

In Quest of the Classics is

proud to present

Château de la Barre



Enjoy the elegance of centuries at Chateau de la Barre

What better way to experience French History and Culture than to live the life of the French aristocracy as private guests of Comte and Comtesse de Vanssay, in their elegant family château in the Loire Valley, dating back to the 14th century ?

DAY 1: PARIS/CONFLANS SUR ANILLE. This morning you are met at your Paris hotel (IQOTC will assist with any previous services needed) or at the Paris airport, by an English-speaking driver and driven south via Chartres famous stain glass Cathedral with its world windows, towards the Loire Chateau de la Barre in the you will be met by your Comte and Comtesse de Vanssay. After enjoy a private visit of the farm, followed by a cheese tasting supper in the billiard room, with its monumental 14th century fireplace...



Day 2: LOCAL TOURING. Today we suggest a full day of touring that will take you back to the Renaissance, starting on the footsteps of Catherine de Medici, with a visit of Chenonceau Castle. Chenonceau, built over the Cher River, is one of the most beautiful chateaux. It is known as the Chateau of Six Women and was occupied by Diane de Poitiers, the mistress of Henri II until his death when his wife, Catherine de Medici, took possession. Then drive past the Royal Palace of Amboise to Leonardo da Vinci's final home, Clos Luce. There, indulge in a lunch under the direction of Master Chef Sieur Sausin, as if you were in 1530 - lunch possible from June 1st to September 30th only. On the way back stop off in Vouvray to discover a 10th century wine cellar and taste some of their vintage wines.



Return to Chateau de la Barre for tea before indulging in dinner at one of the delicious restaurants of the region, in the heart of the Berce Forest or in one of the picturesque local villages nearby.

DAY 3: LOCAL TOURING. Depending on the weather, season and interest, you may want to spend the day comparing the “jardins à la française” in Villandry with the romantic gardens of Le Petit Bordeaux, or the most English of French Gardens planted by Rosamée Henrion, former French president Giscard d’Estaing’s sister in law. If gardens are not your “cup of tea”, we can arrange for more castle visits, such as the Chateau of Cheverny, with its unique furniture collection and the architectural prowess of Chambord Castle... Or a visit of the magnificently restored old city of Le Mans, home of the Plantagenet kings and stage set to many films, followed by the Romanesque 12th century chapels along the Loir river. The possibilities are endless!

Return to Chateau de la Barre for afternoon tea and time to relax before meeting with your hosts for a candlelit dinner in their prestigious 17th century dining room.

DAY 4: CONFLANS SUR ANILLE/PARIS. This morning after breakfast, bid farewell to the Comte and Comtesse de Vanssay, and travel back to Paris with your driver, or continue your journey. In Quest of the Classics will be happy to customize the rest of your program. For those planning to return to the US today, please do not book a flight before 2.00 PM in order to allow enough time to drive to the airport (this still will mean a very early morning departure).

NOTES:

1. This program could also be self-driven with a car rental pick up just outside Paris (Orly airport for example, to avoid Paris traffic), or at the Vendome rail station, which is close to the Chateau.
2. This program is designed with first time visitors to the Loire Valley in mind. Other options for sightseeing could be substituted, such as:
 - Exploring the Abbaye de L'Epau, built by Richard the Lionheart's widow at the beginning of the 13th century. Then walk around the remarkably restored old city of Le Mans, home of the Plantagenet Kings and stage set to numerous films, with many chic little boutiques and alluring cafés.
 - Following the path of the Santiago de Compostella Pilgrimage, with a drive to the Abbey Cathedral in Vendôme, featuring the oldest stain glass window of the "Virgin Mary with Child" in the Western World. Then discover the small and picturesque "Little Loir Valley", with its Renaissance Château of La Possonnière, home of court poet Ronsard, the troglodyte village of Trôo, and the Romanesque chapels of Montoire and Lavardin with their 13th century frescoes.
 - Finally for the more adventurous, we can arrange a 'drive your dream car' excursion event, with a Ferrari, Lamborghini or Porsche. Pick up at the Château and drive with a professional pilot over 200 km of scenic unspoilt countryside roads to the famous Le Mans race track and three times around the race track there. Minimum 2 drivers to operate.
 - And/or we can also arrange for a day of sightseeing in a *Vintage 1950s Citroen* (maximum 3 guests per car) with an English-speaking driver.
3. This program can be extended to a 5-night program and include all suggestions above. It can also be custom-designed for a group of 12 – up to 22 guests, in which case we can arrange some private visits as follows:
 - In Le Mans, a *private welcome at the 17th century Château Chêne de Coeur* by the Vicomte and Vicomtesse Ogier d'Ivry, followed by a lunch in their formal dining room.
 - From mid April to mid September, a *private visit of the Château de Montmirail by the owners, and a lunch* in their formal dining room. This château played a part during the reign of Henri II Plantagenet, as it is in their 12th century guardroom, beautifully restored, that he signed his will in the presence of Louis VII of France.
 - A private welcome at Sasnières garden by Rosamée Henrion.

Please have your travel professional contact In Quest of the Classics at 800 227 1393 or europe@iqotc.com to get a price for the itinerary above, based on numbers of participants and options selected.

