***Netherlands, Belgium, France 2022***

Amsterdam (2 nts) Brussels (1 nt) Arras (1 nt) Caen (2 nts) Paris (3 nts)

**Day 1 –** Depart from the Edmonton airport tonight on your flight to Amsterdam, Netherlands.

**Day 2 –** Upon arrival at Schipol airport, you will be met by your tour manager and

transferred by coach to the city centre. The tour manager will remain with you throughout the tour. This afternoon you will have a one-hour sightseeing tour on the canals of Amsterdam by boat. This is a great introduction to this unique city. Amsterdam is comprised of 70 islands, which are separated by nearly 50 miles of canals and connected by more than one thousand bridges. Transfer to the hotel for check-in. Dinner this evening will be at a local restaurant or at the hotel. A buffet breakfast each day and 7 dinners are included in the tour.

**Day 3 –** Breakfast at the hotel. Today you will have a morning sightseeing tour of **Amsterdam** with a local guide. You will see Dam Square with the impressive Royal Palace along with New Church and Waterloo Square. Time for lunch on your own. After lunch, an optional visit can be the Rijksmuseum (not included), the largest museum of the Netherlands, to view an unrivaled collection of 16th and 17th century art, including

works by Rembrandt and other Dutch Masters. Later, you will visit the Anne Frank House located at Prinsengracht 263 - 267 in the center of Amsterdam. Here you can find the hiding place where Anne Frank wrote her famous diary during World War Two. The original of the diary is on display as part of the Anne Frank House's permanent exhibition. Remainder of the day is at leisure. This evening, dinner will be in a

local restaurant near the hotel. Overnight at the hotel in Amsterdam.

**Day 4 –** Breakfast at the hotel. Then, you must check out of the hotel and load your luggage onto your long distance coach. Travel to Brussels this morning. Upon arrival in Brussels, meet your local guide and head out on a city tour by coach and on foot. See the main sights of Brussels such as the Royal Palace. This is the official home of the Belgian king and you will always know if he is in the country when you see the Belgian

flag flying on top of the building. Continue to the Palace of Justice, which is bigger in area than St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. The city’s law courts were built in Neo-Classical style using the profits of colonialism, and completed in 1833. The impressive structure rules the Brussels skyline and can be seen from almost any vantage point in the city. And of course you don’t want to miss Manneken Pis! This famous statue of a little

boy peeing in a fountain is a perfect representative of the irreverent Belgian humor. The unique Brussels icon has been amusing visitors on the corner of Rue de L’Etuve & Stroofstraat since 1619. Over time it has become a tradition for visiting heads of state to donate miniature versions of their national costume for the little naked boy. You will also see the Great Market Square. Finally, you will learn all about real Belgian Chocolate at the Cacao and Chocolate Museum in Brussels. Then, transfer to your hotel for check-in. Dinner is on your own this evening. Overnight Brussels.

**Day 5 –** Breakfast at the hotel before your departure for Arras, France. En route you will stop to visit **Ghent, a picturesque town in Belgium.** Enjoy a walking tour of the historical town centre upon arrival. During your guided walk, you will discover all of the most famous sites and monuments of the city including the **Belfry** and **Cloth Hall**, a superb gothic monument with a soaring bell tower that dates from 1425, and the **Town Hall**, a complex mix of architectural styles. Then continue to **Ypres in West Flanders,** which was the last major Belgian town in Allied hands in spring of 1915. Ypres provided a defensive position from which to protect French ports on the English Channel. It had to be held. When the French troops suffered huge losses due to the German release of chlorine gas, the Canadians fought hard to defend the front line until British troops were able to rush forward. The Canadian Division suffered over 6,000 casualties at Ypres but earned their reputation as tough, dependable troops. You will have an afternoon tour of some of the battlegrounds and memorials including a visit to **Essex Farm Cemetery** where **Canadian Lieutenant-Colonial John McCrae** wrote the poem **“In Flanders Fields”.** Later this afternoon, continue to **Arras, France**. Check in to the hotel. Dinner

this evening will be at a local restaurant**.** Overnight Arras.

**Day 6 –** Breakfast at hotel before departing for Vimy Ridge to visit the **Canadian Memorial** and tour the **trenches of World War I**. You will also see the **Canadian Cemeteries**. Continue your journey through northern France. Travel to **Dieppe**, the site of **Operation Jubilee** on August 19, 1942. This was the first sortie on French soil after June 1940 by Allied troops under the command of Admiral Mountbatten. Seven thousand men, mostly Canadians, landed at dawn at eight different places on the coast. The tank crews gave their lives to protect the retreat under heavy artillery fire and with heavy casualties, including 3500 Canadians. Continue to your hotel in **Caen**, ‘the city of spires’, for check in. Dinner will be at a local restaurant this evening. Overnight Caen.

**Day 7** - After breakfast at the hotel, board your coach and travel north to visit some of the **D-day Normandy Beaches**, including **Juno Beach** where the Canadians landed. Begin the day with a visit **Longues-sur-Mer** where you will see the artillery battery of WWII. The battery consisted of four navy guns and each one was protected by a concrete casemate. Then, continue to **Arromanches** and the **Musée du Débarquement** on the seafront, which shows the landing plan and an excellent film. After lunch, you will visit **Juno Beach Centre** including a guided tour of **Juno Park**. Return to Caen later this afternoon to visit the city centre. You may wish to visit the 11th century Abbaye aux Hommes and the Abbaye aux Dames, built respectively by William

the Conqueror and Queen Mathilde. Dinner will be at a local restaurant. Overnight Caen.

**Day 8** – This morning, you will visit the "**Museum for Peace", the Memorial**, where you will 'journey' from 1918 to the present day, dealing successively with the failure of the peace treaty following the First World War, the Phony War of 1939-40, the Occupation, the global spread of the conflict, D-Day, the Battle of Normandy and the liberation of France and the rest of the Continent from Nazi occupation. Caen was at the center of the Battle of Normandy in June 1944, a fight for freedom leading to peace. The Memorial recalls the event and what was at stake and encourages all of us to fight for the progress of liberty and the rights of man. Continue by coach for Versailles where you will visit the monumental chateau of **Louis XIV**, the Sun King - **Versailles**.

You will see the **Grands Appartements** of the royal living quarters including the perfectly restored boudoir of Marie Antoinette and the beautiful **Galerie des Glaces** also known as the **Hall of Mirrors**. Continue by coach to **Paris**. Upon arrival, you will check in to your hotel. Then, you will have an orientation lesson on how to use the **Parisian Metro**. The first metro line was opened in 1900 and now 14 lines transport over five million people each weekday! You have metro passes included in the tour for easy travel on the metro during your stay in Paris. Dinner will be at a local restaurant this evening. Overnight Paris.

**Day 9 –** Breakfast at the hotel. Then, meet your local guide in the hotel lobby at 9:00 am and head out on a sightseeing tour by coach which takes you around the major monuments of Paris: the **Tour Eiffel** (get your cameras ready at the **Palais de Chaillot** photo stop), the **Arc de Triomphe** situated in the center of one of the world's largest traffic circles, **Place de la Concorde** with its infamous past, the **Madeleine**, the sumptuous **Opera Garnier**, **Notre Dame Cathedral** and many other sights. The tour will end at **the Musée du Louvre** where you will have time for lunch (maybe have a fresh crepe for lunch). This afternoon, you will have a guided tour of the Louvre. Your guide will show you the ruins of the **medieval fortress,** the **Mona Lisa** and **Venus de Milo.** You may also choose to visit the **European Sculpture Galleries** or the magnificent **Napoleon III Apartments** in the **Richelieu Wing.** After your visit to the Louvre, you will walk through the **Tuileries gardens** to the infamous **Place de la Concorde** and continue to the **Avenue des Champs-Elysées.** You will have free time on the **Champs-Elysées** for shopping and dinner on your own. Following dinner, take the metro to the **Pont d’Alma** to the **Bateaux Mouches** for your evening cruise on the **River Seine**. Return to the hotel by metro. Overnight Paris.

**Day 10 -** Breakfast at the hotel and then, you will take the metro to the **Trocadero** stop. You will then cross the **Seine River** to the **Tour Eiffel** where you will take the elevator up (entrance included to the 2nd level) for an excellent view of the city. The afternoon is free for the group’s own plans. You may wish to take the metro to **Cimetière Père-Lachaise,** Paris's most prestigious cemetery. You would see the memorials to the holocaust victims and some of the graves of individuals such as Oscar Wilde, Edith Piaf, Sarah Bernhardt, Chopin, Jim Morrison, and many other famous people. The cemetery is huge, so be prepared to see only selected sites. Or, from the Tour Eiffel, you could easily take the metro to the **Musée d’Orsay,** which houses the Impressionist paintings amongst other great works of art. The museum itself is unique in that it was originally built in 1900 as a train station and it was closed from 1939 until 1986 when the newly-renovated building opened its doors as one of Paris’s finest museums. Here you can see famous paintings by **Renoir, Van Gogh, Monet, Manet, Degas** and many more. Later this afternoon around 4:00 pm, you will travel by metro to the **Butte de Montmartre.** Climb the steps or take the funicular up to the white **Basilica of Sacré Coeur** gleaming high above Paris. Go around the corner to the nearby **Place du Tertre** where artists have set up their easels, and perhaps have your portrait sketched. Dinner this evening will be at a local bistro in Montmartre. Return to the hotel by metro. Overnight Paris.

**Day 11 –** Transfer to the airport this morning for your flights back to Canada.