



Tombstone of Bombardier George Meltz

D-DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

Round-trip by land: Paris

HOST: ELLIN BESSNER WITH RABBI JARROD GROVER

Join us on our D-Day 75th Anniversary in Normandy, Canadian Jewish Community Tour, to highlight and commemorate the contribution of Canada's Jewish community.

June 2019 marks the 75th Anniversary of the D-Day landings of 1944, in Normandy. This was a key day in WWII, which contributed to breaking down the Nazi regime, and ending the Holocaust. On June 6, 2019, world leaders will join veterans and their families in Normandy to attend commemorative services for the anniversary of the Allied invasion of Northwestern Europe.

The tour will be led by Ellin Bessner, a journalist and professor at Centennial College, and the author of a new book, *Double Threat: Canadian Jews, the Military and WWII*. Accompanying the tour will be Rabbi Jarrod Grover, of Toronto's Beth Tikvah congregation. Rabbi Grover is a veteran of the March of the Living and will provide spiritual guidance and special programming in coordination with the Rabbis of France.

Single supplements available!
Call your local Merit Travel expert.

Merit Travel Toronto | 408 King Street West
Toronto@MeritTravel.com | 416.345.9726 or 1.866.341.1777

11 nights

\$5,995* p.p.

Departs Toronto:
May 30, 2019

✔ What's Included:

- * *Round-trip airfare*
- Plaza Premium airport lounge pass
- Paris: two nights 3-star hotel accommodation
- Juno Beach: three nights 3-star hotel accommodation
- Deauville, Normandy: six nights 3-star hotel accommodation
- All airport transfers and transportation with deluxe motor coach
- Eleven breakfasts, six lunches and seven dinners
- Professional local tour director
- Merit Travel tour host**
- All taxes and gratuities



Flight Lieutenant Sydney Shulemson, D.S.O. and D.F.C.

More than 17,000 Canadians of Jewish faith put on a uniform in WWII, and 70 gave their lives in the D-Day invasion and the subsequent battles and are buried in cemeteries across Normandy. We will attend the international commemoration events and together with the Jewish community of France, hold special Jewish memorial services as we visit the WWII graveyards and the important battle zones and other significant landmarks.

In Paris, you will be met by a local guide and over two days learn about Jewish life in Paris from the time of the Dreyfus Affair through the Dark Days of WWII, including the Deportation of French Jews during the Nazi occupation. Departing from Paris for Normandy, we stop in Rouen, which for centuries was the centre of Jewish life in France during the Middle Ages. Upon our arrival in Normandy, the memorial programme will continue with tours, and sightseeing through to the D-Day Anniversary commemorations on June 6th. At this point we join Canadian best-selling author Ted Barris and his Merit Travel Hosted Tour group, as we attend 75th Anniversary observances at Juno Beach Centre.

Note: Kosher dining and hotel options will be available, as well as religious observances for Sabbath/Shavuot. Plus! All guests will receive a copy of "Double Threat" published by the University of Toronto's Centre for Jewish Studies' New Jewish Press.

Your Itinerary | Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner = (B, L, D)

DAY 1 | May 30, 2019 | Toronto - Paris

Board your overnight flight to Paris, France.

DAY 2 | May 31, 2019 | Arrive Paris (L, D)

Beginning our pilgrimage in Paris, we learn not only about France during the wartime occupation, but also receive an introduction to the current challenges faced by the Jewish Community there today. Then, over eleven days, we travel from Paris to Normandy and beyond, including eastward to the cliffs of Dieppe, and we walk in the footsteps of the tens of thousands of Canadian troops who chased the Germans out of Northwest Europe. It took them eleven bitter months of fighting until victory. We experience a day-in-the-life of a WWII soldier aboard vintage vehicles, meet with wounded warriors, and dedicate a special Torah scroll.

Accommodation at the Hotel Aida Opera or similar (2 nights)

DAY 3 | Jun. 1, 2019 | Paris (B, D)

Our first full day in Paris provides an opportunity to experience Shabbat in the French capital, including optional Sabbath services at local synagogues.

A Jewish guided tour of Paris will be offered in the afternoon, during which you will view the Pletzl Quarter, the Dreyfus Statue on Boulevard Raspail and visit the Musee Nissim De Camondo, named in honour of a French Jewish WWI war hero. In the evening, join your tour host Ellin and Rabbi Grover for an informative discussion, and lively group dinner.

DAY 4 | Jun. 2, 2019 | Paris - Normandy (B, L, D)

We depart Paris for the beaches of Normandy, where we will spend the next nine days immersed in learning about the Allied invasion and have a front-row seat for the 75th anniversary of D-Day commemorations.

Upon arrival in Courseulles-sur-Mer, overlooking Juno Beach, meet the French Jewish community of Normandy at the Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery for a special memorial service to the Canadian Jewish troops buried there. An afternoon visit is also planned to the Canadian Juno Beach Museum, including a guided tour of the well-preserved German tunnels and gun placements carefully excavated from under the sand dunes.

Accommodation at the Hôtel La Crémaillère (3 nights)

DAY 5 | Jun. 3, 2019 | Normandy (B, L)

Few if any trips to historic Normandy, offer travellers the opportunity for a D-Day-in-the-Life of what the invasion soldier actually encountered in their first days ashore in France. We'll rendezvous with the D-Day Academy, a convoy of Second World War vintage vehicles – troop trucks, jeeps and DuckWs – whose experienced drivers will take us to sites that most tourists never see including RCAF landing strips that ground crew built for Allied fighter aircraft; and Longues-sur-Mer, where the German defences consisted of heavy naval guns and where scenes from the movie "The Longest Day" were filmed, in 1961.

DAY 6 | Jun. 4, 2019 | Normandy (B, L)

Today we will move out from the beachhead and retrace some of the battles as the Canadians pushed southward and east, towards the key city of Caen. It took a month of Allied bombing raids until the Germans retreated, but not before Caen itself was flattened. On our tour we will make stops in Le Mesnil-Patry, Les Saullets and the Abbaye D'Ardenne, from where 12th SS Panzer commander Kurt Meyer oversaw the slaughter over 140 Canadian POWs in cold blood.

DAY 7 | Jun. 5, 2019 | Normandy (B, L, D)

Today we will transfer from Juno Beach eastward, following the Canadian route from the Normandy landings towards the interior, including Caen, and east to Deauville, which will be our base for the remainder of the tour.

In Caen itself, which veterans say looked like Stalingrad when it was finally captured in early July 1944, we will tour the Commemoration Plaque at Place Louis Guillaouard, and visit the Memorial de Caen Museum. We will tour the Carpique Airport battle zone. An encounter with the Jewish community of Caen fills out the rest of the day.

Optional Gala Dinner with the Juno Beach Centre board of directors, dignitaries, and Canadian government officials, along with the members of the Wounded Warriors. Location: Domaine de la Barronie, a restored 14th century estate liberated by the Canadians on July 9, 1944 in Bretteville-sur-Odon. (Dress code: sport jacket and tie, cocktail dress).

Accommodation at the Kyriad Deauville Hotel (6 nights)

DAY 8 | Jun. 6, 2019 | Normandy (B, L, D)

75th Anniversary Observances at Juno Beach Centre.

As an added bonus, we join Canadian best-selling author Ted Barris and his Merit group today as we attend 75th Anniversary observances at Juno Beach Centre. A prayer service at the Beny-sur-Mer cemetery can also be held. On our way back to Deauville, we'll stop in the British sector, code-named Sword beach, where we'll take in the Pegasus Bridge museum, which houses the actual bridge which British infantry (landed there by scores of gliders) captured just minutes after midnight on D-Day morning.

Our stop will also offer stories and background on the unique way in which members of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion contributed to the success of the paratroopers' landings early on D-Day. Stop at the War Cemetery at Rainville, where we will visit the graves of RCAF crewman Nathan Berger of Montreal and also Alex Flexer, a Canadian paratrooper.

DAY 9 | Jun. 7, 2019 | Normandy (B, D)

Our tour takes us to the beaches west of Juno, including Arromanches. At Arromanches, in the British sector code-named Gold Beach, we will visit the Invasion Museum, which showcases one of the wonders of Operation Neptune, the creation of the artificial Mulberry Harbour. On the heels of the invasion forces, 115 concrete caissons (some still plainly visible off the beach) were towed from England to form a five-mile breakwater to enclose an instant harbour for the processing of millions of tons of supplies to keep the momentum of the invasion moving inland.



Friday night (optional) visit to Rouen for the 2019 Armada Fleet festival in the city's port, with about 50 tall ships, a marketplace, and a famous night time fireworks display. Otherwise, Shabbat dinner in Deauville at our hotel.

DAY 10 | Jun. 8, 2019 | Normandy (B)

Today your day is at leisure. You may choose to visit the historic Norman city of Rouen, home to St. Joan of Arc, as well as to an ancient Jewish community dating back to the 12th century. La Maison Sublime, a building dating from around 1100 and discovered by chance in 1976 under the courtyard of the Rouen courthouse, is believed to be the oldest Jewish building in France, though scholars are divided as to what its original function was — a private residence, synagogue, or yeshiva. During the tour you will visit the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Synagogue.

DAY 11 | Jun. 9, 2019 | Normandy (B)

Today we explore elements of the Battle of Normandy that raged into July and August. Among the crucibles of these offensives was the tank battle led by three British Armoured divisions against German Panzer divisions along Bourguébus Ridge — it proved extremely costly, as did Verrieres Ridge, a strategic objective between Caen and Falaise, where the Montreal-based Royal Highland Regiment (Black Watch) blundered into a German killing field and lost 315 of its 325 soldiers, either killed, or taken prisoner. Hear about Military Medal Winner Harry "Red" Fromstein, a Toronto soldier who enlisted under age using his older brother's identification.

At St. Lambert-sur-Dives, on August 19-20, 1944, a Canadian rose to the challenge at a critical moment. With the American 1st Army racing northward toward the Germany 7th Army near the town of Falaise, the Canadian 4th Armoured moved southward to meet the Germans, thus trapping German forces in a giant vise. Our tour will visit the Bretteville-sur-Laize Canadian cemetery, and the Memorial Mont-Ormel, to help better understand the bigger picture of the Battle of Normandy after D-Day.

DAY 12 | Jun. 10, 2019 | Normandy (B, D)

The day's journey takes us northeast of the D-Day beaches, along the coast of France to the location of Operation Jubilee on August 19, 1942 at the French seaport of Dieppe. Here, Canadian troops made a first attempt to crack Hitler's Atlantic Wall. That August day, 6,000 soldiers (mostly Canadians) launched the Dieppe Raid. Those nine hours on the Dieppe beaches were the nine bloodiest hours in Canadian military history; more than half the assault troops became casualties that day. We will visit the Theatre Museum in the town, the historic beach where nearly a thousand Canadians died and the War Graves Commission cemetery just outside the town site, where we will put pebbles on the tombstones with the Stars of David, including Morris Greenberg, a Jewish Toronto infantry commando who drowned while saving his own men as they retreated under murderous fire.

Upon return, the tour group will have a last chance to wander the shopping areas of Deauville and enjoy a farewell dinner.

DAY 13 | Jun. 11, 2019 | Normandy - Paris - Toronto (B)

Departure transfer to the airport for your flight home.

RESPONSIBILITY

Merit Travel Group Inc. doing business as Merit Travel, acts solely as agents for the Travel Service Suppliers such as hoteliers, airlines, ground service operators, bus operators, etc. who are providing their facilities as described in this brochure. We do our best to select such suppliers but exercise no control over them and cannot be held responsible for the failure of these suppliers to carry out any obligations. Any and all bookings made with these suppliers by us, for you, are subject to the terms and conditions of each and every such supplier. Supplier liability may also be limited by law, tariffs, or conditions set forth in their documentation, tickets, etc.

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- b. Illness, theft, strikes, mechanical problems, quarantine, governmental intervention, weather conditions, acts of hostility or violence, and any other grounds beyond our control;
- c. Your failure to obtain passport, visas, other travel documents or inoculations
- d. Your failure to advise us the name of the traveller exactly as it appears on the passport;
- e. Your failure to report on time at an airport or ground transfer facility;
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- g. Personal injuries or death;
- h. Force Majeure - an event(s) beyond our, or our supplier(s), reasonable control including, but not limited to, acts of God, strikes, lockout or other labour disputes or disruptions, wars, blockades, insurrections, riots, earthquakes, weather conditions, floods or acts of restraints imposed by governmental authorities.

PRICING

All prices are per person in Canadian dollars unless otherwise noted. GST, HST and provincial taxes are applicable on tours as noted.

INCREASE IN TOUR COSTS

Merit reserves the right to increase tour prices in the event of an increase in government and airport authority imposed taxes and fees, fuel and currency surcharges, supplier price increases, or any other cost increase. If the increase is greater than 7% of the tour cost, the client may cancel the booking within seven days of notification and obtain a full refund.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

A deposit of \$750 per person is required at the time of booking. Full and final payment is due 90 days prior to departure.

Please note, some of our suppliers may require additional deposit or full payments at time of booking, pending seasonality. You will be advised of additional requirements at time of booking.

LIABILITY

Merit cannot assume responsibility for any costs incurred for any travel arrangements purchased separately from the Merit tour. Merit's responsibility shall extend only to the provisions of advice as to industry-standard or supplier recommended connections and check-in times. Provided Merit supplies such advice, they shall not be responsible for missed connections or departures, regardless of the cause.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN (INSURANCE)

Trip cancellation and interruption insurance, medical and hospital insurance, baggage insurance, and various additional insurances are available and

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. If you choose not to purchase insurance, you are required to sign an Insurance Waiver Form. Note that if you choose not to purchase insurance, you are fully liable for any and all penalties imposed as stated under Cancellation Policy on this page. Please speak to your representative at the time of making reservations about insurance.

REFUNDS

The nature of travel involves risks and unpredictable weather and thus Merit cannot assure any departure or arrival times at any point of an itinerary. Your right to receive a refund is limited. There will be no discounts or monies refunded for any missed or unused services. Merit reserves the right to cancel the tour for any reason. Should this occur, a full refund will be made to the traveller.

CANCELLATION POLICY

While Merit will do its utmost to minimize any penalties charged, there are irrecoverable costs associated with your tour. The following penalties will be considered the costs incurred with cancellation:

- a. 90 days or more prior to departure: Loss of total deposit.
- b. 89 – 60 days prior to departure: Loss of 50% of total tour cost.
- c. 59 days or less prior to departure: Loss of 100% of total tour cost.

Cancellation penalties for some tours will vary and there may be additional penalties associated with the airfare. If so, these policies will be noted separately at time of booking and will prevail.

TOUR CHANGES

We reserve the right to substitute itineraries, hotels, airlines or vessels due to conditions beyond our control. In such cases we will do everything possible to ensure the locations visited, the excursions taken and the hotels offered are similar to the ones originally planned. Any change to itineraries will not result in eligibility for a refund.

REVISION FEE

Changes to your tour reservation might not be possible. Should you request a change and we are able to accommodate it, you will be subject to any charges imposed by the airline or tour suppliers. In addition, we reserve the right to charge a \$50 revision fee for any change made after the deposit is paid. A change in name or departure date may constitute a cancellation, and the corresponding penalties may apply.

PERSONAL DOCUMENTATION

All passengers travelling internationally must travel with a passport. Many countries require the passport to be valid for 6 months beyond the traveller's return date. Visas may be required for some destinations. It is the passenger's responsibility to obtain at the passenger's expense, all documentation required by all relevant authorities. In the event that the passenger does not possess the correct documentation, the air carrier has the right to refuse passage.

DESCRIPTION

Every effort has been made to describe and produce the travel services and photographs as accurately as possible in the printed tour description. However we reserve the right to correct errors and we will make all reasonable efforts to inform you should any significant changes occur.

Please note that the living standards and local conditions during your tour may be different from what you are accustomed to at home.

CONSENT

Your retention of tickets, reservations or bookings after issuance shall constitute your consent to the above terms.

If you encounter any concerns during your tour, please inform your local travel service provider. If the matter cannot be resolved, please inform Merit Travel in writing upon your return.