

Village to Villa

LIVING LIKE LOCALS



Two experienced media professionals hit the road, going 'local' in 4 countries, house sitting and tasting life from village to villa. 1 year of spontaneous moments, wonder and discovery.

PROPOSED OUTLINE

Village to Villa living like locals **AUSTRALIA**

Village to Villa living like locals **FRANCE**

Village to Villa living like locals **UK**

Village to Villa living like locals **ITALY**

Each of the four locations will comprise 5 episodes.

Series total 20 episodes of 20 minutes duration.

Plus weekly Social Media clips of 3 to 5 mins — additional content.

THE PREMIS

To know what it's really like to live in a country with a different culture and possibly a different language, you must move into someone else's home and live like the locals.

BRIEF OVERVIEW

Neil McLean and Gai Reid have enjoyed long careers in television production. They've stepped off the treadmill and plan to create a better work/life balance. It's time to enrich their lives by spending a year travelling. But not in the conventional way! Each has seen parts of Europe as a tourist, now it's time to dig deeper and discover what it's really like to LIVE in France, Italy, or the UK. The best way to do that is to step into someone else's "life" for a while.

**They plan to take over other people's homes
AND they're taking YOU along for the ride!**

What is House Sitting?



A large part of the desire to travel is to visit another location, possibly in a foreign country, to relax, to have a memorable experience or to learn more about life in another culture. But some people have animals that need to be considered, a garden that may need attention during their absence or they simply would prefer that their home isn't left empty while they are away. House sitters enable people with these responsibilities to enjoy their own break away, knowing that their pets and their home will be in good hands.

For the house sitters, this is an opportunity to experience new, stimulating locations and countries. House sitting is a fantastic way to travel for long blocks of time rent free and with the use of a washing machine! Animal lovers get to have dog time, snuggle up with the cat or even take care of a few farm animals. Properties, locations and commitments vary enormously.

Gai and Neil have registered with **Trusted Housesitters.com** the world's largest website for matching home owners with sitters. They are based in the UK and have clients from all over the world. This is where our couple will find the majority of their home bases for their year of travel.



THE POSSIBILITIES

How would you like to spend three weeks in **a French chateau** where you care for a small pack of poodles in return for luxury living?

Or stay in an ancient stone cottage with a pool and **a knock out view of the Mediterranean** in return for watering the garden and feeding the chooks?

Would cat sitting in a **Cotswolds village in the UK** send you delirious?

Or could you be tempted by a month in an old **Vicarage in Sussex** spoiling two lazy but adorable cats?

Is spending two lazy weeks near the white sandy **beaches of Australia** your idea of bliss? You may be required to do some light gardening.

How about three weeks in a tranquil **villa in Umbria** where you help neighbours pick fruit at harvest time?

These are real options for our house sitters. What is it like to step into another family's sanctuary, sleep in their beds, make dinner in their kitchen, take care of their beloved pets and even drive the family car?

Will the neighbours be over with curiosity and casseroles? They hope so!

With only a smattering of French and no Italian beyond grazie and biscotti, how will Gai and Neil communicate without creating a massive or potentially embarrassing misunderstanding?

This Gold Coast couple won't balk at driving long distances in their own huge, flat country but how will they navigate the tiny ancient streets of the UK and Europe?



Biography NEIL McLEAN



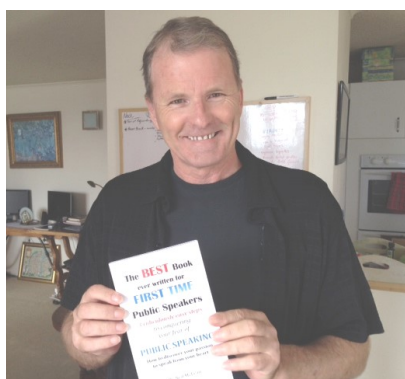
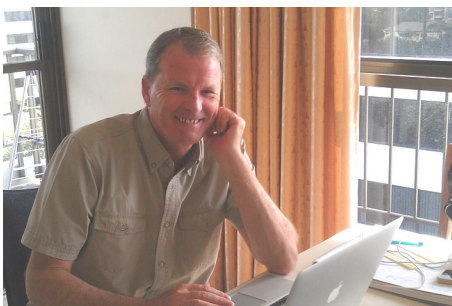
Neil McLean has enjoyed a thirty-five year career, covering the full gamut of media situations. With more than five thousand television news stories to air, Neil has the ability to identify and create entertaining and informative content. Neil estimates he has recorded more than 20,000 interviews, which has taught him to extract the best from the people he speaks to - on camera and off!



He began in radio as a music jock then made the progression into television. It was a natural segway into journalism and news reading in three regional networks. Then came Bureau Chief, Chief of Staff, Director of News, writer/producer, program presenter and insightful interviewer for key Australian metro networks at SEVEN and TEN.

Neil then tackled the exciting role of establishing the first half-hour television news service on the Gold Coast. As founding Director of News, he established a 'new' newsroom, designed a format and put a crack team in place. For seven years he headed up the newly-built studio complex and was its principal news and program presenter.

Thousands of hours in the studio, thousands of interviews in the field and "doing more with less" equipped him with the skill sets to move into the freelance arena. Global media consulting experience and 'on-camera' media coaching/grooming complete the picture. These skills are under-pinned by a speaking and presenting background on national stages in Australia as well as Asia, New Zealand, United States and South Africa.



Neil still loves to write and has published a book on Public Speaking. He enjoys playing guitar and composes his own music.

When growing up, the family always had a cat, a dog and a succession of birds. As an adult, he's owned two Moodles but now his dog time is restricted to patting all the canines in the dog park. He is extremely excited about seeing Paris for the first time.

Biography - GAI REID



Gai Reid has written and produced more than 2,000 stories, 25 documentaries, and a 6 part series. Having started her career in regional television, in the field and the studio, Gai has an understanding of many production roles and shooting situations.



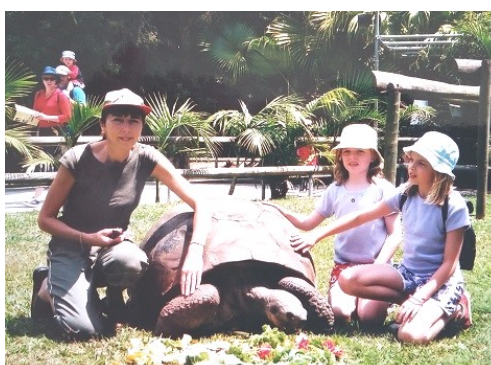
Sydney Opera House, David Wenham PTCs.



The Australian Ballet series interview.

She began as a television graphic artist, but was seduced by the multi-dimensional expression that was possible in production. During her twenty plus years in Australian networks working in the field and in the studio, she has written and produced commercials, factual programs and documentaries.

She then moved to SEVEN Brisbane as Associate Producer for the series "The Motoring Show", then on to TEN where she became part of the large team that produces "Totally Wild", the longest running Children's TV program on Australian commercial television. Here she worked through the ranks to Producer. Editing is the most recent addition to the list of her skills. Since leaving Network 10, Gai has written travel articles for international and national magazines, newspapers and blogs. She is the author of **"Postcards from France"** a travel narrative with a twist. www.postcardsfromfrance.com



Harriet, Galapagos Tortoise Australia Zoo.



Bengal tiger cub, Tiger Island.



Baby Meerkats at Melbourne Zoo.

Gai is a stills photographer, artist and seamstress. Having studied Art History she is intrigued by the rich art, architecture and culture of Europe.

As a child she had many pets, from guinea pigs to orphaned lambs, birds, cats and dogs. She has met an incredible menagerie of animals from her time producing "Totally Wild".

THE YIN AND THE YANG

The couple's disparate tastes in food, sport, music and movie genres will provide plenty of humour and potential awkwardness – but their shared love of animals, nature, architecture, culture, history and travel propels the passion and the appreciation of where they are and how grateful they feel for being invited into the homes of strangers, to take care of their animals and experience life as a local in so many different places.

WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS?

It's about being inspirational.

Each is at a point in life where they have an enormous cache of creative skills ready to run free and no commitments or ties to any one place. Their solid partnership is based on a friendship of decades and they finally have the opportunity to bring this dream travel experience into reality, sharing their stories with a wide audience and encouraging others to follow their bliss.



Neil wants to achieve his dream of traveling for an entire year—filled with joyous, spontaneous experiences in amazing locations, including his own country. He wants to meet lots of new animal friends along the way; to learn the Django Reinhardt style of guitar and to develop the ability to live anywhere and assimilate into the community.

France is the jewel in the crown for Gai. She's visited several times and written about her experiences in a book called "Postcards from France". She has dreamed of living in France for a whole year, to watch as the landscape moves through the seasons and how that changes the daily routines. With this trip they'll also be able to enjoy a taste of life in neighbouring countries.



Village to Villa

living like locals

IN THE BEGINNING

Gai & Neil plan to begin their adventure on home soil.



Australia is an enormous country and many never see beyond their own state. Neil and Gai want to spend real time in impressive locations they've only seen in passing. For example they want to experience life on the island state of **Tasmania**. Tassie has a colourful history, dramatically varied landscapes plus a thriving art and food culture. It has retained more of its English heritage than other states.

EPISODES

Episodes begin with the journey to the next house sitting assignment. Background on the home owners and their pets, the location and the region will set the scene. This is where we get to explore any quirky, mysterious or potentially tricky situations that could occur.

Each location will have at least one personal goal to achieve – which will be an ongoing mission for that episode. *For example:*

During their stay in the **UK**, Neil will be in search of the best fish'n'chips and Gai will be looking for her “Brideshead Revisited ” moment at **Oxford University**.

In rural **France**, Gai wants to learn to make an authentic French Tarte Tartin and Neil is aiming to learn to tell a Bordeaux from a Burgundy.

A stay in the region of **Tuscany** will enable Gai to complete unfinished business at the Uffizi Art Gallery. Neil reckons Italy, land of pasta and pizza, will be the place to embrace his new way of eating.

STORYLINES



Neil with Bonnie and Millie

Storylines will evolve from everywhere they go and people they meet, starting with the host house location. The pets will generate lots of colour and very possibly, poignant moments when the newly bonded pet and house sitters must say goodbye. They will also provide situations to meet the locals.

The neighbours and the town itself will become characters. The people at the shops and markets where the sitters buy their baguettes, pasta, fresh fish or choose from 365 cheese varieties will have stories and advice for our travellers.

The cafes where they take a morning coffee, trips to the countryside, becoming lost and trying to find their way home with no GPS. They will meet artists and creative minds. There is always someone who holds the history and gossip of the town.

The home owners will arrange for their friends and neighbours to make contact with the sitters. They will create opportunities for interaction with the local residents and animals in order for the house sitters to truly **live like locals**.

Gai & Neil will be taking day trips to nearby towns and exploring the area – generating the history and travel components for storylines as well as photo opportunities for colour montages and marketing.

They will research local areas as they go, a task very familiar and fun for Gai, a self-confessed history geek.

One of the most exciting aspects of house sitting is the unpredictability of where they end up sitting for weeks at a time. While they have a wish list, reality will dictate their ultimate locations.



Australia

Australia is a country of contrasts. It's known for fabulous beaches, barren outback and magnificent, ancient rock formations. Like the USA, there is A city culture and a country culture. Life can differ dramatically from state to state.

Melbourne with its magnificent inner city parks and gardens, elegant heritage listed architecture and trendy eateries is one of the most sophisticated cities in the world. The many ornate bridges across the Yarra River give this city an air of Paris. This is Neil's hometown and he would like to become reacquainted with the city. He will warm up his tastebuds for a gastronomic gallop along Lygon Street, famous for Italian and Greek cuisine. Gai's idea of heaven in Melbourne is a stroll through the stunning Block Arcade followed by high tea at the famous and historic Windsor Hotel.

Having spent time in the central west of NSW, Gai and Neil have both driven through the majestic **Blue Mountains** many times. They would welcome the opportunity to see more than the extraordinary view over the valley and rock formations.

Eyes will be on **HouseSitters.com** for a stint in or near **Byron Bay** in northern NSW. There's a pretty village nearby called Bangalow. Gai and Neil have visited and been captivated by the idea of living this village lifestyle with a city appreciation for arts and culture.





France

The country chosen by 80 million travellers each year.

Gai would like to improve her French; take a luxury train journey and follow in the footsteps of Diane Keaton in "Something's Gotta Give" - having a romantic dinner with Neil at the Grand Colbert in **Paris**. She looks forward to helping Neil to expand on his steak and chips palette to include more sophisticated French cuisine, like vegetables.

Gai wants to spend time in a French village so they can walk to the local patisserie for croissants, sit by the fountain and eat them warm with a café au lait.

She would like to stay for at least a few days in a town near **Lyon**, called **Annecy**, said to be the French Venice. Most of all, she wants to share with Neil, all the French places and things she has grown to love.



Neil has never seen **Paris** so the pressure will be on for the City of Light and Love, to meet his expectations. An award winning reporter and journalist, he already has a vision of spending mornings in a café around the corner, constructing a chapter of his new book, just as Hemingway did in the 1920s. He has the beret and is learning to order coffee using acceptable French.

He is keen to experience the iconic Moulin Rouge; float down one of the many French canals and score an invitation to board a superyacht in **Monaco**.

As a lifelong musician, Neil is excited about discovering the music of the street and expanding his musical horizons.

Neil loves France already because they allow dogs into shops and cafés. He aims to meet a new dog each day of this trip.



United Kingdom

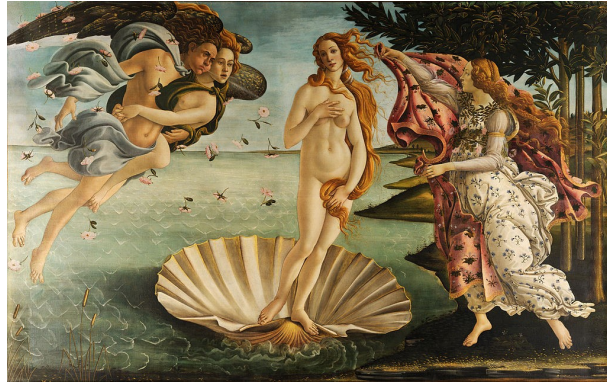
Neil had a whirlwind visit to the UK a few years ago and cherishes the opportunity to go again, slowing down to smell the roses. Staying in the one location for two or three weeks will enable the couple to discover more than the tourist highlights. For example he caught a glimpse of the guitar shops in Davenport St, **London** and yearns to return.

Neil would enjoy the opportunity to learn about life in a castle, how the Lord of the Manor was a key figure in his district. He is also extremely keen to stay a while in the stunningly beautiful **Lakes District** of England to savour the serenity. And he's hoping for the opportunity to live (even for a couple of weeks) in a small village, to blend into the traditional pub culture, sing a few songs and try a few ales.

Gai's love of history and the details will be thoroughly nourished in England. She will be searching **TrustedHousesitters.com** for a house sit in **North Hampshire**. She's hoping to swing a visit to the shoot location of "Downton Abbey", not just for the thrill of seeing a movie production, but getting up close and personal with the wallpaper, the fabric in the curtains and the costumes, the carvings on the mantle pieces and the grandeur of "Highclere Castle".

She would also love to settle into a cute and cosy **Cotswolds** cottage and be invited to afternoon tea with the ladies of the village.





"The Birth of Venus" 1486, Sandro Botticelli

Italy

In Italy they hope to soak up the famous Italian family spirit and hospitality. They have set a goal to be invited to eat home-made pasta and break garlic bread with an Italian family from an idyllic country region. Neil is curious about the mysteries of Italian wines and aims to move beyond a Pinot Grigio.



They will have a booking for the Uffizi art gallery in **Florence**, to stare up at the virginal blondes by Sandro Botticelli. Gai would like to visit the places where Leonardo da Vinci began his incredible career as an artistic genius, but she will avoid the gelateria near the famous Duomo, where ten years ago, she paid eight euro for a strawberry ice

Neil dreams of doing one of the "Famous 5 Italian Drives" like the **Amalfi** coastline in a classic Italian marque! He's also keen to be close to **Modena** to visit the home base of Ferrari.

There is a real danger that both Neil and Gai will be seduced by the exquisitely made designer shoes in Italy. They both love the classic designs.

Gai wants to enjoy the simple pleasure of sitting in an orchard, sharing a plate of freshly cooked anchovies, artichoke hearts and prosciutto with new neighbours.

Neil is hoping to spend a few evenings sipping an aperitif at sunset, on the terrace of a villa on **Lake Como**, listening to a local tell them about their life in Italy.

Perhaps George Clooney will invite them over!



George Clooney's villa. Nice digs.

EPISODE WIND UP



To end each episode - the couple will make a Skype call to the owners of the next house. To pique audience interest in the next episode, they'll have a brief discussion about looking after the pets and the house and mention a couple of highlights of their area.

Final arrangements will be made for their rendezvous.

For example:

"Lyon is said to be the food capital of France, are you adventurous eaters?"

Gai: Of course... we LOVE trying new foods!! Don't we Neil?

"Stella, our precious black Lab really looks forward to her walk every day and she may go into the lake, are you OK with a wet dog?"

Neil: Perfect!!!

"How is your French because we have a cheeky parrot called Pierre, who talks a lot!"

Gai: No problem, I have a little French.

"Brilliant, we will expect you mid morning Tuesday. Safe journey."

Gap days between sits will mean short hotel stays *en route* to the new destination. This will also contribute to content, so there is always a true element of surprise, anticipation and problem solving.

To borrow from *Forest Gump* — *Every day's a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get!*

THE AUDIENCE

The demographic for **Village to Villa** is wide, deep and covers a broad age group. Travellers from late 20s through to retirees in their 70s are house sitting with great success.

Interestingly, this is one area where age and experience will put you ahead of youth!

Primary audience.

The over 55 age group—in some countries are beginning to move into retirement. Many now have the time and low commitments, but they may not have the resources for an entire year of hotel based travel. They do have the budget to spend on food, wine, experiences and shopping. They also have a wide network of friends and family.

People 35 plus who have travelled to other countries as a tourist and have a long held yearning to return to special locations for a more personal and authentic encounter, form another large group of house sitters.

Secondary audience.

Anyone who has the dream of spending a year travelling around Europe but doesn't have the budget for hotels. Learning about house sitting will open up an enormous repository of resources to enable that dream to become reality.

The aim is to attract 1 million world wide followers on social media, boosted by mainstream media pre-publicity and culminating in the broadcasts of the series.



SHOOTING STYLE - TECHNICAL DETAILS & PROCEDURES

The series will be shot in a “compact” casual style. This will enable the producers to record spontaneously, with a minimum of intrusion to capture real life as it unfolds.

Shooting this way we will have higher accessibility, uninhibited interviewees and speed of readiness when something just “happens”.

The two main storytellers will be on the move, with an estimated 17 or 18 home base locations over the year, plus day trips or short excursions most days. House sit moves and travel will form part of the storylines. These real time/real life encounters will not be hampered by the set-up requirements of a traditional TV production crew. This will result in a very honest unfolding of storylines.

These shooting methods have been developed and carefully practiced to ensure the best results from this freestyle approach. Portability and minimum luggage is essential to be able to move this frequently, over an entire year.

Shooting equipment:

Nikon D5300 Digital SLR with external Rode microphone

iPhone 6 with external microphone

Samsung phone

Go Pro *

iPad

Selection of tripods

All material will be uploaded to a portable hard drive and stored in folders before files are copied to a cloud storage facility that can be accessed by the editor.

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living like locals

SOCIAL MEDIA

WEBSITE

Main Content:

Blog post - weekly activities update with photos

Videos - weekly YouTube posts of additional content

Page Tabs:

The Project – sets up the project and outlines possibilities for trip

TrustedHousesitters.com - how it works / involvement with Village to Villa

Profiles - about Gai & Neil

Sponsors - outline of sponsorship details and how others can join us

Photo Gallery – including the trip from Australia to UK – behind the scenes

PLUS: Social Media connections + subscriber opt in + comments +

GOAL: to gather >1 million followers

Facebook - Daily public posts—with pics

Instagram - daily photos and location details

Twitter - regular posts as we have something to share

YouTube –

“Village to Villa” - We will post a weekly clip of activities that will not be program content. This will be shared on all other social media.

“New Day—New Dog” - A short video of the dogs Neil meets during his travels. He will be looking for situations that have potential to go viral.

THE TREE WILL GROW

through linking with our affiliates

facebook

Trustedhousesitters.com
84,500 followers



Village to Villa
living like locals

> 1 MILLION followers



rendezvousenfrance.com

1.25 million followers



368,000 followers



VisitBritain™ 3.2 million fans



**Travel magazines
and websites**

Provincial Living
French Provincial
France Today
French Entrée
Bonjour Paris
The Good Life France

Suitcase Stories

Long term house sitters



> 88,794 FOLLOWERS



Neil & Gai
600 FB friends

Friends & family
170,000 FB Friends

PLUS The social media membership of the project sponsors....

An international AIRLINE and HOTEL group, CAR manufacturer,
COMMUNICATION provider, a BANK, an INSURER....etc

LinkedIn

2,200+ combined personal connections + sponsors'

PRE-TRIP LAUNCH—Australian media

Neil and Gai have strong contacts within the Australian commercial Television networks. They are confident that the take up of their story will be enthusiastic and on-going.

The Hit List:

THE TODAY SHOW & MORNINGS: 9 Network * plus weekend editions

SUNRISE & THE MORNING SHOW: Network 7 * plus weekend editions

STUDIO TEN: Network 10

ABC NEWS BREAKFAST: ABC national news and events coverage

** From the end of school holidays and leading up to Christmas, these programs are usually searching for quality content that steers away from the usual seasonal fall-backs.*

THE PROJECT— an engaging and entertaining dissemination of the day's news and events in a non-traditional format of a panel show/early evening broadcast. This program rates well within a large slice of our demographic.

NEWSPAPERS

No.1 goal is to get coverage in the Sunday edition in each state. These papers have comprehensive travel coverage and lifestyle supplements—providing many opportunities for exposure.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH (1,010,000 readers)

SUNDAY HERALD SUN (890,000 readers)

SUNDAY MAIL (847,000 readers)

Major newspapers like The Guardian, The Independent, major city dailies in countries of our house sits.

MAGAZINES AND WEBSITES **Gai writes regularly for these sites**

BONJOUR PARIS website www.bonjourparis.com

UK based website—monthly views: 450,000

Monthly unique users 110,000

Facebook: 10,000 Twitter: 12,000

* newsletter subscribers 35,000



FRANCE Today website www.francetoday.com

UK based International magazine (leader in USA)

circulation: >150,000 per issue

Website: 70,000 unique visitors

Facebook: 6,136 Twitter: 9,582



FRENCH ENTRÉE website www.frenchentree.com

UK based International magazine (real estate focus)

circulation: >120,000 per issue

Website: > 250,000 unique visitors /month

Facebook: 3,628 Twitter: 6,961 Pinterest: 962



FRENCH PROVINCIAL www.frenchprovincial.com.au

Australian based subscription magazine:

Web: 4,000+ visitors per week 7,000 subscribers

Facebook: 2,545

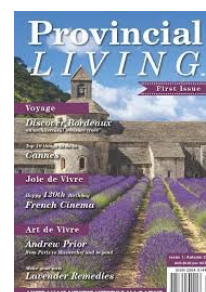


PROVINCIAL LIVING

* New Australian magazine www.provinciallylivingmag.com.au

Audience - Francophiles, but also includes Italy and other “provincial” areas.

Estimated readership: 15,000—20,000+



THE GOOD LIFE FRANCE www.thegoodlifeFrance.com

website and on-line magazine: 200,000 visitors per month

Facebook: 71,000 Twitter: 10,700 * subscribers: 100,000 Social media reach: 1,000,000 per month



MAGS & OTHER MEDIA for story pitches during the year

Gai is a Member of International Writers & Photographers Alliance. She will be pitching stories from "Village to Villa" to various outlets.



INTERNATIONAL LIVING—American monthly mag devoted to international retirement and living outside USA. Articles on living and travel.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLER— bi-monthly magazine based in Sydney aimed at Australians travelling overseas.

www.internationaltravellermag.com

TRAVELLER—UK's oldest travel mag. The real experience of travelling the world. "Special Features", "Destination reports", "A Taste of...".

www.wexas.com/traveller-magazine/

WANDERLUST TRAVEL— UK publication aimed at independent travellers, covers all aspects of independent and special interest travel.

www.wanderlust.co.uk

DISCOVER BRITAIN—UK mag for Anglophiles. Articles that feature British life past and present.

www.discoverbritainmag.com/britain

BRITAIN—Travel and history of Britain Isles, where to go and what to see.

Www.britain-magazine.com

DESTINATION FRANCE—UK publication for Francophiles. Features on holidays, food, wine, culture and property.

www.distinationfrncemagazine.co.uk

VISITOR STATISTICS FRANCE

In 2013 the number of people visiting France was
18.7 million more than its population.



84.7 million people went *en vacance* amid
66 million French citizens.

This makes France the number one tourist destination around the world followed by the US 69.7m, Spain 60.6m, China 55.7m and Italy 47.7m.

83% of the country's tourists come from the rest of Europe - but according to the French Bureau of Statistics, **1,076,900 incoming tourists in 2012 were from Australia.**

1.4 million came from China, one of the biggest increases at 23.3%.

The UK sits at number 6 but if current trends continue, they may nudge out China for the 5th spot.

During their stay the visitors contributed **33.4 billion Euros** to the French economy.

VISITOR STATISTICS UK

In the year 2009, tourism was worth **115.4 billion pounds**.



TOP 10 MARKETS

France 12%, Germany 9%, USA 9%, Irish Rep 9%, Spain 6%,
Netherlands 6%, Italy 5%, Poland 4%, Belgium 3%, Australia 3%

OS visitors increased by 6% in the last year - **34,630,000 million** visits with 21.5 million coming from France, Germany and the US. Australians make up half a million and along with China, Australia is in the growth area for British visitor numbers.

Visitors from France:

- ♦ Most trips are by those **aged 25-44**, but the **strongest growth in the past decade is 55+**
- ♦ **60% of holiday visitors** are making a **repeat trip** to Britain
- ♦ **Paris** is by far the most important source market for visits to Britain from France

Popular activities - sightseeing famous buildings, monuments, visit museums, shopping

Visitors from Australia:

- ♦ Britain attracts **visitors of all ages** from Australia
- ♦ **50%** of holiday visitors are making a **repeat trip** to UK
- ♦ **81%** of visitors are either 'extremely' or 'very' likely to recommend Britain
- ♦ Visitors from NSW are double those from other states.

Popular activities – sightseeing, visit pub, shopping

VISITOR STATISTICS ITALY

Italy is the 5th most visited country with **47.7 million tourists** arriving in a year.



Italy has a population of **61.34 million**.

Tourists have been making a pilgrimage to Italy since the days of the Roman Empire. Today tourism contributes more than €64 billion to Italy's GDP.

Tourism is one of Italy's fastest growing and most profitable industrial sectors, with an estimated revenue of €136.1 billion.

There are more World Heritage sites in Italy than any other country in the world.

Italy attracts visitors who are interested in art, history, culture, the stunning coastline and of course the food.