

Knee Deep Into History Battlefield Tours

**June '44 Normandy Beach and Airborne Landings
Small Group Battlefield Tour
4 – 9 September 2025 (6-days / 5-nights)**



Omaha Beach, photo by Laurie Gaulke

Get knee deep into history on the beaches of Normandy! In planning since 1942, the Allied landings on the beaches of Normandy would go down as the largest amphibious invasion ever attempted. The first day landings alone would involve three American infantry and two airborne divisions, three British infantry divisions and one airborne division, two Canadian infantry divisions and thousands of specialized units. This does not even consider the naval vessels or aircraft involved.

In spite of overwhelming numbers, success was far from insured—Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, who became General Inspector of the Western Defenses in November 1943, embarked upon a rapid expansion and strengthening of the Atlantic Wall. There was also the risk that German intelligence would discover the plan.

In hindsight, it is easy to see that weather, Allied boldness and deception won the day. Nevertheless, the Allied hold on Northern France remained tenuous until the Allied breakouts in July. This KDIH tour will focus on each of the five landing beaches as well as the airborne drop zones.



Top: Tour participants posing inside a replica Higgins boat on Utah Beach. Photo by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

Middle: The Deutscher Soldatenfriedhof La Cambe is always evocative. Photo by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

Bottom: During the 80th Anniversary the temporary exhibit at Gold Beach, "Standing with Giants," brought to life UK losses on 6 June 1944.



Schedule: (Subject to Modification)

Pick-up and return point for this tour will be CDG Airport. A specific meeting point will be provided later. Participants are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the meeting point. Participants with their own vehicles can arrange to meet us at an alternate location.

Day 1, Thursday, 4 Sept.: Pick-up at CDG at 12:00pm. Drive to Normandy. Evening briefing followed by an introductory dinner. Hotel TBD.

Day 2, Friday, 5 Sept.: Utah Beach, airborne operations around Sainte-Mère-Église, German Cemetery at La Cambe and a German battery on the Cotentin Peninsula. Afternoon tour of a famous Normandy cookie or caramel factory. Hotel TBD.

Day 3, Saturday, 6 Sept: Omaha Beach, German battery at Longues-sur-Mer, Pointe-du-Hoc and the Normandy American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer. Afternoon Calvados tour and tasting. Hotel TBD.

Day 4, Sunday, 7 Sept.: British and Commonwealth landing beaches and Arromanches. Hotel TBD.

Day 5, Monday, 8 Sept.: Pegasus Bridge (airborne operation), Hillman Bunker, Canadian Cemetery at Bénysur-Mer, German radar station at Douvres. Hotel TBD.

Day 6, Tuesday, 9 Sept.: Partial coverage of the push inland, the Falaise Pocket and the story of German Panzer Ace Michael Wittmann. Then depart to CDG Airport. We expect to arrive at CDG around 18h00.



Members of a pipe band on the original Pegasus Bridge during the 2024 80th Anniversary Commemorations

Tour Overview

Tour Price (based on double occupancy)	\$2,943
Single Room Supplement	\$588

Tour Price Includes*

- TWO military historian guides who understand both sides of the story and who speak multiple languages and understand European culture
 - Local guides at specific sites as needed
- 3-Star accommodations, typically in European family-owned hotel / restaurants
- Transportation typically in comfortable 9-person people movers with A/C or in cars
- Almost all meals, except those specified as “on your own” in the itinerary
- Water, soda and snacks available in the van
- Cultural outings (calvados tasting, church tour, etc.) and shopping time on trips longer than a few days
- Admission fees to all sites

Tour Price Excludes*

- Transportation to and from the starting point and lodging and transportation before or after the tour’s start and end times; for example, the cost of a hotel night for participants who choose to arrive early.
- Dinner drinks
- Dinners or lunches specifically excluded in the tour brochure
- Souvenirs and gifts

*See KDIH’s 2025 Terms and Conditions for full details.

Questions or concerns? Contact Randy Gaulke at kneedeepintohistory@gmail.com or 908.451.0252.



Surviving veterans were cheered at the 80th Anniversary of the landings in June 2024.

Knee Deep Into History's Tour Philosophy

Knee Deep Into History, LLC was founded by Randy Gaulke in 2020 after he spent eight months in 2017-18 as a freelance guide to the American battlefields of WW1. During those eight months (and the prior thirty years) Randy's tour philosophy has evolved. We:

1. TAKE clients into the field,
2. GUIDE small-group tours (12 max.),
3. PROMOTE a balanced view of both sides,
4. OFFER tours for passionate history buffs,
5. BRIDGE cultures.

What to Expect from a KDIH Tour

- Our small-group tours are designed to enable maximum interaction between participants and guides. Size is generally limited to a maximum of 12 participants.
- Clients will be picked up and returned to the designated starting and ending point at the times indicated.
 - Clients desiring other arrangements need to communicate their needs to Randy Gaulke in advance with the understanding that KDIH has to balance an individual client's needs with the group.
- On tour days, participants should expect to be "in the field" from 09h00 to somewhere around 17h00, regardless of weather. This will be followed by a break and dinner around 19h30.
 - Participants should bring appropriate clothing for the field, and nicer clothing for evening meals.
 - Please see the clothing guide on our website for ideas.
- Spouses and mature young adults are welcome, but please understand that there will be limited down time for sightseeing and time off.
 - When moving from one hotel to another, it will generally not be possible to stay in town.
- Regarding meals:
 - Continental breakfast will be served at the hotel.
 - Sandwich lunches (with wonderful European bread) will be eaten "in the field" to conserve time.
 - Snacks of water, soda, fruit and sweets will be available for free in the van to recharge one's batteries.
 - Multi-course dinners will generally start at the hotel/restaurant around 19h00.
 - Traditional European dinners often last two hours +/-.
 - This gives participants a chance to socialize, ask questions of the guides and share their experiences of the day.
- As per the 2025 Terms and Conditions, in the event that we have fewer than six participants signed up 61 days prior to the tour, we reserve the right to cancel the tour or we can run the tour with only one guide and/or step the hotels down to high-quality two-star hotels.

Meet Tour Guides Randy Gaulke and Markus Klauer

Randy Gaulke has been studying military history for decades as a wargamer, reenactor and battlefield visitor. In 2017 he left the corporate world and during 2017-18 he lived and worked eight months in France as a freelance guide to the WW1 battlefields during the WW1 Centennial. His experiences during those eight months convinced him to follow his passion and start a tour business. Randy has also visited and guided tours of the WW2 battlefields since 2008. Over his life he has lived in Europe almost three years. He speaks fluent English and German and intermediate French. Randy lives in Winchester, VA, not far from the National Archives. He also maintains the website <https://meuse-argonne.com> and the Meuse-Argonne.com Facebook group.

Markus Klauer is a retired Bundeswehr Officer whose military career included five years in an armored battalion and professional work with American and French units. Like Randy, Markus has been studying military history and visiting the battlefields for decades. He has written five books in German covering WW1 and his website can be viewed at <https://gb-weltkriegsbuch.de>. Since retiring in 2018 Markus has been expanding his battlefield research to the battles of WW2, including the Ardennes, Sedan 1940, Normandy and the Seelow Heights near Berlin. Markus lives in Waterloo, Belgium, and he speaks German, English and French fluently.

Randy and Markus have known each other for 30 years. Both share a deep love of historical research and a desire to get their clients into the field. With their language and cultural skills, both understand the “other side,” and both strive to present a balanced view of the combat.



Randy and Markus examining the German bunkers on Omaha Beach during a Normandy recon in 2022

Select Feedback from our Recent Tours

“This week has been a dream come true for me, thanks to the meticulous preparation and execution of the two of you. I truly felt as if I was walking in the footsteps of my grand-uncle in WWI and of my dad in WWII, seeing what each of them was seeing, and trying to imagine what each of them might have been thinking and feeling during their respective wartime experiences. I couldn’t have asked for a more meaningful experience. And the way you two embraced my entire family made the experience even more magical and memorable for me. I can’t thank you enough!”

John Decker

“Thank you for an amazing journey across so many of the battlefields that I’ve been studying for half my life. You demonstrated to us the true history of the places you showed us, many areas both vast and small on the Western Front. We had the opportunity to see where millions of British, French and German soldiers fought and died and to see how their souls are being honored, even to this day. We got to walk in the footsteps of a few thousand boys from the Land of Lincoln—Illinois—in a unit in which both my son and I have served. For a historian to be able to see, and even touch, pieces of history is a gift I will cherish forever...”

Ltc Matthew Savage



Normandy American Cemetery with a naval ship offshore during the 80th anniversary commemorations

2025 Tour Registration Form
June '44 Normandy Beach and Airborne Landings
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Note: Complete this form only if you are sending your registration manually!

Participants: _____ (Names and ages)

Primary Contact: _____

Address: _____

Contact Email(s): _____

Contact Phone(s): _____

Rooms Needed: _____ Double rooms _____ Single rooms

Emergency Contacts: _____

Emergency Phones: _____

Health Concerns: **Per the Terms and Conditions, participant are required to factually state any health issues that could affect their participation on this trip. Please outline these concerns in a brief letter.**

Other Needs: _____

Signatures: _____

Remember: To complete your registration you must send: 1) signed copies of the registration form, 2) signed copies of the 2025 Terms and Conditions page 4, and 3) a \$600 per person deposit. Deposits can be paid by check, PayPal, Venmo or Zelle. Ask Randy Gaulke for payment details.

Please mail / email / text a copy of this form to:

Randy Gaulke, 124 East Clifford Street, Winchester, VA 22601 USA
kneedeepintohistory@gmail.com 908.451.0252