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Voyage in the Val de Loire

Since 30 November 2000 the Val de Loire has been included in the World Heritage list of UNESCO. This journey invites you to discover the beauty of the landscapes in this area as well as its important historical heritage



Day 1: Arrival in Tours

Arrival at the train station in Tours. Welcome by your local guide and transfer by coach to your hotel for the next nights.

Day 2 : Tours, Amboise, Chenonceau

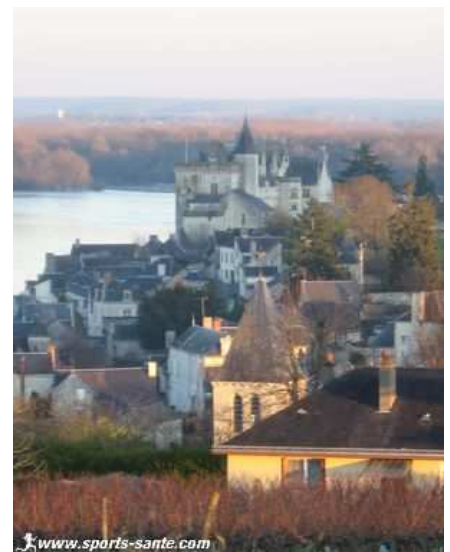
Morning sightseeing of Tours which owns an exceptionally varied and invaluable cultural heritage from different eras and styles. Then we proceed to **Amboise** and visit **Clos Luce**, Leonardo da Vinci residence. This country house has been inhabited by the Renaissance's Genius from 1516 until he died in 1519. A collection of models and an audio-visual presentation pay tribute to the imagination and creativity of the great man. Continue to **Chenonceau**, probably the most unusual chateau in the Loire, especially known for its over the River Cher 60 meters long bridge which Katarina of Medicis erected. Inside visit of the castle and stroll along the River Cher. On our return trip to Tours, we take time for a Loire wine tasting in **Montlouis**. Evening remains at leisure in Tours.

Day 3: Orléans, Blois

Departure for **Orléans**, Joan of Arcs city. Orleans has many religious monument s, a famous cathedral and original half-timbered houses. After a city tour we drive to **Blois**, art and historical city where an important part of the history of French Wars of Religion has taken place. We visit the castle which is still dominated by memories of Francis I and the attack on the Duke of Guise. Return to Tours and rest of the day at leisure.

Day 4: Chambord, Cours Cheverny, Chaumont

After breakfast travel to **Chambord**. Built on the order of Francis I from 1519, the castle is without doubt the largest and most impressive Loire chateau, with its towering facade and its rich and the vast interior. Guided tour and individual walk through the park. Lunch break in Chambord and then proceed to **Cours Cheverny** mansion known for its hounds, its magnificent antlers hall and its the rich interior. Then we reach **Chaumont** famous for its funding middle age castle and its beautiful location on the Loire. Here is held every year in the palace garden, the **International Garden Festival** which represents one of the highlight in the calendar of events the Loire. Time to admire the impressive scenery on the grounds and finally travel back along the Loire to Tours. Evening at leisure.



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Day 5: Azay-le-Rideau, Chinon, Fontevraud abbey, Villandry

Morning drive to the river Indre located castle **Azay-le-Rideau** built under Francis I in the middle of a romantic park. We visit the fully furnished rooms which tell us about the live of the guests who over the centuries visited this place. We then proceed to **Chinon**, dominated by the castle, with its medieval atmosphere preserved until the present days. François Rabelais, French poet of the 16th century, famous for his "Gargantua", has its name closely connected with the city. Short sightseeing and lunch break. Then continue to the **Abbey of Fontevraud** richest and most important monastery before the French revolution and still an important cultural centre. Visit the **Abbey** and continue along the other bank of the Loire river to **Chateau de Villandry** an other famous chateau of the Renaissance in the Val de Loire. Since 1906 in possession of the Carvallo family, castle and gardens have taken benefits of important repair works. Return to Tours and evening at leisure.

Day 6: Langeais, Saumur

Drive to **Langeais** castle which is still as impressive as before hundreds of years. The massive fortress erected from 1465 dominates the Loire and the city lying to its feet. Visit the castle with many exquisite pieces of furniture, art objects and unusual Gobelin tapestry. Then proceed along the Loire and visit one of the numerous **limestone caves** which were formerly inhabited and today where wines are stored and mushrooms cultivated. **Typical lunch** in one of these caves in **Montsoreau**. Afternoon drive to **Saumur**. In the heart of a well-known wine region Saumur is the home of the **Cadre Noir**, the elite force to riding, whose demonstrations are well known around the world. Visit the **riding academy** and **wine tasting** of the famous sparkling white wine. Return to Tours and evening at leisure

Day 7: Angers

Trip to Angers recognized for its diverse and historic architecture. Visit the castle and the Carpet Museum of Angers. With 130 meters **the tapestry of the Apocalypse** is one of the largest evidence of medieval art. Over 170 plants are located in the Castle and the Cathedral of Angers. Numerous weaving workshops in and around Angers as well as schools for visual arts are dedicated to carpet weaving. Return to Tours.

Day 8: Transfer to the train station for departure.

Our services:

- 7 x overnight and breakfast in Tours
- Private coach and guide during the whole stay from/to
- Tours train station
- 1 x lunch in a limestone cave in Montsoreau
- 1 x wine tasting in Montlouis
- 1 x wine tasting in Saumur
- All admissions and visits as described

Theme trips to the Loire:

Garden tour in Chaumont, Prieuré Saint Cosme, Villandry

Agricultural travel: vineyards, farmed mushrooms, cheese, fruit and vegetables in Angers, rose cultivation

