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4 DAY TOUR

Normandy

Day 1

British Airborne Operations

Pegasus Bridge

This successful 'coup de main' operation is one of military history's finest examples of success based on simplicity and surprise. The two bridges captured in 15 minutes by airborne troops of the Ox & Bucks Light Infantry, landing by glider, which then had to be held until relieved by Lord Lovat's Commandos, 13 hours later.

Pegasus Bridge Museum

Well worth a visit and it houses the original bridge.

British Airborne, Merville Battery

Attacked by the 9th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, who were down by 500 men before they even started their attack, yet the gun was put out of action for several critical hours on D-Day.

Ranville CWGC

Predominantly British Airborne casualties resulting from the fighting to take and hold this ridge against German counterattacks. The first British casualty killed fighting in France on D Day, Lt Den Brotheridge, also Pte Corteil and his para dog 'Glen' and Pte Johns, only 16 when he was killed, are amongst the 2,562 burials.

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Day 2

American Sector

St Mere-Eglise

An essential town on the Cotentin peninsula, that would prove vital for the success in opening up routes for the US troops coming off Utah beach. The square was used in the filming of 'The Longest Day', where US airborne troops dropped in by accident. To capture the town, the commander of the 3rd Battalion of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment issued an unusual order.

Pointe du Hoc, German Battery & Rangers Assault

The German Battery was believed to have 6 x 155mm guns, covering Omaha and Utah Beaches. 2nd Ranger Battalion, under Lt Col Rudder was given the task to capture the position. After capturing the site and suffering counter attacks there were only 90 of the original 225 who were able to fire weapons when relieved on 8 June.

Omaha Beach

Where both the 1st and 29th US Divisions landed on the 4 mile beach. The Germans had prepared their positions and battle drills in preparation for a landing. The cliffs and defences being equivalent to a medieval fortress, with the same effect on those who were to be the initial attacking force, as the opening sequence of 'Saving Private Ryan' depicts. 34,250 troops would land on Omaha beach on 6 June, of which 3,881 would become casualties.

St Laurent US Cemetery

Situated, overlooking Omaha Beach and maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission, the Normandy American Cemetery and memorial, has 9,387 burials and another 1,557 names on the Memorial in the Garden of Remembrance. There are three Medal of Honor recipients; Sgt Peregory, Lt Monteith and Gen Roosevelt buried in the cemetery.

La Cambe, German Cemetery

One of the six German cemeteries in Normandy, together holding 77,960 burials, of which La Cambe has 21,139. The German War Graves Commission completed the work at La Cambe in 1958. The German tank commander, Michael Wittmann (The Black Baron) lies in this cemetery with his tank crew.

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Day 3

British and Canadian Beaches

Gold Beach

The landing beach of the British 50th Northumbrian Division. It's objective to capture Bayeux, which did not occur until 7 June. Also on King Sector, CSM Stan Hollis, of the Green Howards, would be the only soldier to be awarded the Victoria Cross on D-Day.

Strong Point "Hillman"

The German artillery and local headquarters position (one of a number) overlooking Gold Beach. It was constructed underground and would take the Suffolk Regiment 6 hours to capture it, possibly having a major affect on the ability of 3rd Division to capture Caen on D-Day.

Juno Beach, (split into 2 areas; Bernieres sur Mer & Courseulles)

The objective of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. This division took the second highest casualties after the US divisions at Omaha Beach. There are 2 good examples of Hobart's 'Funnies' (variants of armoured vehicles specially designed to overcome the German beach defences) to be found on these beaches, all have their stories.

German Battery at Longues sur Mer

A German Naval gun position, having had the guns removed from a German battleship, which managed to fire a total of 170 shells throughout the day. The battery finally being captured by the Devonshire Regiment. The forward observation bunker was used during the making of the film, 'The Longest Day'

Arromanches, Mulberry Harbour

The unique floating Mulberry Harbours ensured the delivery of combat supplies to the expanding bridgehead. They were a key factor in both enabling the strategic intent and servicing the tactical battle. It also aided the German belief that the Normandy invasion was a decoy for the real attack on Western Europe, as no major port had been assaulted.

Circular '360' cinema

Mixes archival footage filmed in June 1944 by war correspondents, with current shots on these sites, today.

Day 4

Commemoration and conclusion

Bayeux Memorial

"We who were conquered by William have liberated William's homeland" The Normandy campaign and break out, the cost. The significance of D Day in modern history – the last day that Britain led the civilised world.

Bayeux Tapestry

The world-famous embroidered cloth nearly 70 metres long and 50 centimetres tall depicts the events leading up to the Norman conquest of England concerning William, Duke of Normandy, and Harold, Earl of Wessex, later King of England, and culminating in the Battle of Hastings. Entry to the exhibit includes the use of audio-guides.