



France



Preparing for your trip

Passports and Visas

A passport with validity six months beyond your trip is required. No visa is required for France.

Vaccinations and Health

No vaccinations required nor recommended. Please do secure adequate travel insurance for any mishap that may occur.

Packing

In addition to your everyday clothes and things, we suggest bringing:

- Medium sized day bag/backpack for easy access
- Light rain/windbreaker jacket
- Sunhat and sunglasses
- Personal medications
- Gel or "sport" sunscreen & lip balm
- French "round-prong" electrical outlet adapters
- Camera with spare battery & card
- Swimsuit
- Cycling shorts (baggy or tight), jerseys, gloves, and comfortable walking and cycling shoes.
- bandana or scarf (to cover neck)
- small Dr. Bronners travel soap
- purell hand wash
- small tissues pack for biking
- French/English menu guide

In May, early June, late Sept. and Oct. mornings can be cool and a light to medium wind breaker and sweater are useful.

Baggage Allowance

Standard weight limit for checked baggage on international carriers is typically 2 bags totaling 23kg (about 50 lbs.) in Economy plus.

Practicalities

Local Time

GMT +1 (5 hours ahead of NYC)

Money Matters

The national currency of France is the Euro (EUR), with exchange rate of about 0.75 to the USD.

ATMs are common, but some banks limit withdrawals and malfunctions are common. Credit cards can be a problem for government and other purchases, such as gas stations. Traveler's checks are not recommended as they may be difficult to change. During your trip, allow for extra expenses such as laundry and drinks.

Telecomm

France Country Code:
33 (from US 011-33-number)

Electrical

France uses 220 volts (U.S. is 110V), but Most phone, tablet, kindle, camera and other adapters adjust to 220V but not hairdryers (best to buy in France).

Mobile Phones

To avoid expensive roaming fees, you may try to have your phone unlocked and buy a sim card after arrival. You may also simply buy a local phone for about \$50.

Internet

Internet access is available in all hotels, most of which offer wireless.

Tipping

Restaurants add a service charge of 15%. We suggest tipping drivers about US\$10 and guides about US\$20 per day, per person in your group.

Books

My Life in France by Julia Child

The Great Domaines of Burgundy: A Guide to the Finest Wine Producers of the Cote d'Or by Remington Norman

Burgundy and Its Wines by Nicholas Faith

Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong by Jean-Benoit Nadeau

Off to the Side by Jim Harrison

Paris out of Hand by Karen Elizabeth Gordon

Paris, The Secret History by Andrew Hussey

A Year in the Merde by Stephen Clarke

The Table Comes First by Adam Gopnik

The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barbery

French Revolutions: Cycling the Tour de France by Tim Moore

Slaying the Badger: Greg LeMond, Bernard Hinault, and the Greatest Tour de France by Richard Moore

French Illusions: My story as an American Au Pair in the Loire Valley Linda Kovic-Skow

Joan of Arc: Her Story by Régine Pernoud

Queen of Fashion By Caroline Weber

Words in a French Life: Lessons in Love and Language by Kristin Espinasse

DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Loire Valley by Jack Tressider

The Discovery of France: A Historical Geography by Graham Robb

A Year in Provence by Peter Mayle