

FRANCE: A LEADING TOURIST DESTINATION

KEY INFO IN

10

POINTS

1

▶ A KEY SECTOR OF THE FRENCH ECONOMY

In 2014, the French tourism sector generated total revenues of nearly €160 billion, of which one-third came from foreign tourists. Tourism accounts for 7.4% of French GDP and 2 million jobs, both directly and indirectly. France is ranked fourth in the world for tourism receipts (€43.2 billion in 2014).

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▶ FRANCE ENTHRALLS FOREIGN TOURISTS

France is the world's leading destination for foreign tourists, with 84.5 million international visitors in 2015, which saw a net increase in Asian tourists (+25.4%), and a new record for Chinese tourist arrivals (2.2 million). (Banque de France/ government report)

3

▶ OUTSTANDING CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Palace of Versailles and the Eiffel Tower both attract more than 7 million visitors every year, while the Château des Ducs de Bretagne and its museum, the Millau Viaduct, and Mont Saint-Michel all attract more than 1 million. With 41 designated sites, France is one of the largest contributors to UNESCO's World Heritage list.

4 ▶ RENOWNED FRENCH CUISINE

The 'gastronomic meal of the French' was added to UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list in 2010. There was also a French winner of the 2015 World's Best Female Chef, H el ene Darroze.

5 ▶ FRANCE'S HIGH-QUALITY HOTELS

In all, France boasts 17,000 hotels. French hotel operator Accor is Europe's leading hotel group, while Le Bristol Paris was voted best French hotel by Institutional Investor Magazine and the World Travel Awards in 2014, before being named best hotel in the world in 2015 by the Gallivanter guide.

6 ▶ MAJOR CULTURAL AND SPORTING EVENTS

Every year, France holds events that put it firmly on the international cultural map, including the Festival d'Avignon, the Chor egies d'Orange, the Cannes Film Festival, the Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain (FIAC), the Deauville American Film Festival, and the Angoul eme International Comics Festival, among others. Recently, France hosted football's Euro 2016, considered to be the world's third largest sporting event.

7 ▶ MUSEUMS GOING GLOBAL

France has more than 1,200 museums. Foremost among them is the Louvre in Paris, home to millennia-old collections, and the world's most visited museum with more than 9 million visitors annually. The United Arab Emirates called on French expertise to help create the first universal museum in the Arab world, the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which is due to open in late 2017.

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▶ OUTSTANDING THEME PARKS

The "Puy du Fou" was voted the world's best theme park in 2014, while with 14.2 million visits in 2014, Disneyland® Paris was Europe's most visited tourist attraction.

9


▶ THE WORLD'S SECOND MOST POPULAR SKI DESTINATION

More than 54 million skiing days were sold in 2014-15, with 31% of resort clientele coming from abroad (Chamber of French Ski Operators, Domaines skiabiles de France, Indicators and Analysis 2015). Val Thorens was voted best ski resort at the 2016 World Travel Awards.



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▶ CULTURAL CAREER PROGRAMS

Culture has a special place in French hearts. France has 245 higher education establishments providing training in culture and the arts, accounting for nearly 30,000 students in 2013, 12% of whom were from overseas. One million musical compositions are copyrighted each year with the French Artists' rights association SACEM.



For further information, please visit:
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**SITES ON UNESCO'S
WORLD HERITAGE LIST**