















MUST-SEE LOCATIONS				
Location	Venue		Descriptions	History
	Langrune-sur-Mer		A bustling seafront with a beach that is renowned for its family-friendly atmosphere and activities. Nicknamed "the children's beach," it offers the perfect setting for building sandcastles! Additionally it is a popular destination for water sports, particularly kitesurfing. During the Battle of Normandy it was the location of a German strongpoint and was fiercely defended. These strongpoints even included villas on the seafront, some of which had been fortified.	No.48 Commando, the last commando unit formed during WWII, landed on Juno Beach on D-Day under Lieutenant Colonel James Moulton, tasked with capturing a German strongpoint at Langrune-sur-Mer. Facing heavy fire from strongpoint WN27, only half the unit initially made it off the beach, with significant casualties, including most of the Troop Commanders. After regrouping and advancing through a minefield under fire, they were supported by naval gunfire and Royal Marine Centaurs but struggled to breach fortified defenses. The objective was captured by the afternoon, but the unit suffered heavy losses, with only 223 effective personnel remaining out of 440.
Juno Beach Centre	Courseulles-Sur-Mer		The town has a charming harbour, which is home to Aux Régals de l'île, a family-run establishment renowned for its delicious oysters. We highly recommended reserving your seafood platters 24 hours in advance, with opening times of 7 days a week from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Courseulles' famous oysters are grown for a minimum of 3 to 4 years before being refined in clear water pools for an additional 3 weeks. The special Courseulles oyster can be savoured at various seafront terraces and should not be missed. If staying in Courseulles-sur-Mer with kids, there are many water activities to enjoy here from river kayaking to paddleboarding and beachside fun.	The village of Courseulles-sur-Mer was heavily defended by German strongpoints during the Normandy landings, but Canadian forces successfully secured their objectives despite heavy resistance. The Royal Winnipeg Rifles and the Regina Rifle Regiment, supported by tanks from the 6th Armoured Regiment, faced intense fire as they landed and fought to capture fortified positions like WN29 and WN31. Despite significant casualties, the Canadians pushed inland, securing key locations such as Graye-sur-Mer, Ste. Croix-sur-Mer, and Creully by evening. Today, the Juno Beach Centre stands as a museum and remembrance site for the Canadian forces, commemorating their sacrifices and achievements on D-Day.
Arromanches-les-Bains	Mulberry B		Arromanches-les-Bains is a picturesque coastal town, known for its role in the D-Day landings. You can explore remnants of the Mulberry Harbour, an ingenious floating port that was vital for the Allied invasion, and visit the excellent D-Day Museum to learn about its history. With its charming beaches, scenic cliffs, and quaint shops and restaurants, the town offers a mix of historical significance and seaside relaxation. The weblink is footage of the 'Ports de débarquement artificiels en Normandie' ©Journal France Libre Actualités	Mulberry B was an artificial harbour constructed by the Allies. It consisted of floating piers, known as "Mulberry Harbours," which were towed across the Channel from England to the shores of Normandy. These floating harbours were made up of huge concrete caissons, codenamed "Phoenix" units, which were sunk to form a breakwater and provide a protected area for the harbour. Phoenix units were filled with seawater to submerge them and create stable platforms. Once the breakwater was established, "Whale" units (floating roadways) and "Gooseberry" units (floating piers) were installed to create the harbour facilities. These components allowed for the unloading of supplies, vehicles, and troops directly onto the beaches, enabling a more efficient supply chain for the advancing Allied forces, directly to the combat zones during the critical early stages. The harbour was operational from June 17, 1944, until November 19, 1944, when it was severely damaged by a storm.




<p>Port-en-Bessin-Huppain</p>	<p>Pont-en-Bessin</p>		<p>Port-en-Bessin is known for its rich history and maritime heritage. The port area still retains its charm, with colourful fishing boats, picturesque waterfront houses, and bustling activity.</p> <p>One of the notable attractions in Port-en-Bessin is the Saint-André church. Built at the end of the 19th century, this church stands on the site of an ancient 12th-century sanctuary. Inside, you can discover a collection model ships, offered by sailors who survived shipwrecks and several statues that are classified as Historical Monuments.</p> <p>The town is also home to a significant historical site - the artillery tower of Port-en-Bessin. Constructed in 1694, this tower was built to protect the port from Anglo-Dutch naval raids during the War of the League of Augsburg. It is an excellent example of military architecture from that era.</p>	<p>The 47 Commando Memorial in Port-en-Bessin is a tribute to the British 47 Royal Marine Commando who played a significant role in the liberation of Port-en-Bessin during World War II. The memorial is located on top of the cliffs to the west of the port, standing on a German Fire Control Post, which is part of Widerstandsnest 57. This gives visitors a panoramic view over the fishing port town. On June 6 and 7, 1944, the 47 Royal Marine Commando, as part of the Normandy landings, embarked on a mission to capture Port-en-Bessin. The town had strategic importance as it would become the main port for fuel deliveries to Normandy until Cherbourg was liberated. Image Credit: Archangel21, Flickr</p> <p>Weblink will take you to a list of some of the best WWII movies of all time.</p>
<p>Colleville-sur-Mer</p>	<p>Normandy American Memorial</p>		<p>Omaha Beach's reputation has been perpetuated through various media formats. Films like "The Longest Day" and Steven Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan" depicted the dramatic and harrowing events of the D-Day landings, notably including the intense events at Omaha Beach.</p> <p>The Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial features a semicircular colonnade with a loggia at each end, displaying large maps and narratives of the military operations. At the heart of the memorial, there is a prominent bronze statue known as "Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves". This cemetery was dedicated on July 19, 1956, and serves as the final resting place for 9,388 military personnel, most of whom lost their lives in the D-Day landings and subsequent operations.</p>	<p>Colleville-sur-Mer played a significant role in the D-Day landings and the Battle of Normandy. From the cliff face, you are standing overlooking 'Omaha' Beach. Several factors contributed to Omaha Beach's prominence. Firstly, it was the primary location where a significant number of American soldiers landed, nearly twice the number that landed at Utah Beach - the other American landing zone. Secondly, the Battle of Omaha Beach was exceptionally demanding and resulted in considerable losses. The intense German defences, including fortified positions, machine gun nests, and artillery emplacements, made the landing particularly challenging and resulted in approximately 5,000 American casualties.</p>
	<p>Vierville-sur-Mer</p>		<p>With its picturesque coastal location, Vierville-sur-Mer also attracts visitors who come to enjoy its beautiful beaches, explore the history of the area, and understand the significance of the events that took place there during World War II. Today, Vierville-sur-Mer serves as a reminder to the soldiers who fought there.</p> <p>If you've built up an appetite, when it comes to food specialties in Vierville-sur-Mer, there are several options to try. A popular destination L'Embusque, which offers French and American cuisine. It is known for its quick bites, including dishes like burgers and traditional French fare.</p>	<p>The town has various sites and memorials dedicated to the events of D-Day, including the 29th Infantry Division Memorial. The memorial consists of a bronze statue of a soldier in full combat gear, standing approximately ten feet tall, and facing the sea. You can visit the Musée D-Day Omaha. This museum offers a comprehensive overview of the D-Day invasion and the role played by the American forces on Omaha Beach. It showcases a wide range of artifacts, including vehicles, weapons, and personal items from the soldiers who participated.</p>




Grandcamp Maisy	The Maisy Battery		<p>Located between the famous D-Day landing beaches of Omaha Beach and Utah Beach, Grandcamp-Maisy is a picturesque village and fishing port. Known for its thriving seafood industry, visitors can enjoy a wide range of delicacies such as scallops, fresh fish, and even shrimp caught during low tide. Don't forget your binoculars as you may spot a seal colony. And if you look to the east, about 2 miles away, you'll see the rocky promontory known as Pointe du Hoc.</p>	<p>The Maisy Battery refers to a group of artillery batteries constructed by the German Wehrmacht here, and was part of Germany's Atlantic Wall coastal fortifications. The Maisy Battery remained hidden and buried for over 60 years until it was rediscovered by British military historian who purchased the site and converted it into a museum featuring trenches, bunkers, and historical artifacts from the war. The site includes several casemates, an accommodation block, and a trench system.</p> <p>The significance of the Maisy Battery lies in its size and previously unknown features. The sheer scale of the site raises questions about its absence from Allied records and the effectiveness of its camouflage.</p>
Isigny-sur-Mer	Isigny-sur-Mer		<p>Isigny-sur-Mer, a charming and bustling market town in Normandy, is renowned for its gastronomic heritage and is particularly famous for its butter, cream, and cheese, which hold the prestigious "AOC" (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) designation. It is also known for its delicious caramels and oysters. These AOC products, considered the white gold of the region, are a must-try for visitors. Isigny-sur-Mer holds its market days on Wednesdays and Saturdays, offering a wide variety of local products.</p>	<p>During World War II, Isigny-sur-Mer was occupied by Ukrainian soldiers who belonged to Ost-Battalion 439, part of the German 352nd Infantry Division under the command of Hauptmann Hans Becker. Sadly, the town suffered significant destruction, with over 60% of it being destroyed by two bombardments on June 8th, 1944. However, the liberation of Isigny-sur-Mer came swiftly, as it was an important objective for the Allies. The town was liberated on June 9th, 1944.</p> <p>Image Credit: Collection Rodger Hamilton: The War Photos; 'Au milieu des décombres encore fumants d'Isigny-sur-Mer, des civils croisent des véhicules américains Place Gambetta (aujourd'hui Place général de Gaulle), à droite dans le fond la rue Alfred Pophillat et à gauche la rue Emile Demagny vers Cherbourg la N13'.</p>
Carentan les Marais	Tucker Bailey Bridge		<p>The website link gives you a clip from Band of Brothers - Battle of Carentan. This HBO series depicts the incredible journey of Easy Company, which was part of the 506th Regiment in the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army. Drawing from interviews with surviving members of Easy Company, as well as soldiers' journals and letters, this 10-part series offers a compelling narrative of the remarkable courage and intense fear experienced by these young soldiers. The series is based on the book written by Stephen Ambrose.</p>	<p>The Bailey Bridge at Carentan, also known as the Tucker Bailey Bridge, was constructed over the River Taute in June 1944 to replace the original bridge destroyed by retreating Germans. Carentan is the junction point between Utah and Omaha, two of the D-Day beaches in Normandy where our troops landed on June 6, 1944. This connection was crucial to establishing a unified American front in Normandy.</p> <p>The Bridge is named after Major John E. Tucker, the commanding officer of the 300th Engineer Combat Battalion. Major Tucker and his men were responsible for repairing bridges and infrastructure in liberated areas with this bridge being one of those crucial infrastructures that facilitated movement and logistics. On June 27, 1944, while overseeing the reconstruction of the bridge over the Taute in Carentan, Major Tucker was tragically killed by German bombardment and is buried in the American cemetery of Colleville sur Mer, alongside his brother Billy, who was killed on Omaha Beach.</p>








<p>Sainte-Marie-du-Mont</p>	<p>La Madeleine</p>		<p>La Madeleine was the site of strongpoints manned by German troops, which were obstacles for the American forces. La Madeleine was eventually cleared by the end of the day, with thousands of troops and vehicles landing on Utah Beach. Today, La Madeleine is a peaceful village surrounded by farmland and is a popular destination for visitors interested in the history of the D-Day invasion. Image Credit: Nusa Urbancek</p>	<p>On D-Day, American forces from the US 4th Division landed on Utah Beach near the village of La Madeleine, but navigational challenges caused them to land 2,500 meters south of their intended targets. This error proved advantageous, as the enemy defenses were weaker in this area, allowing troops to quickly capture key strongpoints like WN5 and WN7 with support from air, naval bombardment, and tanks. Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., who landed with the first wave, personally reconnoitered the area, coordinated the attack, and identified routes inland. By evening, 23,000 men and 1,700 vehicles had landed, with relatively low casualties of 200, demonstrating a successful start to the invasion.</p>
<p>Saint-Marcouf</p>	<p>Crisbecq Battery</p>		<p>Saint-Marcouf was occupied by German forces and was a strategic location in the Battle of Normandy. The Batterie de Crisbecq/Marine Küsten Batterie 'Marcouf', was a coastal fortification and part of the Atlantic Wall defence system. Today, the Crisbecq Battery is one of the preserved historical sites, providing a tour of its 22 underground blockhouses, which have been restored to resemble their original condition. Here you can see visualise the immense structures and strategic firepower of the German forces.</p>	<p>The Utah Beach sector was defended by numerous heavy batteries, including the formidable Crisbecq naval battery, which had powerful coastal guns, anti-aircraft weapons, and extensive fortifications. On the night of 5-6 June, Allied bombers targeted Crisbecq, killing some of the garrison, but the site remained operational and opened fire on the Allied fleet on D-Day, sinking USS Corry. Despite losing two of its large guns in naval duels throughout the day, the battery resisted repeated American assaults, including a major attack on 8 June that was repelled by its defenders. Short on ammunition and medical supplies, the German garrison evacuated under cover of darkness on 11-12 June, leaving the site abandoned and American prisoners behind. Post-battle examinations revealed the remarkable resilience of Crisbecq's casemates, with most damage caused by postwar explosives testing rather than the D-Day fighting.</p>
<p>Sainte-Mère-Église</p>	<p>Sainte-Mère-Église</p>		<p>As you explore Sainte-Mère-Église, you'll feel as though you've stepped back in time. The town's main attraction is its beautiful church, which dates back to the 11th century when local nobleman William of Sainte-Mère-Église, who played a significant role during the reign of Richard the Lionheart, was crowned bishop of London in 1199. The Airborne Museum in Sainte-Mère-Église is the largest museum in Europe dedicated to American paratroopers and a must-see.</p> <p>Don't miss the opportunity to enjoy local cuisine here. Indulge in traditional Normandy dishes, such as creamy Camembert cheese washed down with apple cider.</p>	<p>Sainte-Mère-Église is famous for being one of the first towns liberated by American forces during the D-Day landings of World War II. It became particularly well-known because of paratrooper John Steele, whose parachute got caught on the church steeple during the night of the invasion, leaving him dangling as he pretended to be dead to avoid being shot. Today, you can still see a dummy paratrooper hanging from the church as a reminder of that historic event. The invasion of France marked the largest use of airborne troops at the time, with 13,000 paratroopers. Despite challenging weather and heavy flak, they achieved the best drop accuracy and focused on capturing Sainte-Mère-Église, a strategic road junction.</p> <p>Image Credit: Elliesram13</p>







<p>Sainte-Marie-du-Mont</p>	<p>Sainte Marie du Mont</p>		<p>Sainte-Marie-du-Mont is one of our favourite circular and picturesque town centres with its 11th century Église Notre-Dame de Sainte-Marie-du-Mont and eateries. Just on the outskirts is the beautiful Monument de la Résistance Française dedicated to the French Resistance during World War II, overlooking the countryside. The monument was created at the initiative of Captain Joseph Ivanov of the US Special Forces and worth a look.</p> <p>Sainte-Marie-du-Mont was the site of a significant military engagement on June 6, 1944. Today, it maintains its charm within its location on the Cotentin peninsula, and provides access to beautiful outdoor views, including the Baie des Veys.</p>	<p>On D-Day, the village of Saint-Marie-du-Mont was liberated after fierce fighting between American 101st Airborne Division and the German Wehrmacht. The nearby Holdy Battery, which housed 60 German troops and four 105mm howitzers, was a key target for the Allies. The 101st Airborne Division, dropped near the village, faced scattered landings due to fog and flak, but still succeeded in securing vital objectives. Captain Lloyd E. Patch and Captain Knut H. Raudstein led an assault on the Holdy Battery, capturing the howitzers after intense fighting. After a day of continued combat, the village was fully liberated, but the 101st Airborne Division suffered heavy casualties, with one-third of its men wounded or killed.</p> <p>Image Credit: Fondation de la Résistance The weblink will take you to France24, 'Looking back at the rise of the French Resistance'</p>
<p>Carentan</p>	<p>Normandy Victory Museum</p>		<p>Carentan's combination of historical landmarks, marina and its proximity to significant sites make it a pretty and worthwhile visit for those interested in exploring the town and broader region of Normandy. Historically marked by significant visitors, King Henry I of England, (fourth son of William the Conqueror), Henry II of England with Thomas Becket (notably assassinated as the Archbishop of Canterbury) and King John, of 'Robin Hood' fame. The English kings considered Normandy an important feudal possession influencing a strong cultural presence on both sides of the channel.</p> <p>Located in Carentan, the Normandy Victory Museum, also known as the Battle of the Hedges Museum, has become a destination for visitors exploring the D-Day landing sites. This museum highlights the often overlooked Battle of the Hedges and how this battle played a vital role for allies. With immersive exhibits, personal stories, and a comprehensive collection of artifacts, the museum provides a unique visit.</p>	<p>Carentan, a critical transport hub in the Allied invasion of France, was strategically significant for controlling access to the Cotentin Peninsula. The town's defenses were bolstered by waterways, destroyed bridges, and flooded marshlands, making it challenging for American forces to advance. The 101st Airborne Division faced fierce resistance from German forces, including elite troops of the 6th Fallschirmjäger Regiment, as they launched attacks on key positions like Hill 30 and bridges over the Douve River. Intense combat, including close-range fighting and heavy casualties, culminated in the capture of Carentan by 12 June 1944, with the Germans withdrawing during the night. The town was defended against a counterattack by German reinforcements on 13 June, with US forces, supported by tanks and artillery, securing their position and breaking the enemy's advance.</p>





Cerisy-la-Forêt	Abbaye Saint Vigor		<p>The Abbaye de Cerisy, also known as Abbaye Saint-Vigor, is an architectural gem located in Cerisy-la-Forêt, Normandy, France. It was founded in 1032 by Duke Robert the Magnificent and was dedicated to Saint Vigor, the Bishop of Bayeux. The abbey consists of various structures, including a remarkable 14th-century Abbot's Chapel reminiscent of the Sainte Chapelle in Paris. The area surrounding the abbey, known as the Cerisy Forest, is associated with a legendary dragon. According to a late 10th-century text, the dragon inhabited the Cerisy Forest, posing a threat to the local population. Saint Vigor overcomes the dragon, without killing it, but subdues it by tying a scarf around its neck, thus symbolizing Christian supremacy. It led to the nobleman Volusianus offering the land to Saint Vigor, thus allowing the establishment of the monastery of Cerisy. This legendary tale of the dragon highlights the significance of the abbey in local folklore. Today, the Abbaye de Cerisy stands as a testament to Norman Romanesque architecture.</p>	
Le Mollay-Littry	Chateau of Mollay		<p>The Chateau of Mollay-Littry is located in the heart of woodlands, surrounded by picturesque countryside. During World War II, it was occupied by German forces who attempted to establish and launch V-weapon installations, which were never actually used.</p> <p>The area where the chateau is located, along with the entire V-weapons project, was under the control of Generalleutnant (General) Dietrich Kraiss. Tragically, Kraiss was killed during the fighting at Omaha Beach when a mortar from his own side accidentally struck him, resulting in a gruesome death. In recognition of his service, he was posthumously awarded the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves.</p>	<p>The V2 weapon, also known as the Vengeance Weapon 2, was the first ballistic missile developed, by Nazi Germany during World War II. It was designed as a "vengeance weapon", powered by a liquid-propellant rocket engine. The V2 rocket was intended to be used as a retaliatory weapon against Allied cities in response to the bombings of German cities.</p> <p>The V2 rocket made its first successful launch on October 3, 1942. It was fired on Paris on September 6, 1944, and two days later, the first of over 1,100 V2 rockets were fired against Great Britain. The V2 rocket was a significant technological achievement and Hitler believed that it could turn the tide of the war in Germany's favour. The weblink takes you to 'The Terrifying German Revenge Weapons' ©IWM</p>
Bayeux	Bayeux Cathedral		<p>In 924AD, Bayeux was incorporated into the lands of Rollo, the Viking warrior and first Duke of Normandy. At the time, Bayeux was the second largest city in Normandy, second only to Rouen. The Cathedral was completed during the reign of William the Conqueror. It was a remarkable feat of construction, taking less than fifty years to build. For several centuries, the cathedral was home to the famous Bayeux Tapestry. In 1204 Normandy became part of the Kingdom of France.</p> <p>The consecration of the cathedral took place on July 14, 1077, in the presence of William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy and King of England, and his wife Queen Matilda. While only the crypt, towers at the western end, and the first level of the nave remain from the original construction, the cathedral remains an architectural marvel.</p>	<p>During the Normandy Landings, Bayeux proved vital for the Allied forces as they were unable to capture Caen for many weeks. The city served as a rail and road communications center that supplied the British Commonwealth forces for many months, and its bypass was built by Allied troops. The city also had an operational hospital that was used to treat injured soldiers and civilians, including field hospitals that soon popped up around the area, helped by the infrastructure and transport links. On June 14th, Charles de Gaulle delivered his famous speech in the city. It was the first city to be captured by the Allies during the invasion and was left undamaged, as commemorated on a plaque opposite Bayeux Cathedral.</p>




Bayeux	Bayeux Tapestry		<p>The Bayeux Tapestry is an embroidered cloth measuring nearly 70 meters long and 50 centimeters tall, depicting the events leading up to the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. It is believed to have been created between 1067 and 1079 by embroiderers, possibly working in Canterbury, England. The tapestry tells the story of Harold, Earl of Wessex, and his journey to Normandy in 1064 to confirm William, Duke of Normandy, as the designated heir to the English throne. The narrative then follows the events of the Norman invasion of England, including the Battle of Hastings. The tapestry provides a detailed account of military tactics, clothing and armor, and scenes of daily life in the 11th century. The Bayeux Tapestry is considered a valuable historical artifact as it offers insights into the medieval period, including the Norman Conquest and the fusion of Anglo-Saxon and Norman culture in England. It is also an important source for studying medieval art and embroidery techniques</p>	
Audrieu	Le Chateau D'Audrieu		<p>There are two memorials in Audrieu. One is to the members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles who were murdered at Le Chateau D'Audrieu and others who were executed at Le Haut Du Bosq. There is another to the men of the Durham Light Infantry who were also murdered in the castle grounds.</p> <p>Image Credit Peter Tully; Château d'Audrieu, now a hotel, during 1940's home to the German Gestapo. The weblink explains further the Normandy Massacres, ©Juno Beach Centre.</p>	<p>During D-Day, specifically on June 8 1944, the Château d'Audrieu was the site of a tragic event known as the Château d'Audrieu Massacre. German forces from the 12 SS Recce Battalion executed 24 Canadian and 2 British prisoners of war within the grounds of the château. This massacre was a part of the overall Normandy Massacres, where as many as 156 Canadian soldiers were executed by German forces after the start of the Normandy Invasion. Kurt Meyer was the commander in the 12th SS Panzer Division involved in the massacres. He was responsible for setting up his headquarters at the Abbaye d'Ardenne, an ancient stone church near the Château d'Audrieu. Here, 11 Canadian prisoners of war were taken into the Abbaye's garden and shot on the night of June 7, 1944. Before each soldier was taken, they shook hands with their fellow soldiers. It is important to note that Kurt Meyer was the only perpetrator charged for his role in the Normandy massacres. After the war, he was convicted of war crimes and sentenced to serve time in prison.</p>
Cheux	Cheux Saint Manvieu-Norrey		<p>Cheux is relatively small but it offers an authentic experience in the beautiful Normandy countryside. The geography of the region was crucial throughout the Battle of Normandy, as villages comprised narrow roads and stone buildings, while river banks were lined with hedges and farm walls. From Norrey-en-Bessin, two kilometres north of Saint-Manvieu-Norrey, it was possible for the Allies to see all the possible approach routes that could be used by the Germans. The nearby St. Manvieu War Cemetery CWGC includes a total of 555 German burials in addition to the Commonwealth soldiers.</p> <p>The link will take you to a external video clip 'Fighting In The Normandy Bocage', ©Battle Guide</p>	<p>Fighting at Saint-Manvieu-Norrey was particularly bitter. The Germans had been ordered to resist at all costs and defended every house throughout the morning. The attackers had to use specially adapted Churchill Crocodile flamethrower tanks to force out the enemy. On 7 June, Canadian forces from the 3rd Infantry Division secured Norrey-en-Bessin, a strategically significant village with commanding views of German approach routes. German counter-attacks persisted until 10 June, but the Allies held the area for over two weeks, preparing for Operation EPSOM. On 26 June, the 44th (Lowland) Infantry Brigade, supported by tanks and artillery, attacked Saint-Manvieu-Norrey, facing fierce resistance from German forces ordered to defend at all costs. Using the Churchill Crocodile flamethrower tanks, the Scots overcame house-to-house fighting, capturing the village by the afternoon, but suffered heavy casualties of nearly 150 men.</p>




Caen	Caen Castle		<p>Built around 1060 by William the Conqueror, the castle served as a residence. One notable feature is the 12th-century Église St-Georges, located within the castle grounds. This church houses the information centre that includes a diorama of the castle, providing you with insights into its history. Within the castle grounds, there is also the Échiquier/Exchequer which dates back to around 1100 and is one of the oldest civic buildings in Normandy.</p> <p>Walking along the ramparts of the castle offers splendid views of the town, especially during sunrise and sunset. The castle itself is one of the oldest and largest castles in Europe. It has been restored over the years and offers a truly unique glimpse into medieval architecture and history.</p>	<p>During D-Day, Caen was a major Allied objective due to its strategic location and road network, critical for advancing inland from the beaches. British forces, primarily from the 3rd Infantry Division, faced fierce resistance from well-prepared German defenders, including the 21st Panzer Division. The intense fighting prevented the immediate capture of the city, with Allied forces only managing to secure parts of the surrounding area. The battle for Caen extended well beyond D-Day, becoming a prolonged and destructive campaign lasting several weeks.</p>
Caen	Musée de Caen		<p>The museum is dedicated to commemorating World War II and the Battle for Caen, but it also covers the broader history of the twentieth century.</p>	
Bénouville	Pegasus Bridge		<p>Pegasus Bridge is named after the immortal, Greek winged horse, Pegasus, emblem of the 6th Airborne Division. Bénouville is a famous location where the first landings by Allied troops on D-Day took place. The objective called Operation DEADSTICK was to capture two bridges. These bridges were important because they provided a quick route for German reinforcements to reach the invasion beaches. The attacking force consisted of 130 men, led by Major John Howard, who were transported by gliders. They successfully landed near the bridges and quickly disabled the defenders. Today, there are monuments and a museum in Bénouville commemorating the men who participated in the operation. The Gondrée family, who lived near the bridge, provided valuable information to the resistance and sheltered during the attack. They were liberated in the early morning, and their café, which served as a headquarters and aid post, is now a museum and remains an iconic café and rest stop. The weblink shows footage of gliders used in a similar operation. Image Credit: Peter Hurford Footage Credit: Source: US National Archives / DDay Overlord</p>	<p>EYEWITNESSES: “Quite suddenly and unexpectedly the pilots said, ‘Christ, there’s the bridge’ and they put the nose of the glider down very steeply. The next thing I knew was that there were sparks coming from the skids underneath, they didn’t have wheels, and I thought these sparks were actually enemy fire but they were in fact the skids striking the ground. And then there was an almighty crash and I was thrown out through the side of the glider, landed on the ground, still clutching my canvas bag of grenades. I had my Sten gung with its bayonet still fixed but wasn’t in any way hurt. The rest of the platoon got out of the glider. Some were like me thrown out and some got out through the doors. I collected them together, we knew exactly what we were supposed to do, although we didn’t know at that moment whether we were the first glider to land or the second or the third, because three were destined to land at our particular bridge. I took the platoon forward to where I knew the bridge was and the road running up to it and there, crouching in the ditch, was my company commander, who said quite simply, ‘David, No.2’. And I knew that No.2’s job was to cross the road and sort out the enemy on the other side in the inner defences of the bridge”. [Lieutenant David Wood, 24 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, cited in Roderick Bailey, Forgotten Voice of D-Day (Ebury Press, 2010), 125-126]</p>
Other Notable Locations and People				
Location	Venue/People		Descriptions	

Ouireham	Free French Memorial		The 1er Bataillon de Fusiliers Marins Commandos (BFMC), of 177 Frenchmen led by Commandant Philippe Kieffer, was the only French ground-based contingent in the D-Day landings, joining British No.4 Commando to liberate their homeland. Landing at Sword Beach near Hermanville-sur-Mer, they faced intense fighting to capture strongpoints, including the heavily defended casino at Riva-Bella, with Kieffer wounded but continuing to lead. Despite heavy casualties—10 killed and 30 wounded on D-Day—they supported British troops at Bénouville and defended high ground at Amfreville.
Colleville-Montgomery	Bill Millin Statue		Lord Lovat, accompanied by his 21 year old bagpiper William 'Bill' Millin, landed on Sword beach and played the bagpipes throughout the landing, defying regulations. Millin's pipes were damaged but remained playable. At Pegasus Bridge twelve men who crossed with him were killed by snipers; captured Germans said they had not shot at Millin as they thought he was mad. After the war Millin went to work on Lovat's estate near Inverness before becoming a registered psychiatric nurse in Glasgow. He returned regularly to Normandy reunions and played himself in the 1962 film 'The Longest Day' his character was played by the then official piper of Her Majesty the Queen. Millin also played the pipes in 1995 at Lord Lovat's funeral. Following his death at the age of 88, the bronze statue was erected in 2013 with his son piping as it was unveiled.
Lion-sur-Mer	41 Commando Memorial		No.41 Commando landed on the far right of Sword Beach near Lion-sur-Mer on D-Day, aiming to neutralize German strongpoints, including "Trout" and a heavily defended château. Facing intense resistance, heavy mortar fire, and counterattacks, they were unable to fully secure their objectives, suffering significant losses and falling back to defensive positions. German forces managed a limited counteroffensive in the area, temporarily holding a stretch of beach, but withdrew after Allied reinforcements, including airborne troops, arrived. By the following day, No.41 Commando supported further attacks, enabling the eventual capture of the château and the long-awaited link-up with troops advancing from Juno Beach.
Ver-sur-Mer	British Normandy Memorial		Overlooking Gold beach, you are looking at one of the largest of the D-Day landing spots. Gold Beach was the central British landing site on D-Day, stretching ten miles between Omaha and Juno beaches. Assaulted by the 50th (Northumberland) Infantry Division, its objectives included capturing Bayeux, securing key routes for transporting German reserves, and linking with Canadian forces to the east and American forces to the west. The beach faced significant German resistance, particularly at strongpoints like Le Hamel and La Rivière, but by nightfall, the British had established a six-by-six-mile bridgehead, the strongest among the Allied beaches. On D-Day, 24,970 troops landed at Gold, with 400 killed, wounded, or missing, and the area would later become the site of the British Normandy Memorial honoring those who fell in the campaign.
Arromanches-les-Bains	Arromanches 360° Museum		The Arromanches 360 museum and Circular Cinema, is located on the clifftops of Arromanches-les-Bains. It overlooks the remnants of one of the two artificial Mulberry harbours constructed by the Allies during World War II. The 360° cinema at the museum projects images from British, Canadian, German, American, and French archives onto nine screens, providing a comprehensive view of the historic battle. In addition to its historical significance, Arromanches-les-Bains offers visitors a charming seaside experience.
Arromanches-les-Bains	Musée du Débarquement		Established as the first museum built to honour D-Day, the Musée du Débarquement is located at the site of the artificial port remains, visible just a few hundred meters from the shore. Featuring exhibits that detail the history of the D-Day landings and the prefabricated harbours used during the operation, the Musée du Débarquement offers visitors an immersive experience of the Normandy Invasion. The museum also gives insights into the occupation by German forces.
La Madeleine	Utah Beach Landing Museum		The Utah Beach Landing Museum is located near the village of Sainte-Marie-du-Mont, on the site of the original D-Day landings. It is dedicated to commemorating the events of June 6, 1944, and the museum features a mix of historical artifacts, personal stories, and multimedia exhibits, including vehicles, uniforms, and weaponry used during the invasion. A highlight is the restored B-26 Marauder bomber, the only one in France, displayed in a purpose-built hangar. You can also explore the nearby beach, remnants of German bunkers, and a monument honoring Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., a key figure in the Utah Beach landings. Certainly a must-see.

Longues-sur-Mer	Longues-sur-Mer Battery		One of the notable attractions in Longues-sur-Mer is the Battery, which forms part of the Atlantic Wall coastal fortifications built by the Germans during World War II. 'Widerstandsnest 48', as it was named, was strategically positioned on a cliff overlooking the coastline, providing a vantage point for the German forces to observe any attempted invasion. This well-preserved site provides insight into the defensive measures taken by the German military and offers visitors a chance to explore the bunkers and artillery positions that were once used to defend the coast. "Widerstandsnest," translates to "Resistance Nest." Image Credit: ©Normandy Tourism Office, Weblink credit 'KM Military History'
Colleville-sur-Mer	Overlord Museum		The Overlord Museum is a military museum located in Colleville-sur-Mer, about 15 minutes from Le Bray. The museum showcases an impressive collection of artifacts from D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, including military equipment, uniforms, and vehicles. Visitors to the museum can learn about the preparation and execution of the Allied invasion through exhibits and displays, including an immersive cinematic experience. The "Jacqueline Bridge" displayed outside the museum is a renowned pre-fabricated truss bridge that became a symbol of impressive British engineering during World War II. Notably, it could be assembled on-site without the need for a crane, yet it maintained the strength required to bear the weight of a tank. Image Credit: Alan Wilson 'Bailey Bridge at the Overlord Museum', Flickr.
Saint-Laurent-sur-Mer	Omaha Beach Memorial		Les Braves' is a war memorial sculpture located at Omaha Beach. It consists of three elements made of stainless steel each representing various stages that the soldiers went through, from the water where they landed, to the beach, and finally the sky. According to the sculptor, Anilore Banon, "the wings of hope and freedom that rise from the base symbolise the aspirations of a humanity that asserts itself and takes off towards a better world."
Cricqueville-en-Bessin	Point du Hoc		La Pointe du Hoc is a promontory with a 35-metre (110 ft) cliff overlooking the English Channel. When standing at Pointe du Hoc there are several things you can see. The site still contains well-preserved German bunkers and artillery batteries, providing a vivid illustration of what took place here. You will notice that the area is marked by large bomb craters created by the intense bombings carried out by the Allied forces before the D-Day invasion. Pointe du Hoc is also home to several memorials dedicated to the Allied soldiers who lost their lives during the D-Day operations. These memorials include plaques, monuments, and a Ranger Monument that honours the US Army Rangers who scaled the cliffs to secure the position. As for the scenic views from the clifftops, you can enjoy panoramic views of the rugged coastline, the Channel, and the surrounding landscape. Image Credit: By Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives. - Normandy Invasion D-Day Landings at the Pointe du Hoc, 6 June 1944, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=160727
Carentan les Marais	Filthy Thirteen		The 1st Demolition Section of the Regimental Headquarters Company of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army was known as the Dirty Thirteen or Filthy Thirteen. Their unique and unconventional tactics set them apart from conventional soldiers, and their scruffy appearance and unruly behaviour earned them their nickname. This demolition team specialised in infiltrating enemy lines and carrying out sabotage missions and inspired the 1965 book and 1967 film, "The Dirty Dozen." See the weblink to watch the Dirty Dozen film trailer! Before the Normandy invasion, the Dirty Thirteen were among the airborne forces that parachuted into France. Their mission was to disrupt German defences and secure key locations. However, their missions did not always go according to plan, and many members of the unit were captured or killed during the intense fighting. Despite facing significant losses, the Dirty Thirteen remain a symbol of unconventional warfare.
Azeville	Azeville Batterie		The Azeville battery, located 10 kilometers from Utah Beach, was one of the first German coastal defense sites built in 1941. It featured camouflaged concrete blockhouses housing 105mm French Schneider cannons, interconnected by trenches and protected by minefields and machine guns. Despite being heavily bombed, the battery remained operational. Using bazookas and a single tank which had avoided the enemy mines, they opened fire but barely dented the concrete. It took repeated attacks with flame throwers and satchel charges to capture the position as ammunition stored within the bunker caught fire and exploded. Soon a white flag was raised and, after the firing had ceased, the rear door of the blockhouse swung open and a captured American parachute officer followed by two Germans walked out and the garrison commander surrendered.

	Germany & DDay		<p>After the fall of France in 1940, Germany shifted from plans to invade Britain to preparing for an invasion of the Soviet Union, which ultimately failed with the Axis defeat in Operation Barbarossa. To defend occupied Europe, the Germans constructed the Atlantic Wall, a vast 1,700-mile system of fortifications with exploitable weaknesses, notably gaps between strongholds. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, tasked with strengthening the defenses, disagreed with his superior von Rundstedt over strategy, advocating for destroying Allied forces on the beaches, but a compromise left German defenses uncoordinated on D-Day. This lack of immediate tank reinforcements, along with Allied deception tactics, contributed to the successful invasion and hastened Germany's defeat in World War II.</p>
	History of Normandy		<p>Normandy suffered repeated attacks from the Vikings (or 'Norsemen/Normans') in the early 900's. Finally, Charles III 'the Simple', abandoned Normandy to the Scandinavians in 911AD, and Rollo became the first ruler of Normandy. It is believed that Rollo was truly a giant among men. Rollo was nicknamed 'The Walker' because he was said to be too big to ride on a horse. Rumours put Rollo at around 140kg and 2 metres tall! His great-great-great-grandson, would be William the Conqueror. Normandy remained an important region throughout the Middle Ages, experiencing periods of internal conflict and external struggles with neighbouring powers. Since the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, English monarchs had held titles and lands within France, the possession of which made them vassals of the kings of France. The Hundred Years' War between England and France had a profound effect on Normandy, with the English ultimately losing control of the region in the mid-15th century. Additionally, figures like Richard the Lionheart and Joan of Arc have left a significant mark on the history of Normandy. Richard the Lionheart, the English crusading king fortified Normandy's defence system and expanded its influence. Joan of Arc became a symbol of French resistance and resilience during the Hundred Years' War, and was burned at the stake in Rouen. In the 20th century, Normandy played a pivotal role in World War II when it became the site of the Allied invasion on D-Day, marking a turning point in the war against Nazi Germany.</p>
	What was DDay		<p>Immediately before D-Day began, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander tasked with delivering the invasion of northern France in the summer of 1944, described what was to follow as 'the Great Crusade'. It was the beginning of the most complex operation of this or any war, one that had few parallels in terms of organisation and the amount of resources that had been devoted to helping secure its success.</p> <p>D-Day refers to the Allied invasion of Normandy during World War II on June 6, 1944. It was one of the largest amphibious military operations in history and marked a crucial turning point in the war. The invasion was meticulously planned and involved the combined efforts of American, British, Canadian, and other Allied forces.</p> <p>The objective of D-Day was to establish a foothold on the heavily fortified beaches of Normandy and begin the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi control. The operation involved the landing of troops by air and sea, with airborne divisions dropping behind enemy lines and naval forces delivering soldiers onto five designated landing beaches: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword.</p> <p>Despite facing fierce German resistance, the Allied forces managed to secure their initial objectives by the end of D-Day. The success of the invasion allowed for the establishment of a beachhead, and from there, the Allies pushed forward, ultimately leading to the liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation. D-Day remains a significant event in history, symbolizing the determination, bravery, and sacrifice of the soldiers who participated in the operation. The link takes you to June 6, 1944 – The Light of Dawn written and directed by Jean-Christophe Rosé and was produced for France Télévisions.</p>
	12th Panzer Division		<p>The 12th Panzer Division Hitlerjugend's S.S. Panzergrenadierregiment occupied Fontenay-le-Pesnel, with many of its junior enlisted men coming from the Hitler Youth. These divisions gained a reputation for their fierceness and unwavering combat prowess. They were aggressive, resilient, and displayed fierce loyalty, holding their ground in the face of heavy casualties. The S.S. Panzergrenadierregiment divisions were known for impeding Allied advances. The website link takes you to an overview of the Hitler Youth film clip - 'Youth in Hitler's Reich'.</p>

	Normandy Food		<p>As for the food, Normandy is renowned for its delicious and distinctive cuisine. The region uses a lot of local produce, such as apples, cream, butter, and meats, which are prominent ingredients in many traditional dishes. Normandy is particularly known for its excellent cheeses, including famous varieties like Camembert and Livarot.</p> <p>Normandy is also famous for its seafood. The region's proximity to the sea allows for a wide array of fresh seafood options, including oysters, mussels, scallops, and lobster. The combination of land and sea in Normandy's gastronomy is reflected in popular dishes like "Moules Marinières" (mussels cooked with white wine and shallots) and "Coquilles Saint-Jacques" (scallops cooked with butter and cream).</p> <p>Most recognisably, Normandy is renowned for its apple orchards and the production of cider and apple-based products. The bitter and acidic cider apples, contribute to the creation of flavorful ciders, apple brandy (Calvados), and apple-based desserts like "Tarte Tatin" (caramelized apple tart).</p>
Saint-Laurent-sur-Mer	Charles Shay		<p>The Charles Shay Memorial is dedicated to Charles Norman Shay, a remarkable individual with a fascinating story. Born on June 27, 1924, Shay was a tribal elder of the Penobscot tribe. A decorated veteran of both World War II and the Korean War. He grew up on the reservation in Indian Island, Maine, and was drafted as a medic into the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division in 1943.</p> <p>Shay's incredible journey led him to the front lines of history. On June 6, 1944, he landed on Omaha Beach during as part of the first wave. As an Army medic, his role was to save lives, offering aid and care to fellow soldiers in the midst of battle. Through his courage and selflessness, Shay received several prestigious awards, including the Silver Star, Bronze Star, and the Legion d'Honneur, becoming the first Native American in Maine to be awarded the French chevalier distinction.</p> <p>During World War II, a significant number of First Nation actively served in the military, despite their relatively small population. Out of an estimated First Nation population of less than 400,000, around 44,000 individuals contributed to the war effort as soldiers. This equated to approximately 5 to 10 percent of the entire Indigenous population. Remarkably, this number included almost 800 women who defied societal expectations and boldly took on crucial roles in the armed forces.</p>
	William the Conqueror		<p>William the Bastard (later known as the Conqueror) was born around 1027 and was the Duke of Normandy from 1035 until his death in 1087. He is best known for leading the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. Mathilde of Flanders became his queen consort. She played an important role as the Duchess of Normandy and later as the Queen of England, providing support to her husband and acting as his regent in his absence from Normandy when William was preparing to invade England. She is buried in the Abbaye aux Dames in Caen. Mathilde and William had a strong and influential partnership, with both William and Mathilde having a lasting impact on the history of Normandy and England. William's conquest changed the course of English history, establishing a Norman dynasty on the English throne. Mathilde is also known for her potential involvement or patronage of the Bayeux Tapestry, a famous historical artwork depicting the events leading up to the Norman Conquest.</p> <p>It is said that when William proposed marriage to Matilda, she rejected him, asserting she was too noble. In response to her refusal, William rode from Normandy to Bruges, where he encountered Matilda on her way to church, seized her by her long braids, forcibly removed her from her horse, and humiliated her by throwing her onto the street. Oddly enough, she decided to marry him.</p> <p>At the funeral of William the Conqueror in Caen, extraordinary and gruesome incidents took place. According to historical accounts, a fire broke out in the city as the body was brought to the church, causing panic and disruption. After the mass, when interring his body, it was noted that the coffin initially prepared his burial may have been too small to accommodate him. William's body had bloated due to the decomposition process. As a result, his corpse reportedly did not fit properly into the original coffin and began to rupture. The explosion of William's body created a chaotic scene at the funeral. Attendees, including high-ranking nobles and clergy, were forced to scatter and flee to avoid the dispersal of bodily fluids. It compounded his character as one of conflict and controversy in an ungracious death.</p>

	Adolf Josef Ferdinand Galland		<p>Adolf Josef Ferdinand Galland was a German Luftwaffe flying ace. He flew 705 combat missions surviving being shot down four times. Galland's aerial prowess earned him credit for 104 aerial victories, all against the Western Allies. Towards the end of the war, Galland clashed with Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring over the most effective strategy to combat the Allied Air Forces' bombing of Germany. By 1944, the Luftwaffe fighter force was under immense pressure, and Göring blamed Galland for the failure to prevent daylight strategic bombings by the Allies. The situation reached a breaking point in early January 1945 when Galland's constant criticism of the Luftwaffe leadership led to his removal from command. Subsequently, he was placed under house arrest following the Fighter Pilots' Revolt, where senior fighter pilots confronted Göring regarding the conduct of the air war. Galland made a return to operational flying in March 1945 and was granted permission to establish a jet fighter unit called Jagdverband 44. He continued flying missions over Germany until the end of the war in May. Remarkably, post-war, Galland formed friendships with former enemies, including RAF aces Robert Stanford Tuck and Douglas Bader. Adolf Galland passed away on 9 February 1996. Picture Credit: flickriver.com</p>
	Major Dick Winters		<p>As detailed in Stephen E. Ambrose's bestselling book Band of Brothers and its acclaimed television adaptation, Dick Winters was just 26 years old when he landed in France on D-Day. As a paratrooper in Easy Company, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 101st Airborne Division, Winters demonstrated exceptional leadership, orchestrating a successful attack on German artillery at Brécourt Manor—a feat that earned him the Distinguished Service Cross, presented by Lieutenant General Omar Bradley. Following the death of his immediate commander, Winters took charge of 2nd Battalion, leading it in the critical assault on Carentan and continuing to command Easy Company through key campaigns, including Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Bulge. By the war's end, Winters, promoted to major, had played a pivotal role in capturing Hitler's mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden and ended his military service in the Austrian Tyrol before returning to the United States in November 1945.</p>
	Kieffer's Commandos		<p>At the start of World War II, Philippe Kieffer was serving in the French Navy. After the German invasion and defeat of France in the summer of 1940, Kieffer joined General Charles de Gaulle's Free French Forces. In 1942, Kieffer proposed to create a special unit of commandos who would attack German targets from the sea. British commandos had already been doing similar missions, and Kieffer saw how effective they were. His plan got approved, and in 1943, the 'Commandos Kieffer' was formed. Kieffer became their leader, the first French commando of the Free French Forces. The commandos saw their first action during the D-Day landings. They were the only French unit to land on the beaches of Normandy with the Allied forces during the D-Day invasion. Despite facing tough resistance and suffering casualties, including Kieffer getting wounded twice, the commandos helped make the operation successful.</p> <p>The French commandos were composed of men from various backgrounds, including French mainlanders, citizens of French colonies, and even foreigners who escaped occupied Europe and joined the French resistance. A truly diverse unit. Website link: Leon Gautier, the last surviving member of the French commando unit that waded ashore on D-Day alongside allied troops to begin the liberation of France. Image: Le commando Kieffer; Source Musée n4 Commando</p>

["Greatest Tank
Ace of All Time"](#)



Michael Wittmann was a highly decorated and skilled German tank commander and Waffen-SS officer who played a vital role in securing German victories.

It was his exceptional feat during the Battle of Villers-Bocage on June 13, 1944, that sealed his legendary status. Leading from the front in his Tiger I tank, Wittmann single-handedly confronted and obliterated a significant number of British tanks, anti-tank guns, and other vehicles in the town. This audacious act sowed chaos among the attacking forces, effectively halting the Allied advance towards the strategically important target of Caen. A few months later, Wittmann met his demise near Cintheaux. His Tiger tank fell victim to an ambush orchestrated by British tanks and anti-tank units. The circumstances surrounding his death remain subject to speculation and debate.

Wittmann's legacy continues to captivate and provoke discussions and debates around his actions and tactics. His courage, military skills, and the impact he made on the battlefield have cemented his legacy as a formidable tank commander. He is buried in the nearby La Cambe German Cemetery.

WHAT WAS THE WAFFEN-SS?

The Waffen-SS, which translates to "Armed SS" in German, was the combat branch of the Schutzstaffel (SS), formed and led by Heinrich Himmler.

Weblink takes you to a concise bio of Michael Wittmann: [The Black Baron: The Deadliest Tank Ace Of The Second World War](#)

Image: Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-299-1802-09

[German Resistance](#)



During World War II, there were Germans who rejected the ideology and policies of the oppressive and authoritarian Nazi government. The German resistance comprised of different individuals, groups, and organizations, which can be broadly categorized into two groups: political opponents and military conspirators. Leftist parties like the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party led early opposition against the regime, but their efforts proved futile. On the other hand, military conspirators planned coups and assassination plots to overthrow Hitler. The July 20, 1944 plot led by Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg was the most significant of these attempts, but it failed, and the conspirators were arrested and executed. Estimates indicate that about 800,000 Germans were arrested for resistance activities during World War II, and between 15,000 to 77,000 of these individuals were executed. The actual number of those who participated in the resistance remains unknown.

EXAMPLES OF RESISTANCE IN GERMANY

INDIVIDUALS - Individual Germans or small groups of people acting as the "unorganized resistance" defied the Nazi regime in various ways, most notably those who helped Jews survive the Nazi Holocaust by hiding them, obtaining papers for them, or in other ways aiding them.

HABSBURGS - In Austria, there were groups motivated by the Habsburg legacy, and the Gestapo paid particular attention to them. These groups sought to overthrow the Nazi regime and restore an independent Austria led by the Habsburg family. Their shared objective was especially provocative to the Nazi regime, as Hitler harboured a deep hatred for the Habsburgs. Hitler vehemently opposed the Habsburg family's longstanding principles of tolerance and coexistence among different ethnic groups and peoples.

FRAU SOLF - The Frau Solf Tea Party, referring to an event that took place in Berlin on September 10, 1943. The gathering was an informal meeting of the Solf Circle, a group of German intellectuals involved in resistance against the Nazi regime. Its members were involved in sheltering Jewish families and assisting others in finding hiding places. However, the tea party was infiltrated by a Gestapo agent named Paul Reckzeh and most members of the Solf Circle were executed following their arrest. The arrests were a part of a broader crackdown against the anti-Nazi resistance that led to the demise of the Abwehr, the German military intelligence agency, months later.

MARIA THERESE von HAMMERSTEIN - In the wake of Hitler's rise to power in 1933, she became involved in helping Jews and intellectuals escape the country, even using her motorcycle to transport them to safety in Prague. She also provided valuable information to the Jewish and anti-Nazi communities based on her father's knowledge. Her father, KURT von HAMMERSTEIN-EQUORD, commander-in-chief of the Reichswehr, and brothers were involved in unsuccessful plots to assassinate Hitler, while her mother and other siblings were imprisoned in concentration camps during World War II.

MARIA von MALTZAN - An aristocrat and a prominent figure in the German Resistance. Despite having family connections with some Nazi officers, she was an underground fighter for years. Realizing the brutality of the Nazi regime towards Jews, she sheltered them in her home in Berlin, feeding and protecting them under Gestapo noses. Working with the Swedish Church, she provided over 60 Jews, deserters, and forced laborers, with safety and falsified official visas and drove trucks to rescue them.

[Women In French Resistance](#)



Women played a crucial role in the French Resistance during World War II. They worked as couriers, nurses, fighters, and leaders, contributing in various ways to the fight against German occupation. The head of the French Resistance was Mr Jean Moulin, who was sent by de Gaulle to unify different resistance groups. He was eventually betrayed, arrested by the Gestapo, and subjected to torture but refused to give away any information, ultimately sacrificing his life for the cause. Brave women and men in the French Resistance fought courageously against the German occupation, gathering intelligence, sabotaging the enemy, and supporting the liberation of France.

NOTABLE FIGURES

MARIE-MADELEINE FOURCADE, who founded and led the Alliance network, coordinating successful espionage operations against the Nazis.



JEANNIE ROUSSEAU convinced a German officer to draw a rocket and a testing station, revealing the V2 rocket program to the Allies.

NANCY WAKE, a nurse and journalist from New Zealand, joined the resistance and carried out missions such as smuggling weapons, sabotaging German installations, and aiding the escape of Allied soldiers. She became one of the most wanted individuals by the Nazis and used her wit and quick thinking to gather intelligence for the Allies.

BERTIE ALBRECHT, a former nurse, supported German refugees and organized the "Combat" resistance movement. She was arrested by the Vichy government but managed to escape from a psychiatric hospital and continued her activities in hiding.

GERMAINE TILLION collected intelligence, countered Nazi propaganda, and organized resistance networks. She was arrested and sent to a concentration camp where she actively engaged in resistance activities and documented the conditions there.

LUCIE AUBRAC co-founded the Sud resistance movement with her husband, Raymond Aubrac. She played a vital role in acts of sabotage, espionage, and rescue missions. Her most notable achievement was successfully rescuing her husband and other prisoners from a Gestapo prison. Weblink: Lucie Aubrac Film Trailer

	<p>French Resistance</p>		<p>The French Resistance emerged in response to the German occupation of France after the signing of an armistice in June 1940. Initially consisting of individual acts of defiance and sabotage, the resistance movement gradually organized itself into networks and movements with specific missions. From the very beginning of the occupation, various attitudes emerged among the French population, including a refusal to accept defeat, collaboration, and often manifested as individual acts such as graffiti and assisting injured or escaped British and French soldiers and engaging in acts of sabotage against the occupying forces. Despite the Occupiers' belief that propaganda would secure passivity of the French population, they had to increase repressive measures like curfews and strict movement restrictions, which only served to intensify resistance. Soon, a group of determined individuals began organizing and coordinating their efforts to fight back systematically.</p> <p>On June 18, 1940, General de Gaulle, called on the French to join him in continuing the battle.</p> <p>By 1941, the resistance movement had started to organize itself into two coherent groups. "Networks" maintained direct contact with overseas headquarters such as Free France, British headquarters, and American headquarters. Networks had limited recruitment and implemented strict security measures within small teams, each with specific missions like gathering information, facilitating escapes, and carrying out sabotage. On the other hand, the resistance "movements" aimed to influence public opinion and engage the population directly. As the war progressed, the Wehrmacht faced its first setbacks in 1942 with failed invasion attempts in Great Britain and the Soviet Union, combined with the entry of the United States into the war. Simultaneously, the occupying forces and the Vichy government committed numerous atrocities such as the forced conscription of manpower, the rounding up and deportation of Jews, collaboration with the police, and the worsening rationing situation. As a result, many were inspired to join the Resistance.</p> <p>Some groups recommended generalised attacks against the Wehrmacht's soldiers and installations, whereas others preferred a more targeted approach to avoid reprisals against the civilian population. As the anticipated date of the Allied landing drew closer, the debate surrounding the role and status of the maquis within the Resistance intensified. Despite lacking sufficient weaponry, the Resistance ultimately played a vital role in preparing for the June 6, 1944 D-Day landings in Normandy and the liberation of French territory. Weblink: 10 great films about the French resistance. Image: Public Domain</p>
	<p>Brig Gen Theodore Roosevelt Jr</p>		<p>Brig. General Theodore Roosevelt Jr played a prominent role and known for his legendary assault on the enemy-held beaches at Normandy with a cane and a pistol. At 56 years of age he was the oldest soldier in Normandy and the only general to land with the first wave. With cane in one hand and a pistol in the other, he personally reconnoitred the area behind the beach, then came back to his men and told them: "We'll start the war from right here!" In addition to arthritis, he also had heart problems, a condition he kept secret.</p> <p>On 12 July, just a month after the landings, he suffered a heart attack during the night and died within the hour. He had been selected for promotion to major general and commander of the US 90th Infantry Division earlier that day. He was buried in the temporary military cemetery in Sainte-Mère-Église before being later moved to the Normandy American Cemetery overlooking Omaha beach (Plot D, Row 28, Grave 45), next to his brother Quentin, who had been killed while serving in the First World War, the only grave for someone who did not die in the Normandy campaign. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the first recipient in the US 4th Infantry Division.</p>

[Wehrmacht](#)



The Wehrmacht were the armed forces of Nazi Germany from 1935 to 1945, consisting of Heer (army), Kriegsmarine (navy), and Luftwaffe (air force). Under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, the Wehrmacht initially experienced remarkable success, spearheading Germany's invasions of Poland, France, and other European countries. However, as the war progressed, the Wehrmacht faced challenges and eventually suffered defeats, leading to the collapse of the Nazi regime. The Wehrmacht's strength lay in its armament, training, doctrine and discipline. It is important to note that while the Wehrmacht as an organization was responsible for carrying out Nazi Germany's military operations, not all members were involved in war crimes or atrocities. Some individuals within the Wehrmacht resisted or actively opposed the actions of the Nazi regime. The website link takes you to a fascinating clip about the Wehrmacht including interviews, and how it developed. Image Credit: Archief Alkmaar Commons.

The Wehrmacht, included several notable figures:

General Erwin Rommel - Known as the "Desert Fox," Rommel was a highly respected and skilled military commander who achieved notable successes in North Africa. He played a prominent role in the early victories of the German army and led the defence in Normandy during the Allied invasion.

Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt - Rundstedt was a senior military officer who served as the commander in chief of the Wehrmacht in the West. He played a significant role in the invasions of Poland, France, and the Soviet Union. However, he was relieved of his command shortly before the Battle of Normandy.

General Heinz Guderian - Guderian was one of the key figures in the development of armoured warfare tactics and techniques. He served as a commander of panzer units during the invasions of Poland and France, and later contributed to the design and deployment of the German Tiger and Panther tanks.

Field Marshal Albert Kesselring - Kesselring was a Luftwaffe general who commanded air forces in various theatres, including the Western and Mediterranean fronts. He played a crucial role in the defence of Italy and was known for his skilful coordination of ground and air forces.