

**Kelowna Secondary School  
Battlefield Tour 2016  
France/Belgium**

**Ovis Tours**

**Wednesday, March 9 - Day 1** – Departure from Kelowna to Frankfurt.

**Thursday, March 10 – Day 2** – Upon arrival in Frankfurt, we will meet our guide and coach driver, then travel on to France where you will have a tour of Fort Hackenburg, on the infamous Maginot Line. A short trip later, will land us in Verdun, where you will have time for a walk before dinner and overnight.

**Friday, March 11 – Day 3** – After breakfast we tour the Verdun battlefields, the scene of heavy losses for the French and German Armies in 1916. Visits to the Trenches of the Bayonets, Fort Douamont and the Ossuary will be stark testaments to the violence of the struggle. In the afternoon we will relax along the River Meuse and the Place de Nations where some time is available for lunch and shopping. Our afternoon will be spent traveling to Arras with a brief stop in Rheims.

**Saturday, March 12 – Day 4** – Today we will travel to Vimy Ridge, the place where Canada's army came of age, April 1917. After a trenches and tunnel tour and a visit to the famous memorial, we will take our coach to the Somme and visit Thiepval, then Beaumont-Hamel, scene of the disastrous attack by the Newfoundland Regiment during one of the Battles of the Somme in 1916. Dinner and overnight accommodation will be at Arras.

**Sunday, March 13 – Day 5** – Our day begins with a trip to Ieper, where we tour the Salient of WW I. Sites such as Essex Farm (where John McRae wrote his famous poem, In Flanders Fields), Hill 62, Sanctuary Wood, St. Juliaan, and Tyne Cot will be visited. Soldiers' tunnel life will be evident during our Passchendaele Tunnel tour that afternoon. Chocolates from Belgium are famous and you will have an opportunity to purchase some while in Ieper. Following dinner at our hotel, we will witness the Last Post at the Menin Gate, a ceremony held daily since 1926.

**Monday, March 14 – Day 6** – After breakfast we travel to Paris, with our first stop at the world famous Louvre, then take a river walk to the Notre Dame Cathedral. After dinner we will take an evening cruise on the River Seine to enjoy the City of Lights from the water.

**Tuesday, March 15 – Day 7** – This morning we take the Metro to Trocadero, then a short walk to the Eiffel Tower for a view of this beautiful city. From the tower, we will walk to Les Invalides, formerly a military hospital and now the French War Museum. Our afternoon will be spent shopping and browsing along the Champs Elysee. Dinner will be at or near our hotel.

**Wednesday, March 16 – Day 8** – We leave Paris this morning for the opulent Palace of Versailles including a tour of its manicured gardens. From there, we continue on to Normandy, where Allied troops gained a foothold in Fortress Europe on June 6, 1944. We stop at the Pegasus Memorial, a museum dedicated to the British 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division (which included the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Parachute Battalion). Dinner will be at our accommodation in Caen.

**Thursday, March 17 – Day 9** – Our day begins with a visit to Le Memorial de Caen, a poignant illustration of the hardships endured during wartime, containing a message of peace. Then we travel along the beaches, stopping at Juno Beach Museum, built in memory of those Canadians who participated in the Normandy Landings. We conclude our day at the Abbaye d’Ardennes which reminds us of the brutality of war as we pay homage to the 20 Canadians murdered here by Kurt Meyer’s teenage SS fanatics. Dinner and overnite at Caen.

**Friday, March 18 – Day 10** – Today is a tour of most of the Normandy beach landing sites of 1944. Our first stop is at La Cambe, where 22,000 German soldiers are buried. From here we will head east, with stops at Pointe du Hoc where American Rangers had to scale cliffs to attack positions; at Omaha Beach, which contains the gravesite for 9,000 U.S. soldiers (the opening scene of “Saving Private Ryan”); to the huge guns at Batteries du Longues; capped with a visit to Arromanches where remnants of Churchill’s Mulberry Harbors are still visible. After a short visit to the 360 Museum we end our day’s tour at Beny sur Mer Canadian Cemetery, then return to Caen for dinner.

**Saturday, March 19 – Day 11** – After breakfast we travel east along the coast to Dieppe, scene of the disastrous raid by Canadian troops on August 19, 1942. After visiting the cemetery, we will carry out an exercise as if we were one of the soldiers on Red Beach, facing the town. Stops at Green Beach in Pourville, Blue Beach in Puys and the new museum, will fill out our area visit. Our evening will be spent in this community.

**Sunday, March 20 – Day 12** – This morning we depart Dieppe to follow the route of the Canadian Army as it moved to free the Channel Ports of France from German control. We visit La Coupole, building site of the V1 and V2 rockets which caused so much destruction on London, before traveling to the town of Brugge. “The Venice of Belgium” is our destination for dinner and overnight at our hotel, after visiting the beautiful town center.

**Monday, March 21 – Day 13** – Our day will be spent entirely in the country of Belgium starting with a stop at Adegem Canadian Cemetery. We will then visit the Leopold Canal, site of the very costly crossing for men of the Canadian Scottish, Regina Rifles and Winnipeg Rifles Regiments. Nearby, there exists a Bailey bridge erected by the Canadian Army in 1944 and still in use today. Dinner will be at or near our accommodation in Brugge.

**Tuesday, March 22 – Day 14** – Our last day will be spent travelling to Frankfurt for our flight back to Kelowna. However, we will make a stop at La Chapelle American Cemetery, a site where many of the victims of the Malmedy Massacre are buried. Dinner and overnite at the picturesque village of Limburg, a few miles from the Frankfurt Airport.

**Wednesday, March 23 – Day 15** – We board our flight for home.

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