



## Update

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### April in Paris

Easter week (which runs from Palm Sunday *through* the Monday after Easter) is a national holiday in France. Many of the most popular locales, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre, are therefore crowded with French tourists and school children. However, the holiday did not interfere with our plans to concentrate on the small museums, tea rooms, and boutique shopping areas. We actually found some places to be almost deserted. The small museums were a delight, and we were able to enjoy the flowers and trees blooming all over Paris and the surrounding areas.

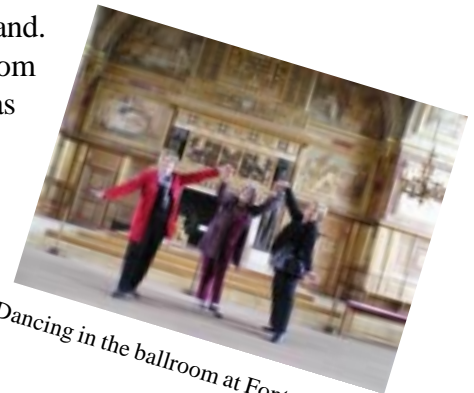
Château Fontainebleau, a short train ride from Gare de Lyon, was grand. The palace dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, and it has rooms preserved from the Renaissance up to the reign of Louis Phillippe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was from Fontainebleau that Napoleón I abdicated and said farewell to his army before going into exile. Many of his personal belongings are still on view. We had the place almost to ourselves, and we could explore at our leisure. We even danced in the ballroom without the bother of crowds of admiring eyes!

The tour buses do not run to Giverny on the Monday after Easter, so we enjoyed a relatively uncrowded trip to that lovely place. We discovered that we could rent a car for less than the tour tickets would have cost. The Mavens enjoyed lunch in a country inn, then toured the Monet home and saw its gardens in spring splendor at our leisure—plus we had all the time we needed for shopping.

Easter Sunday we attended services at the American Cathedral and were enthralled by the wonderful organ music. As inveterate stargazers, we were justifiably hysterical to learn that the lay Lector for the service was none other than Miss Olivia De Havilland! After the service, the Mavens of course marched right up and introduced ourselves. The actress, who still has that beautiful, low voice, was charming and gracious to us.

### A First-Day Tour of Historic Paris

For a lovely first day in Paris, we suggest touring Île de la Cité and Île Saint-Louis for a refreshing and relaxing “two island tour.” The traveler can tour the fascinating sites on the islands while taking time to sit at several sidewalk cafes and browse in the shops. We stopped in the famous Marché aux Fleurs and carried our lovely azalea plant with us the rest of the day to have it on our dining table for our entire stay. These islands are the site of the origin of Paris with the arrival of the Celtic tribe called the Parisii. Île de la Cité became the judicial and religious center, where the major sites today are the Palais de Justice, the Conciergerie, Notre Dame, and Sainte-Chapelle. View the splendor of the stained glass windows in Sainte-Chapelle shot through with afternoon sunlight and attend Vespers at Notre Dame.



Dancing in the ballroom at Fontainebleau



As evening falls, you can sit on a park bench in the gardens behind the cathedral among the trees in full spring bloom, filled with bouquets of pink flowers.

Proceed across the Pont Saint-Louis to Île Saint-Louis and enjoy the famous Berthillon ice cream at Café Le Flore en l'Île. Next is a stroll down the rue Saint-Louis en l'Île. This small area retains the charm of a favorite antique with boutique hotels and luxury residences. Purchase items from the epicurean shops to enjoy during your stay in Paris and select fine dining locations for your visit. One of our favorite restaurants at number 69 is now appropriately named Mon Vieil Ami (*my old friend*), where we had a memorable first-night dinner. With night approaching, take a river cruise on the Bateaux Mouches (tourist boats); the boats flare spotlights on the structures and bridges, and the Eiffel Tower glows with a glittering light show, a magical way to end your first day in Paris.

### Small Museums in Paris

Paris is filled with magnificent houses that have been turned into museums. Visitors can find a museum devoted to almost any subject somewhere here, and no one can manage to visit them all. Here is a small selection that we found to be particularly entertaining.

**Maison de Victor Hugo**—6, place des Vosges. Visit the apartment where Hugo lived from 1832 to 1848, and from 1870 after he returned from exile. Here he wrote some of his major works, including much of *Les Misérables*, and here he died, in 1885.

**Musée Carnavalet**—23, rue de Sévigné. Housed in two mansions in the Marais district, this museum of the history of Paris features art and historical objects in period settings, from prehistory and the Roman period up through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Musée Cognacq-Jay**—8, rue Elzévir. Room after room of enchanting 18<sup>th</sup>-century furniture, paintings, and objets des artes from the vast collection of Ernest Cognacq and his wife, Marie-Louise Jay, founders of the grand Paris department store Samaritaine.

**Musée National Edgar Delacroix**—6, rue de Furstenberg. Visit this apartment where Delacroix lived his last years. Three of the rooms (including the bedroom where he died), the studio, and the small garden are open to the public. Make a “Delacroix day” of it: see his most famous work, “Liberty Leading the People,” in the Louvre, tour the museum, then go to the Saint-Sulpice Church to see his last work, the Chapel of the Holy Angels.

**Musée Marmottan Monet**—2, rue Louis Boilly. This former hunting lodge houses the largest collection of Monet’s works in the world, including “Impression: Soleil Levant,” the painting that gave the Impressionist movement its name. In addition, see a large portion of Paul Marmottan’s collection devoted to the Napoleonic era, as well as furniture and artifacts from medieval times to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

**The Orangerie**—Jardin des Tuileries. A small greenhouse originally built to overwinter orange trees from the Tuileries gardens has been completely renovated to house 8 of Monet’s huge “Waterlilies” canvases. Also on display on the lower level are other Impressionist and 20<sup>th</sup>-century paintings.

**Musée Picasso**—5, rue de Thorigny. Another wonderful 17<sup>th</sup>-century mansion, the Hôtel Salé, houses this huge collection of works by Picasso and some of his contemporaries. Have tea in the garden, watched by a huge iron nanny goat.

**Musée Rodin**—79, rue de Varenne. Across the street from the Hôtel des Invalides. All of his most famous works—and much more—are located in this house where Rodin lived and worked. Many of the largest pieces are in the beautiful gardens. Enjoy lunch or tea in the adjacent café, Le Jardin de Varenne.

## Lodging

If you are going to be in Paris for an extended stay—we were there for two weeks—we can heartily recommend renting an apartment. Our lovely place was on the rue St. Dominique, a short walk from the Eiffel Tower. We rented our apartment from [www.ParisPerfect.com](http://www.ParisPerfect.com). The owners include a helpful 30-page guide to neighborhood shops, tourist attractions, and general information about living in Paris. We loved shopping for our wine, cheese, and breakfast breads in the neighborhood.



The view from our living room window

## Dining

We enjoyed breakfast “at home,” relaxed and informal. For lunches we stopped at a museum tea room or a pleasant sidewalk café. We usually took dinner where we found ourselves at the end of the day. This list contains just a few of our favorite restaurant finds!

**Le Café Marly**—the Louvre. A small café overlooking the pyramid in the Louvre courtyard.

**Ma Bourgogne**—19, place des Vosges. Delicious food in a beautiful setting by the park.

**Mon Vieil Ami**—69, rue Saint Louis en l’Île. This lovely restaurant on the Île St. Louis was formerly le Monde de Chimères. The food is still good, and we were delighted to find it appropriately named: “My Old Friend.”

**Café de l’Alma**—5, avenue Rapp. Edgy, modern decor and wonderful food.

**Le Flore en l’Île**—31, rue St-Louis-en-l’Île. Good food and that fabulous Berthillion ice cream!

**Chez Bernard**—3, rue Royale, Fontainebleau. In the Hôtel François I across from the Château.

**Auberge du Vieux Moulin**—21, rue Falaise, Giverny. Great country fare in a romantic, bucolic setting.

## Salons de Thé À Paris

“I smile, drink tea, and recall Paris in the Spring.  
I feel at peace and find the world to be wonderful.” T. S. Eliot

The Mavens enjoy tea whenever possible. Here are some of our favorites from our Paris trip.

**Hotel Meurice**—228, rue de Rivoli, near Notre Dame and Sainte-Chapelle. After a tour of these magnificent sites, enjoy high tea in the beautiful *le Jardin d’Hiver* at the hotel. The elegant décor plus lovely bouquets of roses add to the excellent tea, with savories followed by the lavish tea cart of

pâtisseries served in Le Salon Pompadour. Following this enchanting experience, step out to the Rue de Rivoli and view the interesting shops or stroll through the Tuileries Gardens.

**À Priori Thé**—35, Galerie Vivienne, near Palais Royal.

Have tea under glass in the Galerie Vivienne, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century shopping arcade. The tea luncheon is recommended for both the food and the photogenic location. Relax at a gallery table and review the wonders of the City of Light.



A delightful tea at À Priori Thé

**Angelina**—226, rue de Rivoli, near the Louvre. Take a break from these great museums with a tea luncheon or enjoy a relaxing afternoon tea. Both experiences are a pleasure in this large mirrored and gilded tea salon that actually resembles a decorated cake. A tin of Angelina tea makes a wonderful souvenir of Paris.

**Le Train Bleu**—Gare de Lyon. Catch the train to Fontainebleau. Upon returning from a tour of the Château, make time for tea at the ornate Le Train Bleu, a Belle Époque restaurant with dramatic carved ceilings.

**Hôtel des Marronniers**—21, rue Jacob, Saint-Germain des Prés. This tiny hotel in the Latin Quarter has a lovely enclosed garden, a good place to rest and enjoy tea.

## Shopping

Before your trip, read about those wonderful shops and department stores, and *organize them into neighborhoods*. As you tour the museums and cathedrals, you can duck into a delightful shop that is right down the street. For example, after visiting Notre Dame, stroll the shops along the rue de Rivoli and then head to Angelina for tea on the same street.

Here are a few that we enjoyed:

### The Marais District

Maison d'ouvrages (fabric & notions)—Entrée des Fournisseurs

Monic (jewelry) and many other shops—rue de Francs-Bourgeois, near the Place des Vosges

Le Cygne Rose—47, rue St. Paul

Andre (shoes)—80, rue Saint-Antoine

### The Rive Gauche

Saturday open market on rue le Cler one finds shops of every kind

Café Richard (gourmet coffees, teas)—139, rue St. Dominique

La Maison Ivre (kitchen items)—38, rue Jacob

Villeroy and Boch (dishes)—38, rue Saint-Sulpice

Gien (home decor)—13, rue Jacob

Souleiado (fabric)—78, rue de Seine, in Saint-Germain des Prés

Le Bon Marché (elegant designer department store and epicurean market) 24, rue de Sèvre

### l'Opéra

Fauchon (gourmet foods; also great place to lunch)—26, place de la Madeleine

Galerie Vivienne near the Palais Royal

### Île de la Cité

Marché aux Fleurs (flowers, plants)—place Louis-Lépine

LaDurée (chocolates) several locations;

All of the architecturally grand department stores (just to look at the architecture and have tea; prices are outrageous)

All of the museum shops (these shops can also become a handy place to meet your friends if you decide to go in different directions)

## Some General Information

### New Travel Restrictions

Because the rules for weight and contents of suitcases are ever changing, it is always wise to check with your airline before packing. We found it possible, among the three of us, to check an almost empty suitcase as we left the U.S. This was a great help in packing to leave Paris. This, along with a small prayer to the luggage gods!

It is so easy to exceed the weight limits on luggage. We each purchased one of the pre-franked shipping boxes at the Paris post office in our neighborhood and shipped home our books and museum pamphlets because of their weight. This left space in our bags for little treasures we found in those wonderful shops. You pay one price for the box and then can mail whatever will fit in it.

### Shoes and Feet

Because there is so much to see in any city, it is necessary to take great care of one's feet. Packing the correct shoes is a must. Be sure to wear any shoes for several days before a trip. New shoes can ruin a sight-seeing day if they cause pain. We also recommend at least one pair of open-backed walking sandals to account for swelling feet. It is also important to take *more than one pair* of good walking shoes so you can switch off each day.

Even the best of packing plans and the most comfortable shoes cannot always prevent foot pain. Remember those cobble stones streets! So, once again you must plan ahead. Be sure to take along foot pads, cushioned Band-Aids, and those wonderful moleskin patches made by Dr. Scholl. They can save the day.



After ascertaining that you have the correct footwear, you are ready to brave the sidewalks of Paris!

### Other Must-pack Items

- Woolite (to rinse out unmentionables)
- Oust or Febreze (we do share those bathrooms)
- Detergent pens (small spills and spots)
- Extra quart-sized Ziplock bags
- Travel Wallets that can be worn under clothing to hold passport and extra cash
- Small compass
- Foldable nylon shopping bags
- "Stop" and "Go" meds

### Flexible Plans

Foreign travel is always fraught with unexpected events. Very often in Paris some work stoppage can upset one's plans. This lesson was brought home to us one evening. We had purchased tickets to the ballet at the Opéra Garnier: *Cendrillon*, as choreographed by Rudolph Nureyev. When we arrived at the opera house, we found that the performance was canceled due to a strike. We met a lady from New Jersey who had brought her two daughters to Paris *just for that evening*. They had no other plans and were devastated. The Mavens know never to build an expensive trip around a single event. We caught a taxi to Pont l'Alma, and boarded the Bateau Mouche. We enjoyed another wonderful evening cruise on the Seine.



No, it's in the middle of the Seine in Paris!

### Getting About in the City

We once again appreciated the financial benefits of traveling with friends. Paris is so beautiful, with some of the grandest architecture in the world, so we prefer not to travel about in the subway. Think what you would miss! The Parisians are working hard to clean all the ancient stone façades and bridges, and the city is beginning to glow as it must have done in ages past. We discovered that going about the Île de France (the main part of Old Paris) in a cab is cheaper and more comfortable than most any other mode of transportation. Although buying a two-day pass on the Batobus (river bus) or the double-decker buses can be fun, it is more expensive than just grabbing a cab. Remember that cab fare for three friends is always divided by three! Even though most prices in Paris are quite shocking, cab fare is comparable to the cost in the U.S., and distances in the main part of Paris are relatively short.

Another plus in the taxi column is that it will take you right to the destination. The buses drop off only in predetermined spots, and this usually calls for a bit of a walk to arrive at the front door of the museum or restaurant. Navigating the city in a cab becomes even more of a plus if your feet are over the age of fifty.

***Bon Voyage!!***