



FRANCE



www.JourneysClub.ca

FRANCE

From the rolling wine country of Provence to the pristine beach paradises of the Côte d'Azur, France is sure to have you soaking in the joie de vivre. Sipping coffee at a Parisian café or taking in the masterpieces at the Louvre are European experiences that can't be missed. Home to a sophisticated savoir-faire, exquisite cuisine and a wide variety of cheeses (stinky and otherwise), a visit to France is an adventure for all the senses.

HISTORY

The borders of modern France are quite similar to that of ancient Gaul. Conquered by the Romans in the first century, the region adopted Roman speech, culture and, eventually, Christianity. In the fourth century, a Germanic tribe known as the Franks invaded from the east, giving the country its present-day name. As one of the earliest countries to progress from feudalism to the nation-state, its monarchy began in 987 and reached its culmination with the reign of Louis XIV, beginning in 1643.

In the seventeenth century, France was a dominant power (and the most populous country) in Europe. However, extravagant spending and expensive military campaigns led to a sharp decline and the revolt of the people. The French Revolution culminated in the establishment of the First Republic in 1792, although France would revert to forms of absolute rule or constitutional monarchy four different times. The most famous of these reversions came when Napoleon Bonaparte appointed himself as First Consul. Napoleon developed a number of innovative military strategies that led to many successful campaigns and surprising victories, as well as some spectacular failures.

Despite France's ultimate victory in World War I and II, the wars brought great losses of troops and capital. In fact, more than half of France's public sector was appropriated by Germany during its four-year occupation. After the war, France established the Fourth Republic, which was replaced in 1958 by the Fifth Republic, ushered in by General Charles de Gaulle. Since then, France has constructed a presidential democracy resistant to the instabilities experienced in earlier parliamentary democracies. In recent years, its reconciliation and cooperation with Germany have been pivotal to the economic integration of Europe, including the introduction of a common exchange currency, the euro, in January 1999. At present, France is at the forefront of efforts to develop the EU's military capabilities to supplement progress toward an EU foreign policy.

FRANCE CONTINUED

FAST

FACTS

<i>Capital:</i>	<i>Paris</i>
<i>Population:</i>	<i>61 million</i>
<i>Language:</i>	<i>French</i>
<i>Currency:</i>	<i>Euro (EUR)</i>
<i>Time Zone:</i>	<i>EST plus 6 hours</i>
<i>Electricity:</i>	<i>230V, 50Hz</i> Ⓢ

HOLIDAYS &

FESTIVALS

<i>April-May</i>	<i>Foire du Trone (Paris)</i>
<i>April- June</i>	<i>Joan of Arc Festivals</i>
<i>April 28</i>	<i>Festival of the Artefacts (Strasbourg)</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Fête des Mai (Nice)</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Cannes Film Festival</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Museums by Night</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Great Paris Steeplechase</i>
<i>May 8</i>	<i>WWII Victory Day</i>
<i>July</i>	<i>Tour de France (Paris)</i>
<i>July 14</i>	<i>Bastille Day</i>
<i>July/August</i>	<i>Festival d'Avignon</i>
<i>September</i>	<i>Autumn Festival (Paris)</i>
<i>September</i>	<i>Cannes International Boat Show</i>
<i>August 15</i>	<i>Assumption</i>
<i>October</i>	<i>Montmartre Harvest Festival</i>
<i>November 1</i>	<i>All Saints Day</i>
<i>November 11</i>	<i>Armistice Day</i>
<i>December</i>	<i>Christmas Markets</i>

BOOKS

- *Chasing Matisse: A Year in France Living my Dream*, by James Morgan
- *Long Ago in France: The Years in Dijon*, by M.F.K. Fisher
- *Paris to the Moon*, by Adam Gopnik
- *Walking Paris: Thirty Original Walks In and Around Paris*, by Gilles Desmons
- *A Year in Provence*, by Peter Mayle and Judith Clancy

VIDEOS

- *Cyrano de Bergerac (1990)*
- *French Kiss (1995)*
- *Saving Private Ryan (1998)*
- *Amélie (2001)*
- *Chocolat (2000)*

FRANCE CONTINUED

LOCAL TOURISM

WEB SITES

<i>France</i>	<i>us.franceguide.com</i>
<i>Normandy</i>	<i>www.normandy-tourism.org</i>
<i>Paris</i>	<i>www.parisinfo.com</i>
<i>The Riviera</i>	<i>www.guideriviera.com</i>

FRENCH

FOR TRAVELERS

<i>Hello</i>	<i>Bonjour</i>	<i>Bawngzhoo</i>
<i>My name is</i> _____	<i>Je m'appelle</i> _____	<i>Zhuh mah-pehl</i>
<i>I would like</i> _____	<i>Je voudrais</i> _____	<i>Zhuh voo-dreh</i>
<i>Please</i>	<i>S'il vous plait</i>	<i>Seel voo pleh</i>
<i>Do you speak English?</i>	<i>Parlez-vous anglais?</i>	<i>Pahr-lay voos ahn-gleh</i>

WEATHER

Summers are warm, especially in the south. Winters are wet and cooler, with snow in the mountains. Pack lightweight clothes in the summer; don't forget your beachwear if you think you might head to the coast. Bring warm clothes for winter, especially in mountainous regions.

AVERAGE

TEMPERATURES

	January	April	July	October
Bordeaux	42°	54°	65°	56°
Dijon	35°	50°	68°	51°
Lyon	35°	50°	69°	53°
Nice	45°	55°	68°	61°
Paris	38°	50°	67°	55°

Temperatures are in °F. For specific weather information, visit www.accuweather.com.

FRANCE CONTINUED

TIPS FOR

TIPPING

*The bill in a bar or restaurant includes service, but it's customary to leave some small change unless you're dissatisfied. The amount varies from €1.50 to €4.50 for a meal. Cloakroom attendants will expect nothing if there is a sign saying *pourboire interdit* (tipping forbidden); otherwise give them €.75. Washroom attendants usually get about €.30; bellhops around €1.50 per item.*

CURRENCY

NOTES

France uses the Euro. See the section on the Euro for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?

- *The prestigious Jules Verne Restaurant, located in the Eiffel Tower, has its own private elevator access and offers fabulous French fare and excellent views. Reservations are definitely required and should be scheduled months in advance of your visit.*
- *The lesser-known nickname of "The City of Light" is "The Swiss Cheese City," referring to the labyrinth of limestone quarries hidden beneath its streets. For more than 700 years, the underlying limestone was mined to construct buildings still visible today.*
- *The Eiffel Tower varies in height depending on temperature, sometimes by as much as six inches.*
- *The D-Day invasion was the first time an invading army crossed the unpredictable, dangerous English Channel since 1688. The 5,000-vessel armada stretched as far as the eye could see, transporting more than 150,000 men and nearly 30,000 vehicles across the channel to the French beaches.*
- *It may not be a surprise that the word "denim" hails from fashion-forward France. The versatile fabric gets its name from "de Nmes," meaning from Nmes, a picturesque town along the Côte d'Azur.*