



Champagne Discovery

For champagne aficionados, a trip to Épernay is a lifetime ambition and this fun tour provides the perfect getaway to the heart of the Champagne region. Your stay will include an elegant hotel, a 3-course Champagne tasting lunch, and an exclusive tasting at one of the grandest of Champagne houses; Moët & Chandon. You'll also learn about the Champagne-making process with a private vineyard tour.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- 2 Nights Épernay

INCLUSIONS

- Moët & Chandon Champagne House Tour with Tasting
- Champagne Vineyards Tour with Tasting
- One 3-Course Champagne House Tasting Lunch
- Daily Breakfast



ARRIVE IN ÉPERNAY:

Upon arrival in Épernay, check into a Superior room at the 4* Hotel Jean Moët, or a Premier room at the 5* La Villa Eugène. The remainder of the day is at your leisure. There are several small champagne producers nearby like Caves Mercier, Comtesse Lafond, and Champagne de Castellane. Some of the bigger producers are here as well, including Perrier-Jouet and Veuve-Clicquot, however a reservation for a tour at the larger houses should be made in advance.

Make time to stop at C Comme Champagne (8 Rue Gambetta). It's a hybrid champagne shop and tasting room, offering a rotating selection of champagnes, available at the bar in the rear. The champagnes are all from small, independent production houses and available for sale in the shop. Descend the stairs to the champagne cave, where 350 champagnes from 45 different growers are stocked. Épernay is renowned for their regional cuisine, and included in your travel pack will be a comprehensive list of recommended restaurants.

(Accommodations; Hotel Jean Moët or La Villa Eugène, Épernay)



ÉPERNAY:

After breakfast, start your day in true style at the largest and grandest of Champagne Houses: Moët and Chandon. Here, a representative will accompany you around the estate and through the extensive cellars. Your visit will conclude with two tastings of vintage Moët Champagnes. A three course Champagne tasting lunch will follow, hosted at a traditional restaurant. Each course will be accompanied by a different Champagne.

In the afternoon, meet your English-speaking driver/guide at a central departure point in the town, for a half-day transported vineyard tour. Your guide will explain to you all about the magical Champagne making process, from vine to bottle. The tour will conclude with a visit to a small, family-run Champagne House, where you will have the opportunity to taste two or three of the Maison's Champagnes. At the end of the tour, you will be dropped back in central Épernay. Your knowledgeable tour guide will be pleased to recommend a restaurant for dinner and reserve a table if required.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Accommodations, Hotel Jean Moët or La Villa Eugène, Épernay)



DEPART ÉPERNAY:

After a leisurely breakfast, time to begin your next Avanti destination.

(Breakfast, Hotel Jean Moët or La Villa Eugène, Épernay)

Where are the Champagne Houses?

The vineyards in the Champagne are the most northerly in France, lying to the east of Paris on both sides of the Marne River. Most of the main Champagne houses are based in one of the five towns synonymous with champagne; Epernay, Reims, Chalons-en-Champagne, Troyes, and Ay. Reims and Epernay are the most famous and known as the "twin capitals" of Champagne. Here is a list of some of the top Champagne Houses in no particular order. Practice and impress your hosts with your pronunciations.

- Dom Pérignon-doh~pay/ree/nyoh~
- Moët et Chandon-moh/eht eh shah~/doh~ (not moh/ay)
- Deutz-døhtz(not the expected German pronunciation)
- Heidsieck-ehd/seek
- Veuve Clicquot-vøhv klee/koh(not voov)
- Pol Roger-pohl roh/zhay(not 'roger' like the name)
- Louis Roederer-louis rho/eh/d'/ray
- Mumm-mewm (not 'mum')
- Pommery-pohm/ree (not pom/meh/ree)
- Ruinart-rwee/nahr (not 'ruin art')
- Taittinger-teh/ta~/zhay (not tay/teen/djuh)

You'll certainly have opportunities to purchase Champagne to take home. If you are ordering by the case, the Champagne houses can usually arrange shipping for you. If you plan on carrying a few home with you, you may want to purchase some half-bottles. Not only are they easier to pack, but they make a perfect aperitif for 2. Additionally, you will find a variety of brands that are not available in the the US.

Bonne Chance!

*** Itinerary and inclusions are subject to change*