



# Europe



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having a great  
time! 😊

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# Europe





# Austria

## "The hills are alive with the Sound of Music..."

From Mozart to the Sound of Music, from Sacher Torte to Wiener Schnitzel, Austria has a host of unforgettable treasures to share with its visitors. Vienna is famous for cultural events and festivals, coffee houses, unique experiences in a Grinzing "Beisl", and of course the very special Viennese charm. Venture outside of the capital and the glorious landscape is breathtaking, from Salzburg to Graz to the ski fields of Tirol the country presents a beautiful and fascinating landscape that should be experienced at least once in one's lifetime.



### Life changing experiences...

**The Opera** A must see for everyone the Vienna State Opera is one of the world's finest with productions and performances staged throughout the year. Experience the delight of a first class opera performance, or take a guided tour, a sight to behold and an unforgettable experience.

#### Visit A Viennese "Coffee House"

There's no better place to watch the world go by... Café Central, Café Demel, Café Sacher, Café Mozart & Café Hawelka are amongst the top 10 of Vienna's cafés, your hotel will point you in the right direction, well worth experiencing the spirit of this beautiful city.

#### The Spanish Riding School in Vienna

A trip to Vienna would not be complete without a visit to see these magnificent Lipizzaner horses in action, both performances and visits are available and they are, without a doubt, "poetry in motion".

**Salzburg** From Mozart to "The Sound of Music" and beyond, the beautiful city of Salzburg is a feast for the eyes and a cultural centre for year round festivals and events. With its dramatic Alpine surroundings and historic centre with cobbled streets,

squares and fabulous architecture, Salzburg is interesting, entertaining, elegant and simply breathtaking.

**The Lake District** Venture out of Salzburg, hire a car or take a bus and discover the sparkling lakes sprinkled among mountains and forests in this picturesque area. Take your time and discover the famous Salzkammergut area, visit Fuschlsee, Wolfgangsee, Mondsee and more, the perfect holiday escape!

**Zell am See** A special experience, summer or winter, this picturesque village is the definition of relaxation and offers some of the purest water you will ever drink, and possibly the freshest air you'll ever breathe! There are beautiful lakes, mountains and the Kitzsteinhorn glacier, a weekly market to explore and an overall charm that is totally captivating!

**Innsbruck** The capital of the Alps, from art treasures to Olympic ski slopes, Innsbruck and Tirol offer the best in winter holidays. For ski enthusiasts and those simply seeking breathtaking scenery this is the place to be! Wander through the old town, discover traditional handicrafts or visit the home of Swarovski (don't

forget your credit card!), there's always something to do or see in this delightful city.

**Must see markets, a feast for all senses and a celebration of colours, scents and sounds!**

#### Vienna...

Naschmarkt an ethnic melting pot full of vibrant life and exotic scents, with a popular weekly flea-market every Saturday.

"Christkindlmarkt" Vienna's famous Christmas markets, Rathausplatz the city's classic market, Schonbrunn Castle for the atmosphere and Spittelberg for its authentic setting and traditional items.

#### Salzburg...

Kapitelmarkt popular with tourists for its beautiful location near the Salzburg Cathedral, offering souvenirs, gifts and tasty tidbits.

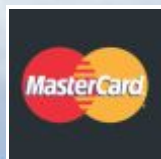
#### Tirol...

Hall Potter's Market featuring pottery from Austria and its neighbouring countries.

Innsbruck, Tirol's largest Flea Market every Saturday.









## Facts for the traveller...

### Weather

The weather varies greatly throughout Austria. For skiing holidays visit between November to March, with the high ski season being from January through March, dress warmly as it can get very cold!

### Best time to go

Spring is the best season to explore Austria with the alpine flowers in full bloom. Summer months can be quite warm but keep in mind the weather is always a little unpredictable so be prepared and dress in layers.

### Currency

Euro

### Time zone

GMT+2 DST+1

### Tipping

In restaurants round off the bill, taxis add 10% and porters €1-2.

### Festival Seasons

**Opera & Theater:**  
September to June.

**Vienna Festival:**  
May to June.

**Salzburg Festivals:**  
June & July/August.

### Shopping hours

Mon to Fri: 9am - 6pm  
Shops may close in smaller towns for 1 to 3 hours at midday.  
Sat: 9am to 12/1pm (until 5pm on the first Saturday of the month)

### Transportation

Nearly all means of transportation are available in Austria, all parts of the country are easily accessible by an excellent system of underground trains, trams and buses. It's worth asking at any "tabak" shop for passes or multi trip tickets. Most public transport runs until midnight, possibly earlier in smaller towns.

### Did you know?

Over 60 percent of Austria's electricity is supplied by renewable sources.

The sewing machine was invented in 1818 by an Austrian, Josef Madersperger.

Adolf Hitler was born in 'Braunau am Inn' Austria.

Many world's most famous composers were Austrian; Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Liszt, Johan Strauss, Mahler and Bruckner.

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### Transportation

Public transport in Zagreb is a well developed tram and bus system, throughout other Croatian cities you will only find buses. Travel throughout the country is best served with buses, trains are available but can be limited and slow. Ferries serve the islands on the coast. Taxis are plentiful but they must be called or taken from a taxi stand, prices can be high and meters start at 25KN.

### Tipping

Tipping in the cities is becoming common practice, tip 10-15% in restaurants if service charge has not been added, and round up the bill to the nearest Kuna in cafés. Taxi drivers do not expect a tip but it is appreciated.

# Croatia

## Central Europe at its absolute best...

This delightfully picturesque country has everything from Roman ruins, historic walled cities, spectacular castles, beautiful national parks and forests, to some of the clearest waters you'll find on a gorgeous coastline that boasts over 1,000 islands. Enjoy the cafe culture in Zagreb, the fabulous cuisine throughout the country, wine from the vineyards of Zagorje, hiking in the mountains around Velebit and exploring the beautiful city of Dubrovnik, the "Pearl of the Adriatic". From sea and sunshine to culture and history Croatia is a holiday destination that really does have something for everyone.



### Life changing experiences...

**Zagreb** A unique blend of old and new can be seen along the streets of this beautiful city, with museums and monuments to explore, open air cafés and endless restaurant choices on offer. Zagreb is a capital city that combines the best of East and Western Europe. From fashion shows, to theaters, shopping, galleries, pubs and night clubs this city's energy is endless and well worth experiencing.

**Beautiful Dubrovnik** Croatia's "Pearl of the Adriatic" is simply a special place. With ancient walls surrounding medieval architecture, marbled streets and the famous red rooftops. With a history that fascinates and entertains and an atmosphere that draws you in, Dubrovnik is a vibrant and exciting city to discover and explore, first on the list of many sights to see in Croatia.

**Cruise the Dalmatian Coast** A great way to enjoy this magnificent coastline, rent a yacht and plan your own tour or join one of the many cruises available along this popular coast. Explore the lush islands, superb beaches, medieval cities, Roman ruins and old fishing ports that make this one of Europe's most exciting holiday destinations, truly unforgettable.



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Summers are hot and dry with average temperatures in August between 22 to 25°C, winters can be mild and wet along the Adriatic coast, with averages of 5 to 9°C. Winter temperatures in the interior regions are cold with temperatures as low as -2 to 0°C in January.

**Diving, kayaking and fishing** Clear turquoise waters, sunken ships, underwater caves and a rich marine life are just a few of the sights that dive enthusiasts can enjoy. For those who prefer to stay above the water sea kayaking and canoeing is an adventure not to be missed. For fishing enthusiasts from simple lines to big game fishing this is the place to be.

**Istria** This picturesque region of Croatia is the largest peninsula on the east coast of the Adriatic. It combines a landscape of green valleys, hilltop villages, a rugged coastline and offers visitors fabulous food with a distinct Italian flavour, historical sites, ancient towns and charming fishing villages. If that's not enough it's also well known for relaxing spas, just the thing to revive both the body and soul.

#### Best times to go

May to September is a good time to visit the coast, Zagreb's cultural season occurs during this period. July and August are the most crowded times to visit.

#### Time zone

GMT +1 DST +2

#### Currency

Kuna

#### Shopping hours

8am to 8 pm weekdays, many are also open on weekends.

### Did you know?

Croatia's currency was named after a small rodent, in English known as a Marten.

The White House was built of Croatian stone from the island of Brac.

The necktie was invented in Croatia and is called a Cravat, which is derived from the word "Croat".

The ball point pen was invented in 1906 in Zagreb.







### Transportation

Bus services cover the island and inner city transportation, buses run on weekdays from 7am to 6pm only and until 2pm on Saturdays with no service on Sundays, timetables are available but the schedule can be a little unreliable at times. Taxis can easily be found at hotels and on the street, using them for long distances however, can be expensive. Renting a car is an excellent and flexible way to tour the island, note that they drive on the left in Cyprus, it takes a little getting used to but is not too difficult.

### Did you know?

One of the largest pots ever unearthed was near Limassol and is in the Louvre museum in Paris.

King Richard the Lionheart celebrated his marriage in Limassol in the Middle Ages on his way to the Crusades.

In autumn some 10,000 pink flamingos feed on the salt lake just outside of Larnaca on their migratory flight to warmer climes, a spectacular sight.

The largest wild animal on the island is the rare Moufflon sheep found only on Cyprus, now very small in numbers but can be seen at Troodos.

### Shopping hours

Mon, Tue, Thu: 9am to 1pm & 2pm to 8.30pm  
Wed & Sat: 9am-2pm  
Fri : 9am-1pm & 2.30pm-9.30pm  
Closed on Sundays.

# Cyprus

## Rising from the sea like a goddess...

Lying at the crossroads of three continents this Mediterranean island has wonderful beaches perfect for swimming and soaking up the sun, cool mountains to enjoy with quaint and charming villages to explore. A long and fascinating history is displayed in the many ancient archaeological sites and fabulously delicious local food, all of this plus so much more is wrapped in a relaxed and welcome atmosphere, it's hard to expect any less from the birthplace of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty!



### Life changing experiences...

**Nicosia the Capital** This 1,000 year old city lies in the centre of the Island, step back in time and wander through the streets surrounded by the ancient sandstone walls of the city built by the Venetians in the 1570's. Explore the tourist quarter, Laiki Yitonia, plenty of shopping on offer and delicious food to keep you going.

**Hire a car and tour the Island** Visit Larnaca, Limassol, Paphos and the south coast, take a trip into the mountains and visit the scenic Troodos region for the day, sample Cyprus's memorable "Klefitco", oven baked lamb, in local tavernas along the way. To the west visit the coastal villages of Coral Bay, Polis and Peyia and over on the eastern side of Cyprus you'll find the golden sands of Ayia Napa and plenty of nightlife to keep you entertained. Cyprus is a destination that has everything you need for a great holiday.

**Enjoy Diving** Cyprus has some excellent dive sites for those who enjoy underwater experiences. Try the Zenobia wreck dive, a Swedish ferry that sank in 1980 just off of Larnaca's fishing harbour, lying at 42 meters under the sea, well worth seeing. Plenty of dive programmes available for all levels, from kids and beginners

to advanced, simply a great way to spend a holiday.

**For the kids** If you're looking to keep the kids entertained there's plenty on offer besides fabulous beaches and water sports. Try the Marine Park, Dinosaur Park and Water World at Ayia Napa, plenty of water attractions and shows to see. Paphos offers the Aphrodite Water Park along with the Bird Park and the Aquarium with fish from all over, including sharks and crocodiles. All great fun for kids and adults too.

**Lefkara Village** Visit this charming village just outside of Larnaca, see the exquisite lace work made by the women of the village in their own homes, you'll find them on their doorsteps chatting with friends and neighbours whilst they create their unique lace and embroideries that are one of the Island's most famous exports.

**Shopping in Cyprus** From charming locally made wares throughout the smaller villages of Cyprus to the larger towns and their full array of shops and stores, plenty to see and buy for the shopping enthusiasts. Visit the weekly markets in Larnaca, Limassol, Nicosia and Ayia Napa,

you'll find everything from food to souvenirs, well worth taking the time to explore.



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Cyprus has a Mediterranean climate with hot summers and cool rainy winters. Summer can be very hot with blue cloudless skies, the southern coastal resorts are fabulous with temperatures reaching the high 30's with pleasant cooling winds keeping it bearable. The mountain areas are cooler and offer a break from the heat during summer but can be very cold in winter.

#### Best times to go

April to June and September to November.

#### Time zone

GMT+2

#### Currency

Euro

#### Tipping

Restaurant service charge is sometimes added to the bill, if not leave 10-15%  
Taxis 10%  
Porters €1-2



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### **Transportation**

Reliable metro (5am-12am), tram and bus services in Prague. Night trams and buses run from 12am to 4.30am. Validate tickets on entering trams, buses or the metro station. Most other cities also run reliable bus & tram services. Taxis are available in all main towns and have meters, higher fares are charged at night. Take taxis from official taxi stands at airports and on main streets where the rates are clearly marked. Hail a taxi in the street at 3am at your own risk!

### **Tipping**

Service charge is rarely added to restaurant bills, so add a tip of 5-10% for good service, judge accordingly if service is less than expected, same applies to pubs, cafés and taxis.

# Czech Republic

## The land of castles and culture

Prague is known as the "City of 100 spires", a stunningly beautiful city with an abundance of Gothic castles and culture. Wander the cobblestoned streets from the old town to the Prague Castle and enjoy a magical charm that's hard to find elsewhere. Venture outside of Prague and you will find town after town of beautifully preserved castles and baroque architecture. Book into one of the Czech Republic's world famous spas at the end of your sightseeing trip and lose yourself in the luxury of self indulgence!



### Life changing experiences...

**Prague & the Castle District** A walkers paradise, stroll through the old city, cross over the famous "Charles Bridge" into the Castle District of Prague. Covering an area the size of seven football fields the Castle includes palaces, churches, ministries and the St. Vitus Cathedral towering above it all, the Castle is not only one of the most beautiful in the country, it has, for thousands of years and until today, been home to the country's Kings and Presidents. A must see!

**Carlsbad** Relaxation and rest is the name of the game when visiting this famous spa city, home of the country's oldest and most well known spa, the mineral springs are a life changing experience! For golfing enthusiasts the area also offers the oldest course in the country and possibly one of the prettiest courses in Europe, hosting a number of tournaments throughout the year.

**Hit the slopes with the kids!** More than 200 ski resorts and centers throughout the Czech Republic offer ski and snowboard runs for all ages and skiing abilities, many resorts cater for children with special parks and teaching aids available. Family ski passes at reduced prices are excellent value for a Czech skiing holiday.



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Rather unpredictable conditions with sudden showers and thunderstorms in the summer months of July and August, temperatures can reach the mid 30's. Winter usually lasts from mid November to mid March with very cold temperatures from -5 to -10°C.

#### Best times to go

Spring from mid May to mid June and Autumn from September to mid October are ideal times to visit. July

and August is the high tourist season and can be crowded.

#### Time zone

GMT+1 DST+2

#### Currency

Czech Crown - Koruna (Kc).

#### Shopping hours

Mon to Fri: 9/10am - 6/7pm, shorter hours on Saturdays, closed on Sundays. The center of Prague and shopping malls have longer hours and are open on weekends.

**Bohemian Rhapsody!** If crystal and cut glass is your weakness then this is the place for you! Hand cut sparkling Bohemian crystal vases, glasses, plates and bowls in traditional or modern designs. Prague is full of glass and crystal shops, take your time, choose carefully & enjoy!

**Cruising and water-sports** From riding the wild rapids on the Czech Republic's scenic river systems, to yachting, windsurfing and fishing in natural lakes and reservoirs, water related activities are plentiful in this land locked country, superb scenery, picturesque castles make these adventures well worth experiencing.

### Did you know?

Czech people are the world's heaviest consumers of beer.

The sugar cube was invented in Dacice by Jacob Chistoph Rad in 1841.

Otto Wichterle, a Czech Chemist, invented contact lenses in 1956.

Professor Jan Jansky, born in Prague in 1873, was the first to study blood and separate it into the four types.

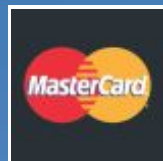
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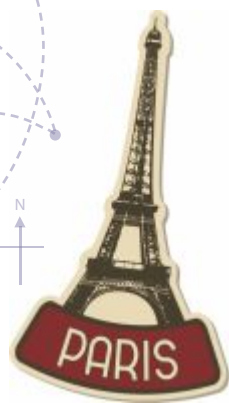




# France

**"France cannot be France without greatness"** Charles De Gaulle

Charming, enchanting, romantic, superbly beautiful are but just a few ways to describe France, one of the world's most popular destinations. Paris alone is a truly great city, with its expansive boulevards, high fashion, style, historical riches and superb cuisine. The entire country simply offers so much for those who visit, from memorable restaurants, shopping and fashion, to breathtaking scenery, quaint villages, waterways, mountains and the beautiful French Riviera, France is a holiday destination made in heaven!



## Life changing experiences...

**The City of Lights** Wander through the streets of Paris, whether you're shopping or just enjoying the sights this beautiful city will keep you enchanted from the moment you arrive. Take the time to discover Paris, enjoy a café and a meal or two and hit the shops! Shopping is a joy here, from small boutiques to the large department stores, Paris has it all.

**Serious Shopping!** For those who enjoy labels, designer wear and good value then La Vallée Village is the place to be. Just 35 minutes from Paris, and only 5 minutes from Euro Disney, take the train or the "Shopping Express". La Vallée offers nothing but designer wear outlet shops, plenty of excellent brands to choose from and great bargains to be found.

**The Louvre** Whether you are a fan of art and history or not, the "Musée du Louvre" is awe inspiring. Offering an incredibly diverse variety of historical treasures from Da Vinci's Mona Lisa, to the breathtaking sculpture of Venus de Milo the museum will keep you fascinated from the moment you enter. So many tales to be told, so much history to be experienced... a must see.

**Euro Disney** For kids of all ages and yes, even adults too, the ultimate location for pure fun! Let the kids meet Mickey and his friends and don't miss the nightly parade when all the characters dance through the Disney Streets. Stay at one of the themed hotel resorts within Euro Disney, have breakfast with Mickey and his friends and get into the park early in the day.

**The Cannes Film Festival** From short movies, to foreign films, from mainstream movies to the true art of film-making, Cannes comes alive during the festival each year and offers those who visit a certain "movie buzz" that's hard to ignore. Watch the stars arrive at the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès, the atmosphere is fabulous.

**Côte d'Azur** The French Riviera offers a coastline along the Mediterranean of over 900km, beautiful cities, towns and villages are a delight to visit. Hire a car and drive the coast, spectacular views and plenty of places to stop along the way and explore. From the quaint Juan les Pins in Antibes to the glamorous St. Tropez, Cannes, Monaco and the beautiful city of Nice, the Riviera is enchanting,

breathtaking, beautiful and well worth visiting.

## Burgundy Wine & Cheese Tours

Experience first-hand the art of wine making in one of France's most famous areas, tour the vineyards and local medieval villages. The countryside is stunning and the opportunity to taste both wines, cheese and other local delicacies is a gastronomic adventure of a life time.

## Did you know?

There is a Victor Hugo street in every town in France.

It's illegal to name a pig Napoleon in France.

Famous French inventions include: the hot air balloon, the submarine, and the parachute.

Coco Chanel's real name was Gabrielle Bonheur.



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## Life changing experiences...

**Bordeaux Gourmet tours** Yet another of France's many superior wine regions. Take a Chateau tour in St. Emilion, learn how a wine estate works, from vine to bottle, and create your own wine blend and your own label while you're there! A great experience for wine lovers, impressive cellars and oak barrels throughout the region, plenty of delicious local cuisine and quaint villages to enjoy.

**Cooking Class** Culinary tourism, a new trend in travel, great for a group of ladies, or even men! Classes are available throughout France, the flavours of Provence are delicious and a popular location for many cooking schools. Explore the markets for the freshest ingredients, learn the techniques and enjoy the flavours. Great fun and very entertaining for all.

**Loire Valley Barge Cruise** See this picturesque valley from the comfort of a luxury barge and experience, not only the scenery, but the wines, cuisine, villages and the breathtaking chateaux around the Tours and Blois areas. The graceful country side is a joy to behold, fields of sunflowers and leafy glades slip by in the sun, a different and delightful way to see this beautiful region.

**French Open at Roland Garros** For tennis lovers, one of the ultimate championships on the World Tour to experience. Held between the end of May and beginning of June it's best to book your tickets as early as possible, they don't last long once the



## Facts for the traveller...

### Weather

Central areas in France such as Paris usually experience pretty cold winters and warm summers. The Riviera in the south has a Mediterranean climate, hot dry summers with cool wet winters.

### Best times to go

April to October

### Currency

Euro

### Time zone

GMT+1

### Tipping

Restaurant tips are usually included in the bill under the term 'service compris' as well as being included in the price list in most restaurants. However, extra tips are welcomed as a mark of appreciation. Extra tips generally range between 5%-10% of the bill.

Taxis 5%-10%

Porters 1-3 Euro

tournament draws closer, great fun and very exciting.

**Bateaux Mouches on the Seine** Take a dinner cruise on the famous River Seine, float beneath the many beautiful bridges, and watch the famous Paris landmarks pass by, magical at night and equally enjoyable during the day, a different view of Paris.



### Shopping hours

Mon - Sat: 9am to 6pm

Large stores and supermarkets  
9am - 8pm

### Transportation

The Paris Metro and RER are convenient and easy public transport systems that cover the city and the outer suburbs. River travel is an alternative way of getting around parts of Paris, the convenient Batobus is a "hop on hop off" system that cruises the banks of the Seine. With all transport in Paris ask for passes if you staying for any length of time, it is a cheap and convenient way to use the many transport systems available. Taxis are available and metered, they can be expensive. Rail transport covers most of France and is an excellent way to travel.

## Did you know?

The Eiffel Tower is painted every seven years.

The most visited attraction in Paris isn't the Eiffel Tower (5.5 million), or the Louvre (5 million), but Disneyland Paris at 13 million people per year.

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### **Transportation**

Germany's rail system is possibly the most efficient in Europe, well organized and comprehensive, train travel here is an excellent way to get around the country. The larger cities throughout Germany have very good public transportation systems, light rails (S-Bahn), trams, buses and undergrounds (U-Bahn). Road transport can be a little crowded in the cities but 'Autobahns' provide fast transport once you leave the city limits. Taxis are easily found and efficient, they are metered by law.

### **Tipping**

Service charge and VAT are included in Germany. If you do wish to leave a small tip 5-10% is appropriate, don't leave payments on the table, pay the waiter directly and tell them then what your tip will be, he or she will then bring the correct change to you, minus the tip. For taxis 50c is fine, or round up to the nearest Euro.

### **Shopping hours**

Mon-Sat: 10am to 8pm,  
closed Sundays.  
Supermarkets open at 8am.

### **Time zone**

GMT + 1 DST+2

### **Currency**

Euro

### **Language**

German

# Germany

## Culture, history and a modern dynamic vision.

Located in the heart of Europe, the beauty of this country lies in its diversity, from old world charm, glamour, art and breathtaking scenery to cutting edge technology, avant-garde architecture and youthful creativity. With its many facets Germany offers the traveller an unlimited choice of activities, fascinating regions and intriguing cities, spend time in Berlin's vibrant hip city scene, shop a little in Dusseldorf, visit Munich's famous opera or take in Cologne's medieval architecture. Move out of the cities and you'll find even more to do, cruise the rivers, hike the hills, sample the food, wine, beer and totally enjoy your time in this wonderful country.



### Life changing experiences...

**Munich** Often referred to as the pearl of Germany, Munich is Bavaria's heart and soul, from "lederhosen" and the fabulous Oktoberfest celebrations to a cosmopolitan city that offers high end shopping and an amazing choice of restaurants and bars. Enjoy Munich's opera scene, visit the famous Glockenspiel perched on the Town Hall or spend the afternoon in one of the famous beer gardens, there's plenty to see and do in this charming city.

**Oktoberfest** Starting from the last week in September through to the first weekend in October, Germany's most famous and popular annual event is the Oktoberfest. Join in with the other thousands of tourists that flock to Munich at this time of year and enjoy the parades, concerts, attractions and every type of beer imaginable, be prepared for the crowds and the noise and you will have a great time.

**Neuschwanstein Castle** One of Germany's most cherished landmarks, built by a theatrical stage designer in 1869 for King Ludwig II as his retreat, this 19th century castle has over 14 rooms, internal gardens, caves and a two floor throne room. Surrounded by breathtaking landscape the castle sits high on a hill overlooking the Hohenschwangau valley. A beautiful scene to behold, camera's are a must.



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Summer temperatures in Germany can be quite pleasant, 20 to 30°C,

**Berlin** A city that is known today for its glamour, fashion, art, opera, music and nightlife. Take the opportunity to visit some of Berlin's most significant monuments of recent history, the Berlin Wall, the Brandenburg Gate and the famous "Checkpoint Charlie". Visit the Bauhaus Museum, shop in Friedrichstraße for high end designers, or head to the weekly flea market on Sundays at Mauerpark, the afternoon karaoke sessions there can be fun too. Berlin is a cool, vibrant metropolis with plenty for the visitor to enjoy and remember.

**Dusseldorf** Known as one of the wealthiest cities in Germany, with its famous ultra-hip high priced shopping street, "Königsallee" and the many galleries and art museums on offer, Dusseldorf is a trendy place to visit. It's also home to the fabulous "Altstadt" (Old Town) with over 200 popular bars, restaurants and nightspots spread throughout cobblestoned streets by the river. Definitely one of the best cities to visit in Germany.

although rain is usually not far away, layered clothing and an umbrella are good options. Winters can be very cold, temperatures vary from west to east, freezing in the west to below freezing in the east.

#### Best times to go

Germany has something to offer all year round, the spring and summer months are the mildest and most popular months to visit.

#### Did you know?

There are around 300 varieties of bread in Germany.

There are around 1,500 different brands of beer in Germany.

Over 98% of the German population own cell phones.

Gummy bears were invented by a German, Hans Riegel.

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# European River Cruises...

## Discover the heart of Europe!

Cruise along the great waterways of Europe... the rivers Rhine, Rhone, Danube, Main and Elbe offer some of the world's most beautiful scenery, a unique and relaxing way to travel through Europe and explore villages, towns and cities along the way.

### Life changing cruises...

**Cruise French waterways** So many delightful options can take you from Paris to all corners of the country through Burgundy and Provence, to the Cote d'Azur, visit Nice, or choose to cruise to Lyon the gastronomic capital for fine cuisine. Cruises vary throughout the regions of France, choose your cruise to suit your own holiday needs, you won't be disappointed.

**Paris to Amsterdam** Cruise through France, Luxembourg, Germany, Belgium and Holland, a magnificent opportunity to view these wonderful countries up close and personal.

**Amsterdam to Bucharest** A unique adventure in Central Europe, from the scenic canals of Amsterdam, beer tasting in Nuremberg, through the Rhine valley with its wine and castles, to the magical city of Vienna

and on to the delights of Bucharest... this is the meaning of life changing!

**Paris to Prague** Cruise the Moselle, Main and Rhine rivers from Paris through Luxembourg and Germany's wine regions, castles, medieval villages and towns, sample delicious cuisine along the way, enjoy historical sights, breathtaking scenery and the old world majesty of Prague.

**North Sea to the Black Sea** Cruise the rivers of Amsterdam, the Rhine, the Main and the fabulous Danube... visit Cologne, Vienna, Budapest and Belgrade, a staggering amount of culture and history to be enjoyed.

**Budapest to Prague** A feast for the eyes with castles, culture, history, fabulous scenery and two magnificent cities to explore.



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### Transportation

Bus travel throughout Greece is well organised and reasonably priced. Taxis are easy to find, make sure the meter is running, a higher rate is charged at night and is also applied for travel outside of the city zone, check the rate zones are correctly shown on the meter. Ferries are a good way to get to and around the islands, the schedules can change at the last minute so make sure to double check dates and times.

### Top tip...

Museums and sites can be closed on Mondays and free on some Sundays, check with your hotel for the latest information.

# Greece

## Islands, tavernas and so much history...

From sites rich in history and culture to the warm waters of scenic island beaches, from nightlife that rivals the best in Europe to deliciously simple food in a local "taverna", Greece is the perfect holiday destination whether you're travelling with your family, friends or even on your own. The clear blue waters surrounding the picture perfect islands and the laid back and relaxed atmosphere is truly the definition of a real holiday!



### Life changing experiences...

#### A driving holiday on Rhodes, Crete or Corfu

Be in charge of your own holiday destiny and rent a car on any of these islands, there are so many places to explore, the roads are easy to navigate and the scenery spectacular. Relax on the many beaches available and enjoy the wonderful food, shopping and nightlife on offer, hard to beat.

**Historical sites** There is no doubt that Greece is home to some of the most important historical sites in the world. Visit the museums and sites around Athens or take a trip to Delphi. The Corinth Canal separates the mainland from the Peloponnese where the amphitheater at Epidauros and Olympia are both worth visiting.

**The Cyclades Islands** The ever popular Greek Islands, stunningly beautiful scenery, warm inviting water, beautiful beaches and delicious food, all in a laid back atmosphere, plenty of nightlife to keep you busy after the sun goes down too. Mykonos, Santorini, Andros, Tinos, Ios, Delos, just to name a few, spend a holiday on the Greek Islands once and you might just find yourself coming back for more

**Sail the islands.** Enjoy a group holiday with your friends, hire a sail boat... crew, cook and all! Sail the islands during the day, drop anchor wherever you like and take a dip. Visit the many



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Greece has a Mediterranean climate, hot dry summers, with cool to quite cold wet winters, milder in the south and much colder in the north, with snow in the mountain ski resorts and around the Peloponnese.

#### Best times to go

May to June and September to October are the best months to enjoy the Islands.

#### Currency

Euro

harbours along the way and explore the towns by day and by night, a wonderful way to enjoy a holiday and discover this beautiful group of islands.

**Lunch trip** Athens is a big bustling city, if you need a lunch break catch the Hydrofoil from Piraeus in Athens to Hydra or Poros and eat at one of the quayside tavernas, enjoy the food explore the villages, shop a little, it's a great way to spend an afternoon.

**Shopping in Athens.** Take a day or two on your way home from the Islands and explore the shops ... from the markets & souvenirs in Monastiraki and the Plaka to the true shopping experience in Ermou Street, it's all there!

#### Time zone

GMT +2 DST+2

#### Tipping

Restaurants 10 to 15%.

Taxis 10% or round up the fare.

Porters €1-3.

#### Shopping hours

Mon, Wed, Sat: 9am to 3pm.

Tue, Thu, Fri: 8.30 am to 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 8.00 pm (summer 9pm)

Large stores and supermarkets: Mon - Fri: 8.30am to 8pm.

Sat: 8.30am to 3pm.

### Did you know?

Greece is the world's third leading producer of olives.

The National Anthem of Greece has 158 verses, no one has memorised all 158.

The earliest recorded Olympics were held in 776 BC, there was only one event called the "one-stade", a 200m sprint which was won by a cook called "Coroebus".



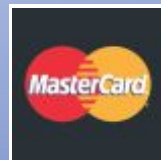
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### **Transportation**

Budapest is the only city with extensive public transport, a combination of trams, buses and the metro which is highly efficient and clean. Buses are the most flexible but not as comfortable as the trains. Taxis are an option, but make sure you use a reputable company whenever possible. Bus travel throughout Hungary is well covered.

### **Tipping**

Tipping is a way of life in Hungary, in restaurants tip 10-15%, pay the tip directly to the server, don't leave it on the table, tell them how much you want to tip and add it on to the total, appropriate change will be returned. Taxis 10-15% and porters 200-300 forints.

### **Shopping hours**

Mon - Fri: 9am to 6pm

Food stores & malls: 7am to 7pm

Saturdays: 9am to 1pm | 7am to 2pm

Many shops are open on Sundays.

# Hungary

## The land of spas and holiday treasures.

In the heart of central Europe this beautiful and hospitable country has Budapest as the "jewel" in its crown. A city for lovers of art, architecture and beauty, with its grandeur covering centuries of history, Budapest lies on both sides of the Danube River and is truly a joy to behold. With delicious cuisine, a legacy of music from Liszt to Brahms, fabulous spas throughout the country, welcoming people and a spirit that has brought this country through an amazing history, Hungary is more than just a holiday destination, it's an experience not to be missed.



### Life changing experiences...

**The 'Jewel'** One of Europe's most beautiful cities, Budapest is a cultural treasure chest, where history meets cosmopolitan flair, a lesson in architecture throughout the ages and a joy to experience and explore. With the River Danube flowing through its center Budapest offers natural beauty and endless activities for visitors, cruise the river, visit the many museums, shop in Váci Street, sample the delicious food and try out the nightlife, the city has a unique energy that's well worth discovering.

**Spas of Budapest** Famous for its spas, Budapest has a wealth of natural thermal springs running beneath the city, whether you're looking for simple rest and relaxation or treatment this is the place to be. With over 1,000 hot springs and plenty of spa facilities located throughout the country Hungary offers some of the finest examples of Turkish Baths in some of the most beautiful architectural settings you can find.

**Lake Balaton** Europe's largest fresh water lake, affectionately known as the "Hungarian Sea", Lake Balaton is a hugely popular location for Hungarians and tourists, with swimming, sun bathing, and water sports throughout the summer, ice



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Temperatures vary throughout Hungary, winters can be quite cold and bleak with lows of -4°C in January whilst summers can be quite warm with highs of 26°C. Spring and

skating and even ice sailing during the winter months. The surrounding areas produce some excellent wines with vineyards that are well worth a visit, plenty of restaurants, delicious food and Hungarian hospitality.

**Lipizzaner Horses** Szilvasvarad in the Eger area, one of the most picturesque mountain valleys in Hungary, is the home to this remarkable historical Hungarian breed, if you're a horse lover then a visit to this area is a must, natural beauty in both the surrounding areas and the animals themselves, life changing to say the least.

**Cruising the Danube** From lunch cruises and romantic dinner cruises or full day trips, the Danube offers a fabulous view of Budapest and beyond. Take it a step or two further and plan a full cruise from Budapest to the Black Sea, sail through Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania on your way, a relaxing and fascinating trip.

Autumn are pleasant, but it can be a little wet in April, May and November.

#### Best times to go

Summer: May to September  
Spring: April and May  
Autumn: September to October.

#### Time zone

GMT +1 DST +2

#### Currency

Hungarian Forint (Ft)

#### Language

Hungarian

### Did you know?

Seven countries border Hungary: Austria, Croatia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Hungary is one of the oldest countries in Europe, founded in the year 896.

Famous Hungarian inventions: Rubik's cube, ball point pen, tungsten and krypton bulbs, and the carburetor.

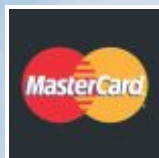


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# Italy

## It's not just about the food!

Italy is one of those countries that has so many diverse holiday destinations to offer, whether it's history, architecture, art, shopping, fashion trends, cuisine or beautiful scenic landscapes that you're looking to experience, it's all there and so much more! From big bustling cities where the new and modern live side by side with the old and historical, to lakes, alps and regions with enough rustic charm to make one wish they never had to leave. Italy is a fascinating kaleidoscope of treasures that has to be experienced and enjoyed at least once in anyone's lifetime.



### Life changing experiences...

**Rome** There's so much to see and do here, visit the Pantheon, the Colosseum, the Forum, the Vatican and the famous Trevi Fountain, masterpieces of the 16th and 17th Century by Bernini, Michelangelo and Caravaggio can all be found in the historic centre of Rome within the Aurelian walls. Take a rest on the Spanish steps and watch the world go by for a while, make your way over to the Trastevere district, a quaint cobblestoned area with plenty of cafés and restaurants to fuel your sightseeing efforts!

**Venice** A trip to this city is worthy of anyone's "Bucket List", ancient history and endless waterways, it is a never ending maze of cobbled walkways, courtyards and winding back streets, all joined by arched bridges, with bars, restaurants and shops sprinkled throughout. It is unique, beautiful, inspiring and mystical all at the same time, and a must visit.

**Tuscany** Think of rolling, rustic landscapes, mouth watering cuisine, vineyards that produce some of the best wine in the world, olive groves, ancient cities, towns and villages and

you have the glory of Tuscany. The region is home to the iconic cities of Florence, Siena and Pisa... from the masters, Da Vinci and Michelangelo to writers Dante & Boccaccio, Tuscany is iconic and simply breathtaking in its historical importance and its sheer beauty.

**Cooking and wine tours** A fun and tasty way to enjoy the culinary side of Tuscany, famed for its food and wine, cooking classes are a popular way to see the country side and experience the region. Discover the secrets of Italy's instinctive knowledge of how to eat and drink well and as the saying goes... "Italians live to eat while the rest of the world eats to live".

**Milan** Perhaps Italy's most cosmopolitan and glamorous city that showcases the true Italian sense of style, fashion and design. If high end shopping is your passion then this is the place for all "fashionistas" to go, Armani, Versace, Prada, Dolce & Gabbana and many more all made their names on Milan's runways. Hunt around for the outlet stores and you might find some real bargains.

### Southern Italy's Treasures

Explore the magnificent Amalfi Coast, colourful Mediterranean villages that seem to cling to vertical terrain, narrow cobblestoned streets and amazing views along the roads that wind around the coast with the stunning blue sea in the background at each turn. Discover Naples, home to the humble pizza, a living medieval city with its ancient Roman street plans, friendly locals, fast mopeds and an unbeatable atmosphere make this city special. Take a trip to Pompeii while you're in the south, a city that was literally stopped in its tracks by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79, explore the well preserved ruins that were buried under hot mud and volcanic ash, simply fascinating.

### Did you know?

The piano, thermometer, typewriter, ice cream cone, eyeglasses and the espresso machine are all Italian inventions.







## Facts for the traveller...

### Weather

Italy's weather can vary from north to south but spring begins officially on 21st March. April and May are extremely pleasant months, it gets hot from June until August, best to avoid the large cities at this time, the coastal areas can be pleasant during in summer. The Alps in the west and north protect the central plain and provide excellent winter sports so naturally very cold winters with deep snow.

### Best times to go

Anytime is wonderful, but April to June or September to October are the best months, avoid the big cities in mid summer as it does become extremely hot.

### Currency Euro

### Time zone

GMT +1 DST +2

### Shopping hours

Generally 8.30am-12.30pm and 15.30pm-9.30 pm. Some variations in Northern Italy where the lunch break is shorter and the shops close earlier.

### Tipping

Tipping is not mandatory in restaurants, but round off the bill for the waiter, no more than 5-10 Euros, note that a cover charge of 1 to 3 Euros is added by restaurants, it should be shown on the receipt. Taxis do not expect tips but appreciate it if bags are carried, the same applies for hotel porters and housekeeping if they have been helpful. The Italians themselves do not often tip.

### Transportation

The train system is good throughout the main cities, if you want to get off the beaten track a little then the country's bus system is fine. Boat travel is often used for coastal destinations and provides a pleasant change for the visitor. For long distances there are internal flights, and car hire is available.



## Did you know?

The average Italian consumes 25 kilograms of pasta per year, and 26 gallons of wine.

The city of Naples gave birth to the pizza.

Every day approximately 3,000 Euros are thrown into the Trevi fountain in Rome.

Vatican City is the only nation in the world that can lock its own gates at night.

Italy has hosted the Olympic Games three times.



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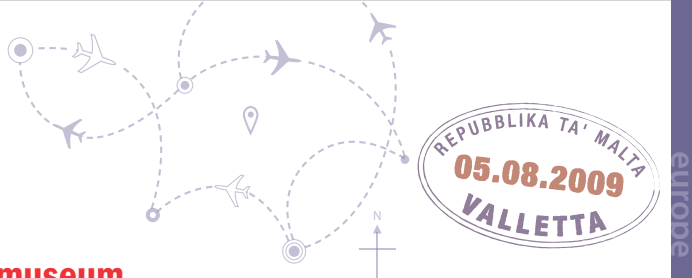




### Transportation

A new system of air conditioned buses operates throughout the island and also on Gozo. White taxis operate on a fixed tariff to the airport only, for city use taxis can be picked up anywhere except at bus stops, water taxis are available between the islands. Valetta offers CT cabs, eco friendly electric chauffeur driven cars on a "hail and ride" basis or by pre-booking.

# Malta



## The Mediterranean's open air museum ...

With over 7,000 years of history still on display the islands of Malta are a feast for the senses, from the honey coloured buildings surrounded by the blue waters of the Mediterranean to fortresses, pre-historic sights, every water sport you can imagine, secluded beaches, caves, delicious food and some pretty good nightlife, Malta is the ultimate escape. Take your holiday to another level and visit Malta's sister islands, Gozo and Comino, for a change of pace, simply relax and discover the real beauty of the Mediterranean.



### Life changing experiences...

**Valetta** A living experience of Baroque architecture, Malta's capital is a World Heritage site that embraces two fabulous harbours, an amazing fortress and the legacies of many successive rulers. The city hosts the majestic St. John's Cathedral, the impressive bastion with timeless paintings and a wealth of historic splendour. Plenty of cafés restaurants and bars are spread throughout the city to keep you well fed and entertained.

**Festivals** Malta plays host to a number of local and international festivals throughout the year. With the annual Opera Festival in March, the popular Malta Arts Festival and Jazz festival in the summer along with local festivals throughout the year, the island offers special entertainment in spectacular settings.

**Gozo's natural escapes** The second largest of Malta's islands, Gozo is a simple, relaxed haven for holiday makers, with a rugged landscape and spectacular coastline, some of the best dive sites in the Mediterranean, historical sites, forts and even a prehistoric temple, Gozo has it all. Hard to expect anything less from an island whose name means "joy".



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

The island is strongly influenced by the sea with typically Mediterranean weather, summers are hot dry and very sunny, allowing swimming right into mid to late October. Winters are mild, Spring and Autumn sees hot winds from North Africa, bringing unseasonably hot, humid weather.

**Time zone** GMT +1 DST +2

**Honeymooners** Malta is the perfect destination with all the right romantic ingredients for a special honeymoon, spend a day or two in Malta and move on to Gozo, where time seems to stand still, explore the villages, rent a villa or luxury farmhouse and enjoy a memorable honeymoon.

**Comino Island** Situated between Malta and Gozo, Comino is a paradise for snorkellers, divers, windsurfers and walkers. Only 3.5 square km the island is car free and uninhabited except for one hotel. The main attraction here is the "Blue Lagoon", a sheltered inlet of clear turquoise waters on white shimmering sand, a popular spot for day trip visitors.

#### Best times to go

There's something to do in Malta all year round, avoid the crowds and try visiting in the spring from April to June, or in autumn from August to November.

#### Language

Officially Maltese and English, Italian is widely spoken.

**Currency** Euro

#### Tipping

Tipping is not customary however a 10% tip in restaurants is normal, porters €1-2.

#### Shopping hours

Mon - Sat: 9am to 1pm & 4pm to 7pm. In many tourist areas trading is until 10pm. Closed on Sundays and public holidays.

### Did you know?

The Maltese islands have become popular film locations for Hollywood blockbuster movies in recent years... Gladiators, U-571 and The Count of Monte Cristo were filmed there.







### Transportation

The public transport system is excellent with buses, trains, trams or the subway in large cities. Train and bus travel is popular for inter city travel. Canal water taxis are an excellent way to get around Amsterdam. Taxis are metered, make sure it's turned on and best to ask how much the journey will cost approximately in advance. Alternatively rent a bike and become part of the Dutch cycling culture, bikes can be rented easily and are a popular form of transport.



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# Netherlands



## Windmills, tulips and "gezelligheid"...

A charming blend of timeless traditional beauty and vibrant culture, the Netherlands offers superb landscapes and fabulous waterways, an amazingly rich art scene, from Van Gogh to Rembrandt, overflowing museums, a variety of activities and festivals alongside a rich restaurant scene and eye opening nightlife in the major cities. A diverse yet compact destination to visit, where a bike or a boat can just about get you anywhere, the Netherlands is a laid back yet cosmopolitan country where visitors cannot help but join in with the Dutch and their genuine love of life and wellbeing ... "gezelligheid"!



### Life changing experiences...

**Amsterdam** Fantastic shopping, amazing museums and fabulous art galleries, this vibrant city is a must see for any visitor. Anywhere you go within Amsterdam you'll be sure to see the iconic 17th century canals and waterways, take a canal boat and tour the city, plenty of "hop-on hop-off" boats are available, enjoy the unique canal houses and beautiful sights throughout, try a night dinner cruise for a touch of romance and even more beauty.

**The "City of Diamonds"** Add a little sparkle to your stay in Amsterdam and take a tour at one of the famous diamond companies. Both Gasson and Coster Diamond Companies offer tours of their facilities, a fascinating insight into the world of the diamond trade, carats, colours, clarity and workmanship. Best to take your credit card with you .... or maybe not!

**Tulip Festival** Hard to beat a trip to the Netherlands in the springtime. From March to May visit the world famous Keukenhof Gardens and tulip fields just outside of Amsterdam, lunch at one of the many restaurants surrounded by thousands of brilliantly coloured flowering bulbs, a breathtaking and totally unique experience.



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Hot weather is rare in Holland but summers can be warm and quite changeable. Winter is fairly cold with some snow and rainfall is prevalent throughout the year. Take light to medium clothing for summer and medium to heavy for winter, best to take rain wear whenever you visit.

**Time zone** GMT +1 DST+2

**The Heineken Experience** Visit the home of Heineken beer, fun and history combined with the latest multimedia lets you see, smell and taste your experience here. Interactive fun with an insight into 150 years of brewing craftsmanship.

**The Windmills of Holland** An integral part of the Netherlands, windmills were not only used as mills but as innovative pumps to prevent flooding on the country's flat landscape. The most famous are at Kinderdijk, a UNESCO site with 19 mills. The largest, with some over 40 meters high, can be seen at Schiedam and last but not least at Zaanse Schans, where over 250 years ago 600 mills formed the first industrial site in the world. An unusual and fascinating look at Dutch culture.

#### Language

Dutch, English and French are widely spoken.

#### Currency Euro

#### Shopping hours

Mon to Sat: 9am-5.30pm

Thu: closing at 9pm

Mondays shops may not open until noon

#### Tipping

Bars, restaurants & taxis: Service tax is included, tips are always appreciated but not required, 10% is reasonable.

### Did you know?

One quarter of the Netherlands is below sea level.

Amsterdam is entirely built on piles and has 1,281 bridges.

Netherlands has 15,000 kms of cycle tracks. Nearly everyone has a bicycle and there are twice as many bikes as cars.







# Portugal

**When you want a holiday that has it all...**

Portugal, from the enchanted islands of Madeira and the beaches of the Algarves to the history of Sintra and fascinating contrasts in Lisbon. The never ending beaches available throughout this fabulous country and the colourful, vibrant cities will keep you entertained, visiting during the "Carnival season" will add even more to your holiday. The people are friendly, welcoming and family oriented, take the kids, it's a destination that has something for everyone!



## Life changing experiences...

**Lisbon** Voted the best location in Europe by the UK's Sunday Times Travel magazine, Lisbon is a city that has everything the holiday maker needs. Food and nightlife, history and culture, shopping, beaches, scenery, and the opportunity to enjoy it all in one place. A city worthy of being a life changing holiday location!

**Sintra** Definitely a must see in Portugal, designated as a World Heritage site, Sintra is an extraordinary place with an amazing mix of history, fairytale palaces, beautiful scenery and fascinating museums. Spend the days wandering through the magical streets of the town center, or catch the unique trams to some of the most beautiful beaches Portugal has to offer, a unique town for visitors to discover and explore.

**Madeira** Located in the mid-Atlantic ocean and often called the "Floating Garden", Madeira offers its visitors clear waters, stunning beaches, mountains and a superb scenic coastline. Take a cable car from the capital, Funchal, to the mountain village of Monte, the fabulous panoramic views are simply breathtaking, visit the volcanic salt water pools of Porto Moniz, plenty to see and do on this lovely island, well worth visiting.

**Porto** The second largest city in Portugal, Porto is a vibrant, colorful and endlessly fascinating city located at the mouth of the Douro River. Explore the historic center with its winding alleys, stairs and village style plazas, or explore the equally fascinating surrounding areas famous for their terraced vineyards and world class wines. Porto is a truly entertaining, charismatic destination that will create some of the best holiday memories possible.

**The Algarve** With sunshine the whole year round this is the place to go for a dream holiday. With some of Europe's most beautiful beaches, top golf courses, magnificent cliff top scenery and a fabulous climate it's no wonder that the Algarve is a popular destination. If you can force yourself away from the superb beaches the area has a lot of historical towns to discover, Faro, Sagres and Lagos are all worth exploring.

**Parque Nacional Da Peneda-Gerês** A magical location with superb landscapes, pretty villages, beautiful mountains and valleys, and even Iron Age ruins, plenty of activities on offer from hiking and powered water sports to relaxing thermal waters. Explore the lush vegetation, streams

and waterfalls, each scene more beautiful than the last. Base your stay in Vila do Gerês, a popular spa town in the summer months with plenty of accommodation choices.



## Facts for the traveller...

### Tipping

Generally 5% to 10% tip for good service in a restaurant, small change is sufficient in a café or snack bar. Taxi drivers do not expect a tip but 10% is appreciated.

### Currency

Euro

### Did you know?

Portugal is the world's largest cork producer.

The word "Algarve" originates from the Arabic word "Al-Gharb", meaning 'the west'.

The country of Portugal was founded in 1152.

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## Facts for the traveller...

### Weather

Portugal has a warm and sunny climate with relatively mild winters. The overall average is 25°C in summer and 14°C in winter. The rainy season begins in November and lasts through January.

### Best times to go

June to September is the most popular, alternatively springtime to avoid heat and crowds.

### Time zone

GMT+0 DST+1

### Shopping hours

Mon -Fri: 9am-1pm & 3pm to 6/7pm

Sat: 9am - 1pm

Large shopping centers:  
9am to 10/12pm

### Transportation

Lisbon and Porto both have undergrounds, however the unique trams throughout both cities are not to be missed and an excellent form of transportation. The bus and train system throughout Portugal is reliable and economical. Taxis are reliable and good value, they run on meters, two rates apply, one for daytime and one for late night,

luggage is charged by piece. Rates from the airport into Lisbon are reasonable.

### Lisbon top tips

If you find long taxi lines at the airport, take the elevator up to the departure area and catch a taxi from there.

Museums and monuments are closed on Mondays.

Best shopping Baixa (downtown) and Chiado.

Nightlife center ... Bairro Alto.

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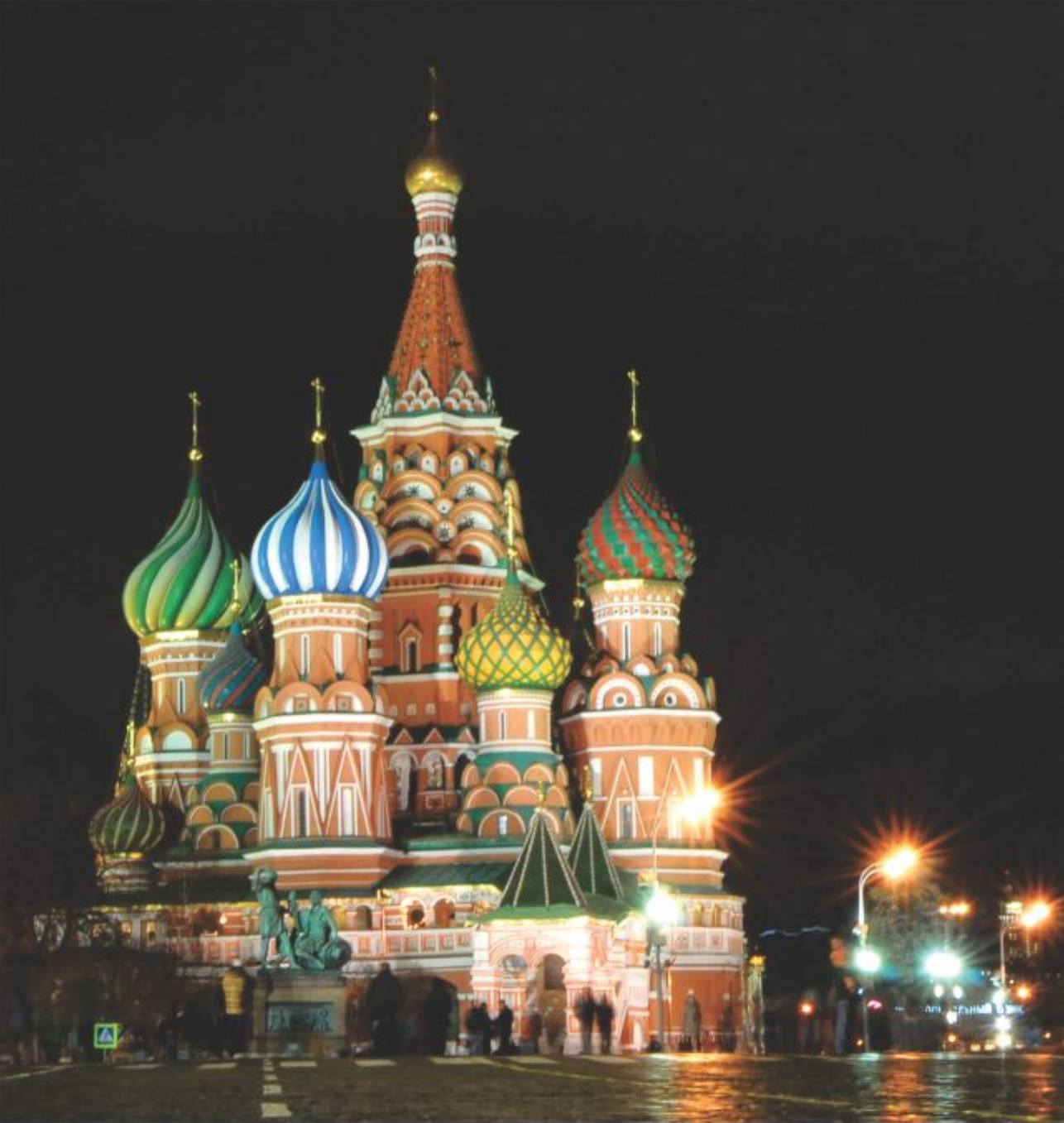
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### **Transportation**

The Moscow underground is the easiest way to get around the city, the underground in St. Petersburg covers less areas. Train services throughout Russia are adequate, but schedules can be unreliable, bus services are also not very reliable. Taxis can be found in many forms, some are just private cars, negotiate the price first, it is a strange system

that does seem to work. The best taxis are the ones that you can call and order by phone.

### **Weather**

July and August are the warmest summer months with frequent rain, a popular time for visitors. The winter months have short dark days and below freezing temperatures, skiing is at its best in January and February.

### **Best times to go**

Early summer and autumn, best to take layered clothing. Winter offers a great skiing experience but the cold can be very intense.

### **Tipping**

Restaurants: 10%, in cafés round up the bill.  
Drivers/tour guides: \$10 per day.  
Housekeeping \$1-\$2 per day.

# Russia

"A riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" Winston Churchill

A magnificent country with a fascinating history, from imperial splendour and monuments left over from the Soviet years, to the icy Siberian plains, Russia is a vast land that stretches from Europe to Asia and covers over 150 various ethnic groups. It is this diverse landscape, with breathtaking scenes that gives Russia its sense of mystery. Visit the famous cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, cruise the scenic Volga River, take in the sights of the spectacular Ural mountains and visit the lakes of Siberia, Russia will both puzzle and delight those who visit.



## Life changing experiences...

**Moscow** A city of culture, history, art, literature and museums with an emerging modern creativity that brings Moscow to a new level of sophistication. From the solid red-bricked Kremlin and the postcard perfect views of St. Basils in the Red Square, to the massive "Soviet Style" monuments of the Stalin era and the upmarket bars, bistros and restaurants that dominate the entertainment scene, Moscow offers visitors a fascinating look at its past and present. Plenty of galleries to visit for art and history lovers, amazing ballet and symphony performances for music lovers and more than enough shopping for the shopaholics amongst us, Moscow will keep you well entertained.

**Lenin's Tomb** An iconic tribute to Russia's history, located at the foot of the Kremlin in Red Square, Lenin's embalmed body has been on display since his death in 1924, open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10am to 1pm, entrance is free, unless of course you would like to jump the line, anywhere between \$10-\$40 can help if paid to the right people! It is an eerie, somber experience inside this chilly mausoleum but worth seeing to

understand just a part of Russia's heritage. (Note cameras are not allowed)

**The Bolshoi Theatre** A visit to Moscow would not be complete without seeing a performance at the Bolshoi Theatre, from ballet to opera this iconic building has brought to the world unforgettable performances. Closed for the past six years and now fully refurbished the theatre is a glittering setting for performances that can only be described as life changing.

**Cruise the Volga** Cruise from Moscow to St. Petersburg and discover the heart of Russia in the smaller towns along the way, a unique insight into life outside of the country's major cities. Relax and enjoy a fascinating trip with the beautiful scenic views that the Volga River offers.

**St. Petersburg** Originally built on a swamp, St. Petersburg is a grand city with a European flavour where Russian Tsars ruled for over 200 years. A charming mix of palace-lined water ways, quaint canals, wonderful restaurant choices and an enchanting culture. Visit the historical centre, a World Heritage site, where you will find unique architecture and

colourful baroque facades, a lasting testament to this city's heritage. Don't miss a trip to the "State Hermitage Museum", one of the world's largest museums and home to masterpieces and artefacts of incredible historical value and interest.



## Facts for the traveller...

### Time zone

GMT + 4 in Moscow & St. Petersburg, the rest of Russia spans 9 time zones.

### Currency

Rubles

### Shopping hours

Mon to Sat: 9am to 7pm

## Did you know?

Russia is the largest country in the world with an area of 17,075,400 km<sup>2</sup>.

The lakes in Russia contain approximately one quarter of the world's fresh water.

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# Scandinavia & The Nordic Countries

## Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland & Iceland

These five countries have, without a doubt, some of the most picturesque scenes in the world. From the delightful canal houses in Copenhagen, to the Fjords of Norway, the unique ice hotel in Sweden, the winter-wonderland of Finland and Iceland's Blue Lagoon, there is just so much to see. The Midnight Sun and Northern Lights are shared across the region, no matter where you have your experience it is guaranteed to be a special one. Plan to visit more than one of these unique countries during your holiday, with ferries, trains and planes there's always a way to hop from place to place.



### Life changing experiences...

**Copenhagen & Tivoli Gardens** An enchanted world located right in the middle of the city, featuring exotic architecture, exquisite gardens and scenery, open air stages, restaurants, cafés and 26 rides for kids or adults alike, ranging from gentle to monstrous! A visit to Tivoli is a one-of-a-kind experience that you simply won't find anywhere else! Take a break from the excitement of Tivoli and tour the scenic canals of Copenhagen on a canal boat, the best way to see and experience this unique city.

**Sweden's famous Ice Hotel** This experience should be on everyone's "bucket list"! Located in Jukkasjärvi, Sweden, the entire hotel is built every year, beginning in October, using 10,000 tons of ice and 30,000 tons of snow. Each year the layout and design is unique and quite simply an amazing work of art. If the idea of sleeping in a room carved from ice is not your thing, "warm rooms" are available with full access to the ice hotel's facilities.... Really worth the trip!

**Swedish Glass** The home of Kosta Boda and Orrefors, synonymous with beautiful design and function, now combined into one factory

located in the town of Orrefors, take a guided tour and watch the world famous glass being made. Top tip: you can also find "seconds" at bargain prices at the factory and other factory outlets in the area at very competitive prices. Sweden is also the home of Ikea, if you're a fan visit one of the three largest Ikea shops in the world in Stockholm, it's a huge at 55,200m²!

**Winter Wonderland** Finnish Lapland is simply the place to go for a unique winter holiday, visit the snow village at Lainio in the west, stay in a glass or ice igloo at the Kaslauttanen Resort, visit the Snow Castle or stay in the Snow Hotel in Kemi near the Swedish border. Take the kids and visit Santa Claus himself, Santa lives in Finland and has his own village in Rovaniemi in the Arctic Circle! All simply life changing!!

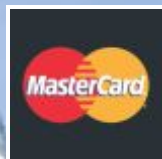
**Helsinki Finland** Walk the city and see the sights it's easy to get around on foot or use the excellent tram service. A seaside city that stretches out into pretty green filled islands. Enjoy the summer café society, sit back and watch the world go by!



**Norway, Land of the Midnight Sun** Play golf at midnight on the Lofoten Islands, go hiking to Keipen or take a boat out fishing in the middle of the night, all great ways to experience this special light from the "Midnight Sun", a natural phenomenon where the sun does not set during the summer months. Time your visit between May and mid-June, depending on how far north you go. A unique experience to tell your friends about!









### Life changing experiences...

**Spectacular fjords** Don't leave Norway without seeing a fjord, the Geirangerfjord is surrounded by majestic, snow-covered mountain peaks, wild waterfalls and lush green vegetation. Take a cruise, try kayaking or simply visit the famous "view points"... all breathtaking experiences that should be added to one's book of memories.

**The Northern Lights** Watch nature's own theatre unfold above you in the sky, the "aurora borealis", or Northern Lights, are a jaw-dropping mystical moment. The lights are at their most frequent in the late autumn and winter/early spring, best chance of seeing them is above the Arctic Circle in Northern Norway, remember though that we are at the mercy of nature and they don't always appear on cue!

**The Golden Circle route** A must see for visitors to Iceland. Visit Geysir and nearby Strokkur, watch the powerful jets of steaming water spout skyward, a sight to behold! See the "Golden Falls" (Gullfoss), with its 105 foot waterfall hitting the



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather round up

The Scandinavian and Nordic climate is quite complex, as a basic rule do not expect to overheat in August! Summers can be quite pleasant but a little unpredictable, chilly at night in most areas, the temperature ranges from 16 to 22°C, with the

occasional short burst of heat and the possibility of rain. Spring and autumn are relatively colder months with winter being an arctic experience. Expect very cold winters and dress accordingly; some countries have more snow than others.

#### Currency

**Denmark** Krone (Kr)

**Sweden** Krona (SKr)

**Norway** Krone (Nkr)

**Finland** Euro

**Iceland** Króna (Kr)

Hvita glacial river, the rainbows and spectacular color and motion is hard to beat. Travel on to Thingvellir National Park, the ultimate symbol of Iceland's independence and unity, a landscape inseparable from the national soul.

**Iceland's Blue Lagoon** Just 40 minutes from Reykjavik city center, relax in the famous Blue Lagoon, a pool of neon blue water supplied from a nearby geothermal plant, soak up the scenic beauty and enjoy breathing the clean, fresh air while relaxing in the warm seawater. A revitalizing must for any traveller!



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## Facts for the traveller...

### Time zones

#### Denmark, Norway & Sweden

(CET) GMT+1 DST +2

#### Finland

(EET) GMT +2 DST +3

#### Iceland

(WET) GMT+0

### Tipping

Tipping is not expected in Scandinavian countries, as a general rule round up the bill, for very good service add 10%, leave small change in cafés or bars. Also round up the bill with taxi services and be prepared to carry your own bags if you can!

### Language

Although some Scandinavian languages are understood between the countries the main language used to communicate is English, visitors should have no problems speaking English in any of these countries.

### Transportation

**Copenhagen** has a clean, efficient public transportation system spreading out past the city limits. Most transportation operates between 5am and 12.30-1am. Taxis are readily available in city centers, shopping areas and trains stations, or wave one down if required. Denmark has a reliable train system with reasonable fares and frequent services for travel throughout the country.

**Norway** has an extremely efficient public transport system and its trains, buses and ferries are often timed to link with each other. For inner city travel ask your hotel for info on the "Oslo Pass". Norway's excellent system of ferries connects the country's offshore islands to the mainland.

**Sweden** has a well organized bus and train service, with regional passes valid in local areas as well. Stockholm also runs an extensive metro system, day passes are cheaper and recommended. Avoid illegal taxis in Sweden, "Taxi Stockholm" or "Taxi Kurir" are recommended companies, others look like real taxis but are not and can charge a lot more, travellers beware! Public transport is well recommended and cheaper.

**Finland** has a reliable train system. Helsinki runs buses, trams, ferries, local trains and a subway. The subway is small, consisting of one line and very simple to use. Buses and trains stop between 1 and 2am, Subway and trams stop at 11pm. Night buses are available on Weekends from 2am to 5am.

**Iceland** has good bus services covering Reykjavik, other towns and the country in general, 3 day passes are recommended. They run from 7am to midnight on weekdays. Night buses run until 4am on weekends, taxis are readily available, tipping is not necessary.

### Did you know?

The inventors of LEGO® toys got started in Billund, Denmark in 1932 manufacturing not LEGO® blocks but stepladders! Billund is now the home of Legoland Theme Park.

Sweden perfected the zip, the marine propeller, the fridge & the pacemaker, plus of course IKEA and H&M!

Rekjavik, Iceland, has sidewalks heated by geothermal heat in winter.

Norway's Viking helmets do not have horns.

Finland is the only country in the world which broadcasts news in Latin.



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# Spain

## Not just a table full of tapas!

From the majestic Pyrenees to the glittering beaches in the south, Spain and its people have a passion for life that's hard to beat. For history lovers there are architectural treasures, medieval towns and castles. For art lovers Barcelona alone is reason enough to visit Spain and for those looking for a little cultural vacation time the museums, flamenco dancing, music and cuisine will keep you more than satisfied. Make your way to some of the best beaches that Europe has to offer, from the quiet to the not so quiet and plenty of nightlife to match, there is truly something for everyone in this beautiful country.



### Life changing experiences...

**Madrid** A sophisticated city that offers everything from beautiful architecture that reflects both the city's past and it's modern present, to magnificent art galleries, delicious food, fabulous shopping and a relentless nightlife. Mouth watering "tapas" are at their best in Madrid, try them out in the streets around the Plaza Mayor, or visit the oldest restaurant in the world "Sobrino de Botin", founded in 1725, vintage decoration and delicious food. From fabulous shopping to the medieval quarter and the grand boulevards of Madrid, there's rarely a dull moment in this special city.

**Barcelona** Some simply fabulous modern architectural styles by the famous Gaudi are on show here, not to mention superb art by the famed Picasso and Miro, both have their own museums and are two of the many that are worth visiting in Barcelona. The "hop on hop off" bus is a great way to see the major attractions around the city. Flamenco shows, local wines, delicious tapas and the famous "Shopping Line" are but a few of the wonders to be experienced in Barcelona, don't miss out.

**Seville** Bursting with rich Andalusian architecture, festivals, arts and a

wealth of traditional culture this passionate city is a joy to explore. Discover the narrow medieval lanes and hidden plazas with their Roman, Islamic, Gothic and baroque styles. Enjoy the best tapas bars you'll find and some unrivalled nightlife as well. From flamenco to bullfighting Seville is everything you ever imagined and more.

**Malaga** The birthplace of Picasso is a sophisticated port city with an entertaining mixture of new and old, wander the narrow lanes within the old town, visit the Moorish fortress and the Christian castle and enjoy the glitzy shopping streets throughout. The Picasso museum is a must see along with the contemporary and fine arts museum, plenty of restaurants, bars and nightlife to keep you busy after hours.

**Costa del Sol** Stretching over 150 km this sun filled, popular tourist destination has more jet skis per capita than anywhere else in Europe! Benalmadena, Fuengirola, Torremolinos and Marbella are just a few of the famous resorts that people flock to for the miles of fine sandy beaches almost all year long. Hire a car and drive the coast, plenty of golf

courses and kid friendly theme parks to enjoy.

**Majorca** This beautiful island holiday spot has more than just sea, sun and sand. Hire a car and take a driving holiday, explore mountain villages, fragrant orange groves, discover the beaches of Illa de Cabrera, catch some of Majorca's spectacular sunsets and enjoy the island's unique charm, delicious food and the famous Palma nightlife.

**Winter Skiing** Try out Spain's winter snow sports in the Sierra Nevada, just 2 hours from Malaga. Snowboarding, tobogganing, snowmobiling and more, great fun for the whole family, plenty of resorts, slopes, and a good 5 month long season.



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## Facts for the traveller...

### Weather

With temperate weather in the north to dry and hot in the south, Spain's climate is a welcoming one for visitors, summer months can be very warm and dry with temperatures of at least 30°C. Winter days are warm and sunny with temps around 17°C in coastal areas, inland is much colder with the Pyrenees experiencing very low temperatures.

### Best times to go

Anytime is Spain time, summer is the best time to hit the beaches, spring and autumn experience wonderful weather and winter offers a fabulous snow scene.

### Time zone

GMT+1 hour DST+2 hours

### Currency

Euro

### Shopping hours

Can vary between regions, general

opening times are:

Mon to Fri: 8.30/9.30am - 8.30/9.30pm.

Siesta closing times between 3-5pm

Saturdays 9.30am - 4pm

Closed Sundays.

### Tipping

Tipping is not customary in Spain, however, loose change can be left. Taxis expect 5-10% of the fare.

### Language

Spanish

### Transportation

Inner city public transport is good within major cities, Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia have Metro systems. Barcelona's "hop on hop off" bus for the city sights is very convenient. An intercity rail and bus system provides a good service between major cities. Taxis must display their licence and have their green light on if they are free for hire.



## Did you know?

The tooth fairy is not recognised in Spain, instead they have a tooth mouse called Ratoncito Perez!!

Spain is 5 times bigger than the UK with only two thirds of its population.

Spain produces 44% of all the earth's olive oil.

Spain has over 8,000 km of beaches.

Spain remained neutral in both world wars.



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# Switzerland

## Mountains, lakes, chocolate and cheese!

Visitors are spoilt for choice in this breathtaking country of majestic mountains, sophisticated ski resorts, waterfalls, beautiful lakes and picturesque pastures. There is a wealth of experiences to be had from delicious cheeses to creamy chocolate, from pure Alpine air, to fabulous skiing, glaciers and lush green meadows dotted with grazing cows, and yes, even the cows are pretty! With French, Italian and German regional influences the varied cultures on offer in this landlocked country are endless, what makes them totally superb is the overriding "Swiss-ness" of it all, a unique, interesting & charming country to visit.



### Life changing experiences...

**Zurich** Located on the northern tip of Lake Zurich with a spectacular view of the snowcapped Alps, Zurich offers a unique mix of attractions, from museums and art galleries, to cruising and lakeside activities in the summer, skiing in the winter and shopping all year round along the famous Bahnhofstrasse. Add to that a fabulous choice of restaurants, elegant clubs and flamboyant nightlife and you have a perfectly trendy, vibrant place to visit.

**The Jungfrau Railway** A magical train journey to the "Top of the World", the Jungfrau railway climbs to the highest railway station in Europe, the Eiger Glacier Station, through the Eiger Tunnel and past spectacular views as it makes its way up. Enjoy the Glacier Restaurant at the top and the breathtaking scenery from the observation platform overlooking the glacier.

**The Glacier Express** One of Switzerland's premier train journeys, 290km over eight hours, from Zermatt to St. Moritz through some of Europe's most dramatic and beautiful scenery. Beginning at the foot of the famous Matterhorn, the panoramic carriages

offer an incredible view as they wind their way through Alpine passes, 91 tunnels and over 250 bridges and viaducts on the journey up, a breathtaking journey not to be missed.

**St Moritz** One of the world's most famous ski resorts, where the sun shines 322 days of the year. St. Moritz is nestled right in the middle of the Upper Engadin lake landscape, 1856 metres above sea level, a picture perfect setting offering a fabulous variety of snow sports and events throughout the winter season and plenty of activities during the summer. Catch the horse races on the frozen lake, pamper yourself in a luxurious hotel, shop a little and enjoy the style and elegance that is St. Moritz.

**Geneva** Perhaps Switzerland's most international city located right on the shores of Lake Geneva. A cosmopolitan metropolis with much to offer its visitors, wander through the old town, the heart of Geneva, enjoy beautiful skylines with St. Peter's Cathedral and the "Jet d'eau" fountain shooting water 140 meters into the air. Lakeside promenades

and cruises, parks, lively streets, restaurants and elegant shops make this city a pleasure to visit.



### Facts for the traveller...

#### Weather

Switzerland has a bit of everything when it comes to weather, during summer from June to September, temperatures range between 20 to 25°C, during the winter months, January and February, temperatures are from 2 to 7°C. Spring and autumn temperatures are a cool 8 to 14°C. Temperatures can vary quite a bit depending on the altitude.

#### Did you know?

Switzerland borders five other countries: Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Liechtenstein.

Switzerland has 48 peaks above 4,000 meters high.

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## Facts for the traveller...

### Best time to go

The winter snow sport season in the Alps starts at the beginning of December. High season in other areas of Switzerland runs throughout summer, from June to September. Spring can be a very pretty time when the snow has melted and flowers cover the mountains. If you take the right clothing, anytime is a good time in Switzerland.

### Currency

Swiss Franc - CHF

### Tipping

There are no obligations to tip here, service is included in restaurants, hotels, bars etc, however a small tip is always appreciated, round up the bill or add 5%, at your discretion. Porters 1 or 2 francs per bag, housekeeping 1 franc per day is appropriate. Taxis round up the bill or tip 5%.

### Time zone

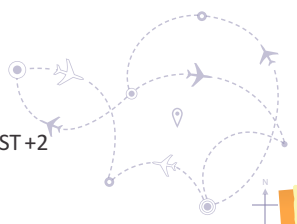
GMT+1 DST+2

### Shopping hours

Mon - Fri: 9am to 6.30pm  
Saturdays: 9am to 4pm  
Most are closed on Sundays

### Transportation

Roads are well maintained throughout the country and the rail and bus systems are excellent for intercity travel and to travel to any of the five bordering countries. Ships and ferries can be a convenient and relaxing way of travelling the rivers and lakes. A wide range of public transport is available within the cities, buses, trams, trains and water options. Taxis are available throughout.



### Did you know?

The Swiss are the world's largest consumers of chocolate: on average each Swiss consumes 10kg of chocolate a year.

The first bar of chocolate was produced in Switzerland in 1819.

The traditional yodeling started as a means of communications for farmers from one mountain to another?

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# United Kingdom

## The best of British!

A compact country full of exciting cities brimming with activities, galleries, historical sites rich in culture and heritage, breathtakingly beautiful countryside and coastlines that range from picturesque to rugged ... drive, fly, take a train or bus your way around the country there's so much to see and it's all within reach. The United Kingdom is not just a shopping trip to London, it's a rich holiday destination that has just about everything any traveller could ever wish for, take the time to explore and discover the UK, it will never disappoint you.

## England

The biggest country in the UK and home to London, the largest city in Europe, England has 1,000 kilometers of beautiful coastline and some of the world's top tourist attractions. The country is divided into nine distinct regions, each with its own unique personality, history and culture, from the rolling hills of the Cotswold's and charming Cornish villages, to the bustling city life of London and the dramatic coastlines of the north east, a perfect holiday destination that offers an amazing array of vacation choices.



### Life changing experiences...

**London** Capital of the UK, this huge, noisy, vibrant and truly multicultural city is a megalopolis of people, ideas and energy. Situated on the banks of the River Thames in the south-east, London is one of the world's greatest cities with a rich heritage and historical legacy that continues today. Fashion, finance, politics, trade and perhaps some of the best shopping you'll find are all here! Take the time to enjoy London, it's truly captivating.

**Buckingham Palace** Originally built in 1705 for the Duke of Buckingham, the palace is the Queen's official London residence. One of London's many iconic symbols, the palace is open to visitors during August and September while the Queen makes her annual visit to Balmoral in Scotland.

**Changing of the Guard** A must see if you're in London, the ceremony takes

place in the forecourt of Buckingham Palace at 11.30am, every day in summer and every other day in winter (weather permitting), these century old ceremonies are a delight to see and the British certainly know how to do them so well.

**The Tower of London** One of London's most popular and iconic tourist attractions built by William the Conqueror in the early 1080's the Tower's role has been as a fortress, palace and prison. See the Crown Jewels (there are 23,578 gems in the collection) and the famous black Ravens, legend has it that if six ravens leave the tower the kingdom will fall! See five hundred years of spectacular royal armour or take a tour with the Yeoman Guards, these famous "Beefeaters", as they're known, will entertain you with tales of pain, passion, torture and treachery. The

tower is well worth a visit, take the kids, they'll love it.

**The West End** One of the world's best known premier theatre locations, catch a show at the West End while you're in London, from famous musicals and mysteries to comedy, drama and something to suit the whole family, a great experience not to be missed.

**Thames Speedboat Ride** For those seeking a little adventure try a thrilling speedboat ride along the Thames, these fantastic interactive guided tours take in London's top sights, the Houses of Parliament, HMS Belfast, the Tower of London, Execution Dock and more, a little history at top speed... more than exhilarating!



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## Life changing experiences...

**Auction Houses** For something a little different experience the excitement of a bid at one of the London's leading auction houses, Christies, Sothebys or Bonhams. Visit the salesrooms and explore the items up for auction, a true treasure chest of rare items, from fine art to antiques.

**Hampton Court Palace & Maze** Enjoy the magnificence of Henry VIII's favourite royal residence, walk in the footsteps of his six wives through his Palace apartments, take in the breathtaking grandeur of the staterooms and the fascinating Tudor kitchens built to feed the 'Court' and up to 600 people, twice a day! Wander through the extensive gardens and try the Hampton Court Maze, one of the most famous in the history of the world. Commissioned by William III the maze covers a third of an acre and offers visitors a confusing and intriguing number of twists, turns and dead ends, thoroughly enjoyable and a must visit for all.

**The Tate Modern** London's museum of modern art also houses a collection of British art from the 1500's and is one of the most visited art galleries in the world. Created in 2000 from a disused power station in the heart of London the structure's vast size becomes apparent when you enter via the 152m long dramatic Turbine Hall, lovers of art will not be disappointed, a memorable way to spend an afternoon.

**Portobello Market** Explore this famous street market in West London, stretching just over 3km through the



### Did you know?

William the Conqueror ordered that everyone should go to bed at eight o'clock.

Nowhere in Britain is more than 120km miles from the sea.

heart of the trendy Notting Hill area, the Portobello Market is a popular destination for Londoners and tourists alike. Browse the stalls, you'll find everything from antiques and used items to food and fashion. Open every day with the weekends being the best days to go, especially Saturdays, hours are 8am - 6.30pm.

**Brighton** Located on England's south coast by the seaside, Brighton is just a quick trip from London by train. Famous for the Brighton Pier and the Royal Pavilion, the city's architecture has kept much of its regency period style. A popular destination for locals in summer Brighton is also famous for its bars and nightclubs, a fun relaxed city that will keep you entertained.

**The Cotswolds** Rolling hills, picturesque villages with distinctive stone cottages make up this area that stretches in a south westerly direction from Oxford to Bristol, it includes some of England's most beautiful and famous market towns. Popular with both local tourists and visitors from all over the world the Cotswolds region is well known for its beauty and for being so typically English. Explore this scenic area, it is really a feast for the eyes.

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### Did you know?

Dying is illegal in the Houses of Parliament.

Britain is the only country in the world that doesn't have the country's name on its postage stamps.

The most popular name for a pub in Britain is the "Red Lion".

# Cornwall

There is just something special about being at the southerly tip of England, sweeping seascapes, quiet sandy coves and picturesque fishing villages set against the magnificent backdrop of granite cliffs, a fabulous mix of old and new with a heritage and history firmly connected to the sea and all things maritime. A unique and unspoilt country that offers the most relaxing holidays.

**Land's End** One of Britain's best loved landmarks, gloriously rugged and wild, Land's End is famous for its unique location and fabulous scenery. A popular tourist destination with plenty to see and do, working craft shops, exhibitions, the "Lost Labyrinth" sound and light show and much more.

**Tintagel Castle & King Arthur** The castle is believed to be the birthplace of King Arthur who, as legend has it, was protected from the evil magician Merlin by his magical sword, Excalibur. Set high on the rugged, windswept coast of North Cornwall the castle's history dates back to Roman times. An iconic attraction, fabulous scenery and amazing history, well worth experiencing.

**Padstow** An area of outstanding natural beauty, full of wonderful bays and beautiful golden beaches, the town and its crooked streets slope down to the harbour where many fine medieval buildings can still be seen. Padstow is a working fishing port and the place to find some fabulous seafood, charming, colourful and memorable.



## Life changing experiences...

**Oxford** "The City of Dreaming Spires" is famous the world over for its University. Home to royalty and scholars for over 800 years, Oxford today is a bustling cosmopolitan town with a wonderful mix of old and new. Plenty to do and see, visit the historic landmarks, colleges and museums, lunch at one of the excellent restaurants or local pubs, take in a show at one of the many theatres or explore the shops on High Street, Oxford has it all.

**Stonehenge** This iconic and breathtaking monument located near Salisbury in the English county of Wiltshire has attracted visitors for the past 5,000 years. Both intriguing and mystical, there are still endless theories about what this site was built for, some say it was a solar calendar, others see it as a place for worship. Whatever its original purpose was it is a must see and one of the world's most famous landmarks.

**Canal Boat Holidays** A truly unique and different way to explore regions of the UK. The "narrow boat" is a modern version of cargo vessels that travelled the canals before railways were introduced. Comfortable and well appointed these quaint boats are available for hire across the UK and Ireland. They can accommodate 2 to 12 people, are easy to master and cruise the canals at a stately pace of just 6km per hour. Explore the canals of London, moor in the historic city of Bath, Oxford or Chester, or cross the amazing Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in Wales, breathtaking, fun and definitely a different holiday adventure.



## Bath

The largest city in the Cotswolds, Bath is one of the UK's most beautiful cities and the perfect place for those with an interest in history and culture. Home to the only thermal springs in Britain this World Heritage city offers stunning architectural sights, plenty of restaurants, theatres, bars, museums and activities.

**Bath's Royal Crescent** A spectacular and famous residential road of 30 houses laid out in a crescent shape, one of the greatest examples of Georgian architecture to be found in the UK.

**The Jane Austen Centre** A celebration of one of Bath's most famous residents gives the visitors an insight into life here during the Regency period.

**The Roman Baths** The UK's only natural thermal springs, the Romans built a magnificent temple and bathing complex that still flows with natural hot water. See the water's source and walk where Romans walked on the ancient stone pavements around the steaming pool. The extensive ruins and treasures from the spring are beautifully preserved and presented.

**The Pump Room** Enjoy morning coffee, lunch or afternoon tea in the magnificent 18th Century Pump Room, try a glass of Spa water from the fountain!

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# Scotland

A diverse and extraordinary country, with a rich and fascinating history, Scotland is home to some of the most beautiful landscapes and scenery in the world. A country of contrasts Scotland has vibrant exciting cities, world class festivals, picture perfect lochs, mountains and coastlines that will leave you breathless, add into that mix some amazing castles and historical landmarks and you have a country that is simply awe inspiring.



## Life changing experiences...

**St. Andrews Links** Known as the "home of golf" St. Andrews is one of the oldest courses in the world with games being played here since the 15th Century. It is also the number one golf course for all golf addicts to visit! Access to playing on the course is somewhat limited but if it's a game you're after there are plenty of courses in the area.

**Fishing** A popular activity in Scotland and perhaps one of the best ways to see some of the country's truly beautiful landscapes, wild salmon, brown, rainbow & sea trout are the most popular fish to look for. "Fly fishing" in rivers and lochs is a real treat or try your hand at hooking one of Scotland's famous "monster pikes", whatever you catch you'll be sure to take home a 'holiday fish story'!

**Scottish Castles** Simply some of the best, the castles of Scotland rank as must see attractions not only in the UK but in the world. From the grand scale of Edinburgh and Stirling Castles, to the picturesque Eilean Donan Castle near Skye, to the ruins of Caerlaverock, with its moat and awe-inspiring battlements, so many to see and explore. Take it one step further and stay in one of the many castles that offer accommodation, a true adventure.



**Glasgow** Scotland's largest city and the nation's key economic centre, Glasgow is a forward looking city with a proud history, fabulous art galleries and museums, great nightlife and a live music scene that's hard to beat, as well as some of the UK's best shopping!

**Loch Ness** Known for its famous "Loch Ness Monster", affectionately known as "Nessie", this huge, deep freshwater loch attracts tourists from all over the world and offers some of the most breathtaking scenery you will see anywhere.

**Edinburgh & Festivals** This beautiful city will captivate you from the moment you arrive. Edinburgh has everything from culture, poets, artists, high fashion, history and wide open green spaces to the fabulous Edinburgh castle overlooking the medieval "Old Town" and the magnificent Georgian "New Town". Cosmopolitan and vibrant the city is also host to one of the world's most famous festivals, a cultural explosion which takes place in August every year and includes the International Festival, the Fringe Festival, the Book and Jazz Festivals and much more. A visit to Edinburgh is a must.



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# Wales

Bordered by England on the east, Wales is a small country with a colourful history and spectacular landscapes, only a few hundred kilometers from North to South you're never far from a mountain or the sea here. With more castles per square kilometer here than anywhere else in the world and some of the most beautiful coastline in the UK, Wales is a charming mix of quaint villages, magnificent national parks, beaches, nature and a thoroughly modern capital City.



## Life changing experiences...

**Cardiff** One of Europe's youngest capitals and fastest growing cities, Cardiff is a popular tourist destination offering its visitors world-class cuisine, electric nightlife, a popular music scene, sporting venues and plenty of art, history and culture.

**Snowdonia** The UK's highest mountain range, Snowdonia is a magnet for climbers, hikers and outdoor enthusiasts and receives over half a million visitors every year. With mountains, sparkling lakes and idyllic moors you can walk, sail, dive, ride horses, go cycling and even white water rafting, plenty to see, plenty to do and all spectacular.



# Ireland

Europe's third largest island, Ireland lies to the east of Great Britain and is separated from it by the Irish Sea. Politically the country is divided between the "Republic of Ireland", covering almost 80 percent of the island and "Northern Ireland" which is a part of the United Kingdom. "The Emerald Isle" as it's known is a fabulous mix of upwardly-mobile modern cities, ancient history, quaint towns, stunning landscapes, ruggedly beautiful coasts and some of the friendliest, most entertaining people you will find anywhere.



## Life changing experiences...

**Belfast** Once a city where few travellers dared to go Belfast has made an amazing transformation over the past two decades. Now an energetic, confident city Belfast offers stylish bars, restaurants, shopping centres and up-market hotels along with its many historical attractions, it is fast becoming one of the UK's top cities to visit.

an "area of outstanding natural beauty" it is made up of over 40,000 interlocking, hexagonal basalt columns that form stepping stones that disappear into the sea, the result of an ancient volcanic eruption 50 -60 million years ago. Attracting visitors from around the world it has often been described as the eighth wonder of the world and was declared a World Heritage site in 1986.

**The Giant's Causeway** Designated as

World Heritage site in 1986.



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### Did you know?

Oscar Wilde was born Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde in Dublin in 1854.

Dublin was founded by the Vikings in 988 and was originally called Dubh Linn (which means Black Pool in Irish).

The famous ship Titanic was built in Belfast.

# The Republic of Ireland

From the urban centres of Dublin and Cork, the sandy bays, rugged coastlines and every shade of green known to mankind, Ireland is truly a beautiful country. Exciting for those who love the great outdoors, fascinating for history lovers, great fun for nightlife lovers and paradise for shoppers, Ireland has something for everyone and is more than happy to share it.



## Life changing experiences...

**Dublin** Ireland's capital is a dynamic, buzzing city overflowing with history, cultural attractions, cool bars and sophisticated restaurants. From nostalgic museums, the famous Trinity College to traditional pubs, cobbled streets and modern architecture, Dublin's special mix of humour and charm is intoxicating and its people are natural born hosts.

**Cork City** Ireland's second largest city, Cork sits on an island in the River Lee, the many bridges that criss-cross the river give the city a very continental feel, almost "Venice-like". Cool and hip Cork offers modern art galleries, avant-garde theatre and plenty of festivals worth visiting throughout the year. A unique city, with a diverse and extremely welcoming culture.



## UK facts for the traveller...

### Weather round up

The UK has a temperate climate, with lows in the winter of up to -10°C and highs of up to 30°C in the summer. Although the UK is not large, the weather does differ slightly between the north, south, east and west. Scotland and Northern England tend to have slightly cooler temperatures and are quite likely to see some heavy snow in the winter months. In contrast, the south of England experiences warmer temperatures and is unlikely to see more than a few



flakes of snow in the winter. The west of England and Wales tends to see slightly higher rainfall than the east.

### Currency

UK and Northern Ireland:  
Pound Sterling  
The Republic of Ireland: Euro

### Language

English

### Time zone

GMT+1

### Tipping

A service charge of 12.5% to 15% may be added to your bill but the practice is not universal in UK restaurants. Don't be embarrassed to ask. If service is included, you are not expected to add anything further but you may want to add a small sum for particularly good service or extra attention. If service is not included, plan to leave a tip of 12 to 15%.

### Transportation

The transportation system throughout the UK is modern and convenient. London's underground, the "Tube", is the fastest and most convenient way to get around the city, ask about the "Oyster Card" for longer stays and cheaper fares.

Air travel can be the quickest way to get where you're going in the UK; cheap flights are available to other popular British cities, worth checking out if time is an issue.

Car rental in the UK is a popular choice for those planning some independent sightseeing, an international driving license is required and note that driving is on the left.

Bus travel is an excellent choice for getting around the UK, it is particularly good if you are travelling between cities.

The UK rail system is extensive and convenient, intercity lines provide fast services between London and other major cities, rural areas are less well served. If travelling extensively by train "BritRail" offer a range of passes allowing for unlimited travel that could be worth considering.

Taxis are available in all cities throughout the UK, they are generally metered, extra is charged at weekends, public holidays and late at night.

### Shopping hours

Most shops are open from 9 am to 5 or 6 pm. Some stay open later on a Friday. In smaller towns and villages half-day closing on Wednesdays and Saturdays is still practiced. Large shops and malls are open on Sundays.



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