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France & United Kingdom Country Book

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Overview & Country Facts:

France is a stable democracy located in Western Europe; to the east, it borders Spain, and to the west, it borders Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and Switzerland. The semi-presidential government is comprised of 96 mainland departments, and also has five overseas departments. Independent centrist Emmanuel Macron won the country's most recent presidential elections on 7 May 2017 after a runoff against far-right Front National Candidate Marine Le Pen. While Macron won with approximately 66 percent of the vote, he will have to form a government with other parties, which will require overcoming deep-rooted political divisions and uniting a deeply divided country. Macron may hope that his appointment of centrist Édouard Philippe as prime minister will help parties find common ground. Among the most divisive issues is France's economy, which while it is one of the largest economies in the European Union struggles with consistently high unemployment and slow economic growth.

The overall assessment of threats in France is Medium. In general, the security concern visitors to France are most likely to encounter is crime. Petty crime is the security concern travelers to France are most likely to encounter, particularly in the country's larger cities. Strikes in the public and private sectors occur frequently and may disrupt services used by travelers, including transportation. Street demonstrations also occur regularly in the country, frequently disrupting traffic. Although protests are usually peaceful, they sometimes devolve into violence. The threat of terrorism perpetrated by Islamist militants such as those affiliated with or inspired by al-Qaeda or the Islamic State (IS) represents a continuing threat in France. Several terrorist attacks have occurred in France in recent years. Possibly the most notable attack took place in central Paris on 13 November 2015. Several well-organized, coordinated attacks targeted civilian locations including Stade de France, cafes and a concert venue. Additional information can be found in the Security Issues section. Continued French military intervention in central Africa and the Middle East contributes to concerns of homegrown terrorist attacks. Future attacks could involve largescale bombings or less sophisticated but still deadly smaller-scale assaults. Additionally, there is a persistent threat posed by radicalized individuals who are capable of carrying out "lone wolf" attacks that are difficult to detect or prevent. Domestic terrorist groups most notably the Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC) have carried out occasional attacks in France in the past, but foreign visitors are rarely affected.

Country Facts:	
Official Country Name	French Republic
Type of Government	Republic
Leadership	President: Emmanuel macron, Prime Minister Édouard Philippe
Capital	Paris
Official Language	French
Population	67.2 million
Ethnic Divisions	French with North African, Indochinese and Basque minorities
Religion	Roman Catholic (83-88%), Protestant (2%), Islam (5-10%), Judaism (1%)
GDP Growth	0.3% (2019)
Inflation	0.7% (2019)
Unemployment	8.4% (2019)
Currency	Euro
Office Work Week	Monday – Friday
Time Zone Offset	UTC + 1 (Daylight Saving Time observed)
Country Phone Code	33
Capital City Phone Code	01
Nationwide Emergency Number(s)	112 (all emergencies, (17 (police), 18 (fire and medical), 15 (backup medical)
Electricity	230 V, 50 Hz
Plug Styles	Types C, E

Current Analysis:

- Centrist Emmanuel Macron became France's new president in May 2017 after winning a runoff vote against far-right Marine Le Pen on 7 May 2017.
- Macron faces the challenge of campaigning for his party, En Marche!, ahead of parliamentary elections in mid to late June 2017. He will likely have to build a coalition in order to effectively govern France.

Political & Economical Developments:

Political Situation:

Independent centrist Emmanuel Macron, who founded the young En Marche! Party, won the country's most recent presidential elections on 7 May 2017 after a runoff against far-right Front National candidate Marine Le Pen. While Macron won with approximately 66 percent of the vote, he will likely have to form a government with other parties following parliamentary elections scheduled on 11 and 18 June, which will require overcoming deep-rooted political divisions and uniting a very divided country. In a surprise development, estimates indicate that 9 percent of voters submitted blank ballots (or ballots stating a choice other than Le Pen or Macron); the act referred to in France as ballot blanc is common in France, but this was the highest percentage of the overall vote since the Fifth Republic was founded in 1958. The number of protest votes in addition to the portion of the electorate that abstained highlights how contentious this election was, a trend that will likely continue ahead of France's legislative elections in June 2017.

Macron may hope that his appointment of centrist Édouard Philippe as prime minister will help parties find common ground. While En Marche! will have candidates running in almost every district in the country, it is relatively unlikely that En Marche! will achieve an absolute majority of the votes, meaning Macron will need to build a coalition in order to push through many of the policy initiatives he campaigned on. The parliamentary elections will be closely watched both domestically and internationally.

International Relations

Much of the narrative surrounding France's international relations centers on the country's relationship with Europe. While the country is a member of the European Union (EU), recent elections most notably the most recent presidential election highlighted growing dissatisfaction with the EU within France's population. One party, the Front National (FN), in particular capitalized on this notion; the FN presidential candidate Marine Le Pen campaigned on France leaving the union as the United Kingdom voted to do in the summer of 2016. While President Emmanuel Macron is moving forward with a pro-EU agenda, France's relationship with other European countries may face challenges moving forward.

Economic Situation:

Since the 2008 global financial crisis, the French economy has grown steadily. However, compared to its European competitors, growth has not been quite as high as hoped. In mid-2016, then President Francois Hollande introduced controversial labor reforms that were intended to ease the burden on employers, which would theoretically make job creation easier. However, by the end of 2016 French economic growth reached only 1.1 percent; while this marked the highest growth in France since 2012, it was quite lower than the European Union (EU) average of 1.8 percent. Furthermore, according to Financial Times, economic growth dropped to 0.3 percent in the first quarter of 2017; the economy is not forecast to improve by

much over the second and third quarters of the year, although these odds may change in light of June's parliamentary elections. The economy will continue to be a main issue Macron's government faces. Job creation remains one of France's most serious problems and unemployment remains near 10 percent, despite the aforementioned labor reforms. In the World Bank's 2019 Ease of Doing Business Survey, France ranked 32nd out of 190 countries globally.

Security Issues:

- Crime, mostly in the form of petty theft, is the security concern in France that is most likely to affect travelers. Racially-motivated crime has become a growing problem in recent years.
- Strikes occur often in France.
- Demonstrations and protests are common occurrences in the country.
- The threat of terrorism remains a significant concern across France.

Crime:

Crime is the security concern travelers to France are most likely to encounter, particularly in larger urban areas such as Paris, Marseille and Nice. Most incidents affecting travelers involve nonviolent, opportunistic crime such as pickpocketing and purse snatching as well as thefts from hotel rooms and parked vehicles. Thieves frequent areas popular with tourists, including hotel lobbies, famous historic sites, shops, restaurants and beaches. Criminals also operate on board public transportation, particularly on the metro, buses and on both regional and long-distance trains. Sophisticated groups of thieves (who are often well-dressed) sometimes operate in teams, with one member distracting the target while an accomplice steals valuables. Foreign travelers may be specifically targeted due to their perceived unfamiliarity with their surroundings. Caution is warranted when withdrawing cash from ATMs, as criminals frequently target users. Although relatively infrequent, muggings and street robberies do sometimes occur, especially during the late-night and early morning hours in urban areas.

Crime rates are higher in the impoverished suburban areas surrounding major cities, where incidents of civil unrest and rioting have broken out in the past. Tensions are elevated in these areas because the underlying issues that have sparked rioting in the past remain unresolved. There is a possibility that even minor incidents (such as a police shooting) in these impoverished areas could trigger a resurgence of civil unrest and rioting. Studies in recent years indicate an increasing number of sexual assaults reported in France. A study published by the French National Observatory of Crime and Criminal Justice (ONDRP) in 2016 indicated that the highest number of rapes per capita in Paris was in the 1st arrondissement, where many national landmarks and tourist attractions are located. While approximately 25 percent of the reported cases in Paris overall involved two people who were acquainted, around 20 percent of reported incidents occurred just after the victim met their attacker. While there is no indication that foreigners are directly targeted in sexual assaults, travelers should take care when around new acquaintances and should not accept drinks from strangers while in France, particularly if at nightclubs.

In recent years, France has witnessed an increase in the number of incidents of anti-Semitism and of other crimes against ethnic and religious minorities; past incidents have included vandalism of religious sites and less frequently physical assaults. The likelihood of anti-Semitic attacks is highest during periods of heightened tensions in the Middle East. In addition, the Chinese government has expressed concern regarding the growing number of crimes targeting Chinese nationals, particularly tourists.

Labor Strikes:

Labor strikes in the public and private sectors occur very frequently in the country. The primary concern regarding labor actions is their potential to disrupt services used by travelers, such as aviation and public transportation. Strikes are often called with little prior notice, so travelers should keep abreast of announcements ahead of and during trips. Demonstrations and protests which are discussed further below often accompany strikes.

Demonstrations:

Demonstrations and protests related to domestic and international political, economic and social issues occur extremely often in France. These events may range from small groups to hundreds of thousands of people. Large demonstrations are most common in urban areas, such as Paris or Marseille. The primary security concern associated with street demonstrations for short-term visitors is traffic disruptions that can result from these protests, particularly in the case of largescale events. While incidents of violence are relatively infrequent, they have occurred in the past. Violence is most likely to occur when extremist right- or left-wing elements are present.

Terrorism:

Terrorism perpetrated by Islamist militant groups such as al-Qaeda or the Islamic State (IS) represents a significant threat in France. The most notable terrorist attack carried out by Islamist militants occurred on 13 November 2015 when several near-simultaneous attacks occurred in central Paris.

In the aftermath of these incidents, authorities declared a state of emergency, which has been extended several times and is expected to continue through at least November 2017. Tight border controls remain in place and additional security measures have been implemented at airports and train stations.

Attacks carried out by radicalized individuals or groups who are inspired by as opposed to coordinated by Islamist militant groups. Several such attacks which are difficult to detect or prevent have occurred in the past two years, including a vehicular attack in Nice in July 2016 and several small-scale shootings and physical assaults in Paris in 2017. Police in France often carry out antiterror raids to help address the threat posed by radicalized individuals who are capable of carrying out "lone wolf" attacks that are difficult to detect or prevent.

Domestic terrorism is also a concern, although less so in recent years than in the past. The Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC) has historically pressed for independence from France by conducting a low-intensity terror campaign. Most attacks committed by Corsican separatists take place on the island of Corsica, although some attacks have occurred on the French mainland. These incidents usually occur during the early morning hours, when the likelihood of causing injuries is low. The main targets include non-Corsican-owned vacation homes and French government interests. In June 2014, the FLNC announced an immediate end to its military activity, and there is optimism that the move will lead to lasting peace. However, in July 2016, a splinter group of the FLNC stated that if the Islamic State (IS) were to carry out an attack in Corsica, it would respond in kind. Additionally, the group stated it would also hold the French government accountable for any attack, which increases the risk of attacks targeting the government.

Country Tips:

- International industrial espionage in France has raised serious concern, and there have been indications that the government sanctions it. Travelers should keep all confidential documents and laptop computers with them at all times and should avoid leaving such items in hotel rooms. Travelers should also avoid discussing confidential business matters on French airlines and in hotels and restaurants.
- Tap water is generally considered safe to drink in most major French cities.

Customs & Immigration:

The Entry Requirements section reflects the most correct and up-to-date information to the best knowledge of UnitedHealthcare Global. Setting requirements for entry into the country is the sole prerogative of each country's government, and requirements may change, sometimes with little or no prior notice. Travelers should always contact the diplomatic representation of the country prior to departure to verify entry requirements.

Passports and Visas:

France is a signatory to the Schengen Agreement, which provides for the free movement of travelers between 26 signatory countries within Europe under a common visa policy. The so-called Schengen visa is typically a single-entry visa that allows visitors to travel between member states without needing a separate visa for each country. There are no internal border checkpoints between the following states: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland and the United Kingdom although members of the European Union are not signatories to the Schengen Agreement and maintain their own visa requirements. It is important to note that border controls can be implemented with little notice, which has been a growing issue in light of the refugee and migrant crisis.

The following entry regulations apply to the Schengen countries:

Nationals of the Schengen countries are not required to have a visa to travel between the Schengen countries, but should carry a national identification card or passport as a means of identification.

Holders of a Schengen country's residence title can travel freely in the Schengen area for a period of up to 90 days.

Citizens of countries not party to the Schengen Agreement are required to have a passport for entry into the first Schengen country visited. Passports are not required to travel between Schengen countries, but may be required if asked for identification.

A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days within a six-month period (for both business and leisure trips) for residents of several dozen countries (including Australia, Canada, Croatia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States).

Travelers who are staying longer than 90 days either for work, school, or to reside in the European Union are required to apply for a Schengen visa. Among the requirements for a Schengen visa are documentation of adequate medical insurance (minimum coverage of 30,000 euros), application form, two passport photos and applicable fees. There may be additional requirements based on the type of visa applied for. To meet the medical insurance requirement, travelers must provide a letter from their insurance company stating that they will be covered for any medical and repatriation expenses applicable to the entire Schengen area for the entire duration of the intended stay.

Travelers requiring a Schengen Visa should apply for the visa at the embassy or consulate of the traveler's main destination country or, if traveling for short periods between multiple countries, at the embassy or consulate of the first country the traveler will enter upon arrival in the Schengen area. Travelers crossing external borders that is, borders that are shared with non-Schengen countries inbound or outbound will be subject to all entry requirement checks, including identification, documentation and visa (if applicable).

Health:

There are no vaccinations required to enter France from any country.

Entry/Departure Taxes:

There is no airport tax levied on passengers upon embarkation at French airports.

Imports and Exports

Visitors from non-European Union countries over the age of 17 can import up to the designated amounts of the following noncommercial items (items of personal or family use or items intended as presents) duty-free:

- 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco;** A total of one liter of spirits exceeding 22 percent volume or undenatured ethyl alcohol of 80 percent volume (or greater) or a total of 2 liters of alcoholic beverages under 22 percent volume;
- Four liters of still wine;
- 16 liters of beer; and
- Other items up to a value of 430 euros for air and sea travelers (this amount is reduced to 150 euros for travelers under 15 years-old).

Prohibitions and restrictions on drugs, medicines, weapons, explosive materials and pornographic materials are covered by national legislation. There are no restrictions on the amount of foreign currency that can be imported into the European Union. However, travelers entering or leaving the EU with more than 10,000 euros (or the equivalent in other currencies) must make a declaration to the customs official.

** EU member states have the option of restricting imports of tobacco products in the interest of their respective health policies. The limit according to this second option is 40 cigarettes or 20 cigarillos or 10 cigars or 50 grams of tobacco.

Currency:

The euro (€) is the official currency of France. Euro coins have been minted in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents, as well as full one- and two-euro coins. Euro bank notes are available in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. ATMs are widely available and are the best means of withdrawing local currency.

Credit cards are also widely accepted. However, many European countries have adopted a type of credit card featuring a microchip that requires users to enter a personal identification number when making a purchase. Credit cards with only a magnetic stripe on the back such as those issued by banks in the United States may be rejected by automatic kiosks and other retail merchants. While in theory a clerk can manually swipe the card to complete the transaction, some merchants may be unable or unwilling to do so (for example, due to a language barrier or lack of training). Travelers checks are most often accepted in larger cities and towns; however, they may not be as widely accepted in provincial areas. Currency exchanges may charge exorbitant fees (sometimes as high as 13 percent).

Communications:

The French telephone system is modern and efficient. Many public telephones accept phone cards, which may be purchased at post offices and metro stations.

France Country Code:

33

Paris City Code:

1

Montpellier City Code:

467

Nice City Code:

4

Strasbourg City Code:

3

Calling France landline from abroad:

Country exit code + 33 + city code + phone number

Calling France mobile phone from abroad:

Country exit code + 33 + mobile code* + phone number

Calling France landline from within country:

0 + city code + phone number

Calling France mobile phone from within country:

0 + mobile code* + phone number

Making international calls

from France: 00 + country code + city code + phone number

**Mobile codes vary by call recipient's provider.*

Cultural Information:

Language:

French is the official language. English is also widely understood in tourist areas.

Cultural Tips:

- The French use titles at greetings and in conversation. Visitors should use titles until invited to use first names and address all women, except for young girls, as "Madame." The title "Mademoiselle" is used for young girls and may be seen as condescending in any other context.
- An aggressive handshake is considered impolite. The French shake hands with a light grip and a single quick shake.
- The U.S. sign for "OK" (index finger forming a circle with the thumb) means "zero" in France. The French analog to the "OK" gesture is the upturned thumb.
- French culture values formality in business, especially in written communications. Eye contact is considered important. Hierarchies and bureaucracy are dominant in business settings.
- The tip ("service compris") is included in the bill at restaurants and cafes (although restaurant patrons customarily leave their small change along with the tab or more for exceptional service). In general, taxi drivers are tipped 5-10 percent of the metered charge. Porters at transport depots and hotels usually receive 1 euro per bag.
- By law, smoking is banned in all restaurants, cafes, hotels, casinos and bars. Individuals caught breaking the ban may be subject to a monetary fine, as will owners of establishments that do not enforce the ban.
- By U.S. standards, French dress formally in cities, especially Paris. Thieves can often spot a foreigner who is wearing athletic shoes.
- French citizens must carry identification at all times. Visitors should carry their passports, as they may encounter impromptu identity checks and it is illegal to be without identification.
- Homosexuality and same-sex marriage are legal in France.

Tips for Female Travelers

Female travelers are often seen by criminals as particularly vulnerable targets. In highly conservative cultures, foreign women may be perceived as promiscuous, inviting unwelcome or violent advances. Female travelers, in turn, are likely to encounter cultural mores that may initially seem startling or offensive. The purpose of this section is to apprise female travelers of such attitudes and customs, offer means to respond without giving offense, and promote a heightened sense for security among female travelers. The information offered below is not intended as advice, nor is it necessarily comprehensive in presenting the challenges female travelers may face. UnitedHealthcare Global encourages female travelers to thoroughly research the areas to which they travel to determine what precautionary measures to take and what to do should they become victims of crime while traveling.

- Under a European Union (EU) directive regarding sexual harassment, employers are obliged to respond to any employee's complaint regarding sexual harassment by proving that they have taken all possible measures against sexual harassment. Employers are financially liable for cases of misconduct.

- Although there is a history of patriarchal family structure in France, business attitudes are quite liberal; female business travelers are unlikely to experience overt discrimination. The majority of urban French women work outside the home, but fewer women than men hold executive positions. Industries which are exceptions include advertising, cosmetics, fashion and art.
- Female visitors should expect to be addressed as "Madame" and should do so when addressing other women.
- When entering churches (whether for prayer or sightseeing), women should be sure that their knees and shoulders are covered.

Health & Hospitals:

Overall, France has an excellent health care system, and high-quality medical care is available throughout the entire country. Public Sector France's public sector includes regional, university and general hospitals. General hospitals cover a range of services, including acute care (medicine, obstetrics and surgery), follow-up care, rehabilitation, long-term care and other outpatient services. They may also provide psychiatric care. Regional hospitals, however, have a higher technical capacity to deal with more complex cases, and often provide a higher level of specialization. Private Sector There is not a large discrepancy in quality of care between private and public hospitals in France, nor a great difference in price. Travelers who choose to use the private system are more likely to avoid waiting lists. Many private hospitals are, however, less equipped to handle emergency or specialized care. The largest hospitals are concentrated in Paris and larger cities. Paris and the southern regions of France are also home to more doctors than the northern part of France.

Introduction to Paris:

City Overview:

Known throughout the world as the "City of Light," Paris is celebrated for its beautiful city plan, its architecture, museums, bridges, cathedrals, parks, shopping, flea markets, sidewalk cafés, wide and luxurious boulevards, elegant cuisine, and numerous monuments. Once confined to an island in the middle of the Seine River, the Ile de la Cité, Paris, founded more than 2,000 years ago, quickly spread to both banks of the river—the rive droit (right bank) and the rive gauche (left bank). The right bank is known for being the commercial heart of the city while the left bank is home to the University of Paris and all that is intellectual and artsy. Paris has always been known to have the aura of romance and mystery and has been the setting for many novels and movies.

City Facts:	
Status:	Capital
Population:	2.141 million

Transportation:

Bus and the Metro/Subway:

Paris has many buses and local trains, but the main mode of travel around Paris is the Metro or Subway. There are 368 metro stations in Paris serving more than six million people every day. To see more sights and have more time, the city buses are a more picturesque way to travel. Maps inside the metro indicate the shortest way to a given destination, as well as where to change trains if necessary. The metro is indicated by the letters R.A.T.P.

Map of Paris Metro:



Districts:

Paris is divided into 20 districts (arrondissements), each possessing a distinct style. City maps will show the districts and all addresses include the district number written in Roman or Arabic numerals followed by “e” or “er.” The last two digits of a Paris zip code indicate in which arrondissement the address is located.

1st Arr. located on the Right Bank, has the most popular attractions, including the Louvre, the Forum des Halles, the Georges Pompidou Centre, Conciergerie and the Jardin des Tuileries.

2nd Arr. is home to the stock exchange (**Bourse**) and primarily a working-class district. The rue de la Paix is a traditional street of goldsmiths and furriers.

3rd Arr. contains one of the best-loved neighborhoods in Paris, Le Marais. Many of the buildings date from the Middle Ages and much of the old has been saved and restored. The Picasso Museum is located in the 3rd Arrondissement.

4th Arr. contains the city hall (**Hôtel de Ville**), Notre-Dame Cathedral, the site of the Victor Hugo Museum, Place des Vosges, Paris’s oldest square, the Sainte-Chapelle and the Conciergerie (King’s Prison), where Marie Antoinette and Robespierre were held before their execution during the French Revolution.

5th Arr., known as the Latin Quarter, includes the Sorbonne, the Panthéon, the Musée de Cluny and the Jardin des Plantes. When people refer to the Left Bank, they usually mean the 5th and 6th arrondissements, an area filled with students, cafes, bistros and street life.

6th Arr. is the heartland of Paris publishing and some believe the most colorful part of the Left Bank. Many earnest young artists can be seen emerging from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

7th Arr. is the home of the Eiffel Tower and is primarily an upscale residential and government-diplomatic area. Napoléon’s Tomb and the Invalides Army Museum are also located here.

8th Arr. is the heart of the Right Bank and the Champs-Élysées. Here you’ll find the fashion houses, the most elegant hotels, expensive restaurants and shops, and the most fashionably attired Parisians.



9th Arr. includes the Quartier de l'Opéra and the strip joints of Pigalle, the major waxworks, Musée Grevin and the famous Folies Bergère.

10th Arr. The Gare du Nord (north train station) and Gare de l'Est are both in this commercial district, which also includes movie theaters and porno houses.

11th Arr. This is the site of place de la Bastille and the new Bastille opera house. It has been a working-class district, attracting new immigrants from all over the world, for many years.

12th Arr. Very few tourists come here. Its major attraction is the Bois de Vincennes, a popular patch of woodland with boating lakes, a racecourse and a zoo.

13th Arr. This working-class neighborhood grew up around the famous Gobelin tapestries works, which can still be visited today. The Gare d'Austerlitz is a landmark.

14th Arr. Montparnasse, home of the "lost generations," is well known. Stein, Toklas, Hemmingway and other American expatriates gathered here in the 1920s. After World War II, it ceased to be the center of intellectual life in Paris, but the memory lingers on in its cafes.

15th Arr. Beginning at Gare Montparnasse, it stretches all the way to the Seine. It is the largest quarter of Paris, but attracts few tourists and has few attractions except for the Parc des Expositions and the Institut Pasteur. Chagall, Léger, Modigliani and many other artists lived in "The Beehive" in the early 20th century.

16th Arr. Originally the village of Passy, where Benjamin Franklin lived most of his years in Paris, this district is still reminiscent of Proust's world. The Bois de Boulogne; the Jardin du Trocadéro; the Musée de Balzac; the Musée Guimet, as well as the Cimetière de Passy, where Manet, Talleyrand, Giraudoux and Debussy are buried, are located here.

17th Arr. Although partly in the 8th, Parc Monceau flows in the 17th. The Palais des Congrès and Porte Maillot Air Terminal are located here.

18th Arr. is the most famous outer quarter of Paris and contains Montmartre. Originally a village, Montmartre became the Parisian symbol for art (Moulin Rouge, Basilica of Sacré Coeur and place due Tertre) at the turn of the century. Utrillo was its native son, Renoir lived here, and Toulouse-Lautrec adopted the area as his own. The most famous enclave of artists in Paris gathered here. Max Jacob, Matisse and Braque all came and went from here. Today, Montmartre is filled with honky tonks and terrible restaurants. Marché aux Puces de Saint-Outen, a famous flea market, is also located here.

19th Arr. What was once the village of La Villette now contains the new Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, a spectacular science museum and park. The Les Buttes-Chaumont, a park where kids can enjoy puppet shows and donkey rides, is also located here.

20th Arr. The Père Lachaise Cemetery, where Jim Morrison, Edith Piaf, Marcel Proust, Oscar Wilde, Isadora Duncan, Sarah Bernhardt, Gertrude Stein, Colette and many, many others are buried, is located here.

La Défense. La Défense, to the west of town, is an ultra-modern business and residential complex. The Grande Arche de la Défense is a towering steel-gray structure. Visitors can ride the panoramic elevator to the rooftop for a spectacular view.

Food & Beverage:

The French consider cooking an art, and French cuisine is popular all over the world. French sauces, soups, crisp breads, tarts and pastries are particularly famous. The first French cookbooks date back to the Middle Ages, and French standards were the early gauge of fine cooking. Lunch was once the main meal of the day, but urban society has changed and many people now have a light lunch and eat their main meal in the evening. In Paris, lunch (**déjeuner**) is usually eaten around noon or 1:00 p.m. and dinner frequently is not before 8:00 p.m. In other parts of the country, particularly rural areas, people eat earlier. The menu may include appetizers, a main dish, salad, cheese, dessert, and wine. The French spend a large portion of their income on food.

Filled croissants and sandwiches in their traditional form can be purchased in shops and cafés. Cafés also offer toasted ham and cheese sandwiches (**croquet-monsieur**) and a plate of salad-type vegetables for a light meal. **Pâtisseries** (pastry shops) sell cakes, and some restaurants sell **crêpes**.

Etiquette in eating is important. Both hands remain above the table at all times, and elbows do not rest on the table. A man may rest his wrists, and a woman her forearms on the table. It is impolite to speak with food in the mouth. It is improper to help oneself twice to cheese. The French eat in the continental style. Lettuce is folded into small pieces with the fork but never cut. Fruit is peeled with a knife and eaten with a fork. Bread is broken with the fingers but never used to wipe the plate. One places the knife and fork parallel across the plate when finished. Formal lunches and dinners may last more than two hours with as many as twelve courses.

In France, the traditional Apéritif is a real friendly ritual. French people like to sip some cocktail, fruit juice or alcohol drink, especially before dinner, when inviting relatives or friends. The very word of "Aperitif" actually designates both the drink and the convivial moment before a meal.

The Aperitif is without any doubt a typical French habit and has become a favored moment in France! More common at family or friend gatherings, this ritual is also widely followed at restaurants today. French gourmets have been drinking a refreshing - generally alcoholic - drink before a meal for a very long time now.

City Attractions & Sightseeing:

The Louvre: The world's largest art museum and a historic monument in Paris. A central landmark of the city, it is located on the Right Bank of the Seine in the city's 1st arrondissement. **Metro Station:** Louvre Rivoli – Line 1



The Eiffel Tower: Built for the World's Fair in 1889, the Eiffel Tower is one of the most recognized structures on the planet. **Metro Station: Bir-Hakeim – Line 6**

Notre Dame de Paris: This famed Gothic cathedral is the seat of the Archbishop of Paris. One of the earliest Gothic cathedrals, Notre Dame was one of the first buildings in the world to use the flying buttress. **Metro Station: Cité – Line 4**

Arc de Triomphe: Located at the western end of the Champs Élysées, the Arc de Triomphe was built at Napoleon's request in 1806 in order to pay tribute to his victories. It was completed in 1836 and is now the home of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Metro Station: Charles de Gaulle – Étoile



Musée de l'Orangerie: is an art gallery of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings located in the west corner of the Tuileries Gardens next to the Place de la Concorde in Paris. Though most famous for being the permanent home for eight Water Lilies murals by Claude Monet, the museum also contains works by Paul Cézanne, Henri Matisse, Amedeo Modigliani, Pablo Picasso, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Henri Rousseau, Alfred Sisley, Chaim Soutine, and Maurice Utrillo, among others.

Metro Station: Concorde – Line 1, 8 & 12

Les Carrières de Paris: Located underneath the 5th, 6th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th arrondissements (note that the tour only goes through the 14th), the Catacombs of Paris are an 18th century burial place. While this may sound like a morbid place to visit, you will be fascinated and amazed by the collection of bones of an estimated six million residents. **Metro Station: Denfert-Rochereau – Line 4 or Line 6**

Panthéon: (Latin: Pantheon, from Greek Πάνθεον meaning "Every God") is a building in the Latin Quarter in Paris. It was originally built as a church dedicated to St. Genevieve and to house the reliquary châsse containing her relics but, after many changes, now functions as a secular mausoleum containing the remains of distinguished French citizens. Designer Jacques-Germain Soufflot had the intention of combining the lightness and brightness of the gothic cathedral with classical principles, but its role as a mausoleum required the great Gothic windows to be blocked. **Metro Station: Cardinal Lemoine – Line 10**

Tuileries Garden: is a public garden located between the Louvre Museum and the Place de la Concorde in the 1st arrondissement of Paris. Created by Catherine de Medicis as the garden of the Tuileries Palace in 1564, it was eventually opened to the public in 1667, and became a public park after the French Revolution. In the 19th and 20th century, it was the place where Parisians celebrated, met, promenaded, and relaxed. Metro Station: Concorde – Line 1, 8 & 12

Grand Palais: (English: Great Palace) is a large historic site, exhibition hall and museum complex located at the Champs-Élysées in the 8th arrondissement of Paris, France. Construction of the Grand Palais began in 1897 following the demolition of the Palais de l'Industrie (Palace of Industry) as part of the preparation works for the Universal Exposition of 1900, which also included the creation of the adjacent Petit Palais and Pont Alexandre III. Metro Station: Champs Elysees – Clemenceau – Line 1 & 13



Shopping:

Shopping is an integral part of visiting Paris. Remember that you are entitled to a refund on the Value Added Tax (VAT) on purchases made while you are in Paris but are subject to certain restrictions. The shopping districts are broken into accessible shopping districts:

1st and 2nd arrondissements: You will find the famous rue de Rivoli here. The Rue St. Honoré, which is parallel to rue de Rivoli, is also renowned for its many stores, which become less elegant as you head toward the Louvre, and more upscale as you approach the 8th arrondissement. The Forum des Halles is the city's biggest shopping mall, the chic boutiques are located on place de l'Opéra. The great jewelry stores are clustered on the prestigious place Vendôme. The 8th arrondissement is where the international elite shop for their haute couture.

Most of the department stores are found in the **9th arrondissement**. Rue de Passy is lined with stores catering to the wealthy residents of the **16th arrondissement**. **The 3rd and 4th arrondissements** are packed with old galleries, boutiques and antique shops.

On the Left Bank, the **5th and 6th arrondissements** contain charming specialty shops and bookstores.

Welcome to the United Kingdom!



Overview & Country Facts:

The United Kingdom is a stable democracy. The most significant issue facing the British government is negotiating an exit from the European Union (EU), a move that voters backed in a June 2016 referendum. Former Prime Minister Theresa May formally began the process, known as Brexit, in March 2017. Newly elected PM Boris Johnson took over in July 2019 and has since renegotiated parts of the existing deal. The United Kingdom has until January 31, 2020 to reach an agreement with the EU before it is dropped from all international agreements pertaining to the union.

Brexit exacerbates the country's existing economic and political issues. Former Prime Minister David Cameron of the Conservative Party lead a coalition government in partnership with the center-left Liberal Democrats from 2010 to 2016, during which the coalition passed numerous austerity measures aimed at cutting public spending that hurt public support for the government and are thought to have contributed to the Brexit referendum results. Additionally, the status of Northern Ireland and Scotland, which have in the past fought for independence from the U.K. and which primarily voted against leaving the European Union, remains unclear. A referendum on Scottish independence took place in September 2014, with the vote siding against independence in a 55 percent to 45 percent split. The Scottish National Party (SNP) leadership is already planning for a new referendum in 2020.

The primary security concern for travelers to the United Kingdom is crime. Most incidents affecting visitors involve opportunistic crime such as burglary, pickpocketing and purse snatching. Street demonstrations related to political, social and economic developments occur regularly in larger cities. Violence has erupted during demonstrations in the past, but most of these actions occur without incident apart from traffic disruptions. Labor strikes in the public and private sectors may affect services used by travelers. The United Kingdom continues to confront the threat posed by terrorist elements, including those motivated by Islamist extremists and "homegrown" radical individuals. Domestically, there is growing concern that dissident paramilitary groups opposed to the peace process in Northern Ireland maintain a capacity and willingness to carry out attacks. Such attacks are likely to be limited to police or military targets within Northern Ireland, and there is no evidence that these groups have the capabilities or weaponry to carry out attacks in mainland Great Britain, comprised of England, Scotland and Wales.

Country Facts	
Official Country Name	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Type of Government	Constitutional Monarchy
Leadership	Queen Elizabeth II. Head of Government: Prime Minister Boris Johnson
Capital	London
Official Language	English
Population	65.65 million (2017)
Ethnic Divisions	English 83.6%, Scottish 8.6%, Welsh 4.9%, Northern Irish 2.9%, Black 2%, Indian 1.8%, Pakistani 1.3%, Mixed 1.2%, Other 1.6%
Religion	Christian (40.2%), Islam (4.8%), No Religion (44.7%), other/unspecified (10.3%)
Growth	1.5% (2019)
Inflation	2.2% (2019)
Unemployment	4.1% (2019)
Currency	Pound sterling
Office Work Week	Monday – Friday
Time Zone Offset	No UTC offset
Country Phone Code	44
Capital City Phone Code	20
Nationwide Emergency Number(s)	999
Electricity	230 volts, 50 cycles AC
Plug Styles	Type G

Current Analysis:

- Prime Minister Boris Johnson took office in July 2019, after Former Prime Minister Theresa May resigned following the "Brexit" referendum. The Conservative Party won the majority of votes in May 2015 elections, making it the first Conservative majority government since 1992.
- The most significant issue facing the government is managing an exit from the European Union.
- A referendum on Scottish independence in September 2014 failed to garner enough support for separation; however, a new referendum may take place in 2020.
- Despite a referendum vote to leave the European Union (EU) on 23 June 2016, the U.K. remains a member of the union and is thus affected by a number of supranational developments and challenges.

Political & Economic Developments:

"Brexit"

Brexit was originally due to happen on 29 March 2019. That was two years after then Prime Minister Theresa May triggered Article 50 - the formal process to leave - and kicked off negotiations. Under Mrs. May, the deadline was delayed twice after MPs rejected her Brexit deal - eventually pushing it to 31 October. Despite negotiating a revised deal, Prime Minister Boris Johnson will miss the latest deadline. That's because the EU has agreed to a further extension until 31 January. The latest extension came after MPs failed to pass the new Brexit deal into law.

Politics

On 17 October 2019 the EU and the UK government reached a [new agreement](#) on a revised deal on Brexit. Most of the changes in the withdrawal agreement negotiated by Boris Johnson concern the status of the Irish border after Brexit, both sides wishing to avoid the return of a "hard border" between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland after Brexit. [The new Northern Ireland protocol](#) replaces the former controversial Irish backstop plan in Theresa May's deal. On 28th October, after agreeing to the UK's extension request, the EU accepted the delay of the Brexit date until 31 January 2020. The UK could leave earlier than 31 January if the new deal is passed by MPs. However, if no deal is passed by Parliament, the UK will leave the EU on 31 January 2020 without any agreement on the terms of its departure and without any transition period. Leaving without a deal (or withdrawal agreement) means the UK would immediately exit the customs union and single market. The degree of uncertainty around the Brexit process remains therefore high and the UK government is now required to achieve a consensus and indicate a way forward with regards to its future relationship with the EU.

Economy

The UK economy slowed in 2018 and further slowing is expected in 2019 due to persisting Brexit-related uncertainty. Since 2018 business investment has declined, consumption has been constrained by slow real income growth and public debt remained at a high level (above 87% of GDP). However, sustained fiscal consolidation has brought the public deficit below 2% of GDP for the first time in 15 years, and inflation (2.5%) started to decline. The government authorities are focused on Brexit preparation work, which entails significant administrative and legislative changes. A comprehensive strategy is underway to boost productivity based on supporting investment in physical and human capital. The 2018 Autumn Budget marked the beginning of a less restrictive fiscal policy in 2019 to support activity. The measures include a spending increase of GBP 10.9 billion (0.5% of GDP), two thirds of which will be allocated to the NHS,

with the remainder going to education, social assistance and defense; and various tax increases as well as the introduction of a new tax on digital services.

Separatism within the United Kingdom

The referendum vote to leave the EU called into question the status of Northern Ireland and Scotland, both of which have in the past fought for independence from the U.K. and which primarily voted against leaving the European Union. A referendum on Scottish independence was held in September 2014, with the vote siding against independence in a 55% to 45% split. Scottish National Party (SNP) leadership is already planning a new referendum for 2020.

Security Issues:

- Crime is the security concern travelers are most likely to be affected by when traveling in the U.K.
- Street demonstrations and strikes also pose a concern, as they may disrupt transportation and public services.
- The threat of domestic and international terrorism remains a significant concern in the United Kingdom.

Crime

While the crime rate is generally low and decreasing according to official government statistics across the United Kingdom, crime remains the security concern travelers to the U.K. are most likely to encounter. Travelers should exercise caution when in major cities in particular. Petty theft and nonconfrontational crimes of opportunity are the most likely types of crime to affect short-term visitors. Violent crime especially incidents involving knives and guns is perceived as a growing problem and British authorities are taking measures to combat such crimes. Travelers are not commonly targeted by violent crime. By using basic safety precautions, such as keeping valuables out of sight and avoiding poorly lit areas, most travelers should minimize the risk of falling victim to crime.

Demonstrations and Strikes

Demonstrations and protests related to economic, social and political issues occur frequently in the United Kingdom. Most demonstrations are generally nonviolent, but clashes have occurred in the past. In addition, these events may disrupt traffic in the city. Demonstrations can range from hundreds to several tens of thousands of people, primarily in London, and have recently occurred in opposition to proposed government budget cuts or other austerity measures.

Terrorism

International Terrorism

The threat of terrorism remains a significant concern in the United Kingdom, as highlighted by the number of attempted attacks and thwarted plots that have emerged in recent years. On 23 May 2017, the U.K. Home Office elevated the international terrorism threat level in the United Kingdom to "critical," the highest tier on a five-level scale. The increase followed the 22 May suicide bombing in Manchester. The "critical" level indicates that authorities believe that "an attack is expected imminently." As part of the associated security measures, on 24 May the government deployed military forces to multiple strategic sites around the country, including to Buckingham Palace, Downing Street, the Palace of Westminster, as well as around foreign embassies. Security officers will also conduct patrols and use "stop and search" tactics.

The sources of the Islamist terrorism threat in the U.K. are well-organized transnational networks such as al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS) and homegrown domestic terrorists motivated by militant groups and radical Islamist ideology. Urban areas are the likeliest targets for terrorists who are intent on causing a large number of casualties and economic damage. Past terrorist threats have centered on public transportation, the commercial aviation sector, and several public buildings and venues.

The most recent terrorist attack in the U.K. occurred on 22 May 2017, when an assailant detonated an improvised explosive device at Manchester Arena in Manchester. The most recent reports indicate that 22 people were killed and dozens more were injured in the attack. The assailant was killed in the explosion, and authorities are currently working to determine whether he was acting alone or if he had assistance from a wider network. IS claimed responsibility for the blast, but the credibility of the group's claim also remains under investigation.

Sectarian Violence

The U.K. Home Office currently assesses the threat level for Northern Ireland related terrorist attacks in Great Britain as "substantial," indicating that "an attack is a strong possibility." For attacks occurring in Northern Ireland, the threat level is currently assessed as "severe," meaning an attack is "highly likely." The United Kingdom's domestic intelligence and security service, MI5, states that republican terrorist groups are the principle Northern Ireland related threat.

Overall, there has been a general decrease in paramilitary violence in the United Kingdom since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, which largely ended more than three decades of fighting in Northern Ireland. Although violence in connection with the region's independence movement has subsided compared to past decades, it still occurs periodically. The main threats posed by such groups are attacks in Northern Ireland, particularly in the city of Belfast. Attacks are frequently aimed at members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and other security personnel, but collateral damage to persons and property remains a possibility in any attack. There is no evidence that dissident groups have the capabilities or weaponry to carry out attacks on the U.K. mainland. However, at least two dissident republican paramilitary groups Real IRA and Continuity IRA remain actively opposed to Northern Ireland's peace process and have used violence in an attempt to derail the process and foment sectarian tensions.

Customs & Immigration:

The Entry Requirements section reflects the most correct and up-to-date information to the best knowledge of UnitedHealthcare Global. Setting requirements for entry into the country is the sole prerogative of each country's government, and requirements may change, sometimes with little or no prior notice. Travelers should always contact the diplomatic representation of the country prior to departure to verify entry requirements.

Passports and Visas:

Passports are required upon entry into the United Kingdom except for those qualified by one of the following:

Identity cards issued by Gibraltar authorities, Laissez Passer (issued by E.U., U.N. or Israeli authorities), selected European national identity cards (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus,

Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland), Seaman Book (on duty), and Hong Kong national identity card.

Visas are required upon arrival. However, several exceptions are in place that are dependent on the nationality of the entrant, which should be verified with the appropriate British consular office. For example, nationals of the United States, Australia, Japan and Canada do not require a visa for stays of a maximum of six months. The length of stay for these exceptions will be determined at the time of application for the visa. Other exceptions include British citizens living in British Dependent Territories and Colonies, stateless persons, Israeli citizens, and diplomatic travelers from the Vatican.

Health:

There are no vaccinations required to enter the United Kingdom from any other country.

Entry/Departure Taxes:

There are no airport taxes levied upon travelers at U.K. airports.

Imports and Exports:

Visitors from non-European Union countries over the age of 17 can import up to the designated amounts of the following noncommercial items (items of personal or family use or items intended as presents) duty-free:

- 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco;*
- A total of one liter of spirits exceeding 22 percent volume or undenatured ethyl alcohol of 80 percent volume (or greater) or a total of 2 liters of alcoholic beverages under 22 percent volume;
- Four liters of still wine;
- 16 liters of beer; and
- Other items up to a value of 390 Pounds Sterling.

Prohibitions and restrictions on drugs, medicines, weapons, explosive materials and pornographic materials are covered by national legislation.

There are no restrictions on the amount of foreign currency that can be imported into the European Union. However, travelers entering or leaving the EU with more than 10,000 euro (or the equivalent in other currencies) must make a declaration to the customs official.

*EU member states have the option of restricting imports of tobacco products in the interest of their respective health policies. The limit according to this second option is 40 cigarettes or 20 cigarillos or 10 cigars or 50 grams of tobacco.

Currency:

The official currency of the United Kingdom is the Pound Sterling (£). Pound notes are divided into 100 pence and



denominations are available in 5, 10, 20, and 50 bank notes, while coins are available in 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 pence, as well as full one-and two-pound coins. It should be noted that certain Scottish banks disburse their own currency, which is legal tender throughout the United Kingdom. In addition to official exchange offices, money can be exchanged in banks and many hotels. Travelers' checks and credit cards are widely accepted. ATMs are widely available throughout the country. Although the U.K. is not a member of the European Monetary Union and, therefore, has not adopted the euro, some British retail shops and restaurants that cater to foreign visitors unofficially accept the currency.

Communications:

Britain has a technologically advanced domestic and international telephone system. However, foreigners should be aware that local calls are individually billed. Therefore, when using someone else's telephone, it is courteous to offer to pay.

The use of cell phones while driving is banned in the United Kingdom; offenders caught using their phones will be fined. However, the ban does not extend to handsfree cell phone kits.

United Kingdom Country code: 44
London City Code: 20

Calling United Kingdom landline from abroad: Country exit code + 44 + city code + phone number

Calling United Kindom mobile phone from abroad:
Country exit code + 44 + mobile code* + phone number

Calling United Kingdom landline from within country: 0 + city code + phone number

Calling United Kingdom mobile phone from within country:
0 + mobile code* + phone number

Making International Calls from United Kingdom: 00 + country code + city code + phone number

*Mobile code varies by call recipient's provider.

Cultural Information:

Language:

English is the primary language. Approximately 25 percent of the population of Wales speaks Welsh, while some Scots speak a Scottish form of Gaelic (although this is mostly found in the northern regions and islands of Scotland).

Cultural Tips:

- Visitors should remember that traffic drives on the left side of the road. Consequently, pedestrians must remember to look both ways at crosswalks and proceed carefully.
- A 10 to 15 percent tip is customarily added to the bill in restaurants; tipping beyond this amount is not expected. Taxi drivers generally receive a tip in the range of 10 to 15 percent of the metered fare.

- In pubs, bartenders generally do not expect to be tipped.
- The use of cell phones while driving is banned within the United Kingdom; offenders caught breaking the law will be fined. However, the ban does not extend to handsfree cell phone kits.
- Smoking is prohibited in enclosed public places and workplaces in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- Business dress varies in formality from industry to industry. In upscale restaurants, athletic shoes and denim jeans are not permitted. Athletic shoes are only worn for exercising. Black and muted colors are the norm.

Tips for Female Travelers:

Female travelers are often seen by criminals as particularly vulnerable targets. In highly conservative cultures, foreign women may be perceived as promiscuous, inviting unwelcome or violent advances. Female travelers, in turn, are likely to encounter cultural mores that may initially seem startling or offensive. The purpose of this section is to apprise female travelers of such attitudes and customs, offer means to respond without giving offense, and promote a heightened sense for security among female travelers. The information offered below is not intended as advice, nor is it necessarily comprehensive in presenting the challenges female travelers may face. UnitedHealthcare Global encourages female travelers to thoroughly research the areas to which they travel to determine what precautionary measures to take and what to do should they become victims of crime while traveling.

- Although there are no specific security threats to women in the United Kingdom, female travelers should always take basic security precautions such as not walking alone at night, locking the door to hotel rooms and never opening their door to strangers.

Health & Hospitals:

The United Kingdom has a universal health care system that is largely responsible for overseeing the delivery of quality medical services, including general practitioner consultations, inpatient and outpatient hospital services, dental and optical services, pharmacies and the ambulance service. While medical services are widely available, free care under the public National Health System (NHS) is allowed only to certain individuals, a list that does not include tourists and foreign visitors. Travelers are eligible for free emergency treatment at NHS hospitals, but will have to pay fees for any other medical services rendered. The quality of health care that is provided by the NHS is of an international standard and a full range of specialties is available. Although the care that is offered through the public health care system is generally excellent, there is often a significant wait time to receive treatment. In private facilities, the wait time is often much shorter. Differences in Hospital Stay in Public and Private Facilities In general, there is almost no difference in quality between the private system and the public system in the UK; often, the same specialists work in both private and NHS institutions. The main difference is the public health system handles emergency care while the private health care system does not. Room comfort and related amenities may be superior in the private sector. Medical facilities can be limited in the rural areas of the UK, but there is a well-developed internal medical evacuation service throughout the country.

Introduction to London:

City Overview:

London is the main political, financial and industrial center of the U.K. The city consists of 32 boroughs, plus the City of London, which are spread out over 600 square miles.

The main geographical feature of London is the River

Thames, which divides the city into northern and southern halves. The central area and the most popular sights, theaters and restaurants are within the underground's Circle line on the north bank of the river. The West End lies within the western portion of the loop, and includes Trafalgar Square, Soho, Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square and Regent Street.

City Facts:	
Status:	Capital
Population:	8.9 million

City Tips:

- A series of criminal incidents including armed robberies have occurred in the St. John's Wood area of London in recent years. Travelers should be attentive to this threat if visiting the area, which is a popular tourist destination and residential neighborhood for expatriates.
- Pickpockets are active in markets and other busy shopping areas, including Covent Garden, Camden, Portobello, Greenwich and Oxford Street.
- Professional pickpocketing teams also operate on the London Underground and specifically target tourists and commuters, especially during the summer months. Police statistics indicate that thousands of pickpocketing offenses occur on the London subway system each year.
- A number of crimes take place when trains are pulling into stations. Travelers should be especially attentive to the presence of pickpockets at these times.
- Fraud involving automatic teller machines is increasing in the United Kingdom, with criminals using sophisticated technology to capture card and PIN details. Travelers should not use ATMs in isolated areas or machines that look unusual in any way. In addition, criminals are increasingly targeting ATM users in Central London using a variety of distraction techniques to secretly withdraw cash. If approached when using an ATM, travelers should immediately cancel their transaction and collect their card. Incidents have been reported in Hanover Square, Shaftsbury Avenue, Portland Place, Holborn and Regent Street.
- Oxford Street and the West End area are frequented by pickpockets, as well as by criminals who steal items hanging on the back of chairs or items that are left unattended.
- Some underground rail lines close sooner than others. Travelers can be stranded in an unsafe area at night and thus forced to look for a taxi. If traveling at night, travelers should confirm rail schedules in advance or take a taxi.

Transportation:

The Underground:

Londoners usually refer to the Underground as the "tube." Stations are identified by a distinctive sign--a red circle with a blue crossbar and the words "London Underground". If you ask for a "subway," you risk ending up in a tunnel for pedestrians running beneath the road. Destinations

Food & Beverage:

Food:

Understanding British traditional dishes will help you enjoy your visit even more. Many good old-fashioned dishes are available in restaurants, wine bars, and pubs--sometimes called inns or taverns, a name going back to the Middle Ages.

The most common pub meal is based on the food a farm worker took with him to work, a ploughman's lunch. Originally a good chunk of local cheese, a hunk of homemade crusty white or brown bread, some butter and a pickled onion or two, it was washed down with ale. You will now find such variations as pâté and chutney replacing the onions and cheese.

Cheese is still the most common ingredient. English cheese comes in many regional variations, the best known being Cheddar, a good, solid, mature cheese, as is Cheshire. Another is the semi-smooth-textured Caerphilly from a beautiful part of Wales, and also Stilton, a softer tangy cheese more popular with a glass of port.

Dishes with names so perplexing you have no hint of their ingredients are found on the little teashop menu or in the pubs. Perhaps the most popular is shepherd's pie, a deep dish of chopped cooked beef mixed with onions and seasoning and covered with a layer of mashed potatoes and served hot. Another version is cottage pie, which is minced beef covered with potatoes and also served hot.

Among the most known and traditional of English dishes is roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. The pudding is made with a flour base and cooked under the joint, allowing the fat from the meat to drop onto it.

Cod and haddock are the most popular fish used in the making of that British tradition, fish and chips. Chips are fried potatoes or French fries. The true Briton covers this dish with salt and vinegar. In the past the wrapping was newspaper, but now the demands of hygiene have revoked the added--some say, indispensable--taste of newsprint from the dish.

Kipper, a smoked herring, is a popular breakfast dish. Herrings are split open and placed over oak chips and smoked slowly to produce a nice pale-brown smoked fish.

Real English mustard is simply the finely ground seed mixed with water, nothing else.

The East End of London has some interesting dishes, among them tripe and onions. The Cheshire Cheese on Fleet Street still offers a beefsteak-kidney-mushroom-and game pudding in a suet case in winter and a pastry case in summer. The East-Enders will be seen on Sunday at the Jellied Eel's stall by Petticoat Lane, eating eel or perhaps cockles, mussels, whelks and winkles, with a touch of vinegar. The eel pie and mash shop can still be found in London. The name, eel pie, however, is misleading because it is really a minced-beef pie topped with flaky pastry and served with mashed potatoes and accompanied by a portion of jellied eel.

Beverage:

It is a misconception to believe that "everything" stops for tea. People in Britain drink an average of four cups of tea a day--mainly at work. The real delight is to visit the little country tea shops where you can enjoy a pot of tea, some toasted tea cake or a crumpet, bread and butter or sandwiches and good homemade cakes while listening to the conversation at the next table.

Britain does not produce much real wine. It does produce some very pleasant white wine on the medium-sweet side and quite fruity in taste. The real "wines" are cider and beer--both of which go well with the traditional dishes mentioned earlier.

Beer is served in all pubs. Draft beer is traditionally served at cellar temperature--the British like to taste their beer, so they prefer it on the warm side. Most bottled beer is similar to light lager

beers and is served cold. Draft beer comes in several different tastes, the most common being called "bitter," which is light in color and taste, not really bitter. A half pint is the equivalent in strength to a single measure of Scotch. Others are mild ale, which is full flavored, and brown ale, which is dark and flavorsome. Stout is a strong, rich dark beer, often mixed with champagne to make "black velvet." Cider made from apples and fermented can be stronger than expected.

All restaurants and cafés in Britain are required to display the prices of the food and drink they offer in a place where the customer can see them before entering the eating area.

Museums & Galleries:

The **British Museum** holds the world collection of art and antiques from ancient and living cultures. Housed in one of Britain's architectural landmarks, the collection spans two million years of human history. This museum is often voted #1 on the list of things to do in London and access to the collection is free.



The **National Gallery** is an art museum that houses a collection of over 2,300 paintings dating back to the mid-13th century to 1900. It is among the most visited art museums in the world, after the Louvre, the British Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Entry to the main collections is free of charge.

Science Museum holds a collection of over 300,000 items, including the first jet engine. The museum is one of the city's major tourist attractions, attracting 3.3 million visitors annually. Like other publicly funded museums in the United Kingdom, the Science Museum does not charge an admission fee. However, temporary exhibitions may require an admission fee.

National History Museum is a world-renowned center of research specializing in taxonomy, identification, and conservation. The museum is most famous for its exhibition of dinosaur skeletons and collections that have great historical and scientific value. The Natural History Museum does not charge an admission fee.

The Serpentine Gallery, located in Kensington Gardens, houses an art gallery containing interesting modern works.

Churchill's War Museum is a piece of living history that is part of the Churchill War Rooms, which sheltered people at the heart of Britain's wartime Government during the Blitz. Immerse yourself in this fascinating piece of living history by discovering the underground maze of historic rooms that once buzzed round-the-clock planning and plotting, strategies and secrets.

Tate Gallery is an institution that houses the United Kingdom's national collection of British art, and international modern and contemporary art. The art museums, Tate Britain and Tate Modern, are in London, housing substantial art collections of the United Kingdom as well as international art.

Imperial War Museum London houses *The Holocaust Exhibition* which uses historical material to tell the story of the Nazis' persecution of the Jews and other groups before and during the Second World War.

Victoria and Albert Museum is the largest decorative arts museum in the world. It's also one of London's most interesting and diverse museums.

City Attractions & Sightseeing:

Buckingham Palace has served as the official London residence of Britain's sovereigns since 1837. Today it is the Queen's official residence. Although in use for many official events and receptions held by the queen, areas of Buckingham Palace are opened to visitors on a regular basis. **Tube Station: Victoria and St. James's Park**

The London Eye is a giant Ferris wheel on the bank of the River Thames. It's Europe's tallest Ferris wheel and offers the highest public viewing point in London. It is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the United Kingdom. **Tube Station: Waterloo**



The **Tower of London** has played a prominent role in English history. It has served as an armory, a treasury, a public record office, and a prison. Controlling the Tower of London has been an important factor to controlling the country. Today, you can visit the Tower of London and enjoy their exhibits. **Tube Station: Tower Hill**

Westminster Abbey has been the setting for every Coronation since 1066 and is the final resting place of seventeen monarchs. The church is one of the most important Gothic buildings in the country, with the medieval shrine of an Anglo-Saxon saint still at its heart. **Tube Station: Westminster**

St. Paul's Cathedral is one of the most famous and most recognizable sights of London. Serving as the seat of the Bishop of London, and the mother church of the Diocese of London, the cathedral sits on Ludgate Hill at the highest point in London. **Tube Station: St. Paul's**

Big Ben the nickname for the Great Bell of the clock at the north end of Palace of Westminster and often extended to refer to the clock and the clock tower. **Tube Station: West Minister**

Kensington Palace is of great historical importance. Today, it accommodates the offices and private apartments of a number of members in the Royal Family. **Tube Station: High Street Kensington**

Trafalgar Square is the largest square in London and has been a central meeting place since the Middle Ages. The square is also used for political demonstrations and community gatherings, such as the celebration of New Year's Eve. **Tube Station: Charing Cross**

Piccadilly Circus is a busy plaza in the heart of London at the junction of many major streets. The "circus" meaning "circle" is a round open space known for its video display and neon mounted on buildings. **Tube Station: Piccadilly Circus**

Hyde Park is one of the largest parks in London and has become a traditional location for mass demonstrations. **Tube Station: Hyde Park Corner**

Globe Theater was a theater associated with William Shakespeare. It was built in 1599 and destroyed by fire in 1613. A second Globe Theater was built on the same site in 1614 and closed in 1642. **Tube Station: Cannon Street, London Bridge and Waterloo**



London Bridge is more than 100 feet wide and divides the port of London from King's reach. **Tube Station: London bridge**

Tower Bridge is one of the many symbols of London. The bridge now gives interactive displays showing the bridge in action and detailing its entire history. **Tube Station: Tower Hill and London Bridge**

Shopping:

Regent Street: Once the hub of the West End and a symbol of London worldwide, this stylish thoroughfare is crammed with fashionable stores, selling everything from silks to silverware. **Tube Station: Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus**

Oxford Street: The shopping drag of metropolis runs from St. Giles Circus to Marble Arch. It contains six of London's major department stores. **Tube Station: Oxford Circus and Bond Street**

Kensington High Street: Stretching for about a mile and a half, it includes many shops, such as House of Fraser. From Kensington High Street you can walk to Kensington Church Street which is one of the city's main shopping avenues. **Tube Station: High Street Kensington**

Carnaby Street: Just off Regent, Carnaby is a legend. While it no longer dominates the world of pacesetting fashion as it did in the 60s, it is still visited by many. **Tube Station: Oxford Circus**

Beauchamp Place: (Pronounced "Beecham") Beauchamp Place is one of London's top shopping streets. Whatever you're looking for, you'll likely find it here. **Tube Station: Knightsbridge**

