

PARISIAN TAXIS. Taxis are a regular part of the landscape of the French capital with some twenty thousand or so circulating in Paris and the city's suburbs. Practical and comfortable they are subject to specific legislation with precise rules and regulations, for the client and driver.

A NEW LOOK FOR PARISIAN TAXIS

Previously, the light on the roof of the taxi was white with yellow lighting on the entire surface if the taxi was available and a small orange or red light showing if occupied or pre-booked. It was therefore often difficult for the client to distinguish from a distance, especially in bright weather, whether the taxi was occupied or pre-booked. To make it easier to see whether the taxi is occupied or not, a new light has been put on the roof of the vehicle, making it immediately clear to the client whether the taxi is available or not.

This light shines green on the entire surface if the taxi is available, and red if it is occupied or pre-booked. This new system, from which some 800 vehicles already benefit, will be gradually extended to the entire taxi fleet between now and July 2012.

In the same way, new vehicles will be obliged to have a black roof and black side trims to give Parisian taxis a harmonious and easily-recognizable look.

HOW TO GET A TAXI

Four different ways:

- hail a taxi in the street, if its light is on;
- at a taxi rank;
- telephone a **taxi company** call centre;
- call the **single** taxi rank **number**.

RULES AND REGULATIONS, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS FOR EVERYONE

Parisian taxis are subject to specific rules and regulations, which respect the rights of their clients, but which also impose certain obligations on their clients.

RIGHTS OF CLIENTS

- Any vehicle is considered available to clients if it is circulating with the "Taxi" sign illuminated (or with a green light, for the new system), or if it is parked with these signs lit;
- itinerary: if chosen by the driver, it must be the shortest journey time possible and where possible the quickest to avoid for example areas where there are traffic jams; however, the client can choose their own itinerary either at the start of or during the journey;
- at a taxi rank, the client is free to choose any taxi of his choice in the line of vehicles;
- unless there is an exceptional reason, a taxi driver is not allowed to refuse to take a client if the taxi is available;
- wheelchair transport of disabled passengers is free;
- if there is no taxi at the taxi rank, the client can call one from another rank using the taxi rank phone. The journey time to the taxi rank will therefore be added to the total fare of the journey;
- objects found in taxis are placed by drivers in the "**Service des objets trouvés de la Ville de Paris**" (municipal lost objects department).

REFUSAL TO TAKE A CLIENT

- A taxi driver can refuse to take a client who is transporting an animal, unless the person is sight-impaired or blind and accompanied by their guide dog;
- if the client's clothing is dubious (e.g. very dirty clothes or genuine body hygiene problems), or if the client is drunk;
- if the destination requested by the client would take the driver too far from his garage, and he is due to finish his shift in the next 30 minutes. This time limit is shown on the back window;
- if the client's baggage is too bulky;
- if the client is 50 metres from a taxi station where available taxis are waiting.

TAXIS AND DISABILITY, TWO SPECIALIST COMPANIES

Two Parisian taxi companies, **G7 Horizon** and **PMR**, have vehicles adapted for disabled people enabling them to travel in their wheelchair in optimal security, and drivers who have had training in dealing with clients with the four disabilities (physical, visual, auditory and mental). The rates are identical to those for a normal itinerary, but it is advisable to make a booking in advance, by telephone or on the taxi company's website.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

Taxi drivers accepting payment by bank card display a notice to this effect on the back side window and are required to accept this method of payment therefore. Otherwise, the client must pay by cash. Payment by cheque is rarely accepted, and a notice in the taxi indicates this. However, where a prior booking has been made with the taxi company and the operator advised of the client's wish to pay by cheque, a taxi accepting this method of payment will be sent to the client who may then pay by cheque providing it is a cheque from a French bank and is accompanied by a current piece of proof of identity.

ONBOARD SECURITY

Article R.412-1 of the Highway Code obliges drivers and passengers of vehicles to wear a safety belt. The client must therefore wear a safety belt (however the wearing of a safety belt is not obligatory for taxi drivers while on duty).

According to the same article, the use of an authorized safety belt system for children is not obligatory for children aged under 13 travelling in a taxi. A client travelling with a child cannot therefore order a taxi driver to equip his vehicle with an adapted chair.

Conversely, a taxi driver cannot refuse to take a passenger accompanied by a child aged under 13, under the pretext that his vehicle is not equipped with an approved child safety belt system.

For obvious safety reasons, and as shown on the back side window of the vehicle, it is advisable to get out of the taxi on the pavement side and not on the road side. This is not always an automatic reaction for tourists who live in countries where driving on the left-hand side of the road is the norm.

As well as avoiding risk to themselves, passengers not respecting this rule may cause bodily damage to road users on two wheels. In the event of an accident of this kind, the taxi driver cannot be held responsible.

PETS

A taxi driver can refuse to take a client if they are accompanied by a pet, except in the case of a guide dog for a blind person. Some drivers however accept small animals in a travel box or bag. Large dogs, especially in wet weather are rarely accepted. It is therefore advisable to pre-book a car with a taxi company, making it clear to the operator that you will have a pet with you. The pre-booked taxi will then accept to transport the pet as the authorization will have already been recorded by the company.

TAXI FARES

The cost of a journey is determined by three factors:

- a fixed-price fee that appears on the metre at the beginning of the journey. A small notice in the vehicle must indicate the conditions of the application of this fee;
- the rate per kilometre, variable according to whether it is day or night time, a working day or public holiday, and the final destination if it is outside Paris;
- the waiting time or slow speed which replaces the rate per kilometre in the event of a traffic jam or the taxi stopping.

The amount of the fare must be clearly visible on the vehicle's metre and the amount of any extra costs must be added here.

EXTRAS

A taxi driver may also charge clients a supplement in the following two cases only:

- if he accepts to take more than three adult passengers;
- if there is more than one piece of baggage in the boot.

THE NEW PARISIAN TAXI FARES

New rates for Parisian taxis came into effect on 14 January 2011:

Rate A

Applicable from 10am to 5pm in the urban area (all Paris up to and including the *périphérique* (inner ring road):

- fixed-price fee at start of journey: €2.30;
- rate per kilometre: €0.92;
- waiting time or slow journey time: €29.25 per hour.

Rate B

Applicable in the urban area from 10am to 5pm, on Sunday from 7am to midnight and on public holidays at any time. Applicable from 7am to 7pm in the suburban area (greater Paris area beyond the *périphérique*, the other *communes* – *départements* 92, 93, 94 – and journeys to and from the Paris-Orly airport and the Paris-Charles de Gaulle airport, as well as the Villepinte *Parc des expositions*):

- fixed-price fee at start of journey: €2.30;
- rate per kilometre: €1.17;
- waiting time or slow journey time: €33.80 per hour.

Rate C

Applicable in the urban area from midnight to 7am on Sunday and public holidays, applicable in the suburban area (*départements* 92, 93 and 94) from 7am to 7pm, as well as on Sunday and public holidays (day and night) and applicable beyond the suburban area (*départements* 78, 91 and beyond) regardless of day or time:

- fixed-price fee at start of journey: €2.30;
- rate per kilometre: €1.42;
- waiting time or slow journey time: €30.90 per hour.

At the end of a journey, the driver must give a receipt to clients who request one and as a matter of course to all clients where the total amount is equal to or above €25. This official receipt slip is completed in duplicate.

The new rates for extras are as follows:

- supplement of €3 per adult from the fourth adult;
- supplement of €1 per item of baggage from the second item (case, bulky parcel like skis, pram, etc.) weighing more than 5 kg and placed in the boot of the vehicle.

MINIMUM RATE FOR A JOURNEY AND APPLICATION OF NEW RATES

A visible and legible notice placed in the vehicle must indicate the minimum journey conditions. This notice is written in French, English and Spanish and includes the following remark “whatever the amount on the metre, the amount payable to the driver, extras included, may not be lower than €6.20”.

APPEAL IN THE EVENT OF A DISPUTE

In the event of a dispute with a taxi driver, concerning for example the fixed price fee at the start of the journey or the amount of the fare, the following procedure should be followed:

- the client should copy down the identification number of the taxi, which is shown on the right wing of the vehicle and on the taxi metre;
- the client can then send a letter, preferably by registered post, to the taxi department of the **Préfecture de police de Paris**;
- if the dispute relates to the amount of the fare, this must be paid to the driver who should provide a receipt so that the client can send a letter to the préfecture. Should the client refuse to pay the journey fare, he will be legally in the wrong for non-payment of a service.

ILLEGAL TAXIS, UNDER SURVEILLANCE BY A SPECIALIST POLICE SQUAD ...

Within the department for public order and traffic circulation at the Préfecture de police, there is a specialist department responsible for taxis and other vehicles subject to rules and regulations for the public transport of people by road. This plain-clothes squad is in charge of surveillance, control and the sanctioning of any infringements relating to payment for passenger transport.

This squad works actively against illegal taxis, and operates 7/7 and 24/24.

A real scourge on the profession, illegal taxis take many forms, for example private individuals picking up clients in their own cars or drivers with a *grande remise* vehicle working on the black, unbeknown to their employers. These drivers, considered by the law as working illegally, put their clients at risk. As well as not having insurance, they may also not possess a driving licence and even steal baggage.

These illegal drivers hang around train stations and airports, and even go inside the arrival halls to accost potential clients. To avoid this type of annoyance and especially the dangers involved, it is essential to only get into vehicles that are parked in clearly indicated lines at airports and stations.

PASSENGER MOTORBIKES WITH DRIVER, NEW RULES AND REGULATIONS

A recent phenomenon in paying transport for the public, passenger motorbikes with driver are on the increase at airports, stations and major Parisian trade shows.

This activity is now subject to strict rules. Passenger motorbikes with driver can only collect clients that have made a prior booking, to avoid operators – common in stations, airports and at major trade shows. This new legislation also sets out minimum requirements to guarantee the safety of the person transported. It is therefore obligatory for the driver to have five years of experience in driving a two or three-wheeled vehicle, to have not lost 6 points from their driving licence for a single traffic offence, to have no criminal record, to have a vehicle log book certifying the regular maintenance of the vehicle, to have a professional card issued by the Préfecture de police and to have an annual medical check-up.

→ PRÉFECTURE DE POLICE DE PARIS

Bureau des taxis et transports publics (Department for taxis and public transport)
36 rue des Morillons, Paris 15th
Tel +33 (0) 1 55 76 20 05

→ SERVICE DES OBJETS TROUVÉS DE LA VILLE DE PARIS (LOST PROPERTY DEPARTMENT)

36 rue des Morillons, Paris 15th
Tel +33 (0) 8 21 00 25 25

PARISIAN TAXI COMPANIES



ALPHA TAXIS

Tel +33 (0) 1 45 85 85 85
www.alphataxis.fr



LES TAXIS BLEUS

Tel +33 (0) 8 91 70 10 10 (€0.23 per minute)
www.taxis-bleus.com



TAXIS G7

Tel +33 (0) 1 47 39 47 39
www.taxisg7.fr

PASSENGER MOTORBIKES WITH DRIVER



PARIS DRIVER

Tel +33 (0) 6 98 50 77 78 / +33 (0) 6 99 38 59 59
www.taxismoto.fr

TAXIS FOR THE DISABLED



G7 HORIZON

Tel +33 (0) 1 47 39 00 91
www.taxisg7.fr



PMR

Tel +33 (0) 6 14 67 75 02

ONE TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR TAXI RANKS

There is one unique number for taxi ranks in Paris, which automatically rings at the nearest taxi rank: + 33 (0) 1 45 30 30 30