The Seine:
Paris to Normandy

RIVER CRUISE

Plus optional extensions in
London; Paris; Brittany; The Loire Valley

SEN/SEL/SPN 2014

The Seine: Paris to Normandy
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1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Passport Required

You need a passport for this itinerary.

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary:

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled "Visas" at the top. Pages labeled "Amendments and Endorsements" are not acceptable.

Recommended number of blank pages:
This recommendation is based on a "worst case" scenario. On this trip you might use fewer pages, depending on the whims of the Immigration officials you meet. Since the consequence of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we opt for a *better safe than sorry* policy, and recommend these guidelines:

Main trip: 2 blank pages.
Optional Extensions to Paris, Brittany or Loire Valley: No additional pages, 2 total
Optional Extension to London: 1 additional page
Because the U.S. authorities may stamp your passport when you re-enter the United States, and because they may refuse to do so on a page that already has a stamp on it, you should have at least the number of blank pages outlined above.

Please take a moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If it you are refused entry, **you may be required by that country** to return to the U.S. immediately, which would be **at your own expense.**

If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages:
Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778,** or visit their website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

NOTE: When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to renew your passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.

Visas Not Required

For a U.S. citizen, a visa is not required for entry into France or Great Britain (extension) for a stay of up to 90 days.

No U.S. Passport?

Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders: If you are **not** a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate or embassy about possible visa requirements. Or you may contact PVS International, who can also assist non-U.S. citizens:

PVS International
Passport & Visa Services
1700 N Moore Street
Rosslyn Center, suite 310
Arlington, VA 22209
Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

Backup Photocopies

The smartest and easiest security precaution you can take is to carry photocopies of the personal information pages of your passport, your air ticket, your traveler's check serial numbers, and your credit cards. Bring along extra passport-sized photos. Add the phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, and for your travel protection plan company if you have purchased one and for your medical emergency network. Store the copies separate from the originals. This can save you immeasurable time, money, and bother if your documents are lost or stolen during your trip. In addition, you can scan these photocopies and email them to your personal email address so that a replacement can be printed out if needed.

Optional Tours—*Early Purchase Required*

Versailles

To pre-book the Versailles optional tour you must do so by 10 days prior to departure. This tour cannot be booked onsite.

Embark on an optional half-day excursion to the Palace of Versailles—the former home of 3,000 princes, ministers, and servants. Your guided tour will take you through the palace's Grand Chambers, the Hall of Mirrors (where the Treaty of Versailles, ending World War I, was signed in 1919), and the Royal Chapel. You'll see the luminous decor in marble, chased bronze, and gold leaf, as well as Rococo-style woodwork and Italian-style painted ceilings. As you explore, you'll discover how much the palace has been expanded and embellished since Louis XIII first built a modest hunting lodge at Versailles in 1623. You'll also enjoy time to visit the French gardens at your leisure. The cost of this optional tour is about $85 per person.

*(**Please note:** Versailles is the most visited site in France. A good deal of walking is involved—from room to room, up and down stairs, and on the uneven cobblestones of the courtyard.* This tour is ***not*** wheelchair accessible. *Visitor circulation inside the palace is carefully monitored by the staff and they may impose time limits for individual rooms. The building is not air-conditioned. Even with a reserved ticket you may encounter waiting lines at the entrance. Similar lines may occur during the Louvre optional tour – with crowds in front of the most important work. Note that the Louvre optional tour does not need to be pre-purchased.)*

2. YOUR HEALTH

Keep Your Abilities In Mind

We've worked closely with our local Program Directors and regional associates to identify the aspects of this adventure that you should be aware of, from physical requirements to cultural factors. **Please carefully review the information below prior to departing on this trip.**

Pacing

- 12 days, with 10 nights aboard the M/S Bizet, and a single 1-night hotel stay

Physical requirements

- Not accessible for travelers using wheelchairs or scooters
- Travelers using walkers, crutches, or other mobility aids must travel with a companion who can assist them throughout the trip
- You must be able to walk 3 miles unassisted and participate in 2-3 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs

Climate

- Daytime temperatures range from 50-80°F during cruising season
- July-August are the warmest months
- March and November weather can be unpredictable and change quickly within a short period of time

Terrain

- Travel over some bumpy unpaved roads, hilly terrain, and uneven walking surfaces, including slippery cobblestones and stairs

Transportation

- Travel by 45-passenger coach and 120-passenger river ship

River Cruising

- Throughout the River Cruise season, weather conditions and tides affect European river depths; water levels may require adjustments to your itinerary, including the Paris scenic river cruise

Cuisine

- Meals will be a mix of local specialties and familiar American standards
- Meals onboard feature a variety of entrée options, including vegetarian

Program Directors

- We reserve the right for our Program Directors to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home if their limitations are impacting the group's experience

Health Check and Inoculations

Feeling healthy and confident of your mobility is essential if you want to fully enjoy your trip abroad. For your comfort and safety, we recommend this program only to individuals in good physical condition. If you have any doubts, please discuss them with your doctor, and follow his or her advice. If you have difficulty walking or are wheelchair-bound, please consider a different Grand Circle Cruise Line vacation. A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip.

If you have a condition that requires special equipment or treatment, you must bring and be responsible for all necessary items related to your condition. If you take medications regularly, be sure to pack an ample supply that will last your entire trip, as obtaining refills of your medication can be difficult during your cruise. Pack these medications in your carry-on bag, and keep them in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name.

Vaccinations

Check with the CDC: To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations we suggest that you check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for your destination. You can contact them at:

Online —Visit the CDC's website at **www.cdc.gov/travel**, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.

By phone—Call toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Please note that automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

Consult your doctor: After checking the CDC's recommendations we strongly suggest that you consult your family physician (at least 6 weeks prior to departure) concerning any vaccinations or medications that you may need on this trip. At the time of print there were no specific vaccinations required for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS
Size, Number, and Weight Restrictions

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current **standard** is **50lbs for checked bags** and **15 lbs for carry-on bags**.
Size restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (*length+width+depth*). Generally, **62 linear inches is the checked bag limit**; **carry-on limit is 45 linear inches**.
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
The extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.	
REMARKS / SUGGESTIONS	
One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights. **Note**: Enforcement of published restrictions by countries and airlines is a matter of governmental and corporate policy. Enforcement may include spot checks and may be inconsistently applied. Expect penalties and fines to be imposed immediately, however, when and if enforced. Before you choose to ignore the published restrictions you should ask: *Do I feel lucky?* And, even if you answer yes, you should make sure that you have the ability to pay the fine.	

Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?
Absolutely, confirm current restrictions about a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your vacation has a lower limit then the average international flight or not, because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowances. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage in the *FAQ* section

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, even on international flights. Others may charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. **These fees are not included in your trip price**; they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the "Air Travel" section of your *Important Information* booklet.

Luggage Suggestions

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase for your checked luggage. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.

Consider a daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag. It will do double duty during excursions and walking trips. A daypack leaves your hands free and distributes its weight onto your back. Packed with daily travel needs (sweater, camera, rain/wind jacket, water bottle, etc.), it will compress to fit the storage space of foreign motorcoaches, and yet still have room for an impulse buy at a local street market.

Tip**:** *Bring a second, empty lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home – but remember that you may incur extra luggage fees. If you're traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.*

Airport Security/TSA

Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage may change. To avoid inadvertently packing restricted items in your carry-on, we suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website at www.tsa.gov/public, which keeps a current list of restricted items. From the main website click on *Our Travelers*, then *Air Travel*, and then you will see a link for *Prohibited Items*.

Liquids and your carry on: Follow the **TSA's 3-1-1 rule**: Liquids must be in a 3.4 ounce or less (100ml) bottle (by volume); all bottles must be in a 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3.4 ounce (100ml) container size is a security measure. Note that this rule is used increasingly throughout the world.

Locking your luggage:
To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, *either* do not lock your bags when checking in for flights that originate in the U.S. *or* use TSA-approved locks. (These are locks that TSA screeners can open and relock with a special tool, avoiding damage to your luggage or lock if a physical inspection is required. Look for the words "TSA" or "TSA-approved" on the lock's packaging.) Outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend that you lock your luggage as a preventative measure against theft.

4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE

GCCL Air Travelers

U.S. Departure: If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have a GCCL Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. The Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.

Europe Arrival: If you made air arrangements through Grand Circle Cruise Line, a GCCL representative or a transfer driver will meet you **outside** the Customs area in the arrival hall of the airport to assist you with your transfer to the hotel. (GCCL staff and porters are not allowed in the Customs area.) Please wear your Grand Circle Cruise Line nametag so our staff can identify you; GCCL staff will be holding a GCCL sign for identification. Lost luggage must be reported **before** you exit the luggage hall area because you will not be allowed back in after you leave customs. If you cannot locate our staff in the arrival hall, go to the Information Desk and ask them to assist you by calling the local GCCL office or the emergency numbers.

Important note: *On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and load it onto a complimentary cart, which you then will move through customs. When you exit customs, you'll handle your cart until reaching your motorcoach. Your motorcoach driver will load your luggage onto your motorcoach.*

Delays *Do* Happen – Despite the Best of Plans. In the event your flight is delayed or you miss a connection and must be re-booked, please remember to let Grand Circle know by calling the emergency number provided in your final documents so that we can make appropriate arrangements for your arrival.

U.S. Return: At the end of your main trip or optional post-trip extension, you'll be transferred to the airport for your return flight to the U.S. If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights.

Please note: *If you plan on booking your own international flights or arranging with our air department to arrive/depart on an earlier/later date than standard for your program, airport transfers will NOT be included in your program price. Transfers must be purchased separately, as an optional add-on, and are subject to availability. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Traveler Support team at 1-800-321-2835. For more information, please see your Important Information booklet.*

Flying with a Travel Companion

If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.

5. MONEY MATTERS

How to Carry Your Money

The European financial infrastructure is as developed and modern as America's – sometimes even better developed. Currencies vary and banks have different names, but most are allied with global institutions and offer the same services you use daily. You can expect to have ready access to ATMs (to get local currency from your account), to have major credit cards accepted at most popular tourist sites, restaurants, and major stores, and to exchange US dollars for local currencies. There will be localized exceptions and perhaps some limitations on availability and amounts, and don't forget the fees. However, a little forethought can make juggling currencies a fairly painless process.

While there is no need to obtain local currency before your trip, many travelers do exchange $50 to $100 or so into the currency of their first destination. This can smooth your arrival should you run into closed banks/exchanges or broken ATMs. Otherwise, rely on a mix of credit/debit cards and ATM use (for ready access to cash) as the best way to manage your money as you travel. U.S. cash should be mixed into the blend, but it's wise to minimize how much you carry. Just as at home, carrying large amounts of cash can be risky. It's generally wise to have spending money in the local currency rather than to rely on American dollars.

You can exchange money at banks, some hotels, and money exchange offices (to do so, you'll likely need your passport). Be aware, however, that torn, dirty, or taped U.S. bills will ***not*** be accepted for exchange. **New** (in terms of use *and* issue date – post 2004) and large bills ($100) will *usually* be accepted by banks and onboard ships; **old** $100 bills (again, in age and condition) will ***not*** be accepted. Money in smaller denominations is much more universally accepted, but even there, new bills are preferred. Note that U.S. currency is not an accepted form of currency in Europe.

Traveler's checks—not recommended: We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's most practical to view any traveler's checks you might bring as a last "cash" resort in the event of a special situation.

U.S. dollars have an advantage over traveler's checks. Cash is more readily exchanged and accepted, and sometimes commands a better exchange rate.

Credit Cards

Though major American credit cards (American Express, Visa, and MasterCard) are accepted abroad, always inquire if your type of credit card is accepted before deciding on your purchase. It is also wise to notify your credit card company that you will be using your cards abroad so that they may remove any security block. When using a major credit card you may receive a different exchange rate than if you pay with cash; inquire about the rate first. Please be aware that credit cards might not be accepted for small purchases or in some restaurants or stores. Note that the Discover credit card is not widely accepted outside the U.S. Keep your receipts in case you have questions about the conversion or exchange rate. Also, keep your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

***TIP**: Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company or bank that you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure.*

You should also double-check what phone number you should call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1-800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

IMPORTANT NOTE: European countries have been phasing in a new type of credit card technology, called a "smartcard" or a "chip-and-PIN" card. These cards have an embedded computer chip instead of a magnetized strip, and the card owner authorizes a purchase by entering a four digit numerical PIN (Personal Identification Number) instead of signing a slip. Some businesses in Europe have already switched to the new system completely; some can process both smartcards and regular cards; and some haven't switched at all.

This new technology is not common in the U.S., so occasionally there may be machines that can't read U.S. cards. Or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. Although it is not common for U.S. credit cards to have PINs (and some providers will not even be able to provide one at all), requesting one prior to your departure is recommended. In some shops you will still be able to sign a slip as usual if you inform the vendor at the point of sale. And if the shop in question requires a smartcard, you can always try a different form of payment, like a debit card or cash. (U.S. debit cards usually have a PIN, so sometimes they work when credit cards don't.) Since there is no way to predict in advance what each shop will do, we recommend that you bring more than one type of payment when you go shopping. For example, a mix of a couple different credit cards, a debit or ATM card, and some cash is ideal—you'll be prepared for anything.

Debit cards: Debit cards are very popular in Europe, and are widely accepted, but will *almost always* require a PIN. Many U.S. banks offer a combined ATM and debit card. Check your ATM card, and if it has a Visa or a MasterCard logo, ask your bank if it can be used as a debit card in Europe. (If there's no logo, then you probably can't use it as a debit card, but your bank will know for certain). If it can be used as a debit card, all you'll need is the same PIN you use at the ATM.

ATMs

When traveling, typically PLUS, Cirrus, and other bank networks are available throughout large cities and small towns. Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account, and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's 4-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number), as many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their numeric keys, they only display digits.

Note on ATM use: Many banks have begun imposing a fee ranging from $1 to $5 every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. You may want to limit the number of withdrawals that you make. Your Program Director/Hospitality Desk Representative can advise you on locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.

Currency
The euro is the official currency of the countries you visit during your cruise. Euro banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500
- Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents; 1 and 2 euro

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director will advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to our website, or the financial section of your newspaper. On our website select the region and then click on the country you'll be visiting. A link to the currency converter is included in the menu on the page of each individual country.

England

Although the U.K. is part of the European Union, it has not adopted the euro for its currency. The official currency of the United Kingdom is the pound sterling. One pound (£1) is divided into 100 pence (100p). This legal tender is used throughout Scotland, England, and Wales. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 5, 10, 20, and 50 pounds
- Coins: 1 and 2 pence (copper); 5, 10, 20, and 50 pence (silver); 1 and 2 pounds (silver/gold)

Onboard Ship

Two separate bills will be issued:

- **Shipboard account:** This bill is for onboard purchases (drinks at the bar, gift shop purchases, laundry, etc) and is calculated in Euros. You may pay for your shipboard account via credit/debit cards (American Express, MasterCard, and Visa are accepted,) **or** via cash. If you use cash, either Euros or U.S. dollars are accepted

  Note: If you pay with a credit or debit card, you will need to sign a receipt and/or supply a PIN number, depending on the card account requirements (onboard sales terminals accept both.) *Personal checks or Discover card are **NOT** accepted.*

- **Optional tour account:** This bill is for optional tours taken during the trip; it is calculated in U.S. dollars. You may only pay for your optional tour account using credit/debit cards (American Express, MasterCard, and Visa are accepted.)

  Note: Debit cards with MasterCard or Visa logos are accepted for optional tour payments, however the card must allow you to sign for purchases—you will not be able to enter a PIN. You will need to sign an optional tour form as proof of payment. *Cash, Personal checks, PIN-only debit cards, or Discover card are **NOT** accepted.*

Please note: Shipboard and optional tour account payments made by credit card may take up to 3 months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, you will not need a PIN for this payment, but the charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "**OPT Boston**" (depending on your credit card company).

Exchange Services

Onboard ship we will break down or change larger U.S. bills into smaller ones (for example, one U.S. $50 bill into U.S. $20, $10, $5, and $1 bills), and change U.S. currency into Euros (for example U.S. $20 into Euro €*XX* — depending on exchange rate). This service is available only for the Euro & U.S. dollar currencies. The daily exchange is **limited to a maximum of U.S. $50 per person**. You can exchange larger amounts at local banks in port towns.

Shopping

There is **no** requirement to make a purchase during visits to local shops or markets, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Grand Circle Cruise Line cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

Value-Added Tax: The French value-added tax (VAT) is typically 19.6% and can be as high as 33.33% on luxury articles. Depending on how much you spend on certain goods, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask your Program Director for details, or ask the shopkeeper or salesperson at the time of purchase. Be sure to save all receipts for Customs. . (Generally, you have to spend over 175€ at the same shop, on the same day, and have filled out a special form for this process.)

If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or gold dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price.

By Destination

Paris

Perfumes, fashion, jewelry, art, glass, and china—these are just a few of the many goods for which France is famous. The big department stores in Paris are excellent places to get an idea of what's available—or to spend an afternoon if your shopping time is limited. The biggest—and best—are *Galeries Lafayette* and *Printemps*, both on the Boulevard Haussmann, near the Opera and the Madeleine. The *Prisunic* and *Monoprix* chains have lower prices, but the selection isn't as good.

Or, if you're looking for something particular, you can head straight to one of the specialized shopping areas. *Haute couture* can be found in the streets around the Champs Elysées: Av. George V, Av. Montaigne, Rue Francois I, and Rue de Faubourg St. Honore. The Rue de Paradis is lined with crystal and china shops, and St. Germain des Pres has more than its share of art galleries. The best and most expensive antiques dealers are along the Faubourg St. Honore on the Right Bank. For great flea markets, head to the Marche d'Aligre, at the Place d'Aligre, or the Puces de St. Ouen, near the Porte de Clignancourt.

For great flea markets, head to the Puces de St. Ouen, near the Porte de Clignancourt, on Monday or Wednesday mornings.

Shop hours: French stores are generally open from 10am to 7pm Monday through Saturday, and are usually closed on Sundays. In smaller cities shop close at lunch time from 12:30 to 2pm.

Shop hours: French stores are generally open from 10am to 7pm Monday through Saturday, Stores are usually closed on Sundays.

London

Department stores: These large establishments are the city's most famous shopping institutions. Harrods, 87-135 Brompton Rd., S.W. 1, by many estimates is the largest department store in the world, selling everything from pins to pianos. *Open*: Monday through Saturday 10 am to 8 pm. Sunday 12 to 6 pm. *Tube:* Knightsbridge.

Selfridges, 400 Oxford St., W. 1, seems almost as big as its chief rival, Harrods. *Open:* Monday through Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9:30 am to 8 pm, Thursday 9:30 am to 9 pm, and Sunday 12 to 6 pm. *Tube*: Marble Arch or Bond Street.

Liberty, 210-220 Regent St., W. 1, has a worldwide reputation for selling fine textiles in unique surroundings. The pretty, old-world store has a fantastic Asian department. *Open*: Monday through Wednesday and Friday and Saturday 10 am to 8 pm, Thursday 10 am to 9 pm, Sunday 12 to 6 pm. *Tube*: Oxford Circus.

London's shopping areas: The West End, where the mile-long Oxford Street is the main artery, is extremely popular. At its midsection, Oxford Street is bisected by Regent Street, a more elegant thoroughfare, lined with boutiques, fine china shops, and jewelers. At Piccadilly Circus, Regent Street meets Piccadilly, which, along with St. James's Street, Jermyn Street, and the Burlington Arcade, make up one of the most glamorous shopping regions in the entire world.

Shop hours: London shopping hours are generally 9:30 am to 5:30 pm. You can find late night shopping at Knightsbridge on Wednesdays until 8 pm, and at Oxford Street on Thursdays until 8 pm. Portobello Antique Market is open all day Saturdays. Most department stores are open on Sundays for 6 hours, and most museums and art galleries are generally open on Sundays.

U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, **www.cbp.gov** has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511.**

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is $800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than $800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S**. Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the *export* duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the *import* duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20229
Tel. **1-877-227-5511**
www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/

Problem with a Purchase?

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! So don't forget to examine merchandise before paying for it, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, don't hesitate to ask in advance about the return policy—local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Expect that any
resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.

To Tip or Not to Tip

Sometimes *that* is the question. Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. For those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines. All tips are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.

Shipboard: Shipboard gratuities to the cruise personnel are not included in the cost of your River Cruise. The ships' tipping guidelines recommend a flat tip of $10-$12 U.S. per person, per day, which will be pooled among all cruise staff, including housekeeping. For your convenience tips for the crew can be paid with a credit card.

GCCL Program Director: It is customary at the end of your trip to express a personal "thank you" to the Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director assigned to your group, especially if he/she has provided you with individual assistance. We recommend $4-$6 per person, per day during your base trip and on extensions. Please note that tips for our Program Directors can only be in the form of cash, and local currency is appreciated.

Drivers and Local Guides: We recommend $2-$3 per person for motorcoach drivers or local tour guides during half or full day tours.

Port Stops & Land Stays: During your port stops and land stays, you may take an extra tour, dine in a local restaurant, take a taxi, or avail yourself of some other service where tipping is customary. We recommend $2-$3 per person for motorcoach drivers or local tour guides during half or full day tours.

When dining in France, a service charge is usually included in restaurant bills—look for the statement "service compris" on the bill or on the menu. If this appears, no additional tip is needed – otherwise it is customary to leaves around 10% of the bill. Rounding up the bill and leaving a few coins in a bar or café that you have lingered in is considered polite. In England, if no service charge appears on the bill, it is customary to leave an additional tip of around 10% for your waiter or bartender. As for taxis, in many cities the tip is included in the fare, and will be announced on a sign inside the cab; otherwise a 10% tip is appropriate.

For hotel housekeeping staff not onboard the ship: a tip in local currency equal to about $1 per person, per day, is sufficient. (Housekeeping staff on the ship are included in the "shipboard" tipping suggestion above.)

Public Restrooms: Most public restrooms in France are manned by a local staff that takes care of cleaning and supplies. It is customary to leave a small tip for the staff—about EUR .50 per person. Some restrooms are pay-toilets; you pay the staff at the entrance to the restroom or drop the appropriate coin into the slot on the stall door. Prices range from EUR .50 to EUR2.00 per single use. Many restaurants, cafes, and shops offer only pay-toilets or expect you to make a purchase before using the facilities.

6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

In General

Travel light. A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. Eliminate all but the essentials and start packing a few days before you leave. That way, you'll have time to think—not fret—about what you might be forgetting. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated pants and shirts, skirts and blouses, or pantsuits that can be mixed to create different outfits.

Pack casual clothes. Comfortable, low-key apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations and aboard ship. Basic pants, shirts, walking shorts, sportswear, everyday dresses and skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes are recommended. At dinner, you will not need to don "dressy" clothing; men do not need a tie or jacket. You may want one or two "smart casual" outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you. If you plan to enjoy a special dinner out in Paris, a blazer or a sports jacket, trousers, and tie will get a man into finer restaurants; for women, a pretty dress or pantsuit will suffice.

Plan to dress in layers on shore excursions. Be prepared for a variety of weather conditions: warm days with sun, chilly temperatures with showers, and evenings that could dip into the 40s or 50s are common during the "shoulder season" of early spring and late fall. In November, evenings may even fall into the 30s. Evenings call for a warm outfit and a heavy sweater or jacket. A sturdy windproof shell over a heavy sweatshirt, sweater, or fleece top is ideal for being out on deck at night.

For warmer conditions, a mixture of cotton sweaters, sweatshirts, long-sleeved shirts, summery tops, pants, skirts, and walking shorts is recommended. Paris can have heat waves in the 90s during July and August, but although summer attire is best for these months, you may still want a light sweater or jacket for evenings or for buildings with chilly air conditioning.

On land excursions, dress in layers. You can then easily adjust to any temperature shifts by removing or adding a layer. For possible showers, take a folding travel umbrella and/or rain hat. A waterproof jacket with a hood is ideal.

Good walking shoes are critical. This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. Supportive, waterproof sports shoes are ideal for daytime shore excursions. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. Bring five to seven pairs of socks. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes, and rain boots or galoshes. Aboard ship, you'll want non-slip shoes with rubber soles.

Packing Your Carry-On Bag

Using a daypack as a carry-on bag for your flights is a smart solution. We strongly urge you to pack your carry-on with at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags go astray. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture. With a daypack you can then remove these items on arrival and load your bag with the gear you'll need on walking tours and excursions.

Clothing Suggestions

We've included information below on the weather you can expect for the regions you'll be visiting on your travels. Taking into account the climate you'll encounter and the general suggestions we offer above will enable you to create a flexible wardrobe that's light enough for sophisticated travel and will guarantee comfort in all the conditions you can expect to encounter. The luggage weight and size restrictions imposed by travel realities today have made traveling light an absolute necessity. With modern fabrics – Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, polypropylene, etc. – lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy. A visit to any on-line or local sporting goods/outdoor stores (L.L. Bean, REI, EMS, etc.) will yield a treasure trove of lightweight, specialized, and fashionable clothing and gear that is readily adaptable to your itinerary.

Travel Gear Suggestions

Though it's often fun to do things as the locals do, it can be frustrating when daily necessities or conveniences from home aren't available. To travel wisely these days you must juggle your personal needs and preferences against the physical constraints of your transportation—whether it's an international airplane, a transfer motorcoach, a small ship or a day-long trek on a camel. You'll have to distinguish between what you **must** have, what you'd *like* to have, whether you can zip your suitcase closed, and what you can reasonably expect to wrestle through airport hallways and security checkpoints. Consult the following items to create your personal checklist – ignoring what you don't need and making the tough decisions over borderline cases. Remember that many airlines today will charge you extra for added luggage.

What not to pack: do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Also avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave at home checkbooks and any credit cards not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose.

Cabin amenities include: shower gel, hand soap, hair dryer, shower cap, nail file, washcloth, and towels. We have still mentioned some of these items in the checklists below, in case you have preferred brands you want to bring with you on your cruise.

Consider …

- ❑ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, body soap, moisturizer, lip balm, etc.
- ❑ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- ❑ Sunglasses and a neck strap; sun hat or visor
- ❑ Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger
- ❑ Electrical transformer & plug adapter—see "Regional Electricity" below
- ❑ Insect repellent with DEET
- ❑ Travel money bag or money belt
- ❑ Pocket-size tissues
- ❑ Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb
- ❑ Compact umbrella
- ❑ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards (and your originals)
- ❑ Extra passport-sized photos

Medicines

- ❑ Your own prescription medicines
- ❑ Vitamins
- ❑ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- ❑ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- ❑ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- ❑ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- ❑ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- ❑ Band-Aids
- ❑ Moleskin foot pads
- ❑ Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin

Optional Gear

- ❑ Reading materials
- ❑ Travel alarm
- ❑ Compact binoculars
- ❑ Toiletry bag with hook and pockets
- ❑ Moist towelettes (packets) and/or anti-bacterial "water-free" hand cleanser
- ❑ Hand-wash laundry soap (Woolite), clothespins/travel clothesline/stopper
- ❑ Travel journal/note pad
- ❑ Swimsuit
- ❑ Home address book
- ❑ Photos, small gift for home-hosted visit
- ❑ Phrase book
- ❑ Collapsible walking staff
- ❑ Pocket-size calculator for exchange rates

7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION

We can't predict the weather you'll have on your travels – our local weathermen are lucky to get tomorrow right! So, as your departure nears, it's a great idea to visit the *My Account* feature of **www.gct.com** for a current 10-day forecast of temperatures and conditions at your destinations. Or check Internet weather sites (www.wunderground.com is very comprehensive) for those forecasts and tweak your wardrobe accordingly. You'll find historical averages and general information on local climates below – but, given recent weather extremes, it's even more important to consult up-to-the-minute resources.

Paris (main trip and optional extension): The City of Light has about the same weather as our Middle Atlantic States, though it's usually not warmer than 75° F, or colder than 30° F. The main characteristic of the city's weather is its changeability. Bright skies can abruptly turn cloudy and a chilly drizzle ensue; then just as quickly as the rain begins it will end.

Another volatile aspect of Parisian weather is the blasts of rapidly moving air—probably the result of a wind tunnel effect caused by the city's long boulevards being bordered by buildings of uniform height. But other than the occasional winds and rain (which add an undeniable drama to many of the city's panoramas), Paris offers among the most pleasant weather conditions of any capital in Europe, with a highly tolerable average temperature of 53°.

The early spring can still be on the cool side, but later on in the season, temperatures are usually comfortable, often reaching into the low 60s. Summers are rarely overly warm—the upper 70s is the norm—though a spell of hot weather in the 90s can settle in for a few days, or even a week or two in July and August. Early autumn is slightly cooler, with temperatures edging toward the 50s. By November, it may dip into the 40s. Rain is a common occurrence year-round.

London (optional extension): The weather in London can be unreliable and unpredictable, with lovely sun-drenched mornings regularly turning into damp, overcast afternoons—and vice versa. Still, legends about the city's incessant rain are exaggerated. London, in fact, has less rainfall accumulation than Rome, which is known as a sunny city. It's just that in London, the rain is spread over more days. The British capital is very much a city of the temperate zone. With occasional exceptions, London's summers tend to be moderately warm, with few days having temperatures above 75°F; winters as well tend to be moderately cold, with few days dropping below 30°F. Spring and autumn are generally comfortable, with little more than a sweater or light overcoat required.

Brittany (optional extension):

Situated in the northwest of the France on the Atlantic coast, Brittany is exposed to a variable climate. Average temperatures from mid May to mid September are in the high 60s to low 70s. Off season, spring and autumn temperatures average in the high 50s to low 60s. For this coastal climate it's advisable to dress in layers and keep rain gear handy—even in summer months.

Weather Conditions and River Depths

Throughout the river cruise season, weather conditions affect river depths, and water levels may require adjustments to your itinerary. When river depths rise or fall during your River Cruise, Grand Circle Cruise Line will be required to adjust your itinerary for your safety and to adhere to the current governmental and nautical requirements. Though we strive to adhere to our planned itinerary, we may not always be able to follow it exactly as planned. The sequence of ports visited and the days on which included features and optional tours occur may vary.

Here is the data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations.

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE? *Average* highs (taken at 2 pm) and lows (taken just before sunrise) in °F.									
	MAR	**APR**	**MAY**	**JUN**	**JUL**	**AUG**	**SEP**	**OCT**	**NOV**
Paris (main trip and optional extension)									
High	51	57	64	70	75	75	69	59	49
Low	38	42	49	54	58	57	52	46	39
Rouen									
High	49	54	61	66	71	71	65	57	48
Low	38	40	46	51	55	55	51	45	39
Le Havre (for Honfleur)									
High	47	50	56	61	65	66	63	57	49
Low	42	45	51	55	60	60	57	52	45
London (optional extension)									
High	49	54	61	66	71	71	65	58	50
Low	36	38	44	50	53	52	48	44	38
Rennes (for St. Malo, optional extension)									
High	54	59	66	71	76	75	70	61	52
Low	37	41	46	51	54	54	50	45	39

Please note: The data cited here reflect *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions, and serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. A 60 degree ***average*** high temperature means that days may be as warm as 80 or as cool as 40 – but it's most likely you'll encounter temperatures in the 50 to 70 degree range.

8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY

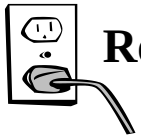
In General

Smartphone, tablet, digital camera/camcorder, MP3 player: travel today can involve technology that didn't exist even five years ago. The usefulness of digital devices is enormous: smartphones can keep you connected and offer up-to-the-minute information via your cell plan or a local Wi-Fi connection. With a tablet (or smartphone) you can store multiple country guidebooks, access maps and connect to the internet in a small, lightweight device. (***Tip****: you can download* ***this*** *document from the Grand Circle Travel website and import it into your tablet or e-reader, many of which can display PDF files.)*

Compact and lightweight, digital camcorders and cameras take high definition movies and still images of the people you meet and places you visit. For robust use a laptop may be effective; for occasional use it's wiser to rely on Internet cafes or a tablet and hotel Internet access rather than shoulder the heft and size of a laptop.

To use these devices you should first consider the services available at your destinations. You'll encounter a range of electrical standards, varied plug configurations to access the local current, erratic availability (electricity and internet access), and differing technological standards.

You'll need to assess your power and data storage needs, and the accessories required to recharge/connect/use these devices. Finally, it's smart to read the owner's manual *before* you depart. Pay particular attention to electrical, power and storage requirements to ensure that you understand exactly what you need. Thorough preparation is the best guarantee that your devices will work up to their potential.



Regional Electricity

The standard U.S. electrical system — 110V 60Hz current and flat two- or three-pronged polarized plug system — is rare elsewhere. The overwhelming choice for the rest of the world is 220-240V and 50/60Hz current with a variety of plug shapes, sizes, and configurations. Some plugs will work with multiple receptacles, while others won't. Europe is largely standardized to the Type C "Europlug."

Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. We suggest that you bring *dual* voltage appliances (widely available) that work on both 110 and 220/240 voltage. Dual voltage appliances are inexpensive and need only plug adapters.

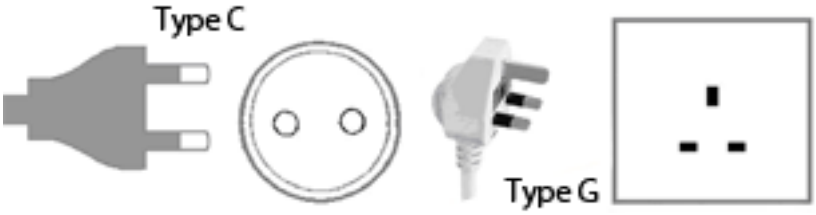
If you bring 110V appliances, such as a hair dryer (note that hotels often supply hairdryers and coffee makers) or shaver, you'll need a transformer (to halve the 220/240V current) in addition to plug adapters. Regional transformer/adapter kits can often be found at hardware or online stores but transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave those larger items at home.

France uses the Type C "*Europlug*" and receptacles that accommodate it. England (on the optional extension) uses a Type G plug and receptacle. Both use 230 V AC/50Hz current.

Electricity Onboard

M/S Bizet
Cabin bathrooms are equipped with a 110-volt outlet for electric shavers. The rest of the cabin has 220 volts, with European-style outlets. To operate 110-volt appliances *outside* of your bathroom, you will need a transformer in addition to a plug adapter; dual-voltage devices will require just a plug adapter.

A *limited* number of transformers and plug adapters are available at the ship's reception desk for occasional use. If you need these items for the duration of the cruise, we recommend you bring your own.



Even though you'll only need Type C and Type G plug adapters on this trip, it may be a good idea to invest in an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, this item will ensure that you are prepared for your current trip as well as future vacations. If you use multiple digital devices—cell phone, digital camera, and MP3 player for instance – it's also handy to have a travel power strip, perhaps with a surge suppressor and USB-style port for charging cell phones, MP3 players or e-readers without the use of device-specific plugs..

Smartphones

It will require some effort to get the most out of your smartphone when you travel. Even with an international roaming plan, costs can add up quickly – those handy apps often pile up download fees. The simplest solution is to shut down all cell phone functions, automatic data feeds and roaming options, and take advantage of the apps via available Wi-Fi. With an Internet VOIP app (like Skype) you can make inexpensive calls. If necessary, turn international roaming back on and your phone will work as usual – albeit at some cost. If your phone doesn't support international roaming (most smartphones do), some carriers offer loaners.

Cell Phones

If you want to use a standard cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check with your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com etc.) to see if your phone will work outside the U.S. or whether you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. Or, consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

Phone Calling Cards

If you don't carry a phone, you can use a prepaid calling card to call the U.S. with minimal additional charges. Besides the prepaid long distance charges, you might have a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at a hotel. Check with the reception desk prior to using it to avoid unexpected charges.

Calling cards purchased locally are usually less expensive than those purchased in the U.S. and are more likely to work with the local system. Note that dialing a U.S. 1-800 number outside the continental United States will incur costly long distance fees, since 1-800 does not work outside the U.S.

Photo Gear

For many people, capturing the highlights of their travel experiences in photographs or movies and sharing them is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the journey. Remember, however: some individuals and cultures and are less tolerant of photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs. And in some places you may be charged for photography at specific sites, or restricted from any photography at all.

Digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel companions—and many do dual duty by recording movies *and* still images. Fist sized camcorders can capture HD movies and high quality still photos; cameras the size of a deck of cards are great for snapshots and casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can record your whole trip with a small, lightweight package.

But you must remember the batteries. Recharging batteries is sometimes impossible, cameras can drain batteries *very* quickly, and replacements may be unavailable. Whether you need standard or proprietary batteries, it's good to have spares. Be sure your charger will work with the local electrical system, and bring more than enough memory cards—they may be hard or impossible to find. Memory cards are small, thin and light: you can never have too much storage.

Compact cameras are impractical for distant subjects. Some models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is good for middle distances. For distant subjects a *megazoom* (with a zoom lens of at least 300mm) or a single lens reflex (DSLR) camera with up to a 300mm telephoto lens are good choices. With a DSLR you can use multiple lenses, though your gear can quickly get complex, weighty and cumbersome. Cameras or lenses that need a tripod are impractical for travel photography. A single mid-range telephoto lens coupled with a small, fast prime lens (for low light/no flash situations) is an effective, flexible and compact kit. Consider mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras (MILC), which combine small bodies and multiple, small lenses with high quality for both still and HD movie images.

If you use a DSLR or MILC camera, protect the lenses with a UV filter and bring lens caps, covers, cleaning paper and a waterproof bag (a heavy duty Ziploc-style bag is good) to protect your gear. Be sure your camera has a flash that you can turn off, and if it's detachable, remember to pack it. (At many sites and museums, flashes are ***not*** permitted.)

Consider disposable cameras, as well. They are inexpensive and capable of acceptable photos as long as the light is not too dim *or* bright. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so pose no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

9. GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE'S EUROPEAN RIVER CRUISES

M/S *Bizet*

The *Bizet's* design incorporates suggestions from Grand Circle Cruise Line travelers—and it offers a host of amenities to make you feel right at home. Designed to carry no more than 120 passengers, the ship's size ensures the ease of maneuverability that's so important when entering small river ports. Amenities include a restaurant with panoramic windows, sun deck with lounge chairs, a library, bar, lounge, dance floor, and small souvenir shop.

Included features of all Grand Circle Cruise Line European river ship cabins:

- A layout of at least 150 square feet
- All outside cabins
- Individual climate control (heat and air conditioning)
- Twin beds that ship staff convert into a daytime couch
- Storage space under beds of 57 inches x 22.8 inches x 11.8 inches (length + width + height)
- Sufficient closet and dresser space
- Color TV, including CNN programming and a bow camera for ship-front views
- Direct-dial international telephone
- Hair dryer
- Desk
- Private bath with shower

Cabins on the Soprano deck have small balconies with sliding door; those on the Alto deck have two picture windows. For safety reasons, cabin windows do not open.

An important word: While our fleet features larger-than-usual riverboat cabins, please keep in mind that these ships are river vessels, not large ocean cruise ships. Riverboat cabins, in comparison, are relatively small, and ship amenities, in general, are comfortable but not lavish.

Shore Excursions

Many sightseeing tours are included on your cruise. Other optional tours are available for purchase. Your Program Director will provide information on these optional excursions on your arrival. Please note that optional tours can only be purchased with a credit card.

Onboard Activities

During your cruise you'll enjoy exclusive Discovery Series events, including group activities that relate to the region, theme dinners, organized discussions, and talks on upcoming ports of call.

Your GCCL Program Director

During your exclusive Grand Circle Cruise Line cruise, you'll have reliable assistance available at all times from up to three Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Directors. Your Program Directors are fluent in English and can give you an inside perspective on your destinations. They are supported along the way by local tour guides, who guide you expertly through particular sites and cities.

Many Grand Circle Program Directors are graduates of professional education programs for travel guides. In addition, they receive specialized training directly from Grand Circle, training that is based on what we've learned from thousands of past travelers about how to make the trip most enjoyable. Your Program Director offers both a deep knowledge of the region and a commitment to make this a very pleasant, informative, and rewarding travel experience for you.

Your Program Directors will provide sightseeing trips, handle all travel details, reserve optional tours you choose to take, and oversee your Discovery Series events. If you take our optional Paris, Brittany or Loire extension, you will have the services of a Grand Circle Program Director there as well; on the London extension, you will have the services of a hospitality desk.

Dining

You'll enjoy fine cuisine and excellent views in your ship's dining room, featuring a warm decor of dark woods, rich carpeting, floor-to-ceiling windows, and white-linen and china table settings. Your ship's daily service includes a breakfast buffet, lunch, and a more formal dinner. Our professional chefs will create unique menus for you that feature regional specialties. Included with dinner are two complimentary drinks (choose from house wine, draft beer, or soft drink) per guest, per dinner. In addition, a selection of other fine wines and beer is available for purchase. Passengers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately €10 (Euro) per bottle, charged to your passenger account.

Please note that if you bring your own alcohol aboard, it can only be consumed in the dining room as described above, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas. We also offer complimentary coffee and tea throughout the day, available at meals and from the machine in the reception area.

Open-table, single-seating for all meals: Each meal is open seating—reservations of any kind are not accepted. Dinner has only one designated time for its open seating, announced each day aboard ship.

Dining times: Dining times for all meals may vary depending on the day's sightseeing and sailing schedule, but in general, meal times are as follows:

Early riser breakfast: 6:30-7:30 am
Breakfast: 7:30-9:00 am
Lunch: 1:00-2:30 pm
Dinner: 7:00-9:00 pm

Special diets & celebrations: Special diets, such as low-cholesterol or vegetarian, can be accommodated, as well as the recognition of an anniversary or birthday. Please call Grand Circle Cruise Line to submit your request no later than 45 days prior to departure. Religious dietary regimens, such as kosher or halal meals, cannot be prepared aboard ship.

Dress code: The dining-room dress code is casual, though most travelers dress nicely for the Captain's Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner.

Non-smoking policy: The entire dining room is non-smoking at all times.

Embarkation/Disembarkation

On the day of disembarkation, your cabin will no longer be available after breakfast. You may sit in the ship's lounge or on the sun deck until disembarkation.

Dock and Landing Etiquette

River waterways are simply not big enough to support large landing docks such as those built on ocean shorelines. It is common for river ships to tie up alongside each other at some piers—particularly in ports where docking area is restricted. While we try to arrange the most convenient mooring available in each port of call, outboard boats may occasionally obstruct views, and you may have to step across other ships when you want to go ashore.

Onboard Facilities

Headsets

During the cruise portion of your trip, complimentary headsets will be provided on all of your included and optional tours, so that you can better hear your Program Director or local guide.

Wi-Fi Access

Limited Wi-Fi service is available for free in the lounge, library, reception and bar areas on board these Grand Circle Cruise Line ships: *Concerto, Harmony, Melody, Rhapsody, Adagio, Aria*, and the *Bizet*. Wi-Fi service is not available in individual cabins, restaurants or other common areas. If you want to use the Wi-Fi connection you'll need to bring your own device (laptop/tablet/netbook) — ships do **not** rent or loan these devices. To use the Wi-Fi service, please visit Reception after you board for access information. Shipboard access is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume on board will affect connectivity and speed. The ship's Internet connection demands a strong 3G cell phone signal, which is unavailable in many of the areas we visit. You can expect disruptions of both long and short duration.

Elevator/Chairlift

The ship has an elevator, which runs between the Alto and Soprano Decks. A chairlift operates from the Soprano Deck to the sun deck (or you can use the staircase to the sun deck, which has one flight of 10-12 steps). The chairlift is a single-seat transport that slides up the staircase banister.

Telephone Services

To make telephone calls from the ship, you will be charged on your shipboard account on the last day of the cruise. Phone calls are directly from your cabin and through satellite. We advise you to use it only for an emergency, as this is a very expensive service (for example, a call to New York City would cost about $3.75 per minute). (Phone Calling Cards cannot be used over the ship's phone system.)

Laundry & Linen Service

Laundry service is available for a fee (currently it costs about 2 euros per shirt). Please note that neither self-service laundry facilities nor dry cleaning services are available. There will be one change of bed linens during your cruise. Towels are changed daily.

Medical Care

Our entire fleet adheres to stringent European safety standards. In addition to an emergency call button in all cabins, ships also feature fully staffed reception desks, 24 hours a day.

Recreational Facilities

These include a sun deck with lounge, library, and lounge with bar and dance floor. The bar is open from 10 am to 1 am, with soft drinks, beer, wine and liquors for sale. Prices are in Euros.

Drinking Water

Tap water aboard ship is safe for drinking. Bottled water is also available. There is one ice machine onboard.

Smoking/Non-Smoking Policy

All cabins are non-smoking. Smoking is only permitted outside on the sun deck. Smoking is not allowed anywhere else on the ships.

Ship Specifications

The ship is of French registry with international crew and features the following specifications:

	Entered service	*Length*	*Width*	*Passenger capacity*	*Crew members*	*Decks*	*Cabins*	*Elevator*	*Chairlift to sun deck*
M/S *Bizet*	2002	366	38	120	34	3	60	yes	yes

10. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

During Your Land Excursions & Optional Extensions

We're including some handy practical details and a brief introduction to the places you'll visit on your cruise. If you expect to explore in depth on your own, we recommend that you consult one of the many available book-length guides to your destinations. If you have one or two specific sites, museums or features that you're interested in, an internet search is the ideal way to get-up-to-date information and details. And of course your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director or Hospitality Desk Representative will be able to assist you with suggestions and arrangements of activities you wish to participate in during your stay.

Drinking Water

The tap water in France is safe to drink, but it is processed differently than tap water in the U.S., so some travelers find the taste a little off. Bottled water—especially French brands like Evian and Perrier—is readily available for purchase, and comes in *gazeuse* ("gaz-ewes", meaning sparkling) or *plat* (flat; also can appear as *non-gazeuse*). In restaurants, if you want tap water and not bottled water, ask for *carafe d'eau* ("care-af doh").

Internet Access and Email

Internet cafés are not always available, and access prices may vary. Some public places – restaurants, cafes – may provide free internet access for customers. While sailing Internet access may be unavailable, depending on locks, bridges, and regional remoteness. Internet access should be most consistently available when the ship is docked in larger cities.

Laundry Service

Laundry service and dry cleaning are available through your hotel for an additional fee.

Paris in Brief—Base and Optional Extension

City Layout and Details

Paris occupies 432 square miles (six more than San Francisco). In central Paris, the *Rive Droite* (Right Bank)—the shore to the right as you face downriver—is north of the Seine, while the *Rive Gauche* (Left Bank) is south of the river. Streets that are more or less parallel to the Seine are numbered from east to west, in the direction in which the river flows. On streets that are perpendicular to the river (or approximately so), the numbering starts at the river; building numbers get higher the farther away from the Seine you go. Thirty-two bridges link the Right and Left banks, some providing access to the two small islands at the heart of the city. This city center, called *Ile de la Cité*, is the birthplace of Paris and includes the sites of Notre Dame and Ile St. Louis, a moat-guarded isle with 17th-century mansions.

Between 1860 and 1870 Baron Haussmann forever changed the look of Paris by creating the legendary boulevards: boulevards St. Michel, St. Germain, Haussmann, Malesherbes, Sebastopol, Magenta, Voltaire, and Strasbourg. The "main street" on the Right Bank is, of course, the Champs-Elysées, beginning at the Arc de Triomphe and running to the Place de la Concorde. Haussmann also created Avenue de l'Opera (as well as the Opera), and the twelve avenues that radiate star-like from the Arc de Triomphe, giving it its original name of Place de l'Etoile (renamed Place Charles de Gaulle following the general's death). Today it is often referred to as Place Charles de Gaulle Etoile. Haussmann cleared *Ile de la Cité* of its medieval buildings, transforming it into a showcase for Notre Dame. Finally, he laid out the two elegant parks on the western and southeastern fringes of the city: Bois de Boulogne and Bois de Vincennes.

Paris has been divided since 1860 into 20 *arrondissements* (districts), which spiral out from the center of the city like a clockwise snail. Each district has its own city hall, police station, and main post office. All addresses include the *arrondissement* number (written in Roman or Arabic numerals and followed by "e" or "er").

Cuisine

Paris is one of the culinary capitals of the world. Whether you opt for just a croissant and café au lait or splurge on an epicurean feast, this is the city in which to indulge all your gastronomic dreams. Remember, too, that there is no such thing as "Parisian" food; rather, Paris is the city in which you can try regional delights from Provence, Alsace, Normandy, Brittany, and many other places. Not to mention the vast array of international restaurants that are available, which enable you to choose from virtually every type of cuisine—from superb pasta and Asian stir-fry to exquisite Middle Eastern couscous and Indian curries.

Regardless of the cuisine you select, a meal without wine is like a day without the sun, say the French, who are the greatest producers and the greatest consumers of wine. The general subtlety and quality of French wines cannot be equaled elsewhere. The best-known wines come from Burgundy, Bordeaux, and the Rhône Valley. A very popular and inexpensive red wine, excellent with red meat and most cheeses, is Beaujolais. For a reasonable dry white wine, good with seafood and white meats, try Muscadet or Chablis.

Important Note: Dining out in Paris can be expensive, even at moderate restaurants. Bistros feature a la carte menus and are less expensive. The ubiquitous baguette sandwich is even cheaper still! Your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director can advise you on eating establishments that offer good food at the best price, or if you feel like a splurge, on gourmet restaurants that feature fine French cuisine.

Laundry Service

Self-service laundromats are available in Paris. The cost is approximately 7 euros to wash and dry one load of clothes. Your hotel also provides laundry services, but the fees are very high. It's much less expensive to launder your clothes yourself.

Local Transportation

The underground Metro operates from 5:30 am to 1:15 am. It is clean, quiet, and easy to use. The different lines are identified by numbers ands the names of their terminals at either end. Every station has clear directional maps, some with push-button devices that light up the proper route after a destination button is pushed. Keep your ticket (you may need it to exit the station; and you will need it when you exit the RER – the rapid transit network – station). A ten-ticket book (*carnet*) is available at a reduced rate and is valid for Metro, RER and buses.

Taxis can be found at stands at main intersections, outside railway stations, and in the streets. Fares increase at night. The green light on the roof signifies availability.

Brittany and St. Malo in Brief —Optional Extension

Brittany occupies a large peninsula in the northwest of France, between the English Channel to the north and the Bay of Biscay to the south. One of France's most rugged regions, it's a fascinating mix of impressive coastline, ancient towns, intriguing islands and atmospheric woodlands. It is perhaps best known for its Neolithic monuments, including ancient burial chambers – some of which significantly predate the Egyptian pyramids, and its countless Neolithic menhirs, standing stones that were planted into landscape. You'll also find walled cities, Gothic cathedrals, and a charming populace still very much attached to their distinctive culture. In the centuries before the Roman conquest of the region, it was occupied by Celtic cultures. In the Dark Ages immigrants from Ireland, Wales and southern England stamped their indelible presence into a land that became know as Brittany, or Little Britain. First as a kingdom and then as a duchy, the region weathered Viking raids and civil war to finally lose its independence to the French crown in 1532.

St Malo is a fortified port city situated on the English Channel and the gulf of St Malo. Largely destroyed in WW II, the walled city has been extensively rebuilt along its historic lines. As early as the Middle Ages St Malo was a major European port and for a time was independent of both France and Brittany—becoming an extremely wealthy city as a result. Wealth and location made St. Malo a popular homeport for corsairs (pirates) who set out to waylay both local and distant maritime traffic—and brought more wealth home. The walled city extends out from the town's château and the Cathédrale St-Vincent, both of which lie near the peninsula's tip. Surrounded by beaches, it's historic charms are coupled with a more modern beach resort aura, and it is a popular vacation spot for British tourists. Local sites to visit include the Fort du Petit Bé – Promenade des Bés, a XII century fort and Fort National, on the beach, which was built in 1689 to ensure the security of St Malo. Also, on the quai Duguay Trouin you'll find the L'Etoile du Roy, a replica of the type of corsair frigate that sailed from the port in 1754.

Dating back to the 8th century Mont St. Michel, the famously picturesque monastery sitting on top of a rocky island in the gulf of St. Malo, is an hour's drive away.

The Loire Valley in Brief—Optional Extension

The Loire Valley is located in the middle section of the Loire River in central France, and is often called the Garden of France because of the abundance of vineyards, fruit orchards, and artichoke and asparagus fields that fill the valley around the river. Perhaps most famous for the combination of its wines and historic châteaux, it has been recognized since 2000 by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Overall there are more than three hundred châteaux – the large number accounted for by the nobility's need to be near the seat of power, and the consequent construction spree engendered when French kings began building their huge châteaux here. Employing the best architects and landscape designers of the time, this lush, fertile valley began came to embody the ideals of the Renaissance and the Age of the Enlightenment in western European thought and design. Notable châteaux include the Château d'Amboise, Château de Chambord, Château de Chinon, Château du Rivau, Château d'Ussé, Château de Villandry and Chenonceau.

The valley encompasses historic towns such as Amboise, Blois, Chinon, Nantes, Orléans, and Tours. Loire wines have a characteristic fruitiness and fresh, crisp flavors throughout its several regions – including Muscadet, Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé. Wine production here focuses on whites from the Chenin blanc, Sauvignon blanc and Melon de Bourgogne grapes; but red wines, rosés, sparkling and dessert wines are produced as well.

The climate is mild most of the year and the river acts as France's weather demarcation line, separating northern and southern climates. The river has a significant effect on the region, adding several degrees to its temperature. The climate can be cool with springtime frosts while wine harvest months may have rain. Summers are hot; however the Atlantic ocean can moderate the temperature with cool breezes.

London in Brief—Optional Extension

City Layout and Details

London is frequently described as a "city of villages" that cropped up around the square mile of the first walled Roman city that once stood here. Though most of the walls disappeared long ago, the political autonomy of The City of London still distinguishes it from the surrounding neighborhoods. The City has always been London's financial center, and it is chock full of tiny lanes and a historic atmosphere. The 32 boroughs of Greater London, which surround The City, comprise over 600 square miles, though thankfully for visitors, the major tourist attractions are relatively close together in the center.

The West End: Stretching from west of the City to Hyde Park is the lively West End, which includes the nation's thickest grouping of boutiques, stores, restaurants, and theaters. Oxford Street, which runs the

length of the West End, vies with nearby Covent Garden and Soho as the most popular site for sightseers and shoppers.

South Kensington and Chelsea: Just beyond the West End, south of Hyde Park, are the stylish residential districts of South Kensington and Chelsea. These areas contain many impressive estates and important city buildings.

The East End: Flanking the City's eastern side is one of London's most impoverished areas. Historically, the East End was unappealing because both the prevailing winds and the flow of the River Thames move from west to east. In the plague-ridden days before sewers, life on the "wrong" side of the City was truly perilous for one's health. Today the East End is still home to indigent immigrants and the capital's famous Cockneys.

Southwark: The borough of Southwark lies across the river from the City, on the south bank of the Thames. Southwark became notorious as London's entertainment quarter during Elizabethan times, when theaters and brothels were banned within the City.

Public Transportation

Bus and Underground ("tube"): Bus stations and tube stops abound in London, making it relatively easy to get across this vast city. The tube runs every few minutes from about 5:30 am to midnight (7:30 am to 11 pm on Sunday). You can pick up a handy tube map, distributed free at all station ticket windows. While London's comprehensive tube transport network may seem intimidating at first, it is surprisingly easy to navigate, and can feel very familiar after just a few rides. However, be aware that certain stations involve going up and down lengthy stairways; others provide escalators. Hold on to your subway ticket throughout the ride; you must insert it in a turnstile to exit the subway.

Taxicabs: You may opt to take a cab once or twice. Metered cabs may be hailed on the street (when "for hire" sign is lit) or ordered by phone. A 10% to 15% tip is usual for a cab ride. Expect an additional charge for travel after 8 pm, and on weekends.

On Foot: London can be a somewhat confusing city to negotiate. It seems as though no two streets run parallel, and even locals regularly consult maps. But in the winding streets of The City and in the tourist area of the West End, there's no better way to go. Don't forget that cars drive on the left, and look both ways before stepping off the curb. Also, cars have the right-of-way over pedestrians; take care even when the light seems to be in your favor.

11. DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

France

Area: 248,573 square miles
Capital: Paris
Language: French
Location: France is a large country, two and a half times as big as Great Britain, extending for some 600 miles from north to south and from east to west. It has coastlines on both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Its southern land border is Spain; to the north are Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany; to the east are Switzerland and Italy.
Geography: Except for extreme northern France, which is part of the Flanders plain, the country may be described as four river basins and a plateau. Three of the streams flow west—the Seine into the English Channel, the Loire into the Atlantic, and the Garonne into the Bay of Biscay. The Rhône flows south into the Mediterranean. For about 100 miles, the Rhine is France's eastern border. In the Alps, near the Italian and Swiss borders, is Europe's highest point—Mont Blanc, at 15,781 feet.
Population (2013 estimate): 65,951,611
Religion: Roman Catholic (83-88%), Muslim (5-10%), Protestant (2%), Jewish (1%), unaffiliated (4%)
Time Zone: France is ahead of U.S. Eastern Time by six hours, Central Time by seven hours, Mountain Time by eight hours, and Pacific Time by nine hours. The French use the 24-hour clock (they do not use the am and pm system): after midday, just continue counting 13, 14, and so on to provide the 24-hour clock time. For example, 1 pm = 13:00.

Holidays (nationally recognized; does not include religious, local or culturally based events)**:**

01/01 New Year's Day
04/18 Good Friday
04/21 Easter Monday
05/01 Labor Day / May Day
05/08 WWII Victory Day
05/29 Ascension Day
06/09 Whit Monday
07/14 Bastille Day
08/15 Assumption of Mary
11/01 All Saints
11/11 Armistice Day
12/24 Christmas Eve
12/25 Christmas Day
12/26 St. Stephen's Day

FRANCE HAS BEEN INHABITED SINCE PREHISTORIC TIMES, as is evidenced by the Lascaux cave paintings in the Dordogne that date back about 25,000 years. By 10,000 B.C., human communities had migrated across the whole of France. After the ice cap receded, the climate became warmer and wetter, and by about 7000 B.C., farming and pastoral communities were springing up. By 2000 B.C., copper made its debut, and by 1800 B.C., the Bronze Age had arrived in the southeast of the country. Trade links with Spain, central Europe, and Wessex in Britain were soon established.

When the Celts journeyed to the land they called Gaul sometime before the 7th century B.C., it was occupied by Iberians and Ligurians. Greeks colonized the area around Marseille—which they called Massilia—founding the oldest city in France. And Julius Caesar conquered Gaul for Rome in 57-52 B.C. Lutecia, later to become Paris, was built by the Gallo-Romans in 52 B.C., and the great Roman Amphitheater at Arles was built in 46 B.C. During the 5th century A.D., Germanic tribes invaded, especially the Franks, who converted to Christianity under Clovis I and established the kingdom that became known as France.

On Christmas Day, 800, Charlemagne, king of the Franks, was crowned by the pope in Rome as Holy Roman Emperor, inspiring a unified national spirit across all of France. Although Charlemagne's empire was not long-lasting, it left an indelible imprint upon the French consciousness, even though the vulnerability of successive rulers allowed regional princes, such as the dukes of Burgundy and Normandy, to amass tremendous power. In 987, however, the French nobility elected Hugh Capet king of France, and from this point, French national history is generally agreed to begin. Capet helped to centralize the monarchy, led the Crusades and wars with England, and instituted the Capetian dynasty.

During the 12th and 13th centuries, trade prospered, craft guilds were founded, and new towns cropped up. Paris grew in importance as the royal city and as the intellectual mecca of Europe; the newly established Sorbonne (1257) drew such teachers, lecturers, and philosophers as Abelard, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas.

Unfortunately, this era of accomplishment and peace was followed by the destruction and bloodshed of the Hundred Years War of 1337-1453. At its core, the war was essentially a dynastic struggle with England, whose Norman kings held vast feudal estates in France. The series of wars ultimately benefited France, by forcing out the English and intensifying the strength of the French monarchy. Once again, as in the days of Charlemagne, the French throne exuded a powerful, almost mystic aura, this time with the aid of Joan of Arc, whose divine voices urged her to lead the French to victory at Orleans in 1429 and to champion Charles VII as king of France.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Valois and Bourbon kings continued to fortify the royal authority, moving the country toward absolute monarchy. The ironclad rule of Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin (1624-61) set the stage for their splendid successor, Louis XIV, whose reign was probably unequaled in the history of Europe for its elaborate and magnificent style. He established the Baroque power base of Versailles and introduced Europe to a gloriously gilded France—so resplendent that it earned him the title of the Sun King. His was an age of brilliant achievements in art and literature, making France indisputably the intellectual capital of Europe. French became the international language for more than a century afterward.

Ironically, the very splendor of the French monarchy helped precipitate its downfall, for it was expensive to maintain and someone had to pay. The major cause of the French Revolution was the system of special privileges that exempted nobles and clergy from the taxes paid by the peasants and the middle class. In 1789, these latter groups rebelled against the monarchy, guillotined both the king and his queen, (Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette), and established the short-lived First Republic. The chaos that followed the revolution resulted in the rise of Napoleon, who proclaimed himself emperor in 1804 and, though a dictator, undertook to spread the ideal of liberty to the world through his conquests. After his fall in 1814, the monarchy was restored.

In the 19th century, France alternated between democracy and dictatorship and was characterized by the steady growth of a new French Empire. A revolution in 1848 established a Second Republic, which was superseded by the dictatorship of Napoleon III, nephew of the emperor. Finally, a Third Republic was

founded in 1870, during which the Impressionist school of painting emerged, as well as the Modernist movement of music and poetry, heralded by composers Ravel and Debussy and poets Mallarme and Verlaine.

From 1914-18, France fought with the Allies in World War I. Afterwards, with the Treaty of Versailles (1919), France regained the areas of Alsace and Lorraine. Between wars, France nourished major artistic and philosophical movements: Constructivism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and Existentialism.

At the beginning of World War II, France sided with the Allies until it was invaded and defeated by Germany in 1940. The French government, under Marshal Philippe Petain, a World War I hero, established a puppet government in the Vichy. On D-Day—June 6, 1944—the Allies landed on the beaches of Normandy and successfully invaded France. Additional Allied forces landed in Provence. Paris was liberated in August 1944, and France immediately declared full allegiance to the Allies. A provisional government then took power under General, Charles de Gaulle.

After World War II, the Fourth Republic was created; it collapsed in 1958 under the pressure of a revolution in Algeria. A Fifth Republic, engineered by de Gaulle, was formed, and under a new constitution, De Gaulle became the first president. He resigned in 1969, after widespread disturbances were begun by student riots in Paris. In 1981, Francois Mitterrand was elected the first Socialist president of France since World War II. He was reelected to a second term in 1988. In 1995, Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris, was elected president.

France made international headlines on the technological front in 1990, when its new TGV (*Train à Grande Vitesse*) clocked a world record of 322 mph on a practice run. Today, the TGV operates daily service between a number of destinations. In 1997, the world's largest library, the Bibliotheque Nationale Francois Mitterrand, was inaugurated in Paris, and in 1998, France hosted and won the soccer World Cup, amid enthusiastic crowds the likes of which had not been seen since the end of the war. In 1999, France launched the euro—the single European currency—on prices in shops and restaurants (the actual euro bills and coins were introduced in January 2002).

Despite its many modern advances, however, visitors can, for the most part, still see the country's past. The French preserve their old buildings well, be they the royal chateaux of Blois and Chambord in the Loire Valley or the splendid cathedrals of Chartres and Reims. The landscapes of France are captivating, from the rugged Pyrenees mountains of southern France, and the snow-covered Alps farther north, to the luxuriant vegetation and posh villas of the sun-kissed Riviera on the Mediterranean coast, to the stark chalk cliffs of Normandy's beaches.

Two of the most appealing areas in France, Provence and the Riviera, are adjacent to one another. Sunny Provence includes towns unmatched anywhere for their charm and beauty; they are set in the craggy mountains from Avignon southeast to Aix-en-Provence. Just south and west is the Riviera, stretching along the coast from Menton to St. Tropez. This is a region beloved by modern painters like Picasso and Matisse for its dramatic cliffs overlooking the clear blue Mediterranean waters, its quaint bays and fishing villages, and its elegant villas and stylish beaches.

12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books, Maps, and Movies

If your local store or library doesn't stock the books or movies below, the Internet offers a wide variety of options for finding older or rare stock – try AbeBooks (abebooks.com), Alibris (albris.com), Amazon (amazon.com) or Barnes & Noble (bn.com) — or any of the smaller websites. Of course, this selection is not meant to be comprehensive, and is offered as a starting point for your research.

Paris to the Moon by Adam Gopnik (Travel Essays)
A self-described "comic-sentimental essayist," Gopnik spent the years from 1995 to 2000 in Paris writing the "Paris Journal" for the *New Yorker*. Collected here are his most charming, insightful, heartfelt, and humorous dispatches on the Parisian people, culture, food, economy, and lifestyle.

Paris in the Fifties by Stanley Karnow (Memoir)
The passions, the jazz, the wine, and the personalities of postwar Paris come to life in this vibrant portrait from a Pulitzer Prize-winning author who was there.

A Moveable Feast by Ernest Hemingway (Memoir)
Personal reminiscences and sketches of Paris, which Hemingway created during his time there between 1921 and 1926.

A Traveller's History of France by Robert Cole (History)
Written for the general reader, this 256-page volume begins with the first conquests of ancient Gaul and continues through the Renaissance, the French Revolution, and on through the events of 20th-century French history. Includes maps and an A-Z gazetteer.

Blood Sisters: The French Revolution in Women's Memory by Marilyn Talom (History)
During the French Revolution, scores of female "aristocrats and bourgeoises, royalists and republicans, as well as servants and peasants, left accounts of the turbulence they witnessed. This collection of the best of these women's chronicles...ranges from the political to the personal and eloquently attests to the human costs of radical social change." —Book News

The French by Theodore Zeldin (Culture)
A witty survey of the country of France, its people, and all things French. The author draws on comments from French men, women, children, and seniors to answer the questions foreign visitors ask most.

France Today by John Ardagh (History)
History scholars regard this volume to be one of the best introductions to modern France. The 3rd edition was updated in 1995 to include end-of-the-century happenings.

Cultural Atlas of France by John Ardagh (History)
Francophiles will find this re-creation of French culture invaluable. The book integrates text, maps, and illustrations.

Lonely Planet: World Food France by Steve Fallon (Travel)
Published in 2000, this 304-page book takes readers on a culinary tour of each of the regions of France. Included are sections on local specialties, an extensive guide to wines and wine regions, a culinary dictionary, a quick reference glossary, useful phrases for every food and drink occasion, and many photographs and recipes.

London— Optional Extension

A Traveller's History of England by Christopher Daniell (History—England)
An entertaining refresher course in English history, from hunter-gatherers to Margaret Thatcher's resignation. Written by a noted British historian and archaeologist.

Literary London edited and published by Spellmont Ltd (Travel Writing—England)
A collection of descriptions of London locales written by Conan Doyle, Chaucer, T.S. Eliot, Keats, Shaw, Dickens, and a host of other English literary lions.

London by Edward Rutherfurd (Fiction—England)
A very ambitious historical novel of London's past, which sweeps from Roman times through the medieval, Elizabethan, Victorian, and Edwardian eras on up to the present.

Guidebooks:
Your Program Director Leader will be happy to provide recommendations and suggestions during the trip, so a guidebook is not a necessity. But a good one can be invaluable as a one-stop reference, so for those travelers who have asked for suggestions, we offer these guidelines. Since different guidebook series each have their own target audience and structure, it is well worth your time to browse your local library or bookstore to find the one(s) you like best. To get you started, here is some general information on the most popular series:

Culture Smart! – Focuses on local customs and etiquette instead of sights, dining, etc.
DK Eyewitness – Innovative visuals make these books easy to use and a nice souvenir once the trip is over. The focus is primarily on the sights and activities.
Fodor's – A classic guidebook with strong information on activities, shopping, and dining. Good mix of upscale recommendations and budget suggestions.
Frommer's – A comprehensive guide series that is known for its restaurant recommendations.
Insight – Offers more information on history and culture than usual, nice visuals, good maps.
Lonely Planet – Practical guides geared towards a more adventurous traveler on a budget.
National Geographic – From the same company that publishes the magazine. Excellent photographs, good information on history, nature, and culture.
Rough Guides –For the independent traveler on a budget. Particularly known for their maps.

Maps:
Most hotels will provide maps free of charge at the reception desk or in your room. These maps are usually sufficient for our travelers, but if you plan on any independent exploration, you may wish to consider purchasing a map before your departure. This can be especially useful in a country that doesn't use the Roman alphabet as the hotel maps may only be printed in the local language.

Some recommended map series include: Rand McNally international maps (especially the StreetWise series), Insight's FlexiMaps, and Rough Guide's destination maps. We suggest that you visit your local bookstore or library to get a better sense of which type of map is best for your needs before making a purchase.

Suggested Movies

Here are few of our favorite movies that are about, or set in, or from the region you'll be traveling. Most are available at movie rental stores and websites—or even your public library. Sometimes films produced outside of the U.S. may be hard to find, but they are usually available online. Lists are highly subjective – and choosing the best of French or English films in under fifty pages is a fool's errand. If your favorites are missing, start a chat with fellow travelers and you'll likely find even more treasured movies to share.

France:

Paris Je T'aime (2006, color) An unusual project that strings together 20 short films with only one thing in common—they all take place in Paris. There's some big names involved, both starring (Steve Buscemi, Juliette Binoche, Nick Nolte, Natalie Portman, Gena Rowlands) and directing (the Coen brothers, Wes Craven, Gerard Depardieu, Gurinder Chadha). Some of the films are in English and some in French with subtitles.

Midnight in Paris. (2011, color) A romantic comedy/fantasy written and directed by Woody Allen. The film follows Gil Pender, a screenwriter, who is confronts the shortcomings of his relationship with his materialistic fiancée. Their divergent goals, become increasingly exaggerated as he travels back in time each night at midnight. The movie explores themes of nostalgia and modernism.

Amelie starring Audrey Tautou and Mathieu Kassovitz (2001, color) A romantic comedy about a girl named Amélie Poulain and her magical journey to help others and find true love of her own. This 2001 gem tells the heartwarming story of a shy waitress in Paris who decides to change the lives of those around her for the better, while struggling with her own isolation. The award-winning film from director Jean-Pierre Jeunet is a whimsical depiction of contemporary Parisian life, sure to capture the hearts of its viewers time and time again.

Charade starring Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant (1963, color) Newly widowed and broke, Regina Lambert (played by Hepburn) tries to find the fortune her late husband stole—before his partners in crime find it. But can she trust the mysterious man who says he's trying to help her (Grant)? It's two great stars, at their best, in Paris.

Julie & Julia starring Meryl Streep and Amy Adams (2009, color) Two stories intertwine: "Julia" focuses on Julia Child's first forays into French cooking while "Julie" is about a modern-day writer's attempt to make every recipe in Childs' first cookbook. Although only partly set in France, French cooking plays a key role in almost every scene.

To Catch a Thief starring Grace Kelly and Cary Grant (1955, color) A retired jewel thief tries to clear his name after a rash of burglaries on the French Rivera. Not only a good story, but also notable as the last film Grace Kelly made with Alfred Hitchcock before starting a new career as Princess of Monaco.

The Longest Day starring John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Robert Mitchum (1963, B&W) An epic re-telling of D-Day from the American, English, French, and German points of view. The filmmakers tried to be as authentic as possible, with actors speaking the correct native language (English, French, or German) and battle scenes that were recreated with the help of military advisors who were at D-Day themselves.

La Vie En Rose starring Marion Cotillard (2007, color) In an Oscar-winning performance, Cotillard transforms herself into the famous French singer Edith Piaf for this biopic told as a series of non-linear flashbacks. In French with subtitles.

A Very Long Engagement starring Audrey Tautou and Gaspard Ulliel (2004, color) At the end of WWI, five French soldiers are thrown into the no-man's land between the French and German trenches. All five are declared dead, but Mathilde, the tenacious fiancée of the youngest victim, is convinced that at least one soldier is still alive. Is it her soldier? The film does a good job at balancing the sadness of WWI with humor, sweetness, and romance. In French with subtitles.

Au revoir, les enfants A 1987 film from director Louis Malle, about an 11-year-old boy's experience at a Catholic boarding school during the Nazi occupation of France. Rivals at first, the two students Julien and Jean Bonnet form a bond and eventually become best of friends. Julien learns that Jean is Jewish and the priests at their school are hiding him from the Nazis. On one cold morning in January 1944, the boy's friendship is cut short by a traumatic moment that will never be forgotten.

Jules and Jim This 1962 film from Director François Truffaut, is about three people in love and how their relationship evolves over the years. Set in Paris before World War I, two friends, Jules and Jim, fall in love with the same women, Catherine. This French cinematic masterpiece has it all—a dissection of that uniquely French concept *ménage a trois*, thoughtful insights on friendship, love, and war, and an oddly endearing connection between the three.

England:

Mrs. Brown starring Judi Dench and Billy Connolly (1997, color) After the death of her husband, Queen Victoria plunged herself into an intense grief that only lightened with the help and support of one of her favorite servants, the highlander John Brown. But a friendship between queen and servant is simply "not done", and the scandal threatens the Queen's popularity and position. Consider watching this along with ***Young Victoria***, starring Emily Blunt and Rupert Friend (2009, color), for a Victoria double feature.

Gosford Park directed by Robert Altman (2001, color) "Upstairs, Downstairs" meets Agatha Christie in this whodunit set in an English country estate in 1932. A powerhouse ensemble cast that includes British stars such as Helen Mirren, Maggie Smith, Michael Gambon, Kristin Scott Thomas, Stephen Fry, Kelly Macdonald, and Clive Owens.

Bend it Like Beckham starring Parminder Nagra and Keira Knightley (2002, color) Showcasing the "new Britain" (a term used to describe modern Britain's increasing diversity), this light comedy follows Jess, a second-generation Brit of Indian descent who wants to play women's soccer instead of finding the perfect Indian boyfriend.

84 Charring Cross Road starring Anne Bancroft and Anthony Hopkins (1984, color) When a New York book lover stumbles across an ad for a London bookshop that does mail-order, she begins an unlikely transatlantic friendship with the bookseller, located at 84, Charring Cross Road. Set during the late 1940s through the 1960s, the movie shows the changes in both London and New York over the years.

Shakespeare in Love starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Joseph Fiennes (1998, color) A whimsical "could-have-been" take on how a romance might have inspired Shakespeare to write one of his most famous plays. Although not a true episode in Shakespeare's life, the film does a good job at mixing the bawdy and humorous spirit of Elizabethan times with a modern romance. Written by Tom Stoppard who has turned to Shakespeare before, turning Hamlet into ***Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead.***

Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites

If you have access to the Internet, the following sites offer a wealth of information:

Visit the Grand Circle Community website for a world of travel news and information:
www.gct.com/community

Government websites:
International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)
www.cdc.gov/travel
U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information
www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel
Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency responsible for screening luggage in U.S.
www.tsa.gov/public
National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information
www.travel.state.gov

General travel information websites:
Travel books
www.amazon.com
www.barnesandnoble.com
World weather
www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages
www.travlang.com/languages
Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.
www.travelite.org
Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe
www.cybercafes.com
Electric current and plug types
www.kropla.com/electric2.htm
Foreign exchange rates
www.oanda.com/converter/classic
ATM locators
www.mastercard.com/atm for **Cirrus ATMs**
www.visa.com/pd/atm **for PLUS ATMs**

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