

# ARTISTS' PARIS

**W**elcome to the Left Bank, the Babylon of beautiful things, where browsing through the pages of a fashion magazine or an art revue is an art in itself. This elegant world is sprinkled with chic and shock fashion designers, art galleries, antique galleries, literary cafés, and publishing houses with a whole string of prizes. Not surprising when you consider what the muses have given it – the Académie Française, the Théâtre de l'Odéon, the Beaux-Arts, the Musée d'Orsay, not to mention, Montparnasse which, during The Roaring Twenties, was a Mecca for artists from all over the world, before drawing them to Saint-Germain.

So much to see! Everywhere, art spills over the threshold of museum-workshops and boutiques. There is the Centaure by César at the Carrefour de la Croix-Rouge, 17th-century wrought-iron balconies in rue de Buci and rue Saint-André-des-Arts, the Fontaine des Quatre Parties du monde, on avenue de l'Observatoire. And if the urban scene sets your head spinning, then go for greenery in the Luxembourg gardens, the parks of Montsouris, Georges-Brassens and the Jardin Atlantique.



**Musée d'Orsay (7th) • Saint-Germain-des-Prés (6th)  
• Luxembourg (6th) • Montparnasse (14th)**



## CULT CAFÉS

The Café de Flore, the Deux-Magots and the Brasserie Lipp make up the golden triangle of the boulevard and place Saint-Germain and were once the 'headquarters' of Sartre and Beauvoir, Éluard and Breton, Fargue and Faulkner, as well as an antechamber for politics and a second 'office' for publishers. What's more, all three are listed as historical monuments.



## Jardin and musée du Luxembourg



Children love the Luxembourg gardens for their wooden horses, their model yachts to push along with a cane on the ornamental pond, for their refreshment kiosks, puppet theatre, ponies, etc. The wrought-iron chairs are perfect for a delightful nap below the Dames de France which form a circle of statues. What would Marie de Médicis think of the success of the palace and garden commissioned by her? At the time, the widow of Henri IV had sought to recapture a little of her native Florence. The Fontaine Médicis with all its niches and nymphs is all that remains of the Italianate groto that she had

built in 1630. The palace has become the seat for the Sénat (the upper house of the French parliament). It oversees the running of the garden and the museum, which stages exhibitions on modern art and the Renaissance, of course, in memory of the Florentine queen. **19, rue de Vaugirard (6th). M° Odéon, RER Luxembourg. Museum expected to reopen in 2011. www.museeduluxembourg.fr**

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Luxembourg may also be admired from the outside: the park's railings showcase exhibitions of large-scale photographs to great effect.

## Odéon

Meet up in front of Danton! The statue stands firm amongst the wave of passers-by at the Carrefour de l'Odéon, some in a hurry, others sauntering along, traffic, café lights and snaking queues in front of cinemas keep this neighbourhood buzzing at all hours. The entrance to the Cour du Commerce Saint-André opens onto the crossroads. This cobbled pedestrian street houses the remains of the ancient city wall of Philippe-Auguste, and amidst the profusion of old-style shop and restaurant signs stands the Procope. Opened in 1688, it is perhaps the oldest café in Paris. It was the first to serve ice creams to its clients, who included Diderot, Rousseau and Voltaire. The Théâtre de l'Europe – Théâtre de l'Odéon until 1990 and temple from the Enlightenment period inaugurated in 1792 – is the stunning centre piece of place de l'Odéon. Its programme of events represents an important part of European artistic heritage.

## Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

Under the auspices of a Cedar of Lebanon planted by Chateaubriand in the 19th century, the glass arch envisaged by Jean Nouvel has, since 1994, revived the artistic tradition of the area. The Theatrum Botanicum lies behind a glass screen, which extends the perspective of boulevard Raspail. This wild-looking garden surrounds the building, whose entrance is adorned with a wall of plants. Inside, a space of steel and glass provides the perfect showcase for contemporary art.



**261, bd Raspail (14th). M° Raspail. Tel: 01 42 18 56 50. Daily: 11am-8pm, except Mon, 25 Dec and 1 Jan. Tues: late night opening until 10pm. €6.50 – RR: €4.50. Under 10s: free. www.fondation.cartier.com**

## Fondation Henri-Cartier-Bresson

The lens on the 20th century, Henri Cartier-Bresson photographed colonial Africa, the Spanish Civil War, the Liberation of Paris, the last hours of Gandhi, etc. His portraits captured Camus, Faulkner, Mauriac and a hundred other contemporary figures. In a workshop dating back to 1910, the Foundation displays the work of the photographer, as well as showing works by other artists. **2, impasse Lebovius (14th). M° Gaité. Tel: 01 56 80 27 00. Tues to Sun: 1pm-6.30pm. Sat: 11am-6.45pm. Wed: late opening until 8.30pm. Closed Mon and between each exhibiton. €6 – RR: €3. www.henricartierbresson.org**

# DISCOVER

## L'Adresse Musée de la Poste\* PASS

Almost 500 years of postal history: mail carried by horses, royal message service, the first telecommunication systems, the birth of the rural postman and the stamp.

34, bd de Vaugirard (15th).

M° Montparnasse-Bienvenue. Tel: 01 42 79 24 24.

Daily: 10am-6pm, except Sun and public hols.

€5 - RR: €3.50. [www.museedelaposte.fr](http://www.museedelaposte.fr)

## École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts

Only the select few study at the Beaux-Arts, but guided tours are available on reservation. Visit the 19th century at the Loges, Palais des Études, etc. and the Hôtel de Chimay for a spectrum of the 17th and 18th centuries. After whetting your appetite, visit the Chapelle des Louanges. Its replicas of works by Michelangelo are housed beneath the oldest dome in Paris, in the remains of the Couvent des Petits-Augustins, built at the beginning of the 17th century for Queen Margot.



## Institut de France

The Académie Française, founded by Richelieu in 1635, rather overshadows the smaller Académies – Belles-Lettres, Sciences, Beaux-Arts, Architecture, Sciences Morales and Politiques, as well as the Mazarine library.



23, quai Conti (6th). M° Odéon.

Tel: 01 44 41 44 41. Visits by appointment.

[www.institut-de-france.fr](http://www.institut-de-france.fr)

## Jardin Atlantique

To keep to the high ground and take in the wide open spaces, the Montparnasse "traveller" can climb up to the Jardin Atlantique – a garden on top of

the train station. Yes, a roof garden! An amazing feat with an undulating wave-like floor surface, evergreen pines, the bassin des Miroitements, a fountain from the island of Hesperides, tennis courts and fantastic ocean-inspired kids play areas. M° Montparnasse-Bienvenue (15th).

Access by lifts or steps.



## Tour Montparnasse

Its 59 floors of steel and smoked glass provoked cries of indignation when it was constructed in 1973. Since then, the tower has become a familiar landmark, visible from all over Paris. Visitors have an exceptional 360° view from a height of 210 metres of all of Paris and its surroundings within a circumference of 40 km.



33, av. du Maine (15th). M° Montparnasse-Bienvenue. Tel: 01 45 38 52 56.

Summer: 9.30am-11.30pm. Winter: 9.30am-10.30pm. Fri, Sat, pre-public holiday: 11pm.

€11 - RR: €7.50/€4.70. Under 7s: free.

[www.tourmontparnasse56.com](http://www.tourmontparnasse56.com)

## Musée des Lettres et Manuscrits

The museum has renounced its status as "the best kept secret in Paris" and moved into a Haussmanian town house on boulevard Saint-Germain for all to see. It is entirely devoted to the preservation of important historical letters and manuscripts.

222, bd Saint-Germain (7th).

M° Rue du Bac. Tel: 01 40 51 02 25.

Tues to Fri: 10am-8pm. Sat and Sun: 10am-6pm.

€6 - RR: €4.50. [www.museedeslettres.fr](http://www.museedeslettres.fr)

## Musée Eugène-Delacroix\* PASS

Follow in Delacroix's footsteps and cross the tiny picturesque place Fürstenberg open the door of this "decidedly charming" home, in the painter's words. The portrait of Jenny Le Guillou, the faithful governess, is displayed beside the *Madeleine dans le désert*, which Baudelaire marvelled at. From the lounge to the workshop opening onto the garden, there are other paintings, travel albums and school books ... covered with sketches and caricatures.

6, rue de Fürstenberg (6th). M° Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Tel: 01 44 41 86 50. Daily: 9.30am-5pm. W/e in June, July and Aug: 9.30am-5.30pm. Tues, 1 Jan, 1 May and 25 Dec: closed. €5. Under 18s and 1st Sun of the month and 14 July: free. [www.musee-delacroix.fr](http://www.musee-delacroix.fr)

### Musée Bourdelle

At the beginning of the 20th century, artists' studios filled Montparnasse. Today, that of Émile-Antoine Bourdelle numbers 500 sculpted works in marble, plaster and bronze, along with canvases and watercolours. The *Centaure mourant* stands in the great hall. The exhibition continues in the studios and then in rooms, where the alchemy of the work is striking against the white walls. It continues in a winter garden of ivy and acacias where, declared the sculptor, "spring laughs, summer burns and time dreams".



18, rue Antoine-Bourdelle (15th). M° Montparnasse-Bienvenue. Tel: 01 49 54 73 73. Daily: 10am-6pm, except Mon and public hols. Permanent collections: free. [www.bourdelle.paris.fr](http://www.bourdelle.paris.fr)

### Église Saint-Sulpice

The church has the dimensions and majesty of a cathedral. Its construction began in the 17th century on the site of a previous building dating back to the 13th century and lasted over 135 years, due to a lack of funds, giving it treasures from each period: a choir decorated with statues by Bouchardon, a *Vierge à l'Enfant* and two fountains in the shape of shells sculpted by Pigalle, the Chapelle des Saints-Anges whose frescoes, filled the last years of Delacroix' life. Place Saint-Sulpice (6th). M° Saint-Sulpice. Tel: 01 46 33 21 78. Daily: 7.30am-7.30pm.

### Mémorial du maréchal Leclerc de Hautecloque et de la Libération de Paris – Musée Jean Moulin

Focus on the action of two emblematic figures of WWII: one a leader of the free French units, the other a French resistance leader. A wall of images from audiovisual archives plunges the visitor into "occupied Paris", "insurgent Paris", and finally "liberated Paris".

23, allée de la 2<sup>e</sup> DB. Jardin Atlantique – covering the Gare Montparnasse (15th). M° Montparnasse-Bienvenue. Tel: 01 40 64 39 44. Daily, except Mon and public hols: 10am-6pm. Permanent collections: free. [www.ml-leclerc-moulin.paris.fr](http://www.ml-leclerc-moulin.paris.fr)

### Cimetière du Montparnasse



Since 1824, the cemetery in the south of Paris has been a green *campo santo* of artists and men and women of letters: Bartholdi, Baudelaire, César, Duras, Ionesco, Maupassant, Sartre and Beauvoir, Zadkine. Gainsbourg, the Lilas ticket-puncher, collects metro tickets (in reference to the song he wrote). Brancusi placed a cubist Kiss and Niki de Saint Phalle a cat in mosaic to brighten the grave of a friend. But those who enjoy something really original will find it at the grave of Monsieur and Madame Charles Pigeon!

#### DID YOU KNOW?

The graffiti and little messages covering the walls at n°5 bis rue de Verneuil (7th) are a reminder that the singer-songwriter Serge Gainsbourg once lived in this private town house, now a mythical place for admirers.

M° Rue du Bac.

### Parc Montsouris

Like the Buttes-Chaumont, this landscaped garden of the Second Empire takes its inspiration from the parks of London. The grotto, artificial mounds and valleys are so convincing that even the crested tit and the serin are duped. On the island, they nest close to turtles from Florida, male mallard ducks and their female companions. Around the lake, there are rolling lawns, play areas, a ginkgo biloba and 1,399 other trees, and even a weather station. 14th. RER Cité-Universitaire.



### Musée Zadkine

Ossip Zadkine lived and worked in this house-workshop from 1928 to his death in 1967. The works exhibited, taken from a collection of more than 400 sculptures, retrace his artistic career ... and juxtapose modern day works of guest artists, thus returning the workshop back to its original function. Artists at work!

100 bis, rue d'Assas (6th). M° Notre-Dame-des-Champs. Tel: 01 55 42 77 20.

Daily: 10am-6pm, except Mon and public hols.  
Permanent collections: free (except during temporary exhibition periods).  
[www.zadkine.paris.fr](http://www.zadkine.paris.fr)

### Parc Georges-Brassens

A brief tram ride will take you from the Cité Universitaire to Georges-Brassens park for further bucolic adventures amongst the beehives, "Pinot Noir" grapes, and honeysuckle and jasmine in the scented garden; playful adventures too with table tennis, merry-go-round, ponies and climbing; intellectual adventures can be found at the book market, each weekend, under the covered Halle aux Chevaux of the former Vaugirard abattoir.



Rue des Morillons (15th). M° Convention.



### Place Denfert-Rochereau and Catacombes

At the intersection of a constellation of avenues, the bronze lion by Bartholdi faces West so as not to offend the Prussian enemy, defeated at Belfort in 1870. Around the perimeter stand the two unpopular tax pavilions that punctuated the wall encircling Paris until the 19th century. Denfert is also the entrance to the "Land of the Dead" or catacombs – the underground tunnels used as the ossuary of the cemetery of the Innocents in 1785. A wall of skulls and a rotunda of tibias isn't for sensitive souls, so you might prefer to get away to the area in and around rue Daguerre with its attractive small shops and eateries.



Catacombes de Paris.

1, av. du Colonel-Henri-Rol-Tanguy (14th).  
M° Denfert-Rochereau. Tel: 01 43 22 47 63.  
Tues to Sun: 10am-5pm. Closed Mon and some public hols. €8. RR: €4, €6.  
[www.carnavalet.paris.fr](http://www.carnavalet.paris.fr)

### Musée de la Monnaie\*

In this 18th-century mansion, 2,000 coins, 450 medals and tokens as well as tools, paintings, engravings, stained-glass windows and sculptures recount the history of France since the Renaissance.

Hôtel de la Monnaie. 11, quai Conti (6th).

M° Pont-Neuf. Tel: 01 40 46 55 35.

Tues to Fri: 11am-5.30pm. Sat and Sun: 12-noon-5.30pm. Closed Mon. Closed for renovation from 30 July to 2012.

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

### Observatoire de Paris

"Your majesty's glory depends on it", scientists assured Louis XIV when they pleaded for an astronomical observatory. Eight years later, in 1672, the building was completed according to the plans of architect Claude Perrault, brother of the story writer. There are guided visits of the Moon, the phases of Venus and some Sunspots by appointment.

77, av. Denfert-Rochereau (14th).

M° Denfert-Rochereau. Tel: 01 40 51 22 21.

Currently undergoing renovation work.

[www.grandpublic.obspm.fr](http://www.grandpublic.obspm.fr)

### Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-la-Médaille-Miraculeuse

In 1830, the Virgin ordered Catherine Labouré, a novice at the Couvent des Filles-de-la-Charité-de-Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, to have a medal minted that would protect its bearers. The first miracles were indicated when cholera ravaged Paris. The medal's favours spread across the world, Catherine was canonized and pilgrims flocked to the chapel.

140, rue du Bac (7th). M° Sèvres-Babylone.

[www.chapellenotredamedelamedaillemiraculeuse.com](http://www.chapellenotredamedelamedaillemiraculeuse.com)

### Musée Curie – Institut du radium

It was here that Marie Curie, her daughter and son-in-law, Irène and Frédéric Joliot-Curie, carried out their research after the death of Pierre Curie in 1906. The laboratory, now a museum, retraces an episode in the history of the sciences inextricably linked to this family with five Nobel prizes.

1, rue Pierre-et-Marie-Curie (5th).

RER Luxembourg.

Tel: 01 56 24 55 33.

Tues to Fri: 10am-6pm, except public hols.

Mon, Aug and the last week in Dec: closed. Free.

[www.curie.fr/musee](http://www.curie.fr/musee)

