

BORDEAUX TO LONDON: THE FRENCH ATLANTIC COAST

8 Days | Expeditions in: |

Explore the rocky islands and French coastal wildernesses off the beaten path. Revisit history from Napoléon to the Normandy beaches, witness scenery immortalized by artists like Monet and Shakespeare, and encounter the stunning landscapes of Brittany. Move leisurely along the coast from port to island, and enter the English Channel, stopping to explore Mont-Saint-Michel, Saint-Malo, and the charming harbor town of Honfleur.



DAY 1: Bordeaux, France/Embark

Arrive in Bordeaux and embark *National Geographic Orion* in the elegant and ornate city center. Spend the afternoon exploring the cafés and shops along the thriving waterfront, before departing through the Gironde estuary, passing sloping hills and islands en route to the Atlantic Ocean. (L,D)



DAY 2: Ile d'Aix/La Rochelle

Stretch your legs on a walking tour of the quaint Île d'Aix, Napoleon's last stop on French soil before his final exile. Visit the Napoleon Museum, then continue to the nearby port of La Rochelle for an afternoon in this charming seaside city guarded by medieval ramparts. Enjoy a special seafood dinner ashore this evening. (B,L,D)

Learn how Cognac is made in the traditional way at Château La Péraudière, a privately held estate, established in 1872.



DAY 3: Belle-Île-en-Mer

Wake up to magnificent views of Belle-Île-en-Mer (beautiful island in the sea), known for its rugged cliffs on the western side and charming ports on the eastern side. Explore highlights such as the Bangor lighthouse, the rocks at Port Coton favored by Monet, the Vauban citadel (one of 12 Vauban fortifications recognized by UNESCO), and the fishing town of Le Palais. We've built in free time so you may explore Belle-Île on your own, too. (B,L,D)



DAY 4: Douarnenez

Today we explore Brittany. Have a guided walk of medieval Locronan, officially one of "the most beautiful villages in France," with its Renaissance buildings and church. Take time to discover its many craft workshops on your own, perhaps tasting Breton butter cake. (B,L,D)



DAY 5: Saint-Malo/Mont-Saint-Michel

Wake up in Saint-Malo, and take a walking tour of this fortified port city surrounded by ramparts dating from the 12th century. Or, head east on an excursion to the iconic abbey fortress of Mont-Saint-Michel, a UNESCO World Heritage site poised dramatically on a rocky tidal island a few hundred yards off the coast. (B,L,D)



We've arranged for an exclusive visit to a privateer's mansion followed by a tasting of the cider for which the region is known. Or for an authentic 'foodie' experience, join us at a local oyster farm to gather oysters for the ship's chef, who will shuck and season these delicacies for a sampling on board. If you wish to explore Saint-Malo on your own on foot or by bike, we've made it easy with a pre-provided map and a list of the best cafés and shops.



DAY 6: Cherbourg/The Normandy Beaches

Today we visit the Normandy beaches with a local historian. The D-Day landings on June 6, 1944 were the first wave of the largest seaborne invasion in history; more than 6,000 ships landed on these beaches. Walk in the footsteps of the Allied troops at Omaha Beach, and pay your respects at the American Cemetery nearby. Travel through countryside known for Calvados, cider, and cheese to the city of Bayeux for an afternoon exploration, including a visit to the Bayeux Tapestry Museum, which houses the 230-foot wool embroidered account of the Norman Conquest. (B,L,D)

We've planned some active options today, too. Cycle through northern France, stopping at relevant WWII sites and have lunch in Bayeux.



DAY 7: Honfleur

Dock in the charming town of Honfleur, a favorite of renowned artists such as Monet, Courbet, and Boudin. Enjoy a guided walking tour of Vieux Bassin (the old port), and visit the Eugène Boudin Museum and Église Sainte-Catherine. (B,L,D)

Be sure to savor time exploring on your own. Interested in art? Ask our concierge to map out the best galleries (there are nearly 100 in Honfleur.) Or, see for yourself what inspired many of the Impressionists with a hike to the arched limestone cliffs of Etretat.



DAY 8: London, England/Disembark

Wake up in London, disembark in the center of the city and head to the airport for your flight home, or remain in London for an added stay. (B)

Important Flight Information



Some departures may travel in reverse.

Sample Airfares:

Economy: from \$1,100

Airfares are subject to change

Cost Includes:

All accommodations aboard ship, meals as indicated, alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages aboard ship, excursions, sightseeing and entrance fees, special access permits, transfers to and from group flights, use of kayaks and snorkeling equipment, services of Lindblad Expeditions' Leader, National Geographic photographer, naturalist staff and expert guides, services of a ship physician, all gratuities, and all port charges and service taxes.

Note: All departures include alcoholic beverages and tips to the ship's crew.

Cost Not Included:

Air transportation, extensions, passport, visa, immigration fees, travel protection plan, internet, and laundry.