



*Guest Senior Writer PJJ, Chicago IL:* This is a spectacular example of Gothic architecture, similar to the famed church in Paris. Constructed in the 12th century, the cathedral was heavily damaged during WW2, but now fully restored to most of its original features. Admission to the cathedral in Rouen is free and donations are accepted.

Rouen is 90 minutes from Paris by train or drive, and makes an excellent day trip. The surrounding Normandy region feature beautiful, rustic areas of France to explore, providing a pleasant contrast to the touristic flash of Paris.

Among the historic artifacts are the ornate tombs of the Dukes of Normandy, once France's richest men. The heart of Richard the Lionheart is also there. He was Duke of Normandy as well as a King of England.

The medieval historic city core with half-timbered houses, another historic church and abbey

and a market square famous for a historic tragedy. The Place du Vieux Marche is where Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in 1431.

Normandy is filled with wonderful things to see, do, eat and drink. Rouen is also about 90 minutes south of the World War 2 D-Day beaches, memorials, museums, cemeteries and other historic sites.