

# RUGBY WORLD CUP FRANCE 2023



THE GRAND TOUR  
Provisional Tour Itinerary  
52 Day / 51 Nights

## Friday 8th September

Depart Dublin for Bordeaux. On arrival coach transfer to your hotel. That evening we have booked dinner in a local restaurant, making it an ideal opportunity to meet the rest of the group.

## Saturday 9th September

Morning at leisure in Bordeaux. In the afternoon, return private coach transfer to Stade de Bordeaux for Ireland's first Rugby World Cup pool game. Ireland V Europe 2. Kick off at 15:30



## Sunday 10th September

Today we will spend some quality time visiting one of the best wine appellations in Bordeaux: Saint-Emilion. It is the first vineyard to have earned UNESCO status in the world! So, without exaggeration or bias, we can honestly say that this is the chance to taste some of the world's most respected wine. Enjoy a typical lunch while tasting the very best wines! Saint-Emilion is one of the most beautiful and fascinating villages in the Southwest of France. Visit the village and enjoy a guided stroll. Then, private coach transfer back to Bordeaux.



## Monday 11th September

On your way to La Rochelle today, embark on a visit to learn all there is to know about cognac, the 'Eau-de-Vie' or 'Water of Life', as you will visit a historic distillery, sample the unique spirit at family-run cellar. We will enjoy a typical lunch in a local restaurant enroute. We will then travel onto La Rochelle, a beautiful harbour town with fortress and the new home to Ronan "Rog" O'Gara! This is a great rugby town with a great atmosphere in the many bars and restaurants a short stroll from your hotel.



## Tuesday 12th September

Today we will take a return coach to Ile de Ré, a popular holiday destination off the west coast of France near La Rochelle. The island is made up of 10 charming little villages with their traditional white houses and green shutters. We will visit La Flotte, with its many restaurants, markets, and shops. If walking is your passion, there is no better place to indulge than Ile de Ré, if not we have included a shuttle pass to get you around for the day.





### Wednesday 13th September

Today enjoy a day of leisure in La Rochelle. Visit the Towers of La Rochelle, take a stroll through Port stopping for lunch in a local restaurant or catch up on some shopping.

### Thursday 14th September

This morning we will leave La Rochelle for Nantes. On the way, we will stop at Le Marais Poitevin Regional Park. This gives us the opportunity to visit one of the several Regional Park in France. Marais Poitevin is a protected area arranged several century ago, it is now a maze of islets crisscrossed by picturesque canals, primarily now a destination for boating. It is called The Green Venice. Enjoy a cruise and a lunch there. Then we continue to the Muscadet's region! Between Loire and farmland, a green and nuanced landscape through the seasons is revealed in the detours of plateaus and hills. From these vines come the Muscadet, emblematic of the vineyards of Nantes. Enjoy a wine tasting. Located in the heart of the vineyard of Nantes, at the junction of the Loire-Atlantique, Vendée and Anjou, you will admire Clisson and its castle. The city is well known for its medieval air and Tuscan influence, the remains of the castle, which is a former fortress flanked by towers.



### Friday 15th September

Embark on a sightseeing tour including a visit to the Palace of the Dukes of Brittany and the Machines of the Isle of Nantes! The Palace of the Dukes of Brittany is an immense castle, located right in the centre of town. You will also head over to the city's old shipyards, where the city's famous Machines of the Isle of Nantes "live"! This unique collection of mechanical animal machines includes a merry-go-round made of sea creatures and a giant elephant that you can ride, among others that are housed in the Hangar à bananes, a space formerly used to treat imported bananas.



## Saturday 16th September

Enjoy a free day in Nantes or join our Optional Guided Tour to the Palace of the Dukes of Brittany. In the evening return coach transfer to Stade la Beaujoire for Irelands second pool game against Asia/Pacific1. Kick off at 21:00.



## Sunday 17th September

Morning private coach transfer from Nantes to Tours. On your way, discover one of many wines of the Loire Valley with a typical winemaker. Enjoy a tasting there. Arrive then in Tours, rest of the day at leisure.

## Monday 18th September

Today is dedicated to Loire Valley Castles. You will visit the famous castles of Chenonceau and Chambord. Exceptional by their design, richness of collections and their history, both Chenonceau and Chambord castle will amaze you. Crown property and royal residence, they were the symbol of power and richness of kings during this wealthy period. A true legacy of French History listed on Unesco's world heritage list! Lunch included in a local restaurant.



## Tuesday 19th September

Morning private coach transfer to Saint-Malo. On your way, make a stop to see the city of Le Mans, known for its motor racing culture and specifically the 24 Hours of Le Mans race! You will catch a glimpse of the city's racetrack on your way to the beautiful old town, which, unlike most of France's old towns, is separate from the rest of the city. It is perched high above the rest of Le Mans and is the home of the awe-inspiring Saint-Julien cathedral. During your visit, you will have the opportunity to sample the specialty of Le Mans: rillettes, with a glass of wine! Enjoy a typical Breton lunch on the way to Saint-Malo.

## Wednesday 20th September

Enjoy a day trip to Mont Saint-Michel, one of the most visited places in France that is located outside of Paris. Take a tour with a local guide. Mont Saint-Michel alternates between island and mainland. You will also visit the abbey (at your own expense), a splendid example of medieval architecture in the area perched atop the mount that gives spectacular views of the bay that surrounds the mount. Enjoy a lunch on your own in the area before heading to Caen.



## Thursday 21st September

We will spend the day visiting the Mémorial de Caen Museum and the D-Day Landing Beaches. These sites are an incredible opportunity to see first-hand the sites that played a key role in ending World War II. You will learn about the events of D-Day as well as how they fit into a larger historical context, the details of the arrival of the Allied troops, the sacrifices made by the Norman people, and much more. There will be a lunch break during the visit before returning to your hotel in Caen.



## Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

Coach transfer to Paris. On the way, you will make a stop first in Deauville and then Honfleur on the Côte Fleurie (Flowery Coast). Deauville otherwise known as "the Hamptons for Parisians", is a beach town! In Honfleur, have lunch on your own, rock the port vibe and take in many of the picturesque scenes that inspired the Impressionist painters.



## Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

Free day to enjoy Paris. In the evening head to Saint-Denis's stadium for the South Africa V Ireland game. Kick off at 21:00.



## Sunday 24th September

Day at leisure in Paris.



## Monday 25th September

Private Coach transfer to Dijon. On the way we will stop in Auxerre, a city built along the Yonne and renowned for its timbered houses. We will enjoy lunch in a local restaurant. Arrival in Dijon, rest of the day at leisure.

## Tuesday 26th September

Spend the morning exploring Dijon, including a visit to the Palace of the Dukes of Burgundy. The Palace is enormous and today houses Dijon's City Hall and Musée des Beaux Arts. The Tour de Philippe le Bon gives an impressive view of Dijon, the Saone River, and the nearby vineyards. Start the afternoon with lunch in a typical Burgundy restaurant, where many of France's most well-known specialties come from: the wine-simmered beef bourguignon or coq au vin, or Burgundy-style snails or fondue, among many other delights. In any case, prepare for a flavourful feast! The rest of the day will be spent on the Côte de Nuits vineyard, including in the Nuits-Saint-Georges and Gevrey Chambertin wine regions, before heading back to Dijon.





## Wednesday 27th September

Head to Beaune, where the Dukes of Burgundy lived! Upon arrival, take a city tour and see the Hospices de Beaune, founded in the 1400s as a hospital for the poor and is today **Beaune's main attraction; its geometrically patterned rooftops and criss-cross façades** are must-see. Then continue with a cellar visit and a tasting! The quality of Burgundy wines is arguably as good as - or better than - that of the famous Bordeaux wines on the other side of the country. Eat lunch on your own in Beaune before participating in a **mustard workshop! Producers of France's truly traditional mustard are few and far between**, and this is your chance to try traditional recipes and even make your own! Head to another wine estate in Côte de Beaune for a final tasting of the day, and then head back to Dijon for the night.

## Thursday 28th September

Private Coach transfer from Dijon to Strasbourg. On your way, we will make a few stops and enjoy lunch.

Spend the rest of the day visiting Strasbourg, located in Alsace region next to the German border. It is one of the European capitals and a typical Alsatian city. Strasbourg is most of all well known for its "Petite France" area: The Ill River is everywhere here, which is why this district is sometimes compared to a little Venice. The district is spread across an amazing river delta, formed by the five arms of the river. Seen from the sky, they look uncannily like the fingers of a hand trying to grab the whole city. Both peaceful and impetuous, the River Ill irrigates the whole district with its charm. Take a leisurely stroll along its quays and admire the reflection of the colourful facades of the old houses.



## Friday 29th September

This morning, visit to the Haut-Koenigsbourg castle, one of the symbols of Alsatian heritage and a witness to the course of European history. The moment you step over the threshold of the great door at Haut-Koenigsbourg Castle, you find yourself in a whole new world: the Middle Ages. Get lost in this prestigious fortress! Enjoy lunch in Colmar, and then make a stop in the Riesling and Muscat vineyards, two of the many Alsatian region's finest, for a tasting with a winemaker!



## Saturday 30th September

Morning free to relax in Strasbourg and enjoy Lunch on your own. In the afternoon we will take a tour of the Alsace vineyards with wine tasting.

## Sunday 1st October

Coach transfer to Reims with lunch stop on the way. Guided tour of Reims then tasting of some Champagne in a "Grande maison de Champagne".





## Monday 2nd October

This will be a day dedicated to champagne and wine. Visits to vineyards are of course on the agenda, and there will be tastings and a lunch along the way. Finish the day in the company of a super-fan of rugby who doubles as an estate owner, who will be hosting you for a final tasting before your transfer back to Reims.

## Tuesday 3rd October

Head to Lille in the morning and enjoy lunch in an estaminet, a type of restaurant that emerged in industrial Lille! Originally a kind of café-bar where industrial workers in the 1800s could enjoy coffee or other drinks and a cigarette after work, today they are cosy jovial restaurants that welcome all kinds of guests. They are iconic of not only Lille, but the Flemish culture in general; this is supported by the fact that guests can often find traditional Flemish games to play in estaminets! After lunch, take in the sights of the city with a local guide. Lille is known for its belfry tower with 400 steps to the top, and for its colourful building façades with golden trim, which were heavily influenced by baroque and neoclassical styles. With that in mind, we recommend a pair of runners and a camera for this part of the programme!



## Wednesday 4th October

Today we will cross the border into Belgium for a day trip to Bruges! With a local guide you will enjoy a tour of the “the Venice of the North”, and after enjoying a lunch on your own, you will explore the numerous canals that wind through the town on a canal cruise. Do not forget to look up though – the towering Gothic architecture will impress you just as much as the wa-terways! We recommend that at one point during the day, while you are admiring the water and the architecture, try a gauffre (waffle) with whipped cream and chocolate! And now, the biggest decision of all: should your waf-ple be Liege-style or Brussels-style? While both are delicious, the Liege ver-sion is dense and topped with sugar crystals, whereas its Brussels cousin is airier with powdered sugar. On that sweet note, head back to Lille at the end of the day



## Thursday 5th October

Enjoy a free day at leisure in Lille exploring the sights or catching up on some shopping.



## Friday 6th October

We will return to Paris today and once you are all checked in we will head out for our farewell dinner with the group.



## Saturday 7th October

Free day to enjoy Paris. In the evening head to Saint- Denis's stadium for the Ireland V Scotland game. Kick off at 21:00.



## Sunday 8th October

Enjoy a free day in Paris.



## Monday 9th October

Today we will head to the Alps for a few days rest to recharge the batteries before we return to Paris for the Quarter Finals. In the morning we will check-out of our hotel and take a Private coach transfer to Paris' train station, where we will take a train to Bellegarde sur Valserine, and then a private coach transfer to Evian (1h30 trip).

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October

Days at leisure in Evian.



Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October

We will return to Paris today for the Quarter Finals. Private coach transfer to Bellegarde train station. High speed train transfer to Paris. Arrival at Paris' train station, transfer to your hotel. Rest of the day at leisure in Paris. Night in Paris.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October

Day at leisure in Paris. In the evening, private coach transfers to the Stadium.  
Match day: Quarter-Final 2



Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October

Day at leisure in Paris. In the evening, private coach transfers to the Stadium.  
Match day: Quarter-Final 4

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October

Hotel check-out and transfer to the train station. High-speed train to the gastronomy capital of Lyon. Rest of the day at leisure and night in Lyon.



## Tuesday 17th October

Embark on a half-day tour of some of Lyon's best sites with a local guide to see Old Lyon, a cobblestoned crossroads between tourist hotspot and local hangout! Old Lyon has UNESCO status and lots of bars where locals hang out, along with plenty of shops and art galleries. As you wander the neighbourhood, you'll get to see Lyon's famous one-of-a-kind Traboules: passageways that were used by both city-dwellers over 1,500 years ago and the French Resistance during World War II, and many in between. They're difficult to navigate alone, but our guides know the way! Then take in some greenery and some of the best views of the city on Fourvière Hill, the grounds of the spectacular Fourvière basilica and the idyllic Rosary Garden.

Next up on the agenda is lunch in a bouchon, a restaurant that is native to Lyon and contributed to its patrimony as the gastronomy capital of the world! Night in Lyon



## Wednesday 18th October

Gourmet rally in the very famous Halles de Lyon-Paul Bocuse today! As far as covered markets go, France has the bases... Well, covered! Among the country's countless covered markets, Les Halles de Lyon stand out. With over sixty restaurants and specialty shops inside, this is a foodie's dream come true. During your visit to this gastronomy landmark, you will have ample opportunity to try a number of the market's flavours, and you will also get to learn about the market's history and hear stories from your tour guide, who will be accompanying you in your quest for deliciousness. Rest of the day at leisure and night in Lyon.

## Thursday 19th October

Today we will return to Paris for the RWC Semi Final games. Hotel check-out and transfer to the train station. High-speed train to Paris. Transfer to your hotel. Free day at leisure in Paris.

## Friday 20th October

Free day at leisure in Paris. That evening take our private coach transfer to the stadium for Semi Final 1.



## Saturday 21st October

Free day at leisure in Paris. That evening take our private coach transfer to the stadium for Semi Final 2.

## Sunday 22nd October

Hotel check-out and transfer to the train station. Take the high-speed train to Avignon (3h30 trip), a city that will delight history buffs and theatre lovers alike. Enjoy included lunch in Avignon and then take a tour to visit Avignon and the Popes' Palace, which is where the popes resided between 1309-1377. Upon relocating the papal court to Rome, "anti-popes" continued to live in the Palace in spite of the relocation. It is the largest Gothic palace in the world, which makes its completion in 20 years all the more impressive (however, Avignon's famous bridge, which you'll also see during this part of your stay in Avignon, is a whole other story). Lots of the original architecture and wall art is still intact, and you can enjoy a stroll in the Palace's lovely rose garden during your visit.

Transfer to your hotel. Night in Avignon



## Monday 23rd October

Board your coach for a half day tour around Pont du Gard. On your way, you'll make a stop in Uzès to enjoy lunch on your own in a typical restaurant à la Provençale – that's to say, any dish containing tomatoes, olive oil, and the Provence seasoning that you'll find in every French person's kitchen.

After a lunch on your own, head off to Pont du Gard, an impressive and large Roman aqueduct surrounded by greenery. You can explore the grounds, get ice cream, and shout into the void from the aqueduct before returning back to Avignon.

## Tuesday 24th October

Coach transfer to Nice, with a first stop in Marseille. Enjoy a lunch on your own in Marseille and spend some time on the old port area. Then, on your way to Nice you will make a second stop in Cannes, renowned for its film festival. Enjoy the Croisette! End your journey by reaching your hotel in Nice.



## Wednesday 25th October

Explore Castle Hill, stroll along the Promenade des Anglais, or breathe in the Mediterranean Sea air. You can't go wrong with a morning off in Nice.

Head to what is quite possibly the country that is the definition of glam: Monaco! This sovereign city-state is full of beauty to appreciate: whether it's Monté Carlo's casino or the Palace of the Prince of Monaco, admiring the real estate or the sea views, luxury is everywhere you look. And when the sun sets, things will get really fancy: you will enjoy a dinner on your own in any one of Monaco's respected dining establishments, and then head out for a night on the town before returning to Nice at the end of the evening.

## Thursday 26th October

Hotel check-out and transfer to Nice's airport. Flight to Paris. Transfer to your hotel. Free day at leisure in Paris. Tonight, we will enjoy a farewell dinner with the group.



## Friday 27th October

Free day at leisure in Paris. For anyone who has booked to go to the Bronze Final we have a private coach transfer booked.

Match day: Bronze Final

## Saturday 28th October

Free day at leisure in Paris. Return Transfer to Saint-Denis Stade de France. To enjoy the Rugby World Cup Final.



## Sunday 29th October

Departure day. Transfer to Paris' airport for your return flight home.



### PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Flights  
(Dublin to Bordeaux & Paris to Dublin)  
Airport Hotel and match transfers (where mentioned)  
51 Nights Hotel accommodation  
(3 Bordeaux / 3 La Rochelle / 3 Nantes / 2 Tours / 1 Saint-Malo /  
2 Caen / 3 Dijon / 3 Strasbourg / 2 Reims / 3 Lille / 15 Paris / 4 Evian / 3  
Lyon / 2 Avignon / 2 Nice)  
Breakfast Each Morning  
Services of Killester Travel Tour Leader & Local Guide  
Wine Tastings as listed  
3 Dinners  
17 Lunches  
Excursions listed in Itinerary  
Official Match tickets - Cat 4 (upgrades available)  
RWC Souvenir

### Not Included:

Travel Insurance (quote on request).  
Ticket Upgrades  
(Prices – subject to availability).  
Other meals not mentioned

Terms and conditions can be viewed here:

<https://www.rugbytravel.ie/rugby-world-cup-2023-booking-terms-and-conditions/>