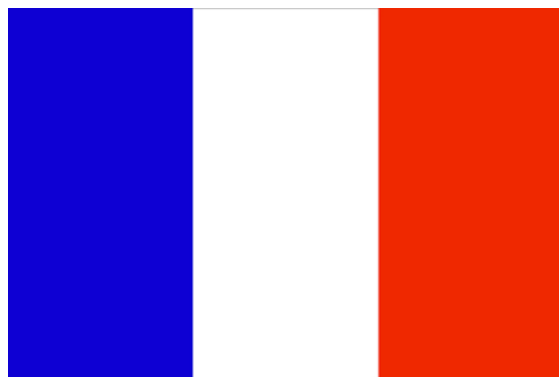


# PARIS



# FRANCE



# MAPS

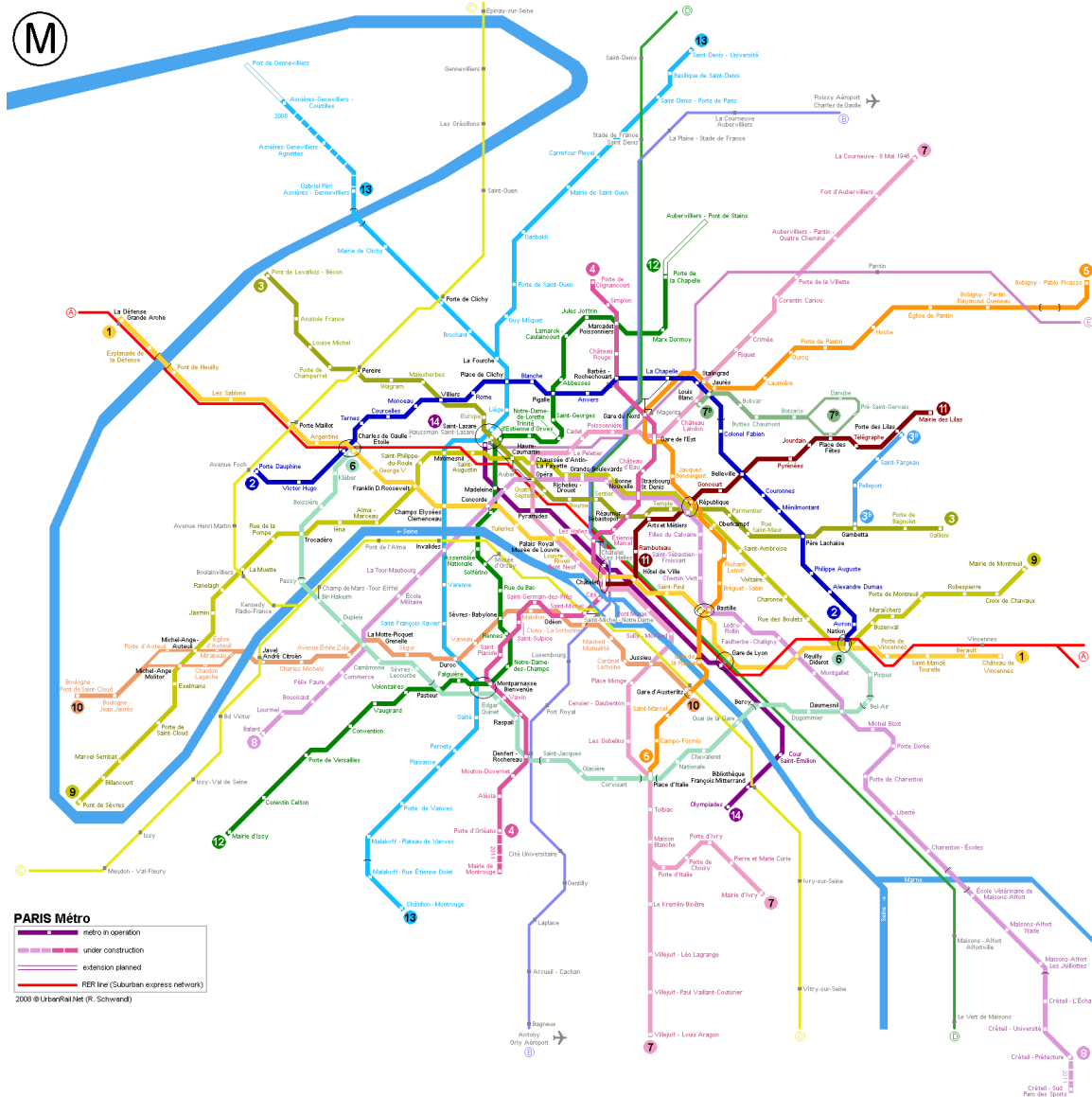


Speos, Paris Photographic Institute / [www.speos.fr](http://www.speos.fr)

Our location 

## DOWNTOWN PARIS

# TRANSIT MAP



## METRO MAP OF DOWNTOWN PARIS

## A. INTRODUCTION TO PARIS

- Paris – the City of Light – has been a beacon of culture for centuries.
- **Planning Your Time**
  - For up to five very busy but doable days in Paris, I have listed sights in descending order of importance in the planning sections that follow.
  - **Therefore, if you have one day just do Day 1**; if you have two days do Day 1&2; and so on.
  - When planning where to plug in Versailles, keep in mind that the Château is **closed on Mondays** and especially **crowded on Sundays and Tuesdays** – try to avoid these days.
- **Day 1**
  - **Morning** – Follow this guidebook’s Historic Paris Walk (at the end of the book).
  - **Afternoon** – Tour the Louvre.
  - **Evening** – Enjoy the Trocadéro scene and a twilight ride up the Eiffel Tower.
- **Day 2**
  - **Morning** – Wander the Champs-Élysées from the Arc de Triomphe down the grand avenue des Champs-Élysées to the Tuileries Garden.
  - **Afternoon** – Cross the pedestrian bridge from the Tuileries Garden, then tour the Orsay Museum.
  - **Evening** – Take one of the nighttime tours by taxi, bus, or retrochic Deux Chevaux car. (If you are staying more than two days, save this for your last-night finale).
- **Day 3**
  - **Morning** – Catch the RER suburban train by 8:00 to arrive early at Versailles (**before it opens at 9:00**). Tour the palace’s interior.
  - **Midday** – Have lunch in the gardens at Versailles.
  - **Afternoon** – Spend the afternoon touring the gardens, the Trianon Palaces, and Domaine de Marie-Antoinette.
  - **Evening** – Have dinner in Versailles town or return to Paris. For dessert, cruise the Seine River.
- **Day 4**
  - **Morning** – Visit Montmartre and the Sacré Cœur Basilica. Have lunch on Montmartre.
  - **Afternoon** – Continue your Impressionist theme by touring the Orangerie and the Rodin Museum, or change themes entirely and tour the Army Museum and Napoleon’s Tomb.
  - **Evening** – Enjoy dinner on Ile St. Louis, then a floodlit walk by Notre-Dame.
- **Day 5**
  - **Morning** – Ride scenic by #69 to the Marais and tour this neighborhood, including the Pompidou Center.
  - **Afternoon** – Tour the Opéra Garnier (English tours available), and end your day enjoying the glorious rooftop views at the Galeries Lafayette and Printemps department stores.

- **Evening** – Stroll the Champs-Élysées at night.

## B. ORIENTATION TO PARIS

- Paris is split in half by the Seine River, divided into 20 arrondissements (regions), circled by a ring-road freeway (the *périphérique*), and speckled with Métro stations.
- You'll find Paris easier to navigate if you know which side of the river you're on, which arrondissement you're in, and which Métro stop you're closest to.
  - If you're north of the river (the top half of the city map), you're on the Right Bank (Rive Droite).
  - If you're south of it, you're on the Left Bank (Rive Gauche).
- The bull's-eye of your Paris map is Notre-Dame, which sits on an island in the middle of the Seine.
  - Most of your sightseeing will take place within five blocks of the river.
- Arrondissements are numbered, starting at the Louvre and moving in a clockwise spiral out to the ring road.
  - The last two digits in a Parisian zip code indicate the arrondissement number.
- The abbreviation for "Métro stop" is "Mo".
  - In Parisian jargon, the Eiffel Tower is on *la Rive Gauche* (the Left Bank) in the 7<sup>ème</sup> (7<sup>th</sup> arrondissement), zip code 75007, Mo: Trocadéro.
- Paris Métro stops are used as a standard aid in giving directions, even for those not taking the Métro.
  - As you're tracking down addresses, these words and pronunciations will help:
    - Métro (may-troh)
    - *Place* (plahs - square)
    - *Rue* (roo - road)
    - *Avenue* (ah-vuh-noo)
    - *Boulevard* (boo-luh-var)
    - *Pont* (pohn - bridge)
- **Tourist Information**
- Paris' TI's have long lines, offer little information, and may charge for maps.
  - All you really need are this book and one of the freebie maps available at any hotel.
  - Paris' TI's share a single phone number: 08 92 68 30 00.
- If you must visit a TI:
  - **Pyramides** – daily 9:00-19:00, at Pyramides Métro stop between the Louvre and Opéra.
  - **Gare de Lyon** – Mon-Sat 8:00-18:00, closed Sunday.
- The official website for Paris' TI's is [www.parisinfo.com](http://www.parisinfo.com).
- Both airports have handy information offices (called ADP) with long hours and short lines.

## C. HELPFUL HINTS

### 1. Theft Alert

- Troublesome thieves thrive near famous monuments and on Métro and RER lines that serve high-profile tourist sights.
  - Beware of pickpockets working busy lines.
  - **Pay attention when it's your turn and your back is to the crowd** – keep your bag firmly gripped in front of you.
- 2. Street Safety**
- Parisian drivers are notorious for ignoring pedestrians.
  - Don't assume you have the right of way, even in a crosswalk.
- 3. Museum Strategies**
- The worthwhile Paris Museum Pass, covering most sights in Paris, is sold at TI's, museums, FNAC stores, and monuments.
- 4. Avoiding Lines with Advance Tickets**
- Throughout Paris, TI's and FNAC department stores sell individual "*coupe-file*" tickets, which allow you to use the Museum Pass entrance at sights and thereby skip ticket lines.
    - **For sights that can otherwise have long waits (such as the Arc de Triomphe, Opéra Garnier, and Versailles), these tickets are a good idea.** (Note that Versailles and the Arc de Triomphe are covered by the Paris Museum Pass).
  - **You can go online to buy Paris Museum Passes and tickets (no more than three weeks in advance, <http://en.parisinfo.com/express-booking>).**
    - You'll print out vouchers, which you'll need to redeem at a Paris TI for the actual passes or tickets.

#### D. GETTING AROUND PARIS

- Paris is easy to navigate: Your basic choices are Métro (in-city subway), RER (suburban rail tied into the Métro system), public bus, and taxi.
- **You can buy tickets and passes at Métro stations and at many *tabac* shops.**
  - Keep change on hand!
- **Public-Transit Tickets:** **The Métro, RER, and buses all work on the same tickets.**
  - You can make as many transfers as you need on a single ticket.
- **A single ticket costs €1.70. To save money, buy a *carnet* (kar-nay) of 10 tickets for €12.** (*Carnets* can be shared among travelers).
- **By Métro:**
  - **In Paris, you're never more than a 10-minute walk from a Métro station.**
  - Color Métro maps are free at Métro stations and included on freebie Paris maps at your hotel.
- **How the Métro Works:** **To get to your destination, determine the closest "Mo" stop and which line or lines will get you there.**
  - The lines are color-coded and numbered, and are known by their end-of-the-line stops.
  - Once in the Métro station, you'll see the color-coded line numbers and/or blue-and-white signs directing you to the train going in your direction.

- When you reach your destination, look for the blue-and-white *sortie* signs pointing you to the exit.
  - Before leaving the station, check the helpful *plan du quartier* (map of the neighborhood) to get your bearings.
- After you exit the system, toss or tear your used ticket so you don't confuse it with unused tickets – they look almost identical.
- **By RER:**
  - The RER is the suburban arm of the Métro, serving outlying destinations such as Versailles, Disneyland Paris, and the airports.
  - These routes are indicated by thick lines on your subway map and identified by the letters A, B, C and so on.
  - Within the city center, the RER works like the Métro and can be speedier if it serves your destination directly because it makes fewer stops.
  - But to travel outside the city (to Versailles or the airport, for example), you'll need to buy a separate, more expensive ticket.
  - Unlike the Métro, not every train stops at every station along the way.
    - Check the sign over the platform to see if your destination is listed as a stop ("*toutes les gares*" means it makes all stops along the way).
- **By City Bus:**
  - Paris' excellent bus system is worth figuring out.
  - Buses require less walking and fewer stairways than the Métro, and you can see Paris unfold as you travel.
  - Bus stops are everywhere, and every stop comes complete with all the information you need: a good city bus map, route maps showing exactly where each bus that uses this stop goes, and a frequency chart and schedule.
  - Just like with the Métro, every bus stop has a name, and every bus is headed to one end-of-the-line stop or the other.
    - First, find your stop on the chart, then find your destination stop.
    - Now, find out exactly where to catch the bus going in that direction.
  - With so many one-way streets in Paris, it's easy to get on the bus in the wrong direction.
  - When the bus pulls up, double-check that the sign on the front of the bus has the end-of-the-line stop going in your direction.
  - Buses use the same tickets and passes as the Métro and RER.
    - Use your Métro ticket or buy one on board for €0.10 more.
  - When you are ready to get off, push the red button to signal you want to stop, then exit through the rear door.
  - Avoid rush hour (Mon-Fri 8:00-9:30 & 17:30-19:30)

- You can't transfer between the bus and the Métro/RER systems on a single ticket.
- You also can't transfer between buses with a ticket bought on board.
- **By Taxi:**
  - Parisian taxis are reasonable, especially for couples and families.
    - A taxi can fit three people comfortably, and a fourth for €3 extra.
  - *How to Catch un Taxi:*
    - You can try waving down a taxi, but it's often easier to ask someone for the nearest taxi stand ("Où est une station de taxi?; oo ay ewn stah-see-ohn duh "taxi").
    - Taxi stands are indicated by a circled "T" on good city maps, and on many maps in this chapter.
    - To order a taxi by phone, call 3607.
    - When you summon a taxi by phone, the meter starts running as soon as the call is received, often adding €6 or more to the bill.

## E. TOURS IN PARIS

- **By Bus:**
  - **Bus Tours – Paris Vision**
    - Offers bus tours of Paris, day and night.
    - Consider a Paris Vision tour only for their nighttime tour.
    - During the day, hop-on, hop-off tours are a better value.
  - **Hop-on, Hop-off Bus Tours**
    - Double-decker buses connect Paris' main sights, allowing you to hop on and off along the way.
    - You can get off at any stop, tour a sight, then catch a later bus.
    - There are two companies: **L'Open Tours and Les Cars Rouges** (pick up their brochures showing routes and stops from any TI or on their buses).
    - You can start either tour at just about any of the major sights, such as the Eiffel Tower (both companies stop on avenue Joseph Bouvard).
  - **L'Open Tours:** uses bright-yellow buses and provides more extensive coverage, rolling by most of the important sights in Paris.
    - Their Paris Grand Tour (the green route) offers the best introduction.
    - Buy your tickets from the driver (1 day-€29, 2 days-€32).
    - Two to four buses depart hourly from about 10:00 to 18:00.
    - Stops can be tricky to find – look for yellow signs.
    - **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 42 66 56 56, [www.paris-opentour.com](http://www.paris-opentour.com).
- **By Boat**
  - **Seine Cruises**
    - Several companies run one-hour boat cruises on the Seine.
    - For the best experience, cruise at twilight or after dark.



- Two of the companies – Bateaux-Mouches and Bateaux Parisiens – are convenient to the rue Cler hotels.
  - **Bateaux-Mouches:** the oldest boat company in Paris **departs from pont de l'Alma's right bank.**
    - This company often has too many tour groups, causing these boats to get packed.
    - **Cost** - €10
    - **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 40 76 99 99, [www.bateaux-mouches.com](http://www.bateaux-mouches.com).
  - **Bateaux Parisiens:** has smaller covered boats with handheld audio guides, fewer crowds, and only one deck.
    - **It leaves right in front of the Eiffel Tower.**
    - **Cost** - €11
    - **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 76 64 14 45, [www.bateauxparisiens.com](http://www.bateauxparisiens.com).
  - **Hop-on, Hop-off Boat Tour-Batobus:** allows you to get on and off as often as you like at any of eight popular stops along the Seine.
    - **Cost** – 1 day-€12.
    - **Website** – [www.batobus.com](http://www.batobus.com).
    - **If you just want a guided boat tour, Batobus is not as good a value as the regular tour boats described above.**
- **On Foot:**
  - **Paris Walks:** This company offers a variety of two-hour walks, led by British and American guides.
    - Tours are thoughtfully prepared and entertaining.
    - **Cost** - €12-15 (2 tours per day).
    - **Website** – [www.paris-walks.com](http://www.paris-walks.com).
    - Call a day or two ahead to hear the current schedule and starting point. (Most tours don't require reservations).
  - **Classic Walks:** The antithesis of Context Paris' walks, these lowbrow, low-information, but high-fun walking tours are run by Fat Tire Bike Tours.
    - Their 3.5-hour "Classic Walk" covers most major sights (€20 March-Oct, daily at 10:00, meet at their office).
    - Ask about discount with Rick Steves book.
    - **Address** – 24 rue Edgar Faure, Mo: Dupleix.
    - **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 56 58 10 54, [www.classicwalksparis.com](http://www.classicwalksparis.com).

## F. SIGHTS IN PARIS

- For a self-guided walk of some of these sights see Rick Steves' "Best of Europe" (p.321) and follow the steps under "Historic Paris Walk" for directions.

### SIGHT RATING KEY

- **MUST SEE**
- **TRY HARD TO SEE**
- **WORTHWHILE IF YOU CAN MAKE IT**

- **Paris Museum Pass**
  - In Paris there are two classes of sightseers – those with a Paris Museum Pass, and those who stand in line.
  - Serious sightseers save time and money by getting this pass.
- **Buying the Pass:** The pass pays for itself with four key admissions in two days (for example, the Louvre, Orsay, Sainte-Chapelle, and Versailles), and lets you skip the ticket line at most sights.
- **Cost** – 2 days/€32, 4 days/€48.
- It's sold at participating museums, monuments, FNAC department stores, and TI's.
  - Try to avoid buying the pass at major museums.
- **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 44 61 96 60, [www.parismuseumpass.com](http://www.parismuseumpass.com).
- An advantage of the pass is that you can skip to the front of most lines, which can save you hours of waiting.
- **What the Paris Museum Pass Covers:** Most of the sights listed in this guide are covered by the pass.
  - Most notable exceptions are the Eiffel Tower, Montmartre Museum, and Sacré Coeur's dome.
- **Activating and Using the Pass:** Think ahead to make the most of your pass.
  - Validate it only when you're ready to tackle the covered sights on consecutive days.
  - Make sure the sights you want to visit will be open (many museums are closed Mondays and Tuesdays).
  - The Paris Museum Pass even covers most of Versailles.
  - The pass isn't activated until the first time you use it (write the starting date on the pass!).
  - To use your pass at sights, boldly walk to the front of the ticket line (after passing security, if necessary), hold up your pass, and ask the ticket-taker: "Entrez, pass?" (ahn-tray pahs).
  - You will either be allowed in at that point or directed to the museum pass entrance.

### 1. Notre-Dame Cathedral

- This 700-year-old cathedral is packed with history and tourists.
- Study its sculpture and windows, take in a Mass, eavesdrop on guides, and walk all around the outside.

- **Cost & Hours** – Free, cathedral open daily 8:00-18:45 (Treasury €3, not covered by Museum Pass).
  - Ask about free English tours.
- **Location** – Mo: Cité, Hotel de Ville, or St. Michel.
- **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 42 34 56 10, [www.cathedraldeparis.com](http://www.cathedraldeparis.com).
- Nearby the **archeological crypt** is a worthwhile 15-minute stop if you have a Paris Museum Pass (€4 without pass).

## 2. Ile St. Louis

- If the Ile de la Cité is a tug laden with the history of Paris, it's towing this classy little residential dinghy, laden only with high-rent apartments, boutiques, characteristic restaurants and famous ice-cream shops.
- One of Paris' most exclusive neighborhoods.

## 3. Latin Quarter

- This area's touristy fame relates to its intriguing, artsy, and bohemian character.
- This was perhaps Europe's leading university district in the Middle Ages, when Latin was the language of higher education.
- Consider a visit to the Cluny Museum for its medieval art and unicorn tapestries.

## 4. Sainte-Chapelle

- This triumph of Gothic church architecture is a cathedral of glass like no other.
- It was speedily built between 1242 and 1248 for King Louis IX.
  - There are 15 separate panels of stained glass with more than 1,100 different scenes, mostly from the Bible.
  - These cover the entire Christian history of the world, from the Creation in Genesis to the coming of Christ (over the altar).
  - The altar was raised up high to better display the Crown of Thorns, the relic around which this chapel was built.
- **Cost & Hours** - €8, €11 combo-ticket with Conciergerie, COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS. March-October daily 9:00-18:00.
- **Location** – 4 boulevard du Palais, Mo: Cité.

## 5. Louvre (Musée du Louvre)

- This is Europe's oldest, biggest, greatest, and second-most-crowded museum (after the Vatican).
- Touring the Louvre can be overwhelming, so be selective.
  - **Focus on the Denon wing** (south along the river), with Greek sculptures, Italian paintings and, of course, French paintings.
- **Cost** - €10, COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS.
- **Hours** – Wed-Mon 9:00-18:00.
- **When to Go** – Crowds are worst on Sun, Mon, Wed, and mornings. Evening visits are peaceful, and the glass pyramid glows after dark.
- **Getting There** – There are a variety of options.
  - **By Métro:** The Métro stop Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre is closer to the entrance than the stop called Louvre-Rivoli.

- From the Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre stop, you can stay underground to enter the museum, or exit above ground if you want to go in through the pyramid.
  - **By Bus:** Handy bus #69 runs every 10-20 minutes.
    - Buses headed west from the Marais drop off passengers next to the Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre Métro stop on rue de Rivoli.
  - **Museum Pass/Group Entrance:** Museum Pass-holders can use the group entrance in the pedestrian passageway (labeled *Pavilion Richelieu*) between the pyramid and rue de Rivoli.
    - It's under the arches, a few steps north of the pyramid; find the uniformed guard at the security checkpoint entrance, at the down entrance.
    - You can also enter the museum directly from the Métro stop Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre.
      - Stepping off the train, exit at the end of the platform, following signs to *Musée du Louvre-Le Carrousel du Louvre*.
      - Museum pass-holders can skip to the head of the underground-mall security line.
    - **Phone & Website** – tel. 01 40 20 53 17, [www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr).
- For a self-guided tour of the Louvre see Rick Steves' "Best of Europe" p.338.

## 6. Palais Royal Courtyards

- Across from the Louvre are the lovely courtyards of the stately Palais Royal.
- Although the palace is closed to the public, the courtyards are open.
- **Cost & Hours** – Courtyards are free and always open.
- **Location** – the Palais Royal is directly north of the Louvre on rue de Rivoli (Mo: Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre).

## 7. Orsay Museum (Musée d'Orsay)

- The Musée d'Orsay (mew-zay dor-say) houses French art of the 1800's and early 1900's (specifically, 1848-1914), picking up where the Louvre's art collection leaves off.
- The most important part of the museum – the Impressionist collection on the top floor.
  - Pick up a free English floor plan upon entering.
- **Cost** - €8, COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS.
- **Hours** – Tue-Sun 9:30-18:00, closed Mondays.
- **Getting there** – the museum sits above the RER-C stop called Musée d'Orsay.
  - The nearest Métro stop is Solférino.
  - Bus #69 from the Marais neighborhood stops at the museum on the river side (quai Anatole France).
  - From the Louvre, catch the bus or otherwise take a 15-minute walk through the Tuileries Garden and across the river on a pedestrian bridge.
  - The museum is at 1 rue de la Légion d'Honneur.
- **Getting In** – The ticket-buying line can be long, but if you have a Museum Pass or advance ticket, you can waltz right in.

- As you face the front of the museum from rue de la Légion d'Honneur (with the river on your left), passholders and ticket-holders enter on the right side of the museum (Entrance C).
  - **Information** – tel. 01 40 49 48 14, [www.musee-orsay.fr](http://www.musee-orsay.fr).
- 8. Eiffel Tower and Nearby**
- It's crowded, expensive, and there are probably better views in Paris, but this 1,000-foot-tall ornament is worth the trouble.
  - The Eiffel Tower rarely disappoints.
  - There are three observation platforms, at 200, 400, and 900 feet. (The higher you go, the more you pay).
  - With online reservations and/or no crowds, figure 1.5 hours to the top and back (with time for sightseeing).
  - **The second level (400 feet) has the best views** because you're closer to the sights, and the monuments are more recognizable.
  - **Cost** - €13.10 all the way to the top, €8.10 if you're only going up to the two lower levels, not covered by the Museum Pas.
    - You can skip the elevator line and climb the stairs to the first and second level for €3.50.
  - **Hours** – Sept – June 9:30-23:45.
  - **Reservations** – At [www.tou Eiffel.fr](http://www.tou Eiffel.fr), you can book an entry time and skip the line – at no extra cost.
    - You just pay online with a credit card and print your own ticket.
    - At the tower, go to the entrance for *visitors with reservation*, where attendants scan your ticket and put you on the first available elevator.
    - This is the best way to avoid waiting in a long line.
  - **Getting There** – The Bir-Hakeim and Trocadéro Métro stops, and the Champ de Mars-Tour Eiffel RER stop, are each about a 10-minute walk away.
    - Buses #69 and #87 stop nearby on avenue Joseph Bouvard in the Champ de Mars park.
  - **Information** – tel. 01 44 11 23 23, [www.tou Eiffel.fr](http://www.tou Eiffel.fr).
  - **Best Views** – the best place to view the tower is across from place du Trocadéro to the north.
    - It's a 10-minute walk across the river, a happening scene at night, and especially fun for kids. Consider arriving at the Trocadéro Métro stop for the view, then walking toward the tower.
    - The tower is an awesome thing to see at twilight, when it becomes engorged with light.
- 9. Army Museum and Napoleon's Tomb (Musée de l'Armée)**
- Built by Louis XIV – houses Napoleon's over-the-top-ornate tomb, as well as Europe's greatest military museum.
  - At the center of the complex, Napoleon lies majestically dead inside several coffins under a grand dome.
  - The best part is the section dedicated to the two World Wars, especially World War II.
  - **Cost** - €9, COVERED BY THE MUSEUM PASS.

- **Hours** – Daily April-Sept 10:00-18:00, Sun until 18:30. Daily Oct-March 10:00-17:00, Sun until 17:30.
  - **Location** – The Hotel des Invalides is at 129 rue de Grenelle; Mo: La Tour Maubourg, Varenne, or Invalides.
  - **Information** – tel. 01 44 42 38 77, [www.invalides.org](http://www.invalides.org).
- 10. Rodin Museum (Musée Rodin)**
- This user-friendly museum is filled with passionate works by the greatest sculptor since Michelangelo.
  - Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) sculpted human figures on an epic scale, revealing through the body their deepest thoughts and feelings.
  - **Cost & Hours** - €6 COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS. Open Tue-Sun 10:00-17:45, closed Mon.
  - **Location** – It's near the Army Museum and Napoleon's Tomb, 79 rue de Varenne, Mo: Varenne.
  - **Information** – tel. 01 44 18 61 10, [www.musee-rodin.fr](http://www.musee-rodin.fr).
- 11. Cluny Museum (Musée National du Moyen Age)**
- The highlights are several original stained-glass windows from Sainte-Chapelle.
  - **Cost & Hours** - €8, COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS. Wed-Mon 9:15-17:45, closed Tue.
  - **Location** – near corner of boulevards St. Michel and St. Germain at 6 place Paul Painlevé; Mo: Cluny-La Sorbonne, St. Michel, or Odéon.
  - **Information** – tel. 01 53 73 78 16, [www.musee-moyenage.fr](http://www.musee-moyenage.fr).
- 12. Champs-Élysées**
- This famous boulevard is Paris' backbone, with its greatest concentration of traffic.
  - From the Arc de Triomphe down avenue des Champs-Élysées, all of France seems to converge on **place de la Concorde, the city's largest square.**
  - A walk here is a must!
  - **Getting there** – To reach the top of the Champs-Élysées, take the Métro to the Arc de Triomphe (Mo: Charles de Gaulle-Etoile), then saunter down the great boulevard.
    - Start here then head down hill.
  - *For a self-guided walk see Rick Steves' "Best of Europe" p. 357.*
- 13. Arc de Triomphe**
- Napoleon had the magnificent Arc de Triomphe commissioned to commemorate his victory at the battle of Austerlitz.
  - The foot of the arch is a stage on which the last two centuries of Parisian history have played out – from the funeral of Napoleon to the goose-stepping arrival of the Nazis to the triumphant return of Charles de Gaulle after the Allied liberation.
  - Climb the 284 steps to the observation deck up top.
  - **Cost & Hours** – Outside – free. Interior - €9.50 COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS. Daily April-Sept 10:00-23:00, Oct-March 10:00-22:30. **Use underpass to reach arch,** Mo: Charles de Gaulle-Etoile.

- **Information** – tel. 01 55 37 73 77, [www.arc-de-triomphe.monuments-nationaux.fr](http://www.arc-de-triomphe.monuments-nationaux.fr).

#### 14. Pompidou Center (Center Pompidou)

- One of Europe's greatest collections of far-out modern art is housed in the Musée National d'Art Moderne, on the fourth and fifth floors of this colorful exhibition hall.
- **Cost & Hours** - €10-12, COVERED BY MUSEUM PASS, Wed-Mon 11:00-21:00.
- **Location** – Mo: Rambuteau or farther-away Hotel de Ville.
- **Information** – tel. 01 44 78 12 33, [www.centrepompidou.fr](http://www.centrepompidou.fr).

#### 15. Sacré-Coeur

- The Sacré-Coeur (Scared Heart) Basilica's exterior, with its onion domes and bleached-bone pallor, looks ancient, but was finished only a century ago by Parisians humiliated by Germans invaders.
- For an unobstructed panoramic view of Paris, climb 260 feet (300 steps) up the tight and claustrophobic spiral stairs to the top of the dome.
- **Cost & Hours** – Church interior free, open daily 6:00-23:00, €5 to climb the dome, not covered by the Museum Pass. Oct-May 10:00-18:00.

### G. ENTERTAINMENT IN PARIS

- Whether it's a concert at Sainte-Chapelle, a boat ride on the Seine, a walk in Montmartre, a hike up the Arc de Triomphe, or a late-night café, you'll see Paris at its best.
  - Night walks in Paris are great.
- **Music**
  - **Jazz & Blues Clubs** – Paris has been an internationally acclaimed jazz capital since World War II.
    - You'll pay €12-25 to enter a jazz club.
  - **Caveau de la Huchette** – a characteristic, old jazz/dance club.
    - Admission about €12 on weekdays, €14 on weekends, €6-8 drinks, daily 21:30-2:30 in the morning or later.
    - **Location** – 5 rue de la Huchette, Mo: St. Michel
    - **Information** – tel. 01 43 26 65 05, [www.caveaudealahuchette.fr](http://www.caveaudealahuchette.fr).
  - **Au Duc des Lombards** – for a spot teeming with late-night activity and jazz, go to the two-block-long rue des Lombards.
    - **Location** – 42 rue des Lombards, Mo: Chatelet
    - **Cost** - €20-30
    - **Information** – tel. 01 42 33 22 88, [www.ducdeslombards.fr](http://www.ducdeslombards.fr).
  - **Utopia** – a less pricy and less central concert club.
    - **Cost** - €10 for a concert.
    - **Location** – 79 rue de l'Ouest, Mo: Pernety.
    - **Information** – tel. 01 43 22 79 66, [www.utopia-cafeconcert.fr](http://www.utopia-cafeconcert.fr).
- **Night Walks**
  - Go for an evening walk to best appreciate the City of Light.
  - Remember to avoid poorly lit areas and stick to main thoroughfares.
  - **Trocadéro and Eiffel Tower\*\*\*** - This is one of Paris' most spectacular views at night.

- **Getting There** – Take the Métro to the Trocadéro stop and join the party on place du Trocadéro for a magnificent view of the glowing Eiffel Tower.
  - **Café de l’Homme** – a good place to enjoy the same view while having a drink.
  - **Location** – 17 place du Trocadéro, enter through Musée de la Marine tel. 01 44 05 30 15.
- Walk down the stairs, passing the fountains and rollerbladers, then cross the river to the base of the tower, worth the effort even if you don’t go up.
- From the Eiffel Tower you can stroll through the Champ de Mars park past tourists and romantic couples, and take the Métro home (Ecole Militaire stop, across avenue de la Motte-Picquet from far southeast corner of park).
- **Champs-Elysées and the Arc de Triomphe\*\***
  - Start at the Arc de Triomphe then stroll down Paris’ lively grand promenade.
  - A right turn on avenue George V leads to the Bateaux-Mouches river cruises.
- **After Dark Tours**
  - Several companies offer evening tours of Paris.
  - You can take a traditional, mass-produced bus tour for €28 a person, or for about the same price (€90 for 3 people) take a vintage car tour with a student guide.
  - **Do-it-yourselfers can save money by hiring a cab for a private tour (€50 for one hour).**
  - **Deux Chevaux Car Tours\*\*\*** - Paris Authentic has assembled a fleet of these “tin-can” cars (not made since 1985) for giving tourists tours of Paris day and night. Night is best!
    - The student-guides are informal, speak English, and are passionate about showing you their city.
    - **The tours are flexible – you tell them where you’d like to go.**
    - They’ll pick you up and drop you at your hotel or wherever you choose (€90 for 3 people).
    - **Information** – 23 rue Jean Jaques Rousseau, tel. 06 64 50 44 19, [www.parisauthentic.com](http://www.parisauthentic.com), [paris@parisauthentic.com](mailto:paris@parisauthentic.com).
  - **Do-it-Yourself Floodlit Paris Taxi Tour** – For less than the cost of two seats on a big bus tour, you can hire your own cab (maximum four passengers).
  - *See Rick Steves’ recommendation for places to see while on this tour on p. 376 of his “Best of Europe”.*

## H. SLEEPING IN PARIS

- *For information on sleeping in Paris see Rick Steves’ “Best of Europe” starting on p. 376.*



## I. PARIS CONNECTIONS

- When leaving Paris, get to your departure point early to allow time for waiting in lines.
  - Figure on 2-3 hours for an overseas flight; 1-2 hours for flights within Europe (particularly if flying with one of the budget airlines, which tend to have long check-in lines) and 40 minutes for a train trip or a long-distance bus ride.
- Whether arriving or departing, always keep your luggage safely near you.
- **Trains**
  - Paris is Europe's rail hub, with six major stations and one minor one, each serving different regions.
    - Gare du Nord (northern France and Europe).
    - Gare de Lyon (southeastern France and Italy).
    - Gare d'Austerlitz (southwestern France and Europe).
    - Gare de Bercy (smaller station, departure point for most night trains to Italy).
  - All six main train stations have banks or currency exchanges, ATM's, train information desks, telephones, cafés, and newsstands.
  - Any train station has schedule information, can make reservations, and can sell tickets for any destination.
  - Paris train stations can be intimidating, but if you slow down, take a deep breath, and ask for help, you'll find them manageable and efficient.
    - Bring a pad of paper for clear communication at ticket/info windows.
    - The bigger stations have roving helpers, usually wearing red or blue vests.
  - Make a habit of confirming the track number and departure time with these helpers.
- **Gare du Nord**
  - **Key Destinations Served by Gare du Nord Grandes Lignes:**
    - i. **Bruges** (at least hourly, 2.5 hours, change in Brussels).
    - ii. **Amsterdam** (8-10/day, 3.5 hours direct).
    - iii. **Berlin** (6/day, 9 hours, 1-2 changes, via Belgium, better connections from Gare de l'Est).
    - iv. **Copenhagen** (7/day, 14-18 hours, two night trains).
    - v. **London** – by Eurostar Chunnel train (15/day, 2.5 hours, tel. 08 36 35 35 39).
- **Gare Montparnasse**
  - **Gare de Lyon Key Destinations Served by Gare Montparnasse:**
    - i. **Madrid** (3/day, 13 hours).
    - ii. **Lisbon** (1/day, 21.5 hours via Irun).
- **Gare de Lyon**
  - **Key Destinations Served by Gare de Lyon:**

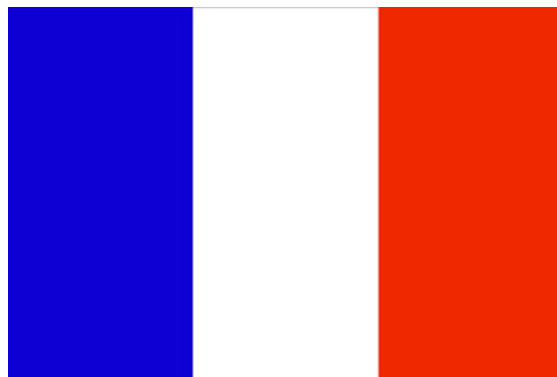
- i. **Nice** (10/day, 6 hours, may require change, 11-hour night train possible out of Gare d'Austerlitz).
  - ii. **Venice** (3/day, 10-12 hours).
  - iii. **Rome** (4/day, 11-13 hours, plus several overnight options, important to reserve ahead).
  - iv. **Barcelona** (3/day, 9 hours, 1-2 changes).
- **Gare de l'Est**
  - **Key Destinations Served by Gare de l'Est:**
    - i. **Vienna** (7/day, 12-17 hours, 1-3 changes, night train via Munich or Frankfurt).
    - ii. **Prague** (5/day, 12.5-13.5 hours, night train via Mannheim or Berlin).
    - iii. **Munich** (4/day, 6-7 hours, most with 1 change, 1 direct night train).
- **Airports**
- **Charles de Gaulle Airport**
  - Paris' primary airport has three terminals: T-1, T-2, and T-3.
  - To find out which terminal serves your airline, check your ticket or contact the airport (toll tel. 3950, [www.adp.fr](http://www.adp.fr)).
  - **Transportation Between Charles de Gaulle Airport and Paris:**
    - Three public-transportation routes, airport vans, and taxis link the airport's terminals with central Paris.
    - **Roissy-Buses** run to the Opéra Métro stop (€9.40, 4/hour, runs 6:30-21:00, 50 minutes, buy ticket on bus).
    - You can also take a taxi (about €12).
      - The stand is in front of Galeries Lafayette department store.
    - **"Les Cars" Air France buses:** serve central Paris on two routes (€16, at least 2-hour, runs 5:45-23:00, toll tel. 08 92 35 08 20, [www.cars-airfrance.com](http://www.cars-airfrance.com)).
      - Bus #2 runs between the airport and the Arc de Triomphe and Porte Maillot (45 minutes).
      - Bus #4 runs to Gare de Lyon (45 minutes) and continues to the Montparnasse Tower/train station (1 hour).
    - **Taxis:** cost about €60 for up to three people with bags.
- **Beauvais Airport**
  - Budget airlines such as Ryanair use this small airport.
  - Airport is 50 miles north of Paris.
  - This airport has direct buses to Paris, and is handy for travelers heading to Normandy or Belgium.
  - Airport tel. 08 92 68 20 66, [www.aeroportbeauvais.com](http://www.aeroportbeauvais.com), Ryanair toll tel. 08 92 68 20 73, [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)).
  - **Transportation Between Beauvais Airport and Paris:**

- **Buses:** depart from the airport when they're full (about 20 minutes after flights arrive) and take 1.5 hours to reach Paris.
  - Buy your ticket (€14 one-way) at the little kiosk to the right as you exit the airport.
  - Buses arrive at Porte Maillot on the west edge of Paris (on Métro line 1 and RER-C).
  - Buses heading to Beauvais Airport leave from Porte Maillot about 3.25 hours before scheduled flight departures.
  - Catch the bus in the parking lot on boulevard Pershing next to Hotel Concorde-Lafayette.
  - Arrive with enough time to purchase your bus ticket before boarding (bus toll tel. 08 92 68 20 64).
- **Trains:** connect Beauvais' city center and Paris' Gare du Nord (20/day, 80 minutes).

# VERSAILLES



# FRANCE



## A. ORIENTATION TO VERSAILLES

- The powerful court of Louis XIV at Versailles set the standard of culture for all of Europe.
- Arm yourself with a pass to skip ticket-buying lines; arrive early or late to avoid the crowds; and use this self-guided tour (provided by Rick Steves “Best of Europe”) to focus on the highlights.
- **Cost:** Make sure you have the Museum Pass (it covers most of the sights at Versailles).
  - Get the latest information at the helpful Versailles website – [www.chateauversailles.fr](http://www.chateauversailles.fr).
- **The Chateau** – the main palace. Your Chateau ticket includes the famous Hall of Mirrors, the king and queen’s living quarters.
- **The Trianon Palaces and Domaine de Marie-Antoinette** – This ticket gives you access to the far corner of the Gardens, the small palaces called the Grand Trianon and Petit Trianon, the queen’s Hamlet, and a smattering of nearby buildings.
- **The Gardens** – are free except on certain days (generally weekends).
- **Passes** – The Museum Pass allows you to save money and skip the long ticket-buying lines at Versailles (though everyone must endure security checks before entering the palaces).
- **The Paris Museum Pass** – covers the Chateau and the Trianon/Domaine area (a €25 value!) and is the best solution for most.
- **Hours:** The Chateau is open April-Oct Tue-Sun 9:00-18:30, Nov-March Tue-Sun 9:00-17:30, closed Monday.
  - The Trianon Palaces and Domaine de Marie-Antoinette are open April-Oct 12:00-18:30, closed Mon; Nov-March Tue-Sun 12:00-17:30, closed Monday.
- **Crowd-Beating Strategies:**
  - Versailles is a zoo May-Sept 10:00-13:00, especially Tuesday and Sunday.
  - You can skip the ticket-buying line by using a Paris Museum Pass.
  - Everyone including advanced ticket and pass holders – must wait in line to go through security (longest lines 10:00-12:00).
  - If you go early, arrive by 9:00 (when the palace opens), and tour the Chateau first, then the Gardens. (Remember that the Trianon/Domaine area opens at noon).
- **Getting There:**
  - The town of Versailles is 30 minutes southwest of Paris.
  - Take the **RER-C train** (4/hour, 30-40 minutes one-way, €6.20 round-trip) from any of these Paris RER stops: Gare d’Austerlitz, St. Michel, Musée d’Orsay, Invalides, Pont de l’Alma, and Champ de Mars.
  - Any train whose name starts with a “V” goes to Versailles; don’t board other trains.
  - Get off at the last stop.
  - Exit through the turnstiles by inserting your ticket.

- To reach the palace, turn right out of the train station, then left at the first boulevard, and walk 10 minutes.
- To return to Paris, all trains serve all downtown Paris RER stops on the C line.
- **Information:**
  - Before you go, check their excellent website – [www.chateauversailles.fr](http://www.chateauversailles.fr). Tel. 01 30 83 78 00.
  - Versailles has two information offices.
  - You'll pass the (uncrowded, helpful) town TI on your walk from the main RER station to the palace – it's just past the Pullman Hotel. Tel. 01 39 24 88 88.
    - The information office at the Chateau (long waits) is on the left side of the courtyard as you face the Chateau (toll tel. 08 10 81 16 14).
- **Guided Tours:**
  - The 1.5-hour English guided tour gives you access to a few extra rooms and lets you skip the ticket-buying lines.
  - Book at the information office in the Chateau courtyard; bypass the ticket-buying line and find the guided tour desk just to the right of the ticket office.
  - Reserve immediately upon arrival!
  - **Cost** - €7.50 if you already have Chateau admission or pass, runs about every 45 minutes 9:00-15:00.
- **Length of This Day Trip:**
  - Allow 1.5 hours each for the Chateau, the Gardens, and the Trianon/Domaine.
    - Add another town hours for round-trip transit, plus another hour for lunch...and, at around eight hours, Versailles is a full day trip from Paris.
- **Overview**
  - The main sights to see at Versailles are the Chateau, the landscaped Gardens in the "backyard," and the Trianon Palaces and Domaine de Marie-Antoinette, located at the far end of the Gardens.
  - If your time is limited, skip the Trianon/Domaine, which is a full 40-minute walk from the Chateau.
  - In the Chateau, the highlights are the State Apartments of the King and Queen and the Hall of Mirrors.
- *For a self-guided tour of the grounds at Versailles, see Rick Steves' "Best of Europe" starting on p. 444 for more information.*