


# Châteaux of the Loire

Hotel-to-hotel  independent walking

- Gentle, off-the-beaten-track walking - lovely temperate climate and genuinely flat routes!
- Great royal châteaux: Chambord, Cheverny, Chaumont, Amboise, Blois
- Warm, friendly hotels: lots of local character and great regional cuisine
- Flat river valleys, shaded forest tracks, well-tended vineyards, poppy fields and pretty parkland
- Superb value; outstanding wines; lots to see and do locally



This easy-paced, gentle walking holiday balances peaceful, out-of-the-way discoveries with the splendor and opulence of some of the finest Renaissance châteaux in France. There's no tough climbing – the highest point is at just 150m – but you are still rewarded with beautifully unspoiled landscapes and enchanting views at every turn.

Following a triangular route, you'll first head north crossing the majestic Loire river and on through the royal forest of Blois. It's then down through vineyards and poppy fields to the elegant village of Chitenay and back via the peaceful hamlets of Seur and Les Montils. Highlights en route include some of the Loire's most famous châteaux: Blois, formerly known as "Versailles of the Renaissance", has developed around its massive château, which has enjoyed a long connection with royalty and nobility. The fairytale château of Chambord, set in the heart of the huge Forêt de Boulogne, reflects the lavish and ostentatious tastes of its original owner, King François I. And the white stone façade of Cheverny, one of the most perfect examples of French architecture, houses one of the largest art collections in the region.

The places you'll stay in have been hand-picked for their superb locations, atmospheric charm, excellent cuisine and warm, friendly owners. We've included evening meals everywhere except in Blois - with so many restaurants on your doorstep, we thought you'd appreciate having a choice.



Book now on **1-800-567-6286** or visit [www.breakaway-adventures.com](http://www.breakaway-adventures.com) for more information

# CHÂTEAUX OF THE LOIRE | DAY BY DAY



## Day 1 Arrive in Chaumont

We collect you at Blois station and take you (20 mins) to Chaumont where the lovely riverside Hostellerie du Château oozes real medieval charm – beamed dining room, minstrel gallery, grand fireplace. There's a lovely pool if you fancy a dip after your journey.

## Day 2 Chaumont to Blois 17km/11mi or 22km/14mi

Lots of wildlife - herons, hen harriers, roe deer - this morning as you cross the Loire and head north following the course of the Cisse to the pretty C13 Abbaye de la Guiche. Lunch in Coulanges – the C12 church is worth a detour. From here it's on through the Royal Forest of Blois until you reach your hotel opposite the famous château.

## Day 3 At Blois

The small town of Blois sits on a small hill overlooking the Loire, and is very easy to explore on foot: C16 château, Museum of Fine Arts, C17 St Vincent de Paul church and *Maison de Magie* – House of Magic – are all worthy of a visit. Have lunch on the lovely square below the château, or you can take a river trip on an original flat-bottomed *toue* sailing boat and view the town from the water. If you want to explore further afield, local buses run from Blois to the châteaux of Chambord and Cheverny, or you can take the train (20 mins) into Amboise.

## Day 4 Blois to Chitenay 17km/10mi

You leave Blois via the shady banks of the river Cosson and enter the Forest of Russy - look out for nut hatches, woodpeckers and tree creepers. Lunch in the village of Celettes where you must visit the stunning C15 Château de Beaugard – set in impressive parkland, this gem is an absolute must! Of particular note is its rare C16 kitchen, portrait gallery and recently restored *Galerie des Illustres* featuring 327 portraits of different kings, queens and politicians. Your final stretch takes you on through acres of well-tended vineyards – lots of places to pop in for a spot of tasting – and poppy fields to the elegant village of Chitenay. Our ivy-clad hotel here has a pleasant garden terrace – an ideal setting for pre-dinner aperitifs!

## Day 5 At Chitenay

The sleepy wine village of Chitenay is ideally placed to visit many of the Loire châteaux. We particularly recommend picture-postcard Cheverny – it has one of the largest art collections including a permanent "Secrets of Moulinsart" exhibition – and, just 3kms/2mi further on, lovely little Château de Troussay with its elaborately decorated ceilings and rich furnishings collection.

## Day 6 Chitenay to Chaumont 18km/11mi

You'll follow the peaceful river Beauvron past the C14 Château Fay and on through the pretty hamlets of Seur, Les Montils and sleepy Cande-sur-Beauvron. There's a pretty riverside park if you fancy a picnic lunch before continuing along the shady banks of the Loire into Chaumont. The impressive C15 château, once owned by Catherine de Medici, hosts the International Garden Festival each year and, on selected summer dates, stays open until midnight – as your hotel is just a few metres away, getting home isn't a problem!

## Day 7 Leave Chaumont

For people wanting to have bikes available for all 'rest-days' these can be pre-booked for you (\$130 per adult and \$64 per child per stay) and will be waiting at each hotel for you.



"We had the most wonderful time and the food was incredible."

Mrs Whittaker

## Dates and Prices

Departs every two days	Tour Only
<b>2012 departures</b>	
May 11-25, Sep 12-20	\$2,273
May 27-31, Jun 8-12	\$2,273
Sep 2-10	\$2,273
Jun 2-6, Jun 14-Jul 8	\$2,329
Aug 29-31	\$2,329
Jul 10-Aug 27	\$2,329
Child (any dates, see notes)	\$1,396

**Singles:** Add \$70 per night for sole occupancy of a double room.

**Child:** Over 2 and under 12, sharing with 2 adults.

**Holiday type:** Independent walking, hotel-to-hotel, no minimum group size.

**Departs:** Every two days from May 11 to Sep 20.

**Duration:** 7 days (6 nights). This holiday may be adapted into a 4 night version – just deduct \$376 per adult and \$191 per child from the prices above.

**Meals:** Continental breakfast and 4 evening meals.

**Other details:** For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

## Tailor-made travel choices

**Nearest Arrival Airport:** Paris CDG Airport

Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

**The above prices include our standard transfers:** Blois train station at 17:27, (transfer to hotel, 20 mins, provided).

**Return:** Blois train station by 09:48 (transfer provided).

**Rail Options:** Paris Austerlitz to Blois 15:39/17:27. Return: Rail Blois to Paris Austerlitz 09:48/11:44.

**Second Class French Rail:** Add \$97 per person, round trip

**First Class French Rail:** Add \$147 per person, round trip.

**Tour only:** Transfers included from Blois train station at 17:27 and back to Blois train station departing hotel at 09:15.

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## CHÂTEAUX OF THE LOIRE | WHERE YOU STAY



**Hostellerie du Château**  
★★★  
Chaumont



**Hotel de France et Guise**  
★★  
Blois



**Auberge du Centre**  
★★★  
Chitenay

Days 1+6

Days 2+3

Days 4+5

For extra nights we recommend Chaumont, and city add-ons can be arranged in Paris.

## CHÂTEAUX OF THE LOIRE | WALKING DETAILS



Mainly flat walking along riverside paths and through open fields and vineyards. Much of the route follows waymarked GRs. Good views with not too much effort!



**Average daytime temperature (°C):**

17 25 27 26 22  
MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP



**Average monthly rainfall (mm):**

57 55 54 52 50  
MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP

Further details at [www.breakaway-adventures.com](http://www.breakaway-adventures.com)