

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW WHEN TRAVELLING TO FRANCE

SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- June to August – Summer
- September to October – Autumn
- November to March – Winter
- April to May – Spring

France is a popular year-round destination with long hot summers and cool winters which brings snow to higher ground. Temperatures and climatic conditions vary from one side of France to the other and travellers should be prepared for all weather conditions.

WHAT TO PACK

As you plan what to wear in Europe, keep in mind that the trick is to pack and wear layers. We suggest layering like this: tank top or t-shirt, long sleeve shirt, jersey and then jacket. Always pack something to protect yourself against rain showers. Alpine wear will be needed in the Ski Resorts in winter.

RETAIL HOURS

Monday to Saturday 10h00 to 18h00 or 19h00, although Department Stores often stay open longer. Outside the main areas, some shops might close at lunchtime.

MONEY MATTERS

France is a member of the European Union with the **Euro** being the official currency.

Currency: Euro (EUR). EUR1 = 100 Cents.

Credit Cards are widely available and ATM's are very prevalent.

DRINKING WATER

- Tap water in France is generally both safe and acceptable in taste, but mineral water (French: eau minérale) is generally considered to taste better, except in areas that use mountain water from the Alps for their municipal supply.

TIPPING / PORTERAGE

- Porters Euro 0.50 to Euro 1 per bag
- Housekeepers Euro 1 to Euro 1.50 per day
- Concierge Euro 8 to Euro 20
- Doormen Euro 1 to Euro 2 if they hail you a taxi.
- Taxi Drivers 10% of the fare.
- In restaurants a service charge is included in all prices and is not mandatory but customary for good service. At restaurants you should tip waiters and waitresses Euro 1 to Euro 3 at a casual eatery or 5% of the bill for a fancier restaurant.
- Tour Guides are tipped between Euro 2 and Euro 5 – it is also good etiquette to leave a Euro 1 or Euro 2 tip per person per day for the bus driver. Museum guides should be tipped between Euro 1 & Euro 2.

TRAVEL RESPONSIBILITY

- Learn a few words of the local language so you know what's considered polite in terms of eating, greeting and local values.
- Appropriate behaviours by travellers helps ensure local communities continue to be hospital and friendly.
- Respect other people's cultures and avoid imposing your beliefs.
- Adhere to the hotel's water or energy conservation policies.
- Buy locally made crafts and support local skills.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- French is the official language. Many people speak at least some English.
- South African passport holders require a **Schengen Visa**.
- France is on Central European time. They are 1 hour behind S.A during their winter months (November to March) and are on the same time as S.A during their summer months (last Sunday in March to the Last Saturday in October)
- For France there are two associated plug types, types C and F. Plug type C is the plug which has two round pins and plug type F is the plug which has two round pins with two earth clips on the side.
- France operates on a 230V supply voltage and 50Hz.

WHAT THINGS COST

- Meal Inexpensive Restaurant : Euro 10 to Euro 15
- Meal for 2 people, midrange Restaurant 3 Course: Euro 35 to Euro 60
- McMeal at McDonalds (or equivalent): Euro 7.15 to Euro 15
- Domestic Beer (0.5 Lt Draught) : Euro 4 to Euro 7
- Imported Beer (0.33 Lt Bottle) : Euro 3 to Euro 6
- Cappuccino (Regular) : Euro 1.50 to Euro 3.60
- Coke/Pepsi (0.33 Lt Bottle) : Euro 1.50 to Euro 3.50
- Water (0.33 Lt Bottle) : Euro 1 to Euro 3

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- A lot of public restrooms will charge you a small fee to use them, so just keep some change on hand to pay the fee.
- Lock valuables away while travelling and always be vigilant of your belongings. Never leave them unattended.
- Always be aware of pick pockets irrespective of where you are in the world.