



# A WEEK IN PARIS

Who can resist the lure of Paris—in June or any other month? I jump at the opportunity to travel there. I love the people, the art, the architecture, the food, the museums -- I could go on and on. I shared this latest trip with my college-aged daughter who happens to be an artist and loves art history. What a perfect traveling companion for the City of Light.

Two notes: the metro is fabulous in Paris, but walking is the best way to really take in the city. Choose accommodations in an accessible location, so it's easy to stop back during the day and drop packages, rest, or grab a forgotten item. Giving yourself a chance to regroup occasionally will make a big difference in what you can accomplish each day.

*Sheila*

## DAY

# 1

- Arrive in central Paris via taxi, shuttle bus or train. Prepare to enjoy!
- Head to the apartment in the St. Germain des Pres area to meet host and unpack bags.
- Grab a bite to eat at a neighborhood restaurant and then outline a walking route to view some of the nearby sites.
- Walk along Boulevard Saint Germain de Pres. Visit Notre Dame Cathedral. Line for bell tower climb too long? Plan to visit at a different time.
- Stroll along the Seine for an hour or two. Admire the Louvre. Cross a few bridges. Survey the vendors selling antiques, postcards and tourist trinkets from their stalls along the river.
- Find a small neighborhood café and plan to make it your hang out for the week – to truly feel “part” of the Paris vibe.
- After an early dinner, take a boat trip on the Seine that evening to see the city at night. Gorgeous!

## DAY

# 2

- Enjoy a breakfast of café au lait and warm croissants – and an early start to the day.
- Plan museum visits accordingly. The Louvre is open on Mondays, closed on Tuesdays. Many others are closed on Mondays.
- Walk to the Louvre and purchase a 2-, 4- or 6-day Museum Pass. The card offers shorter lines, slight discounts and overall time savings. With the pass, more monuments and museums are available for quick visits during a stay.
- Enjoy the Louvre at a casual pace. Choose the brochure with a map to the major pieces of art to see – Mona Lisa, Venus De Milo – and view other art along the way. You can always come back!
- Once outside again, take pictures in front of the I.M. Pei pyramid.
- Walk through the gardens and cross the Pont Royal to the Left Bank. Wander through some of the charming back streets and find a restaurant for lunch like La Caleche.
- Stop by the apartment for a short rest. When refreshed, explore the neighborhood. Visit Euro stores like Zara and Bon Marche to check out the current French fashions.
- Buy some groceries for the next few days to save on restaurant bills. Find a quintessential market or a grocery store for cheese, bread, wine, fruit -- staples of the Parisian lifestyle.
- People watch while you perfect the Parisian activity of enjoying a beverage at a neighborhood café.

## DAY

# 3

- Start the day early with workout clothes, a quick breakfast and a brisk walk to Notre Dame to climb the bell tower. Arrive around 8:45 am and wait an hour, but be in the front of the line!
- Views – up 367 steps and just above rooftop – are tremendous from the tower. Great way to start the day!



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[DAY 3  
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- Return to the apartment to shower and get ready for another spectacular day in Paris.
- Walk to the D'Orsay Museum. Fabulous works of art, stunning building and the setting/inspiration for the movie Hugo. That clock!
- After a couple of hours, wander around the side streets – away from the Seine – and choose a quick place for a delicious lunch.
- Use that museum pass to try some smaller museums that never quite make it to the top of your list. Two to try: La Conciergerie where Marie Antoinette spent her final months and the Decorative Arts Museum which houses, among other items, very elaborate furnishings and trinkets taken from the aristocracy after the French Revolution.
- The days fly by! Once again, enjoy a beverage at the neighborhood café. Head back to the apartment to relax.
- The Arc de Triomphe is open until 11 pm during the summer. Take a metro ride over, find the underground access way and enjoy the small crowd, summer sky and beautiful views.

DAY

4

- Another early start – but why not? Don't miss a moment of your time in Paris.
- Take the metro to the offices of Fat Tire Bike Tours and get ready for a day of biking and sightseeing at Versailles. (Book this far in advance of your desired date!)
- Put yourself completely in the hands of a very capable guide and enjoy the day. Upon arrival in Versailles, walk with the group to the bike storage area and get set up with a bike and basket. Take a few loops around the courtyard in front of the church to test your balance/skills.
- Stop at the local farmers market and shop for a picnic lunch. Here's where the basket comes in handy!
- Enjoy the ride around the beautiful grounds. Visit the Forest of Versailles, Marie Antoinette's Hamlet and ride around the Grand Canal.
- After a picnic lunch on the shores of the Canal, hop back on the bike for the final stretch and start your visit to the palace itself.
- The tour guide will arrange for tickets to enter. At this point, Fat Tire guide will pass out return train tickets and indicate a place to meet after touring the palace.
- The self-guided tour is comprehensive and just enough to see after a full day on bikes! Relax in the gardens after the elaborate interior rooms – and then head back to Paris for the evening.

DAY

5

- Enjoy a lazy morning at the apartment – and maybe do some laundry?
- Take the metro to Montmartre and walk (uphill!) in the footsteps of Van Gogh, Picasso and others.
- Visit the beautiful Basilica of Sacre Coeur and then wander through the Place du Tertre. The art is very touristy, but the location is lovely.
- Walk around and visit vintage shops, have lunch and enjoy the afternoon.
- Take the metro to the Paris Opera House. A stunning building, fans will recognize it from the Phantom of the Opera movie.



[DAY 5  
CONTINUED]

DAY  
6

- Peek into private boxes and walk down the stunning staircase. Admire the gorgeous ceiling painted by Chagall. Step outside on the balcony and enjoy a view of Paris's Right Bank.
- Back to the apartment. Have dinner in a local restaurant and call it an early night.
  
- Up early to max out the final day in Paris.
- 🚆 Take the metro to the Eiffel Tower and get on line early with a café au lait. Take turns walking around to photograph the iconic monument.
- The views are spectacular – so get your fill on the lower level and the top. Crowds can be thick, so plan accordingly or you'll end up waiting in lines to get down also.
- 📍 Walk through the Champs de Mars on the way to a one-stop shopping street appropriately named Rue de Commerce.
- Rue de Commerce is lined with small boutiques and several chain stores. Most feature mid-range prices and offer everything from shoes to work out clothes to evening wear. Spend a fun couple of hours shopping!
- 📍 Laden with bags, walk back along Rue Joffre toward Invalides. Pick a café and enjoy lunch.
- Visit Invalides, The Army Museum. Walk through its beautiful Dome Church, view the collection of armor and artillery and see Napoleon's Tomb.
- 📍 After Invalides, walk a few blocks to the Rodin Museum and explore the beautiful sculpture garden. Pose with The Thinker.
- 🚆 Ride the metro back to the apartment and rest for a bit. Have a beverage at the neighborhood café on the last evening.
- Head out for a late dinner near the Eiffel Tower – and view the lights on the tower late at night. A sparkling end to a fantastic visit!