



**BAYEUX
BESSIN**
D-DAY NORMANDIE



2021 - A YEAR FOR MAJOR WORKS Great achievements and grand projects

Attracting visitors from all around the world, Bayeux Bessin – D-Day Normandie is a top holiday destination where great projects thrive. 2021 promises to be a remarkable year in that respect, with the launch of four major building programmes and the completion of two much awaited projects...

1. The battery of Longues-sur-Mer : new facilities for a quality visitor experience



Featured in the famous American movie « the Longest Day », this German coastal fortification, which formed a part of the Atlantic Wall is the only gun battery listed as a **historical monument** in the D-Day sector. The site is quite remarkable due to its remarkable state of

conservation and the fact that the **original guns** are still in situ. Located between the landing beaches of Omaha and Gold, the battery has become one of the top D-Day sites, attracting some **500 000 visitors each year!** This increase in notoriety called for the creation of more appropriate facilities, including a new visitor centre, a landscaped parking area and an interpretation circuit. The first construction phase will begin in spring 2021 and is due to last a year and a bit. The German battery will remain open to the public throughout.

2. D-Day Museum in Arromanches : technology at the service of History

The Musée du Débarquement in Arromanches, which was inaugurated in 1954, was **the first museum** built to present the events of 6 June 1944 and the Battle of Normandy. Attracting some **320 000 visitors** each year, it is also one of the leading attractions dedicated to the D-Day landings. After years of extensive celebration, the project of a complete overhaul has taken shape. The **museum will begin its metamorphosis in 2021**, stepping firmly into the 21st century. The new building will take the shape of a **creative glass cube**, a see-through structure facing the remains of the Mulberry Harbour. **Decisively modern** in its design, it promises to be all the more so from a technological point of view thanks to **cutting edge scenography** and the use of **virtual reality**, a central part of the museum. The museum's guides will continue to propose a commentary around the historical models of the artificial harbour. The opening of the new museum is set for **2023** with an **official inauguration** planned for the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Landings. In the meantime, the current museum will remain open to the public.



3. The abbey of Longues-sur-Mer : French celebrity Stéphane Bern to the rescue !



Founded in the 12th century by Benedictine monks, Longues Abbey is a remarkable testimony to religious life in the Middle-Ages. Although the abbey suffered gradual decline and finally closed in the 18th century, successive owners made unrelenting restorations, in order to revive this jewel of Norman heritage. The abbey was selected in 2019 by the non-profit organisation *Mission Stéphane Bern*; thanks in part to the French heritage lottery fund, the Fondation du Patrimoine is providing €230,000 in

support of its preservation, more specifically for the restoration of the choir of the abbey church and the installation of a roof (phase 1 in 2021). A second phase of works, scheduled for 2022, will involve rendering the interior of the choir and repairing the roof of the monks' refectory. The worksite is intended to be educational and is a unique opportunity to familiarise the general public with the trades of woodworking, stonecutting and slate-laying. Work progress, visits, cultural and musical events, and they abbey's news are on the social networks: [Abbayedelongues](https://www.abbayedelongues.com).

4. Mondaye Abbey : a vast restoration programme for the abbey church

To the south of Bayeux, the Mondaye Abbey is an **emblematic feature** of the tourist destination and one of the 5 key points of interest fostered by the tourist office of Bayeux Intercom (the other four being Arromanches, Bayeux, Longues-sur-Mer and Port-en-Bessin-Huppain). Mondaye is also an active abbey, home to a community of Premonstratensian canons as well as a **remarkable example of 18th century architecture**. For more than 10 years, the community has been carrying out major restoration works on the abbey farm and its gardens in order to welcome visitors in the shop, tourist accommodation and exhibition room. It is now the turn of the parish church to be at the centre of attention: the interior of the abbey church, adorned with magnificent 18th century decors, is the subject of an ambitious restoration programme - initiated by the Village Council - which will run from June 2021 to December 2024.



5. Gold Beach: the British Normandy Memorial soon to be officially opened

At a stone's throw from Arromanches stands an imposing memorial overlooking Gold Beach, where history was shaped. The memorial will provide a place for reflection and remembrance, a place where future generations can come and understand the scale of what happened in Normandy in 1944. On the columns are inscribed the names of more than 22,000 soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen, most of them British, who fell during the D-Day landings and the Battle of



Normandy. 34 nationalities are represented here, including Irish, Polish, Dutch and even French. The compilation of this list of honour required an unprecedented amount of historical work and allows, for the first time, to gather the names of those under British command who fell in Normandy. A second phase is now beginning for the Normandy Memorial Trust, now working on the creation of an interpretation centre. If all goes according to plan, the British Memorial of Ver-sur-Mer should be inaugurated on 6 June 2021.

6. Cycle route La Vélomaritime® : on your marks, get set, go !



Stretching from Roscoff in Brittany to Dunkirk on the Belgian border, the much awaited cycle route La Vélomaritime opens new horizons in 2021 for touring cyclists looking to get away from it all! The portion between Arromanches and Port-en-Bessin-Huppain, hugs the coast along 22 kilometers, offering a spectacular ride with breathtaking views over the remains of the Mulberry Harbour and a passage through the German gun battery of Longues-sur-Mer. When arriving at the semaphore, a little detour to the charming village of Port-en-Bessin is a must. Leading port in Normandy for traditional fishing, the village is particularly renowned for its scallops and offers an exciting stop along the Vélomaritime. What better place to enjoy seafood while watching the return of fishing boats? A wide range of accommodation is also available to weary-legged cyclists, from affordable B&Bs to luxury hotel rooms. To date, 96% of the overall itinerary has been completed and the aim is to inaugurate La Vélomaritime in its entirety in June 2021.

Photo credits:

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OT Bayeux Intercom (G.WAIT, A.GUERIN)

Musée du Débarquement Arromanches

Architectes Le Moal & Daumas

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→ *"A friendly welcome awaits at our visitor centres!"*

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