

THE TOUR 2017 PATROUILLE DE FRANCE



KANSAS CITY 5 – 6 APRIL

Organized by the US Centennial Commission At the National World War I Museum & Memorial, military leaders, veterans and descendants of veterans of the war have been invited to this commemorative ceremony. Many foreign representatives including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary and Italy will be attending as well. Several texts of historical value will be read during the ceremony including extracts from speeches, press articles as well as literature and poetry. Archive videos and musical moments will also be used in an attempt to revive the special atmosphere of the time.

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE 8 – 9 APRIL



The Patrouille de France will fly with the USAF Thunderbirds at the air show in Montgomery, Alabama. The theme of this meeting will be the legacy of the Great War “One Century of Air Power ” commemorating not only the Centenary of America’s entry into the First World War but also the 70 years of the US Air Force. The base will be open to the public and the event is free both days. In addition to the Thunderbirds, a variety of civilian acts and ground demonstrations will provide entertainment fit for the whole family.

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE 20 – 21 APRIL



The TEI (Trilateral Exercise Initiative) exercise, a joint 3 country training exercise is taking place there. Aircraft from the US Air Force along with the Patrouille de France will again commemorate the centenary and the friendship between France and the United States which will include the F-22 Raptor, F-35 Lightning II along with the French Rafale & EF-2000.

PENSACOLA 10 – 12 APRIL



US Navy Blue Angels (US Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron) will fly with the team at home. It will be the French team's third performance in the sunshine state. **April 1 – 2** they fly in **Melbourne's** Air & Space Show and **3 -4** at **Lakeland** as part of Sun'N Fun. The French team is impressed with the Blues saying in the press release, "Created in 1946, it is one of the first aerobatic teams in the world and is among the most spectacular. One of the peculiarities of this patrol is that, even today, its pilots fly without anti-G suits in F-18 Hornet combat aircraft."



NELLIS AFB 17 – 18 APRIL

The team meets up with the USAF Thunderbirds at their home base, Nellis AFB in Las Vegas. The US team takes their name in reference to a strong native influence the same way the famous Lafayette Sqn of World War 1 took their insignia. (*More on that below.*) At both Pensacola and Nellis it's expected that the pilots will share rides and fly the teams together in formation.

COLORADO SPRINGS 19 APRIL



The Air Force Academy and French Air School, which is situated at the home base of the Patrouille de France in Salon De Provence, maintains and develops close links. Since 1969 the French Air School and the USAFA cross-exchange 8 cadet officers. This exchange, supervised by senior officers and professors both French and American, are integrated for three years within each school. As a nod to this collaboration the French team will fly over the Academy on April 19.

SACRAMENTO 13 – 16 APRIL



The team will spend Easter weekend at historic Mather Field. The team will fly on the 15th and attend other events in the city. The visit is being arranged by California Capital Air Show organizers and representatives of the French and US Consuls there. In January 1918, the Department of War sent officers to the Sacramento to survey sites for an aviation school. The first unit stationed there was the 283d Aero Squadron. Most of the Curtiss JN-4 Jennys to be used for flight training were shipped in wooden crates by rail. Mather Field served as a base for primary flight training. The team will leave Sacramento for a fly-over of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge.

The team will also fly over other iconic American landmarks and cities including Washington D.C., and New York City where they will fly a formation over the Statue of Liberty. "Liberty Enlightening the World" was a gift of friendship from the people of France to the United States and is recognized as a universal symbol of freedom and democracy.

CANADA



Canada is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year and the Royal Flying Corps In Canada marks its centennial. The Patrouille will be seen over 4 places in the predominantly French speaking province of Quebec. They include Canadian Forces Base Bagotville, which this year celebrates its 75th anniversary, Montreal (May 1) where the city is marking its 350th anniversary and Quebec City (May 2). I think your best chance to meet the team will be in the National Capital region where they will perform with the Snowbirds at Gatineau airport. It's part of an air show being planned for April 30 and full details of this one-day free spectacle (*there will be a fee to park*) will be announced later in March. It doesn't look like the CF-18 Canada

150 demo jet will be part of a formation with the Patrouille de France. As of this writing the Canadian Hornet team begins their season in Lake Charles, Louisiana at the Chennault Air Show April 29 – 30 and then head to McEntire ANGB in South Carolina before joining up with the Snowbirds back in Canada over Montreal May 13 -14.