

The Port of Le Havre, France: A Disney Cruise Line Port of Call Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

In the second of this [series of articles](#) looking at some of the ports of calls on the Magic's inaugural cruise around the British Isles, we look at one that's slightly unusual, given it's actually in France!

At first, Le Havre may not be a place that you've heard of, but it's ideally located for a number of different excursions across northern France. The first of those is Paris, and for many Disney fans, that also means Disneyland Paris. There are four different excursions you can take, the first being Disneyland Paris on your own, which does what it says on the tin, in that it offers park tickets and transport there and back.

It's a slightly shorter journey into Paris itself, although not by much, with the trip taking three hours each way. The first option is Paris Notre Dame, which gives you a tour of the famous cathedral (one of my favourite sights in the city), with photo stops at some of the city's other main sights. You can also opt for a River Cruise with Lunch, which will give you a unique view of Paris from the River Seine. Although we haven't done a lunch cruise, we enjoyed our dinner cruise, and it is one of the most pleasant and relaxing ways to see the city. Paris Sightseeing gives you a fair degree of free time, although I'd find that disappointing, especially if it was my first time visit, as I'd prefer someone to guide me around one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

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□ You'll have around seven hours in the parks, and at least the all ashore day falls on a weekday, which is a bonus, as the parks tend to be much busier at weekends. Like any Disney park, you'll only just be able to scratch the surface of the parks in that time, and be warned, there's no such thing as Fastpass+ here… yet anyway. It's still the traditional version we used to know and love, and some of the biggest rides don't even come with Fastpasses. It's also worth knowing that the parks are undergoing a massive renovation ahead of Disneyland Paris' 25th anniversary next year, with many attractions closed.

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□ Other options are the Ultimate Day of Thrills VIP tour for coaster fans, and for those with youngsters in their party, there's also the Ultimate Day for Young Families VIP Tour, both priced at \$710, but if you have a lot more to spend, then the private VIP tour at \$5,500, although that is for up to 10 people, which could provide better value if you can find nine others to accompany you! Here you can design a tour that suits you, allowing you to enjoy the attractions you want to. Be warned, if you

opt for any of these tours, it will be a very long day, given it's a three and a half hour coach journey each way.

There are some excursions that are closer to Le Havre, and reflect the country's more recent, and sobering history. Just two hours away are the D-Day Landing Beaches (with an adult only variant available), and until you've visited them, you can't imagine just how much they will affect you emotionally. We visited a few years ago, and we happened to be there over the anniversary of D-Day itself, and it was such a moving visit, especially when it turned out that the guy next to me was a veteran, paying tribute to "his boys", as he termed them. I had tears in my eyes just looking at all the grave stones and hearing him talk about what happened as if it had been only a few years ago.

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□ If you want to visit a traditional French city, but Paris doesn't inspire you, you can't go far wrong with the historic town of Rouen. The centrepiece of the amazing gothic Cathedral, which we could see from miles away from the route we approached on, and it lived up to our expectations when we arrived. Visiting Rouen is a bit like stepping back in time, and you can easily picture people from medieval days here. Perhaps that helps to explain why one of the tours is called Medieval Rouen. Other options are Giverny, Monet's House and Rouen and Rouen and Monet Cathedrals, featuring Exclusive Youth Activity.

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□ Monet's House isn't somewhere we've been to, given neither of us are particularly into art, but somewhere I'd always wanted to go was Mont Saint Michel -- A UNESCO World Heritage Site. I'd seen so many photos of this place, a monastery that appears to just rise out of the rock it's located on, with the sea lapping around it. It's no less mythical when you actually get there, and head over the causeway to visit the island. The monastery has plenty to see, but we were also spellbound by the shops and restaurants littered around its base. Of course it's touristy, you wouldn't expect anything less, but equally it's got a charm all of its own.

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□ Le Havre is certainly a port with plenty of places to head for as far as shore excursions are concerned, and all very different from each other. As you've seen, some incur long journeys to get there and back, but depending on what you're interested in, it may be worth enduring those for the end product.

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□ Le Havre is a port of call on the 12-night British Isles cruise from Dover, leaving on June, 5 and she will return there next year on her second 12-night British cruise from Dover, which departs on July 9, 2017.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to

travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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