



# UKRAINE



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## 1 CONTACT ADDRESSES

**Location:** Central Eastern Europe.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Mykhailovska Square 1, 01018 Kyiv, Ukraine  
**Tel:** (44) 226 3379. Fax: (44) 226 3169. E-mail: embassy@gov.ua  
**Web site:** <http://www.mfa.gov.ua>

Embassy of Ukraine  
60 Holland Park, London W11 3SJ  
**Tel:** (020) 7727 6312. Fax: (020) 7792 1708. Opening hours: Monday to Friday 0900-1800  
**Consular section:** 78 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2PL  
**Tel:** (020) 7243 8923 or (09001) 887 749 (recorded visa information; calls cost 60p per minute).  
Fax: (020) 7727 3567. Opening hours: Monday to Friday 0930-1230 (visa application) 1600-1700 (visa collection).

Intourist Travel Ltd.  
219 Marsh Wall, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9PD  
**Tel:** (020) 7538 8600 (general enquiries). Fax: (020) 7538 5967.  
**E-mail:** [info@intourist.co.uk](mailto:info@intourist.co.uk)  
**Web site:** <http://www.intourist.com>

British Embassy  
vul. Desyatynna 9, 01025 Kyiv, Ukraine  
**Tel:** (44) 462 0011/2. Fax: (44) 462 0013. E-mail: [ukembinf@sovam.com](mailto:ukembinf@sovam.com)  
**Web site:** <http://www.britemb-ukraine.net>  
**Consular section:** vul. Sichnevoho Povstannya 6, 01010 Kyiv, Ukraine  
**Tel:** (44) 290 7317 or 290 2919. Fax: (44) 290 7947. E-mail: [ukembc@webber.net.ua](mailto:ukembc@webber.net.ua)

Embassy of Ukraine  
3350 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007  
**Tel:** (202) 333 0606 or 333 7507 (consular section). Fax: (202) 333 0817. Web site:  
<http://ukremb.com>  
**Consulates in:** Chicago and New York (tel: (212) 371 5690).

Russian National Group  
130 West 42nd Street, Suite 412, New York, NY 10036  
**Tel:** (212) 757 3884. Fax: (212) 575 3434.

Embassy of the United States of America  
vul. Yuri Kotsyubinsky 10, 01909 Kyiv, Ukraine  
**Tel:** (44) 490 4000. Fax: (44) 244 7350. E-mail: [acs@usemb.kiev.ua](mailto:acs@usemb.kiev.ua)  
**Web site:** <http://www.usemb.kiev.ua>  
**Opening hours:** Monday to Friday 0900-1800  
**Consular section:** vul. Pymonenko 6, 01909 Kyiv, Ukraine  
**Tel:** (44) 490 4331. Fax: (44) 236 4892. E-mail: [consular@usemb.kiev.ua](mailto:consular@usemb.kiev.ua)

Embassy of Ukraine  
310 Somerset Street West, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0J9

**Tel:** (613) 230 2961. Fax: (613) 230 2400.  
**Consulate in:** Toronto (tel: (416) 763 3114).

Canadian Embassy  
Yaroslaviv Val 31, Kyiv 01901, Ukraine  
**Tel:** (44) 464 1144. Fax: (44) 464 1130.

**Country dialling code:** 380.

## 2 GENERAL

**Area:** 603,700 sq km (233,090 sq miles).

**Population:** 50,500,000 (1997).

**Population Density:** 83.6 per sq km.

**Capital:** Kyiv. Population: 2,635,000 (1995).

**Geography:** Ukraine is bordered by the Russian Federation to the north and east; Belarus to the north; Poland, the Slovak Republic and Hungary to the west; and Romania and Moldova to the southwest. It is a varied country with mountains in the west, plains in the centre and the Black Sea views to the south. The north of the state is dominated by forests. Its other two main features are wooded steppe with beech and oak forests and the treeless steppe. The River Dnieper divides Ukraine roughly in half, and flows into the Black Sea.

**Government:** Republic. Gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Head of State: President Leonid D Kutshma since 1994. Head of Government: Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko since 2000.

**Language:** Ukrainian is the sole official state language. A member of the eastern Slav languages and similar to Russian, it was discouraged for centuries by Tsarist and Soviet authorities. It is still widely spoken in western and central Ukraine, although Russian is spoken by virtually everyone. Russian is the main language spoken in Kyiv, eastern Ukraine and Crimea. The present Government uses every opportunity to promote the revival of Ukrainian, particularly in schools. There are 12 million ethnic Russians in Ukraine, 500,000 Jews and more than 250,000 Crimean Tatars.

**Religion:** There are about 35 million Ukrainian Orthodox faithful, although the church is divided into a traditional pro-Moscow and a breakaway pro-Kyiv faction. Five million Eastern-rite (Uniate) Catholics, subservient to Rome, are concentrated in western Ukraine and it is now several years since a Stalin-era ban on their church was lifted. There are also Protestant and Muslim minorities. Mass emigration has reduced the numbers of Jews, concentrated in Kyiv, Lvov and Odessa.

**Time:** GMT + 2 (GMT + 3 from last Sunday in March to Saturday before last Sunday in October).

**Electricity:** 220 volts AC, 50Hz.

**Communications:**

**Telephone:** Ukraine has reliable communications with the West, and most major cities provide IDD facilities and can be dialled from abroad. Country code: 380. Outgoing international code: 810. Telephone counters in the central post offices of city centres are usually open 24 hours.

**Mobile telephone:** GSM 900/1800. Operators include Ukrainian Mobile Comms (web site: <http://www.umc.com.ua>), Ukrainian Radio Systems (web site: <http://www.welcome2well.com>) and Kyivstar (web site: <http://www.kyivstar.net>). Coverage is limited to Kyiv and other main urban areas.

**Fax:** Facilities are good and are available in most offices and hotels.

**Telegram:** These can be sent from central post offices in large cities 24 hours a day.

**Internet/E-mail:** ISPs include UANet (web site: <http://www.ua.net>) and Ukraine Intercom (web site: <http://www.ukrcom.net.ua>). E-mail can be accessed from cybercafés in Kyiv, Odessa, Lyiv and Cherkassy.

**Post:** Services are erratic. Letters to Western Europe can take two weeks or more. The main post office in Kyiv is located at Khreshchatik 22 and it is open 24 hours. Post office hours: Generally 0800-1700.

**Press:** The most popular and lively daily is the Russian-language Kyivskiye Vedomosti. Also widely read are the liberal Nezavisimost and the parliamentary daily Holos Ukrainy. The Russian press is also widely available. News from Ukraine is published in English and available in 70 other countries. Western newspapers are now available in Kyiv, but not in other parts of the country.

**BBC World Service and Voice of America frequencies:** From time to time these change.

**BBC:**  
MHz17.6415.579.4106.195

**Voice of America:** MHz15.2059.7607.1701.197

### 3 PASSPORT

	<i>Passport Required?</i>	<i>Visa Required?</i>	<i>Return Ticket Required?</i>
<b>British</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Australian</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Canadian</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>USA</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>OtherEU</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Japanese</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Note:** (a) Visa regulations are liable to change at short notice. Prospective travellers are advised to contact the nearest Ukrainian Consulate/Embassy (see address section). (b) If in transit between Ukraine and other CIS countries, several visas must be held. Travellers who enter the Russian Federation from Ukraine without a Russian Federation visa are charged a penalty of US\$250 for illegal entry. Ukrainian visas are not valid in the Russian Federation, and Russian

Federation visas are not valid in Ukraine. (c) As a general rule, visitors should apply for a visa before travelling.

**PASSPORTS:** Passports valid for at least 1 month beyond return date required by all.

**VISAS:** Required by all except the following:

- (a) nationals of CIS countries (except nationals of Turkmenistan who do require a visa);
- (b) nationals of Poland for stays of up to 90 days, provided travelling for touristic purposes;
- (b) nationals of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania, Slovak Republic and Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), provided they are travelling for touristic purposes. If travelling for private purposes, these nationals require an officially endorsed letter of invitation.

**Types of visa and cost:** Tourist: £25 (single-entry); £40 (double-entry). Business: £30 (single-entry); £50 (double-entry); £120 (multiple-entry). Group Tourist (available to travel agents only): £10. Transit: £10 (single-entry); £20 (double-entry). Normal processing time is 10 working days. For urgent visas (processed within 3 working days), the fee is higher. This service is available for all visas except Group visas. No fee is charged for children under 16 years and for applicants delivering humanitarian aid or providing technical assistance to Ukraine.

**Validity:** Single-entry: 3 months from date of issue; Multiple-entry: 6 months; Transit: 3 days for each entry. Visas must be stamped inside the passport.

**Application to:** Consulate (or Consular section at Embassy); see address section.

**Application requirements:** (a) Valid passport/travel document with at least one blank page. (b) 1 completed application form. (c) 2 passport-size photos. (d) Fee (cheque or postal order made payable to the 'Embassy of Ukraine'; UK cheques should be endorsed 'A/C payee only, not negotiable' and must have a cheque guarantee card number written on the back). Separate cheques should be sent for the visa fee (see above) and the handling charge (£10). (e) Stamped, self-addressed envelope for postal applications.

**Tourism:** (a)-(e) and, (f) Tourist voucher with confirmation of hotel booking.

**Business:** (a)-(e) and, (f) \*Letter of invitation from Ukrainian company or organisation stating purpose of the visit. (g) \*For Multiple-entry visas, detailed letters from Ukrainian company and company in home country explaining necessity for Multiple-entry visa. (h) Copy of registration certificate of company or office in Ukraine.

**Private:** (a)-(e) and, (f) \*Letter of invitation from Ukraine (faxed copy is acceptable) from a local immigration office (OVIR).

**Transit:** (a)-(e) and, (f) Photocopy of the visa (if required) of the country of destination.

**Note\*:** (a) Nationals of EU countries, Canada and Japan applying for business, sporting, private or cultural visas do not require a letter of invitation. (b) For Group Visas, individual passports, photos and application forms are not necessary. It is sufficient if the tour operator supplies photocopies of the passports and a list in triplicate with the following details for every participant: Surname, first names, date of birth, nationality and passport number. Included should also be a copy of the planned itinerary.

**Working days required:** 10. Transit visas take 5 days to process. Allow extra time for postal applications. Applications for visas from nationals of EU countries, Canada and Japan can be processed within 3 working days; see above under 'Types of visa and cost' for details. Applicants for Urgent services should mark their envelopes accordingly.

## 4 MONEY

**Currency:** Hryvnya (UAH) = 100 kopyok (singular: kopyka). Notes are in denominations of 100, 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 hryvnya. Coins are in denominations of 50, 25, 10, 5, 2 and 1 kopyok.

**Currency exchange:** Money should only be changed at currency booths on the street or in banks. Changing money with black-market traders is not recommended and can be dangerous.

**Credit cards:** Not readily accepted. Only a few restaurants and hotels will accept them.

Exchange rate indicators

The following figures are a guide to the movements of the Hryvnya against Sterling and the US Dollar:

Date May '00 Aug '00 Nov '00 Feb '01 £1.00=8.038.127.857.98 \$1.00=5.415.415.425.44

**Currency restrictions:** The import of local currency is up to the amount declared on the Ukrainian Exit Customs Declaration. The export of local currency is limited to UAH85. The import of foreign currency is limited to US\$10,000 and any amounts exceeding US\$10,000 require a special customs form. The export of foreign currency is limited to US\$1,000. Any higher amounts can be exported with special permission from the National Bank of Ukraine.

## 5 DUTY FREE

The following items may be imported into Ukraine without incurring customs duty:

200g of cigarettes or cigars or tobacco; 1 litre of spirits and 2 litres of wine (persons over 20 years of age only); goods for personal use (toiletries and personal effects); gifts up to the value of US\$210.

## 6 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Jan 1 2001 New Year's Day. Jan 7 Orthodox Christmas. Jan 14 Orthodox New Year. Mar 8 International Women's Day. Apr 15 Orthodox Easter. May 1-2 Labour Days. May 9 Victory Day. Jun 18 Trinity. Jun 28 Constitution Day. Aug 24 Ukrainian Independence Day. Jan 1 2002 New Year's Day. Jan 7 Orthodox Christmas. Jan 14 Orthodox New Year. Mar 8 International Women's Day. Mar 31 Orthodox Easter. May 1-2 Labour Days. May 9 Victory Day. Jun 18 Trinity. Jun 28 Constitution Day. Aug 24 Ukrainian Independence Day.

## 7 HEALTH

	<i>Special Precautions</i>	<i>Certificate Required</i>
<b>Yellow Fever</b>	No	No
<b>Cholera</b>	No	No
<b>Typhoid and Polio</b>	Yes	-
<b>Malaria</b>	No	-
<b>Food and Drink</b>		1

**1:** All water should be regarded as a potential health risk. Water used for drinking, brushing teeth or making ice should have first been boiled or otherwise sterilised. Milk is pasteurised and dairy products are safe for consumption. Only eat well-cooked meat and fish, preferably served hot. Pork, salad and mayonnaise may carry increased risk. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled.

Rabies is present. For those at high risk, vaccination before arrival should be considered. If you are bitten, seek medical advice without delay. For more information, consult the Health appendix. Widespread outbreaks of diphtheria have been reported in recent years. Tick-borne-encephalitis occurs in forested areas. Visitors are advised to seek medical advice about immunisation and precautionary measures. Good personal hygiene and care with water and food supplies are essential. Hepatitis A may occur and precautions should be taken.

**Health care:** The health service does, in theory, provide free medical treatment for all citizens and travellers who become ill. However, as in most parts of the former Soviet Union, health care is a serious problem. For minor difficulties, visitors are advised to ask the management at their hotels for help. For major problems, visitors are well advised to seek help outside the country. Travel insurance is, in fact, compulsory for all travellers. It is advisable to take a supply of those medicines that are likely to be required (but check first that they may be legally imported) as medicines can prove difficult to obtain. Travellers are advised to contact their Embassy, in the first instance, for advice on where to get medical help.

Travel - International

**AIR:** Ukraine International Airlines (PS), a Ukrainian alliance with Austrian Airlines/Swissair and Aer Fi Group, links Kyiv with Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Frankfurt/M, London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Zürich and most recently Milan. Air Ukraine (6U) serves a smaller number of European points, as well Moscow and other Russian cities aboard aircraft reclaimed from the former Soviet airline Aeroflot (SU). Flights are also available from Lviv to Warsaw, New York and Washington, from Simferopol to Turkey and from Ivano-Frankivsk to the UK (summer only).

**Approximate flight times:** From Kyiv to London is 3 hours 30 minutes, to Moscow is 1 hour 15 minutes and to Vienna is 2 hours.

**International airport:** Kyiv (IEV) - Borispol International (KBP) is approximately 38km (24 miles) from central Kyiv. The airport has undergone extensive renovation. Facilities currently include 24-hour banks/bureaux de change, duty-free shops, restaurants, child facilities, 24-hour post office, left luggage and pharmacy. The bus terminal is located at Ploshcha Peremohy where there are local buses and shuttle buses connecting with Kyiv. However, transport to and from the airport is often unreliable and a taxi is the best means costing about US\$30.

**Departure tax:** None.

**SEA/RIVER:** The main ports are Odessa and Izmail on the River Danube. Services are available to the Russian Federation ports of Novorossiysk and Sochi, Batumi and Sukhumi in Georgia, as well as to a number of cities on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. A ferry service connects Sevastopol and Istanbul, Turkey. The republic's most important internal waterway is the River Dnieper. Black Sea cruises around the Crimean peninsula are available and well-recommended. Most cruises leave from Turkey, Bulgaria or Romania and stop over in Yalta, but there are also cruises which leave from Yalta.



**RAIL:** The 22,730km (14,207 miles) of railway track link most towns and cities within the republic and further links extend from Kyiv to all other CIS member states. The main stations are Kyiv and Lviv. There are direct lines to Warsaw in Poland, Budapest in Hungary, Bucharest in Romania, Berlin in Germany and Brest in Belarus. Ukrainian trains are slow. Journeys can range from pleasant to terribly uncomfortable if, for instance, the heating is not working. Security can also be a problem, as many muggings have been reported. If travelling by overnight train, do not leave the compartment unattended. Buying tickets locally can be difficult and it is easier to pre-book through Intourist Travel Ltd before departure (see address section). From Kyiv to Moscow takes 16 hours and to St Petersburg is about 36 hours.

**ROAD:** Of the 172,315km (107,074 miles) of road network, 29,227km (18,161 miles) are main or national roads. Ukrainian roads tend to be in reasonable condition. Border points are at Mostiska, Uzhgorod and Chop. It is recommended to carry a visa to enable a smooth border crossing. Private car-repair garages have recently become available, along with state-owned ones; however, spare parts are still scarce. The biggest problem is availability of suitable petrol (for instance, unleaded petrol is not available). Never set out on a journey without several cans of petrol. Insurance cover can be difficult to arrange. See Travel - Internal for information on traffic regulations and documentation.

Travel - Internal

**AIR:** Fuel shortages used to result in sharp reductions in flights within Ukraine and erratic timetables. However, the situation has improved recently. Air Ukraine's repainted Aeroflot aircraft are far from comfortable and buying tickets is extremely difficult and almost guaranteed to involve complicated negotiations with the local travel agencies. Pre-booking through Intourist Travel Ltd in London is advised (see address section). Winter weather frequently grounds aircraft. The most reliable flights are from Kyiv to Lviv, Donetsk and Odessa.

**RIVER:** Cruises between Kyiv, Sevastopol and Odessa are very popular and can be booked through various tour operators.

**RAIL:** Again, pre-booking through Intourist Travel Ltd in London is advised, as buying tickets is a difficult undertaking. Journeys are slow, though trains are more reliable than air travel in winter.

**ROAD:** Bus: There are services to most cities and towns although they are not always recommended due to overcrowding and uncleanliness. Taxi: Hiring a driver for a long-distance destination is a realistic option, costing about US\$200 from Kyiv to Odessa or a similar journey. Car hire: Not recommended. Self-drive hire cars are, so far, extremely rare. Traffic regulations: Speed limits are 60kph (37mph) in built-up areas, 90kph (55mph) in outside areas and 110kph (69mph) on the motorways. Traffic drives on the right; righthand-drive cars are prohibited. Drinking and driving is strictly prohibited. Heavy fines are imposed if traffic police smell alcohol on a driver's breath. Documentation: An International Driving Permit is necessary.

**URBAN:** Kyiv's metro is clean, cheap and efficient, though it runs less frequently than it once did. Buses and trolleybuses are extremely crowded and are best avoided. Taxis are available. State-owned taxis have yellow and black signs on the roof and are metered. Some shared taxis and minibuses exist on fixed routes. Hitchhiking is very common, although not recommended. Travellers can indicate the need for a lift and the driver will take them to their destination cheaply by Western standards, but prices should be agreed in advance. There are no public transport services from 0100-0500/0600.

## 8 ACCOMMODATION

**HOTELS:** Standards are lower than in countries where the tourist industry is more developed. The best hotels are in Kyiv, Odessa and the seaside resort Yalta.

**PRIVATE ROOMS:** A room in a private home is an excellent accommodation option in Ukraine as the people are friendly and hospitable and prices tend to be far more reasonable. However, there is no organisation as such that arranges rooms in private homes. Visitors can, however, ask around, as the savings and greater comfort may be well worth the effort (as long as due caution is observed).

**CAMPING/CARAVANNING:** Campsites are available on the outskirts of cities.

## 9 RESORTS & EXCURSIONS

**Kyiv:** Kyiv is the capital of Ukraine and the third-largest city in the CIS. It is also the cradle of Russian civilisation, the origin of the Kyiv Rus State founded in the 8th and 9th centuries and the city from which the Orthodox faith spread throughout Eastern Europe. Even though many of its buildings were destroyed in World War II, Kyiv still has much to offer. The Caves Monastery in the city centre is the focal point of the early Orthodox church. Visitors have to carry candles to see the church relics which are set in a maze of catacombs. It is the headquarters of the pro-Russian Orthodox church. The 11th-century St Sofia Cathedral contains splendid icons and frescoes and is situated in beautiful grounds. The Golden Gate of Kyiv is the last remnant of the 10th-century walls built to defend the city. Other attractions include the Cathedral of St Vladimir (the headquarters of the rival pro-Ukrainian church), the Opera House, the Museum of Ukrainian Art (with its collection of the work of regional artists from the 16th century to the present) and the Historical Museum of Ukraine. Andreyev Hill is a restored cobbled street in central Kyiv now used by artists to sell their wares. There are a lot of cafés and restaurants in this area. Khreshchatik Street and Independence Square are Kyiv's main thoroughfares. The square is particularly elegant with its chestnut trees and fountains. Martinsky Palace and Parliament is the official residence of Ukraine's President. The nearby Park of Glory is a war memorial, with a vast and controversial monument of a woman with a sword and shield overlooking the river. Locals go swimming in summer in the Dnieper River and climb onto its ice in winter to fish. It is possible to take boat trips on the river. There is a park and a beach on Trukhaniv Island.

**Lviv:** Lviv is a city of striking Baroque and Renaissance architecture and is the focal point of Ukrainian national culture. It was the centre of Ukrainian nationalist ambition at the beginning of the Soviet era. The City Castle was the first building to fly Ukraine's blue-and-yellow national flag. Lviv is also the headquarters of Ukraine's Greek Orthodox church. Located by the foothills of the picturesque Carpathians, it is one of the oldest and most unusual cities in Europe. Lviv is 'the city of lions' - the heart and soul of the Western Ukraine with a population of over 900,000. Lviv was mentioned in the Volyn chronicle in 1256 when Galycian King Danylo Galytsky founded the city and named it after his son Leo. Thanks to its advantageous location, many important trades and cultures meet in Lviv. Busy trade led to a dramatic increase in prosperity. Secular and religious gentry, rich merchants, artisans and crafts people lived within the narrow ring of the city walls. As early as the 15th century the city had its own mint, water supply system and regular international post. The streets were paved with cobbled stones and many new houses were built.

As the centuries passed, the varied heritage led to a wide variety of museum artefacts. The National Museum, Museum of History, Art Gallery, Antique Armoury (City Arsenal) and Museum of Ethnography and Crafts are famous for their collections. Development of the pharmaceutical trade in Ukraine is represented by the collection of the Pharmaceutical Museum - the oldest functioning pharmacy of Lviv (established in 1735). The interiors of these fabulous buildings evoke the atmosphere of times past.

The city itself is often called 'the open-air museum'. The highlight of its architecture is doubtlessly Market Square, connected for more than 600 years with local history. The Market Square of the old city performed the function of an economic, political and administrative centre up to the end of the 19th century. The area housed members of the urban nobility and wealthy merchant class, building many mansions and commercial properties. Today, Market Square is the core of the historical and architectural preservation area, consisting of 45 buildings. They reflect elements of many architectural traditions, such as Gothic, Baroque, Renaissance and Rococo.

Several theatre companies perform in Lviv. The Opera House of Ivan Franko is a source of great pride to locals. Extravagantly built, with richly decorated façade and interior, its architecture leads Lviv Opera to be classed among the best theatres in Europe.

**Odessa:** Odessa is the site of the famous 192 steps of the Potemkin stairway from Sergei Eisenstein's film Battleship Potemkin. In addition Odessa is also a centre of renewal of Jewish culture, with a community of 45,000. There is a vast Opera House - one of the world's largest. The ceiling is decorated with scenes from the plays of Shakespeare. Also worth visiting is the Statue of the Duke of Richelieu, the Vorontsov Palace on the waterfront and the Archaeological Museum with exhibits from the Black Sea area and Egypt.

**THE CRIMEA:** THE CRIMEA: This was once a summer playground for Kremlin leaders. Hotels and services are relatively cheap for Westerners, and the place is a favourite with German tourists. The region's dusty capital of Simferopol has few tourist sights. It is Yalta, the 'Pearl of the Crimea', which draws visitors. Former Communist Party spas have now been turned into resort centres. The region's vineyards produce good quality wine which can be tasted locally quite cheaply. The Wine Tasting Hall in Yalta is as good a place as any. The Vorontsov Palace was designed by Edward Blore, one of the architects of Buckingham Palace. Nikitsky Gardens, just outside of Yalta, is a good afternoon's excursion. Industry is centred on Massandra, above Yalta. Livada is where Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met in the Livada Palace in 1945. Foros is where Gorbachev was held for three days during the 1991 coup.

## 10 SPORT & ACTIVITIES

Ukrainians go skiing in the Carpathian Mountains in the west, where top resorts are in Yermcha and Vorokhta near the Romanian border and Slavsko, close to the Slovak Republic. The most popular spectator sport is football, although successes in the international arena for Oksana Baiul, Andrei Medvedev and Sergei Bubka have attracted many to figure skating, tennis and athletics.

## 11 SOCIAL PROFILE

**Food & Drink:** Specialities include borshch (beetroot soup), varenniki (dough containing cheese, meat or fruit) and holubtsi (cabbage rolls). Chicken Kiev exists but is better known in the West. Restaurants still tend to be fairly expensive (around US\$40 for a 2-3 course meal), but visitors now have a wider choice of cuisines (including Japanese, Thai, French, Italian or Indian),

particularly in Kyiv. Drink: Crimean wines are excellent, especially dessert wines such as Krasny Kamen ('Red Stone'). For those who prefer dry wine, Abrau and Miskhako are excellent brands of cabernet. Also outstanding are Artyomov champagne (bottled in eastern Ukraine) and fortified wines from Massandra, particularly one named 'Black Doctor'.

**Nightlife:** Opera is performed in the ornate theatres of Kyiv, Lviv and Odessa. Ukrainians have a deep-rooted musical tradition and singing is very popular. Most cities also have a good musical comedy, puppet-theatre and troupes performing theatrical works in Ukrainian and Russian. Tickets are cheap by Western standards and readily available on the day of performance at the box offices. Post-Soviet economics unfortunately mean that many performances are badly attended. Prominent visiting artists most often perform in Kyiv's vast Ukraine Theatre, where prices are higher.

**Shopping:** Artwork is the best buy. Top-quality paintings, ceramics and jewellery may be purchased quite cheaply at galleries or direct from artists on the street. Avoid the state shops, which have dull merchandise. Shopping hours: Large state or department stores tend to open Monday to Saturday, 0800-1900, whereas small boutiques are generally open 0900-1800. Some shops stay open as late as 2000.

**Special Events:** Odessa hosts an extravagant April Fool's Day celebration with costumes and street dancing. The Sarochin Market in central Ukraine takes place in August and draws people from far and wide. The Independence Day celebrations on August 24 are good fun, as are the celebrations for Orthodox Christmas on January 7.

**Social Conventions:** Ukrainian people are warm and particularly friendly to visitors. It is not at all uncommon for Ukrainians to invite strangers into their own homes. People on the street are friendly despite the rigours of post-Soviet life. Formal attire is rarely required, though people dress smartly for the theatre. Visitors should avoid ostentatious displays of wealth in public places. Tipping: Tips and, if appropriate, small gifts are appreciated. Service is sometimes included in first-class restaurants and hotel bills.

## 12 BUSINESS PROFILE

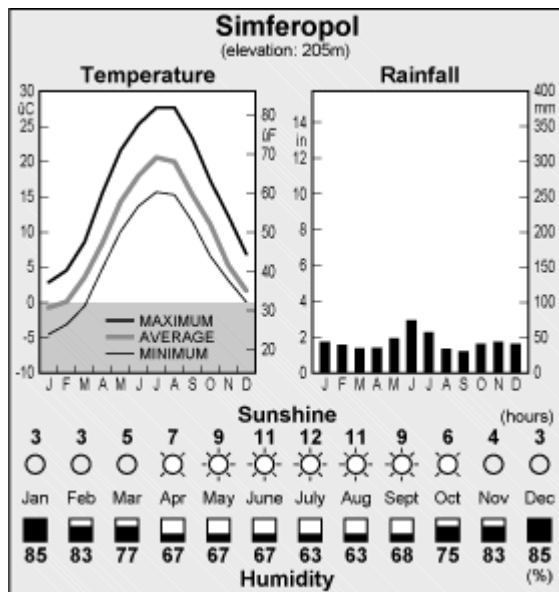
**Economy:** Ukraine has large areas of very fertile land which gave it its reputation as the 'bread basket' of the former Soviet Union. Grain, sugar beet and vegetables are the main crops; a high proportion of agricultural land is devoted to livestock farming. The country is also well blessed with mineral resources, particularly coal in the huge Donbass fields, and iron ore, manganese and titanium. There are a few reserves of gas and oil but Ukraine has to import over three-quarters of its requirements of these products from elsewhere, mainly from the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan. Much of this is still needed to fuel the heavy industries which dominate the country's manufacturing economy. Metal working, engineering products (especially machinery and transport equipment) and chemicals are the most important of these. A large proportion of industry was previously devoted to military production but this has sharply declined since the demise of the Soviet Union and drastic cuts in defence budgets. After some initial reluctance, Ukraine began to dismantle its highly centralised command economy in 1992 and to introduce market mechanisms under the guidance of the IMF which the country joined, along with the World Bank, in the same year. Ukraine also belongs to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development as a 'Country of Operation'. Key elements of the programme were privatisation, price reform, trade liberalisation and, as a necessary adjunct, the introduction of a fully-convertible currency - the Hrivnya - which came into use in 1995. During the early and mid-1990s, the Ukrainian economy suffered from rapid contraction of about 12% per year, and very

high inflation which occasionally touched 400%. While both statistics have improved markedly in the last few years, Ukraine is still far from recovering the status of its economy in 1991. Ukraine's major trading partners are the Russian Federation, China, Belarus, Turkmenistan and Germany.

**Business:** Suits, and ties for men, are required for official business. Exchange of business cards is extremely common and visitors are advised to bring company cards. Office hours: 0900-1800 Monday to Friday. Lunch hours tend to be at least 1 hour 30 minutes.

**Commercial Information:** The following organisations can offer advice: Chamber of Commerce and Industry, vul. Velyka Zhytomyrska 33, 01601 Kyiv (tel: (44) 212 2911; fax: (44) 212 3353); or Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see address section); or Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, Lvovska pl. 8, 252053 Kyiv (tel: (44) 226 2733; fax: (44) 212 4409).

## 13 CLIMATE



Temperate with warm summers; crisp, sunny autumns; and cold, snowy winters.

**Required clothing:** Lightweight clothes needed in summer, light- to mediumweight in the spring and autumn and heavyweight in the winter.

## 14 HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

**History:** Ukraine first came under Russian suzerainty in the 1650s, as an alternative to invasion by the Poles. Although part of Ukraine was annexed by Poland shortly afterwards, the whole of Ukraine was taken over by Russia after the partition of Poland at the end of the 18th century. When the empire of the tsar collapsed in 1917, Bolshevik forces consolidated their control over Ukraine and the republic was incorporated into the Soviet Union. However, Ukraine became the scene for much of the key fighting during the civil war of the early 1920s, and the Soviets subsequently lost some Ukrainian land to Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. These lands were recovered after the Soviet victory in World War II, along with the Crimea, which was also

attached to Ukraine (and is now the subject of an ongoing dispute between Ukraine and the Russian Federation). In the Gorbachev era, Ukrainian politics were substantially affected by the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in northern Ukraine in 1986. The secretive and parsimonious behaviour of the authorities gave a boost to the nascent opposition movements in the republic, particularly the Ukrainian People's Movement for Restructuring, known as Rukh. Elections to the Supreme Soviet in March 1990 gave around one-third of the 450 seats to opposition groups, with the remainder occupied by the Communist Party. Under pressure from the opposition, Rukh especially, the Government moved gradually towards sovereignty and independence. In March 1991, a referendum was held at which the independence option attracted 80% support. The failed Moscow coup of August 1991 spelt the end for the USSR, and shortly afterwards the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet made a declaration of full independence. Among the new political parties which emerged around this time was the Ukraine National Movement under the leadership of Leonid Kravchuk. Kravchuk's record as a politician on the reformist wing of the Communist party was sufficient for him to defeat the Rukh candidate Vyacheslav Chornovil to win the presidential poll held in December 1991. International recognition of the new state was easily forthcoming with little hesitation, assisted by the historical anomaly which gave Ukraine its own seat at the UN. (Belarus enjoys the same privilege). The future relationship between the Russian Federation and Ukraine was the greatest uncertainty in the dissolution of the USSR, primarily because of the presence of a significant proportion of strategic nuclear systems in Ukraine, the future distribution of which was - in theory - governed by the US-Soviet START treaty. In January 1994, Kravchuk signed an agreement with Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin agreeing to the destruction and/or transfer to Russia of the country's nuclear arsenal in exchange for US\$1 billion in compensation and security guarantees. Another difficult bilateral defence problem with the Russian Federation was the allocation of conventional systems between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, specifically the Black Sea fleet and a number of key tank divisions. These and other tricky issues were the subject of protracted but ultimately successful negotiation. Domestic politics have been dominated by economic reform: while there was universal agreement over the necessity of it, there were sharp disagreements over its pace and nature. This dispute forced the resignation in September 1992 of Ukraine's first Prime Minister, Vladimir Fokin, followed by much of his cabinet. Leonid Kuchma took his place, at the head of a government which included members of Rukh and the New Ukraine bloc but he too was forced out of office after twelve months. Yukhlym Zvyahilsky took over the Government which remained in office until the next presidential election scheduled for March 1994 at which Kuchma defeated the incumbent Kravchuk despite trailing him on the first ballot. Under Kuchma, the balance of power between the three main political forces in the country, the presidency, the cabinet and the Supreme Council (parliament) has been altered markedly in favour of the presidency. Kuchma's motive in obtaining the necessary constitutional amendments was to lessen the ability of the parliament (dominated by ex-communists broadly opposed to his rapid market reforms) from blocking key elements of his economic programme. The battle has continued, however, and Ukraine's reform process has yet to be completed. The IMF, which had guaranteed financial support to the country conditional upon the implementation of the reform programme, has on several occasions held up payment of several tranches. The most recent elections for the Supreme Council in March 1998 returned the Communist party as substantially the largest party but, with just 25% of the vote, far short of an overall majority; Rukh won just under 10% and 41 seats and participates in a multi-party administration made up of independents and reformists. The presidential election which fell due in November 1999 was far more clear-cut: Kuchma comfortably won a second term without the need for a run-off. Ukraine's foreign relations are dominated by the Russian Federation: disputes which initially marred bilateral relations, such as the future of the former Soviet Black Sea fleet and of Ukraine's nuclear arsenal, have for the most part been resolved. Only trade disputes persist. Elsewhere, a territorial dispute with Romania over certain Black sea islands has been settled. Further afield, Ukraine has made steady progress in initiating and developing relations with the European Union and also Latin American countries (Brazil, Argentina) which have sizeable Ukrainian exile communities. Any prospect of

joining the EU is, however, as yet distant: at least a dozen countries are in front of the Ukraine in the queue for membership.

**Government:** Legislative power is in the hands of the 450-strong Supreme Council (Verkhovna Rada) of whom half are elected half by proportional representation and half directly in single-seat constituencies. Executive power is held by the president, who is directly elected for a 5-year term, assisted by the Council of Ministers who control the day-to-day operation of the Government. The Prime Minister, who heads the Council of Ministers, is a presidential appointee.

## 15 OVERVIEW

**Country Overview:** Ukraine is bordered by the Russian Federation, Belarus, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Romania and Moldova. It is a varied country with mountains in the west, plains in the centre and breathtaking Black Sea views in the south.

Kyiv is the capital of Ukraine and the third-largest city in the CIS. It is also the cradle of Russian civilisation, the origin of the Kyiv Rus State founded in the 8th and 9th centuries.

The Caves Monastery in the city centre is the focal point of the early Orthodox church. The Golden Gate of Kyiv is the last remnant of the 10th-century walls built to defend the city.

The Crimea was once a summer playground for Kremlin leaders. Hotels and services are relatively cheap for Westerners. It is Yalta, the 'Pearl of the Crimea', which draws visitors. The region's vineyards produce good quality wine.

Specialities include borshch (beetroot soup) and holubtsi (cabbage rolls).

Opera is performed in the ornate theatres of Kyiv, Lvov and Odessa. Ukrainians have a deep-rooted musical tradition and singing is very popular.

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