

CONTENTS

- List of Maps xv
- About the Author xvi
- Acknowledgments xvii

Introduction 1

Welcome to Unofficial Paris 1

About This Guide 4

- Why Unofficial? 4
- About *Unofficial Guides* 4
- How This Guide Was Researched and Written 5
- Letters, Comments, and Questions from Readers 6

How This Guide Is Organized: By Subject and Geographic Districts (Arrondissements) 7

- Hotels 7
- Attractions (Museums, Monuments, Parks, Churches, Landmarks) 8
- Restaurants (Bistros, Brasseries, Cafés) 8
- Entertainment and Nightlife (Clubs, Bars, Cabarets) 8
- Neighborhoods and Arrondissements 8
- The Arrondissements 13

On Being a “Tourist” 14

- Understanding *Les Bises* 15

FAST FACTS ABOUT PARIS AND FRANCE 16

- Commas versus Decimal Points 17

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 17

PART ONE Understanding Paris 18

A Brief History of Paris 18

- Les Parisii and the Romans 18
- Barbarian Invasions 19

VI CONTENTS

Charlemagne 19
Renaissance and the Reformation 19
Louis XIII and Louis XIV 20
The French Revolution 20
Napoléon I (Napoléon Bonaparte) 21
Haussmann and the New Paris 21
Commune de Paris 21

FRENCH PERIODS AND RULERS 22

The Third Republic 22
World War I 23
Between the Wars 23
World War II 23
The Fourth Republic 24
The Fifth Republic 24
The Socialist Years 24
Turn of the Millennium 24

The Language: Français 25

Getting Linguistically Equipped: *Parlez-Vous Français?* 26
Survival French 26

Numbers and Prices: The Euro 27

MISNOMERS 28

CURRENCY CONVERSION TABLE 29

PART TWO Planning Your Visit 30

How Far in Advance Should You Plan? 30

When to Go 32

Price 33
Weather 33

PARIS AVERAGE TEMPERATURE 34

PARIS RAINFALL 34

Package Deals and Travel Agents 35

Finding a Package Tour, Tour Operator, or Consolidator 37

Finding Airfare Deals and Making Reservations 39

Start with Your Local Travel Agent 39
Skim the Travel Section of Your Local Paper 39
KEY WEB SITES FOR AIR-TRAVEL RESERVATIONS 40
Surfing for Inexpensive Airfare 40
Call the Airlines Directly 41
Tricks for Cheap Airfare 43
The Paris Airfare Game 43

Reducing the Confusion of Choice 46

Maison de la France (French Government Tourist Office) 46
The Alliance Française 47
Franco-American Chambers of Commerce 47

What to Pack 49

- Cell Phones 51
- Passports and Visas 51
- Travel Restrictions 53
- How to Dress 54
- Estimating Your Budget: A Ballpark Idea 55

PART THREE Accommodations 58**Understanding Your Options 58**

- The Hotel Scene 59
- Location 59

Types of Lodging 61

- Small versus Large Hotels 61
- Hotel Chains versus Independents 61
- About French Hotel Chains 62
- Some Have Stars, Some Have None Upon Thars 63
- Alternative Lodging Options 65
- Hostels in Paris 67
- Web Addresses for Paris Lodging 68
- Specialized and Unusual Accommodations 68

Hotels for Business Travelers 71

- Paris's Major Conference Centers 71
- Hotels at the Airports 71

Rates, Rules, and Recommendations 72

- Making Reservations from Home 75
- Arriving without Reservations 78

The Parisian Hotel Room 79

- Elevators 79
- Beds 79
- Bathrooms 80
- Showers versus Bathtubs 80
- The Bidet 82
- The Toilet 82
- Closets 82
- Hotel Clocks and Time 82
- Automated Wake-up Calls 83
- Radios 83
- RADIO STATIONS** 83
- No Bible in the Drawer 83
- A Word on Noise (Yours and Others') 84
- Heating and Air-conditioning 84
- Minibars 85
- Making Calls from Your Hotel Room 85
- Watching French Television 85

VIII CONTENTS

- Keys and Outer Doors 86
- La Cour versus La Rue 86
- The Lobby 86
- To Breakfast or Not to Breakfast 86
- Hotel Concierges 87
- Apartment Concierges 88
- Hotel Staff 88

Paris Hotels: Rated and Ranked 88

- Prices in Profiled Listings 91
- Discounts for Guidebook Readers 92
- Crème de la Crème 92
- Notable Paris Lodging 93
- HOW PARIS HOTELS COMPARE 94**
- PARIS HOTELS BY ARRONDISSEMENT 96**

Hotel Profiles 102

- Reminder on Deposits 102

PART FOUR Arriving, Getting Oriented, and Departing 135

- Beating Jet Lag 135

Arriving: Day One 136

- Those First Minutes 136
- Paris Airports 136
- Wi-Fi Access 144
- Changing Money at the Airport 144

Departing 145

- Confirming Your Flight: Reaching the Airlines 146
- MAJOR AIRLINE OFFICES IN PARIS 146**
- Getting to the Airport on Time 146
- Claiming Your VAT Refund on Purchases 149

Arriving and Departing by Train 149

- Train Stations 149
- The Famous TGV (Train à Grande Vitesse) 151
- Train Reservations and Tickets 151
- Lockers and Other Services 151
- Taking the Eurostar 151

Arriving and Departing by Car 152

- Rules of the Road 152
- Parking 153
- Gas 153
- Traffic 153

Understanding Those First Signs and Getting Directions 154

Telephones, E-mail, and Postal Services 154

- A Prominent Word on Calling or Faxing Paris 154
- Calling Home from Your Hotel 155

- Come Prepared 155
- Using Parisian Telephones 156
- Ordering Prepaid Phone Cards 157
- Understanding the Busy Signal 158
- Using Cell Phones in France 158
- Internet Telephony 158
- E-mail 158
- INTERNET CAFÉS** 159
- Using the French Post Office 160

Understanding Euros 161

- Changing Money 161
- Banking in Paris 164
- Using Credit Cards 165
- Traveler's Checks 165
- Tipping 165

Things the Locals Already Know 166

- Getting an English-Language Newspaper 166
- Other Paris Publications 167
- Public Toilets 167
- Uncurbed Dogs 168
- Doing Laundry 168
- The Emerging Story of French Smoking 170
- Health 172
- Religion and Houses of Worship 175

Travelers with Disabilities 176

- Hotels Equipped for Travelers with Disabilities 177
- Using the Métro 178
- Restaurants and Disabled Access 179
- Monuments and Disabled Access 180
- A Useful Contact 180

Traveling with Children 180

- Eating Out with Kids 180
- Babysitters 181
- Special Parks for Kids 182
- Theme Parks for Kids 182
- Museums for Kids 182
- Publications and Listings 184

Safety and Security 184

- If You're a Victim of Crime . . . 184
- Hotel Security 185
- Lost and Found 185
- Lost Credit Cards 185
- Emergency Numbers 185
- Your Embassy or Consulate 186

PART FIVE Getting Around 187

Visualizing the City 187

- Paris *Pratique* 187
- Spotting the Eiffel Tower 188
- Walking in Paris 188
- Street Addresses 188

Public Transportation 189

- The Métro 189
- MÉTRO LINES** 190
- PARIS VISITE PASS** 191
- The RER 195
- Buses 196
- Taxis 198
- Train Passes and Reservations 200

Renting a Car 200

- Rental Car Contact Information in the United States 201
- A Tip about Price Quotes 202
- Chauffeured Touring 202

PART SIX Sightseeing, Tours, and Attractions 203

Planning for Paris Touring 203

- Opening and Closing Times 203
- Planning Visits of Three, Five, and Seven Days 204

Tours and Guides 206

- City Tours 206
- River Tours 207
- Biking and Walking Tours 208
- Suggested Walking Itineraries 209

Exploring Points of Interest 211

- Anglo-Americans in Paris 211
- Getting the Best View: Micro and Macro 211
- Literary and Artistic Landmarks 214
- Taking Classes 215
- Getting Tickets 216
- Paris Façade-Spotting 216
- Cultural Paris 218
- Absolutely Necessary: The Paris Museum Pass 219

Touring Neighborhoods 219

- Latin Quarter 220
- The Marais 220
- Châtelet—Les Halles 220
- Île Saint-Louis—Île de la Cité 220
- Saint-Germain-des-Prés 221

- Bastille-République 221
- Champs-Élysées-Concorde 221
- Invalides-Eiffel Tower 221
- Montparnasse 221
- Grands Boulevards 222
- Montmartre 222
- Outer Arrondissements 222
- Neighborhoods for the Adventurous 222

Attraction Profiles 223

PARIS ATTRACTIONS BY TYPE 224

PARIS ATTRACTIONS BY LOCATION 226

Museums, Monuments, and Churches 241

Parks, Gardens, City Squares, and Cemeteries 281

The Bridges of Paris 294

A Tour of Paris by Bridge 295

The Bridges by Night 297

Day Trips and Excursions 298

PART SEVEN Dining and Restaurants 304

Bon Appetit! 304

When to Eat 305

General Hours 306

A Word about Toilets and Telephones 306

Paris Restaurants: Defined and Explained 306

Café and Café Tabac 307

Café Tabac 308

What to Order in a Café 308

Restaurants, Haute Cuisine, and La Gastronomie 313

The Baguette and Boulangerie 316

Fast Food and French Chains 317

Street Food 318

A Gourmand's Paradise 318

Ethnic Food 319

Understanding French Restaurants 321

Message from French Restaurant Owners to American Visitors 323

A Note for Nonsmokers 323

Manners 323

How to Settle a Dispute 324

The Restaurant Ratings: Stars, Forks, Toques, and More 324

The Menu versus La Carte 326

Size of Portions 327

Cooking Instructions 327

A Note on French Beef 328

XII CONTENTS

- Ordering and Tasting Wine 328
- The Structure of the Meal 329
- The Bill (L'Addition) 332
- Doggie Bags 333
- Dressing for Dinner 333

The Restaurants 333

PARIS RESTAURANTS BY LOCATION 334

PARIS RESTAURANTS BY CUISINE 337

Paris Restaurants Rated and Ranked 338

Restaurant Profiles 341

PART EIGHT Shopping 380

A Browser's Paradise 380

- An Unofficial Suggestion 380
- VAT Tax Refunds on Your Purchases 381
- Mailing or Shipping Home Your Purchases 382
- Using Credit Cards 382
- Returns and Refunds 383
- Duty-Free Shops 383
- Museum Gift Shops and Bookstores 384

Shopping Areas and Favorite Streets 384

- Place des Victoires/Rue Etienne Marcel 385
- Les Halles 385
- Le Marais 385
- Saint-Germain-des-Prés 385
- Boulevard Haussmann, Rue Saint-Honoré, La Madeleine 385
- The Champs-Élysées 386
- Passy/Avenue Victor Hugo 386
- The Bastille 386
- Bercy Village 386

Department Stores 387

A Selection of Special Shops 388

Cool Cheap Shopping 390

Haute Couture: Discounted and Marked Down 391

Open-Air Markets 391

- Tips for Shopping in the Open-Air Markets 392
- Permanent Markets 392
- Roving Markets 393
- Organic Markets 394
- Flea Markets 394
- Specialized Markets 395
- Fabric and Cloth Markets 396

Great Parisian Gifts and Where to Find Them 396

Antiques 396

Aprons and Knives	397
Bathroom Accessories	397
Biscuits and Candy	397
Bread	397
Café Tables and Other Authentic Items	397
Cheese	398
Children's Books in French	398
Chocolate	399
Dishes	399
Dolls, Bears, and Puppets	399
Foie Gras, Escargots, Caviar, and Saumon Fumé	400
Genera; Groceries	400
Gold Jewelry	400
Hardware	400
Kitchen, Cooking, and Dining Room Supplies	401
Linen	401
Lingerie	401
Music and French CDs	401
Mustard	401
Original Ready to Wear and More	402
Pens	402
Perfume and Fine Cosmetics	402
Stationery	403
Trendy Clothing	403
Wine and Spirits	403

PART NINE Exercise and Recreation 405

Sports and Fitness 405

Jogging and Running	405
A Special Report for Serious Runners	406
Swimming	409
Fishing and Boating	409
Hiking	410
Parks and City Squares	410
Tennis	410
Gym Clubs	411
Body and Mind	412
Cycling	412
Inline Skating	414
Golf	414
Horseback Riding	415
Down at the Beach: Paris Plages	415

XIV CONTENTS

PART TEN Entertainment and Nightlife 416

Paris by Night 416

- The Lights of Paris 417
- Self-Guided Night Tour by Taxi 417

Cultural Evenings 418

- Where to Go for Listings? 418
- Music, Opera, and Dance 418
- Theaters and Spectacles 421
- Readings and Lectures 423
- Cinema 424

The Red Lights of Paris 424

Tips for Going Out on the Town 425

- Dress Codes for Paris Clubs 425
- Prices and Entrance Fees (Prix d'Entrée) 425
- Sexuality 426
- Notable Paris Nightclubs 427

PARIS NIGHTCLUBS BY LOCATION 428

Nightclub Profiles 428

- Note on the Mix of Clubs 428
- Note on Food at the Clubs 430

Accommodations Index 447

Restaurant Index 449

Subject Index 451

Reader Survey 461

LIST *of* MAPS

Paris Arrondissements	10
Accommodations on the Right Bank (1er–4e, 8e–12e, and 18e)	98
Accommodations on the Left Bank (5e–7e and 13e–14e)	100
Top Paris Attractions	232
Attractions on the Right Bank (1er and 2e)	234
Attractions on the Right Bank (3e, 4e, 11e, and 12e)	235
Attractions on the Left Bank (5e, 6e, and 14e)	236
Attractions on the Left Bank (7e and 15e)	237
Attractions on the Right Bank (8e)	238
Attractions on the Right Bank (9e, 17e, and 18e)	239
Attractions on the Right Bank (16e)	240
Notre-Dame de Paris	243
The Louvre	257
Bois de Boulogne	282
Père-Lachaise Cemetery	286
Restaurants and Nightclubs on the Right Bank (1er–4e, 8e–12e, and 18e)	342
Restaurants and Nightclubs on the Left Bank (5e, 6e, 13e, and 14e)	344
Restaurants on the Left Bank (7e and 15e)	346