

France, Belgium, & the Netherlands



Time Frame: 9 days + 2 travel days

Destinations: Paris, France; Brussels & Bruges, Belgium; Amsterdam, Netherlands

Travel Day/Day 1

Arrive in Paris, France

Take a red-eye to Paris CDG Airport

Get an uber to your hotel or use the Bounce app to find a luggage storage location near your airbnb

Stop by a boulangerie (bakery) and spend your afternoon strolling around the **Eiffel Tower** & along the **Seine River**

Check in to your accommodation & get dinner nearby

DAY 2

Paris, France

Take the metro to **Champs Elysées street** & walk to the **Arc de Triomphe**

- €16 pp timed ticket or on *Museum Pass (MP; see info at end)* to climb up (open 10a-11p)
- *Recommend going before opening to see outside without crowds, no need to climb up*
- Use underground tunnel to avoid walking in traffic (near CDG-Etoile metro stop)

Continue walking by the **Grand & Petit Palais** → **Place de la Concorde**, **Obélisque de Louxor** → **Musée de l'Orange** → **Jardin des Tuileries** → **Musée du Louvre**

Continue down **Rue de Rivoli** to **Pont Neuf** & **Île de la Cité** (original city settlement)

- **Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris** (free, just wait in line ~10 min, open 8a-7p)
- **Sainte Chapelle Church** timed entry at 1500 (€13 pp/MP timed ticket, expect to still wait)

Dinner at Relais de l'Entrecôte for steak frites & profiteroles (get there 30 min before opening, you'll still wait a while but it's a fun experience!)

Bateaux Mouches Seine River Cruise: 1 hr cruise booked for €16 pp but no time slot needed

- Departs every 30 min from Port de la Conférence at the Pont de L'Alma all day

DAY 3

Paris, France

Day trip to Versailles: Timed entry at 1000, €32 pp/MP timed ticket (closed Mon)

- Use free audio guide on app
- Take 35 min train from RER C to Versailles Château RG/Rive Gauche, turn right out of station at Versailles then walk the first boulevard to the left
- If going on a Musical Fountain day, gardens are an extra €10 pp, can buy there or online

Lunch at Grand Cafe d'Orleans (cafeteria style cafe near entrance to Versailles)

Musée d'Orsay: €16 pp/MP (open 9:30a-9:45p, closed Mon)

Dinner at Les Cocottes (can make reservation day-of)

Eiffel Tower: €25 pp for elevator to 2nd floor (NOT on MP, open 9a-12a)

France, Belgium, & the Netherlands



DAY 4

Paris, France

Musée du Louvre: Reserve an early timed entry slot or go much later in the day, it will be very crowded & you will wait a while to enter even with a timed ticket

- €22 pp/MP, timed entry slot required (closed on Tues)
- Plenty of places to grab lunch in the museum

Metro to **Galleries Lafayette Haussmann** mall & take the escalators up to the rooftop for a view of the city & **Palais Garnier Opera House**

Metro to **Montmartre:** Be prepared for lots of stairs at the Abbesses metro station!

- Walk to the **Wall of I Love You** right by the metro station → walk Rue de Abbesses → Rue Lepic → Square Suzanne Buisson Park → Rue de l'Abreuvoir → **Basilique du Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre** overlook (this area is very crowded, be aware of pickpocketing here)

Dinner at Cafe Marguerite & macarons at Maison Arnaud Delmontel across the street

DAY 5

Paris, France

Hotel National des Invalides: Museums & monuments related to French military history → Musée de l'Armée, Napoleon's tomb

- €17 pp/MP (open 10a-6p)

Pick up lunch at Boulangerie Liberte & have a picnic by the Seine River

Musée de l'Orangerie: €14 pp/MP (closed Tues)

- Timed ticket suggested but there was no wait in the afternoon

Metro to **Place de l'Estrapade** (if you're an Emily in Paris fan!), see the Pantheon & stroll through the **Jardin du Luxembourg**

Dinner at L'Oliveto (make reservations earlier in the day)

Paris Tips

Tips	<p>Many people speak some English but learn basic phrases in French to order at restaurants & to be polite (especially local boulangeries).</p> <p>No need to tip, but you can leave €2-5 or 5-10% as a tip (<i>service compris</i> on receipts means the tip is included). Tap water (<i>carafe d'eau</i>) is free at restaurants.</p> <p>Use type C or E plug adapters.</p> <p><u>Museum Pass:</u> For 2, 4, or 6 days entrance to 50 monuments/museums & to skip the line → make sure you're going to enough spots to get your money's worth BUT skipping the lines may be worth it itself, time starts at first use & allows only 1 entry per spot.</p> <p><u>Apps to get:</u> Bonjour RATP (Paris metro), The Fork (restaurant reservations), Versailles app, Eurostar, download offline google translate & google maps</p>
Eat	<p>Steak frites, duck confit, onion soup, croque monsieur, jambon beurre baguette.</p> <p>Macarons, croissants, crêpes, chausson aux pommes (apple pastry), Paris-brest, pain au chocolate, pain suisse (brioche cream pastry), viennoise (denser croissant), éclair, profiteroles, kouign-amann (similar to cinnamon roll).</p> <p>Make sure you go to boulangeries (made from scratch), <i>not bakeries!</i></p>
Get Around	<p>RER train for longer distances (to/from airport), Uber or official G7 taxi, metro for within city (get Navigo Easy card for weekly pass or our rec → just buy single metro tickets on Bonjour RATP app)</p>
Other Things To Do	<p>Le Marais area (Place des Vosges, Picasso Museum), Catacombs (not on MP), Musée de Shoah, Musée des Égouts de Paris (not on MP), Paris by Mouth food tour, day trips to Alsace region</p>

France, Belgium, & the Netherlands



DAY 6

Arrive in Brussels, Belgium

Check out and take an uber to the Gare du Nord train station → book a mid-morning **Eurostar train from GDN to Brussels Midi/Zuid/South** train station (book this in advance)

- Once at Brussels Midi/Zuid/South, take the Belgian IC train one stop to **Brussels Centraal** station (this is not their metro, it's the local train line)

Walk across the street to the **Hilton Brussels Grand Palace** & store your luggage until check in

Grab lunch at Fritland (try a mitraillette & some of their amazing frites sauces)

Take a self-guided city & chocolate tour of **Brussels**:

- Start at the **Grand Palace (Grote Markt) & Town Hall**, go to Neuhaus for Cornet Dores & Mary Chocolatier for champagne truffles
- Walk along Rue de l'Etuve to **Mannekin Pis** statue → **Monts de Arts park & Old England Building** → **Palais Royale & Parc du Brussels**
- Back to Grand Palace & enter **Les Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert**, go to Corne Port-Royal for manon sucre
- End your tour at Maison Dandoy for Belgian waffles & get a beer at Delirium Cafe

DAY 7

Bruges, Belgium

Day trip to Bruges: Take the SNCB train from Brussels Centraal station to Bruges (€35 pp roundtrip)

- 1 hr train, they run about every 20 mins → 15 min walk to Bruges from the train station
- Walk around **Market Square/Historium Brugge** & the **Belfry** (can climb for €15 pp, open 9-8)
- **Basilica of the Holy Blood** in Burg Square (free, open 10-5)
- Walk to **Huidenvettersplein & Rozenhoedkaai**, do the 30 min **canal cruise** from here (€15 pp, buy tickets there, open 10-6 & departs from many different locations along the river)
- Walk along canal to **Church of Our Lady, Bonifacius Bridge, & Minnewater Park**
- Have a beer at Duvelorium Belgian Beer Bar for a cool view of the Market Square
- Have lunch at one of the many nice restaurants with a patio in the Market Square

Train back to Brussels for the evening

Dinner at Big Mama (try the shrimp croquettes & chicken vol au vent)

Belgium Tips

Tips	French & Dutch are most common languages, most everyone speaks English. Carry coins or credit card for public restrooms (most have turnstile to pay to use).
Eat	Frites & sauces, mitraillette, shrimp croquettes, chicken vol au vent, Belgian chocolate, Brussels waffles (square, usually have toppings) & Liege waffles (round, best on their own)
Get Around	Use SNCB app (local train line) as google was not as accurate. Train stations here can be confusing, make sure you're at the right station and know all names for the line you're taking as the board & train itself would show the same destination but in a different language. Most line names are in Dutch and French.
Other Things To Do	Day trips to Ghent or Antwerp.

France, Belgium, & the Netherlands



DAY 8

Arrive in Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Check out & walk to the Brussels Centraal train station for a short trip to Brussels Midi/Zuid/South station → book an early morning **Eurostar train from Brussels Midi to Amsterdam Centraal** train station (book this in advance)
- Once at Amsterdam Centraal station, head outside & catch the tram to your hotel

Store your luggage at **The Leonardo Hotel Amsterdam in Leidse Square** until check in & walk to Foodhallen for lunch & drinks

Stroll through the **Jordaan area** canals known as the **9 Little Streets** (De 9 Straatjes) & pass by the **Anne Frank House**

Take the tram to the **Centrum area** (city center) to Dam Square, the Royal Palace, and the famous Damrak row houses → continue your walk to **Waterlooplein** & pass by the Rembrandt House

Dinner at Umailon Ramen Leidseplein & stroopwafels at Firma Stroop

DAY 9

Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Breakfast at Eggs Benaddicted

Rijksmuseum: Book a timed entry reservation for mid-morning (€25 pp, no need to do this far in advance)

Walk through the **Bloemenmarkt** floating flower market

Canal boat tour in Leidseplein: 75 min Blue Boat Tour from Stadhouderskade 501 (€17 pp, no need to book in advance)

Walk through **Vondelpark**

Dinner at Sherpa & Stroopwafels (again) at Firma Stroop

Travel Day

Travel Back Home

Get breakfast & enjoy another walk in the 9 Little Streets area

Get an uber to the airport & hop on your flight home!

Amsterdam Tips

Tips	Dutch is their official language but everyone speaks English as well. Be sure to stay in the Centrum area to be able to walk to most places. We highly recommend the Leidseplein neighborhood.
Eat	Bitterballen, fresh stroopwafels, Heineken
Get Around	Use the GVB app (local Amsterdam transit) for tram tickets. Tickets are good for 1 hour once activated on your phone. Scan your QR code on your phone at the tram entrances when you get on & off.
Other Things To Do	Rent bikes, Anne Frank House (timed tickets released 6 weeks in advance & sell out quick!), Van Gogh Museum (require timed tickets, need to book weeks in advance), De Oude Kerk Museum, the Heineken Experience, day trip to Haarlem (15 min train) or Keukenhof for tulip gardens (30 min bus).