

Title:

An Overview of France for Travelers

Word Count:

365

Summary:

Throughout history, France has always played a pivotal role in Europe. From Art to Politics to Architecture, it is a fascinating place. Here is some background information to consider before your trip.

Keywords:

france, europe, western europe, paris, french, lyon, nice, cannes, Marseille, Toulouse, Bordeaux,

Article Body:

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An Overview of France for Travelers

The official name of the country is the French Republic. The French Republic covers an area of 220,668 square miles. This makes it the largest country in Western Europe, which is about 80 percent the size of Texas for comparison purposes. The capital of France is Paris. Other major cities of note include the port city of Marseille, Lyon, Toulouse, Strasbourg, Nice, Rennes, Lille and Bordeaux in the famous wine region of the same name. If you have ever watched the Tour de France, you know the terrain in France varies from majestic mountain peaks to flat plains to beautiful coast line along the southern and western borders of the country. This gives the country various climatic conditions ranging from very cool in the mountain areas to downright hot in the southern beach locations such as Nice.

Citizens of the French Republic are designated with the name French. The total population exceeds 62.4 million with a strong annual growth rate of over 2 percent. Ethnicity is broken down as Celtic and Latin for strong influences of Teutonic, Slavic, North African, Sub-Saharan African, Indochinese and Basque minorities. The strong minority base is due to two facts, a lax immigration policy and the migration of peoples from former colonies of France during its more imperial periods.

Despite the massive immigrant influx over time, France is a largely uniform religious society. Over 90 percent of all French claim the Roman Catholic faith as their religion of choice. Strong Muslim population sectors, however, exist and are growing rapidly through immigration. The official language of the country is French and it is also the dominant language used in daily life. The literacy rate for France is over 99 percent, which makes sense given the free, compulsory education system.

As this overview of France demonstrates, it has played a major role in European history. This makes it a great travel destination since much of the country has historical value, which you can experience by just walking down the street.