



The Island of Jersey

Jersey is situated off the north-west coast of France. The nearest points of the French coast are Normandy, 14 miles to the east, and Brittany, 30 miles to the south. Jersey is the largest and most southerly of the Channel Islands. It covers an area of 45 square miles and has a resident population of 87,000. This population increases in the summer months as a result of a significant tourist industry. St Helier is the capital and the administrative and commercial centre of the Island.

Jersey's two principal industries are financial services and tourism. Since 1962 Jersey has become a major centre for financial services and the industry now accounts for 25% of employment and 55% of the Island's GDP. There are 73 banks, over 33,000 registered companies and £100 billion is deposited in the Island at any one time. Tourism provides nearly a quarter of the Island's income and there are around 200 hotels and guesthouses on Jersey. The other important industry is agriculture and in particular market gardening. 53% of the Island is in agricultural use.

Jersey has beautiful scenery, lush green valleys, well kept fields and over 50 miles of unspoilt coastline with many excellent beaches, majestic cliffs and rocky coves. St Ouen's Bay, which forms the Island's west coast, is overlooked by Les Mielles nature reserve which is home to a multitude of flora and fauna. Jersey enjoys an excellent climate.

Jersey has many sites of historical interest including Elizabeth Castle, a fortress built in 1600 on an islet guarding St Helier harbour. Other notable sites include Mont Orgueil Castle at Gorey on the east coast and La Hougue Bie, a Neolithic site with a giant burial mound. The La Mare Vineyards, the Quetivel watermill and the Jersey Zoological Gardens founded by the late Gerald Durrell are also some of other major attractions.

There are regular boat and car ferry services to France, England and the other Channel Islands and there is an international airport at St Peter in the west of the Island.

English is the Island's official language, but French is also spoken. Jersey's currency is Sterling but it issues its own notes and coins.

We have included in this pack a section on living in Jersey which provides information on income tax, housing, education, social security, healthcare, employment legislation, goods and services and leisure.

Further information on the Island and its government can be found by visiting the States' website on www.gov.je

Government and Constitution

History and Constitution of the Island

Prior to the Norman Conquest in 1066, the Channel Islands were part of the Duchy of Normandy. When Normandy was freed from English rule in 1204, the Islands retained their allegiance to the English Crown. Since that time successive English monarchs have ruled Jersey and the other Channel Islands through their claim to the title of the Duke of Normandy.

Jersey has its own government and legislative assembly, known as the States of Jersey, and comprehensive legal, fiscal and administrative systems. The Bailiwick of Jersey is not represented in the United Kingdom Parliament and UK legislation therefore only applies to the Island if it is expressly agreed that it should do so.

Whilst the Island is responsible for its own internal affairs, the Crown, through the Privy Council and Westminster, is responsible for defence and foreign affairs. The Crown is also responsible for the appointment of certain local officials including the Lieutenant Governor who acts as the official communication between the States Assembly, the United Kingdom Government and the Crown. Other official appointments are the Bailiff and Deputy Bailiff, who share the duties of presiding over the States Assembly and the Royal Court and the Attorney General and Solicitor General who act as legal advisers to the States on behalf of the Crown.

When the United Kingdom became a member of the EEC, the Island negotiated a special relationship with the Community, guaranteeing the preservation of its constitutional status whilst retaining the benefit of free movement of manufactured and agricultural goods within the Common Market.