

1<sup>ST</sup> SPRING MEETING

Paris, France – 15th May 2009



Paris is the cosmopolitan capital of France and - with 2.2 million people living in zone 1 (Central Paris) and another 9.9 million people in the suburbs (la banlieue) - is one of the largest cities in Europe. Located in the north of the country on the river Seine, Paris has the reputation of being the most beautiful and romantic of all cities, brimming with historical associations and remaining vastly influential in the realms of culture, art, fashion, food and design. Dubbed the City of Light, it is among the most popular tourist destinations in the world.

Central Paris is officially divided into 20 districts called arrondissements, numbered from 1 to 20 in a clockwise spiral from the centre of town. Each arrondissement has its own unique character and selection of attractions for the traveler.

Well informed, eloquent and oh-so-romantic, the 'City of Light' is a philosopher, a poet, a crooner. As it always has been, Paris is a million different things to a million different people.

Paris has all but exhausted the superlatives that can reasonably be applied to any city. and the – at sunrise, at sunset, at night – have been described countless times, as have the and the subtle (and not-so-subtle) differences between the Left and Right Banks. But what writers have been unable to capture is the grandness and even the magic.





## Culture

France has a rich and diverse culture known for its richness in art, architecture, music, language, cuisine, and of course fashion. The cultural heritage of France dates back to thousands of years and is as old as the country itself is. The French population has very diverse origins, contributing to the development of a cosmopolitan culture. France is home to people with various ethnic backgrounds including Celts, Romans, Germans, Russians, Asians, Africans North Americans and recent immigrations. The people of France are known worldwide for their sophisticated approach towards life, combined with great concern for style, fashion and appearances. France had been an important cultural center of the world for many centuries, with Paris being the cultural hub. Even today, France contributes greatly to the fashion culture of the world.

France has produced several world-renowned artists, painters, authors, and musicians and the artistic history of France dates back to thousands of years. The cave paintings of Altamira, Font de Gaume, Lascaux, Les Combarelles, Niaux Cave and Les Trois Frères show the artistic richness of France since time unknown. During medieval period, France emerged as an important center of art and architecture in the world. Among famous artists of France include Edgar Degas, Francis Picabia, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Claude Monet. The world-renowned Victor Hugo who wrote *Le Miserables* and the *Hunchback of Notre Dame* were also from France. The renowned Spanish painter Pablo Picasso settled in France in 1904 and contributed significantly to the progress of art in France. France is home to thousands of museums including the world-famous Louvre Museum, Orsay Museum and Picasso Museum with amazing collections of art and artifacts.



Paris offers the largest concentration of tourist attractions in France, and possibly in Europe. Besides some of the world's most famous museums, it offers a vibrant historic city centre, a beautiful riverscape, an extensive range of historic monuments, including cathedrals, chapels and palaces, plus one of the most famous nightlife scenes in the world.

Paris is also famous for its cafés and restaurants, its theatres and cinemas, and just its general ambiance. While there are a thousand other things to do in Paris.

### Main Attractions

- **The Eiffel tower** - take the lift to the top, for a spectacular panorama of Paris. The tower is 317 metres high, over 1,000 ft.
- **Notre Dame Cathedral** - one of the finest gothic cathedrals in Europe. Climb the 400 steps to the top of the towers.
- **La Sainte Chapelle**, not far from Notre Dame. thirteenth century royal chapel, with remarkable stained glass windows.
- **The Arc de Triomphe** - the largest triumphal arch in the world, commissioned by Napoleon.
- **Montmartre, and the Sacré Coeur**. Narrow streets, filled with artists, round the 19th century basilica on top of a hill on the north edge of Paris.
- **The banks of the Seine** - just wander along the footpaths through the centre of the city.
- **The Latin quarter**; narrow streets, with lots of cafés and restaurants, antique shops and boutiques, near the Sorbonne university.
- **Les Champs Elysées**; one of the most famous streets in the world, a broad tree-lined boulevard. Enjoy a drink on a pavement café, but watch the prices!
- **Seine river boats** (les bateaux mouche). Take a trip on one of the famous Seine river boats, and see Paris from the river. Departures from the Pont Neuf.
- **Les Invalides** A fine military museum, containing the tomb of Napoleon, and a remarkable collection of historic models of French cities.

### USEFUL LINKS

#### Getting around

Airports: [www.aeroportsdeparis.fr](http://www.aeroportsdeparis.fr)

Bus & Metro: [www.ratp.info/informer/anglais/index.php](http://www.ratp.info/informer/anglais/index.php)

Train information: [www.sncf.fr](http://www.sncf.fr)

#### Guides

[www.paris.fr](http://www.paris.fr)

<http://en.parisinfo.com/>

#### Some attractions

[www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr)

[www.musee-orsay.fr](http://www.musee-orsay.fr)

[www.tour-eiffel.fr](http://www.tour-eiffel.fr)



**Novotel Paris Gare Montparnasse**



The Novotel Paris Gare Montparnasse is a 3 star hotel located in Montparnasse, close to the TGV station for trains to the Atlantic coast, a short stroll from Saint Germain des Pres and the Eiffel Tower. Offers 199 airconditioned soundproof rooms, a Novotel Cafe and four meeting rooms for conferences and seminars. This hotel is equally suited to a business trip or a holiday in Paris. Guests also enjoy the benefit of a private car park and a Novotel gym.



**Contact information**

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