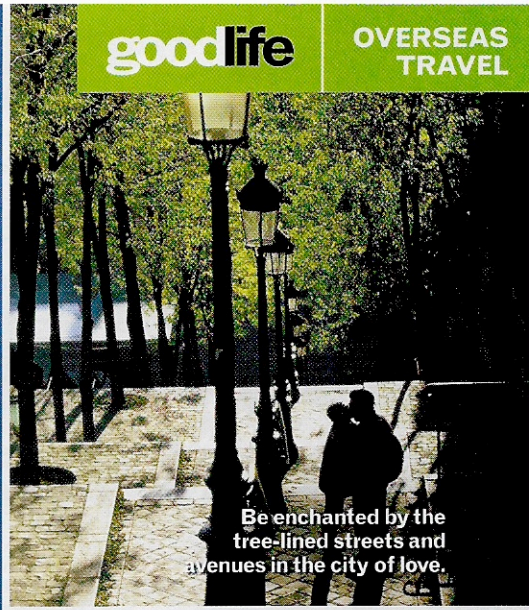


GOOD TASTE  
TOP TRAVEL  
DESTINATIONS  
DEPARTURE 2005

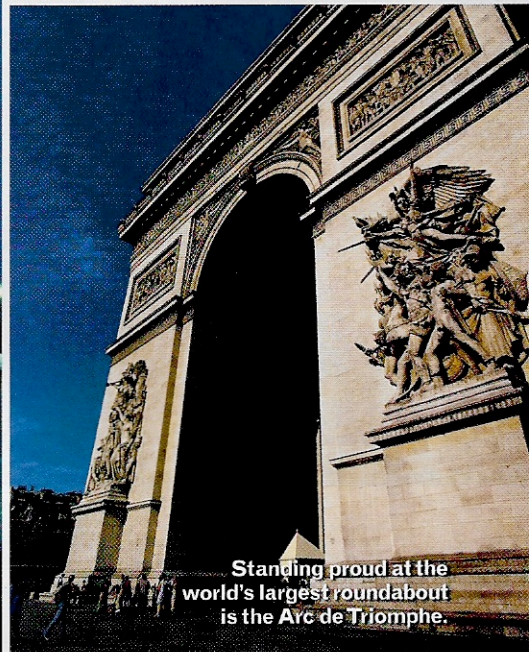
- ✓ PLENTY TO DO
- ✓ BUDGET OPTIONS
- ✓ FAMILY-FRIENDLY
- ✓ SPECTACULAR SIGHTS

# Destination: Paris

Spectacular by day or night, the Eiffel Tower is a must on anyone's Paris itinerary.



Be enchanted by the tree-lined streets and avenues in the city of love.



Standing proud at the world's largest roundabout is the Arc de Triomphe.



It's so easy to get around the city on the metro and you're never far from a station.

From gardens and gastronomy to markets, museums and more, the magical city of Paris is a must-see destination.

## Why Paris?

Paris is a city of superlatives – the capital of love, food and fashion, and, brimming with grace and culture, this bustling metropolis lives up to its enviable reputation. Whether you're strolling through a quaint neighbourhood, perched in a cosy bar or dining alfresco while watching the well-heeled walk by, the city's charm envelops you like a misty morning on the banks of the River Seine.

## You'll love

**Window shopping** Parisians love to *lécher les vitrines* (which literally means "lick the windows"), so window displays at the department stores Galeries Lafayette, Printemps and

Bon Marché are designed to wow. Most of the designer boutiques have moved from the famous Avenue des Champs-Élysées to the glamorous rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré and Avenue Montaigne in the 8th arrondissement (district), right in the heart of Paris.

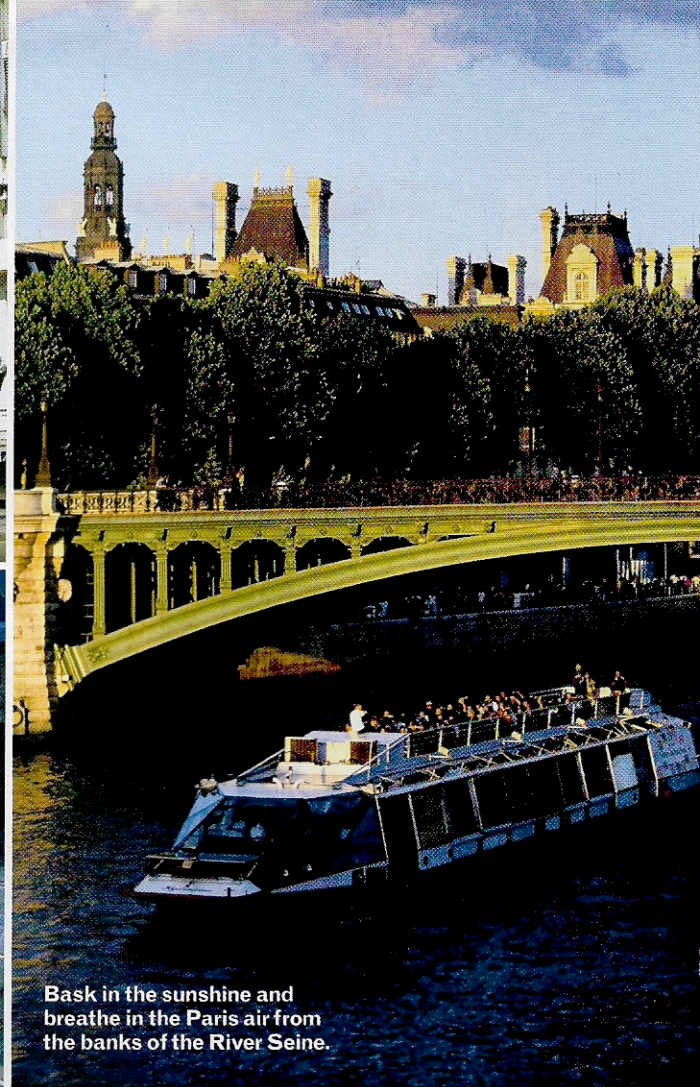
**The markets** Markets are a way of life in Paris and are a good place to soak up the city's village-like atmosphere. There are markets in most quarters on any given day of the week. On Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays watch locals haggle over fresh produce and practice your French at Marché Monge (Place Monge) near the Notre Dame cathedral. If you're in the mood for bargain hunting, sort through the treasure trove of clothing, ►



Don't miss seeing a lively cabaret show at the Moulin Rouge, which dates back to 1889.



The glass pyramid in the centre of the enormous Louvre museum that houses the Mona Lisa.



Bask in the sunshine and breathe in the Paris air from the banks of the River Seine.

homewares and antiques at flea markets, such as the enormous Puces de Montreuil (Saturday to Monday, 20th arrondissement).

**The beauty treatments** The French set the benchmark for beauty hundreds of years ago, so what better place to surrender yourself to the hands of a skilled beautician than in the swish surrounds of a classic French salon?

## “ Introduce kids to a French childhood experience at Le Jardin du Luxembourg. ”

Head to The Sothys Institute at 128 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. Go to [www.sothys.com](http://www.sothys.com) or call (331) 5393 9153.

### Kids will love

**Taking the Mickey** The squeals of delight when kids see their favourite Disney characters at Disneyland Resort Paris are worth the entry fee alone (\$AU78 for adults, \$AU65 for kids under 12). The five Disney lands within the park offer everything from rides such

as Indiana Jones and the Temple of Peril to the dizzying Mad Hatter's Tea Cups. When hunger hits, there are 11 eateries at the Disney Village. Go to [www.disneylandparis.com](http://www.disneylandparis.com) for details. To get there, buy a Paris Visite five-zone card (from \$AU30), which gives you one, two, three or five days of unlimited use of the metro (train system), and take the RER (Réseau Express Régional) Line A.

**The tower trip** You haven't seen Paris until you've looked down upon the arrondissements from the 324-metre high Eiffel Tower. Built in 1889, many Parisians thought it was an eyesore at the time – it was almost torn down in 1909 – but it's now regarded as a national treasure. If the kids can't endure all 1665 steps to the second level, take the lift, which stops at all three levels (\$AU8 to \$AU20 for adults, \$AU4 to \$AU11 for kids under 12). Aside

from the view, there are souvenir shops, restaurants and exhibitions. Go to [www.tour-eiffel.fr](http://www.tour-eiffel.fr) for details.

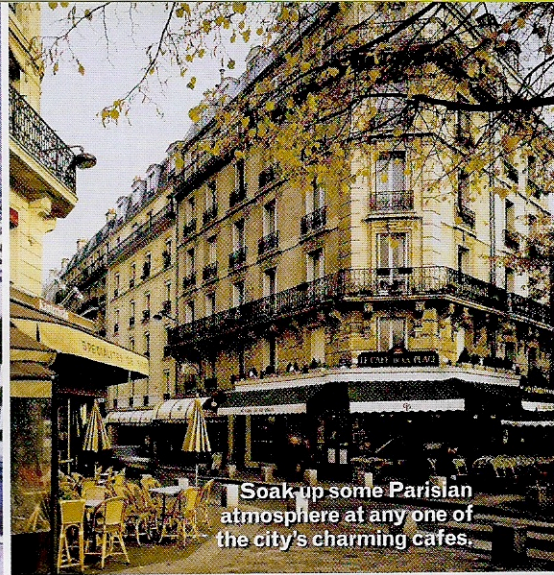
**Le Jardin du Luxembourg** This is the ideal location to introduce your kids to a genuine French childhood experience – open-air puppet shows. Popular with French families, chess fanatics and smooching couples, the garden boasts a 17th-century palace for the adults to admire, and merry-go-rounds and pony rides for the kids. It's right near the lively student quarter (Le Quartier Latin).

### Must-see sights

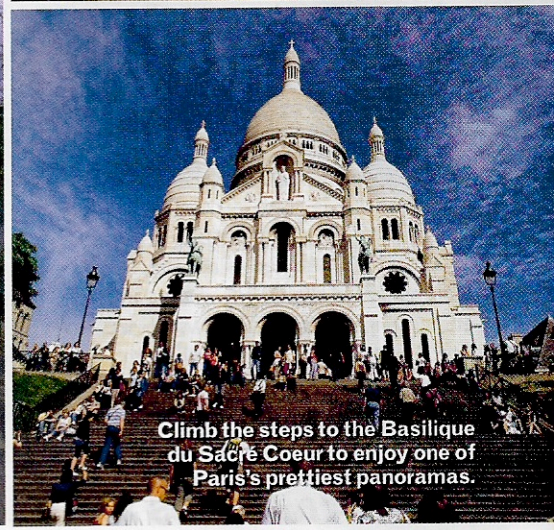
**The art galleries** Home to Da Vinci's famous Mona Lisa, the Louvre museum is a work of art in itself. Despite the initial controversy over its design, the glass pyramid erected outside the 13th-century building is now loved by Parisians. Art buffs should snap up a Paris Museum Pass valid for two to six days (\$AU50 to \$AU100). It offers unlimited access to about 60 museums and monuments in and around Paris – best of all, it means you won't need to



No high-rises here – the view over the Champs-Élysées from the top of the Arc de Triomphe.



Soak up some Parisian atmosphere at any one of the city's charming cafes.



Climb the steps to the Basilique du Sacré Coeur to enjoy one of Paris's prettiest panoramas.

queue at hot spots, such as the Louvre and the recently re-opened Musée national de l'Orangerie, which houses big names such as Monet and Matisse. Go to [www.parismuseumpass.com](http://www.parismuseumpass.com) for details. If you're interested in interior design, don't miss the Musée des Arts Décoratifs next to the Louvre. Go to [www.lesartsdecoratifs.fr](http://www.lesartsdecoratifs.fr) for details.

**Room with a view** Take in one of Paris's most spectacular panoramas from the Basilique du Sacré Coeur, perched on a hill in the Montmartre district. If the 234 spiral stairs to the dome don't take your breath away, the view of the city at sunset will. Follow the hoards to Place du Tertre if you'd like your portrait sketched by local artists.

**Notre Dame** In the true heart of the city (all road distances in Paris are measured from the Cathédrale de Notre Dame de Paris), this gothic house of worship took almost 200 years to construct. While its impressive rose windows are best viewed from inside, its famous spires and ornate flying buttresses are in full view from the Square Jean XXIII behind the cathedral.

**Arc de Triomphe** In the middle of the world's largest roundabout on the Champs-Élysées stands one of the most photographed monuments in Paris, the Arc de Triomphe, commissioned by Napoleon in 1806. Head to the rooftop for a view of erratic French driving at its most entertaining. Admission is \$AU14 for adults and free for kids under 18.

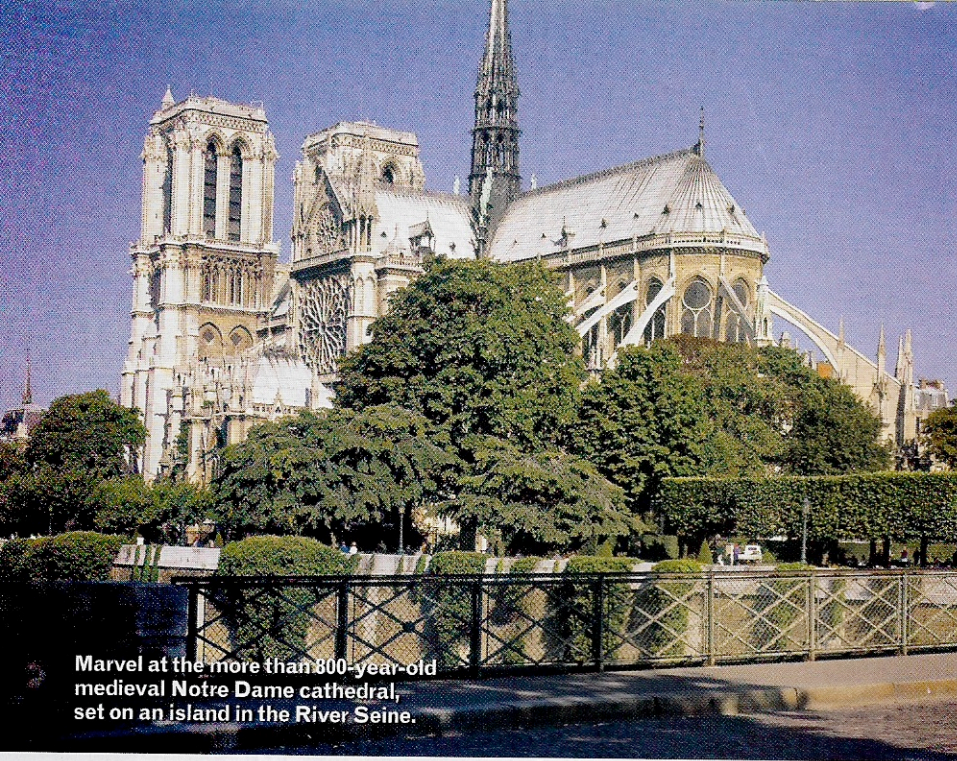
**The famously departed** Pay your respects to legendary singers Edith Piaf and Jim Morrison or novelist, poet and playwright Oscar Wilde at the Cimetière du Père-Lachaise, which is reputed to be the world's most visited cemetery. Their ornate tombs are among the many famous names in this tranquil sanctuary.

## Holiday eating

Paris has become a great place to sample world cuisine – you'll find everything from pho (Vietnamese beef noodle soup) to *boudin antillais* (Caribbean-inspired blood pudding). But classic French fare hasn't changed much – they still eat steak rare, fresh chunks of buttered baguette are dunked in big pots of *café au lait* at brekkie, and flaky pastries are eaten without a smidgin of guilt. As the famous book title states, "French Women Don't Get Fat", but the same can't be said for tourists – however, worrying about your waistline means you might miss out on the treat of a lifetime for your tastebuds. ▶

## tip

**GET AROUND LIKE A LOCAL – ON TWO WHEELS** Hiring a *vélib*, an abbreviation of *vélo* (bicycle) and *liberté* (freedom) is a cinch. With a self-service bike station roughly every 300 metres, there are about 20,000 bikes ready for hire at any given time. Buy a one-day (\$AU2) or seven-day access card (\$AU8) at any *vélib* station to get going. It works much like hiring a car – you can pick up and drop off your *vélib* at any of the 1450 stations. Just remember to pick up a *vélib* safety guide before you head off.



Marvel at the more than 800-year-old medieval **Notre Dame** cathedral, set on an island in the River Seine.

**Munch time** Brasseries are the quintessential dining experience in Paris, and among the best is the wood-panelled Bofinger (5-7 rue de la Bastille, 4th arrondissement), as famous for its *choucroute* (sauerkraut with cured and boiled meat) and pig's trotter with fries

(172 Boulevard Saint-Germain, 6th arrondissement), where stylish Parisians head for their hot chocolate or caffeine fix before work or linger over a *citron pressé* (a refreshing lemon, water and sugar concoction) before dinner.

## “Brasseries are the quintessential dining experience in Paris.”

and bearnaise sauce as it is for its glass-domed roof. A stone's throw from the Opera Bastille, the bar is also a great spot for a nightcap. Go to [www.bofingerparis.com](http://www.bofingerparis.com) or call (331) 4272 8782 to make a reservation.

**Bread of life** In 1998 Parisians complained to the government that their bread was not what it used to be, so now only bakers who knead, mix and bake baguettes on their own premises are allowed to call their shops *boulangerie* (bakery). There's a great selection at Arnaud Delmontel (39 rue des Martyrs, 9th arrondissement). Make sure you try their award-winning Renaissance baguette.

**Cocoa culture** Kids will be in cocoa heaven at Salon de thé Angéline (226 rue de Rivoli, 1st arrondissement), right near the Louvre. Their signature cocoa creation is the *chocolat africain*, which is served with an enormous glass of whipped cream on the side. Call (331) 4260 8200 for details. If you like it slightly less rich, try Café de Flore

**Cocktail hour** Le Fumoir (6 rue de l'amiral Coligny, 1st arrondissement) is everything you'd hope for from a classic Parisian cafe-bar. Packed with artistic types, its cosy atmosphere is the perfect place to devour a novel (pick one from their library). It often has copies of the English language expat paper *The Paris Times*. Call (331) 4292 0024 for details.

### Holiday highlight

What better way to indulge in the hidden delights of Paris than with a bona fide local? A growing number of Parisians are attempting to break the city's snooty stereotype by showing you around their neighbourhood for free. Register your details at [www.parisgreeter.org](http://www.parisgreeter.org) one to two weeks before you go. 🗺️



French hotel rooms tend to be notoriously small. When booking, ask for a room on the top floor – they're often bigger and not always pricier.

## Travel planner

### WHEN TO GO

Paris is fantastic all year around, but to avoid crowds, go between November and March. The average maximum temperature at this time of year is about 10°C, so take lots of warm clothes. It's a lot warmer between May and September, but be aware bus loads of tourists converge on the capital.

### GETTING THERE

Return flights from Sydney to Paris via Hong Kong or Singapore with Air France are about \$AU2175. Qantas flies via Singapore for about \$AU2437 return. Go to [www.airfrance.com.au](http://www.airfrance.com.au) and [www.qantas.com.au](http://www.qantas.com.au) for details. Alternatively, you can take the Eurostar from London (about \$AU175, one way), which arrives at Gare du Nord train station. Go to [www.eurostar.com](http://www.eurostar.com)

### GETTING AROUND

The metro is the easiest way to get around – always hold on to your ticket as inspectors are sometimes stationed at the exit. Don't bother hailing a cab on the street – they're only allowed to pick you up at taxi ranks.

### WHERE TO STAY

- **Alcôve & Agapes B&B** offers great accommodation. If you've ever dreamed of opening your floor-to-ceiling French windows to be greeted by the waft of fresh brioche from the bakery below your chic Parisian apartment, then this is your fantasy come to life. The friendly owners offer a delightful double room (from \$AU130 per night) with ensuite and private entrance in Montparnasse on the Left Bank. Go to [www.bed-and-breakfast-in-paris.com](http://www.bed-and-breakfast-in-paris.com)
- **Hotel du Petit Moulin** is a tasteful blend of old and new. The 17th-century former bakery, in the funky Le Marais district, was given an internal makeover by designer Christian Lacroix. Prices start at AU\$315 per room per night, but it's worth splashing out for. Go to [www.paris-hotel-petitmoulin.com](http://www.paris-hotel-petitmoulin.com) for details.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Go to [au.franceguide.com](http://au.franceguide.com) or [www.parisinfo.com](http://www.parisinfo.com) for more information.