

# Europe: Visit the Top War Tourism Sites

War tourism is definitely seeing a splurge lately as more and more people are getting interested in exploring the history of their nation and how the nations pulled together during the darkest of hours at war.



While it is always great to visit natural sites and amusement parks, tourists are now finding an interest in visiting memorials, battlefields, and historical sites that stand as a reminder of today's ideals and hardships. War tourism is a good way for people to look back at the past and a good way for the countries involved to reflect their culture and heritage to the rest of the world. It also puts to good use all of the killing machines and sad memorabilia that still stands today.

Tourists interested in the history of WWII often head first to European countries which is quite natural. The continent has a plethora of interesting sites dedicated to both warring sides depicting various aspects of the destructive conflict. Whether you want to see where the Americans landed on the Normandy beaches or you want to explore certain battlefields and memorials then Europe is the place to go.

## The Normandy Beaches (France)

When discussing World War II it is almost impossible not to think of the Normandy Beaches in France. This is where the Allied Forces stormed through enemy lines to retake the European front and win the war on this side of the world (Japan would not surrender until the bombing of their cities in the following year). The beaches still use the code names and map designations that were used during the war. The main attraction here is a number of veteran cemeteries as well as the remarkable, and for some visitors depressing, atmosphere.



### **The Panzer Museum (Munster, Germany)**

The museum is renowned for its collection of tanks coming from World War I and World War II alike. The very first armored vehicle ever deployed in Germany is also displayed here in perfect state. This is what makes the museum a must-see destination – the tanks are all in tip-top condition. With no less than forty different tanks displayed outside of the museum and in four halls you will have your fill of war vehicles at one spot. Besides there are several other tank museums in France, the Netherlands, and UK.

### **The American Cemetery (Luxemburg)**

This cemetery is one of only fourteen permanent American cemeteries erected during WWII for American military on foreign shores. This makes it a pivotal destination for Americans looking throughout Europe for WWII sites. The area of Luxemburg City was freed from Axis Forces on the 10th of September, 1944 and in the following years the cemetery was erected. More than five thousand soldiers are buried here and thus the cemetery covers over fifty acres of land.



### **Fort Douaumont (Verdun, France)**

This fort sprawls over three kilometers underground and is one of the most complicated military facilities ever constructed during the First World War. It was used extensively until it was conquered by enemy forces in 1915 and then recaptured in 1916. Later on it became a key stronghold during the Second World War. While forts have been made famous during both wars, this is the only fort that covers so much ground and still keeps a whole track of different memorabilia from both wars. There are gun turrets, open cannon holes, long corridors and even various memorials inside the tunnels.

### **D-Day Museum (Portsmouth, UK)**

Most museums will focus on displaying tanks, weaponry, memorials and cemeteries but the D-Day museum in Great Britain has one element that no other war tourism spot has: the Overlord Embroidery. This is an 83-meter long tapestry that displays all of the major events that took place during the historical Operation Overlord and the events that took place afterwards. There are thirty four sections to the banner and you can take a look at the long banner with or without a guide as you look at the different portrayals of the liberation operations in Western Europe. Moreover there are films, dioramas, some tanks and weaponry on display as well as informative tours that all explore the pivotal day of the Second World War: D-Day.

Date: 2012-06-25

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-war-tourism-in-europe-plethora-of-sites-article1862>