

# Montpellier Culture Kit

## Online Version



# France / République Française

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## **Bienvenue! Welcome to Montpellier!**

Montpellier is located in the south of France near the Mediterranean Sea. The city is over 1,000 years old and is home to the oldest medical school in the western world. At the heart of Montpellier is Place de la Comedie, a grand pedestrian and sidewalk cafe area facing the beautiful city theater. Visitors to Montpellier will discover that the food of the region is more Mediterranean than the cuisine found in the capital, Paris, and that wine is the traditional product of the city's region. In addition to the wine industry, Montpellier is also known for manufacturing and exporting medical equipment and state-of-the-art technical products.

## **Facts About Montpellier:**

- The city was a major trading route between Northern Europe, North Africa, and the Mediterranean during the middle Ages.
- The historic centre of the city is referred to as the "Ecusson."
- Montpellier has a very multicultural history and is home to large North African and Jewish communities.
- The city has a pronounced Mediterranean atmosphere and mood, as seen in the architecture, the bright colors of the markets and the relaxed approach to daily life.

## **Sister City Relationship:**

Montpellier and Louisville became Sister Cities in 1954. The relationship was inspired by Dr. George Brodschi of the University of Louisville and Dr. Aimes of l'Universite de Montpellier who decided to create educational opportunities for students at their universities. Louisville's Sister City relationship to Montpellier is natural considering the deep French influence in Louisville's origins. French explorer La Salle discovered Louisville in 1669 and the city was named after French King Louis XVI. Today, through the Sister Cities relationship, Louisville and Montpellier share a strong sense of support for one another's cities. Several educational programs have resulted in this relationship and remain consistent: the Montpellier Work Exchange Program, the Montpellier Yearlong Scholarship, and cultural person-to-person exchanges. The two cities have also worked together to create cultural programs such as exchanges for choral groups, the cities' operas and for athletes.

# Snapshots of Culture

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## **People and Places:**

France (211,208 sq. mi.) is slightly smaller than Texas. Its hexagon shape includes terrain that varies from plains to mountains and farms and forests to large cities. The climate is generally mild and temperate. Ethnically, the French have a Gallic heritage and have mixed with various other European groups over the centuries. Primary immigrant groups include Portuguese, Italian, Spaniards, Poles, North Africans (Algerians, Tunisians and Moroccans), West Africans, Caribbean peoples and Asians from the former Indochina region.

## **Life Experiences and Needs:**

While the nuclear family is the most important unit of society, the extended family is also important. The average family has fewer than two children with pets outnumbering children; many couples choose not to have children. Housing is scarce; most city dwellers live in apartments. The French consider cooking an art. Traditionally, the French eat a light continental breakfast, lunch about noon, and a late dinner as the main meal of the day. Etiquette is very important to the French.

## **Aesthetics and Language:**

Soccer and rugby are popular spectator sports; participation is highest in individual sports: tennis, cycling, fishing, hiking, skiing, and sailing. Leisure activities include watching television, visiting museums, and attending plays and concerts. French artists, writers, and architecture have set the standard around the world. The Louvre Museum, once a palace, houses many of the world's great art treasures. French is an important international language. It is an official language of the United Nations and is second only to English in use between nations in communication, business, and diplomacy. English is the most common choice for the first foreign language.

## **Past, Present and Future Cultures**

Although the country is very multicultural, it seeks to maintain its identity by resisting the growing popularity of cheap fast food, foreign sitcoms, and American music. As the largest European country and its central position, France has played a key role in continental and world battles. France has had many internal revolutions and leaders—Joan of Arc, Louis XIV, Napoleon, and General Charles deGaulle.

## **Rules, Leaders and Institutions:**

The French Republic has 22 regions plus overseas possessions. France's President is directly elected and serves as both Head of State and Executive Head of government for a seven-year term. The President also appoints the Prime Minister from the majority party in the National Assembly and has the right to dissolve the Assembly or to call for new elections. The voting age is 18.

## **Recreation and Celebrations:**

Soccer and rugby are popular spectator sports. Participation is highest in individual sports: tennis, cycling, fishing, hiking, skiing, sailing, hunting, riding horses, and golfing. The French celebrate several holidays each year: New Year's (Jour de l'an), Mardi Gras (Shrove Tuesday) in February; Easter Sunday and Monday as legal holidays; Labor Day ( May 1); and the French Armistice Day (le Huit Mai).

## **Values and Service:**

The French measure success by educational level, family reputation, and financial status. Among the most patriotic people in the world, they are extremely proud of their culture, heritage, and way of life. The majority of the population is Roman Catholic, however only about 8 percent of the French actively practice religion, but most do celebrate various religious holidays and attend mass once or twice a year.

## **Producers, Consumers and Transporters:**

France has the world's fourth largest industrial economy, enabling its people to enjoy the benefits of economic prosperity. The agricultural sector employs only four percent of the workforce, but France is a world leader in wine, milk, butter, cheese, barley, and wheat production. Major industries include steel, motor vehicles, aircraft, textiles, chemicals, and food processing. France's public transportation system is well developed with bus and train service extending to smallest towns. Many French own small cars, usually of French make. Not surprisingly, the French spend much of their income on food.

## **Interdependence and Connections:**

French cuisine is popular all over the world, and France remains a world leader in fashion. French is an important international language; it is the official language of the United Nations and is second only to the use of English in trade and communication among nations.

# When In France

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## **French Greetings:**

- Greet and depart in France with a light grip and one quick shake.
- Good friends may touch both cheeks and kiss the air.
- French expect all speakers to know some French words, especially in Paris.

## **Common Phrases in French**

- “Bonjour” (Hello)
- “Comment allez-vous?” or “Ca va?” (“How are you?” formal and informal)
- “Au revoir” or “A bientot!” (“Good-bye” and “See you later”)

## **Etiquette Do’s and Do Not’s in France**

- When eating, both hands remain above the table, and elbow do not rest on the table.
- Eat in the continental style with the fork in the left hand and the knife remaining in the right. When finished, place the knife and fork parallel across the plate.
- Avoid questions and topics relating to personal politics and money.
- Sit straight with knees together or crossed.
- Avoid grooming in public with toothpicks, nail clippers, and comb.
- Discretely sneeze and blow noses with handkerchief or tissue.
- Avoid yawning, scratching and chewing gum in public and talking with hands in pockets



# French Vocabulary

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1 = un  
2 = deux  
3 = trois  
4 = quatre  
5 = cinq  
6 = six  
7 = sept  
8 = huit  
9 = neuf  
10 = dix  
20 = vingt  
30 = trente  
40 = quarante  
50 = cinquante  
100 = cent

red = rouge  
green = vert  
blue = bleu  
pink = rose  
yellow = jaune  
black = noir  
purple = violette  
white = blanc  
orange = orange

pencil = crayon  
pen = stylo  
paper = papier  
folder = chemise  
scissors = ciseaux  
ruler = grille de tabulation  
notebook = chier

math = math  
science = science  
history = histoire  
English = anglais  
French = français  
music = musique  
art = art

soccer = football  
baseball = base-ball  
swimming = natation  
basketball = basket-ball  
tennis = tennis

arm = bras  
leg = jambe  
neck = cou  
hand = main  
finger = doigt  
foot = pied  
toe = orteil  
fingernail = ongle  
nose = nez  
mouth = bouche  
eyes = yeux  
ears = oreilles  
hair = cheveux

t-shirt = tee  
pants = pantalons  
shirt = chemise  
shoes = chaussures  
shorts = un short  
skirt = jupe  
dress = robe  
belt = ceinture  
sandals = sandales  
watch = montre

house = maison  
bedroom = chambre  
bathroom = toilet  
kitchen = cuisine  
living room = salon  
dining room = salle à manger

dog = chien  
cat = chat  
guinea pig = cobaye  
horse = cheval  
rabbit = lapin  
bird = oiseau  
cow = vache

Hello! = Bonjour!  
Good-bye! = Au revoir  
Please = S'il vous plaît  
My name is... = Je m'appelle...  
Thank you = Merci  
I'm sorry = Je suis désolée  
You're welcome = Je vous en prie  
Excuse me = Pardon  
How's it going? = Ça va?  
I like... = J'aime...  
Do you speak English? = Parlez-vous anglais?  
I am lost = Je suis perdu  
I don't understand = Je ne comprends pas.  
It's OK = C'est bien.

# Additional Information

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## People and Place

Wikipedia Encyclopedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France>

Encarta Encyclopedia [http://encarta.msn.com/text\\_761568934\\_0/France.html](http://encarta.msn.com/text_761568934_0/France.html)

CIA World Factbook - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/fr.html>

Contains the most up-to-date statistics on Argentina compiled by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

France Statistics - <http://www.nationmaster.com/country/fr>

## Life Experiences and Needs

French Food Culture and Recipes - <http://www.ffcook.com/>

Contains information menus, recipes, and the French table.

French Recipes - <http://www.frenchselections.com/recipes/index.hts>

A large variety of French recipes.

Americans in Toulouse - <http://www.geocities.com/AITonline/>

Website of a non-profit, English-speaking community in France that contains advice about daily life in France.

## Aesthetics and Languages

French Language Learning Site of the BBC - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french>

Features topical French phrases and a video-learning series.

## Past, Present, and Future Cultures

French Culture and Education in the USA- <http://www.frenchculture.org/>

Website supported by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S.

## Rules, Roles, and Leaders

Profile of the President of France - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques\\_Chirac](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Chirac)

Joan of Arc - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan\\_of\\_arc](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_of_arc)

Page about the national heroine of France.

Louis Pasteur - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis\\_Pasteur](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Pasteur)

Page about the famous French chemist.

## Recreation and Celebration

Public holidays in France - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holidays\\_in\\_France](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holidays_in_France)

Tour de France - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tour\\_de\\_France](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tour_de_France), official site - <http://www.letour.fr/indexus.html>

## Values and Service

University of Montpellier - <http://www.univ-montp1.fr/index.asp>

## Producers, Consumers, and Transporters

Le Monde - <http://www.lemonde.fr>

French daily paper (moderate).

Le Figaro - <http://www.lefigaro.fr/>

French daily paper (conservative).

## Global Connections and Interdependence

Official France Tourism Site - <http://www.francetourism.com/>

Contains information on all aspects of traveling to France.

# France Culture Kit Contents

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A hands-on learning culture kit is also available from Sister Cities that contains the following items:

- 1 white France Culture Kit binder
- 1 miniature French flag and stand
- 1 red and black woman's dress
- L'horizon rompu
- Le Guide des Fetes de France
- Montpellier: City of Arts
- A Journey to the Heart of Medieval Civilization
- Cinema Mediterranee Montpellier
- Montpellier: Dossier de Presse
- Obelix et Compagnie
- Montpellier m'a muse
- L'Histoire de Montpellier en B.D.
- Montpellier: Architectures
- ABC: Mon Abecedaire
- Oliver et Compagnie
- Montpellier in the Heart of History
- A Journey Through the Regions of France
- John Chatterton Detective
- 1 Black folder: Folk tales Told Around the World
- 1 L'Etranger
- Montpellier: Ville d'art et d'histoire
- Bicentenaire de la Révolution
- Les Aventures de Tin Tin: L'Affaire Tournesol
- Hotels, Restaurants de Montpellier
- Les Bonnes Adresses de Montpellier
- Palavas Les Flots
- Montpellier : Place de la Comedie
- Musée de le Lavande
- Destination Méditerranée
- French maid uniform
- Grisettes de Montpellier candy
- French coins
- Montpellier : Histoire d'une Passion
- Bienvenue La Grande Motte
- Montpellier en Image
- 10 ans de Révolution a Montpellier



SISTER



CITIES  
OF LOUISVILLE, INC.

## Sister Cities of Louisville

**SCL Mission:** Sister Cities of Louisville, Inc. (SCL) is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to global friendship, multicultural understanding, and economic growth by developing lasting relationships between the Louisville area and its Sister Cities around the world. To that end, SCL promotes, fosters, and publicizes local, state, and national programs of international municipal cooperation.

Sister Cities honors the following values to pursue its mission of peace and friendship:

- To create opportunities for Louisville citizens and citizens of Sister Cities to work together in creating international community partnerships.
- To develop municipal partnerships between Louisville and its Sister Cities.
- To stimulate exchanges and projects in the areas of professional economic development, education, community initiatives, arts and culture, medicine, tourism, and technology.
- To promote public awareness of our Sister Cities through community outreach and people-to-people relationships.
- To collaborate with local international organizations with similar goals.

**History of SCL:** Sister Cities of Louisville, Inc. became one of the first of many Sister City organizations to develop after World War II, when President Dwight Eisenhower proposed his "People-to-People" idea in 1956. President Eisenhower's intention was to involve individuals and organize groups at all levels of society in citizen diplomacy, with the hope that personal relationships, fostered through Sister City, county and state affiliations, would lessen the chance of future world conflicts.

### **Sister Cities of Louisville:**

Montpellier, France - 1954  
Quito, Ecuador - 1962  
Mainz, Germany - 1977  
Tamale, Ghana - 1979  
La Plata, Argentina - 1994  
Perm, Russia - 1994  
Jijang, China - 2004  
Leeds, England - 2006

[www.sclou.org](http://www.sclou.org)