

# The Netherlands, France, Portugal and Spain

## Farm Study Tour 2019

Date	Activity	Overnight
<b>DAY 1</b> Fri, Aug 23	<b>Tour leader: Lloyd O'Connell 0428 724 615</b> Depart Australian capitals for Amsterdam.	On plane
<b>DAY 2</b> Sat, Aug 24 (B,L)	On arrival in Amsterdam we are met at the airport and transferred to our centrally located, canal-side hotel. After freshening up, we enjoy an informal welcome reception at the hotel and a chance to say hello to your fellow travellers. We then have a brief guided walking tour designed to orientate you to this intriguing and historic city – not to mention a chance to stretch your legs after the long flight. Free evening.	<b>The Netherlands</b>  <b>Amsterdam,</b> <b>Estherea Hotel</b>
<b>DAY 3</b> Sun, Aug 25 (B,L,D)	We enjoy a guided canal tour of Amsterdam this morning before heading out of town to visit some intensive agricultural operations. Return to Amsterdam for overnight.	<b>Amsterdam</b> <b>Estherea Hotel</b>  <a href="http://www.estherea.nl/en/index.html">www.estherea.nl/en/index.html</a>
<b>DAY 4</b> Mon, Aug 26 (B,L)	More farm and cultural visits this morning including the Royal FloraHolland flower auction at Aalsmeer. This is the largest trading centre for plants and flowers in the world. The Netherlands is also a world-leader in autonomous farm machinery and precision agriculture technology for broadacre farmers – we will visit one of the manufacturers exporting their technology to Australia. We return to Amsterdam for a free afternoon and evening.	<b>Amsterdam</b> <b>Estherea Hotel</b>
<b>DAY 5</b> Tues, Aug 27 (B,L)	We leave Amsterdam by charter coach this morning and head south to Rotterdam. From 1962 until 2004 the Port of Rotterdam was the world's busiest port – now overtaken first by Singapore and then Shanghai. After a tour of the port, we continue into Belgium and arrive at one of the best preserved medieval cities in the world, Bruges. We enjoy a guided walking tour of the area around the famous market square before continuing into south-western Belgium and the region of West Flanders. On the way we travel through magnificent farming country – a scene which belies the human suffering endured here during WWI. Our overnight stop is the town of Ypres (pronounced Ee-Prez). Ypres occupied a strategic position during WWI because it stood in the path of Germany's planned sweep across the rest of Belgium and into France from the north. Ypres is also the home of The Menin Gate Memorial. We will arrive in Ypres in time for the Last Post Ceremony. Every evening since 1928 (except for a period during WWII when Ypres was occupied by Germany), at precisely 8pm, traffic around the imposing arches of the Menin Gate Memorial has been stopped while the Last Post is sounded beneath the gate by the local fire brigade in honour of the memory of British Empire soldiers who fought and died there.	<b>BELGIUM</b> <b>Ypres</b>

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<b>DAY 6</b> <b>Wed, Aug 28</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we will visit some of the Western Front battlefields and memorials. With a local battlefields historian/guide on board we journey along sections of the Australian Remembrance Trail taking in areas such as Flanders Fields, Passchendaele, Broodsiende,, Pozieres, Le Hamel and Villers-Bretonneux. Overnight in Northern France at Amiens.	<b>FRANCE</b> <b>Amiens</b>
<b>DAY 7</b> <b>Thurs, Aug 29</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	This morning there is the opportunity to visit the recently opened museum at Villers-Bretonneux commemorating the Australian men and women who served on the Western Front – the Sir John Monash Centre. Then we head southwards with a farm visit on our way to Paris in time for a guided orientation tour of the “City of Light”.	<b>Paris</b>
<b>DAY 8</b> <b>Fri, Aug 30</b> <b>(B)</b>	Another guided tour this morning before a free day in Paris.	<b>Paris</b>
<b>DAY 9</b> <b>Sat, Aug 31</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	We leave Paris today and continue southwest into the beautiful Loire Valley with a farm visit and scenic stops along the way.	<b>Loire Valley</b>
<b>DAY 10</b> <b>Sun, Sep 1</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Continuing south today we have more farm visits and scenic stops in the postcard perfect Loire Valley and Dordogne regions before arriving at San Sebastian - a majestic seaside town on the Bay of Biscay and just inside the Spanish border. San Sebastian is also the gateway to the mountainous Basque Country of northern Spain.	<b>SPAIN</b> <b>San Sebastian</b>
<b>DAY 11</b> <b>Mon, Sep 2</b> <b>(B,L)</b>	Farm and cultural visits in and around the Basque region before a free afternoon and evening in San Sebastian.	<b>San Sebastian</b>
<b>Day 12</b> <b>Tues, Sep 3</b> <b>(B,D)</b>	We leave San Sebastian this morning and travel westwards and into the heart of Basque Country (Euskadi). Basque Country is an autonomous community in northern Spain with strong cultural traditions, a celebrated cuisine and a distinct language. We continue onto the main Basque city of Bilbao and call into the world acclaimed and titanium-clad Guggenheim Museum. After visiting the Guggenheim we continue south into the province of Burgos. The most important rivers in the province are the Ebro and the Duero. Over the next day or two we will meander along the Douro River Valley (a world Heritage Listed Site) and visit some of its productive grain and livestock farms. The region is also world famous for its fine wine production, particularly port.	<b>Leon - Douro River Valley</b>
<b>Day 13</b> <b>Wed, Sep 4</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	More farm and scenic visits in the Douro River Valley as we enter Portugal and continue onto Pinhao, a beautiful and historic village nestled on the banks of the Douro. We enjoy a river cruise before overnight in this picture postcard village..	<b>PORTUGAL</b> <b>Pinhao - Douro River Valley</b>
<b>Day 14</b> <b>Thurs, Sep 5</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we swap our charter coach – for a few hours at least – for an historic train. From Pinhao we journey by train along the spectacular Douro River to where it empties into the Atlantic at Porto – a varied city steeped in history. From the warren of narrow streets that make up the ancient Ribeira district through to the grand plazas of the Avenida dos Aliados, Porto has something for everyone. We arrive in town in time for a guided tour.	<b>Porto</b>
<b>Day 15</b> <b>Fri, Sep 6</b> <b>(B)</b>	More guided touring in and around Porto before a free afternoon and evening.	<b>Porto</b>
<b>Day 16</b> <b>Sat, Sep 7</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	We board our coach this morning and travel towards the capital, Lisbon, 300 km to the south. On arrival in Lisbon we have a guided tour of the city to help get our bearings. Lisbon is a beautiful and cosmopolitan city set over a series of hills near the mouth of the River Tagus. It's a place inextricably linked with the sea. Intrepid navigators embarked from here in the 15th and 16th centuries to sail unknown waters and chart new lands. Much of Lisbon's culture and heritage is a legacy of this golden Age of Discovery.	<b>Lisbon</b>

Date	Activity	Overnight
<b>Day 17</b> <b>Sun, Sep 8</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	<p>More guided touring this morning in Lisbon before we travel south today into the Alentejo region, the heart of grain and olive farming in Portugal. We meet with researchers and farmers before continuing onto the spectacular village of Azenha do Mar perched precariously on the southwest Atlantic coastline cliffs.</p>	<b>Azenha do Mar</b>
<b>Day 18</b> <b>Mon, Sep 9</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	<p>This morning we head eastwards and cross into southern Spain and the country's most populous 'autonomous community', Andalusia. Compared to the rest of Spain, Andalusia has been a traditionally agricultural region, rich in culture and a strong identity. Many cultural phenomena that are seen internationally as distinctively Spanish are largely or entirely Andalusian in origin. These include flamenco, bullfighting and Hispano-Moorish architectural styles.</p> <p>Spain is the second biggest producer of cotton in the EU after Greece. And where we are in southwest Andalusia is the region for Spanish cotton production. We meet with some growers and researchers today before continuing onto Seville for overnight.</p>	<b>SPAIN</b> <b>Seville</b>
<b>Day 19</b> <b>Tues, Sep 10</b> <b>(B,L)</b>	<p>This morning we enjoy a guided tour of Seville before a free afternoon and evening in this fantastic city.</p> <p>Seville is the capital of the Andalusia region. Famous for flamenco dancing, major landmarks include the ornate Alcázar castle complex, built during the Moorish Almoravid dynasty, and the 18th-century Plaza de Toros de la Maestranza bullring. The tomb of Christopher Columbus is also found in Seville.</p>	<b>Seville</b>
<b>Day 20</b> <b>Wed, Sep 11</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	<p>A leisurely start before boarding our coach and travelling south into Andalusia. We travel through farmlands and olive groves before arriving at Ronda. This is a mountaintop city in Spain's Malaga province located dramatically above a deep gorge. The gorge separates the city's 15th-century 'new town' from its old town, dating to Moorish rule. Puente Nuevo is the stone bridge spanning the gorge and offers breathtaking views over the Andalusian countryside.</p>	<b>Ronda</b>
<b>Day 21</b> <b>Thur, Sep 12</b> <b>(B)</b>	<p>This morning we travel onto nearby Malaga to board our (very) fast train north to Madrid. This 500 km train journey will be covered in just over 2 hours! We arrive into Madrid in the early afternoon. After checking into our downtown hotel we have a guided walking tour of the old town.</p> <p>Madrid is Spain's central capital and is a city of elegant boulevards and expansive, manicured parks. It's renowned for its rich collections of European art, including the Prado Museum's works by Goya, Velázquez and other Spanish masters.</p>	<b>Madrid</b>
<b>Day 22</b> <b>Fri, Sep 13</b> <b>(B,D)</b>	<p>More guided touring of Madrid this morning. Time permitting, we will also arrange a briefing with Austrade officials. The Madrid office is responsible for Australian import and export interests for both Spain and Portugal. It's then a free afternoon before our farewell dinner this evening.</p>	<b>Madrid</b>
<b>Day 23</b> <b>Sat, Sep 14</b> <b>(B)</b>	<p>Transfer to the airport today for our flights home or other adventures in Europe or elsewhere.</p>	



## YOUR FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Armitage	Stuart & Maxine	2942 Pampas Horrane Rd	CECIL PLAINS	QLD	4407	0428 680 190
Brodie	Michael & Margaret	PO BOX 8068	TREVALLYN	TAS	7250	0439 416787
Burns	Dennis & Maureen	Kalora	CAPELLA	QLD	4723	0428 990 954
Carrigan	Wal & Louise	Norlin	BOGGABILLA	NSW	2409	0428 765 136
Hayward	Brian & Helen	PO Box 21	WARRA	QLD	4411	0429 988 962
Hedt	Brian & Pam	7 Rushbrook Close	HORSHAM	VIC	3400	0417 891 511
Peters	Arnold & Jill	Springfields	WEST PRARIE	QLD	4403	0407 622 982
Single	John & Mary	Narratigah	COONAMBLE	NSW	2829	0428 256 217
Sykes	Bill & Sally	507 Benalla-Tatong Rd	BENALLA	VIC	3672	0427 624 989
Wrigley	Gary & Jenny	Meryon	WARREN	NSW	2824	0428 669 058
O'Connell	Lloyd & Catherine	PO Box 766	TOOWOOMBA	QLD	4350	0428 724 615 (Lloyd) 0408 717 459 (Catherine)