


• Walking Tour 5 •

The St-Germain Quarter & Montparnasse



PART I FROM ST-GERMAIN-DES-PRES TO L'ODEON

Start: Church of St-Germain-des-Prés (Métro: St-Germain-des-Prés).

Finish: Carrefour de l'Odéon.

Time: 3 to 5 hours.

Best Time: During both equinoxes and at the winter solstice, when sunlight illuminates the cross at the St-Sulpice church.

Worst Time: Mondays or mid-afternoons, when Marché Buci is closed.

For most of the last century, oddballs and artists have felt more at home in St-Germain than

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almost anywhere else in the world. The intellectual, argumentative, creative, and cosmopolitan spirit of the neighborhood has nurtured everyone from revolutionaries and painters to existentialists and jazz musicians. On this tour, you'll have the chance to sit in the same cafes where Hemingway, Sartre, and de Beauvoir once sat. You can visit Delacroix's studio and museum. In the winding back streets you'll take in Henry Miller's favorite square, place de Furstemberg, and see where Sylvia Beach, Thomas Paine, George Sand, Hemingway, Picasso, and Stein and Toklas lived. Though the area has become overwhelmingly commercialized, especially along boulevard St-Germain, you'll find side streets crammed with art galleries and bookstores, small cinemas showing offbeat movies, and jazz clubs, theaters, cafes, and restaurants at all price levels. In fact, for two essential vacation activities—eating and shopping—there's no better place in Paris to visit.

The story of St-Germain began where that of so many other Parisian neighborhoods began—around an abbey. The church of St-Germain-des-Prés is on the site of the prosperous St-Germain abbey, which once owned much of the Left Bank. A village grew up around the abbey and began hosting the Foire St-Germain (St-Germain fair) in the 12th century. From the 15th through the 18th centuries, fairs were held on the site of the Marché St-Germain and attracted merchants and entertainers from all over Europe. The neighborhood's famous tolerance for diversity dates back to these fairs.

In the late 18th century, the Odéon quarter became a hotbed of revolutionary activity. The main actors (save Robespierre) all lived in the area of carrefour de l'Odéon, where the statue of Danton now stands. They met in the Café le Procope, and Marat published revolutionary literature on cour du Commerce St-André; the first revolutionary massacre took place near the church of St-Germain-des-Prés.

As the political situation cooled down during the 19th century, the artistic soul of St-Germain slowly emerged. At the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Delacroix and Ingres launched a revolution in painting that continued with Manet and the Impressionists. Artists who couldn't get into this prestigious school attended the Académie Jullian and set up their studios nearby.

The painters were followed by European poets and writers, who discovered that the neighborhood had everything

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necessary for a literary life: stores to buy books, cafes in which to discuss them, and a climate that encouraged tolerance and freewheeling debate. André Gide published an avant-garde literary review, *La Nouvelle revue française*, and the poet Apollinaire took an apartment on boulevard St-Germain.

After World War I, American writers and journalists also began flocking to the Left Bank. Returning GIs who'd seen Paris wanted to know more about it, prompting many popular periodicals to open branch offices here. That brought jobs for English-speaking writers in Paris and, with a franc that was worth about 6¢ in 1921, life here was considerably cheaper than life in the United States. The American community straddled St-Germain-des-Prés and Montparnasse to the south. Writers moved between Gertrude Stein's apartment on rue de Fleurus and Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company at 12 rue de l'Odéon.

When the Germans marched into Paris in 1940, the cultural life of the neighborhood came to a halt, only to rev up again with renewed energy after the war. The cafes along boulevard St-Germain, where Sartre and de Beauvoir came to write and keep warm during the winter, became the center of the quarter's social life; the famous couple drew legions of acolytes wanting to discuss the new philosophy of "existentialism," which examined the place of the individual in a godless universe. Picasso was another celebrated presence in these cafes, and his studio on rue des Grands-Augustins certified the area's growing vitality as an arts scene.

A new breed of Americans gravitated to the Left Bank in the postwar years. African-American jazz musicians like Sydney Bechet, Kenny Clarke, and Bud Powell found more tolerance and acceptance here than in their homelands, as well as a public ready to embrace their music. Authors Richard Wright and James Baldwin settled on the Left Bank, and beat writers Allen Ginsburg, Gregory Corso, and William Burroughs spent time here during the 1950s.

The residual glamour of those years made St-Germain one of Paris's most desirable residential districts—but also changed its character somewhat. Politicians and their relatives, newsmen, and actors all keep apartments here today. Philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, actress Catherine Deneuve, and newswoman Christiane Amanpour are some of the more celebrated current residents. The recent opening of a Cartier

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monk who developed a technique for determining the authenticity of documents.

When you come out of St-Germain-des-Prés, turn to the right and walk around it to rue de l'Abbaye, in the rear. Behind the church is the tiny square Laurent-Prâche, a quiet park containing a **Picasso bronze bust of a woman** dedicated to Guillaume Apollinaire. Picasso and Apollinaire were great friends, and the bust was dedicated 41 years after Apollinaire's death.

Return to boulevard St-Germain and the "golden triangle" of the Café aux Deux Magots, Café de Flore, and Brasserie Lipp, all of which conjure up the prime years of St-Germain. The list of notables who frequented the cafes in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s includes just about everyone in Paris who put a pen to paper or a brush to an easel. Each café acquired its own following. In 1942, Sartre decided that Deux Magots was for old writers, Flore for young writers (such as himself), and Lipp for politicians. Now the distinctions are much more fluid, and most of the café habitués are likely to be tourists.

First on your right you'll see the:

2. **Café aux Deux Magots**, founded in 1881 and named after the wooden statues of two Chinese dignitaries (*magots*) sitting atop boxes of money attached to a column in the café. Journalist Albert Thibaudet described the café as "an intersection of roads, an intersection of professions, an intersection of ideas." The two terraces, one on boulevard St-Germain and the other facing the square in front of the St-Germain church, make this café ideal for people-watching. In the 1920s, it attracted the surrealists—like André Breton and Raymond Queneau—as well as Hemingway and Ford Maddox Ford. Janet Flanner, a close friend of Hemingway and the writer who (under the pen name Genêt) vividly captured Paris's 1920s café-and-salon scene, described Hemingway's habit of coming here to have "serious talk" and read works aloud. His love for Deux Magots is apparent in several passages of *The Sun Also Rises*, particularly the one in which Jake Barnes meets Lady Brett.

Next door is the landmark bookstore **La Hune**, which played as important a role in literary Paris as the famous

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cafes. Founded in 1944 by a former philosophy student, the bookstore regularly exhibited modern artists and became a favorite haunt of Left Bank intellectuals.

Next is the:

3. **Café de Flore**, the oldest of the three cafes, founded in 1870. Pablo Picasso used to come here when he had his studio nearby on rue des Grands-Augustins. In the early 1940s, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir came here regularly to write, socialize, drink coffee, and keep warm in winter. De Beauvoir recalled afterward that she'd try to arrive early to get a seat next to the stove, where she'd write all day.

Across the street is the:

4. **Brasserie Lipp**, a favorite rendezvous since the 19th century. Politicians came for the *choucroute* (sauerkraut) served in the plush interior—the choucroute is still one of the best in Paris—and the brasserie later became a favorite watering hole of Saint-Exupéry and Camus. Today it attracts politicians, newspeople, and photogenic philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy (known simply as BHL), who holds court downstairs, never (horrors!) upstairs.

From the Lipp, turn left on **rue du Dragon**, which used to be named rue du Sépulchre. Its name was changed in the 18th century because residents preferred the name Dragon, after the huge gateway that had marked the entrance to cour du Dragon at **no. 7**. Proceed to **no. 31**, the:

5. **Académie Jullian**. Many artists who weren't accepted into the Ecole des Beaux-Arts attended this school, which opened in 1868 but didn't move to this location until 1890. In the French tradition, the academy was conservative and traditional, though considered inferior to the Beaux-Arts. Among the Americans who attended were Maurice Prendergast (1891–93), Max Weber (1905), and Jacques Lipchitz (1910). George Biddle described the place in 1911 as “a cold, filthy, uninviting firetrap.” When he arrived, he found this scene: “Three nude girls were posing downstairs. The acrid smell of their bodies and the smell of the students mingled with that of turpentine and oil paint in the overheated, tobacco-laden

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air.” He also said that while the artists worked “there was a pandemonium of songs, catcalls, whistling and recitations of a highly salacious and bawdy nature.”

Continue down rue du Dragon to **no. 44**, where you can see a copy of the original ornamental dragon from which the street took its name.

You’ll come to carrefour de la Croix-Rouge, dominated by a huge sculpture of a centaur by César. Turn left at the far end of the square onto **rue du Vieux-Colombier**. Influential poet/critic Boileau lived in a house on this street in the 17th century, and here he entertained Molière, Racine, and La Fontaine. Mme Récamier had a noted literary salon here later. But the highlight of the street is at **no. 21**, the historic:

6. **Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier.** Founded in 1913, the theater company intended to revive the classical tradition by focusing on the text, stripping scenery and design to a minimum. Undoubtedly the company produced its greatest success with the opening of Sartre’s *No Exit* in 1943. Though the company’s plays met with mixed results after World War II, the jazz club that opened in the basement in 1947 was an unqualified hit. Sydney Bechet and Claude Luter played New Orleans jazz at “le vieux-co,” as it was called, while black-clad existentialists came from all over Paris to dance through the night. Saved from demolition in 1977, the building was named a historic monument in 1978 and purchased by the government. It’s now back in business as a national theater supported by the government, with a repertoire that mixes classic plays and modern works.

At the end of the street, you’ll come to:

7. **St-Sulpice,** one of Paris’s largest and richest churches, with a splendid square around a fountain. Building began in 1646 but wasn’t completed until the late 18th century; the south tower is still unfinished. Two of the architects were Louis Le Vau and Jean-Baptiste Servandoni. As you enter St-Sulpice, note the enormous holy-water stoups made of natural shells, with intricately carved pedestals by J. P. Pigalle. Go right after you enter and you’ll come across three of Eugène Delacroix’s greatest masterpieces: *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel*, *Heliodorus Driven from the*

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Temple, and *St. Michael Vanquishing the Devil*, all completed in 1881. Wander through and view the other spectacular pieces of art.

Another interesting feature is the bronze **meridian line** running along the north-south transept. During both equinoxes and at the winter solstice (at midday), sunlight hits the line, runs along the floor, climbs up the obelisk to the globe on top, and lights the cross.

When you leave the church, head right along rue St-Sulpice and then turn left on rue Mabillon. On your right you'll see the shopping center:

- 8. Marché St-Germain**, on the site of the Foire St-Germain. Though fairs (*foires*) had been held on this spot since the 12th century, in 1482 the monks of the St-Germain abbey built a permanent complex for the increasingly popular events. In addition to merchants selling their goods, there were games, shows, and novelty acts. Tailors rubbed shoulders with counts, and even the king attended regularly. A fire destroyed the marketplace in 1762, and the fair was ultimately discontinued, but the freewheeling tradition of song and theater gave the neighborhood its character as the cultural hub of Paris. For many years, the Marché St-Germain was a renowned food market, but it was recently redesigned, and the food market now occupies only a small portion of the modern mall. Stores are open Monday to Saturday 10am to 7pm.

Continue up rue Mabillon to **rue du Four**. When the St-Germain abbey controlled the neighborhood, the street was the site of the public oven (*four*), where people came to bake their bread. In the postwar heyday of existentialism, the street was known for its many cheap cafes and hotels, but today impecunious philosophers will find little here within their budgets.

Turn right on rue du Four and follow it to boulevard St-Germain. Directly across the street is the:

- 9. Marché Buci**, one of the city's liveliest markets. Here you'll find stalls selling fish, flowers, cheese, and fruit, as well as shop windows filled with mouthwatering pastries—the profusion of sights and smells will make you giddy. Be aware that if you arrive at lunchtime you won't find a

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market—it goes to lunch. The best time to arrive is between 9am and 1pm or later in the afternoon, until 7pm.

Turn left on rue de Bourbon-le-Château and cross rue de l'Echaudé onto rue Cardinale, which has changed little since its opening in 1700. Turning right will bring you to:

10. **Place de Furstemberg**, named for Cardinal Egon von Furstemberg, abbot of St-Germain-des-Prés in the late 17th century. It would be hard to find a lovelier and more tranquil hideaway. Here's how Henry Miller described it, though, in *Tropic of Cancer*: "Pass the Square de Furstemberg. Looks different now, at high noon. The other night when I passed by it was deserted, bleak, spectral. In the middle of the square four black trees that have not yet begun to blossom. Intellectual trees, nourished by the paving stones. Like T. S. Eliot's verse."

In May, Eliot's "intellectual trees" bloom and exude a sweet vanilla fragrance. Diagonally to the left across the square at **no. 6** is the:

11. **Musée Eugène-Delacroix**, the home and studio of the French Romantic painter (1798–1863) from December 28, 1857, to August 13, 1863. Here's an entry from his journal after he moved into this studio:

Woke up the next morning and saw the most gracious sunlight on the houses opposite my window. The sight of my little garden and the smiling aspect of my studio always cause a feeling of pleasure in me.

Today, from inside the museum you can look out on the garden he describes.

Among the museum's pieces are Delacroix's portraits of George Sand, self-portraits, and animal paintings, plus the artist's collections of sketches and many letters. Exhibits rotate, so there's no telling which part of the enormous collection you're going to see. The museum is open Wednesday to Monday 9:45am to noon and 1:30 to 5pm.

After exiting the museum, go left up rue de Furstemberg to rue Jacob. (Note as you approach rue

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Jacob that there are some wonderful **fabric shops** to your left and right.) Go left on rue Jacob to:

12. **No. 20**, the former residence of Natalie Clifford Barney (1876–1972), who moved here from the United States in 1909 as a student and stayed for more than 60 years. Though virtually unknown in America, Barney was famous all over Paris for her literary salons. Virgil Thomson, Carl van Vechten, Sherwood Anderson, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust were among the many who visited her Friday-night salon.
13. At **no. 44** is the Hotel d'Angleterre, which used to be the British Embassy in the 19th century. It's now a charming three-star hotel. Hemingway lived here for a time in the 1920s.

Continue up rue Jacob to rue Bonaparte. Turn right on rue Bonaparte and make a quick right onto the narrow alley:

14. **Rue Visconti**. In 1962, the artist Christo blocked off the street with stacked oil barrels, calling the exhibit the “Iron Curtain.” On your left at **nos. 20–24** is the residence where classical playwright Jean Racine (b. 1639) died on April 21, 1699. Educated at the Port-Royal abbey, he was Louis XIV's court dramatist and has been described as the most French of French writers. He's particularly well known for injecting his characters with psychological realism.

Just a bit farther on, **no. 17** was once the site of Balzac's print shop—yet another failed business scheme for the perpetually indebted writer—and where Delacroix had a studio for 8 years.

Retrace your steps to rue Bonaparte. Turn right and head to **no. 14**, the:

15. **Ecole des Beaux-Arts**, the most famous of art schools, housed in a group of buildings from the 17th to the 19th century. The Beaux-Arts opened in 1648 as the Académie Royale de Peintre et de Sculpture, then became an individual institution in 1795. The Prix de Rome was bestowed by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; its teachings remained traditional until well after World War II, and the

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entrance exam was so difficult—or perhaps so irrelevant—that even Rodin failed it. Among those who passed were Degas, Matisse, Monet, and Renoir.

Continue up rue Bonaparte and turn right onto:

16. **Rue des Beaux-Arts.** At **no. 13** is the discreetly elegant L'Hôtel, where Oscar Wilde, broke and in despair, died in 1900. "I'm dying beyond my means," the English playwright/author wrote—and he was only paying 80 francs (14€) a month for his room. Thomas Wolfe took up residence in the hotel in 1925 and wrote about it in his semi-autobiographical novel *Of Time and the River*. Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges also stayed here.

Painter Jean-Baptiste Corot had a studio at **no. 11**, where he welcomed Prosper Mérimée, the author of *Carmen*. Fantin-Latour had a studio in **no. 8**, where James Whistler was a frequent visitor.

Make another right when you get to:

17. **Rue de Seine.** Look to your left at **no. 31**, the house of several who made unusual fashion statements. The female writer George Sand (see Stop 7 in Part II, later in this chapter) lived here and scandalized Paris by wearing pants. Raymond Duncan, brother of Isadora, lectured on Greek art and philosophy—clad in a toga and sandals and crowned in a laurel wreath. At **no. 33** is the art bookstore **Fischbacher Livres d'Art**, which stocks a fine selection of books on all genres of art, in both French and English. On the right (at the corner of rue Visconti) at **no. 26**, notice the sign of a famous 17th-century nightclub, Le Petit Maure.



Take a Break At the corner of rue Jacques-Callot you may wish to stop at **La Palette**, a delightful terrace cafe that has been an artists' hangout since it opened in 1903. The interior is decorated with colorful murals, and a palette hangs over the bar. Note that the cafe is closed in August.

Then continue on rue Jacques-Callot to:

18. **Rue Mazarine.** Take a look at **no. 42**, to your left. Formerly a tennis court, it was converted into the Théâtre Guénégaud by Pierre Perrin to present his opera *Pomone*,

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the first opera presented in France. It later became the home of Molière's theater troupe.

Cross the street and turn right down rue Mazarine. Look for the entrance to the:

19. **Passage Dauphine** on the left, next to the parking garage. Ring the green button marked PORTE and enter the gate. This winding passageway is an easy and scenic way to get from rue Mazarine to rue Dauphine.

Cross rue Dauphine and head directly into:

20. **Rue Christine**, opened in 1607. On the corner you'll see the **Hôtel d'Aubusson**, which once housed one of the hottest clubs in postwar Paris, Le Tabou. American jazz hit liberated Paris in the late 1940s and was quickly embraced by a war-weary public. A favorite party spot for singer Juliette Greco, Le Tabou attracted all the young existentialists, including, on occasion, Jean-Paul Sartre.

Continue along rue Christine. In 1938, Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein moved into an apartment at **no. 5** from one at 27 rue de Fleurus. They moved out during the Nazi occupation, but returned immediately after the liberation. Paris was full of American soldiers, and Stein plied them with whisky and cake and listened to their stories. By this time, her reputation as a writer and an art collector was firmly established. On a visit to deliver a housewarming bouquet, Janet Flanner was asked to take an inventory of Stein's incredible art collection. She found more than 130 canvases, 25 of them by Picasso. Stein died in 1946, but Alice B. Toklas lived here until 1964.

As you continue along rue Christine, you'll find yourself on:

21. **Rue des Grands-Augustins**. At the corner is the restaurant **Jacques Cagna**, one of the finest in Paris. Diagonally across the street, to the left (just a few steps up the street in the direction of the river), is **no. 7**, where Picasso lived from 1936 to 1955 near his good friend Gertrude Stein. Here he painted the masterpiece *Guernica* in 1937, as is duly noted on a plaque.

Go right down rue des Grands-Augustins to **rue St-André-des-Arts**, then turn right to **no. 46**, where

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e.e. cummings lived in 1923. Continue along, looking for Bar Mazet on your left. Near the bar, go left onto:

22. **Cour du Commerce St-André**, a passage built in 1776 and strongly associated with the French Revolution. At **no. 9**, Dr. Guillotin perfected his little invention on sheep—before deciding it was fit to use on humans. This was also the site of the **printing shop** to which Jean-Paul Marat (1743–93), Swiss-born revolutionary, would walk in his bathrobe every day to correct the proofs of *L'Ami du peuple*, the paper he founded.

You'll also find the rear entrance to **Le Procope** (formerly Café le Procope), founded by a Sicilian named Procopio just after the 1689 opening of the Comédie-Française (which used to be across the street). It quickly became the favorite of artists, writers, and playwrights. Beaumarchais waited in the cafe to hear the public's verdict after the opening of *Marriage of Figaro* at the nearby Théâtre de l'Odéon. Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau also gathered here, and the revolutionaries Danton, Marat, and Desmoulins liked this back entrance to the cafe; here they planned strategy around the tables. Later patrons included Benjamin Franklin, Victor Hugo, and Balzac. The main entrance is around the corner at **no. 1 rue de l'Ancienne-Comédie**.

Exit cour du Commerce St-André onto boulevard St-Germain. The little island at the center of the boulevard is carrefour de l'Odéon. The first part of the St-Germain tour ends here. If you don't wish to continue on with Part II, the Odéon Métro station is right here. If you choose to continue, Part II begins where you're now standing.

PART II FROM L'ODEON TO MONTPARNASSE

Start: Carrefour de l'Odéon (Métro: Odéon).

Finish: Cimetière de Montparnasse.

Time: 3 to 4 hours.

Best Time: Any time during the day.

Worst Time: In winter, when the Jardin du Luxembourg is bare.

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This part of the walk first takes you through the Odéon section of the St-Germain neighborhood, which flourished after the Théâtre de l'Odéon was built between 1779 and 1782. Because of its proximity to the Latin Quarter and the print shops along rue St-Jacques, bookstores and publishers have a long presence here. Bookstalls were licensed to operate in the arcades around the Théâtre de l'Odéon in the mid-19th century. One of them expanded into the renowned publishing house Flammarion, which still has its headquarters on rue Racine.

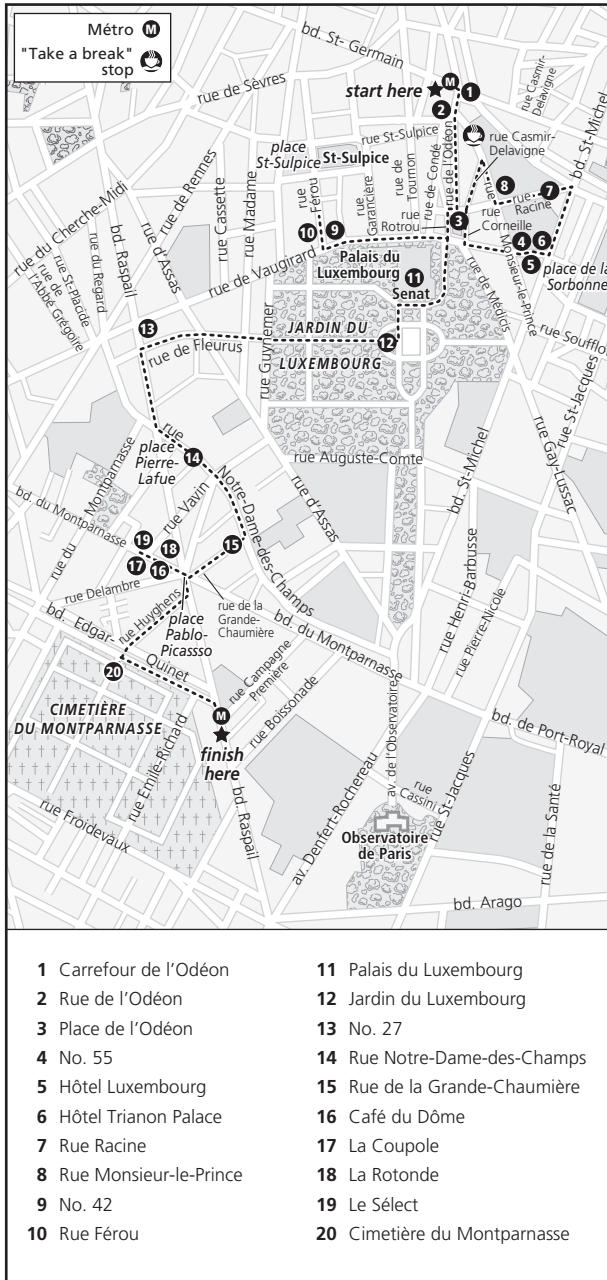
Adrienne Monnier founded a bookstore, La Maison des Amis des Livres, on rue de l'Odéon in 1915, and it supported such talents as André Gide and Paul Valéry. Soon after, her friend/lover Sylvia Beach started Shakespeare and Company a few doors away. You'll pass by the site of both bookshops, as well as the former residences of Gertrude Stein, William Faulkner, and Richard Wright.

After relaxing in the Jardin du Luxembourg, you'll walk south to Montparnasse, a neighborhood that was another favorite haunt of artists and writers. In the 17th century, students from the Latin Quarter gathered here to read poetry and named the area Mount Parnassus after the Greek mountain consecrated to Apollo and the Muses. Cafes, dance halls, and theaters sprang up in turn-of-the-century Montparnasse, eventually luring artists from the increasingly touristy Montmartre. Before World War I, Chagall, Matisse, Picasso, Modigliani, and Max Jacob sipped absinthe in La Rotonde and Café du Dome with Russian exiles, who included Lenin, Trotsky, and Stravinsky. The scene picked up again in the 1920s with the opening of La Coupole and the addition of the American literary crowd—Hemingway, Dos Passos, Fitzgerald, and Miller.

The famous old cafes still draw a mix of Left Bank old-timers and tourists, but the rest of Montparnasse has changed dramatically. This walk avoids the garish neon-lit neighborhood that emerged around the Tour Montparnasse when the 688-foot tower opened in 1967. Unlike other controversial architectural ventures that the public grew to accept, this looming monstrosity is as despised now as it was 30 years ago.

Instead, your walk will take you to the more interesting area east of the tower, where you can imagine the

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type for it. Beach arranged for it to be printed in Dijon by Frenchmen unaware of what the words meant. “As the publisher of *Ulysses* Miss Beach became both martyr and heroine when its detractors and admirers began congregating, over the years, in her shop,” wrote Janet Flanner some years after. Later, Bennet Cerf at Random House published the book and is reported to have made at least \$1 million. Joyce received a \$45,000 advance, but Beach never saw any money at all—even though she discovered, edited, and published the original work. She claimed not to mind and said she’d do anything for Joyce and his art. (Joyce never returned her favors, and when her shop was threatened with closure it was André Gide who rode to her rescue.)

Just a couple of doors down at **no. 18** was the building in which Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach shared an apartment until 1937.

Continue to the semicircular:

3. **Place de l’Odéon**, a calm and elegant square dominated by the neoclassical **Théâtre de l’Odéon**, built in 1782 by architects Peyre and de Wailly to house the Comédie-Française. With nearly 2,000 seats, it was Paris’s biggest theater at the time. Beaumarchais’s groundbreaking *Marriage of Figaro* was both created and performed here in 1784. His hilarious story of cunning servants outwitting their thickheaded master expressed the democratic sentiments sweeping through Paris. As one commentator pointed out, Beaumarchais’s predecessors “had always had the intention of making the great laugh at the expense of the small; here, the lowly could laugh at the expense of the great and the number of those ordinary people being so considerable one should not be astonished at the huge throng of spectators from every walk of life summoned by Figaro.”

Turning to your left, you’ll see at **no. 1** the building that used to house the Café Voltaire, a literary and artistic hot spot for 150 years. First frequented by Gauguin, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Whistler, and Rodin, this celebrated café attracted the “lost generation” in the 1920s. At **no. 6** is the **Hôtel Michelet Odéon**. Sherwood Anderson took a room here in 1926 and American poet Allen Tate

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(1899–1979) stayed here in 1929. He, too, was introduced to Ernest Hemingway by Sylvia Beach.

Bear left around the theater and walk straight through on rue Corneille to rue de Vaugirard. Turn left on rue de Vaugirard and walk to rue Monsieur-le-Prince, then go left to:

4. **No. 55**, on the right corner. Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809–94) lived here from 1833 to 1835 while studying medicine. A graduate of Harvard University, Holmes was a doctor, an occasional poet, and quite a wit. He came to this city to study because during his lifetime Paris was one of the world's greatest scientific and medical centers. In 1857, he founded the *Atlantic Monthly* with James Russell Lowell. Dr. Holmes was easily flattered, and in his old age he took advantage of his hearing problems and would say to admirers, "I am a trifle deaf, you know. Do you mind repeating that a little louder?"

Return to rue de Vaugirard, turning right. At **no. 4** is the:

5. **Hôtel Luxembourg** (formerly the Hôtel Lisbonne), where author William Shirer lived in September 1925. It was a bargain at \$10 per month, but Shirer reported that he had to use the bidet as a bathtub since the owner used the only bathtub as a coal bin. Further, he and other Americans who were accustomed to creature comforts had a lot of trouble learning how to use the hotel's Turkish toilets.

Retrace your steps, heading downhill on rue de Vaugirard. On the right at **no. 1 bis** is the:

6. **Hôtel Trianon Palace**, where Richard Wright took up residence when he first arrived in Paris in 1946 after a long battle for a passport with the U.S. government.

Turn left on **boulevard St-Michel**. At **no. 38** is the apartment Richard Wright sublet in 1946 from a professor who was on leave in Australia.

Continue and make a left on:

7. **Rue Racine** and head to **no. 3**, where George Sand rented an apartment in 1860. She was 56 years old, and it was her eighth residence in Paris. The building is now a Belgian restaurant with a sparkling Belle Epoque interior.

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Henry Wadsworth Longfellow lived at **no. 5** while studying at the Sorbonne. When he began his studies in 1826, he lived in a *pension de famille* (boardinghouse) until he began to feel imprisoned by the curfew and mealtime restrictions; he moved here so that he could be more independent.

Turn right on:

- 8. Rue Monsieur-le-Prince.** At **no. 22** is the building in which American painter James Abbott McNeill Whistler had a second-floor studio. Many of his contemporaries disliked him because he had such a high opinion of himself. In fact, a wealthy man once visited here (when Whistler was still virtually unknown) and inquired as to the total price of everything in the studio. Whistler quoted him a price of \$4 million. As you can imagine, the man could hardly believe his ears. “What?” he exclaimed, to which Whistler replied, “My posthumous prices.” This was probably the first and last time he ever underestimated himself.

Continue to **no. 14**, where in March 1959 Martin Luther King, Jr. visited Richard Wright in his third-floor apartment. Sylvia Beach’s bookstore was near here, and she and Wright became close friends. She said of him, “Of all writers I have known, he is the most unselfish and thoughtful. In fact, none of the others . . . were interested in anyone but themselves. Fellas like Hemingway appear uncouth beside Dick Wright.”



Take a Break At **no. 12** rue Monsieur-le-Prince is **Chez Maître Paul**, a lovely little restaurant in which to stop for lunch. The chef is best known for his variety of wine sauces. If you miss lunch here, consider coming back later for dinner—and call ☎ **01-43-54-74-59** to make reservations if you plan to do so.

After a pleasant lunch, return to place de l’Odéon via rue Casimir-Delavigne. This time bear right around the theater and turn right on rue de Vaugirard, heading to:

- 9. No. 42**, where William Faulkner stayed for several months in 1925. He spent 55¢ a day for his hotel room and another 45¢ a day on his meals. He particularly enjoyed going across the street to the Jardin du

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Luxembourg, where he could sit and write in peace. He describes the gardens in his 1931 novel *Sanctuary*:

In the Luxembourg Gardens . . . the women sat knitting in shawls and even the men playing croquet played in coats and capes . . . the random shouts of children had that quality of autumn. . . . From beyond the circle with its spurious Greek balustrade, clotted with movement, filled with a gray light of the same color and texture as the water which the fountain played into the pool, came a steady crash of music.

Continue on to:

10. **Rue Férou.** Man Ray lived at **no. 2** when he came back to Paris in 1951, and Hemingway lived at **no. 6** while working on *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway had just left his wife, Hadley, and child and moved in with Pauline Pfeiffer, his mistress. When asked why he did so, he replied, “Because I’m a bastard.”

Retrace your steps to rue de Vaugirard and turn left. Across from Faulkner’s old place and directly behind the Théâtre de l’Odéon is the:

11. **Palais du Luxembourg,** built by Marie de Médici shortly after she was widowed by Henri IV’s murder. She was never a tenant, however, because before it could be finished she was banished by her son, Louis XIII, for opposing Cardinal Richelieu. During the revolution, the palace was used as a prison. Thomas Paine was imprisoned here by the revolutionary Tribunal and escaped execution only because the jailer missed the fatal X marked on Paine’s cell door. Currently the French Senate sits here. The palace is open only 1 day a month and the line is often very long.

Beyond the palace is the:

12. **Jardin du Luxembourg,** the most Parisian of all the city’s parks. The gardens are immaculately tended, the long gravel walks are bordered by tall trees and classical statues, and young adults fill the tennis courts while elderly gentlemen play *boules* (similar to the Italian game,

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bocce). There is a playground and puppet theater for kids: The **Marionettes du Luxembourg** perform Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday afternoons and all major holidays (for show hours, call ☎ 01-43-26-46-47).

Isadora Duncan used to come here at 5am to dance, and Hemingway claimed he used to strangle pigeons in the park and take them home for supper. As you enter the gardens, go straight until you reach the impressive **Médici Fountain** (1624) on your left. This is a glorious place to sit and relax away from the crowds that gather around the central ornamental lake. After some leisure time, go around the back side of the bandstand area (near the bd. St-Michel entrance) to find **Rodin's bust of Stendhal** and **François Sicard's sculpture of George Sand** (1905). As you head for the other side of the gardens, look for the rose garden, the beehives, and the orchard. Try not to miss the **miniature Statue of Liberty**, just to the left of the rue Guynemer exit.

Exit at rue Guynemer and cross onto rue de Fleurus to:

13. **No. 27**, the former home of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas; a plaque marks the spot. This was their most important residence, the apartment in which Stein amassed her incredible modern art collection and held her famous salons. Hemingway and Fitzgerald visited regularly, as did Picasso, Matisse, and Gauguin. Stein helped guide the careers of more than a few of them and took credit for many of their successes. The art dealers and collectors of her time watched what she and her brother, Leo, bought and then bought that too. She had the power to make or break almost any modern artist who walked through her door.

When you come to boulevard Raspail, turn left. In another block, at the Notre-Dame-des-Champs Métro station, the boulevard branches off to:

14. **Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs** on the left. Presently, you'll come to **no. 70**, where in 1921 Ezra Pound and his wife, Dorothy, moved into an apartment overlooking the courtyard and garden. Though all his furniture was made out of boxes and various discarded items, the place was charming. It didn't matter that Pound was poverty-stricken: He loved to throw parties, and just

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about everyone who was anyone during the time he lived in Paris visited this apartment. Hemingway often spent time here boxing and writing with Pound.

Katherine Anne Porter (1890–1980) lived in the same apartment in 1934. She came to Europe on a Guggenheim grant and joined Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company Library in 1933. Porter remained in Paris until 1936 and is acclaimed for her collection of short stories *Flowering Judas* (1930) and her novel *Ship of Fools* (1962).

Across the street on your left is **no. 73**, where painter John Singer Sargent (1856–1925) once shared a studio with Carroll Beckwith. Here he completed his first major commission, a portrait of playwright Edouard Pailleron. Sargent was an American born in Florence who came to work in Montparnasse in 1874 at the age of 18. Already highly skilled in life drawing, he was able to jump to the head of the class shortly after he joined; as a result, he spent some time as Duran's assistant. By 1878, Sargent was out working on his own.

A few steps farther is **no. 72**, on your right. A second-floor apartment in this building was Malvina Hoffman's (1887–1966) first studio, and its only running water was from a tap down the hall.

This is where she worked on her first commission: a bust of the American ambassador to France, Robert Bacon. While living here, she met Rodin and visited his studio. One day he asked her to pick out one of the sculptures displayed in his studio and study it carefully until he came back. Knowing this to be a test, Hoffman intensely studied the one she'd chosen. Rodin returned about 20 minutes later and took her to another room. He gave her some clay and instructed her to sculpt from memory the head she'd studied. He walked out, locked the door, then came back a while later to find that she'd done an excellent job. He proceeded to take her to lunch, and that's how she was accepted as his student.

Only 5 years after she began working with Rodin, Hoffman achieved national recognition for her *Pavlova La Gavotte* and *Bacchanale russe*. She's also responsible for the creation of the Hall of Man at Chicago's Field Museum.

Across the street is **no. 75**, the home of Alice B. Toklas and Harriet Levy. Toklas first came to Paris with her friend

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and fellow San Franciscan Levy, and they moved into an apartment here. In 1912, Levy moved back to the United States, though Toklas decided to stay and move in with Gertrude and Leo Stein (she'd been typing manuscript pages for Gertrude since her arrival). Though Leo moved to Italy in 1914, Toklas stayed—for 32 more years.

Turn right at the corner of:

15. **Rue de la Grande-Chaumière.** *Chaume* means “thatch” and refers to the thatch-roofed dance halls that occupied the street until the 18th century. In 1783, an Englishman and a local restaurateur teamed up and turned the dance halls into a two-story building surrounded by terraces and gardens where people could dance and drink. La Grande Chaumière became one of the most popular places in 19th-century Paris. The polka was introduced here in 1845, and then the cancan and another dance called the *chabut*, which was thought so vulgar that it was forbidden. The doors finally closed in 1853.

At **no. 14 bis**, on your left, is the **Académie de la Grande-Chaumière**, the art school begun by Antoine Bourdelle. Paul Gauguin took an apartment at **no. 8** on his return from Tahiti in 1893. On the right side (now the Best Western Villa des Artistes), **no. 9** was once the **Hôtel Liberia**, the haunt of many artists and writers. Among them was Nathanael West (1903–40), an American novelist born Nathan Weinstein who moved to Paris in 1926 and lived here for 2 years. He was fascinated with the idea of the American dream, and his best-known work is *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1933). West worked as an editor for several magazines, and 2 years after the publication of *Miss Lonelyhearts* he moved to Hollywood to become a scriptwriter.

Sculptor Malvina Hoffman also took furnished rooms somewhere on this street, which around 1920 was fondly referred to as the “rabbit hutch.” Hoffman described the sounds of rue de la Grande-Chaumière as a veritable cacophony of “the calls of the knife sharpeners and mattress makers, the pan pipes of vendors of goats while leading their bleating flocks.”

At **no. 8**, on your left, is the old studio of Amedeo Modigliani (see Walking Tour 7, Stop 16).

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At the end of the street, you'll come to place Pablo-Picasso, which is the intersection of boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse. Notice the controversial **bust of Balzac** by Rodin (it was controversial because Balzac is rendered "warts and all," when at the time all statues were typically more idealized). Turning right onto boulevard Montparnasse will bring you to "café corner." First on your left is the:

16. **Café du Dôme**, which opened in 1897 and was popular with Americans and other expatriates in the 1920s. Hemingway and Sinclair Lewis both frequented the Dôme. An inebriated Lewis was insulted one night here and exacted his revenge several years later in a magazine article:

Among the other advantages of the Dôme, it is on a corner charmingly resembling Sixth Avenue at Eighth Street, and all the waiters understand Americanese, so that it is possible for the patrons to be highly expatriate without benefit of Berlitz. It is, in fact, the perfectly standardized place to which standardized rebels flee from the crushing standardization of America.

Next door at **no. 102** is:

17. **La Coupole**, where Henry Miller used to come for his morning porridge. This café opened in December 1927 and became a favorite spot of Russian exiles and émigrés (including Leon Trotsky and Igor Stravinsky) both before and after the Bolshevik Revolution. It also hosted the area's artistic community, including Josephine Baker, Sartre, Matisse, and Kiki de Montparnasse and her lover, photographer Man Ray.

The 12 columns inside were painted (in exchange for a meal) by, among others, Brancusi, Gris, Léger, Chagall, Soutine, and Delaunay; they're registered as a historic monument. Of all the cafés on the corner, La Coupole is the most continuously crowded and boisterous.

Across the street at **nos. 103–105** is:

Kiki de Montparnasse: A Queen but Not a Lady

Born illegitimate, Alice Prin (d. 1953) was raised by her grandmother in Burgundy. Her mother called her to Paris to work—first in a printing shop, then in a shoe factory, and finally in a florist's shop on rue Mouffetard, where she was discovered by a sculptor. So began her career as an artists' model, for which she adopted the name Kiki de Montparnasse. At age 14, after her mother disowned her, she became a nightclub dancer at Le Jockey (Montparnasse's first nightclub), sporting black hose and garters.

Kiki was a voluptuous, seductive nonconformist who would bare her breasts to anyone who'd pay her 3 francs. She's most closely associated with Montparnasse because she spent 20 years frequenting cafés du Dôme, Le Sélect, and La Rotonde. As she got older, her quality of life deteriorated, and she began abusing drugs and alcohol, which ultimately caused her death. Hemingway, who wrote the introduction to Kiki's memoirs, called her "a Queen," noting that that was "very different from being a lady."

18. **La Rotonde**, a cafe housed at **no. 105** when it opened in 1911. This was more than just a cafe. Stanton MacDonald Wright, an American painter who frequented La Rotonde, described it as "a gathering place of most American and German artists; André, the waiter there, lent the boys [the artists] money and treated many as a father would." He also said that the cafe at that time contained "a small zinc bar in a long narrow room with a terrace where [they] drank and warmed [themselves] at great porcelain stoves."

Around 1924, La Rotonde had become popular enough to warrant expanding it next door to **no. 103**. Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Picasso, and Modigliani enjoyed spending time in the cafe and nightclub. There was an artists' gallery on the premises as well; Edna St. Vincent

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Millay, the American Romantic poet, came here often during her 1922 visit.

Up the boulevard a block at **no. 99** is:

19. **Le Sélect.** This cafe, one of the most popular in Paris in the 1920s, was frequented by Ernest Hemingway, James Baldwin, and Joan Miró (1893–1983), among others.

It was here that Isadora Duncan held an impromptu demonstration supporting anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, who had been convicted of murder and sentenced to death. A fight with another of Le Sélect's patrons, journalist Floyd Gibbons, over whether or not Sacco and Vanzetti's lives should be spared prompted her to lead a small march to the American embassy to protest their impending executions.

Return to place Pablo-Picasso and turn right on boulevard Raspail. Make another right on rue Huyghens, which will take you to the entrance of the:

20. **Cimetière du Montparnasse.** Be sure you go in the main entrance. This will be a brief tour of the cemetery, with directions for the general locations of grave sites that you might be interested in visiting. You can pick up a map of the graves in the office to the left of the main entrance.

As you enter, go directly to the graves of **Jean-Paul Sartre** (1905–80) and **Simone de Beauvoir** (1908–86), on the right side of the roadway. Sartre was an existentialist playwright/philosopher/novelist. During World War II, he was taken prisoner but escaped and became a Resistance leader. During the Occupation, he wrote *Being and Nothingness* (1943) and *No Exit* (1944). He declined the Nobel Prize in 1964. Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre's intimate friend and occasional lover, was an existentialist novelist and a teacher of philosophy, but she's probably best known for her analysis of women in *The Second Sex* (1950). Toward the end of her life she wrote *The Coming of Age* (1970), about the ways different cultures treat and respond to the elderly.

Continue straight ahead, past the graves, and turn left at avenue de l'Ouest. On your left you'll find the grave of

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Chaim Soutine (1894–1943). Born in Lithuania, Soutine arrived in France in 1913 and became one of the greatest contributors to the Ecole de Paris (a loose term combining those artists who participated in the dadaist, cubist, and surrealist movements). He isn't very well known because he suffered from depression and a lack of self-confidence that kept him from showing his work, but many believe Soutine was a man of great genius. It's said that he often destroyed his paintings. Soutine preferred the work of the old masters to that of his contemporaries and particularly admired Rembrandt's *Flayed Ox*. In fact, Soutine's own *Side of Beef* (ca. 1925) was inspired by the old masters. A frequent slaughterhouse visitor, he once brought a carcass home to paint; when his neighbors called the police to complain about the smell, Soutine answered them with a discourse on the importance of art over sanitation.

After crossing avenue du Nord, you'll find on your left the grave of French symbolist poet/critic **Charles Baudelaire** (1821–67). Only one volume of Baudelaire's major work, *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857), was published in his lifetime, and it was met with great animosity. Once considered obscene, *Les Fleurs du mal* is now regarded a masterpiece.

Cross avenue Transversale and on your left you'll find the grave of **Tristan Tzara** (see Walking Tour 6, Part I, Stop 12). Farther ahead, on your right across allée Raffet, is the grave of **Emile Antoine Bourdelle**.

Turn around and go right on allée Raffet to avenue Principale, following it around the circle to the left and straight through to avenue du Nord. Turn right to the grave of troubled actress **Jean Seberg** (1938–79), who co-starred with Jean-Paul Belmondo in *Breathless*, Jean Luc Godard's innovative 1959 film. Next is the grave of French composer **Charles Camille Saint-Saëns** (1835–1921), who made his debut as a pianist at age 10. Only 3 years later, he entered the Paris Conservatory, and for 20 years he was the organist at the Madeleine church. Saint-Saëns disliked modern music, and his most famous work was the romantic opera *Samson et Dalila* (1877).

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After viewing the grave of Saint-Saëns, you'll see the grave of Romanian sculptor **Constantin Brancusi** (1876–1957) on the left. Brancusi decided to come to Paris to work, and soon after his arrival Rodin invited him to work in his studio. Brancusi did the unthinkable—he declined the offer, saying wisely, “Nothing grows well in the shade of a big tree.” An abstract sculptor, Brancusi was unafraid of controversy. He believed in the absolute simplification of form and liked working in metal, stone, and wood. Continue on avenue du Nord, cross rue Emile-Richard, and enter the little cemetery, taking the door on the left. You'll see a tomb ornamented by Brancusi's famous sculpture *The Kiss* (1908).

Return to rue Emile-Richard and turn left. Go left again at avenue Transversale and right on avenue Thierry. On your left you'll see the grave of **Capt. Alfred Dreyfus** (1859–1935), the Jewish officer falsely accused of passing secrets to the German government and sentenced to Devil's Island. The Dreyfus Affair revealed an ugly strain of anti-Semitism in the French military, targeted by Emile Zola's impassioned article *J'accuse*. Dreyfus was eventually exonerated when it was revealed that the evidence against him had been fabricated.

Exit the cemetery by returning to rue Emile-Richard, turning right, and continuing straight ahead to the exit. Then make a right and proceed to the Raspail Métro station.