

Destination: Paris

Spring 2011 • Volume 1

Bonjour Mes Amis!

Welcome to *Destination: Paris*, a quarterly newsletter designed specifically to help you plan your trip to Paris. Whether this is your first trip or your tenth, *Destination: Paris* contains information and essential tips for making your stay in Paris a success.

Information about hotels, the best places to shop, restaurants and much more are found in this newsletter. Our feature article "Using the Metro," will help you navigate your way through Paris. Taking the kids with you and want some fast food ideas? There are some great suggestions on page 4. Enjoy your trip to Paris and I wish you a bon voyage!

Using the Metro

The Metro, Paris' subway system, is the fastest, easiest, cheapest way to get around Paris. There are dozens of stations around the city. Metro stations are easily identified by their logo, a large circled M, and their elegant turn-of-the-century Art Nouveau entrances.



The Métro opened on 19 July 1900. Fulgence Bienvenüe was the engineer in charge of construction and the architect Hector Guimard is responsible for the Art Nouveau entrances. The system has 124 miles of track and 15 lines. There are 368 stations (not including RER stations), 87 of these are interchanges between lines. Every building in Paris is within 500 meters of a Métro station. There are 3500 cars, which transport approximately six million people per day.

Metro tickets are sold in the entrance halls of all Metro stations. They can also be purchased at airports and at several tourist offices. Some Metro stations have coin-operated machines selling individual tickets or packs of ten (carnets). Station agents also provide information and direct travelers to their destinations. All Metro tickets are second-class and one ticket allows the bearer to travel one journey and any transfers on the Metro system.

To determine which Metro line to take, travelers should first find their destination on a Metro map, which is located inside stations. Trace the Metro line by following the color-coding and the number of the line. At the end of the line you will see the number of the terminus. This is the line you will take. At the entrance to each station platform, or in the station corridors, there is a list of upcoming stations corresponding to a given terminus. Terminus names are also indicated on the platform and should be checked before boarding the train. Inside the trains are charts of the line being served by the train. The station stops are plotted on the chart, so travelers can track their journeys. To change lines, get off at the appropriate transfer station

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and follow the “correspondance” (connections) signs on the platform indicating the appropriate direction. The “Sortie” sign indicates the exit. At all Metro exits there are neighborhood maps.

Shopping

FNAC

Leading cooperative for books, records, photo, video, audio and electronics equipment with après-vente and photo service all over the city. This store is an institution in France. Large selection and prices marked 5% lower than suggested retail prices. Also, a major outlet for concert tickets.
website: www.fnac.com

La Samaritaine

Largest and oldest department store in Paris. Galeries Lafayette Major department store with principal location at Auber/Opéra. Features Parisian souvenirs, gourmet food, jewelry, home decorating and much more. All major fashion houses are represented here.
website: www.la-samaritaine.com

Saint-Ouen Flea Market

The city’s largest flea market and dates to the 19th century. Located at the very northern tip of Paris, les puces are an essential shopping stop. Come here for a few hours to browse the antique furniture, odd objects, or vintage clothes. Weekdays are preferable to avoid the inevitable crowds.
website: www.parispuces.com

Le Bon Marché

Large department store The destination for chic on the posh left bank, Le Bon Marche is another classic Parisian department store that merits a detour. The store, which features regularly renewed collections from over 40 top fashion designers, is housed in a building that was designed by Gustave Eiffel (think eponymous tower) in 1852. And foodies, take note: the gourmet market at Le Bon Marche, called La

Grande Epicerie, stocks thousands of delicacies from around the globe.
website: www.lebonmarche.com



Galeries Lafayette

Even if you don’t intend to shop here, visiting the much-revered Galeries Lafayette is worthwhile for the breathtaking setting alone. The store’s unique Belle Epoque architecture, which features a dramatic colored glass dome and an ornate Art Nouveau staircase offering dizzying perspectives, contributed to the department store being named a Paris city heritage site.
website: www.galerieslafayette.com

“If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.”

Ernest Hemingway

Hotel Review



Hotel Luxembourg Parc

42, rue de Vaugirard

75006 Paris, France

phone: +33 1 53 10 36 50

website: www.luxembourg-paris-hotel.com

The location of the Luxembourg Parc hotel is just perfect for lovers of Saint Germain des Pres, with its art galleries, literary cafes, restaurant terraces and luxury shops. The hotel is located between the Luxembourg Gardens and the Saint Sulpice Church, this hotel is 15 minutes walking distance from the Louvre Museum and the Orsay Museum.

“Fantastic service, fantastic location!”

From the moment we stepped inside I was blown away, all the staff spoke perfect English and treated you in such a way that you felt like that you were v.i.p's, the room was elegant and well laid out with a large bathroom, the location is perfect and we could walk to all the attractions from the hotel. For a special visit to Paris would recommend this hotel to all.--John, Chicago IL

“A well above average hotel”

Firstly, the hotel is in the most amazing area so close to the Parc. Then we loved our bedroom, the service... This hotel is really cosy, elegant, typically “Parisien”. We were really well welcomed. With a really nice staff, you just feel like “at home.” Our new address in Paris! --Mark & Janice, New Haven CT

“
*America is my country
and Paris is my
hometown.*”

Gertrude Stein

“A hidden gem of a hotel”

This hotel was wonderful - it was a warm and cosy place to return to each afternoon after exploring Paris with our three little children in the cold Dec weather. The staff was extremely helpful, starting several weeks before our arrival: answering many emails immediately, making reservations for us, booking tickets, etc. The rooms were comfortable and not small by Paris standards. The bathrooms were very clean and sparkly. The rates seemed about right as I have no complaints - maybe a tad high but when booking from overseas with nothing to go on but online reviews, the hotel beat all my expectations. --Shannon, New York NY

“Outstanding service”

The hotel is extremely well located and the rooms are lovely. But most important, the staff could not be more helpful or congenial. I especially enjoyed speaking with Xavier. He and all the staff made me feel very welcome, and patiently gave their recommendations for many local places to eat and shop. --Josh, San Francisco CA

Fast Food in Paris



Let's face it, Paris isn't exactly known for their quick meals. If you would rather spend your time exploring and sightseeing than spending a few hours eating a meal, then you need to know your fast food options. Honestly, Paris can be a tourist trap. If you want really great food with good service, you will probably have to go off the beaten tourist path. But if you are there for the sightseeing instead of the food, grabbing quick meals will save you a lot of time and money. Here are some fast food ideas:

Food Stands: While exploring Paris, you will come across food stands just about anywhere you go. You can grab a crepe, falafel, or a sandwich from these stands. Eat it as you walk, or sit down for a bit of Paris people watching as you take your quick meal break.

La Boulangerie: Stop by a Paris bakery for some fresh bread, tasty sandwich, or a pastry. You won't get a four-course meal, but you will eat some wonderful baked goods that will fill you up. Honestly, if you pass one of these places the smell will trap you into buying something delicious.

Museum Food Courts: If your goal is to spend more time sightseeing than eating while in Paris, then don't even bother leaving the museums. You will find a wide array of decent food in the food courts.

Quick: This hamburger place is similar to McD's—burgers and pommes frites. It will be like you never left the U.S. These places are all over Paris, so you should be able to find one easily.

Museums of Paris-The Pompidou Center



Hours:

Every day, except
Tuesdays and May 1
11am-10pm

Cost: 8-12 Euros

Website:

www.centrepompidou.fr



The Pompidou Center (Centre Pompidou in French) is one of the most spectacular buildings of Paris. It was designed to bring art and culture to the man in the street. Its 1977 factory style architecture violently contrasts with the surrounding houses of Paris' oldest district near the Hotel de Ville. Whether you like or hate the Pompidou Center, you will not forget it with its glass facade, its external stairs and the red, blue and green external pipes on the rear facade.

The Museum has large collections of paintings spanning the 20th century and including works by the most famous artists (Picasso, Braque, Max Ernst, Magritte, Chagall, Matisse, Delaunay, Kandinsky, Klee and many others). The Pompidou Center is divided into five floors : temporary exhibitions in the Grande Galerie on the fifth floor; Museum of Modern Art from 1905 to present time on third and fourth floors.

In front of the center, there are always the street performers, jugglers, musicians, fire-eaters, and other miscellaneous performers capturing the attention of the crowd as they stroll by. The colorful sculptures and fountains by Tinguely and Nicky de St. Phalle in the pool are located in front of Eglise St. Merri.