

Thank you
for your inquiry





Thank you for your inquiry!

From experience we know that our prospective guests appreciate knowing exactly what is included in the rental, what additional services we can provide, and what there is to see and do in the area.

Chateau de Courtomer is an ideal venue for a family party or holiday, business event, photo-shoot or wedding. The Chateau is renovated and furnished to a high standard so you and your guests will be very comfortable. The estate of 150 acres includes a working farm and Chateau guests have the exclusive use of the park and gardens surrounding the Chateau. We have on-site maintenance and security personnel. If you have any queries which aren't answered in this leaflet please contact our bilingual team which manages the Chateau. Heather will be happy to answer all your questions and help you curate your stay. In the event that you need additional accommodation for guests or an extra room for parties, meetings, dancing or workshops, we have also included pricing details for the Orangerie and Farmhouse. For more details of the Orangerie and Farmhouse please refer to our [website](#).

We hope that we will have the pleasure of welcoming you and your guests to the Chateau soon.

À bientôt,

from the Chateau de Courtomer team

What is included in the Chateau rental?

When you book the Chateau, you have exclusive use of the spacious public rooms and the bedrooms which have been reserved for your stay. Once you have finalised your booking, Heather, our on-site manager, will be pleased to answer all the questions you have on the lead up to your trip. Please note that Heather is based in France so when you contact her you should take into account the time differences.

Heather or Jane will meet you on arrival at the Chateau (please note our check in time is 16.00), show you around, explain how everything works, answer any questions you have, and hand you the keys. Heather and Jane are native English speakers, and also speak French. They will help you throughout your stay on matters relating to house-keeping.

There is onsite maintenance and security so if any problems arise during your stay help is at hand.

The Chateau

The Chateau is centrally heated and has open fires in the library and billiard room. Your rental includes all costs relating to electricity and fuel, wood is charged for. The Chateau's bedrooms are made up with fine quality bed linen and we provide towels. These will not be changed during your stay except if you request housekeeping (please refer to the services section of this document). There are hair dryers in each bedroom.

Dining at the Chateau

Our kitchens are equipped to a professional standard and include two large fridges, a freezer and a cold room in the basement. Our coffee machine is a standard cafetiere. We also provide a catering size coffee maker and hot water heater for bigger groups. The kitchen is stocked with basic cleaning products, bin liners etc. and we provide a welcome pack of tea, coffee, milk, sugar. The fridges will be on, just waiting for you to stock them. The nearest large supermarket is 20 minutes away and we have very good local stores in the village, including a small convenience store. Local supermarkets do not deliver to the Chateau but several offer a click and collect service.

We provide good quality tableware and cutlery for 40 guests so that you can entertain in style. There are several changes of tablecloths for everyday use. These will not be laundered during your stay unless you book our housekeeping service. For special events we recommend that you hire tablecloths and tableware.

When you confirm your reservation, we will send you a Welcome Pack containing more details of local amenities and life at the Chateau!



Other important matters

The Orangerie is our designated party space, it is perfect for dancing. The floors in the Chateau are not designed for dancing. So if you are planning a dance party, please book the Orangerie.

We charge per person so there is no surcharge for single occupancy, which means your single friends can enjoy a double room at no extra cost.

We don't charge corkage so this means that you are free to buy in your favourite wine at local prices even for catered events. As there is livestock on the estate we do not allow fireworks. There are no curfews on the estate, so your celebrations can carry on into the small hours.

Well behaved pets welcome. Please keep your pets under control at all times and ensure you clean up after them.

How should you leave the Chateau upon departure?

Check out is at 11:00. Late check out can, under certain circumstances, be organised but it must be booked at the time of reservation. Check out, up until 15:00, costs an additional 500€. This cost will be added to your invoice.

The cleaning fee that we charge only covers laundry, making up the bedrooms and cleaning the bedrooms, bathrooms and public spaces. The booklet on reception and the appendix to your contract gives our guests details of check-out tidying and cleaning procedures.

At the end of your stay, Aurélie our housekeeper will check the Chateau to ensure that all is in good order so that we can return your security deposit promptly.

Services and suppliers...

For guests who want more support to make their stay more relaxing and enjoyable.

We understand that some clients like to upgrade their stay to include meals, cleaning, local travel etc. We are pleased to offer the following services. We can also suggest a number of talented suppliers who have worked at the Chateau and been recommended to us by guests, please ask for our Vendors list. .



☞ Concierge service (200€ per day)

Booking restaurants, planning day's out, organising a round of golf or garden visit can all be a bit daunting if you don't speak French. Jane is bilingual in French and English and knows the area well. If you would like to book our concierge service Jane will visit you to help and advise you on things to see and do in the area, make bookings etc. Our concierge service must be booked in advance and can be available any or all days of your stay. We usually find that an hours meeting on the first morning of your stay is enough and that after that WhatsApp support works well.

Please note however, that we can't work miracles and if you want a guide, a group meal out or a private chef you must book these services well in advance. We recommend that you book all external suppliers as soon as you confirm your booking with us and restaurants at least three months prior to your arrival. During the summer season local restaurants get booked up well in advance and so unless you book you will probably be disappointed. For groups of more than 10 people most good restaurants will ask you to choose a single menu, so you and your friends or family will have to choose what this is in advance. Also note that many restaurants in the French countryside will not accept 'drop in' customers after 20:30.

☞ Housekeeping (20€ per person per day)

If you book this service, please note that it is for all guest bedrooms and that housekeeping comes between 8.30 and 12.00. Rooms not available for service will not be serviced. If you would like us to make up your rooms each day, tidy public rooms and wash your tablecloths our housekeeping team will be happy to provide this service. This service must be booked in advance. The cost will be added to your final invoice.

☞ Transport

We recommend that you pick up a hire car at the airport, if you are not driving to the Chateau. Local car hire companies are few and far between and local supermarkets do not deliver to the Chateau.



Policies & Pricing

Our Cancellation Policy

We do understand that events beyond your control may require a change of date or cancellation. We are always willing to help you find another date and we will gladly apply all your payments to that date. Cancellations made up to three months from your stay's start date will be fully reimbursed, except for the non-refundable deposit. Please consider the purchase of traveler's insurance to cover the cost of cancellation, in case you are unable to reschedule your stay with us.

Our Pricing

If you have not already received a quote for your stay with us please contact Heather at heather@chateaucourtomer.com. Please state the number of guests you want accommodation for and she will send you a quote.

The starting price for the privatisation of the estate is on our [website](#). This is for 2024, prices for 2025 will be increased by 10%.



The Orangerie

If you are planning a dance, seminar or creative workshop the Orangerie is the spot. The Orangerie is just a few minutes walk from the Chateau. It has central heating, great light, a screen and a good WIFI connection. It looks out over a walled garden and the large double doors open out on to a gravel terrace. It's the perfect spot for entertaining and relaxing. Please tell us if you want to hire the Orangerie so we can add it to your quote. Hire of the Orangerie is 1,000€.

Discounts

A 10% discount is given to returning clients and for stays over five nights in the Chateau or Farmhouse

Payment methods, Deposits and Payment Terms

We accept payment by Pay Pal or direct transfer. Please note that we do not accept credit card payments.

Chateau deposit -1,000€ to hold your dates. This deposit is refundable for up to one month, from the date of receipt. Full payment payable three months before your trip. A refundable security deposit of 1,000€ will be added to your final invoice. It will be returned to you within 15 days of your departure, provided that the Chateau and the grounds are left in good order.

Farmhouse deposit - 500€ to hold your dates. This deposit is refundable for up to one month from the date of receipt. Full payment payable one month before your trip. A refundable security deposit of 500€ will be added to your final invoice. It will be returned to you within 15 days of your departure, provided that the Farmhouse is left in good order.

What is there to see and do locally?

Historic towns, Museums and Markets

Not all of Normandy's battles took place on the beaches. Just 35 minutes from Courtomer, in the exact location occupied by the [Memorial of Mont Ormel](#), one of the deciding battles of WWII took place. [The Civilian museum](#) and [William the Conqueror's castle](#) in Falaise are just nearby.



[Mortagne-au-Perche](#) hosts one of the best markets in the area every Saturday morning. If you love [organic produce](#) this is the place to go! The town is the gateway to the Perche which is rapidly gaining a reputation for its local produce. To understand more about the area, its history and producers take a visit to the [Maison du Parc](#). The information centre explains the history, way of life in the area and gives details of local producers that you can visit.

The lovely old town of [Bellême](#) (market day Thursday) lies at the centre of the Perche and is home to a range of craft and antique shops. Next door to Bellême is [La Perrière](#) and its elegant antique shop which also serves delicious meals, [Maison D'Horbe](#).

A feast for your senses

Just north of the Chateau lies the Pays D'Auge an area of France famous for its cheeses, cider, Calvados and half-timbered houses.

The village of [Camembert](#) has a museum that explains the history of the cheese and from here you can drive on to Livarot and stop off at the [Graindorge Cheese Village](#) which has an excellent visitors centre and runs guided tours and tastings. [The Cider Route](#) is a well-marked trail that leads you around the Normandy countryside passed producers which welcome visits from the public. We recommend [Maison Huet](#), they run tours in English and are very friendly. [Beuvron-en-Auge](#) is justifiably classified as one of France's most beautiful villages. It's a great place to shop, and of course, eat.

Thrills and spills

The [Le Mans 24 Hour circuit](#) is a short drive from the Chateau and 2023 marks the Centenary of the race. If you like motor sports the Chateau is an ideal base and the circuit also hosts a number of other races throughout the year. Step inside the world of Porsche at [Porsche Experience Centre](#). Go Karting at [Quest Karting](#), next door to the Chateau. When International competitions aren't being staged there, you can take to the track yourself.



☞ *Great gardens of Normandy*

[Normandy is a haven for gardens](#) from classical and grand to intimate and surprising. Most gardens are open weekdays between May and September. [Saint-Céneri-le-Gérei](#) is classified as one of the most beautiful villages in France and is well worth a visit. Just next door is the acclaimed garden "[Les Jardins de la Mansonière](#)". [Les Jardins de Pays D'Auge](#) in Cambremer is classified as one of France's "Jardin Remarquable".

☞ *All things equine*

Normandy is one of the main horse breeding areas of France, so if you love horses there are a variety of options. If you fancy a flutter the local racecourses run regular events throughout the year. [Carriage driving](#) in the Perche...What better way to explore the forests or local villages than in a horse drawn carriage? The renowned stud, [Le Haras du Pin](#) was built on the orders of The Sun King and now houses a permanent exhibition which explains the role that horses have played in French life through the ages. The stud also hosts international competitions throughout the year.

☞ *Golf courses galore!*

The course at Étretat is very beautiful and the one at Bellême is very near. Whatever your level, Normandy has 26 [golf courses](#) to choose from.

☞ *Family fun around the Chateau*

The swimming lake at [Soligny-La-Trappe](#) is just 20 minutes from the Chateau in the heart of an ancient pine forest.

[What to do in the Orne...](#) A good website which gives details of all activities and attractions in the area. Regularly updated and accurate.

☞ *Further a field, but less than two house from the Chateau*

If you would like to plan day trips to the sites which Normandy is famous for; the WWII landing beaches, Mont Saint Michel, Monet's garden at Giverny, Bayeux and Lisieux are all within easy reach of the Chateau. If you prefer guided tours we recommend that you contact [Dominique Eudier](#). Dominique is based locally and her knowledge of Normandy is encyclopaedic. Dominique is very popular, so we recommend that you contact her well in advance.



History of the Chateau

Chateau de Courtomer, seen above in an engraving of 1861, is set in a gentle valley amid the green hills of the Orne, a department of Normandy in western France. This was the seat of a powerful family of Norman noblemen from the 11th century until the beginning of the 20th century – almost a thousand years of stability amid the centuries of creative destruction that shaped modern France, through social and economic upheaval and transformation, revolution and war.

The earliest remains of human occupation found in the area date back about 100 000 years. Celtic tribes settled, the Romans conquered, the barbarian Franks swept through...and they all left their mark in this fertile, outwardly peaceful area. Before it was Normandy, the region was part of the vast Roman province of Gallia Lugdunensis. When Rome fell and the Franks conquered Gaul, Normandy became part of the Kingdom of the West Franks. When the Merovingian kings, descendants of King Clovis of the Franks, gave way to the new dynasty of Charlemagne, it merged into the new Carolingian kingdom of France.

Viking Raiders

The first Chateau de Courtomer was a fortress, a stronghold in a countryside that had suffered from civil war between rival factions of Frankish noblemen and 200 years of Viking raids. These fierce men from the North spent the summers sailing back and forth between the English and French coasts, looting abbeys and pillaging rich farms. But when they had rowed up the Seine and besieged Paris once too often, the French king Charles the Simple made a deal. In return for peace, he gave them land. That was in 911. The Norsemen soon settled in France where they intermarried with local families, converted to Christianity and founded new aristocratic dynasties. They gave their name to Normandy.

By the year 1050, the Norman seigneurs of Courtomer had made a name for themselves in local lore. They had allied themselves closely with their powerful neighbors, the dukes of Alençon. They had fought in the crusades. And one of them married a daughter of the Count of Tancarville -- from whom my husband William Bonner and our children are descended! (Today, the only reminder of the Tancarville name in France is a ruined fortress and a bridge over the Seine River. The family followed William the Conqueror to England in 1066. Their descendants today are the Tankervilles in England and the United States.)

Of course, placating the Normans only worked for a short time. The duchy of Normandy became a center of conflict as soon as its duke conquered England in 1066. At one time, the new English kings actually held more territory in France than their French rivals. The 100 Years War spanned the mid-14th and 15th centuries, as the kings of France and the Norman kings of England fought for control. Not far from Courtomer, in Moulins le Marche, you can still see traces of the immense "Fossés le Roi" an earthwork wall and ditch separating the duchy of Normandy and the comté de Perche, whose counts were loyal to the king of France.

War or Religion

The Chateau de Courtomer would remain an important defensive center until the end of the 100 Years War and the beginning of a period of peace and growth. That is, until the Protestant Reform ushered in another period of violent conflict. Protestantism was widespread in Normandy by the 1530s, protected by the king's sister, Marguerite of Angouleme. This fascinating woman of letters -- "heart of a man in a woman's body, with the face of an angel" as a contemporary put it, held court in her husband's duchy of Alençon. The barons of Courtomer, like many independent-minded noblemen, converted to Protestantism. In the temple on their lands, the family was baptized, married, and buried. "Paris is worth a mass."

The Protestant king converted to Roman Catholicism, ending the war and instituting a long period of civil peace and enforced religious tolerance. The nobles who had supported the new Henri IV found their fortunes greatly enhanced. The baron of Courtomer, Artus de Saint-Simon, was granted a marquisate. The title was recognition not only of important military service, but also of large territorial holdings. When you look out from the windows of Courtomer, all the land you see today was once Courtomer land. By the 1600s, the medieval chateau was beginning to crumble. Times had changed. It was no longer necessary to maintain thick walls and towers to fend off robbers and invading armies.

Landed Wealth and Power

Land was the source of the Marquis de Courtomer's wealth and power. He held thousands of acres of farmland, owned monopolies on mills and communal ovens, controlled and enforced justice in the jurisdiction of his domains. The seigneurs of Courtomer ran a school and took a prominent role in church affairs. And there were a multitude of sources of income connected to ownership of the land besides rents. By the "droit de massacre," for instance, the Marquis de Courtomer had a right to the tongues of all the sheep and cattle butchered during a certain period of the year. And what the family could not eat, they sold! Then as now, tongue is a delicacy in France.

As French nobles, the seigneurs of Courtomer were exempt from most taxes. But they owed the "tax of blood." They paid heavily during the wars of the 17th century, serving Henri IV's son, Louis XIII, in Germany, Italy, and Spain. They fought, too, with Henri's grandson Louis XIV the Sun King. It was during Louis XIV's reign that the modern-day borders of France were established, pushing the kingdom north into the former Spanish Netherlands, east into Germany and the Alps, and south to the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean.

It was also during the reign of Louis XIV that the seigneurs of Courtomer abandoned their Protestant faith. Louis the Sun King, and many Frenchmen tired of civil war, held to the theory of the absolute power of kings. That power was based on the concept of an inherited, divinely appointed right. And it meant France must have “one king, one law, one faith” (un roi, une loi, une foi). There was no room in France for two forms of Christian worship. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which had granted religious tolerance and protected Protestants, sent thousands of Huguenots fleeing across the borders of France. High position or wealth was no protection.

The marquis of Courtomer's Protestant uncle, the powerful Duc de La Force, went to prison. His wife was forced into a convent. The Courtomer family quickly converted back to Roman Catholicism. The temple became a dairy. It is one of the rare Protestant temples to have survived the king's vigorous imposition of Roman Catholicism. Most Protestant temples were razed to the ground. But the seigneurs of Courtomer had served the ancestors of Louis XIV well. The temple was also a place of burial for warriors who fallen in battles for the king – war with Spain under Louis XIII, war with the Netherlands under Louis XIV had taken their toll. By the end of the 17th century, in fact, not a single adult male was left alive.

The enlightenment ideal

The medieval Chateau was finally torn down in the 18th century. (Although the Protestant temple still stands.) The family, in a new period of prosperity brought about by the good sense and economical management of the widowed Marquise de Courtomer, began anew. The vaulted cellars in the present Chateau are all that remain intact from the medieval foundations. In place of the tough medieval defensive fortress, the new Chateau de Courtomer rose as a superb example of 18th century ideals expressed in building. Its classical style and symmetry represent harmony and balance. The chateau is grand, but simple in its form, typical of the 18th-century Age of Enlightenment's admiration for the pure ideals of the early Roman republic. The Chateau celebrates light, which pours into its windows on every side.

As you may know, Chateau de Courtomer was one of the last grand French Chateaux built in the 18th century. It was constructed from 1787 to 1789, the eve of the French Revolution. Although it represents the Enlightenment ideals that formed the ideological basis of the Revolution, Courtomer is also a monument to the Ancien Régime, a way of life and a system of privilege that ended conclusively with the execution of the French king Louis XVI in 1793.

The Marquis and his wife and mother-in-law almost met the same fate during the Great Terror and its wave of executions. But after several months in prison, they survived to return to Courtomer – and to take part in rebuilding post-Revolutionary France. With the end of the revolutionary period and the rise of Napoleon after 1800, the family was once again firmly established in the corridors of power. The Marquis became chamberlain to the Empress Marie-Louise, Napoleon's second wife. It was an honorary position meant valuable access to the powerful political figures of the day.



Words not War

The course of the 19th-century saw the Saint Simon family turn from war to literature...in a manner of speaking! The orphaned Leontine de Saint Simon, heir to the last Marquis of Courtomer, married Astolphe, Marquis de Custine. His mother Delphine de Custine was a famous beauty whose father-in-law and husband had been guillotined during the Terror. Francois-René de Chateaubriand, man of letters, novelist, critic of the Revolution, was her lover. Some said he was Astolphe's father. Be that as it may, he was the godfather of Leontine and Astolphe's son Enguerrand.

This last direct descendent of the Saint Simon family died at the age of three, and is buried between his mother and grandmother. Courtomer was inherited by the next heir, who married into the family of the Turenne d'Aynac. In 1905, the Chateau was sold. It was purchased by a neighbor and distant relative, the vicomtesse de Brimont and her husband, the comte de Pelet.

One hundred years later...

The Bonner family purchased the Chateau de Courtomer in 2005. It serves again as a family gathering place- and also as an annual conference center for the Bonner publishing company.

FOR MORE QUESTIONS PLEASE EMAIL OR CALL OUR TEAM AT

info@chateaucourtomer.com

+33 (0)6 49 12 87 98

OUR WEBSITE IS FULL OF INFORMATION AS WELL AT

www.chateaucourtomer.com