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Bienvenue à Paris!

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Paris

Welcome to Paris, France! This charming city is the capital of the country. It is famous for its exquisite cuisine, wine, fashion, and romance. It is a great place to study a foreign language while learning and enjoying an enchanting culture. Get ready to take a virtual tour with us. Your host today has been immersed in the culture of Paris for the past year.

Places you must
see

L'Arc de
Triomphe

Today, we will be visiting some of the major sites of the city, from L'Arc de Triomphe, down through Champs Elysées —all the way to Le Palais du Louvre.

Le Louvre

Other sites we will visit are Notre Dame de Paris, La Place de la Concorde, l'Opéra Garnier, le Musée d'Orsay, and la Tour Eiffel. Bien sûr, we must see le Sacré Coeur and La Place du Tertre in spite of the fact that they are a bit of a drive away.

La Cathédrale
Notre Dame de
Paris

Le Musée
d'Orsay

Encore la Tour
Eiffel, and more



Le voyageur

Paris, France

Places you must see

L'Arc de Triomphe



<http://www.paris.org/postcards/monuments.html>

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The Pyramid of
Louvre Triomphe



<http://www.paris.org/postcards/monuments.html>

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Notre Dame de Paris



<http://www.paris.org/postcards/monuments.html>

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Musee d'Orsay



<http://www.paris.org/Musees/Orsay/info.html>

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L'Opera



<http://www.histoire-en-ligne.com/tourisme/opera/opera2.html>

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L'Arc de Triomphe

We are starting the tour at L'Arc de Triomphe, the city's beautiful arch at the center of the Place Charles de Gaulle, at the top of the Champs Élysées, where twelve avenues meet. It was built in 1835, after Napoleon Bonaparte mandated its construction in 1806. The design of the monument was inspired by the Arch of Constantine in Rome, but at 50 m (164 ft) high and 45 m (148 ft) wide. Reliefs and panels on L' Arc de Triomphe recount several Napoleonic and subsequent French military victories and treaties. It is considered the national war memorial of France; beneath it is the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

It is an amazing monument, which you can climb to the top to enjoy one of the most beautiful views of the city! Well, after climbing to the top and taking some great pictures, we will start walking down the Champs Élysées! This is an exciting boulevard filled with fine restaurants, stores, and places for entertainment! All the style and fashion that makes Paris the envy of the world is on view here! Be ready to spend a few Euros, however— an Hermès scarf might set you back 412 Euros (\$400.00)!

“It is an amazing monument where you can climb to the top to enjoy one of the most beautiful views of the city, since it is 164 ft high!”





Le Louvre

We keep on walking down this exciting avenue and arrive at the Place de la Concorde which was built in the 18th century. Louis XVI was guillotined here on January 21, 1793, at which time it was known as the Place de la Révolution.

Across from the Place de la Concorde is the Jardin des Tuileries, a public park built for Catherine de Medici, queen of France 1560-74. After crossing this park we can see le Musée du Louvre, a national art museum located on the right bank of the River Seine. It is one of the largest palaces in the world, and until 1682 it was the residence of the kings of France. The construction of the Louvre was begun during the reign of Francis I in 1546. By the mid-19th century, the vast complex was completed. Today it covers more than 19 hectares (48 acres). The Louvre was opened as a public museum in 1793. In 1848 it became the property of the state.

Among its greatest treasures are two of the most eminent sculptures of the ancient world, the *Victory of Samothrace* and the *Venus de Milo*. *Mona Lisa*, DaVinci's famous portrait, is on view here as well. The Louvre also has works by the other Italian masters such as Raphael and Titian. The Flemish and Dutch masters Rubens and Rembrandt are represented as well. Egyptian, Oriental, Greek, Roman, and Etruscan antiquities are on view, as well as other objets d'art, including the ever popular crown jewels of France.



<http://www.paris.org/postcards/monuments.html>



La Cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris

Now after being exposed to all these wonderful works of art at the Musée du Louvre, we will visit la Cathédrale Notre Dame, n'est-ce pas? This marvelous cathedral was begun in 1163 and completed for the most part in 1250, but they say it is not finished yet. It is one of the most well-known Gothic cathedrals in the world. The view here is of the south side, which overlooks the River Seine, and shows the vivid flying buttresses and one of the famous rose windows.

Even though Notre Dame is considered a Gothic structure, it combines some traits of the earlier Romanesque style. Once again, it is a superb monument to visit. We will make ourselves très fatigués climbing all those stairs!

When we finish we will refresh ourselves with a café (avec beaucoup du sucre, bien sûr) at a street café. We will now take the left bank of the Seine River to visit the Musée d'Orsay.



Musée d'Orsay

This is an art museum whose collection includes thousands of paintings, sculptures, photographs, and other works of art created between 1848 and 1914. Opened in 1896, the Musée d'Orsay is housed in a historical turn-of-the-century train station that was remodeled during the early 1980s. It is arranged in three main galleries, and the collection consists of early works at the ground level, which range from the French neoclassical by painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, through early impressionism and the Barbizon School. Special attractions include *La Source*, by Ingres. Naturalism, art nouveau, and the symbolist movement are exhibited on the middle level, including a large permanent display of art nouveau furniture and objets d'art. The upper level contains later impressionist and postimpressionist works, by artists such as Camille Jacob Pissarro, Paul Gauguin, Paul Cézanne, Georges Seurat, and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Famous paintings of this period are displayed here, including the controversial *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* by Edouard Manet, *Le Moulin de la Galette* by Pierre Auguste Renoir, *Racing at Longchamps* by Edgar Degas, and *Self-Portrait* by Vincent Van Gogh.

La Tour Eiffel

After visiting this splendid museum we will visit the famous Tour Eiffel! This extraordinary structure was built for the World's Fair of 1889. French engineer Gustave Alexandre Eiffel designed it. It was constructed from over 6,300 metric tons (7,000 tons) of highest-quality wrought iron and is a masterpiece of that technology.



Encore la Tour Eiffel, and more

What I find ironic is that at the beginning the people of Paris hated the tower, and today people from all over the world come here to visit it!

Other places that you must visit are the famous Opéra Garnier and Montmartre. Though they are not close, we can get there by métro! It was Napoleon's III idea to build l'Opéra Garnier, dedicated to music and to dance. The architect was Charles Garnier who was paid 1500 F to build this monument. When the architect presented the project to the empress, she said, "But what an awful thing this is, without style; it is neither Greek nor Roman." He replied, "It is Napoleon the III, Madame!" We could say that this building is a perfect example of the art of the Second Empire. It is the largest theatre in Europe. The first opera was performed here on July 21, 1862. The architect was invited, but he had to pay for his ticket! Isn't it ironic?

After looking at this fascinating building, we will head toward Montmartre where we can find the Basilica of Sacré Coeur—completed in 1910. It was here that Saint-Denis, the first bishop of Paris, was beheaded. Behind the basilica is la Place du Tertre, surrounded by cafés, bars, and restaurants. In the square you find lots of artists making portraits of tourists from all over the world, so be sure to get yours! For a day in Paris we have visited a lot of interesting places, but there is much more we can explore and discover in this enchanting city! I hope you enjoyed our tour! A bientôt!

