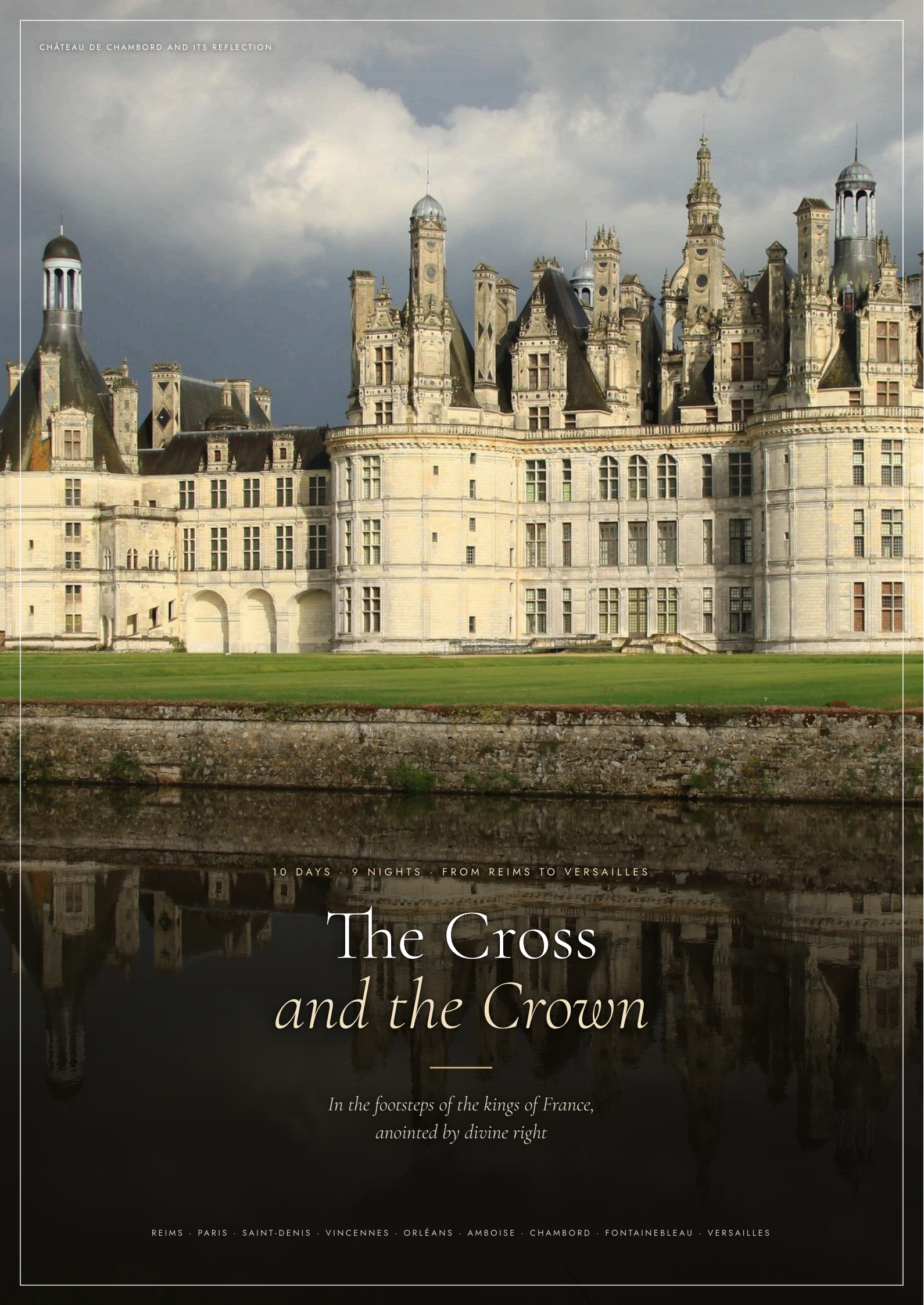


CHÂTEAU DE CHAMBORD AND ITS REFLECTION

10 DAYS · 9 NIGHTS · FROM REIMS TO VERSAILLES

The Cross *and the Crown*

In the footsteps of the kings of France,
anointed by divine right

REIMS · PARIS · SAINT-DENIS · VINCENNES · ORLÉANS · AMBOISE · CHAMBORD · FONTAINEBLEAU · VERSAILLES

YOUR JOURNEY

When kings *received their crown* from God

The history of the French monarchy cannot be separated from that of Christianity.

It all begins with the **baptism of Clovis** by Bishop Remi, in Reims. For more than a thousand years, the kings of France were not simply crowned: they were **anointed** with holy oil, like the kings of the Bible. Their decrees opened with the words **"by the grace of God, King of France"**.

This journey tells the story of the alliance between **throne and altar**: from the medieval king, protector of the Church, to the Renaissance king, patron and builder, and on to the **divine-right monarch** of Versailles.

Each monument sheds light on a moment of this story, between **personal faith**, sacred rites and the political uses of religion.

The anointed king
DAYS 1 — 4

The crown restored
DAYS 5 — 7

The divine-right king
DAYS 8 — 10



THE APOLLO GALLERY, LOUVRE PALACE

Nine sovereigns, *a thousand years of the crown*

"By the grace of God, King of France": from Clovis to Charles X, each held his crown as a gift from God, and each left his mark on a place you will visit.



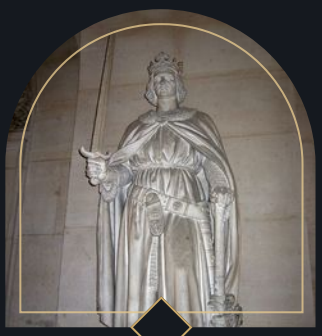
THE BAPTISM OF CLOVIS, MASTER OF SAINT GILES, C. 1500

Clovis

c. 466 – 511

Baptised by Saint Remi around 500: Reims becomes the city of coronations.

DAY 2 · REIMS



STATUE OF PHILIP AUGUSTUS

Philip Augustus

1165 – 1223

Anointed in Reims in 1179, he built the fortress of the Louvre.

DAY 3 · LOUVRE



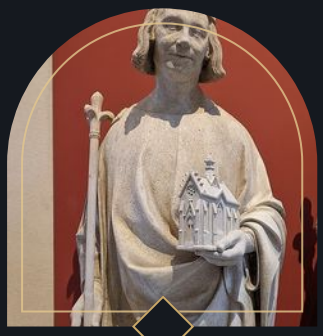
SAINT LOUIS, BY EL GRECO, C. 1590

Saint Louis

1214 – 1270

A canonised king, he built the Sainte-Chapelle for the Crown of Thorns.

DAY 3 · SAINTE-CHAPELLE



STATUE OF CHARLES V, LOUVRE MUSEUM

Charles V

1338 – 1380

The wise king completed Vincennes and founded its Sainte-Chapelle.

DAY 4 · VINCENNES



CHARLES VII, AFTER JEAN FOUQUET

Charles VII

1403 – 1461

Joan of Arc, who said she was sent by God, led him to his coronation.

DAY 5 · ORLÉANS



MEDAL BEARING THE LIKENESS OF CHARLES VIII

Charles VIII

1470 – 1498

Born and died in Amboise, he brought the Renaissance into France.

DAY 6 · AMBOISE



FRANCIS I, BY JEAN CLOUET, C. 1530

Francis I

1494 – 1547

Leonardo's patron, he began Chambord and embellished Fontainebleau.

DAYS 6 – 8



LOUIS XIV IN CORONATION ROBES, WORKSHOP OF HYACINTHE RIGAUD

Louis XIV

1638 – 1715

Anointed in 1654, the divine-right king reigned from Versailles.

DAY 9 · VERSAILLES



CHARLES X IN CORONATION ROBES, AFTER FRANÇOIS GÉRARD

Charles X

1757 – 1836

Anointed in Reims in 1825: the last coronation in French history.

DAY 2 · REIMS



YOUR ROUTE

From Reims *to Versailles*

The whole journey by private luxury touring coach, from and back to Paris-Charles de Gaulle. Amboise is a day trip from Tours (dotted line).

1 Reims
DAY 1 · 1 NIGHT

2 Paris
DAYS 2 – 3 · 2 NIGHTS

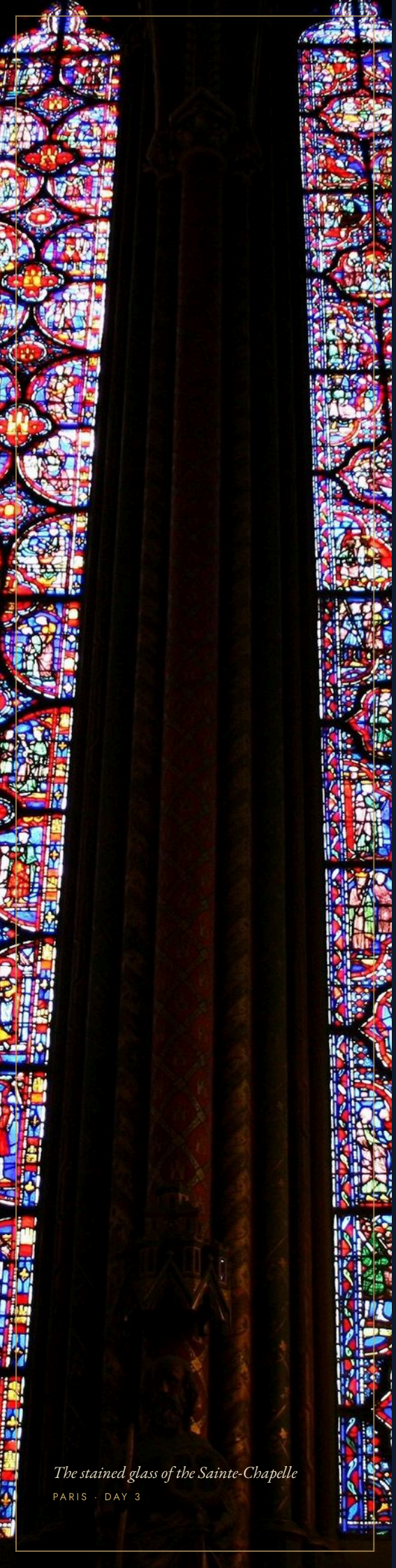
3 Orléans
DAY 4 · 1 NIGHT

4 Tours
DAYS 5 – 6 · 2 NIGHTS

5 Fontainebleau
DAY 7 · 1 NIGHT

6 Versailles
DAY 8 · 1 NIGHT

7 Paris
DAY 9 · 1 NIGHT



The stained glass of the Sainte-Chapelle
PARIS · DAY 3

A THOUSAND YEARS IN EIGHT DATES

From the baptism of Clovis to the last coronation

The great moments of a kingship received from God, which you are about to explore.

c. 500 — CLOVIS AND SAINT REMI
The king of the Franks is baptised in Reims by Bishop Remi.

1144 — ABBOT SUGER
The new choir of Saint-Denis, flooded with light, heralds Gothic art.

1190 — PHILIP AUGUSTUS
Before leaving on crusade, the king has the fortress of the Louvre built.

1248 — SAINT LOUIS
Consecration of the Sainte-Chapelle, shrine of the Crown of Thorns.

1429 — JOAN OF ARC
Orléans is freed on 8 May; Charles VII is anointed in Reims on 17 July.

1519 — FRANCIS I
Work begins on Chambord; Leonardo da Vinci dies in Amboise.

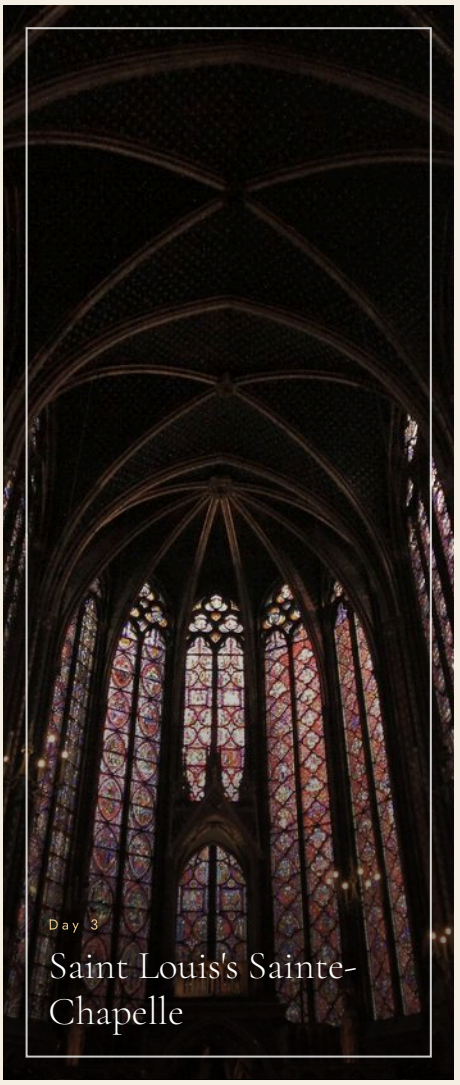
1682 — LOUIS XIV
The court and the government move to Versailles.

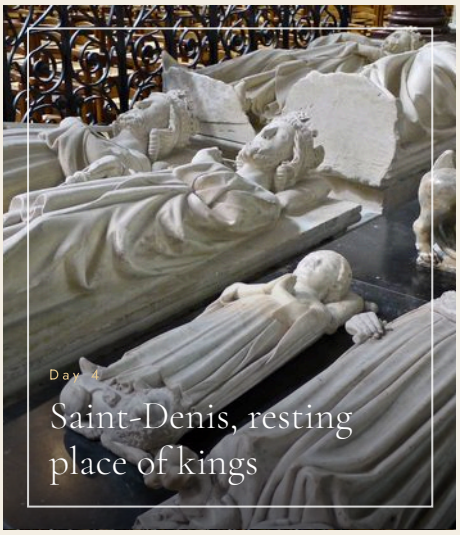
1825 — CHARLES X
The last coronation of a king of France, in Reims.

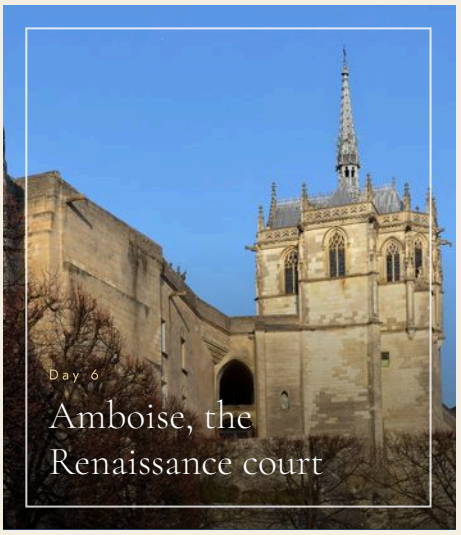
Six places *where throne meets altar*

Cathedrals, chapels, royal tombs and palaces: a comfortable pace, never rushed.

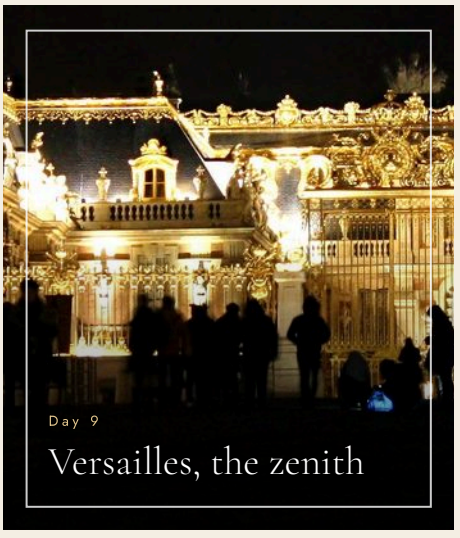


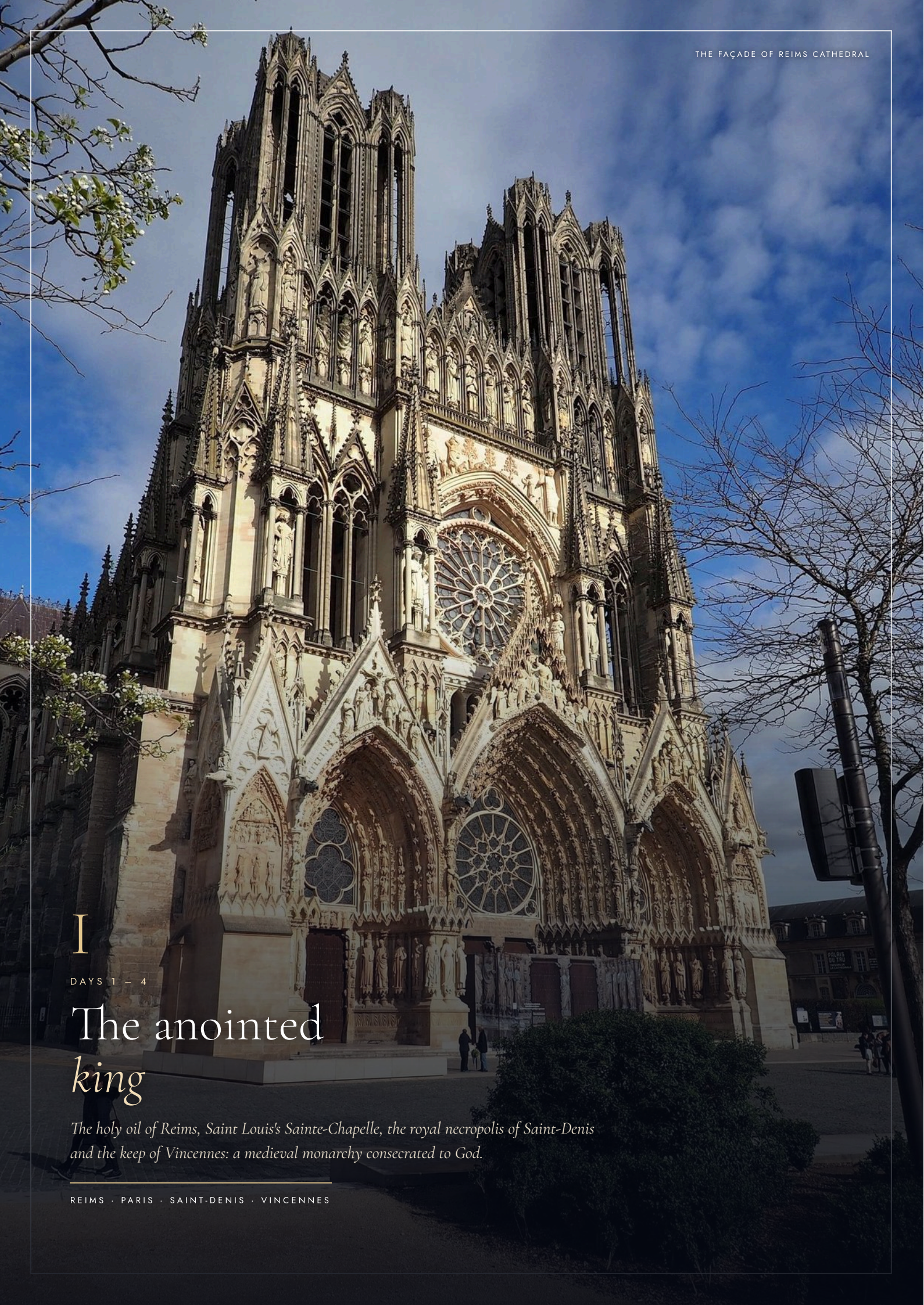












THE FAÇADE OF REIMS CATHEDRAL

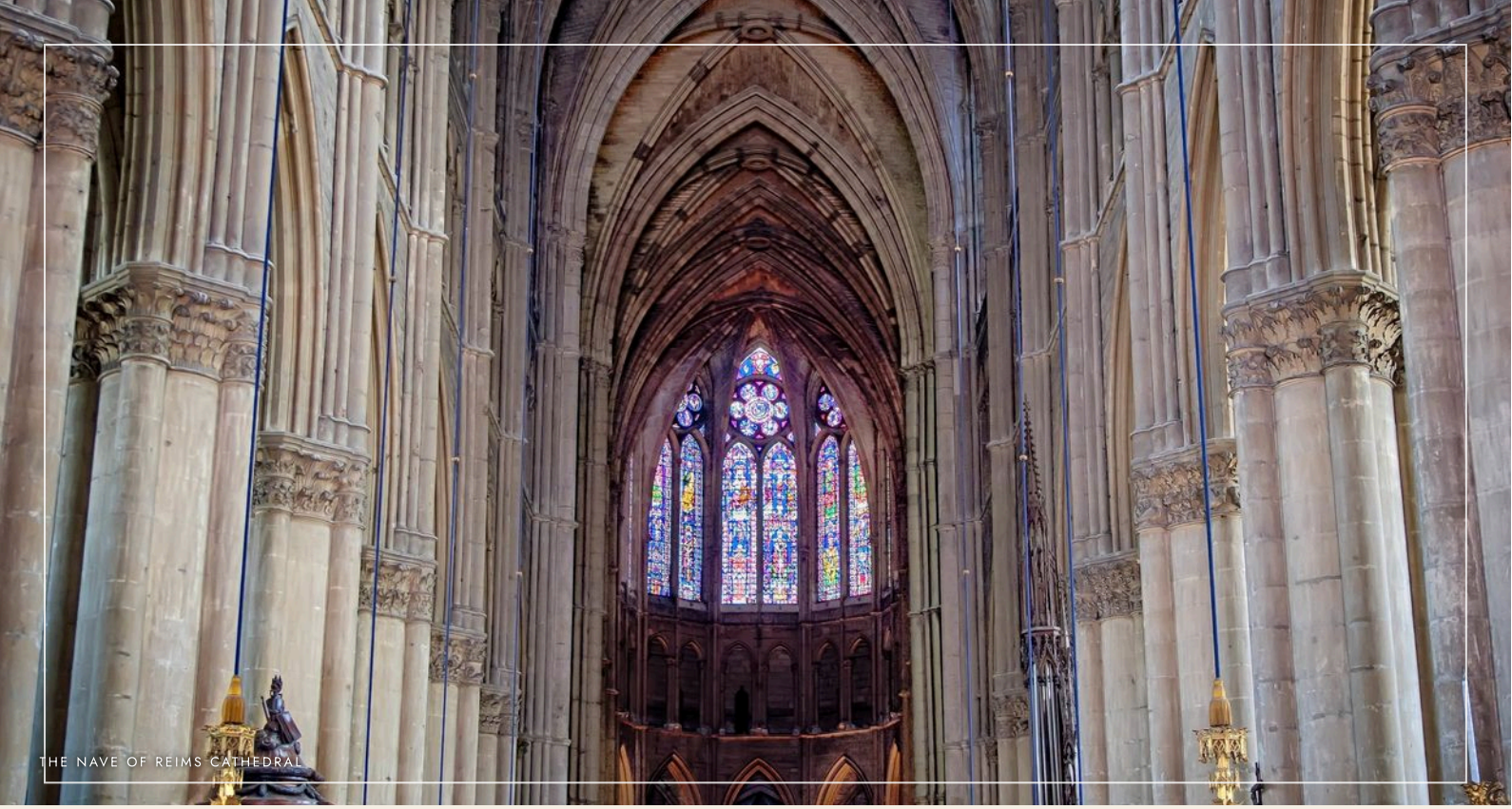
I

DAYS 1 – 4

The anointed *king*

The holy oil of Reims, Saint Louis's Sainte-Chapelle, the royal necropolis of Saint-Denis and the keep of Vincennes: a medieval monarchy consecrated to God.

REIMS · PARIS · SAINT-DENIS · VINCENNES



THE NAVE OF REIMS CATHEDRAL

DAY 1

Welcome
to the land of the Most Christian Kings

Paris-Charles de Gaulle – Reims

MORNING	Arrival at Paris-Charles de Gaulle *Welcome of the group*
AFTERNOON	Private coach transfer *Hotel check-in, time to rest*
EVENING	Welcome dinner *Night in Reims*

Welcome at the airport, then on to **Reims**, the historic city of coronations. After the international flight, free time to rest at the hotel.

In the evening, the **welcome dinner** opens the journey: here, for centuries, the kings of France received a **sacred mission**, and the ceremonies of Reims were its most dazzling expression.

DID YOU KNOW?

2,303

The number of statues recorded on Reims Cathedral, one of the richest sculpted ensembles of the Middle Ages.



THE SMILING ANGEL AND ITS NEIGHBOURS, REIMS PORTAL



BENEATH THE VAULTS OF REIMS CATHEDRAL

DAY 2

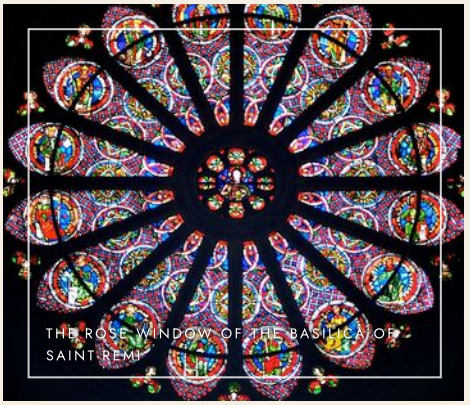
Reims, where kings *received God's anointing*

Reims – Paris

MORNING	Guided tour of Reims *Notre-Dame Cathedral*
AFTERNOON	Basilica of Saint-Remi *Palais du Tau, if open*
EVENING	Drive to Paris *Night in Paris*



SCULPTURES OF REIMS CATHEDRAL AT NIGHTFALL



THE ROSE WINDOW OF THE BASILICA OF SAINT-REMI



THE PALAIS DU TAU, FORMER ARCHBISHOPS' PALACE

On a **guided tour**, **Notre-Dame Cathedral**, where most of the kings of France were anointed, including **Charles VII** in 1429, with Joan of Arc at his side. Then the **Basilica of Saint-Remi**, which holds the tomb of the bishop who baptised **Clovis**.

The **Palais du Tau**, former residence of the archbishops where the king stayed for his coronation, displays its treasures, **subject to its reopening** to the public. In the late afternoon, drive to Paris.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Smiling Angel

Carved on the north portal of the façade around 1240, it has become the emblem of Reims.

DAY 2 · REIMS

The coronation, *step by step*

More than a crowning, a liturgy: the anointing made the sovereign a king "by the grace of God". After the ceremony, he touched the sick suffering from scrofula, with the words: "The king touches you, God heals you."



THE GREAT ROSE WINDOW OF REIMS CATHEDRAL

The oaths
STEP 1

The king pledges to protect the Church and to govern with justice.

The anointing
STEP 2

The archbishop anoints him with holy chrism: the act that makes him a consecrated king.

The regalia
STEP 3

He receives the ring, the sceptre and the hand of justice, signs of his office.

The crowning
STEP 4

The crown is placed on his head, held up by the peers of the realm.

The enthronement
STEP 5

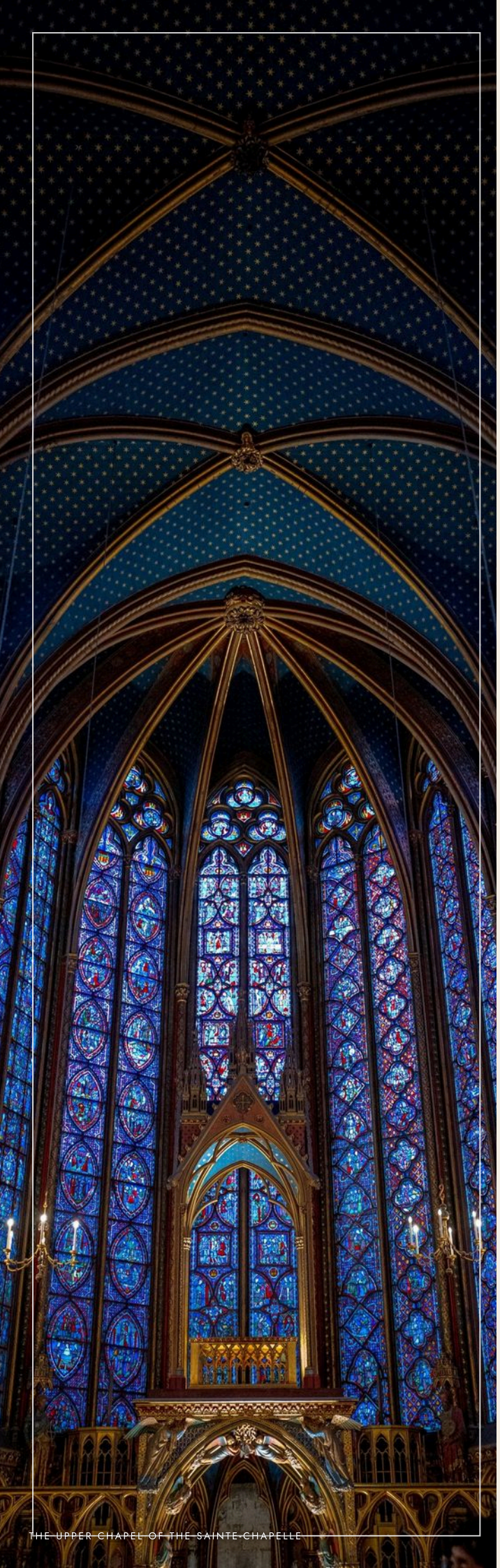
Seated on his throne, the king is acclaimed: "Vivat rex in æternum!"

1027 – 1825
from Henry I to Charles X, almost every king is anointed in Reims

9th century
Archbishop Hincmar records the legend of the Holy Ampulla brought by a dove

1793
the Holy Ampulla is smashed during the Revolution

17 July 1429
coronation of Charles VII, with Joan of Arc at his side



THE UPPER CHAPEL OF THE SAINTE-CHAPELLE

DAY 3 · MORNING

Paris, the palace *of the saint king*

Paris, full day

MORNING	Guided tour *Sainte-Chapelle*
AFTERNOON	Same guided tour *Conciergerie*
EVENING	Afternoon at the Louvre *Night in Paris*

On a **guided tour**, the **Sainte-Chapelle**, built by **Louis IX** to house the relics of the Passion, including the **Crown of Thorns**. Its stained glass tells sacred history up to the arrival of the relics in Paris: a message both **spiritual and royal**.

Then the **Conciergerie**, a remnant of the Capetian palace of the Cité, transformed under **Philip IV the Fair**. Its Hall of the Men-at-Arms keeps the memory of medieval power, and that of **Marie Antoinette**, imprisoned here in 1793.

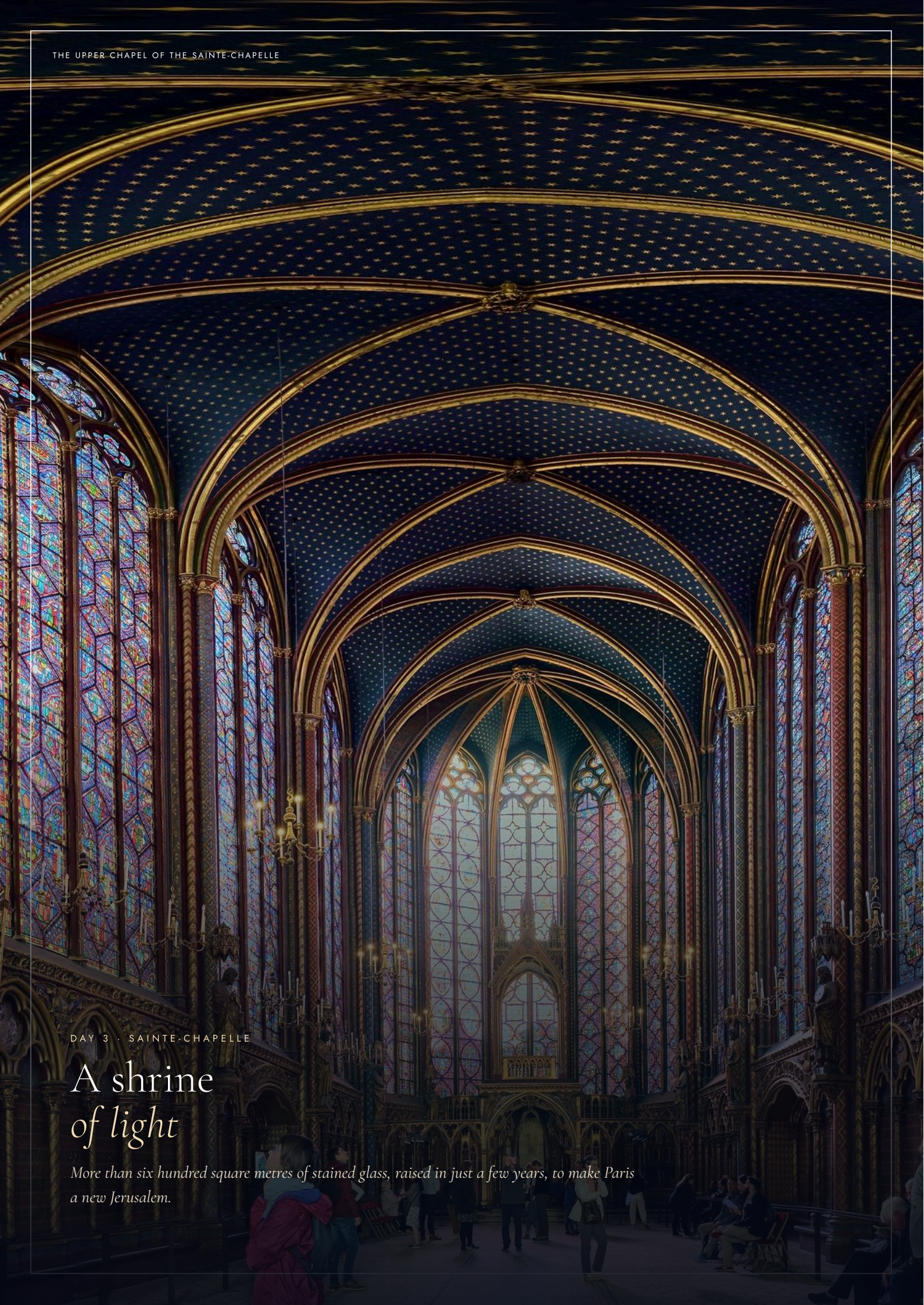


THE HALL OF THE MEN-AT-ARMS, CONCIERGERIE

DID YOU KNOW?

1248

The Sainte-Chapelle is consecrated on 26 April. Saint Louis had paid far more for the Crown of Thorns than for the building itself.



THE UPPER CHAPEL OF THE SAINTE-CHAPELLE

DAY 3 · SAINTE-CHAPELLE

A shrine *of light*

More than six hundred square metres of stained glass, raised in just a few years, to make Paris a new Jerusalem.

DAY 3 · AFTERNOON

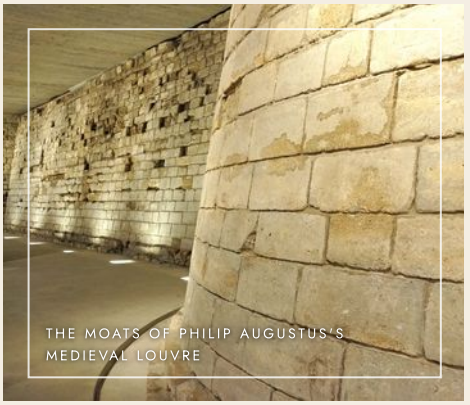
The Louvre, *from kings to masterpieces*

Paris, Louvre Museum

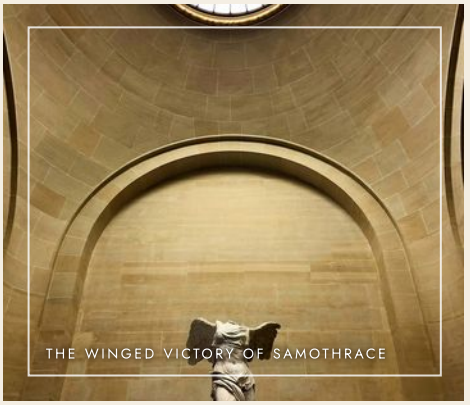
MORNING	Guided morning *Sainte-Chapelle and Conciergerie*
AFTERNOON	The Louvre at your own pace *The whole afternoon*
EVENING	Return to the hotel *Second night in Paris*



THE PYRAMID AND COUR NAPOLÉON AT SUNSET



THE MOATS OF PHILIP AUGUSTUS'S MEDIEVAL LOUVRE



THE WINGED VICTORY OF SAMOTHRACE

The whole afternoon is devoted to the **Louvre Museum**, on a **self-guided visit**, according to ticketing conditions: paintings, sculptures, antiquities and world masterpieces, each at their own pace.

Beneath today's palace lie the **remains of the medieval Louvre**: the moats and foundations of the fortress built by **Philip Augustus** from 1190, which became a royal residence under **Charles V**.

DID YOU KNOW?

Charles V

The king installed his "library" at the Louvre, with nearly a thousand manuscripts: the ancestor of the Bibliothèque nationale.



THE NAVE OF THE BASILICA OF SAINT-DENIS

DAY 4

Saint-Denis and Vincennes, *kings before God*

Paris – Saint-Denis – Vincennes – Orléans

MORNING
Basilica of Saint-Denis
Royal necropolis, self-guided

AFTERNOON
Château de Vincennes
Keep and Sainte-Chapelle

EVENING
Drive to Orléans
Night in Orléans

In **Saint-Denis**, the necropolis of the kings of France: effigies and tombs of more than forty kings, queens and princes. Monks prayed here for the salvation of the sovereigns: the abbey was the keeper of **dynastic memory**, and Abbot **Suger** gave birth to Gothic art here.

In the afternoon, on a self-guided visit, the **Château de Vincennes** of **Charles V**: keep, ramparts and Sainte-Chapelle. A fortress combining defence, residence, government and prayer, far from the showcase palaces to come.

DID YOU KNOW?

The oak tree

According to his biographer Joinville, Saint Louis dispensed justice seated at the foot of an oak, in the woods of Vincennes.



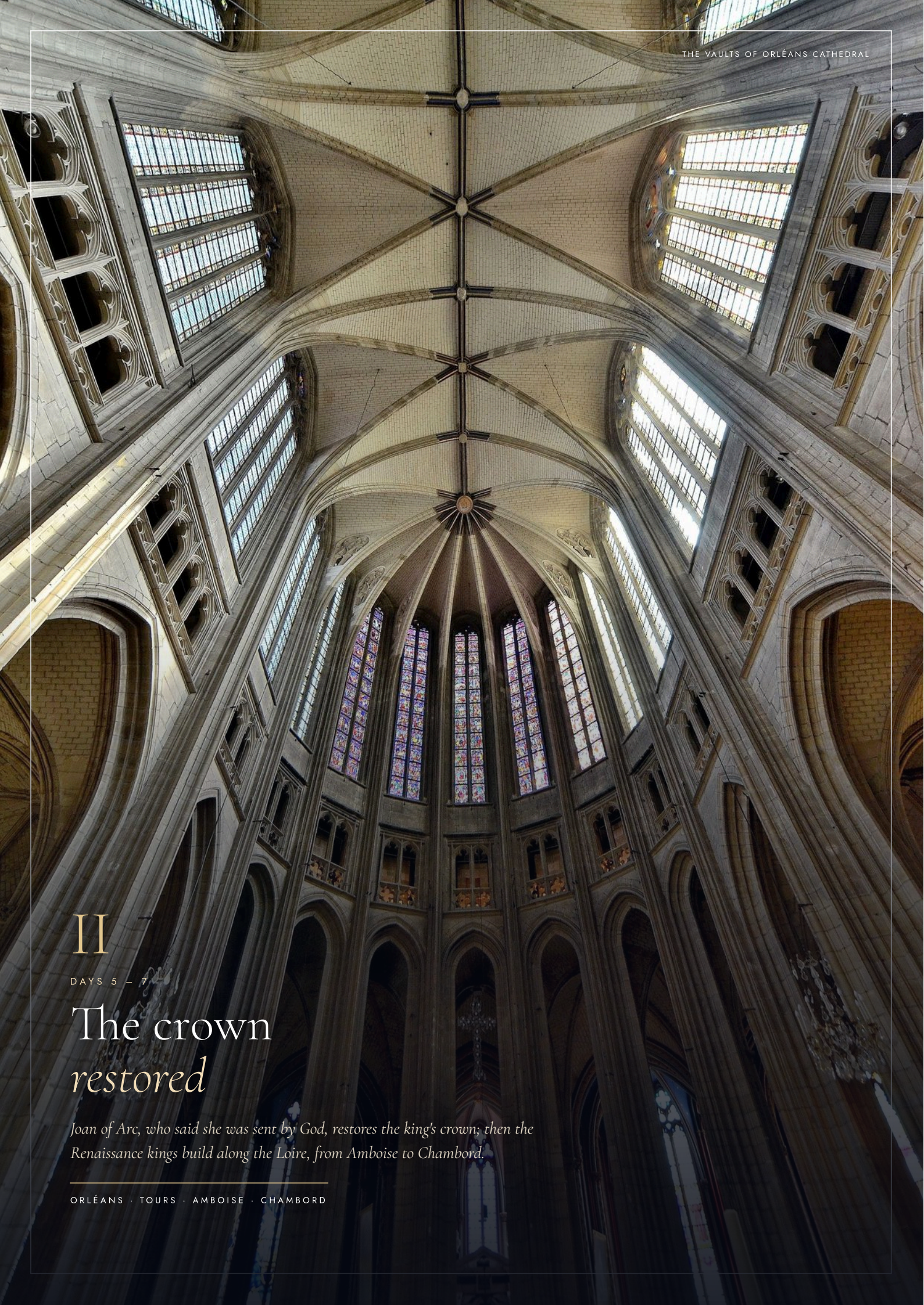
ROYAL TOMB EFFIGIES, SAINT-DENIS NECROPOLIS



THE KEEP OF THE CHÂTEAU DE VINCENNES



THE SAINTE-CHAPELLE OF VINCENNES



THE VAULTS OF ORLÉANS CATHEDRAL

II

DAYS 5 – 7

The crown *restored*

Joan of Arc, who said she was sent by God, restores the king's crown; then the Renaissance kings build along the Loire, from Amboise to Chambord.

ORLÉANS · TOURS · AMBOISE · CHAMBORD



ORLÉANS CATHEDRAL (SAINTE-CROIX)

DAY 5

Orléans, Joan of Arc *and the fate of Charles VII*

Orléans – Tours

MORNING	Guided tour of Orléans *Sainte-Croix Cathedral*
AFTERNOON	Joan of Arc's House *Historic centre, Martroi*
EVENING	Drive to Tours *Night in Tours*

On a **guided tour**, **Sainte-Croix Cathedral** and the story of the **Hundred Years' War**: in 1429, Joan of Arc helps to free Orléans, then leads the Dauphin Charles to his **coronation** in Reims, in the name of the mission she said she had received from God.

Joan of Arc's House, a reconstruction of the house where she stayed (not her birthplace), tells her story. Then the **Place du Martroi** and the places of her memory: a young woman carried by an exceptional **religious conviction**.

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 1430

Every year, in early May, Orléans celebrates its deliverance by Joan: the Fêtes johanniques.



THE ROYAL CHÂTEAU D'AMBOISE, HOME OF THE RENAISSANCE KINGS

DAY 6

Amboise,
kingship in the Renaissance

Tours – Amboise – Tours

MORNING	Royal Château d'Amboise *In-depth self-guided visit*
AFTERNOON	Saint-Hubert Chapel *Back to Tours mid-afternoon*
EVENING	Free late afternoon *Second night in Tours*

The **royal Château d'Amboise**, home of **Charles VIII**, **Louis XII** and **Francis I**: its historic rooms, gardens and views over the Loire tell of the passage from the Middle Ages to the **Renaissance**, under the influence of Italy.

Within its walls, the **Saint-Hubert Chapel**, a Gothic jewel holding the remains attributed to **Leonardo da Vinci**, the guest of Francis I. A deliberately peaceful day.

DID YOU KNOW?

1498

Charles VIII, born in Amboise, died here after striking his head on the lintel of a low doorway on his way to a game of real tennis.



CHÂTEAU D'AMBOISE AND THE BRIDGE OVER THE LOIRE AT NIGHTFALL

DAY 7

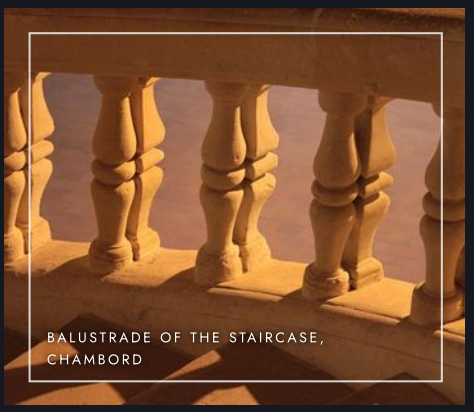
Chambord, the grandeur *and ambition of Francis I*

Tours – Chambord – Fontainebleau

MORNING	Château de Chambord *In-depth self-guided visit*
AFTERNOON	Lunch *Transfer to Fontainebleau*
EVENING	Check-in *Night in Fontainebleau*



CHAMBORD AND ITS REFLECTION



BALUSTRADE OF THE STAIRCASE, CHAMBORD



THE FAÇADE OF CHAMBORD

Begun in 1519, **Chambord** asserts the power of **Francis I** through architecture. At the heart of the château stands the famous **double-helix staircase**; around it, the royal apartments, the terraces and their forest of chimneys.

Leonardo da Vinci's influence on its design has often been suggested, without formal proof. The **chapel** recalls the place of religion in the life of the court.

DID YOU KNOW?

426

Rooms, 282 fireplaces and 77 staircases: yet Francis I stayed here for only a few weeks in all.



CHÂTEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU AND THE CARP POND

III

DAYS 8 – 10

The divine-right *king*

Fontainebleau, home of kings for eight centuries, then Versailles, where the divine-right monarchy reaches its zenith.

FONTAINEBLEAU · VERSAILLES · PARIS



THE FRANCIS I GALLERY, FONTAINEBLEAU

DAY 8

Fontainebleau, *eight centuries of royal presence*

Fontainebleau – Versailles

MORNING
Château de Fontainebleau
Francis I Gallery

AFTERNOON
Royal apartments
Trinity Chapel

EVENING
Drive to Versailles
Night in Versailles

An in-depth self-guided visit of the **Château de Fontainebleau**, from its medieval origins to its royal and imperial periods. The **Francis I Gallery**, decorated by Italian artists, reveals a court art of great refinement.

The **royal apartments** reflect the hierarchy of the court; the **Trinity Chapel**, depending on access, recalls the role of Christian ceremonies.

DID YOU KNOW?

"The house of the centuries"

This is how Napoleon, on Saint Helena, described Fontainebleau, "the true home of kings".



THE HORSESHOE STAIRCASE, FONTAINEBLEAU



THE DIANA GALLERY, FONTAINEBLEAU



THE OVAL COURT AND THE CHÂTEAU, FONTAINEBLEAU



THE GARDEN FAÇADE OF THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES

DAY 9

Versailles, *the divine-right king*

Versailles – Paris

MORNING	Palace of Versailles *State Apartments, Hall of Mirrors*
AFTERNOON	Royal Chapel and gardens *Drive to Paris*
EVENING	Farewell dinner cruise on the Seine *Night in Paris*

A self-guided visit of the **Palace of Versailles**: the **State Apartments**, etiquette and the staging of power, then the **Hall of Mirrors**, a painted tribute to the reign of **Louis XIV**. The **Royal Chapel**, dedicated to Saint Louis, depending on the areas open, recalls the king's daily Mass.

André Le Nôtre's **gardens** extend the royal order to the horizon. In the evening, a **gourmet farewell dinner cruise** on the Seine, past Paris lit up at night.

DID YOU KNOW?

1710

Consecration of the Royal Chapel, dedicated to Saint Louis, ancestor of the Bourbons and model of the Christian king.



THE HALL OF MIRRORS, PALACE OF VERSAILLES



THE ROYAL CHAPEL, PALACE OF VERSAILLES



LE NÔTRE'S GARDENS AND THE GRAND CANAL



THE HALL OF MIRRORS, PALACE OF VERSAILLES

DAY 9 · VERSAILLES

The Hall *of Mirrors*

Beneath the vault painted by Charles Le Brun to the glory of Louis XIV's reign, three hundred and fifty-seven mirrors face the gardens.

DAY 10

Farewell, *France*

Paris – Paris-Charles de Gaulle

MORNING	Breakfast at the hotel *Last moments in Paris*
AFTERNOON	Private transfer *To Paris-Charles de Gaulle*
EVENING	Return flight *End of the journey*

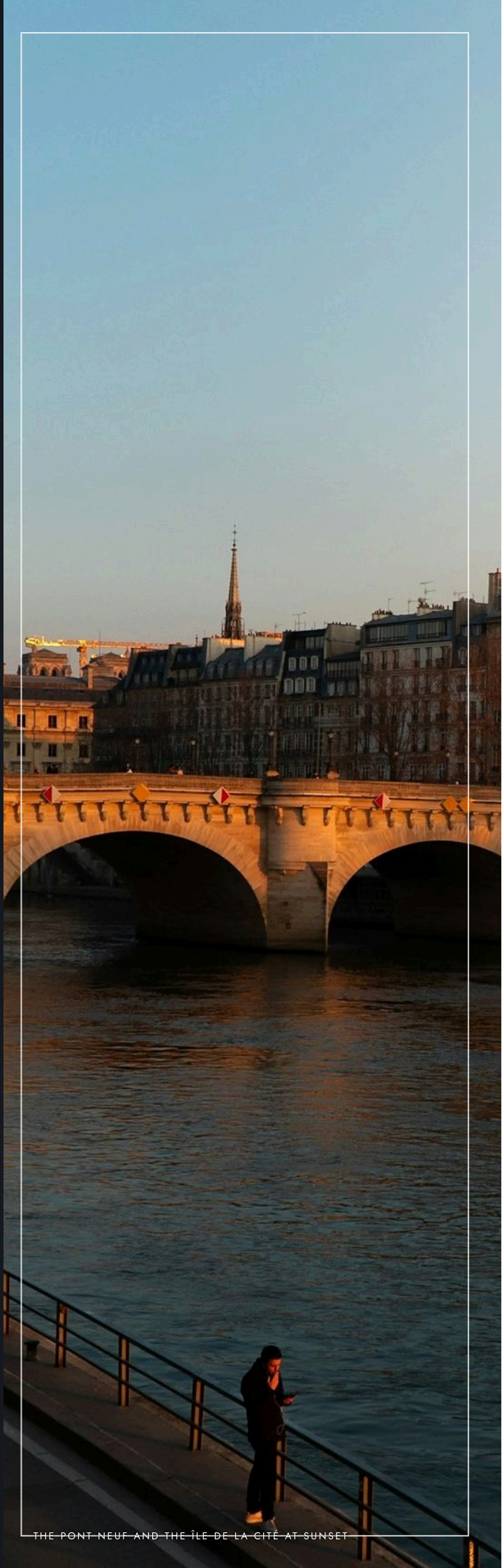
After **breakfast**, a **private transfer** takes the group to **Paris-Charles de Gaulle** airport.

Everyone leaves with memories of **Reims** and its coronations, of **Saint Louis**, of **Joan of Arc**, of **Francis I** and of the splendour of **Versailles**.

DID YOU KNOW?

Most Christian King

This title, borne for centuries by the kings of France, reminded each sovereign of his duties towards the Church and his subjects.



THE PONT NEUF AND THE ÎLE DE LA CITÉ AT SUNSET

YOUR GUIDES

Three guided tours, *three keys to understanding*

Professional guides speaking the group's language, able to explain the links between the Church, the monarchy and the great events of French history.

I — DAY 2

Reims

Notre-Dame Cathedral, Basilica of Saint-Remi and Palais du Tau, if it is open.

2 — DAY 3

Paris, Sainte-Chapelle and Conciergerie

A single morning devoted to the palace of the Cité and the legacy of Saint Louis.

3 — DAY 5

Orléans

Sainte-Croix Cathedral, Joan of Arc's House and the historic centre.

> *All other visits, including the Louvre, Saint-Denis, Vincennes, Amboise, Chambord, Fontainebleau and Versailles, are self-guided, according to each monument's visiting arrangements. Interpretation tools included with tickets are not guided tours.*

REMARKABLE EXPERIENCES

Four moments *to remember*

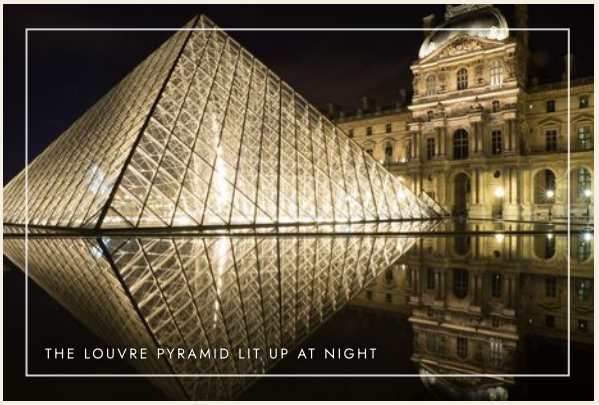


THE PORTAL OF REIMS CATHEDRAL

DAY 1 · REIMS

The welcome dinner

The first evening of the journey, in the city of coronations, to get to know one another and step into the history of kings.

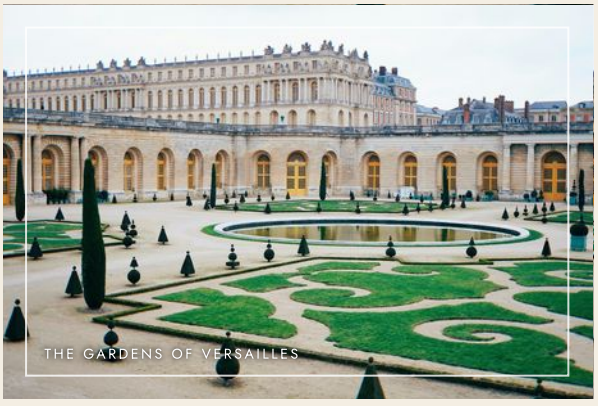


THE LOUVRE PYRAMID LIT UP AT NIGHT

DAY 3 · PARIS

A whole afternoon at the Louvre

Time to discover the collections at your own pace, and the foundations of Philip Augustus's fortress.

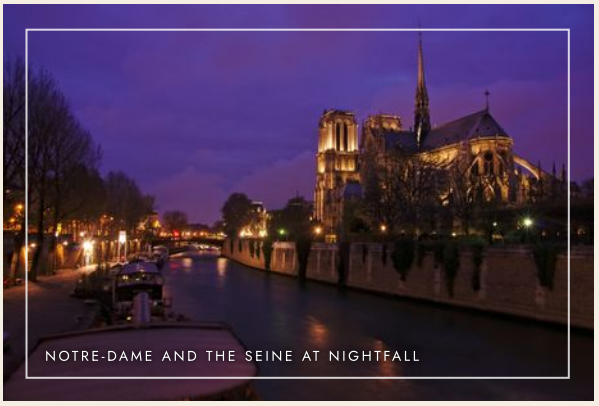


THE GARDENS OF VERSAILLES

DAY 9 · VERSAILLES

Le Nôtre's gardens

Monumental perspectives, depending on the season, revealing how the landscape served royal majesty.



NOTRE-DAME AND THE SEINE AT NIGHTFALL

DAY 9 · PARIS

The farewell dinner cruise

A gourmet dinner on the Seine, past the illuminated monuments: the evening that brings the journey to a close.

YOUR SERVICES

A journey designed *down to the last detail*

TRANSPORT

- Welcome at Paris-Charles de Gaulle airport
- Private luxury touring coach throughout the tour
- Transfers between cities, sites and hotels
- Final transfer to Paris-Charles de Gaulle

ACCOMMODATION

- 9 nights in carefully selected upscale hotels
- 4-star, or even 5-star, depending on the stop

MEALS

- Welcome dinner in Reims
- Gourmet farewell dinner cruise on the Seine

GUIDED TOURS

- Reims: cathedral, Saint-Remi, Palais du Tau if open
- Paris: Sainte-Chapelle and Conciergerie
- Orléans: cathedral, Joan of Arc's House, historic centre

ADMISSIONS

- Palais du Tau, subject to reopening
- Sainte-Chapelle and Conciergerie
- Louvre Museum and medieval remains
- Royal necropolis of Saint-Denis, Château de Vincennes
- Joan of Arc's House
- Châteaux of Amboise, Chambord, Fontainebleau and Versailles

THE NINE NIGHTS

D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9
Reims	Paris	Paris	Orléans	Tours	Tours	Fontaine-bleau	Versailles	Paris

International flights are not part of the land services. Meal arrangements, opening hours and access to the areas of each monument will be confirmed when the journey is prepared.

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THE CROSS AND THE CROWN

A thousand years of history *between the Cross and the Crown*

There was a time when the kings of France received their crown from God, beneath the vaults of a cathedral, when royal palaces were as much places of power as symbols of faith.

From Reims to the Sainte-Chapelle, from the tombs of Saint-Denis to the Renaissance residences and on to the splendour of Versailles, faith, politics, art and royal ambition shaped one of the most extraordinary heritages in Europe.

Ten days to travel through a thousand years of history and understand the fascinating bond between the Cross and the Crown.

THE GRAND CANAL AT SUNSET, VERSAILLES