

Cruising Itinerary 2019

June and July : Champagne region

August to mid-September : Somme region

- **CHAMPAGNE :** Château-Thierry – Epernay – Reims,
or in the opposite direction
(7 days, 6 nights)

- **SOMME :** Amiens to Péronne or Amiens to St-Valery,
or in the opposite directions
(7 days, 6 nights)
or
Roundtrip Amiens – Corbie – Froissy – Amiens
(5 days, 4 nights)
or
Barge Handling Roundtrip Amiens – Péronne – Corbie
(5 days, 4 nights)

Below you will find typical cruise programmes, but we are flexible and can stay for a longer time at a given mooring depending on our guests' interests and wishes. You can take the bicycles and explore the nature and the many sights along the river and the canal, at your leisure. Enjoy going from sight to sight on the boat without having to pack and unpack your luggage. Your cabin and private en-suite bathroom come along.



CHAMPAGNE

We will be cruising on the beautiful river Marne, east of Paris, and discover the interesting production of the wonderful Champagne wines. – And of course do some serious tasting !

The Marne is a broad, winding river which still has a good deal of commercial traffic. We will meet barges transporting gravel and scrap metal, but at the same time be treated to picturesque villages and towns with spectacular old churches and châteaux. Along the river you will see the vineyards high on the hills and enjoy the beautiful scenery. The battles of the Marne in WW1 are still commemorated and you will have the possibility of visiting some of the memorials.

We will go upstream through 17 locks, pass under Mont de Billy in a 2.3 km tunnel in the water shed and then go down through 7 locks before reaching Reims, the biggest town in Champagne, with its amazing gothic cathedral. (Or of course in the opposite direction, from Reims to Château-Thierry, first upstream, then downstream).



One Week Cruise

Monday, Day 1, Château-Thierry

You will arrive in the afternoon by train from Paris. Settle down and go for a walk in the old part of the town with its beautiful houses and ruins of a medieval castle. You may also wish to take a taxi and visit the amazing [Oise-Aisne American Cemetery and Memorial](#) (23 km away) which commemorates the achievements of United States forces (the Marines) who fought here during World War I. As it is Monday, French restaurants are normally closed, and we therefore serve the "Captain's Dinner" aboard.

Tuesday, Day 2, Château-Thierry to Dormans

We will have lunch aboard upon arrival in Dormans. You can walk or bike to the winegrowing villages around the town. Admire the old castle and the Chapel of Reconnaissance which was built in 1920 in commemoration of the two victories of the Marne in WW1. Have dinner at a local restaurant.

Wednesday, Day 3, Dormans to Ay

We will have lunch aboard underway in Damery. We leave the river Marne and enter the Canal Latéral à la Marne and in the afternoon we moor in Ay. You will take a taxi or bike to Epernay, the capital of Champagne, lying in the heart of the Champagne vineyards. You will have ample possibilities of visiting several champagne houses with their kilometers of vaults and tunnels in the limestone underground. Dinner in a restaurant of your choice. Unfortunately, the pleasure port of Epernay is very small and does not offer a mooring for larger ships, therefore we moor in Ay.

Thursday, Day 4, Ay to Condé-sur-Marne

You can visit some of the approx. 40 producers and the viticulture and tools museum in Ay and have lunch in a local restaurant. We continue to Condé, and you can hike or use our bicycles to go to Bouzy, 4 km from Condé. Bouzy is a "Grand Cru" village which grows not only Champagne but the famous red wine that was used for coronation banquets in Reims. Another idyllic village is Ambonnay, 3 km from Condé. Dinner-buffet aboard when you return.

Friday, Day 5, Condé-sur-Marne to Sept-Saulx

We will go up through a "staircase" of 8 locks and have lunch aboard at the waiting quay in front of the Mont de Billy tunnel. It is always an adventure to navigate underground, and this tunnel is one of the best. In Sept-Saulx we moor at a silo quay, another experience. You can visit the French war cemetery and bike to Verzy, a village renowned for its dwarf beeches. Dinner in the "Cheval Blanc" restaurant in Sept-Saulx.

Saturday, Day 6, Sept-Saulx to Reims

Lunch aboard in Sillery where you can visit another WW1 cemetery close to the harbour. We continue to the city of Reims, passing through an industrial area, and moor to a bank not far from the center where it is less noisy than in the harbour. There is an amazing outdoor light-show on the cathedral in the evening, not to be missed.

Sunday, Day 7, Reims

You will have time to go and visit the beautiful Cathedral which has witnessed the coronation of 25 kings of France as well as a number of Champagne houses which offer guided tours and sampling. Departure by TGV to Paris in the afternoon.



The above travel plan can be modified in case you wish to have more time in Château-Thierry, in Dormans or in Ay.

SOMME

We have two cruising themes :

- Remembrance of the First World War (Amiens to Péronne)
- Wonderful unspoilt nature and unique cultural sights (Amiens to St-Valery-sur-Somme)

We will cruise the beautiful Canal de la Somme and arrange visits to the battlefields, war cemeteries and memorials closely connected to the river and canal.

As an antidote to the war scenario, the wonderful nature on the Canal de la Somme will bring peace of mind, as will the true relaxation on board the boat while we go at leisurely 6 km/h on the winding canal. It is not boring, however, as the river Somme is joining the canal very often bringing excitement and sudden additional current. Saint-Valery with the vast tidal area and the seal and bird reserves in the bay, as well as the beautiful cathedrals and castles along the waterway, will be sure to make you disconnect from everyday stress.





One Week Cruise : Amiens to Péronne

Sunday, Day 1, Amiens.

Arrival in the afternoon by train to Amiens. We will meet you at the station and accompany you to the mooring, a nice stroll along the pedestrian street. Settle down and have a welcome drink, then go sightseeing in this interesting university town : [Notre-Dame Cathedral](#) (the largest Gothic church in France, a UNESCO World Heritage site, - the Notre-Dame of Paris can be contained in there twice), the beautiful botanical garden, [Jules Verne's house](#) with its observatory, various art museums, the old part of town Saint-Leu etc. Have dinner in one of the many restaurants in this pulsating town and enjoy the amazing light-show at the cathedral in the evening (mid-June to 3rd Sunday of September).

Monday, Day 2, Amiens – Lamotte-Brebière. (2 h. cruising)

Same sightseeing programme as Day 1, lunch aboard. In the afternoon we leave Amiens and on the way we pass by the "[hortillonnages](#)" (vegetable gardens in an old moor area) and admire the quaint entrances to the small lots. We stop at the renovated lock-keeper house in Lamotte-Brebière. You can walk or cycle on the tow-path in the beautiful nature. As it is Monday, most French restaurants are closed, and we have "Captain's Dinner" aboard. You will enjoy the silence of the night (apart from the rushing river Somme close by and the occasional coot or duck).

Tuesday, Day 3, Lamotte-Brebière – Corbie. (2 h. cruising)

After breakfast we continue on the winding canal where the river Somme enters from time to time adding current to the canal (we go upstream). Lunch aboard. From Corbie, a visit to the Australian memorial and cemetery close to Villers-Bretonneux, site of the ANZAC Day commemoration, is an emotional experience, and you can admire the newly inaugurated [Sir John Monash Center](#) which gives a comprehensive explanation of the circumstances of the war. A subsequent visit to the Australian museum in the Victoria School in Villers-Bretonneux gives additional information on the Battle of the Somme. You can walk up to the memorial (2.5 km), - another possibility is to put our folding bicycles in a taxi. You can cycle back downhill on a path among the fields. Dinner at the "La Caroline", a local restaurant serving traditional French food.

Wednesday, Day 4, Corbie – Cappy. (5 h. cruising)

From Corbie, we continue to Cappy passing the beautiful little Château de Méricourt. Lunch aboard. The comprehensive [narrow-gauge train museum](#) in Froissy is open July and August and offers the possibility of a short train-ride in the old wagons that were used to carry ammunition and soldiers to the front (and wounded soldiers back). Take a short taxi-ride to visit the town of Albert and the impressive [underground WW1 museum](#). Have dinner in a restaurant in Albert and come back to your peaceful floating cabin.

Thursday, Day 5, Cappy – Eclusier-Vaux. (2 h. cruising)

We continue to Eclusier-Vaux and you walk or bike to the village of Suzanne where you have lunch at the “Auberge de Suzanne”. Afterwards you can walk up to the Belvédère from where you have a breathtaking view of the entire Somme Valley with all its lakes. On the way back to the boat you can visit the eel ponds close to the mooring. Dinner-buffet aboard.

Friday, Day 6, Eclusier-Vaux – Péronne. (3 h. cruising)

We leave the winding Canal de la Somme and enter the large Canal du Nord with its busy commercial traffic. We moor at the commercial quay and have lunch aboard. You walk to Péronne center, where you can admire the old fortifications and visit the “[Historial](#)”, the amazing WW1 museum located in the old medieval castle in the center of town. You have dinner in one of the many restaurants.

Saturday, Day 7, Péronne.

Departure before noon by taxi to the TGV station Haute-Picardie.



One Week Cruise : Amiens to Saint-Valery-sur-Somme

Sunday, Day 1, Amiens.

Arrival in the afternoon. We will meet you at the train station and accompany you to the mooring, a nice stroll along the pedestrian street. Settle down and have a welcome drink, then go sightseeing in this interesting university town : [Notre-Dame Cathedral](#) (the largest Gothic church in France, a UNESCO World Heritage site, - the Notre-Dame of Paris can be contained in there twice), the [hortillonnages](#), the beautiful botanical garden, [Jules Verne's house](#) with its observatory, various art museums, the old part of town Saint-Leu etc. Have dinner in one of the many restaurants in this pulsating town and enjoy the amazing light-show at the cathedral in the evening (mid-June to 3rd Sunday of September).

Monday, Day 2, Amiens.

Same sightseeing programme as Day 1, lunch aboard, dinner in a restaurant of your choice.

Tuesday, Day 3, Amiens – Picquigny. (2.5 h. cruising)

We leave Amiens and stop at Samara and have lunch aboard, after which you can visit this [pre-historic theme park](#). We will continue to Picquigny where you can admire the medieval castle ruins and the church. We will have "Captain's Dinner aboard.

Wednesday, Day 4, Picquigny – Long. (3 h. cruising)

We continue on the winding canal and have lunch aboard in Long. In the afternoon you can visit the beautiful [Château de Long](#) and its huge, well-kept park. Another unique sight not to miss is the museum of the old Hydroelectric Power Plant. The village of Long got rich from the extraction of peat and became one of the first towns in France to install electricity and drinking water in each house, - an unheard-of luxury at the time. Dinner at the "Le Comptoir Bleu" restaurant.

Thursday, Day 5, Long – Abbeville. (3 h. cruising)

On our way to Abbeville, you will observe that the Canal de la Somme is an angler paradise. We pass many quaint small angler huts and several beautiful manor houses. Lunch aboard. In Abbeville, a medium-sized town, you can visit the old Belfry containing the archeological Boucher de Perthes museum. Also interesting are the Saint-Vulfran Collegiate and the [Saint-Sepulcre church](#) with its beautiful stained-glass windows by Alfred Manessier, one of the biggest non-figurative artists, inspired by the light of the Bay of Somme. Dinner at the "Etoile du Jour", a restaurant in a beautiful old half-timbered house, or in another restaurant of your choice.

Friday, Day 6, Abbeville – Saint-Valery-sur-Somme. (2.5 h. cruising)

The canal from Abbeville to Saint-Valery is a long straight line, but we will be going through four mobile bridges and through the big sea-lock out into the tidal sea-port. Lunch aboard. The [Baie de Somme](#) is one of the most beautiful bays in the world, with vast tidal waters, dunes, a rich bird life, a seal reserve and the famous "prés-salés" (salty marshes). It was from Saint-Valery that William the Conqueror sailed to conquer England in 1066, and Jeanne d'Arc has been kept prisoner in the castle in 1431. Dinner at one of the many restaurants in this seaside resort.

Saturday, Day 7, Saint-Valery-sur-Somme

You will leave the boat before noon and go by the narrow-gauge steam-train to Noyelles-sur-Mer from where you can take the ordinary train back to Amiens.

In case you wish to have more time to explore the bay, we can skip the Day 2 in Amiens and go directly on with the itinerary, giving you an extra day in Saint-Valery.



Roundtrip (WW1 related)

Sunday, Day 1, Amiens.

We will meet you at the train station in the afternoon and accompany you to the mooring, a nice stroll along the pedestrian street. After settling down and a welcome drink, you can go sightseeing in this interesting university town : [Notre-Dame Cathedral](#) (the largest Gothic church in France, a UNESCO World Heritage site, - the Notre-Dame of Paris can be contained in there twice), the [hortillonnages](#), the beautiful botanical garden, [Jules Verne's house](#) with its observatory, various art museums, the old part of town Saint-Leu etc. Have dinner in one of the many restaurants in this pulsating town and enjoy the amazing light-show at the cathedral in the evening (mid-June to 3rd Sunday of September).

Monday, Day 2, Guided Tour on the [Remembrance Trail](#) (separate booking, lunch at a restaurant underway).

The boat goes from Amiens to Corbie where the guests join it after the Tour and have "Captain's Dinner" aboard.

Tuesday, Day 3, Corbie - Froissy (4.5 h. cruising)

From Hamelet, close to Corbie, you can take a horse-carriage ride to the trenches around the memorial of Le Hamel. It gives a good impression of the landscape and the conditions of the WW1 soldiers. We have lunch aboard and sail to Froissy, passing the beautiful little Château de Méricourt. The comprehensive [narrow-gauge train museum](#) in Froissy is open July and August and offers the possibility of a short train-ride in the old wagons that were used to carry ammunition and soldiers to the front (and wounded soldiers back). Dinner in a restaurant in Bray, or take a taxi to Albert.

Wednesday, Day 4, Froissy – Corbie (4.5 h. cruising)

After lunch aboard in Corbie, you can visit the memorial of [Le Hamel](#) with its very comprehensive explanatory tablets. There is a good view across the Somme river valley and the hills the soldiers had to climb. You can put our folding bicycles in a taxi and cycle back downhill to the canal. Dinner at the "La Caroline" or the "Abbatiale", local restaurants serving traditional French food.

Thursday, Day 5, Corbie – Amiens. (4 h. cruising)

We have lunch on the way in Lamotte-Brebière and afterwards pass the "[hortillonnages](#)" (vegetable gardens in an old moor area) and admire the quaint entrances to the small lots. Arrival in Amiens late afternoon. Departure on foot or by taxi to the station.

Barge Handling Roundtrip

This hands-on course will give you the necessary basic knowledge of how to handle a barge of 24m, both on a small, winding canal/river and on a big commercial canal (Canal du Nord).

We will be going both upstream and downstream and pass through 14 locks and 6 mobile bridges.

The skills obtained will facilitate your further steps to obtain the French Permis Péniche Grande Plaisance which allows you to navigate boats longer than 20m on inland waterways in Europe.

Monday, Day 1, Amiens – Corbie (4.5 h. cruising, 3 or 4 locks)

You will arrive at the mooring after 10:00 am. We will go upstream to Lamotte-Brebière passing the “[hortillonnages](#)” (vegetable gardens in an old moor area) and admire the quaint entrances to the small lots. Lunch on board. We will then proceed along the winding canal/river to Corbie where you will have the possibility of visiting the town. Being Monday, the restaurants are closed and we will have Captain’s Dinner on board.

Tuesday, Day 2, Corbie - Froissy (3.5 h. cruising, 2 locks)

From Corbie, a visit to the Australian memorial and cemetery close to Villers-Bretonneux is an emotional experience, and you can admire the newly inaugurated [Sir John Monash Center](#) which gives a comprehensive explanation of the circumstances of WW1 in the area. You can walk up to the memorial (2.5 km), - another possibility is to use our folding bikes. After lunch aboard we continue upstream to Froissy, passing the beautiful little Château de Méricourt. You can walk to Bray-sur-Somme and have dinner at the brasserie or take a taxi to Albert and visit the town and the impressive [underground WW1 museum](#) and have dinner in a restaurant in Albert.

Wednesday, Day 3, Froissy – Péronne (5.5 h. cruising, 5 locks, 3 lifting bridges)

We will continue upstream and have lunch on board and continue to the last lock on the Canal de la Somme. After a few kilometers we leave the winding canal and enter the large Canal du Nord with its busy commercial traffic. We moor at the commercial quay and you can walk to Péronne center, where you can admire the old fortifications and visit the “[Historial](#)”, the amazing WW1 museum located in the old medieval castle in the center of town. You have dinner in one of the many restaurants.

Thursday, Day 4, Péronne – Cappy (4 h. cruising, 3 locks, 3 lifting bridges)

We leave Péronne and enter Canal de la Somme, this time going downstream. Lunch on board in Eclusier-Vaux where you can visit the eel ponds and the explanatory tablets. We continue to Cappy, where we moor close to the lock to get an early start next day. You have dinner at the “Le Graal de Cappy” restaurant.

Friday, Day 5, Cappy – Corbie (4 h. cruising, 2 locks)

We start at 9:00 am through the lock, have lunch on board underway and arrive in Corbie early afternoon. You go by train to Amiens (15 min. ride).

- Prices :**
- One Week Charter (7 days/6 nights), EUR 3,000 per cabin (1-2 persons)
 - Roundtrip Charter (5 days/4 nights), EUR 2,000 per cabin (1-2 persons)
 - Barge Handling Roundtrip (5 days, 4 nights) EUR 2,500 per cabin (1-2 persons)

**These prices include breakfast and lunch buffets, a “Captain’s Dinner”, beverages and all navigation costs. See the “[General Conditions](#)” on our website : www.arnild-barging.com.
Capacity : 2 cabins, 4 persons.**

Public transport to and from the boat (not included in the price) : Château-Thierry and Reims are both reached by direct train from Paris. Amiens is reached by train from Paris, and also from London (St-Pancras International, via Lille), Péronne by TGV from Paris plus a taxi . Saint-Valery can be reached by train from Paris via Amiens to Noyelles-sur-Mer and then the small narrow-gauge steam train or a taxi.

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