

# Florida Gator Marching Band Shadow Tour D-Day 80 Normandy Parade

June 3-10, 2024 (6 nights/8 days)

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**Day 1 Monday, June 3, 2024**

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Depart via scheduled air service to Paris, France

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**Day 2 Tuesday, June 4 Paris / Normandy (D)**

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Arrive in Paris

Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motorcoach

Transfer to the Normandy region. Sightseeing or enroute stops to be determined by arrival schedule.

Late afternoon hotel check-in

Welcome Dinner included, and overnight

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**Day 3 Wednesday, June 5 Mont St. Michel / Normandy (B,D)**

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Breakfast at the hotel

Excursion to one of France's most recognizable landmarks, the Mont Saint-Michel and its bay are on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. Over 60 buildings within the commune are protected in France as "Monuments Historiques." Mont Saint-Michel is one of the most striking sights that France has to offer! Perched on its rocky islet and surrounded by walls and bastions, this old abbey has the appearance of a fortified castle. Enjoy a full self-guided tour of the attractions in this remarkable site.

Lunch, on own

Additional sightseeing determined by schedule. Return to hotel.

Dinner included, and overnight

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**Day 4 Thursday, June 6 Normandy / Point du Hoc (B,L,D)**

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Breakfast at the hotel

Excursion to Vierville-sur-Mer and Saint Laurent-sur-Mer to participate and perform in the D-Day 80th Activities

Lunch provided to all trip participants

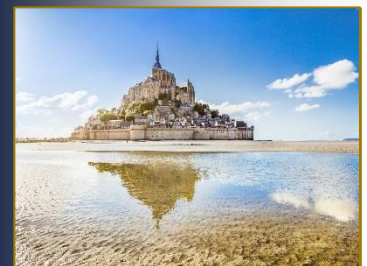
*Attend D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Opening Ceremony at the Monument of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry*

*Experience the University of Florida Gator Marching Band Performance and participation in the D-Day 80 Normandy Parade – marching along Omaha Beach from Vierville-sur-Mer to Saint Laurent-sur-Mer (two towns liberated during the Normandy invasion by Allied Forces)*

*Experience the University of Florida Gator Marching Band Standing Exhibition Concert in Normandy\* (on a Normandy beach -or- Normandy town location liberated during the D-Day Invasion)\**

Following the parade, visit other sites and liberated town/villages as time permits.

Visit the Omaha Beach Memorial, the National French memorial that honors the over 24,000 Allied Force heroes who died during the Battle of Normandy



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Visit the Les Braves Omaha Beach Memorial. Les Braves is a memorial that is located in the center of Omaha Beach and commemorates the fallen American soldiers of World War II who lost their lives on the beaches of Normandy, June 6th 1944. French sculptor Anilore Banon, created the monument in 2004, commissioned by the French government to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the D-Day Invasion of Normandy. Originally intended only as a temporary exhibit, this piece still stands today. Enjoy free-time on Omaha beach for reflection and remembrance.

Time permitting, visit the Point du Hoc where you can see the World War II Pointe du Hoc Ranger Monument. It was erected by the French to honor elements of the American Second Ranger Battalion under the command of Lieutenant Colonel James E. Rudder. During the American assault of Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, these elements scaled the 100-foot cliff and seized the German artillery pieces that could have fired on the American landing troops at Omaha Beach. At a high cost of life, they successfully defended against determined German counterattacks.

Dinner included and overnight at hotel

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**Day 5      Friday, June 7                      Normandy / Rouen / Paris                      (B,D)**

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Breakfast at the hotel, followed by check-out

*Morning excursion to Colleville to view wreath laying ceremony and short memorial recital by the University of Florida Brass Choir at the Normandy American Cemetery\**

Visit and tour to the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, the site of the June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944 Normandy Invasion. White marble crosses and Stars of David stretch off in seemingly endless rows at the Normandy American Cemetery, situated on a now-serene bluff overlooking the bitterly contested sands of Omaha Beach. Also visit the visitor's center.

Lunch, on own

Afternoon transfer to Paris via Rouen

Excursion to Rouen to see the Cathedral. In the Place de la Cathédrale stands the Gothic Cathedral of Notre-Dame, one of the largest and most magnificent in France. The most striking feature is the elaborately articulated west front which was several times painted by Claude Monet. Also see the sight of Joan of Arc's execution.

Continue to Paris for hotel check-in

Dinner included, and overnight

*With its grand boulevards, Streetside cafés, magnificent architecture, and river vistas, it takes little to understand why Paris is known as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. There is nothing more inspiring than walking the streets of Paris taking in the dynamic atmosphere. Paris is a place that breathes history and legend, a perfect combination of the modern and the ancient.*

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**Day 6      Saturday, June 8                      Paris                      (B)**

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Breakfast at the hotel

Enjoy a guided tour of *Paris historique* and see the most historic parts of the city including seeing the Notre-Dame Cathedral, Arc de Triomphe, Eiffel Tower, Champs Elysees, Paris Peace Monument, Place de la Concorde, Luxembourg Palace and Gardens, Latin Quarter, Place de la Bastille, Invalides Hospital, and other Parisian highlights. Also enjoy Paris in all of its "Pre-Olympic" glory as it prepares for the 2024 Olympic games that the city will be hosting in late July and August of 2024. See numerous venues and spaces being used and on-display for the Olympic Games.



Lunch, on own

*Experience the University of Florida Gator Marching Band Performance in Paris as part of the American Celebration of Music in France\* (site likely near the Eiffel Tower)*

Dinner on own

Evening cruise on Seine River with Bateaux Mouche

Return to the hotel for overnight

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**Day 7 Sunday, June 9 Paris (B,D)**

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Breakfast at the hotel

Morning at leisure in Paris

**Alternative Option (additional costs apply):** Take a guided tour of Versailles Palace. Louis XIV transformed his father's hunting lodge into the monumental Château de Versailles in the mid-17th century, and it remains France's most famous and grand palace. Situated in the leafy, bourgeois suburb of Versailles, southwest of central Paris, the baroque château was the kingdom's political capital and the seat of the royal court from 1682 up until the fateful events of 1789 when revolutionaries massacred the palace guard. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were ultimately dragged back to Paris, where they were ingloriously guillotined

Lunch, on own

Enjoy a tour of *Paris artistique*, including entrance to the Louvre, the largest and greatest art museum in the world, with more than 45,000 works of art displayed over 700,000 sq. ft. It's packed with enough artistic masterpieces to make the Mona Lisa weep. Rembrandt, Reubens, Botticelli, Ingres, and Michelangelo are all represented here; subjects range from the grandiose (Antoine-Jean Gros's gigantic Napoleon Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken in Jaffa) to the mundane (Vermeer's tiny, exquisite Lacemaker). You can gape at a diamond the size of a golf ball in the gilded Galerie d'Apollon or marvel over exquisite bronze figurines in the vast Egyptian section, there's something for everyone

**Alternative Option:** Afternoon visit to the Musée d'Orsay, on the left bank of the Seine River. The museum is housed in the former Gare d'Orsay, a Beaux-Arts railway station built between 1898 and 1900. The museum holds mainly French Art dating from 1848 to 1914, including paintings, sculptures, furniture, and photography

Farewell Dinner included

Evening visit to Montmartre, a large hill in Paris's 18th arrondissement, and home to the white-domed Basilica of the Sacré-Cœur on its summit. Enjoy time for souvenir shopping and visit one of the local restaurants that offers a variety of delicious desserts

Return to the hotel for overnight

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**Day 8 Monday, June 10 Depart for home (B)**

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Breakfast at the hotel, followed by check-out

Transfer to the Paris Airport for return flight home

*\*Subject to confirmation*

***This is a very flexible itinerary.*** Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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