

Vimy & Arras



This popular day excursion offers History students an interesting and thought provoking combination of World War 1 visits in Northern France. During the First World War, Vimy Ridge was a vital part of the German defence system. All attempts to take the Ridge by the Allied forces during the first three years of the war failed.

In 1917, after careful planning, Canadian troops stormed the Ridge and took control of this strategic position. However, heavy losses were suffered on both sides, including over 10,000 Canadian casualties and 3,598 dead. As an important base for the allies, Arras was never far from the front line. The town was extensively damaged during the war and most of the buildings had to be rebuilt.

“Despite the fact that I seemed to be constantly changing the itinerary and asking for help, your staff were always extremely professional and friendly.”

Itinerary

Depart school very early for a breakfast-time ferry crossing or Eurotunnel to Calais. Arrive in the Vimy area early afternoon for sightseeing. Depart early evening, returning by ferry / Eurotunnel. Arrive back at school in the late evening. The amount of time available in the Vimy and Arras area is limited to approximately 6 hours, but could be less dependent upon the location of your school.

Low season

£33

Mid season

£36

High season

£41

Prices are per person based on Saturday to Thursday departure from Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex or Kent. See page 4 for details of seasonal dates, supplements and insurance costs.

Optional visits

Vimy Memorial Park

Here it is possible to see the preserved remains of trenches and mine craters and the impressive Memorial that dominates the Ridge. The names of 11,285 Canadians who were posted ‘missing presumed dead’ are inscribed on the ramparts of the Memorial. An equal number of trees and shrubs are planted in the Park. The Visitor’s centre includes exhibits, archive photographs and a short audio-visual presentation.



Vimy Tunnels

A guided visit of the underground tunnel system is highly recommended. This is only possible between February and November, but an advance reservation which can be requested through Galloway is essential. This visit is free of charge, but please remember to make a donation.

Wellington Quarry

The Wellington Quarry is located 20 metres below the town of Arras. This network of tunnels was transformed from chalk quarries by New Zealand Soldiers during WWI and provided billeting for thousands of soldiers. Visitors are taken on a guided tour to see audio-visual presentations of the campaign. Advance booking essential. A guided visit (fee payable) can be pre-booked through Galloway.

Arras Memorial to the Missing

Situated on the outskirts of Arras, the memorial wall carries the names of 36,000 servicemen with no known grave who died in battles in the Arras sector. The enclosed Faubourg d’Amiens cemetery contains 2,700 graves.

Notre Dame de Lorette

This is the site of the largest cemetery for French soldiers, with 44,533 burials including 8,000 in a mass grave and the remainder are in eight ossuaries. The site is dominated by an imposing chapel and 52 metre high ‘Lantern Tower’.

Musee Vivant 1914-1918

An excellent museum, adjacent to the cemetery, with an audio-visual presentation, life-like dioramas and many interesting artefacts and documents.

Neuville St. Vaast German War Cemetary

This is on the site of the heavily defended German position known as ‘The Labyrinth’ and contains 37,000 burials with 8,000 in a mass grave. This is the largest German military cemetery in France and also includes headstones marking the graves of 129 Jewish soldiers.

