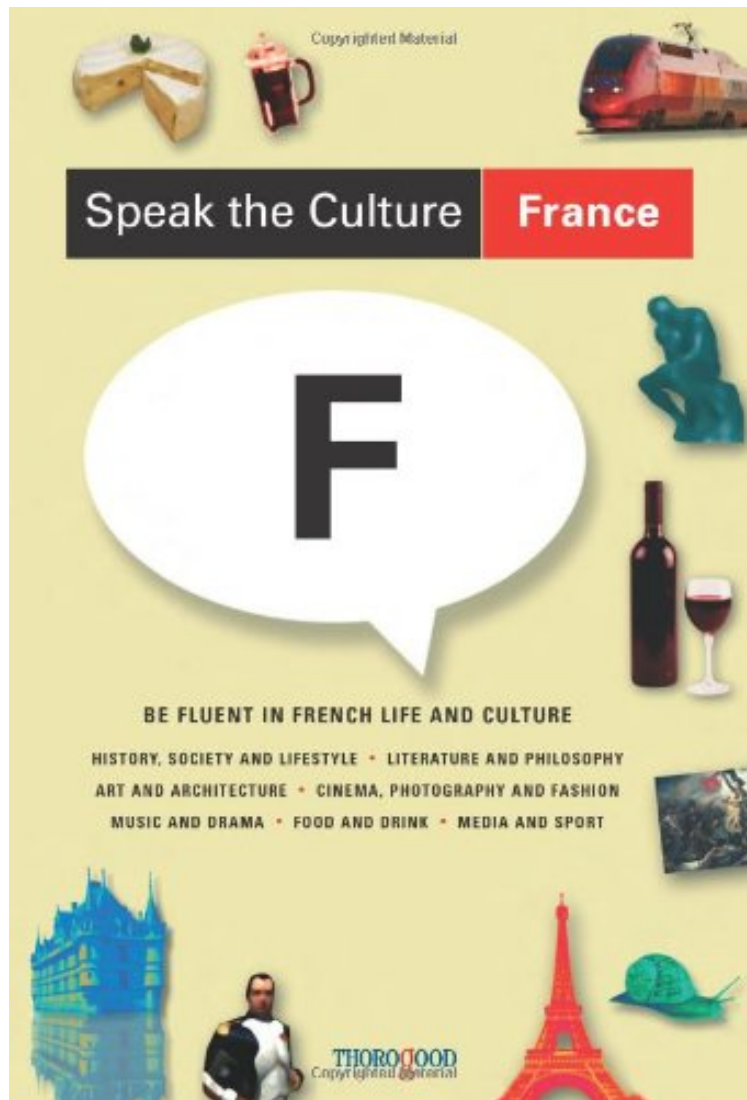


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Speak the Culture: France

Andrew Whittaker

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A guidebook can show you where to go, a phrase-book what to say when you get there. Only *Speak the Culture: France* will lead you to the nation's soul. This easy-to-use cultural companion reflects what it means to have grown up with Camus, Cézanne, De Gaulle and Bardot; it captures the spirit of France and delves deep into the Gallic psyche. Through exploring the people, the movements and the lifestyles that have shaped the French experience, you will come to an intimate understanding of France and the French. There are many travel guides and manuals on living in France. *Speak the Culture: France* is different: a superbly designed, informed and entertaining insight into French life and culture and who the French really are. Recommended by the Institut français du Royaume-Uni, the Official French Government Centre of Language and Culture in the UK. For new residents, business travellers, holidaymakers, students and lovers of France everywhere, *Speak the Culture: France* is an engaging companion and guide to an enviably rich civilization at the heart of Europe. Excerpt: It would be wrong to imagine that your average Frenchwoman just pops into Chanel on the Rue du Faubourg-St-Honor whenever she needs a new bag, cardy or fragrance. While a significant minority do indulge in ready-to-wear lines produced by designer labels, most are happy with less brand-conscious garments. Small boutiques and historic department stores like Le Bon Marché and Les Galeries Lafayette sell the big brands, but many French are happy to buy anonymous clothes at knockdown prices in chain stores like Tati, or even in the hypermarket.

"How refreshing and, to be honest, reassuring to come across a book of such high quality.... If you want to unravel French DNA, read this book. Thanks to good research and a modern, reader-friendly layout, it paints a true picture of French culture in such a way that you can read about a subject thoroughly or just pick little snippets of interesting information.... This is a very impressive book indeed... a pleasure to read It should come with a 'Learning guaranteed certificate.'" (France magazine) "In intelligent tabloid style, it gallops through history (from Cro-Magnon to Sarkozy in 14 pages: brilliant), art, literature, music, food and more besides. Overlooking hardly anything of importance, it's a miracle of compression spiced with good trivia.... Read the book carefully and you will have the skeleton of French culture." (Daily Telegraph) "Even as Eurostar relocates to a gloriously refurbished St Pancras station and the journey time between London and Paris is shaved even closer, more and more people on both sides of the Channel are taking advantage of the extra opportunities this highly cherishable link offers us. And for those already in love with France (not to mention the ever-increasing legions of converts), *Speak the Culture: France* will be an invaluable aid and companion. Actually, no publisher has attempted anything quite like this, and the publishers Thorogood are to be much applauded for their ingenuity and achievement. The subtitle is *Be fluent in French Life and Culture*, and that facility is just what this remarkable volume offers, cramming an amazing mass of information into its well-designed pages. Everything is here, from French art and literature, architecture, media, sport, fashion and (of course) food and drink. But while not being in the slightest dumbed down, the information here (while often dealing with such weighty subjects as Proust and French existential philosophers) is delivered in a concise and highly accessible style (and aided considerably by the clever graphics which have a nicely self-mocking subtext--when was that last seen in a book on a foreign country?). So, you're sitting on Eurostar, and a fresh espresso is to hand. Don't reach for the glossy magazine the train company provides--crack open *Speak the Culture: France* and you'll be thoroughly tooled up for your visit to the City of Light." (Barry Forshaw Travel Journalist) "For anybody living in France, visiting the country on holiday or simply interested in French life, *Speak the Culture: France* is essential reading." (Living France Magazine) "A veritable cultural kaleidoscope of famous, influential and significant activities, events, place and people that add up to France." (French Property News) About the Author Andrew Whittaker has travelled widely and written extensively on France and the Mediterranean countries.