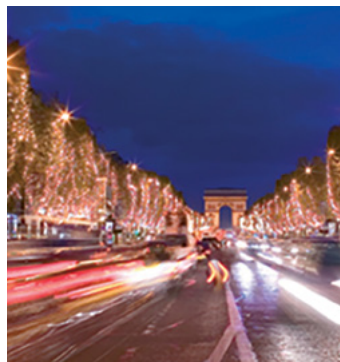


CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND HOLIDAY DELIGHTS WITH STEVE & JAN COX

December 6-15, 2025



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND HOLIDAY DELIGHTS

The dark evenings of December in Paris sparkle with the spirit of Christmas festivities, as the city's iconic landmarks shimmer with dazzling displays, transforming the streets and main squares into a winter wonderland.

Alsace, nestled in northeastern France, enchants with its storybook villages adorned with twinkling lights and half-timbered houses. The Christmas markets in Alsace, steeped in tradition and community spirit, come alive with the scent of mulled wine and gingerbread, creating a truly enchanting atmosphere.

Explore from well-located boutique hotels in Paris and Strasbourg, and enjoy superlative French service aboard your intimate canal barge.

Savor Parisian flavors and Alsatian holiday traditional treats and plenty of *vin chaud* - mulled wine - to keep warm as you stroll the wintry, cobblestone streets.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Delight in the glittering holiday lights of Paris
- Enjoy exclusive access during a visit of Chateau Vaux-le-Vicomte, festooned for the holidays
- Explore the Queen of Alsace – Strasbourg – and the historic Hospices Wine Celler, housing the oldest barrel of wine in the world
- Discover the stunning 12th century Château du Haut-Kœnigsbourg, situated on a high hill overlooking the Alsace plain
- Stroll charming Alsatian Christmas markets in Strasbourg, picturesque Little Venice in Colmar, colorful Riquewihr and historic Kaysersberg
- View French masterpieces from the Renaissance to Impressionism
- Enjoy expert guiding throughout the journey with your Conservancy Travel Trip Leader, and licensed professional guides.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

- Paris, 2 nights at Les Jardins du Marais
- Strasbourg, 2 nights at Hotel de l'Europe or similar
- Canal Barge *MS Madeleine*, 3 nights
- Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport, 1 night Oceania Roissy CDG

Enjoy more of Paris on a two-or three night pre-tour extension.

DETAILED ITINERARY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

Independent Departures from the USA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 PARIS

Independent Arrivals in Paris. Note: Hotel check-in is available from 3:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m. Meet your Conservancy Travel Trip Leader for a welcome and orientation meeting, then walk to a nearby restaurant for a traditional French dinner including limited choice of appetizer, entrée and dessert; a glass of wine, water and a choice of tea or coffee. *Les Jardins du Marais Meals: D*

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8 PARIS

After breakfast, depart the hotel on foot and take the Paris Métro (subway) to the Île de la Cité to visit the newly reconstructed Notre Dame Cathedral. Construction on the cathedral began in 1163 and was not finally completed until 1345. Damaged and restored several times, it remains one of the largest and finest examples of Gothic architecture anywhere. Continue to La Sainte Chapelle, begun in 1239, the stained-glass windows and soaring pinnacle spires are one of the glories of Gothic architecture.

We'll have lunch in a local restaurant.



In the afternoon, we depart Paris by private motorcoach for a special visit of Chateau Vaux-le-Vicomte, decorated for the holidays with candlelight, tables laden with gourmet delicacies and twinkling Christmas decorations. The Château is a stunning 17th-century French baroque masterpiece, renowned for its harmonious architecture, lavish interiors, and meticulously designed gardens by André Le Nôtre. It was commissioned by Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's finance minister. Returning to Paris, we'll have a panoramic drive through the city. Dinner on own. *Les Jardins du Marais Meals: B, L*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9 PARIS – STRASBOURG

After breakfast, check out of the hotel. Depart to the Marmottan Museum, where we'll learn about the masterpieces by Claude Monet and his friends, including Monet's "Impression at Sunrise" which gave the Impressionist movement its name. Enjoy traditional cuisine for lunch in a local restaurant.

Late-afternoon, take the high-speed train from Paris to Strasbourg. Check in at the hotel, then we'll stroll through the Christmas Market around the main square and walk to dinner in a nearby restaurant. *Hotel de l'Europe Meals: B, L, D*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10 STRASBOURG

This morning, set out on foot for a guided tour of the Alsatian capital that will take you through the beautifully preserved district of "Petite France." Then, visit the cathedral, famed for its beauty.

We'll visit the legendary wine cellars that lie beneath Strasbourg Hospital, a fascinating glimpse into history - once used to store wines gifted by patients in exchange for care. Today, a selection of Alsace's finest winemakers keep their most prestigious wines to age in the reputed cellars of the Hospices, that also house the world's oldest wine barrel, dating from 1472.

For lunch, enjoy regional cuisine in a typical Alsatian restaurant.



Afterwards, we'll enjoy the magical atmosphere of the numerous Christmas Markets located in several squares across the city. Dinner on your own. *Hotel de l'Europe Meals: B, L*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

STRASBOURG – COLMAR / EMBARK CANAL BARGE

After breakfast, check out of our hotel, and depart south along the Alsace wine route. We drive through picturesque villages and vineyards and visit the Château du Haut-Kœnigsbourg, a stunning medieval 12th century castle perched on a strategic hill in the Vosges mountains, overlooking the Alsace plain. The castle is an architectural marvel, featuring a mix of medieval and Renaissance styles.



We'll have an included lunch featuring local wine.

We arrive in Colmar and visit one of the city's six Christmas Markets.

At 6:00 p.m. we embark the canal barge. We'll enjoy a welcome cocktail then dinner on board. Our lunches and dinners on board feature refined French cuisine and include a choice of a 1/4-liter carafe of wine or a bottle of mineral water, and an espresso coffee. *Canal Barge MS Madeleine Meals: B, L, D*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12

CANAL CRUISING COLMAR - KUNHEIM

We'll spend the morning cruising along the canal from Colmar to Kunheim, passing through fields and forest, and enjoy an Alsatian gingerbread tasting. Lunch on board. This afternoon, we'll visit Kaysersberg to view its Christmas display: Each year, the entire village is festooned with creatively designed Alsatian Christmas decorations. Next stop is Riquewihr, a charming medieval village nestled among the vineyards, with a traditional Christmas market. The brightly decorated, half-timbered homes add to the postcard-like setting of traditional Alsace. Wander the cobblestone streets and admire the marvelous decorations covering the facades and village monuments. Dinner on board the barge.

Canal Barge MS Madeleine Meals: B, L, D

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

CANAL CRUISING KUNHEIM - COLMAR

Relax on board as we cruise to Colmar this morning. Lunch on board.



This afternoon, we'll explore the center of Colmar, beginning in Little Venice, where the Lauch River canals wind their way through the city, dotted with colorful, half-timbered homes. During the holidays, everything is decorated to the hilt. In the center of the holiday activity, we stop in at the Choco-Story chocolate museum, to warm up with a cup of delightful hot chocolate. Afterwards, spend some time strolling through the Christmas market enjoying the traditional wooden market stalls filled with Christmas decorations, artisan crafts and culinary specialties whose tempting, spicy notes waft through the market.



Back on board the barge, we enjoy a festive gala dinner.
Canal Barge MS Madeleine Meals: B, L, D

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

UNTERLINDEN MUSEUM - RETURN TO PARIS-CDG

Early breakfast and disembarkation at 9:00 a.m.

Before departing Colmar, we visit the exquisite Unterlinden Museum, celebrated for its extensive collection. A highlight is the 16th century Isenheim Altarpiece, renowned for its emotional depth and intricate craftsmanship within the context of Renaissance art.

We'll enjoy a celebratory Farewell Lunch and visit the Christmas Market of Obernai. Late afternoon, transfer to Strasbourg and travel to Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport by highspeed train then check-in at the hotel for overnight. *Oceania Roissy CDG Hotel Meals: B, L*

END OF TOUR PROGRAM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15 INDEPENDENT DEPARTURES

Independent departures. *Meals: B*



ACTIVITY LEVEL: Walking up to 3 miles per day on pavement and cobblestones. Using the Metro in Paris involves some unavoidable stairs. The centers of European cities are often pedestrian-only, and access for motorcoaches is strictly limited. Travel by motorcoach, train and aboard a river barge. You must be able to manage your hand baggage independently while boarding and disembarking the train Paris – Strasbourg and Strasbourg – CDG.

Please Note: This itinerary is preliminary and may be adjusted according to conditions on the day of operation.

PARIS PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

Extend your discovery of the magic of Paris at Christmas with choice of three or two additional nights in the City of Light to delve deeper into history, art, and festive Parisian Christmas Markets.



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\$5,526 per person, sharing a double room

\$1,000 deposit.

Final Payment Due August 6, 2025

Register Online at

www.conservancytravel.org/COX_Xmas25



INCLUSIONS:

- ✓ Arrival Meet & Greet with Airport Transfer from Paris-CDG airport to the hotel
- ✓ Conservancy Travel Trip Leader
- ✓ Guiding by certified, French National Guide(s) throughout the journey
- ✓ Enhanced breakfast in French hotels
- ✓ Porterage for one suitcase per person where available (hotels, motorcoaches, barge and transport between Paris-Strasbourg)
- ✓ Transportation for all included activities by Paris Metro/ High Speed Train / Private Motorcoach
- ✓ Meals: (8B, 7L, 5D)
- ✓ Gratuities for included meals
- ✓ Gratuities for local guides, drivers

EXCLUSIONS:

- International airfare and baggage fees
- Passport fees / European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) fee
- Travel Insurance
- Trip Cancellation/Interruption/Emergency medical
- Items of a personal nature, laundry, phone calls, internet access, beverages not included with meals
- Gratuities for barge crew aboard La Madeleine, suggested at \$50 per person
- Specific items described as Not Included or Optional
- Gratuity for Conservancy Travel Trip Leader, suggested at \$10-\$15 per day

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Conservancy Travel
contact@conservancytravel.org



ACCOMMODATIONS

A cruise aboard a canal barge is an authentic discovery of *La douce France* – the simple pleasures of slow-paced French living – while experiencing all that the countryside and small villages along its canals can offer.

The MS Madeleine is an elegant, intimate premium canal barge, measuring 126.32 feet long and 16.63 feet wide. Located on the upper deck are the restaurant, the lounge bar and an outdoor terrace with a Jacuzzi. The barge accommodates a total of 22 passengers in 11 cabins. Cabins are 97 square feet, with picture window, two single beds.

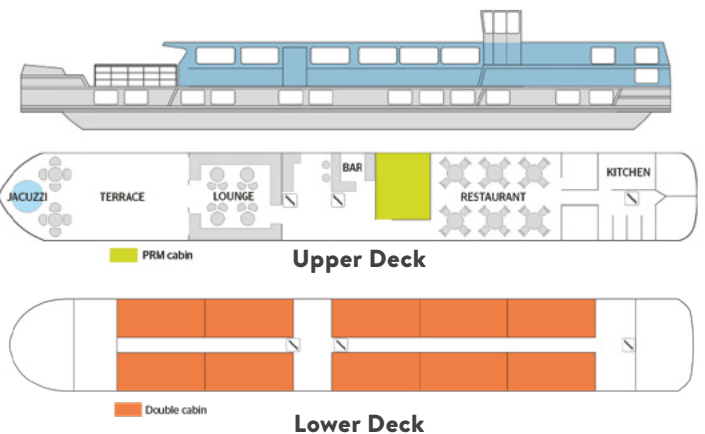
Each cabin has a TV, telephone for internal ship calls, private bathroom with shower and toilet, in-room safe, individually controlled thermostat. The electrical outlets are French and the electrical current is 220V. Free Wi-Fi on board. Please note that there is no elevator and no laundry service on board the ship. Six crew members guarantee a personalized service.

PARIS

Hotel Les Jardins du Marais is a Four-Star retreat nestled in the heart of Paris's vibrant Marais district. Boasting a blend of Art Deco charm and modern elegance, the hotel features rooms and suites overlooking a serene courtyard garden. Its prime location places you just steps away from trendy boutiques, art galleries, and historic landmarks, and Metro lines 8 and 9.

STRASBOURG

Hotel de l'Europe is a charming Four-Star hotel situated in the heart of Strasbourg's historic Petite France district. Housed in a meticulously preserved 15th-century former coaching inn, the hotel seamlessly blends traditional Alsatian architecture with modern comforts. Each of the 67 thoughtfully decorated rooms combines classic and contemporary elements, offering a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The hotel's prime location is in the heart of Strasbourg's Christmas Markets.





December 6-15, 2025

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

contact@conservancytravel.org