

Dear Congress Participants,

We would like to draw your attention to two special tours that we have arranged to run before and after Congress this year. The tours have been designed to take you to see two different exceptional regions of France that are both rich in wonderful gardens, history and bio-diversity that would help you to make the most of your time in France. Please see the descriptions below.

The tours have been carefully set up by Boxwood Tours and you can read more about the tours and book on www.boxwoodtours.eu. To secure your booking you will need to pay a deposit. For the Loire tour the minimum number of bookings need to be secured by the 1st week of April 2015, for the Normandy tour we have until the 30th of April 2015. If you are interested in joining either tour please do make sure that you book with Boxwood by these dates.

Gardens & Arboretums of the Loire Valley 2nd - 5th July, 2015

This first tour will focus on the region of Touraine that surrounds the elegant city of Tours. It is here that the great River Loire is joined by the Rivers Indre & Cher, bringing water and life to the heart of France. This region has played a key part in the history of the nation and also in the development of garden style. In a country where more than half the population have access to their own vegetable plot, the art of vegetable gardening has reached a very high standard. The main flavour of this tour is the management of plant collections, a theme that is echoed at The International Garden Festival, Chaumont where this year's theme is: 'Extraordinary Gardens; Collectors' Gardens'. In addition you will visit the decorative and productive gardens of Villandry & Valmer and two outstanding Arboreta. The group will be accompanied by a linguistic guide (speaking French, English and Italian) and a botanist from the Jardin des Plantes of Paris to introduce the local vegetation.

Gardens of Haute-Normandie 10th - 12th July 2015

Departing on the last day of the Congress, you travel to Normandy to the department of Seine-Maritime. Here there is a wealth of remarkable gardens that thread their way from Varengeville to Giverny, from the sea to the River Seine: country gardens set amidst old cider orchards, lush rolling pastures, and mixed woodland, mostly owned by passionate gardeners with excellent plant collections. Many of the gardens are private, where you will meet the garden owners and head gardeners. The group will be accompanied by a linguistic guide (speaking French, English and Italian) and a botanist from the Jardin des Plantes of Paris to introduce the local vegetation. You stay in a hotel close to the sea in the port of Dieppe from where it is a short stroll to a bustling centre with many good restaurants from which to choose.

Looking forward to hearing from you

The congress organisers