

How high you did not know about ...

France is the largest European country in terms of land area **after Russia and Ukraine.**

Nearly 20% of its territory lies outside Europe. These regions are known as "DOM-TOM" (overseas departments and territories), where over 2.5 million French citizens live



While all the **stripes of the official French flag** are of equal width, the one **used by the navy** has bands that **increase in width from blue to red**



France is the first producer of nuclear electricity in Europe and second producer in the world after the United States. France produces as much nuclear electricity as Germany, the UK, Spain and Russia *combined!*



French people cheek kiss to greet each others between family and friends, even between men. The number of kisses varies according to the region, from 1 (e.g. in the tip of Brittany) to 4 (e.g. Paris and most of the North), and occasionally up to 5 in Corsica



André Gide, French writer and Nobel Prize of Literature, said **"French people are Italian people in bad mood"**



The concept of jean clothing was born in the Languedoc-Roussillon city of Nîmes, **France**, from where it was imported by Levi Strauss to California to make tough clothes for gold diggers

In spite of foreign stereotypes, **many French people can speak at least one foreign language** (45% are able to participate in a conversation in a foreign language), and English is the most widely spoken (34%)

There are about **2 new cooking books published every day** in France



Famous **French inventions** include the adding machine, the hot air balloon, the airship, the parachute, the submarine, the ambulance service, photography, animation and cinema

The tradition of the white wedding dress began in France. Anne of Brittany is believed to be the first bride to choose a white gown when she married Louis XII in 1499



FRANCE

Officially, it is said that **France produces 365 different types of cheese!** That is to say, a different cheese for each day of the year. However, it is believed that there are even more than this. There are in fact over 1000 different types available in the French market



There is a story that the word **'marmalade' comes from the French words 'Marie est malade'** (Mary is ill). Whenever Mary Queen of Scots was unwell, she liked to eat orange jam to make her feel better



Nicotine was named after Jean Nicot (1530-1600), a **French diplomat** and scholar who introduced the tobacco plant to France in 1559 (from Portugal)



France is the country that has won the most Nobel prizes for literature (16 as of 2009, with the last prize going back to 2008).



There are 450 different wine appellations in France. There are tens of thousands of small wine-producing domains, but only 15% of all French wines enjoy the marketing benefits of AOC

There is a town called **Grasse** and it is very famous for growing flowers. They are grown for some of the **famous perfume companies**, including Chanel. Twenty-seven tons of jasmine are harvested in the Grasse area each year



'Cinderella', 'Sleeping Beauty' and 'Bluebeard' came to birth in France



April Fool's Day is believed to have originated in France, in 1564, when the country started following the Gregorian Calendar. Those that did not know about the switch in the calendars, were mocked on this day as they continued to believe that 1st April was the first day of the French new year



France is home to 29 UNESCO World Heritage Sites like the Mont St. Michel Abbey, Versailles Palace, and the Chartres Cathedral

