



Some passengers find huge Charles de Gaulle Airport confusing. However, what could be so bad when it's only 15 minutes away from the Eiffel Tower in downtown Paris in one direction, and 20 minutes from a big Disneyland in the other?

Charles de Gaulle Airport, named after the famed World War II French general and later Premier of France, is one of the largest in the world. There are three main terminals, and they include stylish Parisian shops, duty free stores, typical French restaurants and kids' interactive games centers. There are also prayer rooms for travelers of all faiths. Due to today's need for tight security at CDG and all airports, a few moments of prayer may help getting around in this huge hub and to your flight. Keep passport and ticket information handy at all times, because you may be stopped by uniformed guards.

If you don't speak French, ask at any information booth for printed directions in English. Most major signs around the airport are in several languages, including English. Be sure to arrive at least an hour before your flight, to get through customs and security, and to the proper gate with as little anxiety as possible.

If there's time for shopping, CDG is one of the best airports for finding what you want. For a large selection of French wines and liquors, there are branches of Pure and Rare in each of the four terminals. Employees will help comply with regulations for shipping or taking approved purchased items aboard your flight.

There are familiar-named shops in every terminal. For example, there's Dior in 2E and Ferragamo in 2E and 2F. Don't forget to view what Cartier has to offer in 2E and 2F, and sniff the perfumes at L'Occitane in 1, 2C and 2D.

If American and need a taste of home, there's a Starbucks in Terminal 1, and a McDonald's in each of the terminals. If hungry for familiar Broadway deli, try Bert's in 2D. To sample an authentic French bistro, visit Bistrot Fontaine des Halles in 2A.

For travelers there for the first time, Charles de Gaulle can be as confusing, rushed and noisy

as any other major world airport. However, by allowing time to explore the many interesting features, your visit to CDG can be une expérience très agréable.