

TRAVEL GUIDE

TELAMON TRAVEL

# France



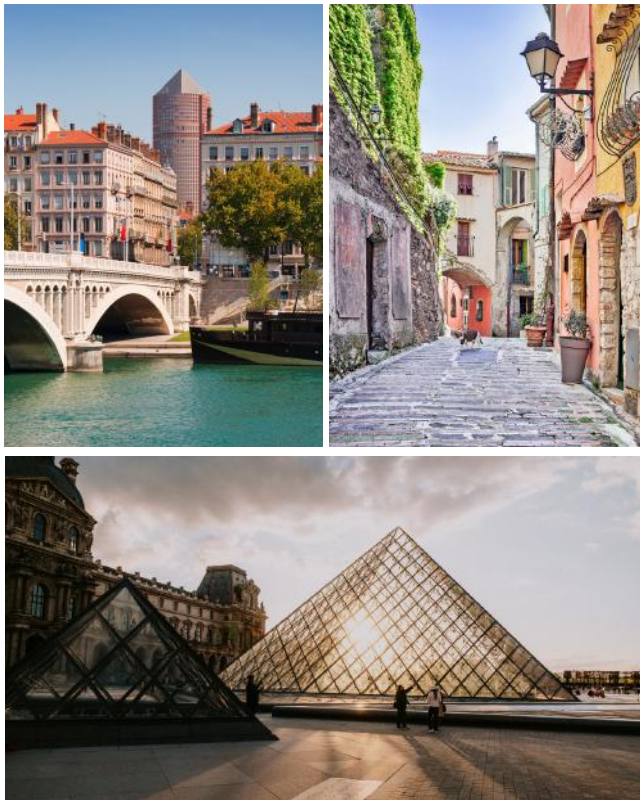
# Welcome to France

Where culture is cultivated, cuisine is elevated to art, and beauty is both preserved and lived in.

France is a country of remarkable depth. Gothic cathedrals and modern design. Vineyard-covered hillsides and dramatic coastlines. Refined cities shaped by centuries of philosophy, fashion, gastronomy, and craftsmanship. Every region carries its own identity, yet all share a commitment to excellence and aesthetic precision.

From the elegance of Paris to the lavender fields of Provence, from the vineyards of Bordeaux to the alpine drama of Chamonix, France invites you to travel deliberately. Luxury here is rarely loud. It is expressed through detail, heritage, and thoughtful execution.

This guide is your curated companion to exploring France with clarity, comfort, and intention. When you are ready, we will shape it into a journey designed distinctly around you.



## AT A GLANCE

**Capital:** Paris

**Language:** French (English widely spoken in major cities and tourism sectors)

**Currency:** Euro (EUR)

**Time Zones:** Central European Time (UTC+1)

**Visa Requirements:** U.S. travelers may stay up to 90 days within the Schengen Area without a visa

**Population:** Approx. 67 million

**Safety Index:** Considered a safe destination with standard precautions in major cities

# When to Visit France

## HIGH SEASON | JUNE - AUGUST

**Ideal for:** Riviera stays, countryside estates, festivals, long daylight

Summer brings energy and extended daylight across the country. Paris is lively, Provence is in bloom, and the Côte d'Azur is at its most vibrant. Coastal and countryside properties are in high demand, and advance planning is essential.

## SHOULDER SEASON | APRIL - MAY & SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

**Ideal for:** Cultural touring, wine regions, balanced pacing

Mild temperatures and manageable crowds make this one of the most rewarding times to visit. Vineyards are active, cities feel polished but not overwhelming, and itineraries flow comfortably between regions.

## LOW SEASON | NOVEMBER - MARCH

**Ideal for:** City stays, culinary travel, alpine escapes

Winter offers a quieter rhythm in Paris, Lyon, and Bordeaux, while the Alps open for ski season. Museum visits, dining reservations, and cultural programming feel more accessible, particularly outside of the holiday period.



# Top 5 Experiences in France

## **01. EXPERIENCE PARIS WITH INTENTION**

Private museum access, guided architectural walks, refined dining, and evenings along the Seine reveal the city's layered sophistication beyond its most photographed landmarks.

## **02. EXPLORE THE WINE REGIONS**

From Bordeaux's structured reds to Burgundy's terroir-driven expressions and Champagne's celebrated houses, France offers immersive tastings rooted in heritage and precision.

## **03. DISCOVER PROVENCE AND THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE**

Hilltop villages, open-air markets, olive groves, and vineyard estates create a slower, more deliberate travel rhythm.

## **04. EMBRACE COASTAL ELEGANCE ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR**

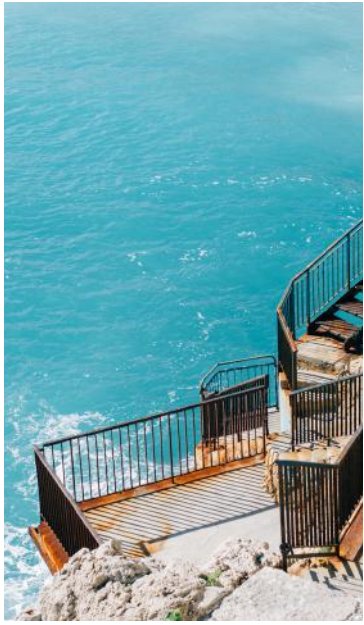
Yacht-lined harbors, cliffside villas, and understated beach clubs define the Riviera's refined atmosphere.

## **05. RETREAT TO THE FRENCH ALPS**

Whether in winter for skiing or summer for alpine hiking, the mountain regions combine fresh air, spa traditions, and dramatic scenery.

Want a private château stay, a behind-the-scenes atelier visit, or a curated culinary experience in Lyon? We'll arrange it seamlessly.

# EXPLORE FRANCE





## More to Explore

*France rewards regional depth. Beyond its most recognizable cities, each province reveals a distinct identity shaped by geography, craftsmanship, and tradition.*

### **ALSACE**

Half-timbered villages, vineyard routes, and a blend of French and German influence create a distinctive cultural landscape.

### **ANNECY**

An alpine lake town known for its crystalline water, canals, and proximity to the mountains.

### **BASQUE COUNTRY (BIARRITZ & SAINT-JEAN-DE-LUZ)**

Atlantic coastline, refined surf culture, and a strong regional culinary identity.

### **THE LOIRE VALLEY**

A concentration of Renaissance châteaux, gardens, and elegant countryside estates.

### **NORMANDY**

Cliffside coastlines, historic sites, and pastoral farmland with a quietly powerful sense of history.

### **BURGUNDY**

Rolling vineyards, Romanesque abbeys, and small market towns define this quietly refined region.

**Curated Tip:** France is best approached region by region. We will design your routing to minimize transfers and allow each destination to unfold fully.



# Where to See Iconic Sights

*France's landmarks reflect centuries of artistic, political, and architectural evolution. With thoughtful pacing and expert guidance, these sites feel immersive rather than crowded.*

## **EIFFEL TOWER | PARIS**

A defining symbol of modern engineering and Parisian identity. Private access experiences elevate the visit beyond observation.

## **THE LOUVRE | PARIS**

Home to centuries of art history. A focused, privately guided visit ensures depth without overwhelm.

## **MONT-SAINT-MICHEL | NORMANDY**

A medieval abbey rising dramatically from tidal flats, offering both historical and visual impact.

## **PALACE OF VERSAILLES | VERSAILLES**

An expression of royal power and design ambition, best experienced early and beyond the main halls.

## **PONT DU GARD | PROVENCE**

A remarkably preserved Roman aqueduct showcasing ancient engineering against a natural backdrop.

## **NOTRE-DAME CATHEDRAL | PARIS**

A masterpiece of Gothic architecture and spiritual symbolism. As restoration efforts continue, the cathedral remains a powerful emblem of resilience and cultural heritage.

# Cultural Etiquette *and Smart Travel Tips*

*French culture values politeness, discretion, and respect for tradition. Observing small courtesies enhances every interaction.*

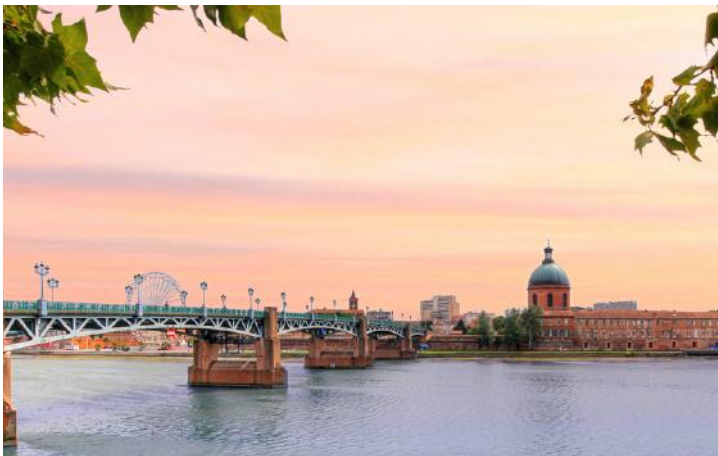
## DO

- **Begin every interaction with “Bonjour” or “Bonsoir.”**
- **Use “Madame” or “Monsieur”** when addressing someone directly.
- **Respect structured dining hours;** lunch and dinner follow defined windows.
- **Keep conversations at a moderate volume** in public spaces.
- **Stand on the right side** of escalators in metro stations.
- **Make reservations** for restaurants, museums, and special exhibitions in advance.
- **Observe dress codes** in religious sites and refined establishments.

## DONT

- **Assume service begins without acknowledgment.**
- **Expect immediate check presentation** in restaurants; request “L’addition” when ready.
- **Overtip out of habit;** service is typically included.
- **Photograph individuals** without permission, especially in smaller towns.
- **Ignore local market etiquette**—wait your turn and allow vendors to serve you directly.

**Curated Tip:** The French appreciate effort. Even a brief greeting in French sets a positive tone and often results in warmer service.



# A Taste of France

*French cuisine is regional, disciplined, and deeply expressive of geography. Each province contributes its own techniques, ingredients, and culinary traditions.*

## REGIONAL SPECIALTIES

- **Boeuf Bourguignon (Burgundy):** slow-braised beef finished with red wine, aromatics, and often pearl onions and mushrooms—classic, structured, and deeply tied to the region’s vineyards.
- **Bouillabaisse (Provence):** a saffron-forward seafood stew traditionally built on layered fish stocks and served with rouille and bread. The best versions feel precise, not heavy.
- **Cassoulet (Southwest France):** a slow-cooked dish of white beans, duck confit, and sausage, developed over time for depth and richness rather than speed.
- **Quiche Lorraine (Lorraine):** a savory custard tart built on eggs and cream, traditionally finished with lardons and a delicately browned top. It is rich but refined when well made, often served with a simple green salad as a complete lunch.
- **Galettes (Brittany):** savory buckwheat crêpes, traditionally crisp at the edges and filled with ingredients like ham, cheese, egg, mushrooms, or local seafood. They are a regional staple and a reliable choice for a relaxed, classic meal.

## FROMAGE & BREAD

France produces hundreds of cheeses, each with protected origins. Pair with fresh baguettes and regional wines for a simple, complete experience.

## WINES & CHAMPAGNE

Bordeaux, Burgundy, Rhône, Loire Valley, and Champagne each offer distinct profiles shaped by terroir and heritage.

## PASTRIES & DESSERTS

Croissants, éclairs, macarons, tarte Tatin, and crème brûlée remain icons of French pâtisserie.



# Wellness in France

*Wellness in France is often understated yet deeply established. Spa culture, mineral springs, alpine air, and coastal therapies create a framework for restoration.*

## THERMAL AND MINERAL SPA TOWNS

France's spa towns are built around hydrotherapy traditions that prioritize consistency and results.

- **Évian-les-Bains** centers on mineral-water wellness with lakeside serenity and restorative programming.
- **Aix-les-Bains** offers thermal bathing and spa culture near the Alps, pairing easily with Annecy or mountain stays.
- **Vichy** is known for structured wellness and thermal treatments, with a legacy of therapeutic bathing and longer-form programs.

## THALASSOTHERAPY COASTAL CENTERS

Along the Atlantic and northern coasts, thalassotherapy uses seawater, marine minerals, and seaweed-based treatments in dedicated wellness centers.

- **Biarritz** and the **Basque** coast combine ocean air with polished spa facilities and movement-focused days.
- **Brittany** is known for established thalasso centers where programs can include hydro circuits, marine wraps, and targeted recovery treatments.

## PROVENÇAL RETREATS

**Provence** lends itself to nervous-system reset: warm light, open landscapes, and a naturally unhurried rhythm.

## ALPINE REGENERATION

Mountain resorts in **Chamonix** and **Megève** combine altitude training, thermal circuits, and restorative spa rituals following skiing or hiking.

**Curated Tip:** Balance metropolitan stays with countryside or coastal retreats to maintain energy and perspective throughout your journey.





# Getting Around France

*France's infrastructure is efficient, allowing for seamless regional movement when thoughtfully planned.*

## **HIGH-SPEED TRAINS (TGV)**

Fast and reliable connections link Paris with Lyon, Bordeaux, Marseille, Strasbourg, and beyond. Rail travel is often the most efficient option between major cities.

## **PRIVATE DRIVERS**

Recommended in wine regions, Provence, Normandy, and the Loire Valley where rural routes benefit from door-to-door service.

## **TAXIS**

Licensed taxis are widely available in cities and can be hailed at designated stands or pre-booked via hotel concierge.

## **RIDESHARES**

Uber operates in major cities including Paris, Lyon, Marseille, and Nice. It offers convenience for shorter city transfers.

## **METRO & TRAMS**

Paris's metro system is extensive and efficient. Lyon and Bordeaux also maintain reliable tram networks.

## **DOMESTIC FLIGHTS**

Useful for longer distances, including connections to Nice, Biarritz, or Corsica.

## **SELF-DRIVE**

Best suited for countryside exploration. Avoid driving within central Paris due to restricted zones and limited parking.

**Curated Tip:** Coordinating transfers in advance eliminates unnecessary delays and ensures seamless movement between regions.



# Packing Tips for a Seamless Escape

*France rewards thoughtful style and practicality. Days may include walking tours, museum visits, and refined evenings.*

## ESSENTIAL WARDROBE

- Neutral, tailored daywear
- Polished walking shoes with strong support
- Structured blazer or lightweight jacket
- Evening attire suitable for Michelin-starred dining
- Seasonal outerwear (coat or trench in cooler months)
- Swimwear for coastal or spa stays

## PRACTICAL MUST-HAVES

- Universal adapter (Type C & E)
- Compact umbrella
- Leather crossbody bag with zipper closure
- Sunglasses
- Travel garment brush
- Silk or cotton scarf (functional and stylistic)
- Portable charger

## SEASONAL ADDITIONS

- **Winter:** Gloves, wool coat, insulated footwear
- **Summer:** Breathable fabrics, sun protection, lightweight layers

**Curated Tip:** Choose versatile pieces that transition from daytime exploration to evening dining with minimal change.



# Gratuities & Service Tips

*Service in France is structured and professional. Compensation is built into pricing more frequently than in the United States.*

## RESTAURANTS

Service compris is included in most bills. Leaving small change or rounding up is customary for strong service.

## CAFÉS & BARS

Rounding up to the nearest euro is appropriate.

## HOTELS

- **Housekeeping:** €2–5 per night
- **Porters:** €2–5 per bag
- **Concierge:** Discretionary for complex arrangements

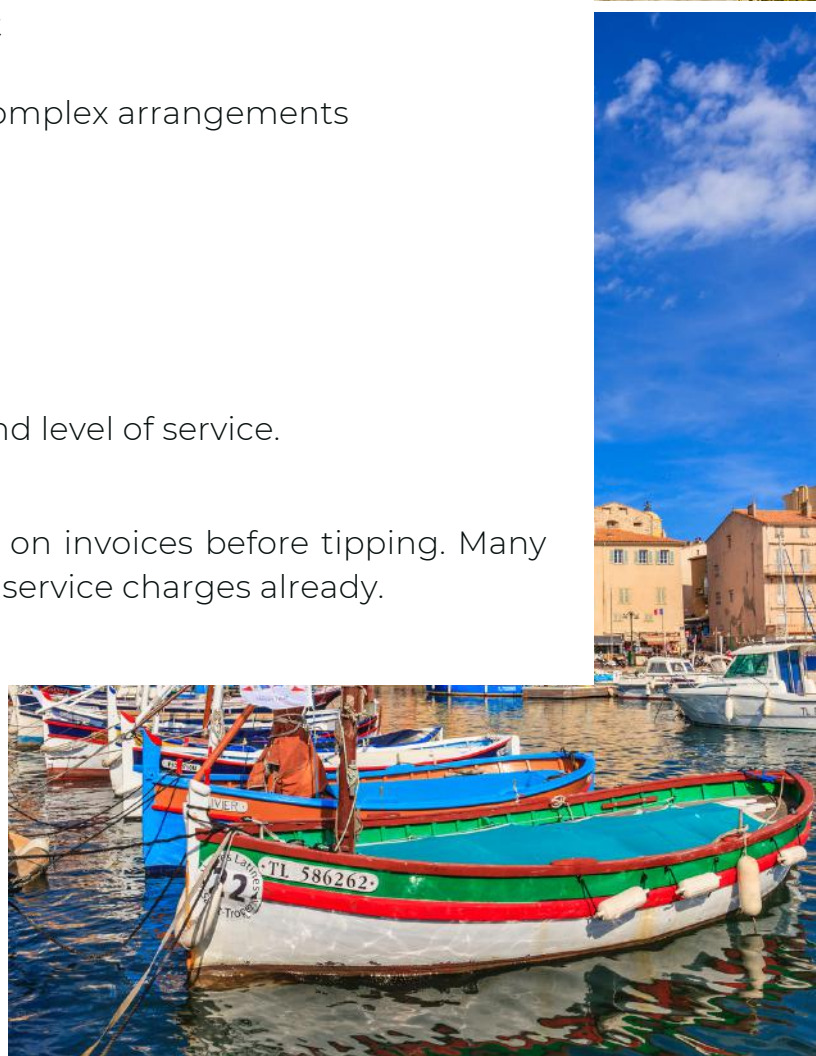
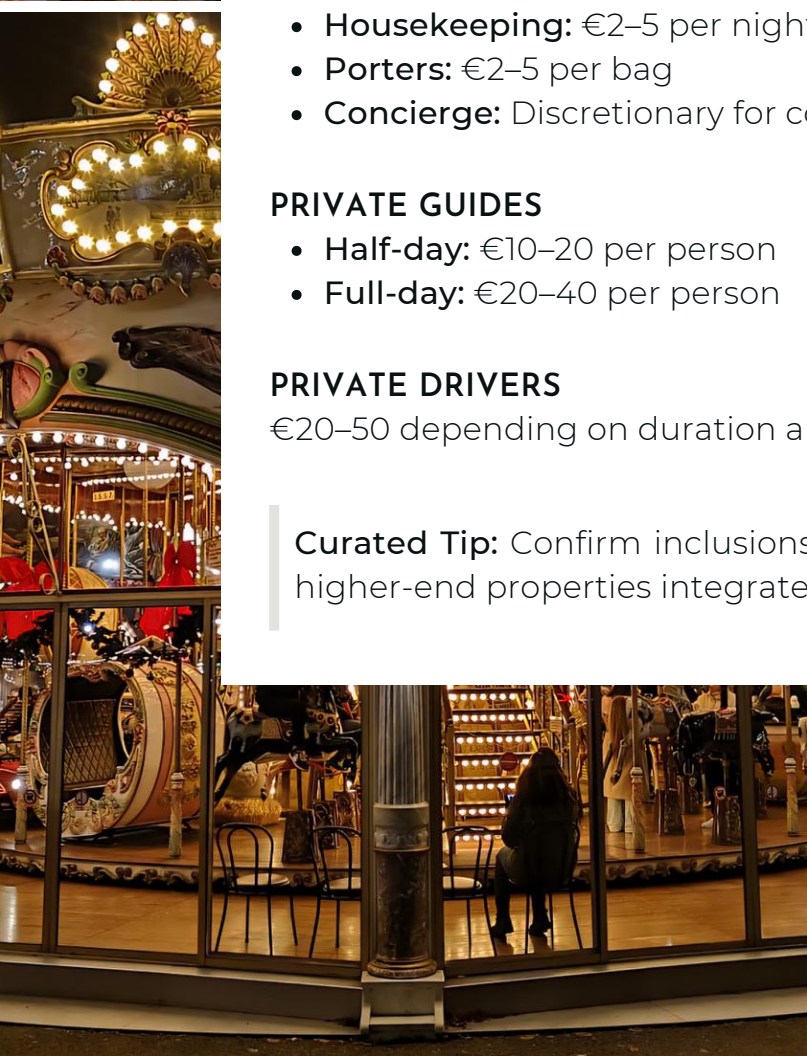
## PRIVATE GUIDES

- **Half-day:** €10–20 per person
- **Full-day:** €20–40 per person

## PRIVATE DRIVERS

€20–50 depending on duration and level of service.

**Curated Tip:** Confirm inclusions on invoices before tipping. Many higher-end properties integrate service charges already.



# Travel Safety Overview

*France maintains strong infrastructure, healthcare systems, and public services.*

## **GENERAL SAFETY**

- Major tourist cities are safe with routine vigilance.
- Petty theft may occur in high-traffic areas such as train stations and metro lines.
- Use crossbody bags and remain aware in crowded settings.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

- Dial 112 for emergency services.
- Police stations and pharmacies are clearly marked and accessible.

## **HEALTHCARE**

- France's healthcare system is highly regarded.
- Pharmacies provide frontline medical guidance.
- Tap water is safe nationwide.

## **TRANSPORT SAFETY**

- Licensed taxis and rideshares are regulated.
- Public trains and metro systems are well maintained and widely used.

**Curated Tip:** Maintain digital copies of passports and travel documents, and store physical copies separately from originals.





## Your Escape Awaits

*Where culture is preserved, cuisine is elevated, and every region offers its own expression of refinement.*

*France is a country of depth and distinction. Whether you are envisioning a multi-region journey, a château stay, a culinary immersion, or a Riviera escape, we will curate each detail so it unfolds with ease, clarity, and intention.*

*Laura + Ann*



Let's curate your dream  
French escape.

Laura Adams  
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