



BAIV

2024 D-Day Experience Normandy

Newsletter February 2024

Exploring the D-Day history of Omaha Beach



Our third historic tour starts at an unique museum: Musée des Épaves sous-marines du Débarquement. The Frenchman Jacques Lemonchois is the only person in the world (!) who was permitted in 1970 to salvage a few tanks and guns that were lost at sea during the invasion on June 6th, 1944. Check the remnants of a Sherman Duplex Drive, a Sherman Dozer, a Stuart tank and several guns. Inside the museum you can even find equipment and personal artifacts.

The first Allied petrol harbor

Next stop is the harbor of Port-en-Bessin, that was captured by the British 47th Royal Marine Commando after two days of fierce fighting. The harbor that was heavily damaged by the fights and by destruction by the Germans, was rehabilitated and converted into the first petrol harbor for both the American and the English troops. It functioned for more than two months, when it was replaced by PLUTO, the pipeline under the ocean, that ended in Cherbourg.



German strongpoints at Omaha

On the east side of Omaha Beach where the 1st US Infantry Division 'The Big Red One' landed, we visit two German strongpoints: WN 60 and WN 62 (WN is short for Widerstandsnest, German for strongpoint). At WN60 the famous Major Pluskat from the film 'The Longest Day' should have been in his observation bunker. Luckily he wasn't, as he wouldn't have survived the bombardments of the Navy. At WN 62 we explore the MG42 tobruk of the German Hein Severloh, who later said that he probably fired 12,000 rounds with his MG42 at the American soldiers who landed at the feet of the cliff.



American Normandy Cemetery



Of course we visit the American Normandy Cemetery to pay our respect to the men and women, who gave their life in Normandy to free the people of tyranny by the Nazi regime and to restore democracy in Europe.

In the Visitor Centre you see the uniforms and belongings of several men and women who served and fought during the Normandy campaign and hear their personal story.

Overlord Museum Historical Days

Opposite the cemetery is the Overlord Museum with an unique collection, gathered by the French Michel Leloup for nearly half a century. The volume, diversity and quality of the vehicles, equipment and personal items are overwhelming and perfectly depict the story of the invasion. In the week starting June 1st, 2024 there are outside also a military camp, vehicle and tank demonstrations, music and dance from the war years.



Stand on the sand of 'Bloody Omaha'



We conclude the third tour with the sectors of Omaha Beach where the most soldiers lost their lives in storming the beaches. First Easy Red with exit E1 (WN65 Le Ruquet), second Easy Green en Dog Red with Exit D3 (Les Moulins, St. Laurent-sur-Mer), At this beach the official commemoration will be with head of states.

We end the tour at Dog Green with Exit D1 at Vierville-sur-Mer. At this last stretch of Omaha the relatively inexperienced A Company of the 29th Infantry Division landed in a hail of bullets and grenades. With only a few officers left, the terrified men hid

themselves in the water, behind the obstacles, unable to move.

In the footsteps of the 82nd Airborne

In our fourth historical tour we focus on the stories and the area where the 'All American' division operated, though we also meet para's from the 101st. Due to FLAK pilots drifted from their course and droppings were scattered all over the countryside. That is how Colonel Robert 'Bull' Wolverton, commander of 3rd Battalion 506 PIR, ended in St. Côme-su-Mont, as was SSgt. Joe Beyrle who landed on the church roof.

Through typical French landscape with hedgerows we travel to Château Franquetôt. Here Major General J. Lawton Collins, commander of VII Corps, had his second headquarters after the invasion at Utah. A part of the building is restored in its original state when Collins received Supreme Commander Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower and Lt.Gen. Bradley, commander in chief of the American ground forces in Operation Overlord.



The causeways of Chef-du-Pont and La Fièvre

From there we enter the area around the river Merderet, where 82nd AB had to secure the causeways to prevent German units to attack the 4th Infantry Division while moving further inland. Though planned to be dropped east of Ste. Mère-Église, many paras plunged into the marshes around the river Merderet near Chef-du-Pont and the farm La Filere. Seeking high ground paras fled north to the railroad between Carentan and Valognes or south to Hill 30, where they were isolated from their battalion.

On our way to the causeway between Cauquigny and La Fièvre we make a little detour to the spot where Generalleutnant Falley, commander of the German 91. Luftlande Division (airborne division), drove into an ambush and was shot by 1st Lt Malcolm Brannen. We stop at La Fièvre to explore the area and meet with Iron Mike, the statue that symbolizes the American para.



We conclude the tour at Ste. Mère-Église to visit the church, where Pte. John Steele got stuck on a pinnacle of the church tower. There is also time to visit the museum and the large re-enactment camp behind the museum.

What can you expect from us at Dog Green Camp

Our camp consists of a large mess tent. Here breakfast and dinners are served daily by our Warrant Officer Sgt. Major Dave and his team. We also have a bar where you can buy soft drinks, wine, or beer during the day and in the evening. On our tours we provide lunch bags for all our participants, though on two tours the lunch is served halfway the tour in the field by Dave and his team.

The sleeping quarters for participants are located in large tents, in which compartments are made for privacy (though not soundproof). If you want more privacy, we offer the option of a US Small Wall Tent, suitable for two people as mentioned in our newsletter of February. These tents are perfect replicas and used for the movie 'General de Gaulle'). The additional cost for this upgrade is set at Euro 400,- per tent (2 persons). Only 4 available. So if you want to make use of this, please let us know quickly!

In the sleeping quarters we provide a field bed, a pillow and a military sleeping bag for each participant. There will be extra blankets in reserve. Next to the field bed is a chair to sit on or hang your clothes on. Also we provide a plastic box to store private items (though not lockable) and a lamp.

In all compartments is a power source to, for instance, charge your phone or for your electric razor or hairdryer. Note that this power source is 220/240 Volt, the European standard.

You need an adapter to plug your appliances into the European socket of the power source. In Europe these are different from the plugs in the USA, Canada, Australia and the U.K.! So be sure to buy an adapter plug before you come to Europe.



At a central point at Dog Green Camp there will be units with modern toilets and showers. Also, there are sinks to wash your hands, and for instance brush your teeth.

What you need to bring yourself

First of all: a good mood, a smile and eager to take part of our D-Day Normandy Experience. But there are more things you have to bring. For instance, there are no laundry facilities, so bring enough clothes with you for your trip to Normandy.

As group we are part of the commemorations and celebrations of the 80th anniversary of D-Day, we would like to ask you kindly to dress in the style of our WW2 military camp and our military vehicles (no camouflage by the way).

Our camp is located in the area of Omaha Beach, where the 29th US Infantry Division 'Grey and Blue' and the 1st US Infantry Division 'Big Red One' landed on the beaches. They were dressed like the men on the photo.

If you have a problem with this, please choose at least clothes that are in the some colour range, i.e. army green or kaki (and do not forget to buy an adapter plug for a Europea socket.)



Finally a few questions ...

As part of what we offer you as participant of our BAIV D-Day Normandy Experience we will have special T-shirts made. All participants and our crew. will receive two T-shirts, for free! On the photo you can see the shirt we had made for participants and crew in 2019.

To be sure that we provide you with the right size T-shirt, we would like to know the size you prefer. Please let us know as soon as possible in the form we mailed you with this newsletter.

Second question: our caterer wants to know whether participants have an allergy or are on a special diet for their health, so he can take these needs and wishes into account. If you do, please fill in the form that we mailed you with this newsletter.

Finally we miss some information on participants, who come with the main subscriber for the BAIV D-Day Normandy Experience 2024. It is obligated by the French authorities to provide the information, probably because of safety regulations for the main commemoration of D-Day with heads of state in St. Laurent-sur-Mer.

Please fill in the form we mailed you with this newsletter and send to marketing@baiv.nl.

Last remark for now

Next week we will send you an invoice for the second payment for your participation in the BAIV D-Day Normandy Experience 2024, so we can make the necessary preparations.

At <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtDQFz0LWvs> we promote our BAIV D-Day Normandy Experience 2024. Enjoy it. Next mont you receive our next newsletter.