

Bonne route - A little advice on driving in France

France has an excellent road system and a superb motorway network

- Traffic lights change direction from red to green without showing red and amber to give you a slight warning. Often traffic lights contain green or orange slip arrow.
 - Don't forget that we drive on the right in France, so it is compulsory to place converters on your headlights to ensure that your dipped beams won't dazzle oncoming traffic. (Headlight converters are available at most car accessory stores).
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- Remember the telephone number for emergency services is 112 from a mobile and 15 from landline.
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- Carrying a warning triangle is compulsory and must be displayed after an accident or breakdown in France, spare light bulbs and a first aid kit are sensible precautions.
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- Carefully watch the speed limits, remember in France it is in kilometers. There are regular security patrols day and night on all the networks. Speeding can result in large fines, payable on the spot.
 - Speed Limits
Motorways: 80mph (130 kph).
On urban stretches 68mph (110kph) and 49mph (80kph) on the Paris ring Road.
Dual carriageways: 68mph (110kph).
Outside built-up areas 55mph (90kph).
Built-up areas 31mph (50kph).
In wet weather, lower limits apply -
49mph (80kph) outside built-up areas,
62mph (100kph) on dual carriageways
and 68mph (110kph) on motorways.
These lower limits apply at all times to drivers who have held a licence for less than 2 years.
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- Breakdowns
Try and stop on the hard shoulder as far to the right as possible. Put your hazard lights on and find the nearest emergency phone (there should be one every 2 km's). The calls are free and go straight through to the police who will send an approved mechanic who will try to fix the problem or arrange to tow you to a garage.
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- **Filling Up**
As in Britain service stations vary their fuel prices on the motorway, so it's best to check before you fill up. Do keep some Euros with you as they do not take all UK credit cards. Most stations have shops offering a variety of products, such as snacks and drinks, and services including fax and telephone.
- **Lavatories**
The WC's are generally well kept and have disabled and baby facilities.
- **Emergency Phones**
You'll find the orange SOS phones every 2 km's along motorways and in many of the larger aires.

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- If you are following a route and approaching a round about and no longer see a sign for the place which you were going to, it normal means you go straight ahead.
 - **Toutes Directions = Other Directions**
 - **Gouche = left**
 - **Droite = Right**
 - **Vehicle Paperwork**
You should always carry your vehicle documents and driving licence whilst driving in France(French authorities delight in paperwork).
 - **Aires & Les Panneaux Marrons**
You can't help but notice the "aires" every 10 to 15 kilometers along the motorways of France. "Aires" (areas) are specially designed for motorists to stop at and generally have a wide range of facilities. You'll find everything from WC's right through to picnic areas and, for those of you wanting to do more than simply stretch your legs, some "aires" even feature exercise circuits! The other thing you'll notice straight away are 'Les panneaux marrons'. These are the brown panels on the side of the motorway that give you information about the area you're driving in. Fuel stations have all the facilities you'd expect in the UK and you'll also find WC's and card phones after most toll barriers.