

Epic Battlefield Tours for 2017

TOUR OPERATOR | TRAFALGAR | MONICA POLING | MARCH 05, 2017



PHOTO: A U.S. Marine Corps archive photo from Guadalcanal (Photo via Flickr/[USMC Archive](#))

History buffs already know that 2017 marks the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal, which kicked off the U.S. involvement in the Pacific Theater during World War II. And that this year is also the 100th anniversary of the start of “The Great War” or what is now known colloquially as World War One.

With two such major anniversaries on the horizon, 2017 will be a time for larger-than-life commemorations, memorials and other activities that pay homage to the untold bravery of the many men who fought and gave their lives during these battles.

If you're looking to retrace the steps of a loved one who fought overseas or just want to explore the history of two great conflicts that continue to inform world politics and policies today, a number of travel companies are rolling out epic battlefield tours this year.

A non-exhaustive list includes:

Easy Company: England to the Eagle's Nest

The National WWII Museum in New Orleans has organized a special, commemorative tour that follows in the footsteps of the Band of Brothers. The tour starts in London with a visit to the Wiltshire area where Easy Company lived among the locals while preparing for the invasion. Tour participants are invited to join a welcome banquet attended by some of the same villagers who welcomed Easy Company more than 70 years ago. Other stops include Southwick House, where Eisenhower set D-Day into motion and Omaha Beach, where a morning visit highlights the challenges faced by Army Rangers in scaling imposing 100-foot cliffs. Also on the itinerary, Landsberg, where Hitler was incarcerated and wrote Mein Kampf and Hitler's Eagle's Nest, which was captured by Allied forces in May 1945. www.ww2museumtours.org/easy-company/

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The Great War, A Commemorative Cruise in Belgium

European river cruise line, CroisiEurope is commemorating the 100th anniversary of the start of “The Great War” with a special cruise that pays homage to “the war to end all wars.” For seven days, passengers will sail on the MS Victor Hugo, beginning on the Belgian coast in Ostend and ending in the French city of Lille. Shore excursions will visit sites like the “Trench of Death” in Diksmuide, the Memorial to the Missing in Kotrijik; and the underground tunnels used during the war at the Carrière Wellington. Rates start from \$1,838 per person.

www.croisieurope.com.

Return to Guadalcanal

For a trek that’s way off the beaten path, the Solomon Islands is commentating the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal. San Francisco-based Valor Tours, Ltd., which specializes in military interest tours is leading a Return to Guadalcanal, which runs April 30 to May 9, 2017. The program retraces the early beginnings of the U.S. involvement in the Pacific Theater, which started on August 7, 1942, when U.S. Marines landed on Guadalcanal, Tulagi and Gavutu in order to establish a presence in the enemy-held territory. This offensive, the beginning of the “Allied Advance” to Tokyo, lasted nearly two years in The Solomons. The now peaceful island is still dotted with numerous relics from that violent period in history. The package starts from \$3,900 per person, twin share including flights on Fiji Air from Los Angeles.

www.valortours.com

WWI and WWII Battlefields

The 12-day WWI and WWII Battlefields program by Trafalgar visits 14 cities and many of the key sites and battlefields made infamous during the two world conflicts. In addition to a city tour of London and a walking tour in Paris, participants will visit military cemeteries throughout Northern France, Belgium and The Netherlands. A stop at the Portsmouth Dockyard will include a tour of HMS Monitor 33, the only warship from the Great War that is open to the public. In Amiens, the area memorials pay homage to the British, Canadian and Australian forces that help liberate the area, a move which ultimately led to the signing of the armistice of November 11, 1918 (Veteran's Day.) Rates start from \$2,897.50 per person.

www.trafalgar.com/usa/tours/wwi-and-wwii-battlefields