

# TIMELESS PARIS

**W**ho said that ancient stone wasn't exciting? In the Latin Quarter and on the Île de la Cité and Île Saint-Louis, which form the historic heart of Paris, they are charged with emotion, light and magical shadows.

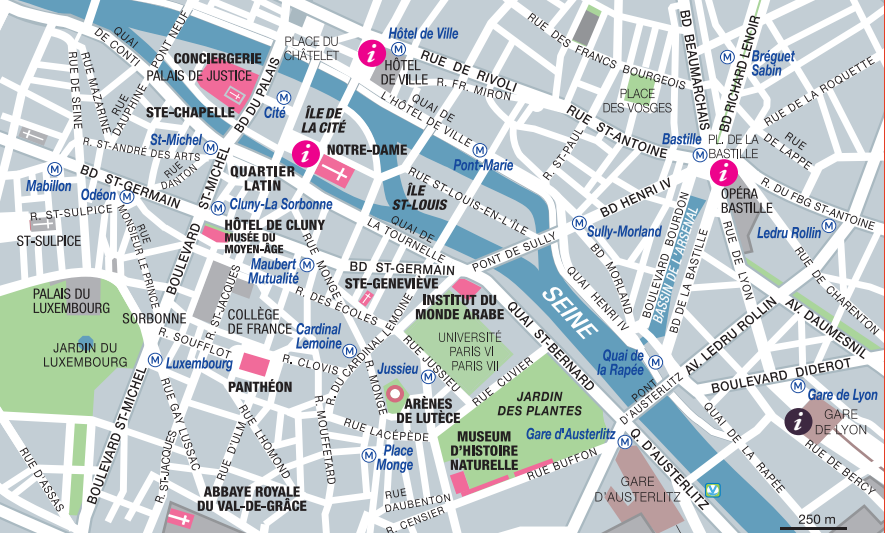
Embark on a treasure hunt and discover the impressive sculpted facade of Notre-Dame or the sublime series of stained-glass windows of Sainte-Chapelle.

Venture through the labyrinth of alleyways on the Left Bank, once bustling with hawkers, charlatans, already rebellious students, and cut-throats. Or like Baudelaire and Camille Claudel, opt for a gentle walk past private mansion houses on the Île Saint-Louis.

Walking this way, you will pass bishops, rare birds and tulips at a little flower market, a queen, several poisoners, and the Girondins assembled for their last banquet at the Conciergerie. You will come across scientists from the Museum, mammoths and Japanese cherry-blossom trees, the jewellery of fine ladies of times gone by at the Hôtel de Cluny, Gallo-Romans at a grand event or the baths, and the patron saint of Paris ... Bon voyage.



Île de la Cité (4th) • Quartier latin (5th)  
• Île Saint-Louis (4th) • Jardin des plantes (5th)



**M** Cité (line 4) • Saint-Michel (line 4) • Odéon (lines 4, 10) • Jussieu (lines 7, 10)  
 • Censier-Daubenton (line 7) • Cluny-la-Sorbonne (line 10) • Cardinal-Lemoine (line 10)

## DON'T MISS

### Notre-Dame de Paris

The beginning of its long construction coincided with the choice of Paris as a capital and, on the square in front of the cathedral, a bronze star inscribed "zero kilometre" indicates the centre of the country in terms of travelling distances. A symbol of Gothic art, its harmonious layout seems to be the work of just one architect, yet dozens followed on from the 12th to the 19th century, the date of its restoration by Viollet-le-Duc. The cathedral has witnessed Saint Louis, barefoot, wearing the Crown of Thorns in 1239, the coronation of Napoléon in 1804, the celebration of the Liberation of Paris in 1944 ... and you too, as you climb the 422 steps leading to the top. Like Victor Hugo's Quasimodo, you will then find yourself face to face with some of its grimacing gargoyles. You will also be able to make the acquaintance of the thirteen-ton bell named Emmanuel, and enjoy a

breathtaking view across the rooftops of Paris.  
 Parvis Notre-Dame.  
 Place Jean-Paul-II (4th).  
 M° Cité.

#### Cathedral



Tel: 01 42 34 56 10.  
 Mon to Fri: 8am-6.45pm.  
 Sat and Sun: 8am-7.15pm.  
 Limited access on Sun due to services.  
[www.cathedraledeparis.com](http://www.cathedraledeparis.com)

**Towers\*** **PASS**  
 Tel: 01 53 10 07 00.  
 1 Oct to 31 Mar: 10am-5.30pm.  
 1 Apr to 31 May and 1 to 30 Sept:  
 10am-6.30pm. 1 June to 31 Aug:  
 10am-6.30pm and until 11pm  
 Sat and Sun. €8 – RR: €5.  
 Under 18s and 1st Sun of the  
 month (from Nov to Mar): free.  
[www.monuments-nationaux.fr](http://www.monuments-nationaux.fr)

### Archaeological crypt **PASS**

Tel: 01 55 42 50 10.  
 Daily: 10am-6pm, except Mon  
 and public hols.  
 €4 – RR: €2, €3.  
 Under 14s: free.  
[www.carnavalet.paris.fr](http://www.carnavalet.paris.fr)

### DID YOU KNOW?

It was here on the Île de la Cité that the centre of Paris first developed, in Gallo-Roman times: you can see vestiges of its remains in the crypt.

### Île Saint-Louis and Île de la Cité

Despite being the birthplace of Paris, these two neighbouring islands, embraced by the arms of the Seine, are very different. On the Île de la Cité, amid a flurry of uniforms and lawyers' gowns, you go from one historic site to another: place Dauphine, the Conciergerie, Sainte-Chapelle, Hôtel-Dieu, Notre-Dame ... The Pont Saint-Louis marks

the boundary – often with music – beyond which lies the tranquility of sumptuous mansion houses. A refuge for artists and poets, the Île Saint-Louis is also a haven for gourmets judging by the profusion of restaurants, cafés, ice-cream makers and confectioners, whose tempting windows line the rue Saint-Louis-en-l'Île.



## Panthéon\* PASS

Its dome dominates the Latin Quarter and gives its name to the similarly solemn square, at the centre of which it stands. This colossal civic temple worthily upholds the motto inscribed on its pediment that honours the nations great men. An irony of history, this monument dedicated to Republican liturgies was commissioned by Louis XV in 1744 to honour Sainte-Geneviève. But with the Revolution under way, the scarcely finished basilica was transformed into a civic temple in 1791 and consecrated as the national Panthéon in 1885, at the funeral of Victor Hugo.

A synthesis of neoclassical and Gothic-style architecture, it also houses the tombs of Pierre and Marie Curie, Alexandre Dumas, Jean Jaurès, André Malraux, Jean Moulin, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire.

**Place du Panthéon (5th).**

**RER Luxembourg.**

**Tel: 01 44 32 18 00.**

**Summer: 10am–6.30pm.**

**Winter: 10am–6pm.**

**Colonnade: from 1 Apr to 31 Oct.**

**€8 – RR: €5.**

**Under 18s (accompanied by an adult) and 1st Sun of the**

**month from Nov to Mar: free.**  
**www.monuments-nationaux.fr**



### DID YOU KNOW?

Léon Foucault set up an experiment with a pendulum, under a cupola of the Panthéon, to prove the rotation of the Earth.

## Quartier Latin

On the Left Bank, in the vicinity of the University founded in the 12th century, latin was the language most commonly spoken by professors and students. This tradition seems to have died out but the name remains. Around the Sorbonne, the Collège de France, prestigious schools and the Sainte-Geneviève library, there are still numerous bookshops, publishers, and cafés, where students revise for their exams, as well as tiny art-house cinemas. Of course, the Saint-Michel fountain is not only a meeting point for students, many businesses have now moved into the area, but the memory of Professor Abélard and the paving stones of May 1968 still remain here and there.



## Sainte-Chapelle\* PASS

Next to the Palais de Justice (law courts), Sainte-Chapelle and the Conciergerie are the precious remains of what was once the palace of the kings of France from the 10th to the 14th century. The Sainte-Chapelle, a triumphantly flamboyant example of the Gothic style, was commissioned by Saint Louis. In the lower chapel, dedicated to the Virgin, gilded lilies on an azure-blue star-

studded vault are a wonderful sight. But reserve your praise for the upper chapel, designed to house the relics of Christ's Passion, dispersed during the French Revolution, and lined with predominantly red and blue stained-glass windows – the largest expanse of 13th century stained glass in the world.

**6, bd du Palais (1st). M° Cité.**  
**Tel: 01 53 40 60 80.**

**Daily except 1 Jan, 1 May and 25 Dec. Summer: 9.30am–6pm. Winter: 9am–5pm.**

**€8 – RR: €5.**

**Combined ticket with the Conciergerie: €11 – RR: €7.50. Under 18s and 1st Sun of the month (from Nov to Mar): free.**  
**www.monuments-nationaux.fr**

## Conciergerie\* PASS

The Conciergerie was once a royal palace. Imagine the enormous Salle des Gens d'Armes with two thousand persons sitting down to eat, and kitchens buzzing with kitchen boys. Above all the Conciergerie was a prison up until the 19th century: the regicidal Ravallac, Marie-Antoinette and many others, especially during the darker days of the French Revolution, spent their last days here.

**Palais de la Cité.**

**2, bd du Palais (1st). M° Cité.**  
**Tel: 01 53 40 60 80.**

**Summer: 9.30am–6pm.**

**Winter: 9am–5pm. 1 Jan,**

**1 May and 25 Dec: closed.**

**€7 – RR: €4.50.**

**Combined ticket with the Sainte-Chapelle: €11 – RR: €7.50.**

**Under 18s and 1st Sun of the month (from Nov to Mar): free.**  
**www.monuments-nationaux.fr**



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# DISCOVER

## Institut du monde arabe **PASS**

Arab-Muslim civilization is showcased at the centre of timeless Paris in this superb glass and steel building, designed by Jean Nouvel and Architecture Studio, and built in 1987. Behind the mobile *moucharabiyah* screens that regulate the amount of sunlight entering the building, tradition and modern technology work together to set the tone. An ultra-modern oriental gentleness reigns over the museum, exhibition rooms, auditorium, library and media library for young people, language centre, bookshop, restaurant and literary café. One can also enjoy temporary exhibitions, mint tea and concerts, dance and cinema, conferences, sugar-covered shortbread crescents, art workshops and more.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Before coming back down to earth, you can prolong the enchantment on the terrace and take in all of Paris in one glance!

### Collections of the "IMA"

The museum's collections are displayed over three floors around a patio and showcase the very essence of Arab-Muslim art, from ancient history to the 20th century and from the far reaches of central Asia to the shores of the Atlantic. Phoenician amphora and Yemenite perfume burners bear witness to the pre-Islamic era before the flourishing dynasties of Damascus and Baghdad, and the blossoming of science. And finally, explore the treasures of the golden age: glass, metal, ceramics,

wood encrusted with ivory, shell, pewter, and mother of pearl, and the ideal, sacred world of carpets.

1, rue des Fossés-Saint-Bernard (5th). M° Jussieu.  
Tel: 01 40 51 38 38. Daily: 10am-6pm, except Mon and 1 May. [www.imarabe.org](http://www.imarabe.org)

## Musée du Moyen Âge – Thermes et hôtel de Cluny\* **PASS**

Since 1843, the Musée National du Moyen Âge has encompassed two architectural marvels: the Gallo-Roman baths, dating from the end of the 2nd century BC, and the Hôtel des Abbés de Cluny, built in the 15th century. The main building and the wings of the *hôtel* reveal the layout of subsequent centuries, but, in the exuberant interlacing of the curves of the facade, the Middle Ages is resplendent ... and even more so inside. Sculpture, gold and silver plate, ceramics, tapestry, furniture, and everyday objects provide a unique picture of medieval art and society. Between the little chapel sculpted with foliage and the secular sanctuary dedicated to the *La Dame à la Licorne* (The Lady with the Unicorn) tapestries, there is an extensive collection of golden crowns, Byzantine ivory, daggers and coats of chain mail. Of the ancient Gallo-Roman baths, one can see the remains of the tepid baths and the *caldarium*, a kind of sauna. However, the best conserved part is the *frigidarium*. Here one was sprayed with cold water after passing through the steam baths. See also the impressive fifteen-metre-high vaults and the remains of the sculpted pillars of tritons that pay tribute to the corporation of *Nautes* (Gallic boatmen).



6, place Paul-Painlevé (5th). M° Cluny-la-Sorbonne.  
Tel: 01 53 73 78 16. Daily: 9.15am-5.45pm, except Tues, 1 Jan, 1 May and 25 Dec.  
€8 – RR: €6, under 18s and 1st Sun of month: free.  
[www.musee-moyenage.fr](http://www.musee-moyenage.fr)

### Medieval garden

The museum's gardens, of medieval inspiration, prolong the journey in the Unicorn Forest. Take a walk through the *ménager* (a kitchen garden for pot plants), observe the medicinal plants, and admire the inner courtyard dotted with flowers, the Heavenly Garden and the Garden of Love.

## LADY WITH THE UNICORN

Up until the 19th century, this series of six tapestries adorned the walls of a chateau in the Creuse region. Each represents a lady surrounded by a lion, a unicorn and a monkey on a vermillion background strewn with flowers. The first five tapestries are allegories of the senses with a sweetmeat, an organ, a mirror, flowers and the unicorn's horn held by the lady. The sixth, entitled *À mon seul désir* (to my only desire) depicts jewels placed in a casket, symbolising what lies beyond our passions.

## Muséum national d'histoire naturelle\*

This has been one of the favourite walks of Parisians ... since 1640! It was in this year that the Jardin Royal des Plantes Médicinales (Royal Medicinal Plants Garden), created by Louis XIII in 1633, became the first public garden in Paris. Under the influence of Buffon and the Jussieu botanist brothers, the garden was enlarged and an emphasis placed on research. Renamed Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in 1793, exhibition galleries were added in the 19th and 20th centuries. The Natural History Museum is set within over 23 hectares of plants and trees and harmoniously combines the natural sciences with candy floss and sweets kiosks. But what exactly is there to do here?

57, rue Cuvier (5th). M° Jussieu.  
Tel: 01 40 79 56 01. www.mnhn.com



### Jardin des plantes

Wander peacefully among the statues, lime trees from Russia, the olive trees from Bohemia, and twenty or so trees over one hundred years old. The oldest – a Cedar of Lebanon – was planted in 1734. Climb to the belvedere, at the top of a little hill named *Labyrinth*, for a romantic embrace or to embrace the view. You'll pass school children out on the trail of dinosaurs or here to learn about gardening. Explore the greenhouses, the educational vegetable garden, the Alpine garden, and the rose, iris, rock and peony gardens.

Daily: 7.30am-5.30pm. Free.

Cabinet d'histoire du Jardin des Plantes:  
from Wed to Mon: 10am-5pm. 1 May: closed.  
€3 – RR: €1.

### Galerie de paléontologie et d'anatomie comparée

In a building dating back to 1900 characterized by girders and metallic sculptures, visitors learn the alphabet of vertebrates and invertebrates. Admire the skeleton of Louis XV's rhinoceros and hundreds of fossilized exhibits, including dinosaurs, mammoths, etc.

Wed to Mon: 10am-5pm. Sat, Sun and public hols: 10am-6pm. 1 May: closed.  
€7 – RR: €5. Under 26s: free.



### Galerie de minéralogie et de géologie

Discover over 600,000 rocks and minerals, gigantic crystals, meteorites and even precious stones from former royal collections.

Wed to Mon: 10am-5pm. Sat, Sun and public hols: (from 1 Apr to 30 Sept): 10am-6pm. 1 May: closed. €8 – RR: €6. Under 4s: free.



### Greenhouses

Fully renovated and reorganized, the greenhouses of the Jardin des plantes have reopened to the public. They are laid out in such a way that the visitor is guided like an explorer through a discovery of the different environments and learns about their fragility and the current challenges for preserving them.

Wed to Mon: 10am-5.30pm/6.30pm.  
1 May: closed. €5 – RR: €3.

### Grande galerie de l'évolution

In subdued lighting under a huge glass roof, one can see a spectacular parade of stuffed animals – and you would swear that they were about to move! The surrounding permanent exhibition provides an educational journey through our diverse living world, the evolution of organisms and the effect of man on his environment.



Daily, except Tues and 1 May: 10am-6pm.  
€9 – RR: €6. Under 26s: free.



### Ménagerie

This little zoo is home to Sichuan takins, Seychelles turtles and almost one thousand mammals, birds and reptiles, in a landscape with footbridges and small pavilions. Visitors can picnic here. Not to be missed are the monkey house and wild-cat house – major architectural feats from the 1930s – nor the white storks and black-crowned cranes, under the finely netted dome of the great aviary, which dates from 1888.



Daily: 9am-5pm or 6pm.  
€8 – RR: €6. Under 4s: free.



## SAINTE GENEVIÈVE, PATRON SAINT OF PARIS

Born in Nanterre, Geneviève (422-512) was a member of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy. When the Franks invaded Gaul and besieged Paris in 451, she ensured supplies got to the city. Later, she encouraged Clovis to be baptised and, so it is said, accomplished many miracles. Buried at the top of the hill which carries her name (on the present site of the Pantheon), Geneviève was canonized in the 8th century. She is invoked especially whenever any ill threatens the city and she is always the object of the greatest devotion, particularly at the church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, situated behind the Panthéon.



## Rue Mouffetard and Place de la Contrescarpe

A saunter down the gentle slope of montagne Sainte-Geneviève along rue Mouffetard is a delightful experience and full of picture-postcard views of Paris. In the small paved place de la Contrescarpe, restaurant and café terraces encircle the 'village' fountain. The Pomme de Pin store, still visible at No. 1, is a reminder that the area was once filled with cabarets. It is here that the rue Mouffetard, once the only road leading from Lutèce (Paris) to Rome, starts to trace its medieval line; today it is the place to pause for an affordable bite to eat in the lively pubs and cafés. But good food is making its mark again, and under many a sloping facade you'll find window displays of traditional breads and cakes, stalls of charcuterie, and mounds of fruit and vegetables, leading to the small and colourful market that stretches from the bottom of the street to the Saint-Médard church bell tower.



## Arènes de Lutèce

In the 1st and 2nd centuries BC, this amphitheatre held up to 15,000 people, who came to see plays, comedies, gladiator combats and wild beasts fighting. Together with the forum and the baths, the amphitheatre constituted the centre of the Gallo-Roman city. Rediscovered in 1869, while building rue Monge, the restored amphitheatre has been reopened, offering its stone terracing and stage to the city – impromptu football matches take place here after school, as well as games of pétanque and just general lazing around in the sun.



49, rue Monge (5th). M<sup>o</sup> Cardinal-Lemoine.  
Opening times vary according to season.  
[www.paris.fr](http://www.paris.fr)

## Abbaye royale du Val-de-Grâce

Anne of Austria, the young queen abandoned by her husband Louis XIII, vowed to "build a magnificent temple to God if he sent her a son". Her wish was granted with the birth of the future Louis XIV, in 1638, after over twenty years of marriage. She had to wait another seventeen years to see the beginning of the building work, which was completed after her death, in 1669. Magnificently preserved thanks to the military hospital established here since 1796, the royal abbey of Val-de-Grâce is a unique gem of 17th century religious architecture.

**Rue Saint-Jacques (church court entrance) (5th).**  
RER Port-Royal. Tues, Wed, Sat and Sun:  
12-noon-6pm. €5 – RR: €2.50.

