

# The Geography of Europe



# The Continent of Europe

1. Europe is a peninsula
  - an area of land with water on 3 sides
2. Almost all of Europe is within 300 miles of coastline
3. What hemisphere?
  - Northern Hemisphere
4. The giant landmass of Europe and Asia is called Eurasia

# Peninsulas and Islands

- Europe is a huge peninsula with smaller peninsulas branching off from it
- Large Islands: Great Britain, Ireland, Iceland
- Peninsulas and islands have affected history causing people to be separated and many cultures to develop
- Made up of more than 40 countries





**Iceland**

**Scandinavia**

**Ural Mts.**

**Atlantic Ocean**

**North Sea**

**Baltic Sea**

**Ireland**

**Great Britain**

**Alps**

**Carpathian Mts.**

**Caucasus Mts.**

**Pyrenees Mts.**

**Black Sea**

**Iberian Pen.**

**Apennines Mts.**

**Mediterranean Sea**

# 4 Regions

- Plains and Uplands
- Alpine Mountain System
- Northwestern Highlands
- Siberia

How was this created?



Fiords in Norway - long, narrow inlet with steep sides, created by glaciers

# Plains and Uplands

## North European Plains

- Southern England and France → foot of Urals
- Rich soil = productive farmland
  - Loess (fertile, dust-like soil) is blown across plains
  - Cleared forests and prairies for farmland and grazing
- Deposits of coal, iron ore, and other minerals
- High population density

Why would so many people live in this area?

## • Central Uplands

- Mountains and plateaus (raised flat area of land)
- Soil is too rocky for farming, but it is rich in minerals like coal and it is good for grazing



Morning fog in the  
German plains



Central Uplands in Germany



# Alpine Mountain System

- Series of high mountain ranges
- Spain to the Balkan Peninsula
- Includes the Pyrenees (between Spain and France) and the Carpathians (Central Europe)
- Highest peak is Mt. Blanc in France

Mt. Blanc and Rébuffat platform



# Alps



# Northwestern Highlands

- Scandinavia and northern parts of France and Great Britain
- Low population density
- Severe climate
- Thin soil = poor farming



Scottish Highlands



Northern Norway

# Rivers

- Highlands = a great source for many rivers
  - Melting glaciers from into streams → rivers
- Rhine - Switzerland to the North Sea
- Most of Germany's vineyards owe their existence to the Rhine river.



# Rhine River

- The castles are an unmistakable feature of the Rhine landscape. Their founders were feudal overlords, who built them to protect their lands from marauders.
- [http://www.castles.org/castles/Europe/Central\\_Europe/Germany/germany1.htm](http://www.castles.org/castles/Europe/Central_Europe/Germany/germany1.htm)

# Danube River



- 2<sup>nd</sup> longest river in Europe
- Germany → Black Sea
- Connects the Mediterranean to central Europe
- Navigable (ships can travel on it) year round

# Volga River

- Longest river in Europe (Russia)
- Canals and tributaries link Arctic Ocean, Baltic Sea, and Caspian Sea via the Volga River
- Frozen 3 months
- Many Russian rivers are polluted from Industrial runoff



# Importance of Rivers

- Transportation corridor - links places and transports goods
- Provides for fertile lands
- Hydroelectric power
  - Water turbines (generate electricity)
  - Supplies almost all of Norway's electricity





