



Canadian World War History: Paris to Amsterdam

9 days | 11 days with Amsterdam extension

From the beaches of Normandy to the fields of Flanders, trace Canada's profound role in World War II and the Great War. Begin in Paris, then journey through Caen to the hallowed shores of Normandy, where Canadian forces stormed Juno Beach on D-Day. Travel north to Lille and onward to Ypres, where the Last Post still sounds at the Menin Gate, and stand at Vimy Ridge, where Canadian forces achieved the impossible. End your journey in Amsterdam, where canals and culture await. From Paris' grand boulevards to the solemn war cemeteries of France and Belgium, this tour weaves together stories of sacrifice, courage, and the unbreakable bonds forged between Canada and the nations it helped free.



Your tour package includes

- 7 nights in handpicked hotels
- Breakfast daily
- 2 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 cheese & cider tasting
- 5 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- Petit Palais Museum
- Musée d'Orsay
- Honfleur harbor
- Caen Memorial Museum
- Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery
- Juno Beach
- Vimy Battlefields
- The Last Post Ceremony in Ypres
- Amsterdam canal cruise
- Rijksmuseum

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with few hills or stairs.

Canadian World War History: Paris to Amsterdam with Richard Vien

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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Paris today.

Paris → 2 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Paris

Included meals: welcome dinner

Bienvenue! After clearing arrivals, transfer from the airport to your hotel to recharge. This evening, join your fellow travelers at a local restaurant for a welcome dinner, served with beer or wine, and let your first impression of Paris leave you enchanted.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Paris & Musée d'Orsay

Included meals: breakfast

Ready to be dazzled by the City of Light? Begin your first full day in France with a tour of its splendid capital, Paris. With a local guide leading the way, you'll get an overview of its most recognizable landmarks and a feel for the character of its arrondissements. (That's French for "districts," and it's how Parisians refer to the city's neighborhoods.)

- Drive down the sycamore-lined Avenue des Champs-Élysées—an icon of France that's lined with majestic monuments, glitzy restaurants, and glamorous storefronts. Continue to its western end and take in the magnificent Arc de Triomphe, originally built to commemorate one of Napoleon's many conquests. A dozen different avenues spoke from this epic arch, making it Paris' symbolic heart.
- Make a photo stop at the Eiffel Tower (you know this one!) before viewing the Place de la Concorde, the city's grandest square.
- Visit the Petit Palais, an art museum built for the 1900 Exposition Universelle. It houses the City of Paris Museum of Fine Arts and features masterpieces by artists like Gustave Courbet, Paul Cézanne, and Claude Monet. Explore the museum at your own pace before enjoying free time to grab lunch.

Later, enjoy a visit to the Musée d'Orsay which

boasts the world's greatest treasury of Impressionist and post-Impressionist pieces. This massive collection of art includes works by Cézanne, Delacroix, Gauguin, Pissarro, Renoir, van Gogh, and other notable artists.

For a more elevated experience, opt into the evening's dinner and Seine River cruise. As the sun sets and the city's streetlamps begin their nightly twinkle, you'll see Paris' monuments in a whole new light.

+ Dinner in Paris & Seine River Cruise

Normandy Region → 2 nights

Day 4: Transfer to the Normandy region

Included meals: breakfast, tasting

Leave Paris, watching as the cityscape transforms into a medley of rolling hills, open farmland, and sleepy villages. Before arriving on the Normandy coast, you'll make a pair of stops.

- Visit Rouen, home to the Gothic, two-towered Rouen Cathedral; dreamy, half-timbered medieval houses; and the Gros-Horloge, a giant clock whose mechanism dates to the 14th century.
- Walk through the Old Market Square where Joan of Arc, the famed French heroine, was executed in 1431.
- Head to seaside Honfleur and gaze upon its port, once the launch point for expeditions across the Atlantic to Quebec, Canada. If it looks picture-perfect, that's because it is: The inner harbor has inspired impressionist painters, poets, and playwrights for centuries.
- Sample cheeses—including Camembert, Pont-l'Éveque, and Livarot—paired with cider and Calvados, the region's distinctive apple brandy.

Before reaching your hotel in the Normandy region, make a stop in Caen to enter the Caen Memorial Museum, a powerful institution dedicated to the history of World War II, the D-Day landings, and the quest for peace. Explore exhibits that chronicle the events leading up to the Battle of Normandy and honor those who fought for liberation. Then, continue onward to your hotel and get settled in.

Day 5: Sightseeing tour of Normandy

Included meals: breakfast

Journey to the hallowed shores of Normandy, where the events of June 6, 1944, forever changed the course of history. Today's full-day tour takes you to the sites where Allied forces landed during D-Day, honoring the courage and sacrifice of those who fought for freedom. Your guide will provide Canadian-themed commentary throughout, connecting you to the stories of the soldiers who stormed these beaches.

- Begin at Bény-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, the final resting place of 2,049 Canadian soldiers who fell during the Battle of Normandy. Walk among the white headstones set against manicured lawns and reflect on the profound cost of liberation.
- Continue to Juno Beach, one of the five D-Day landing beaches and the sector assigned to Canadian forces. Enter the Juno Beach Centre, Canada's premier museum and memorial dedicated to the contributions of Canadian soldiers during the Second World War. Explore interactive exhibits and personal stories that bring this pivotal moment to life.
- Travel to Arranches, where the remains of the Mulberry Harbour—a temporary port constructed by Allied forces—still stand in the waters offshore. Enter the Musée du Débarquement to learn about the ingenious engineering feat that enabled the landing of troops and supplies.
- Visit Arranches 360 Cinema and view a powerful 19-minute film projected on circular screens, immersing you in archival footage from the Battle of Normandy.
- Enjoy free time in Arranches for lunch and exploring the charming seaside town, where history and coastal beauty converge.

Lille → 2 nights

Day 6: Lille via Vimy battlefields

Included meals: breakfast

Travel north from Normandy to Lille today, stopping en route at the Vimy battlefields to explore one of World War I's most significant sites. Join a local guide for an immersive sightseeing tour that offers a profound insight into the history and sacrifice of the Great War.

- Enter the Vimy Interpretive Centre to see medals and memorabilia from the significant battle, gaining a deeper understanding of the sacrifices made and the pivotal moments that shaped the course of history.
- See the Vimy Ridge Memorial, a national historic site of Canada, which stands as a poignant tribute to the Canadian soldiers who fought and died in the battle. The towering monument overlooks the landscape where Canadian forces achieved a decisive victory in April 1917.
- Explore the area's battlefields—the tunnels, trenches, and cemeteries—which provide a tangible connection to the past and a solemn reminder of the war's impact on the lives of countless individuals.

Continue to your hotel in Lille and enjoy some free time to relax and unwind after a day of reflection and remembrance.

Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Ypres

Included meals: breakfast

The fields of Flanders hold stories of sacrifice, resilience, and remembrance—and today, you'll walk through the landscapes where history was written in the trenches of World War I. From preserved battlefields to moving memorials, immerse yourself in the legacy of the Great War as you explore the Ypres region with a local guide.

- Stop at Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world, where nearly 12,000 soldiers rest beneath white headstones that stretch across gently rolling fields. Pause at the memorial wall inscribed with the names of those whose graves are unknown.
- Continue to Canadian Hill 62, also known as Sanctuary Wood, where preserved trenches offer a rare glimpse into the conditions soldiers endured. Walk through the muddy dugouts and see the landscape scarred by shell craters, a powerful reminder of the brutal reality of trench warfare.
- Visit the Passchendaele Museum to trace the harrowing story of one of WWI's most brutal battles, where interactive exhibits and artifacts bring the soldiers' experiences to vivid life.
- Follow your local guide to significant sites around Ypres, including Canadian Hill and moving war cemeteries, where rows of white headstones stand as silent witnesses to the courage of those who fell.

- Step inside the In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres' historic Cloth Hall and discover personal stories of soldiers and civilians through immersive displays that chronicle the war's devastating impact on this region.
- Enjoy free time to explore Ypres' charming center and settle in for dinner before making your way to the Menin Gate for the Last Post Ceremony at 8 pm, a nightly tribute to the fallen that has echoed through this memorial arch nearly every evening since 1928.

Amsterdam → 1 night

Day 8: Transfer to Amsterdam, sightseeing tour & farewell dinner

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Make your way north and cross the border to the Netherlands where you'll take to the water in Amsterdam with a local guide, who'll introduce you to the Dutch capital's iconic waterways. Amsterdam's 60 miles of grachtens, or canals, criss-cross the city, earning it a fitting nickname—the Venice of the North.

- Cruise by icons like the Dutch National Opera & Ballet building and beneath the Magere Brug—the famous “Skinny Bridge” that spans the River Amstel. You'll also float by the Jodenbuurt, the former Jewish Quarter, and reflect on the city's long association with Jewish culture.
- See the Dancing Houses, cockeyed structures painted in flashes of vibrant color, and keep an eye out for flower bikes. More than 300 of these bloom-bedecked cycles can be found around the city, decorated and placed by an American expat known simply as “the Flower Bike Man.”
- Disembark and make your way to the Rijksmuseum, the national art collection populated with the works of Dutch masters like Vermeer, Van Gogh, and Rembrandt.

Then, celebrate your trip with your group at a farewell dinner this evening, served with beer or wine.

Flight Home

Day 9: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to continue exploring Amsterdam.

+ Amsterdam extension

Extend your stay in the Dutch capital with plenty of free time to do as much or as little as you please. Wander through Dam Square, step inside the Rijksmuseum, or continue exploring the region alongside your Tour Director.

Amsterdam → 2 nights

Day 9: Free day in Amsterdam

Included meals: breakfast

Your day in Amsterdam is completely your own—wander where curiosity takes you, revisit a favorite spot, or simply soak up the city's effortless charm at your own pace. Looking to venture beyond the city limits? Add on today's optional excursion to the Dutch countryside, where you'll explore the landscapes of Arnhem and Hoge Veluwe National Park and visit the renowned Kroller-Mueller Museum, home to one of the world's largest Van Gogh collections. + Van Gogh & the Dutch Countryside

Day 10: Free day in Amsterdam

Included meals: breakfast

Savor one last day in Amsterdam before your journey comes to a close—the city is yours to enjoy however you see fit. If you haven't yet, track down a fresh stroopwafel at a local market, settle into a canal-side cafe for a slice of Dutch apple pie, or pull up a stool at a traditional bruine kroeg (brown cafe) and sample a plate of crispy bitterballen—a beloved Dutch snack you won't soon forget.

Tonight, enjoy a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

Flight Home

Day 11: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: <https://www.goaheadtours.ca/ZUJG> | 1-800-363-3333

Day 3: Dinner in Paris & Seine River Cruise

From \$189.00 CAD. Visit the link above for pricing info. (5 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Take in the nighttime allure of the City of Light on a special evening excursion. The event begins with dinner at a local restaurant. After you dine, board a boat cruise along the Seine. As you coast along the river and under Paris' bridges, you'll behold the illuminated monuments of the city glittering alongside the riverbanks. Please note: The dress code may vary depending on the restaurant for your dinner. Your Tour Director will advise you on what to wear, but shorts and sneakers are likely to be considered inappropriate attire.

Extension excursion options

Day 9: Van Gogh & the Dutch Countryside

From \$225.00 CAD. Visit the link above for pricing info. (9 hours, departs in the morning)

This morning, leave the busy streets of Amsterdam for the tranquil Dutch countryside. On the way to the heaths and sand dunes of Hoge Veluwe National Park, one of the largest nature preserves in this small country, you'll stop in Arnhem for some free time to explore the city. Known for its rich history, vibrant culture, and beautiful natural landscapes, Arnhem offers attractions such as the Netherlands Open Air Museum and Sonsbeek Park. Continue to Hoge Veluwe, where you'll have the rest of the day to explore as you like. Rent one of the free bicycles the park provides to visitors, or step inside the Kröller-Müller Museum and sculpture garden, home to the world's largest collection of Van Gogh art. The museum also houses masterpieces from Mondrian, Seurat, Gauguin, and Picasso.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. Go Ahead Tours accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at <https://www.goaheadtours.ca/about/terms>.