



# FRANCE

**Capital:** Paris

**Population:** 63 million

**Currency:** Euro (€ or EUR)

**Language:** French

**Time Zone:** EST plus 6 hours

**Electricity:** 220V. 50Hz

## Fun Facts



- France is one of the most visited tourist destinations in the world.
- The Eiffel Tower stands at a height of 984 feet, almost the height of a 70-story building.
- France has the sixth-largest economy in the world.

With an area of roughly 212,500 square miles, France is the largest country in Europe—yet only a fourteenth the size of the U.S.A.! Its population approaches 63 million. Shaped roughly in the form of a hexagon, it has almost entirely natural boundaries: the North and Mediterranean Seas, the English Channel, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Pyrenees Mountains. It is a country of variety and a patchwork of regions, each with a unique identity. It is a modern country steeped in tradition with architectural masterpieces and rural scenery little changed for many centuries. It has a wealth of historical monuments: Greek, Roman, Romanesque, and Gothic. The French are justly proud of their magnificent palaces, churches, cathedrals, and castles.

France is beloved by artists from all over the world, including Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, and Picasso, who made the country their home. It is the birthplace of Impressionism with painters Monet, Manet, and Degas. It was the cradle of great philosophers, writers, and scientists, including Voltaire, Victor Hugo, and Pasteur; it has also had great leaders, such as Joan of Arc and Napoleon.

The climate, the variety of the soil, the local produce, and the skillful *savoir-faire* of its chefs have earned French cuisine international fame. Try one of its numerous cheeses (over 400 kinds), savor some of its great wines and champagne, and be sure to visit one of its pastry shops—*patisserie*. Shop for lace, pottery, perfume, china, beautiful Parisian scarves, and designer labels. Relax and watch the world go by in one of the cafés in true French style, absorbing the French love of philosophy and their eternal search for the meaning of life; the motto of Descartes was "I think, therefore I am." This is a country firmly and successfully established in the 21st century, yet still maintaining its legendary *douceur de vivre* (sweetness of life).



## VISAS AND PASSPORTS

Visas to France are not required for U.S. citizens. If you hold a passport from another country, please check with your local consulate about requirements for travel to France. All passengers traveling internationally are required to have a passport. Please carry proper identification (your passport) on you and do not leave it in your suitcase or hotel room. European law requires you to carry your passport with you at all times.



## COUNTRY CODES

The country code for France is 33. When calling to France from overseas, you dial your international access code (011 from the U.S./Canada) followed by the country code and phone number. Phone numbers in France are nine digits. The dialing format from the U.S./Canada: 011+33+XX+ XXX XXXX.



## CURRENCY AND BUDGETING

The official currency of France is the Euro. Euro coins differ according to country, but they can be used in any EU state. Bank notes are of uniform EU design.

1 Euro (€) = 100 Cents (c)

- Banknote denominations: €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, €500
- Coin denominations: 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, €1, €2

For the most current exchange rates, please go to our Web site at [www.globusfamily.com/currency](http://www.globusfamily.com/currency)

Credit cards are accepted in France, and you should have no problems using them in larger shops and restaurants. Visa and MasterCard are most accepted. Smaller shops may ask you to pay in cash or have a minimum amount required to use a credit card.



## TO HELP YOU BUDGET

The following budget guidelines are just approximate values or starting values for meals and are per person. Actual prices will vary widely by restaurant and city within a country but below are some averages as provided by our experienced personnel.

The approximate cost of a soft drink/mineral water/coffee is €2-4.

An average lunch consisting of a salad or sandwich and a soda or water starts at approximately €8-15.

A steak dinner at a mid-range restaurant with dessert and a non-alcoholic beverage starts at approximately €20-30.



## TIPPING

At restaurants in France, a 15% service charge is already included in the bill. However, it is still customary to leave a tip to show appreciation. Some general tipping guidelines for France:

- In a café, €0.20 for a drink and €0.50 for a snack.
- In a restaurant, €1-2 per person (tips are usually left in cash and not added to the credit card payment).

At bars or bakeries, sitting down to eat and drink costs more than standing up or takeaway.

For taxis, round up the fare by €1 for a city ride; add €2 for a ride from the airport.

Tip hotel staff €1 for room service.

Sometimes a few coins will be needed for public restrooms. If there is a saucer with coins in a restroom, it is common to leave small change as a tip.



## ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Voltage for outlets is 220V. North American voltage is generally 110V. Therefore, a converter may be necessary for your travels. Adapters will be necessary to adapt your plug into the outlet but may not convert the voltage, so both devices are necessary. France uses a round, 2-prong plug that looks like:



type E



## TEMPERATURES

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.

To help you plan, below are average low and high temperatures for Paris.

Month	Average High °(F)	Average Low °(F)
January	45.7	36.5
February	48.2	36.3
March	54.7	39.9
April	59.5	42.6
May	67.8	49.8
June	72.9	54.7
July	77.7	58.1
August	77.5	58.1
September	70.2	52.2
October	61.7	47.3
November	51.4	40.1
December	45.7	36.5

To convert to Celsius, subtract 32, then multiply by 5 and then divide by 9.

See examples in the Know Before You Go Europe document.

Parisian hotels have automatic, centralized air-conditioning systems, and the temperatures may not be quite as cool as you are accustomed.



## FOOD SPECIALTIES

Cheeses (over 400 kinds), wines and champagne, sweet pastries (*pâtisserie*) crêpes, onion soup, and quiches.

Eggs, bacon, steaks, and other meats may be cooked very lightly, as this is the way usually enjoyed locally; ask chefs to prepare them the way you prefer.



## A FEW WORDS OF THE LOCAL LANGUAGE

**Good morning/day (until 5 pm):** Bonjour, **Good evening:** Bonsoir, **Goodbye:** Au revoir, **Please:** S'il vous plaît, **Thank you:** Merci, **Yes:** Oui, **No:** Non, **Do you speak English?:** Parlez-vous anglais?, **I don't understand:** Je ne comprends pas, **Please write it down:** S'il vous plaît, écrivez le, **How much?:** C'est combien?, **1:** Un, **2:** Deux, **3:** Trois, **4:** Quatre, **5:** Cinq, **6:** Six, **7:** Sept, **8:** Huit, **9:** Neuf, **10:** Dix, **Where is...?:** Où est...?, **Telephone:** Le téléphone, **Bathroom:** Les toilettes, **Tea:** Thé, **Coffee:** Café, **Bottled water:** De l'eau minérale (**carbonated**=eau pétillante, **non-carbonated**=eau plate), **Cheers!:** Santé!, **Restaurant check/bill:** L'addition, **Have a nice day!:** Bonne journée!, **Waiter:** Monsieur (*not garçon*), **Waitress:** Mademoiselle.

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