

Anzac Day on the Western Front

10 days, departs Paris 18 April 2012



Dawn Service Villers-Bretonneux (Photo courtesy of the Australian Department of Defence)

Albatross gives you more...

- ✚ Absorb the full reality and tragedy of the trench warfare with commentary by our expert Australian War Historian
- ✚ Gain a deeper insight into the life of the diggers from our specialist Battlefield Tour Manager
- ✚ All hotels located to access all the major Commemorative sights
- ✚ Experience the ANZAC Day dawn service at Villers-Bretonneux
- ✚ Be moved by the Last Post at the Menin Gate, explore Hoge Crater Cemetery and Museum
- ✚ Visit the Flanders Commemorative sites including Messines, Hill 60, Polygon Wood, Essex Farm Cemetery, Tyne Cot, Toronto Avenue Cemetery and Island of Ireland Peace Park
- ✚ Visit the Somme Commemorative sites including the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, Fromelles Memorials, Vimy Ridge, Bullecourt 'Digger' Memorial, Adelaide Cemetery, Australian Memorials at Pozzières, the Ulster Tower Memorial, Newfoundland Memorial Park and the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme
- ✚ 11 years experience operating Western Front tours

The Albatross Difference

 <p>More sightseeing time</p>	 <p>42 max</p>	 <p>NO SURPRISES</p>	 <p>Personal audio system whilst on tour</p>	 <p>Group GUARANTEED departures</p>
Less time on coaches, average 94 kms travelled each day	Maximum 42 passengers	Over \$1,000 value of extras already included - no hidden costs		Guaranteed to depart with 7 or more passengers



Services of an Australian War Historian included on this tour

The presence of our expert Australian War Historian, Dr Richard Reid, working alongside our specialist Battlefield Tour Manager, will add so much depth to this tour and ensure you have a tremendously fulfilling experience.

Imagine being there on ANZAC Day in the still of the morning, with the mist and damp air hovering over lines of white gravestones. Then, as dawn breaks, the haunting Last Post is sounded by the bugler. Come join us on the Western Front at Villers-Bretonneux as we commemorate the sacrifice and valour of a generation who long ago fought and died so far from home. Over the years we have handled numerous commemorative tours to the Somme and Flanders battlefields. Our Tour Managers have been specially selected as they are experts in these regions and are well versed in the path our 'Diggers' trod nearly a century ago. Together with our War Historian they separate fact from fiction and bring to life the whole tragic Western Front campaign. Specially designed by our expert Australian War Historian, this tour offers you a unique and personal experience.

DAY 1 - 18 APRIL PARIS

Your tour commences in your Paris hotel this evening. We have included a welcome drink and dinner in your hotel. This is an ideal chance to meet and get to know your Tour Manager and fellow travellers. (D)

Your Paris hotel: Mercure Montmartre

DAY 2 - 19 APRIL PARIS

This morning we enjoy a Paris panoramic tour which will bring alive the city from the Eiffel Tower, Champs Elysées and Arc de Triomphe (including the

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier), to the Louvre and Notre Dame. Your afternoon and evening are at leisure. (B)

DAY 3 - 20 APRIL YPRES

We depart Paris and our first stop is a visit to the Adelaide Cemetery (site of the exhumation of Australia's Unknown Soldier in November 1993) before arriving at the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux. It was here on April 25, 1918, exactly 3 years after the Gallipoli landings, that Australian courage and determination provided a stunning victory that ended the German advance in this area. It is a place to think about how Australia's story on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918 has been commemorated. Also visited today is the Franco Australian Museum at the Victoria School in the village. Driving on, across the uplands of the Somme, our next visit is to the Australian Corps Memorial at Le Hamel and finally to the 2nd Australian Division memorial at Mont St Quentin, on the outskirts of the historical town of Péronne. All in all, these first battlefield visits provide the perfect context for our touring over the next few days. Later this afternoon we continue to Ypres where we stay the next four nights. Between 1916 and 1918 thousands of Australian and New Zealand soldiers came to Ypres where some of the heaviest fighting in World War 1 took place. Completely destroyed in the war, the town was lovingly rebuilt carefully restoring the grand old buildings and picturesque square. Our hotel is superbly located in the very centre of the old town and barely 200 metres from the famous Menin Gate. Tonight, after a buffet dinner, you can attend the sounding of the Last Post at the Menin Gate, a moving ceremony repeated every night since 1928. (B, D)

Your Ypres hotel: Novotel Ieper Centrum

DAY 4 - 21 APRIL YPRES

Today will be enjoyed in Ypres. Our walking tour takes us through the centre of town to the magnificent Cloth Hall, St Georges Chapel and St Martin's Church. We will also visit the beautiful Ypres Ramparts Cemetery and walk on top of the ramparts to the Menin Gate Memorial, the British Empire's tribute to the missing from the battles around Ypres. The rest of your day is free in this delightful gothic town. (B)

DAY 5 - 22 APRIL YPRES

A day to discover the battlefields and memorials associated with some of the most costly operations fought in by Australian soldiers – the battles of the 'Flanders Offensive' of June to November 1917. In the morning we visit the site of the Battle of Messines, the beautiful Toronto Avenue Cemetery and the Island of Ireland Peace Park. After time at leisure for lunch in Ypres, we drive up the famous Menin Road to visit Hooze Crater Cemetery and Museum (this small, private museum is in a renovated Chapel and small school), the 5th Australian Division Memorial in Polygon Wood, Hill 60 and the British Commonwealth's largest war cemetery at Tyne Cot. What happened in this area east of Ypres in 1917 was eventually summed up in one terrible word - Passchendaele! (B)

DAY 6 - 23 APRIL YPRES

We have included a delightful excursion today to the charming city of Bruges. Recognised as one of Europe's best preserved medieval cities, Bruges is riddled with canals, bridges and quiet back streets and is often called the Venice of the North. Wander the quaint and picturesque cobbled streets lined with tiny lace boutiques, tempting chocolate shops and cosy cafes. Maybe take a cruise along the canals or a ride in a traditional horse drawn carriage through the old town to admire the historic architecture. Or simply relax in one of the pavement cafes on the glorious old market square. On our return drive we will stop to visit the Essex Farm Cemetery, a site forever associated with the composition of the poem 'In Flanders Field'. (B)

DAY 7 - 24 APRIL AMIENS

Today we journey through the old Western Front battlefields from Ypres in Belgium to Amiens in France. After crossing the border, we will stop at VC Corner (Australian Cemetery), Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery and the Australian Memorial Park at Fromelles, scene of Australia's first major battle on the Western Front. From there we visit the most spectacular British Commonwealth memorial in France – the Canadian National Memorial on Vimy Ridge. Before heading into Amiens, we will travel across the old Bullecourt battlefield and view the moving statue of an Australian soldier at



Interior view - Menin Gate, Ypres





Martin Neagle's headstone, Polygon Wood (Photo courtesy of Julie Reece)

the Bullecourt 'Digger' Memorial. A packed lunch, and dinner has been included today. Your hotel for the next three nights is located in the very heart of town. (B, L, D)

Your Amiens hotel: *Mercure Amiens Cathedrale*.

DAY 8 - 25 APRIL AMIENS – ANZAC DAY

ANZAC Day will be special! A ceremony with military uniforms, slouch-hats, Ambassadors and dignitaries, army bands, national anthems, the Last Post, crowds of visitors as well as the local population of this small French village which will "never forget Australia". This morning we attend the Dawn Service at the Australian National Memorial near Villers Bretonneux. At the conclusion of the Dawn Service, we attend the local community service, led by the Mayor, at the French monument near the town hall in Villers Bretonneux. Return to your hotel mid morning for breakfast. In 1918 Australian soldiers played a prominent part in the defence of the city of Amiens. Today we visit one of the gems of French medieval architecture - Amiens Cathedral, where the Australian and New Zealand soldiers have been honoured. The rest of your day and evening are at leisure in the delightful town of Amiens. (B)

DAY 9 - 26 APRIL AMIENS

Today we experience the tragedy of the 1916 Somme battlefield including the Australian memorials at Pozieres, which recall the loss of 23,000 men in six weeks. Later we visit the vast and tragic Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, the Ulster Tower Memorial to the 36th Ulster Division and the Newfoundland Memorial Park. A snack lunch is included today. Return to Amiens where this evening you enjoy a farewell dinner in a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

DAY 10 - 27 APRIL TO PARIS

Sadly your Western Front Tour ends this morning after breakfast as you are transferred to Paris to arrive around midday. Drop off points will be Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport and Paris Gare du Nord station. We recommend that you do not book flights or trains that depart Paris before 2pm today. (B)



Tour Inclusions

- All excursions, scenic drives and sightseeing as described in the itinerary
- Fully escorted by our specialist Battlefield Tour Manager
- Services of an expert Australian War Historian
- Personal audio system whilst on tour
- First class air-conditioned touring coach
- End of tour tips to Tour Manager, driver and local Paris guide
- 9 night's accommodation as described
- Buffet breakfast daily, 2 snack lunches
- 4 dinners including farewell dinner in Amiens
- Welcome drink Paris
- All entrances as per itinerary
- Extensive touring of the WW1 Battlefields

Tour Price (land only prices)

\$2,999 pp twin share

Single supplement \$829

'The selection of hotels was very good and our war historian was very informative. He was always available to give more detail or to assist with personal enquiries such as locating relatives in the war cemeteries.

The coach was very comfortable and the driver amazing maneuvering the coach down cobbled narrow village lanes.'

William, NSW

