

VIVE LE FRANCE.

by John Farrow

Now that the war in Iraq is winding down/heating up (take your pick), our ever-watchful government offers the following advisory for those intrepid American travelers willing to venture across the pond on their summer vacation and consort with the French. This information was compiled from information provided by the U.S. State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Food and Drug Administration, the Center for Disease Control and some very expensive spy satellites that most people don't even know about. It is intended as a guide for American travelers only and no guarantee of accuracy is ensured or intended.

General

France is a very old country with many treasures such as the Louvre and Euro Disney. Among its contributions to Western civilization are champagne, Camembert cheese, the guillotine and body odor. Although France likes to think of itself as a modern nation, air conditioning is little used and it is next to impossible to get decent enchiladas anywhere in the country.

History

France was discovered by Charlemagne in the Dark Ages. Other important historical figures are Louis XIV, the Huguenots, Joan of Arc,

Jacques Cousteau, Charles de Gaulle and Pépe le Pew. The French army has had its butt kicked by just about every other country in the world.

The

People

France has a population of 54 million people, most of whom drink and smoke a great deal, drive like lunatics, are dangerously over-sexed and have absolutely no concept of standing patiently in line.

They also exasperatingly persist in speaking French, although many will speak English if shouted at repeatedly. Most French citizens are Roman Catholic although you'd hardly guess it from their behavior - many are Communists and topless sunbathing is common.

Safety

In general, France is a safe destination although travelers are advised that the country is frequently invaded by Germany. By tradition, the French surrender more or less at once and, apart from a temporary shortage of Scotch whisky, life generally goes on much as before. A tunnel connecting France to Britain beneath the English Channel has been opened in recent years to make it easier for the French government to flee to London. In the early 1950s, the French Parliament considered a bill to do away with the Department of Defense and replace it with a telephone recording saying "We surrender" in German.

Running

Running in France is generally considered safe except for all the crazy drivers. However, you can't run a race without a license. Also, any race is likely to be interrupted by political protesters decrying the latest capitalist outrage infringing upon the rights of the people to a 35-hour work week, 6-weeks paid vacation and 134 official government holidays.

France enjoys a rich history, a picturesque and varied landscape and a temperate climate. In short, it would be a very nice country if French people didn't inhabit it.□

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Albuquerque Road Runners Club

Government

The French form of government is considered democratic for some reason, and it is very noisy. Elections are held more or less continuously due to constant run-offs. For administrative purposes, the country is divided into regions, departments, districts, municipalities, cantons, communes, villages, cafes, booths and floor tiles. Most normal daily activities require a license and fully 45% of the populace is employed by the government to process license applications.

Culture

Many movies are produced in France although you would hardly ever want to watch any of them except for the nude scenes.

Cuisine

The French have a peculiar fondness for escargot; however, no matter how much garlic you put on it, it is still a slug with a shell on its back. The croissants, however, are generally excellent although it is impossible for most Americans to pronounce this word to the satisfaction of the French, or any other French word, for that matter.

Conclusion