

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The country of rains, tubes and hunting for foxes, castles and cathedrals, beauty of landscapes and rhythm of the modern cities. Great Britain is the unusual country with a special character.

Geographical position

The UK is located on the British Isles. The largest one is Great Britain called also Albion by Roman conquerors. The island is separated from Europe by the North Sea, the Strait of Dover (Па-де-Кале) and English Channel (Ла-Манш). Such geographical position influenced history of the country.

There are a lot of gulfs and bays on the coasts of Great Britain.

Northern part of Britain is generally mountainous. The highest peak is the Ben Nevis height of 1343 meters. The southeast of the island is hilly. The territory of the British Isles is divided by rivers the Thames, Severn, Trent; in the northern part there are many lakes such as Loch Neagh, Loch Ness, Loch Lomond.

Some about history

The first inhabitants of the islands were Celtic tribes of Britons, than Romans occupied them. Afterwards Anglo-Saxon tribes came and formed the Kingdom of England. At the beginning of the 18th century Great Britain was formed.

A century before the British colonial Empire appeared, the biggest in the world. During the period of the highest prosperity it had colonies on all continents.

It occupied India, almost all North America, Australia, New Zealand, a half of Africa. By the middle of the XX century all these territories got independence, but some of them formally remained under the English crown such as Australia, Canada, Kingdom of New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Jamaica.

Elizabeth II, the queen of Great Britain since 1952, is the oldest monarch in the history of England. Her sixty-year anniversary of reigning had celebrated this year. Queen's reigning is nominal; she "reigns, but doesn't rule". The parliament of Great Britain makes functions of the head of the state. It consists of two parts: The House of Commons and The House of Lords.

National symbols of Great Britain

One of the state symbols is the flag Union Jack. Its pattern occurred after the unification of England and Scotland and unification of their flags' patterns. In 1801 Ireland joined, and the flag got the cross of St. Patrick.

The shield of Great Britain is the official shield of the British monarch. It includes two lions and seven leopards. It is divided into four fields, two of them represent England, others represents Scotland and Ireland.

«God save the King/Queen!» is the national anthem of great Britain that sounds during important events in the United Kingdom. The word «King» and «Queen» change according to the person who rules the Britain at the time.

The administrative division of the UK

The United Kingdom includes Great Britain and Ireland. Great Britain includes England, Wales and Scotland with all islands.

England is the birthplace of the most ancient monarchy in Europe. The capital of the country is located there. Other cities of England are The Beatles' Liverpool, Nottingham - the city of Robin Hood, Cambridge and Oxford with Universities, the city of Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon and the Stonehenge.

Scotland has high mountains and blue lakes, the homeland of the Loch Ness monster, the sounds of bagpipes, strong whiskey and plaid skirt.

Wales is a place of the wonderful landscapes and medieval castles.

Northern Ireland has ancient villages with idyllic scenery and slow life.

Great Britain and British

The British believe that self-control is the main advantage. "Be able to behave" – they say. Personality of British is very unusual - mysterious, strange, eccentric. Briton is the person who is difficult to understand and who keeps couple of focuses in a sleeve.

The ideal of the British is independence, education, honesty, politeness, ability to manage time and money. They are inventive, concentrated, thoughtful people. These qualities defined development of the country that sometime was the world's largest empire.

The most known English tea ceremony is "five-o'clock". At the time shops and institutions are closed and everybody drinks tea. The British drink more tea than in any other country in the world because there are a lot of breaks between meals. For example, they drink tea 20 times more, than Americans. Since recent time British began to use tea in tea bags.

Since the time of the Beatles and Rolling stones in the 1960s, the UK remains the center of youth culture.

Traditional music in Britain is also world-known. Britain gave the world composers-classics - Henry Purcell in the Baroque era to Benjamin Britten in the twentieth century.

It has a rich literary heritage, including the creations of William Shakespeare and Scot Robert Burns, the Dylan Thomas and Walter Scott and others, and others.

Climate

The climate of the UK is soft because of warm of North Atlantic current. In Great Britain there is a cloudy weather and many drizzling rains the most part of year. In highlands the winter frost and snow are frequent. On lowlands snow is quite rare. In London, for example, it is possible to see snow only 5 days in a year.

Well-known London fogs enveloped the city because of a smoke of burned coal. Nevertheless they didn't lose their charm. Nowadays the damp natural fog appears often.

The weather is the major subject for conversation in Great Britain. Any conversation begins with the ritual phrase: "Lovely day isn't it?", or when weather bad: "Nasty day, isn't it?"

Things should be made in Great Britain

Arriving in Britain, go for a ride on well-known London's "double-decker" on the second floor, stand on the line of the Greenwich meridian – a point the world time is counted from, visit Southampton's port which "Titanic" in 1912 departed from and sit in the pub "The Grapes" in Liverpool – a favorite place of The Beatles and understand the rules of pub etiquette.