



FRANCE & BELGIUM

ITINERARY (subject to change) **JULY 6-15, 2026**
WITH DR. MARC SHAPIRO

MONDAY: PARIS

Welcome dinner

TUESDAY: PARIS

In the morning we will visit the Pletzl, which used to be Paris' Jewish quarter in the Marais district. While Jews now live throughout the city, Le Marais is still home to synagogues and kosher restaurants, and it is here where we will learn about the history of Paris Jewry. After lunch we explore the historic Saint-Germain neighborhood on the Left Bank and then go to the Saint-Michel area where not only will we see the narrowest street in Paris but also the first street that Jews inhabited when they were allowed back into Paris. Following this we head to the Sorbonne, the historic University of Paris which was founded in the twelfth century.

WEDNESDAY: ROUEN

We travel to Rouen, capital of the Normandy region. A very large and prosperous city in medieval times, it was also home to a great yeshiva, often described as Europe's oldest Jewish building, whose remains were discovered only in 1976. We shall also have a walking tour of Rouen where we travel back in time, as hundreds of medieval houses still line the streets.

THURSDAY: TROYES

We travel to Troyes, in the Champagne wine region famous as the home of Rashi. In addition to a wonderful museum devoted to Rashi, where perhaps we will learn if Rashi really was a vintner, Troyes also has a contemporary Jewish community which we will learn about. We will also have a walking tour of Troyes and see why Troyes became known as a center of stained glass.

FRIDAY: PARIS

In the morning, we will visit the world-famous Louvre Museum. Following lunch we will walk along the Champs-Élysées to the Arc de Triomphe, and then drive to the historic and beautiful Montmartre neighborhood, which was a haven for artists like Picasso and Van Gogh. Return to the hotel to get ready for Shabbat.

SHABBAT: PARIS

Davening at a local synagogue. In the afternoon Dr. Shapiro will offer a Torah class on a theme related to our tour. Following this class, there will be a walking tour in the area of our hotel.

SUNDAY: BRUSSELS

We travel to Brussels, the de facto capital of the European Union and home to many international organizations. Following lunch we will have a walking tour of historic Brussels and visit the beautiful Great Synagogue of Europe. We then head to Antwerp, referred to as the last shtetl in Europe.

MONDAY: ANTWERP

We begin with a visit to the diamond exchange, in which Jews have been prominent for a century. On our walk we will see learn how the Jews of Antwerp created such a vibrant community and visit various synagogues. After lunch we will drive to Antwerp's Old Town and tour the Red Star Line Museum, which tells the story of the millions of immigrants who came to America on the Red Star Line ships. We then take a boat trip along the Scheldt River.

TUESDAY: BRUSSELS

We travel to western Belgium where so much of World War I was fought. Standing on the battle fields, hearing the stories, and seeing the many cemeteries, will help us to understand the brutality of the First World War. This was the last war where Jews from opposite sides fought against each other.

WEDNESDAY: BRUSSELS

Breakfast and return home.