



Ukraine

Includes »

Kyiv	915
Lviv	925
Kamyanets-Podilsky	932
Odesa	934
Crimea	940
Simferopol	940
Yalta	942
Bakhchysaray	944
Understand Ukraine.....	946
Survival Guide.....	952

Best Places to Eat

- » Spotykach (p922)
- » Pervak (p922)
- » Gogol Mogol (p937)
- » Masonic Restaurant (p929)
- » Vegeteriya (p941)

Best Places to Stay

- » Sunflower B&B (p921)
- » Vintage (p929)
- » Leopold Hotel (p929)
- » On the Corner (p931)
- » Villa Sofia (p943)

Why Go?

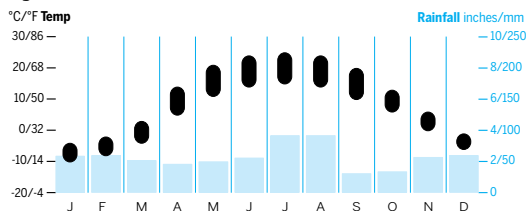
Big, diverse and largely undiscovered, Ukraine (Україна) is one of Europe's last genuine travel frontiers, a poor nation rich in colour-splashed tradition, warm-hearted people and off-the-map travel experiences.

'Ukraine' means 'land on the edge', an apt title for this slab of Eurasia in many ways. This is the Slavic hinterland on Europe's periphery, a mere two decades into a troubled independence and dogged by Second World political anguish, ethnic divisions and deep-rooted corruption. But it's a country whose peoples can pull together when need arises, most recently for the remarkably successful Euro 2012 soccer championships which showed off the country at its hospitable best.

Most visitors head for capital Kyiv, but architecturally rich Lviv and hedonistic Odesa are attracting ever greater numbers. Add a spot of hiking or skiing in the Carpathians and the balmy beaches of Crimea, and Ukraine becomes a much more diverse destination than many might imagine.

When to Go

Kyiv



Apr Witness Ukraine's funny side at Odesa's Carnival Humorina festival of humour.

May Take a Sunday morning stroll through Lviv when church music wafts through streets.

Dec Enjoy some hearty Hutsul apres ski during the Carpathian ski season.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Hryvnya (uah)
- » **Language** Ukrainian, Russian
- » **Money** ATMs widespread; credit cards accepted at most hotels
- » **Visas** Not required for EU, UK, US and Canadian citizens for stays of up to 90 days

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 603,628 sq km
- » **Capital** Kyiv
- » **Country code** ☎380
- » **Emergency** ☎112

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	8.51uah
Canada	C\$1	8.02uah
Euro Zone	€1	10.42uah
Japan	¥100	8.64uah
New Zealand	NZ\$1	6.82uah
UK	UK£1	12.33uah
USA	US\$1	8.15uah

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** 200uah
- » **Two-course meal** 60uah
- » **Museum entrance** 10–30uah
- » **Beer** 15–25uah
- » **City transport ticket** 1–2uah

Resources

- » **Brama** (www.brama.com)
- » **Ukraine.com** (www.ukraine.com)

Connections

Ukraine is well linked to its neighbours, particularly Russia and Belarus, with whom it shares the former Soviet rail system. Kyiv is connected by bus or train to Moscow, St Petersburg, Minsk, Warsaw and Budapest, as well as other Eastern European capitals. Odesa is the hub for travelling to the Moldovan capital Chişinău and Tiraspol in Transdnester, with several daily buses and one train a day making the trip. The city also has ferries to Bulgaria, Georgia and Turkey, though the service is erratic. From Uzhhorod it's a short journey to the international mainline into Europe at Chop, connecting Ukraine with Slovakia and Hungary. Lviv is the biggest city servicing the Polish border and an ever-increasing number of travellers are taking budget flights to Poland then crossing the border to Lviv by bus or train. It's also possible to take no-frills flights to Budapest or Bratislava, and continue to Ukraine from there by train.

ITINERARIES

One Week

Begin by sampling the charms of Kyiv before heading either south to party in Odesa or west for a more refined and relaxed time in Lviv. Alternatively, take in Kyiv and Lviv then trundle on down into the Carpathian mountains for a spot of skiing, hiking or mountain biking.

Two Weeks

Spend three days in Kyiv, two in Lviv, then pass through rocking Odesa to Crimea, making Yalta your base and being sure to visit Bakhchysaray.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Borsch** The Ukrainian national soup, which is made with beetroot, pork fat and herbs. There's also an aromatic 'green' variety, based on sorrel.
- » **Salo** Basically raw pig fat, cut into slices and eaten with bread or added to soups and other dishes. Look out for the 'Ukrainian Snickers bar' – *salo* in chocolate.
- » **Varenyky** Similar to Polish *pierogi* – pasta pockets filled with everything from mashed potato to sour cherries.
- » **Kasha** Sometimes translated as 'porridge', but usually turns out to be buckwheat swimming in milk and served for breakfast.
- » **Vodka** Also known in Ukraine as *horilka*, it accompanies every celebration, red-letter day and get-together – in copious amounts.