

4. FANTASTIC WEEKEND PLANS

Take **great museums** (like the Musée d'Orsay and the Orangerie), **amazing monuments** (like the Eiffel Tower), **historic churches** (like Notre-Dame and Ste-Chapelle), **fantastic neighborhoods** (like the Marais and Île St-Louis) and mix with **excellent French cuisine** – and you've got the ingredients for great weekends in Paris.

I've laid out three weekend plans, plus some alternatives, each with its own map to guide you through the beautiful streets of Paris.



WEEKEND IN PARIS / #1

Friday Evening

A great way to begin your weekend in Paris is to dine at an authentic Paris eatery. Check out the *Eats* section of this book for dining recommendations. You'll find everything from casual, inexpensive bistros to luxurious, expensive restaurants.

After dinner, head to **Café Marly** at 93 rue de Rivoli (1st/Métro Palais Royal-Musée d'Orsay). You'll pay for the view overlooking the glass-pyramid entrance to the Louvre, but it's a great place to end your first day in Paris with a glass of champagne. How French! *Info:* 93 rue de Rivoli. Tel. 01/49.26.06.60. Open daily 8am to 2am.

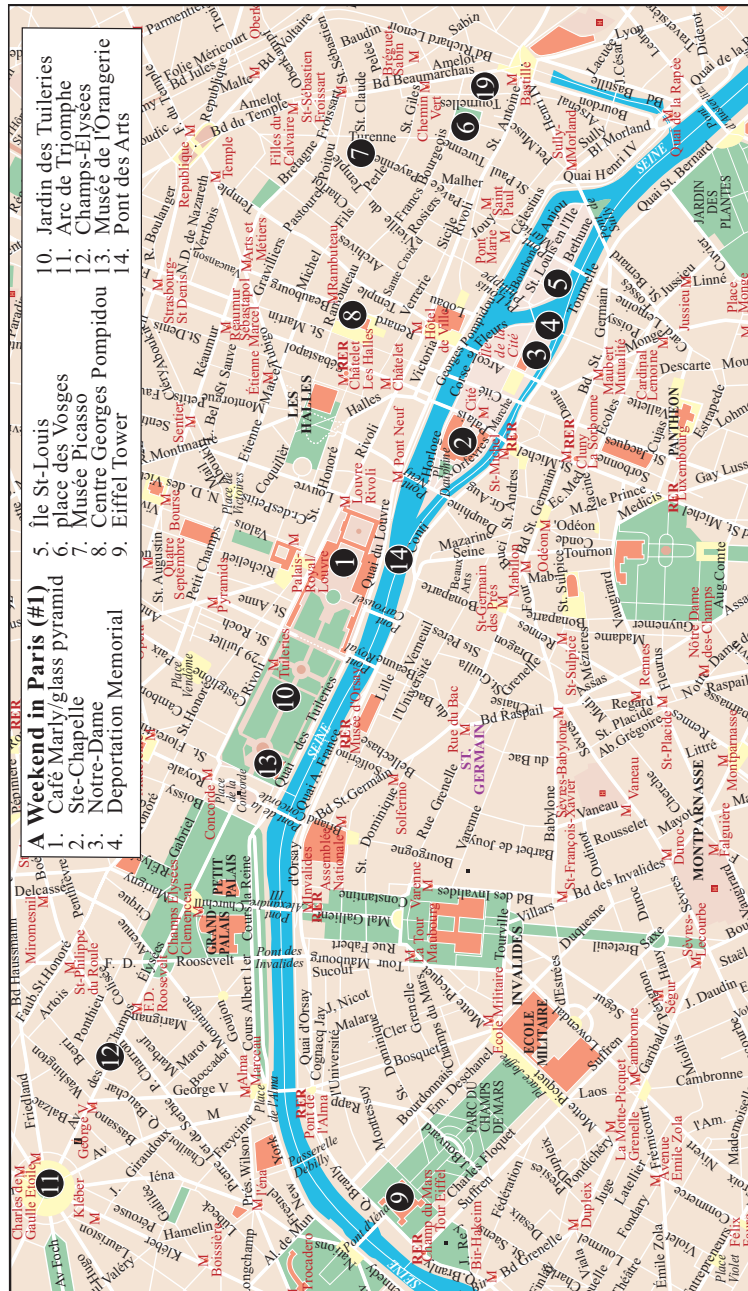
Saturday

Start your day at the centrally located **La Ferme** at 55-57 rue St-Roch. It's a good place to relax with a great cup of coffee and have breakfast. *Info:* 1st/Métro Opéra or Pyramides. Tel. 01/40.20.12.12.

Now that you've fueled up, see the islands of Paris (including visits to **Notre-Dame** and the **Deportation Memorial**) by taking the **Islands Walk** in this book. If you'd rather not take the walk, take the métro to the Cité stop.

You'll start your sightseeing by visiting **Ste-Chapelle**. On a sunny day, you'll be dazzled by nearly 6,600 square feet of stained glass at this Gothic masterpiece. Fifteen windows depict biblical scenes from the Garden of Eden to the Apocalypse (the large rose window). Built in 1246, it took less than two years to build, an amazing feat when one realizes that Notre-Dame took over two centuries to complete. *Info:* 1st/Métro Cité. 4 boulevard du Palais. Tel. 01/53.40.60.80. Open daily Mar-Oct 9:30am-6pm, Nov-Feb 9am-5pm. Closed Jan 1, May 1 and Dec 25. Admission: €7 adults, €5 ages 18-25, under 18 free. Combined admission with Conciergerie is €11.

From here, you can head to the square in front of Notre-Dame. The **place du Parvis Notre-Dame** (recently renamed Parvis Notre-Dame/Place Jean-Paul-II) is the center of all of France. A copper plaque on the ground outside the cathedral is **Point Zéro** from which all distances in France are measured. Tradition holds that you'll be granted a wish if you stand on this point, close your eyes and turn three times. Oh, go ahead and do it!



Now we'll visit **Notre-Dame**, one of the greatest achievements of Gothic architecture. It took nearly 200 years to complete the cathedral. It's so huge that it can accommodate over 6,000 visitors. On your right when you're facing the church is the statue of Charlemagne ("Charles the Great"). On the left doorway is St. Denis holding his head. He was the first martyr of France, decapitated by a jealous king for preaching Christianity. In the center is Christ sitting on the Throne of Judgment with those damned to hell on the right in chains and those destined for heaven on the left.

The interior is dominated by three beautiful (and huge) rose windows, and has a 7,800-pipe organ. Inside along the walls are individual chapels dedicated to saints. The most famous chapel is that of Joan of Arc in the right transept. The sacristy houses relics, manuscripts and religious garments.

If you're afraid of heights or just don't want to climb the tower, make sure you take a look at the sides of the church. You'll see the "flying buttresses" (50-foot beams that support the Gothic structure). But if you decide to climb the 387



steps of the north tower, you'll have a grand view of Paris. You'll also have a great view of the cathedral's famous gargoyles. *Info:* 4th/Métro Cité. 6 place du Parvis Notre-Dame. Tel. 01/42.34.56.10. Open daily 8am-6:45pm (until 7:15pm on Sat and Sun). Treasury open Mon-Fri 9:30am-6pm (until 6:30 on Sat), Sun 1:30pm-6:30pm. Tower open daily Apr-Sep 10am-6:30pm (until 11pm on Sat and Sun Jun-Aug), Oct-Mar 10am-5:30pm. Closed Jan 1, May 1, and Dec 25. Free tours in English Wed and Thu at 2pm, Sat at 2:30pm. Admission: Free to the cathedral. Towers: €8, under 18 free. Treasury: €6. www.notredamedeparis.fr.

Behind the cathedral is the **Mémorial des Martyrs Français de la Déportation de 1945** (Deportation Memorial). This free memorial was built in honor of the more than 30,000 citizens who were placed on boats at this spot for deportation to concentration camps. You descend steps and

34 OPEN ROAD'S BEST OF PARIS

become surrounded by walls. The plaque on the floor reads: "They descended into the mouth of the earth and they did not return." A hallway is covered with 200,000 lit crystals (one for each French citizen who died). At the far end of the hall is the eternal flame of hope. Don't miss this memorial. It's both moving and disturbing. *Info:* 4th/Métro Cité. Open daily 10am-noon and 2pm to 5pm (until 7pm in summer). Admission: Free.

You can cross the bridge behind Notre-Dame to the **Île St-Louis**, a residential island within the city. The vast majority of the buildings on this island date back to the 1600s, making for a beautiful place to stroll, especially the small side streets. There are interesting shops and several good restaurants.

Now, take the métro to the St-Paul stop and the Marais. The Marais neighborhood, with its small streets and beautiful squares, is filled with interesting shops and plenty of places for lunch. It's considered the historic heart of Paris. To experience it, take the **Marais Walk** in this book. At the end of the walk, you'll visit the **Café Beaubourg** facing the Pompidou Center. Great people-watching!

If you'd rather not take the walk, head to the St-Paul métro and walk east on rue St-Antoine (on the left side of the street) until you reach rue de Birague. Turn left and then head to the beautiful **place des Vosges**. It's not only the oldest square in the city, but it's also the most beautiful square in Paris, in France, and probably in all of Europe. The area around the square is a wonderful place to stroll and take in the beauty of this fabulous city. The Marais is a shopper's paradise with unique boutiques from kitschy to upscale, especially on and around the rue des Francs-Bourgeois. There are plenty of places to take a break and have a drink or snack.

If you're interested in visiting a museum, there are several famous ones in the Marais.

The **Musée Picasso** has the largest Picasso collection in the world (not to mention works by Renoir, Cézanne, Degas and Matisse). *Info:* 3rd/Métro St-Sébastien or St-Paul. 5 rue de Thorigny. Tel. 01/42.71.25.21. Open Apr-Sep 9:30am-6pm, Oct-Mar 9:30am-5:30pm. Closed Tue. Admission: €6.50, €4.50 ages 18-25, under 18 free. Free the first Sun of the month. www.musee-picasso.fr. Note: Currently closed for renovations.

The **Centre Georges Pompidou** houses an incredible collection of 20th- and 21st-century art. The building is a work of art in itself. Opened in 1977, the controversial building is “ekoskeletal” (all the plumbing, elevators, and ducts are exposed and brightly painted). *Info:* 4th/Métro Rambuteau. place Georges-Pompidou (on rue St-Martin between rue Rambuteau and rue St-Merri). Tel. 01/44.78.12.33. Open Wed-Mon 11am-9pm. Closed Tue and May 1. Admission: To the Center: €12, under 18 free. Free on the first Sun of the month. www.cnac-gp.fr.

After dinner visit the **Eiffel Tower**. The lines will be short, the view memorable, and the light show on the hour is spectacular. There’s no better way to end your day! *Info:* 7th/Métro Trocadéro, École Militaire or Bir-Hakeim. Champ-de-Mars. Tel. 01/44.11.23.23. Open daily. Elevator: 9:30am-11:45pm (final ascension 10:30pm to the top). From mid-June to end of Aug 9am-12:45am (final ascension 11pm to the top). Stairs: 9:30am-6:30pm (last admission 6pm). From mid-June to end of Aug 9am-12:45am (last admission midnight). Admission to the second landing by stairs: €4.50, 24-12 years €3.50, under 12 €3. Admission to the second landing by elevator: €8.10, 24-12 years €6.50, under 12 €4. Elevator to the top: €13.10, 24-12 years, €11.50, under 12 €9. www.tou Eiffel.fr.

Sunday

Start your day in the lovely **Jardin des Tuileries**. While in the park, stop at **Café Very**, for a *croissant* and cup of coffee.

A great way to see lots of sights (including the **Arc de Triomphe** and the **Champs-Élysées**) is to take the **Major Sights Walk** in this book. There are plenty of places to relax along the walk.

If you’re not interested in taking the Major Sights Walk, take the métro to the Charles-de-Gaulle-Étoile stop. You’ll be at the **Arc de Triomphe**.



Don’t try to walk across the square. This is Paris’s busiest intersection. Twelve streets pour into the circle around the Arc.

36 OPEN ROAD'S BEST OF PARIS

Instead, there are underground passages that will take you here. It's the largest triumphal arch in the world. Napoléon commissioned it in 1806 and it was completed in 1836. The Arc is home to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and is engraved with the names of generals in Napoléon's victories.

There's an observation deck providing one of the greatest views of Paris. There's no cost to visit the Arc, but there's an admission fee for the exhibit of photos of the Arc throughout history and for the observation deck. If you aren't impressed by the view down the **Champs-Élysées**, you really shouldn't have come to Paris. *Info:* 8th/Métro Charles-de-Gaulle-Étoile. place Charles-de-Gaulle-Étoile. Tel. 01/55.37.73.77. Open daily Apr-Sep 10am-11pm, Oct-Mar 10am-10:30pm. Admission: €9, under 18 free.

After you've visited the Arc de Triomphe walk down the **Champs-Élysées**, one of the most famous streets in the world. At the end of the street, you'll find yourself at the **place de la Concorde**. In the center stands the **Obelisk of Luxor**, an Egyptian column from the 13th century covered with hieroglyphics. On the other side of the square is the **Jardin des Tuileries** (where you started your day). Head to the **Musée de l'Orangerie**. This former 19th-century greenhouse is situated in the beautiful Tuileries garden. It's home to a collection of paintings from the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century (including 15 Cézannes, 24 Renoirs, 10 Matisse and 12 Picassos).

Of particular note are *Les Grandes Décorations*, Japanese-inspired paintings of water-lily gardens. These 22 six-foot-high canvases are stunningly displayed in two oval-shaped white rooms. While visiting the Louvre can be overwhelming (so many paintings, so little time), the Orangerie is small and manageable. After years of renovation, it's finally reopened and it's magnificent. *Info:* 1st/Métro 1 place de la Concorde. Tel. 01/44.77.80.07. Open Wed-Mon 9am-6pm. Closed Tue. Admission: €7.50, under 18 free. Free on the first Sun of each month. English tours Mon and Thu at 2:30pm. www.musee-orangerie.fr.

After visiting the museum, make sure to stop into any one of the **Nicolas** wine shops scattered throughout the city, where you'll find a great selection of inexpensive French wines. (You can also find inexpensive and decent French wines at neighborhood grocery stores.)

After dinner, head to the Seine River. There are 36 bridges over the Seine that don't just connect one bank with the other, they should be considered monuments in and of themselves. They are places for strolling, for stopping to kiss someone you love, for viewing the beauty of Paris and pondering life. A favorite is the **Pont des Arts**, at the tip of the Île de la Cité. It dates back to 1803 and was the first pedestrian-only bridge in Paris. It has a fantastic view of the Pont Neuf, the Louvre and Notre-Dame. (Métro Louvre). What a way to end your weekend!

WEEKEND IN PARIS / #2

Friday Evening

A great way to begin your weekend in Paris is to dine at an authentic Paris eatery. Check out the *Best Eats* section of this book for dining recommendations. After dinner, head to **Notre-Dame** and stroll along the islands in the middle of Paris.

Saturday

Start your day with a visit to the **Musée d'Orsay**, a magnificent museum. Get there early to avoid the lines, and after you've entered the museum, go to the **Café des Hauteurs** on the 5th floor. The café opens at 10:30am.

The **Musée d'Orsay** is located across the Seine from the Tuileries and the Louvre in a former train station that has been gloriously converted into 80 galleries. Many of the most famous Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works are here. Some of the paintings here are:

- Whistler's *Whistler's Mother*
- Manet's *Olympia* and *Picnic on the Grass*
- Dega's *Absinthe*



38 OPEN ROAD'S BEST OF PARIS

- Renoir's *Moulin de la Galette*
- Monet's *Magpie*

There are also works by Sargent, Pissaro and van Gogh, just to name a few. *Info:* 7th/Métro Solférino. 1 rue de la Légion d'Honneur. Tel. 01/40.49.48.14. Open Tue-Sun 9:30am-6pm (Thu until 9:45pm). Closed Mon, Jan 1, May 1 and Dec 25. Admission: €8, €5.50 ages 18-30, under 18 free. €5.50 after 4:15pm (after 6pm on Thu). Free on the first Sun of each month. www.musee-orsay.fr.

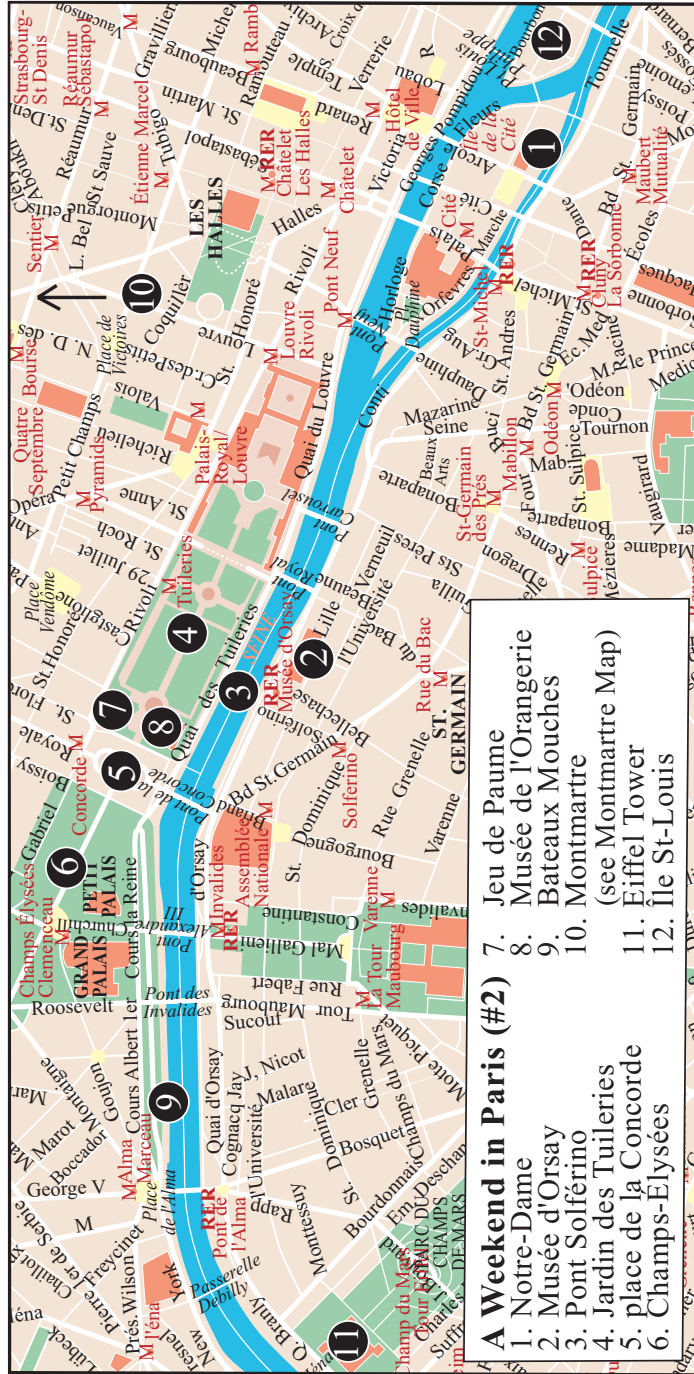
You can have a reasonably priced buffet lunch in an ornate dining room at the museum at the **Restaurant du Musée d'Orsay**. Closed Mon.

After lunch, head to the Seine River and the **Pont Solférino**. This double-decker bridge spans the Seine near the Musée d'Orsay. It's located at one of the most beautiful spots along the river. (Métro Solférino)

If you walk on the lower level of the bridge, continue under the street on the other side and you'll be in the lovely **Jardin des Tuileries**. The same man who planned the gardens of Versailles designed the Tuileries. The garden takes its name from the word *tui*/or tile (roof-tile factories once were here). You'll enjoy bubbling fountains, statues, flowers and trees between the Louvre and place de la Concorde. Sit down and relax in this beautiful garden in the middle of Paris. *Info:* 1st/Métro Tuileries or Concorde. West of the Louvre to the place de la Concorde.

From here, you can either call it a day or head west through the gardens to the **place de la Concorde**. This square is huge (21 acres) and in the center stands the **Obelisk of Luxor**, an Egyptian column from the 13th century covered with hieroglyphics. It was moved here in 1833. Now a traffic roundabout, it was here that King Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette were guillotined during the French Revolution. The name is ironic as *concorde* means "harmony." *Info:* 8th/Métro Concorde. Between the Jardin des Tuileries and the Champs-Élysées.

Off of this square is the **Avenue des Champs-Élysées**, one of the most famous streets in the world. It's the site of the victory parade of the Allies in World War II, the annual military parade every July 14, and the final leg of the Tour de France bicycle race. The Champs-Élysées is home to expensive retail shops, fast-food chains, car dealers, banks, huge movie





theatres and overpriced cafés. Despite this, you can sit at a café and experience great people-watching (mostly tourists, but one of the most diverse groups of people you'll ever see). At the far west end is the **Arc de Triomphe**. If you're interested in photography, you can visit the **Galerie Nationale du Jeu**

de Paume in the northeast corner of the Jardin des Tuileries. Named after a ball game similar to tennis that was played here, this museum houses the national video and photography museum. *Info:* 1st/Métro Concorde. Northeast corner of the Jardin des Tuileries at 1 place de la Concorde. Tel. 01/47.03.12.50. Open Tue noon-9pm, Wed-Fri noon-7pm, Sat-Sun 10am-7pm. Closed Mon. Admission: €8.50, under 10 free. www.jeudepaume.org.

Also here is the **Musée de l'Orangerie**. This former 19th-century greenhouse is home to a collection of paintings from the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century (including 15 Cézannes, 24 Renoirs, 10 Matisse and 12 Picassos). Of particular note are the eight large *Water Lilies* that Monet gave France in 1922. After years of renovation, it's finally reopened and it's magnificent. *Info:* 1st/Métro Concorde. 1 place de la Concorde. Tel. 01/44.77.80.07. Open Wed-Mon 9am-6pm. Closed Tue. Admission: €7.50, under 18 free. Free on the first Sun of each month. English tours Mon and Thu at 2:30pm. www.musee-orangerie.fr.

If you're visiting Paris for the first time, a good way to tour the Seine River and get a good overview of Paris is on the **Bateaux-Mouches boat tour**. The boats depart regularly from the Right Bank next to the place de l'Alma near the Eiffel Tower. (Métro Alma-Marceau). Dinner cruises cost €125 (cheaper if you're a member of a group). Lunch cruises cost €50. Reservations are essential. *Info:* Tel. 01/42.25.96.10, www.bateauxmouches.com. A 75-minute day cruise costs about €8.

If you're up for more (you're on vacation after all), check out the *Nightlife & Entertainment* section in Chapter 8.

Sunday

Discover the Montmartre neighborhood by taking the **Montmartre Walk** in this book. Highlights include **Sacré-Coeur**, **Espace Salvador Dali**, and the **Moulin Rouge**.

If you're not up to the walk, take the métro to the Abbesses stop to see the **Basilique du Sacré-Coeur** (Sacred Heart Basilica). To avoid climbing the hundreds of steps to the basilica, you can take the métro to Abbesses, then take the elevator and follow the signs to the funicular (cable car), which will take you up to the Basilica for the price of a métro ticket. (A fun curiosity just behind the Métro Abbesses is the "Love Wall" where "I love you" is written in what looks like a zillion languages.)

You could also head directly up **Rue Foyatier**. With over 200 steps, this "street" is west (left) of the hill leading up to Sacré-Coeur. It's one of the most photographed streets in Paris.



At the top of the hill (*butte*) in Montmartre is the basilica, which wasn't completed until 1919. It's named for Christ's heart, which some believe is in the crypt. You can't miss it, with its white onion domes and Byzantine and Romanesque architecture. Inside you'll find gold mosaics, but the real treat is the view of Paris from the dome or the square directly in front of the basilica. *Info:* 18th/Métro Anvers or Abbesses. place Parvis-du-Sacré-Coeur. Tel. 01/53.41.89.00. Open daily 6am-10:30pm. Observation deck and crypt 9am-7pm (until 6pm in winter). Admission: Free. To the observation deck in the dome and to the crypt is €5.

After visiting the basilica, you can head right over to the attractive **place du Tertre**. It's overrun with tourists (like you) and artists trying to paint your portrait. There's a circus-like atmosphere here, and plenty of cafés to have a snack and a drink.

After your break, you can either wander the quaint streets of Montmartre, once a small village of vineyards and windmills, or visit the **Espace Salvador-Dali**. Black walls, weird music with Dali's voice and dim lighting all make this museum an interesting experience. Come here if you're a fan of Salvador Dali to see 300 of his lithographs and etchings and 25 sculptures. *Info:* 18th/Métro Abbesses. 11 rue Poulbot. Tel. 01.42.64.40.10. Open daily 10am-6pm (until 8pm Jul and Aug). Admission: €10, under 8 free. www.daliparis.com.

After dinner visit the **Eiffel Tower**. The lines will be short, the view memorable, and the light show on the hour is spectacular. There's no better way to end your weekend in Paris! *Info:* 7th/Métro Trocadéro, École Militaire or Bir-Hakeim. Champ-de-Mars. Tel. 01/44.11.23.23. Open daily. Elevator: 9:30am-11:45pm (final ascension 10:30pm to the top). From mid-June to end of Aug 9am-12:45am (final ascension 11pm to the top). Stairs: 9:30am-6:30pm (last admission 6pm). From mid-June to end of Aug 9am-12:45am (last admission midnight). Admission to the second landing by stairs: €4.50, 24-12 years €3.50, under 12 €3. Admission to the second landing by elevator: €8.10, 24-12 years €6.50, under 12 €4. Elevator to the top: €13.10, 24-12 years, €11.50, under 12 €9. www.tou Eiffel.fr.

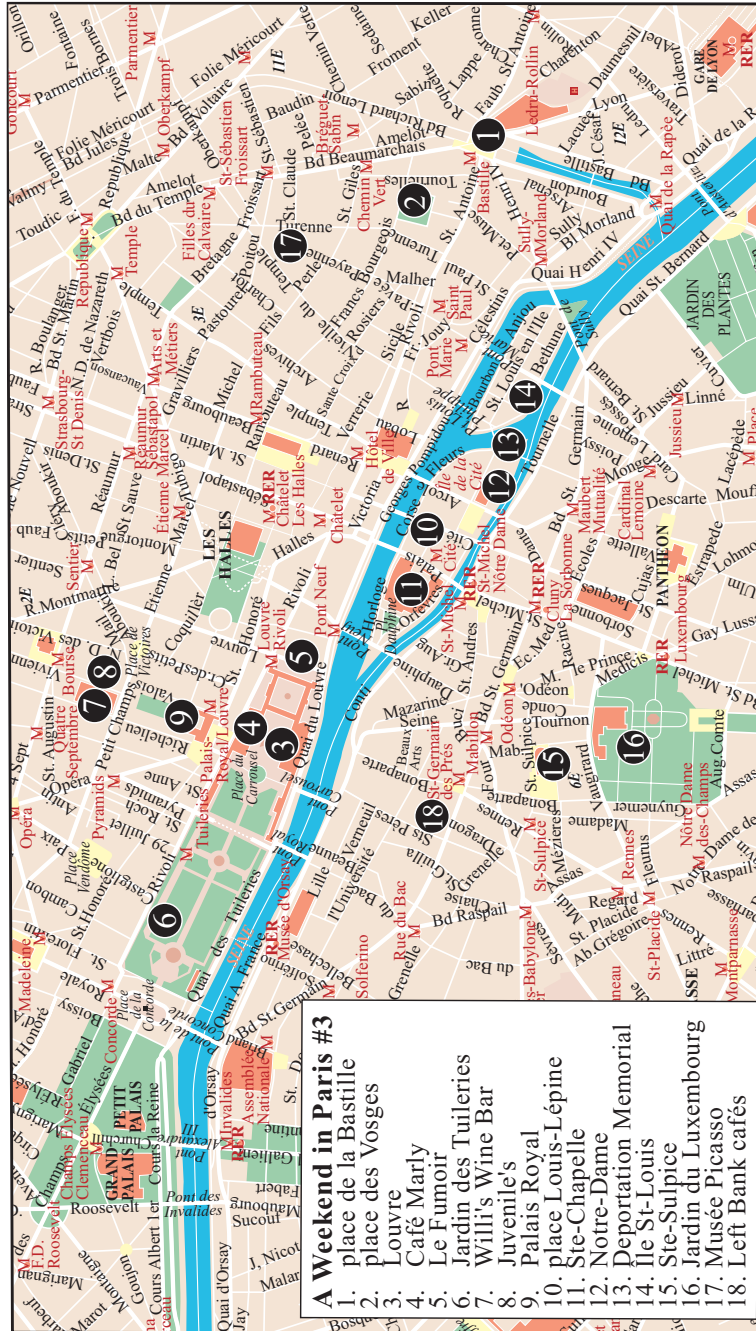
WEEKEND IN PARIS / #3

Friday Evening

Head to the Bastille métro stop. The 11th arrondissement, centered on the place de la Bastille, is primarily a residential area that has become increasingly hip lately, especially around rue de Charonne and rue de Lappe.

When you exit the métro, you'll be at the **place de la Bastille**, but you won't find it here. The notorious Bastille prison was torn down over 200 years ago when mobs stormed the Bastille as part of the French Revolution. Today, it's a roundabout traffic circle where cars speed around the 170-foot **Colonne de Juillet** (July Column). You come here for the wonderful cafés. You'll also find the **Opéra Bastille** (Bastille Opera House) on the south side of the place. Opened in 1989, this modern glass building hosts opera and symphony performances.

This area is home to some of the most interesting and diverse dining experiences in Paris. Check out the *Eats* section of this book, especially those restaurants found on the "Right Bank Eats (East)" map.



After dinner, you can do some serious people-watching back at one of the cafés on the place de la Bastille. For an even more intimate experience, you can head to the nearby **place des Vosges** (enter from rue de Birague off of rue St-Antoine). It's simply the most beautiful square in Paris, in France, and probably in all of Europe.

Saturday

We're going to visit the **Musée National du Louvre** (the "Louvre"), the world's greatest art museum. Start your day by taking the métro to the Palais-Royal stop. There are many cafés that line the rue de Rivoli near the Louvre. Try to start your day as early as possible, as the lines to enter the Louvre are shorter the earlier you arrive.

Note: It's quicker if you enter through the **Carrousel du Louvre mall** at 99 rue de Rivoli rather than through the glass pyramid.

The buildings that house the Louvre were constructed in the 13th century as a fortress. Today, the inner courtyard is the site of the controversial (but I think fantastic) glass pyramid, designed by the famous architect I.M. Pei, that serves as the main entrance to the museum.

The Louvre is the largest art museum in the world, the largest building in Paris, and it's in the largest palace in Europe.

You can get a free *Louvre Handbook* in English at the information desk under the glass pyramid. From this area, you have the choice of visiting three wings: Denon, Sully or Richelieu.

You can spend a whole weekend in the Louvre and still not see all of the art here. Your time is limited, so I've listed some highlights. Remember that even if you don't get to see the *Mona Lisa*, you'll still see incredible art. So decide how much time you want to spend here and what you don't get to see, you'll just have to come back to Paris and the Louvre again (and again)!

I suggest that you just tour the **Denon Wing** this weekend. Rooms are numbered and there are signs pointing the way to works like the *Mona Lisa*. The first floor of the Denon Wing has the following incredible highlights:

- *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, a fabulous Greek statue dating back to between 220 and 190 B.C. discovered in Greece. The sculptor used

- marble to simulate transparent fabric over skin. (top of the Daru staircase)
- the Grand Gallerie, with Italian masterpieces from the 13th to the 17th centuries
- *Mona Lisa*, painted by Leonardo da Vinci in the early 1500s (room 6)
- Directly across from the *Mona Lisa* is Veronese's *Wedding of Cana*, the Louvre's largest painting (1562)
- Huge paintings line dark red walls in room 75, including *The Coronation of Napoléon I* (1804)
- *The 28th of July 1830: Liberty Leading the People* by Delacroix (1863) (room 77)
- The Long Hall with Da Vinci's *The Virgin of the Rocks* and *John the Baptist*.



For a more detailed list of what's at the Louvre, see *A Day in the Louvre* in Chapter 5.

Info: 1st/Métro Palais-Royal. 34-36 quai du Louvre. Tel. 01/40.20.53.17 (recorded message). Open Mon, Thu, Sat-Sun 9am-6pm; Wed and Fri 9am-10pm. Closed Tue. Closed Jan 1, May 1, and Dec 25. Admission: €10 (reduced admission after 6pm on Wed and Fri). Under 18 free and free the first Sunday of the month and July 14. Under 26 free after 6pm on Fri. €11 for exhibitions in Napoléon Hall. Combined permanent collection and temporary exhibits €14. www.louvre.fr.

ALTERNATIVE PLAN

If you just don't want to fight the crowds at the Louvre, take the **Left Bank Walk** in the *Walks* chapter of this book. Highlights include: **Musée Maillol**, **St-Germain-des-Prés**, and the **Jardin du Luxembourg**.

When you've had enough art, you'll need a break. There are several decent cafés in the Louvre, or you could try one of these nearby places:

The **Café Marly** overlooks the pyramid at the Louvre. Open daily 8am

PARIS MUSEUM PASS

Don't want to wait in lines to see great art? Buy a **Paris Museum Pass** and have access to over 60 museums and monuments, including the Louvre and Musée d'Orsay. The cost is €35 for two consecutive days, €50 for four days and €65 for six days. They're available at participating museums and tourist-information centers.

to 2am. **Le Fumoir**, a bar and restaurant, is located near the Louvre at 6 rue de l'Amiral-de-Coligny. Open daily 11am-2am. Closed part of Aug.

Afterwards, you can wander through the **Jardin des Tuileries**: The garden takes its name from the word *tuil* or tile (roof-tile factories once were here). You'll enjoy bubbling fountains, statues, flowers and trees between the Lou-

vre and place de la Concorde. Relax in this beautiful garden in the middle of Paris. From here, you can also get a glimpse of the **Eiffel Tower**.

Parisians love wine bars and so should you. Visit one of these two great wine bars for dinner: **Willi's Wine Bar**, where the British owners serve Parisian specialties (*Info*: 1st/Métro Bourse. 13 rue des Petits-Champs. Tel. 01/42.61.05.09. Closed Sun and part of Aug. Moderate) or **Juvenile's**, an unpretentious wine bar serving light meals. (*Info*: 1st/Métro Bourse. 47 rue de Richelieu. Tel. 01/42.97.46.49. Closed Sun and Mon (lunch). Inexpensive-Moderate. Both have great wine lists.

After dinner, why don't you head to the nearby gardens of the **Palais Royal**? Built in 1632, it now houses ministries of the French government (so you won't be able to look inside). The buildings around the garden, built in the 1700s, are home to everything from stamp shops to art galleries. If you're interested in sculpture, check out the 280 controversial (meaning some did not like them) prison-striped columns by Daniel Buren that were placed in the main courtyard. Very 80s! There are plenty of comfortable cafés here to have a nightcap. (*Info*: 1st/Métro Palais-Royal. place Palais Royal (across the rue de Rivoli from the Louvre).

Sunday

Begin your day by taking the métro to the Cité stop. On the north side of the Île de la Cité you'll find the lovely **Marché aux Fleurs** (flower market) at **place Louis-Lépine**. On Sundays, the market becomes the **Marché aux Oiseaux** (bird market) where all types of birds, supplies and cages are sold.

You'll be on an island in the middle of the Seine River. Here, you'll be able to visit two great churches.

On a sunny day, you'll be dazzled by nearly 6,600 square feet of stained glass at **Ste-Chapelle**, a Gothic masterpiece. Fifteen windows depict biblical scenes from the Garden of Eden to the Apocalypse (the large rose window). Built in 1246, it took less than two years to build, an amazing feat when one realizes that Notre-Dame took over two centuries to complete. *Info:* 1st/Métro Cité. 4 boulevard du Palais. Tel. 01/53.40.60.80. Open daily Mar-Oct 9:30am-6pm, Nov-Feb 9am-5pm. Closed Jan 1, May 1 and Dec 25. Admission: €7 adults, €5 ages 18-25, under 18 free. Combined admission with Conciergerie is €11.

On the same island in the middle of the Seine River is our second sight.

The **Cathédrale Notre-Dame** is one of the greatest achievements of Gothic architecture. It's so huge that it can accommodate over 6,000 visitors. The interior is dominated by three beautiful (and immense) rose windows, and has a 7,800-pipe organ. Inside along the walls are individual chapels dedicated to saints. The most famous chapel is that of Joan of Arc in the right transept. The sacristy houses relics, manuscripts and religious garments.

You may want to climb the 387 steps of the north tower for a grand view of Paris. You'll also have a great view of the cathedral's famous gargoyles. *Info:* 4th/Métro Cité. 6 place du Parvis Notre-Dame. Tel. 01/42.34.56.10. Open daily 8am-6:45pm (until 7:15pm on Sat and Sun). Treasury open Mon-Fri 9:30am-6pm (until 6:30 on Sat), Sun 1:30pm-6:30pm. Tower open daily Apr-Sep 10am-6:30pm (until 11pm on Sat and Sun Jun-Aug), Oct-Mar 10am-5:30pm. Closed Jan 1, May 1, and Dec 25. Free tours in English Wed and Thu at 2pm, Sat at 2:30pm. Admission: Free to the cathedral. Towers: 8, under 18 free. Treasury: €6. www.notredamedeparis.fr.

After visiting these two churches, make sure you head to an overlooked sight directly behind the cathedral. Cross the street (quai Archevêché) and head through the gate.

It will take you only a short time to walk through the **Mémorial des Martyrs Français de la Déportation de 1945** (Deportation Memorial). This free memorial was built in honor of the more than 30,000 citizens who

were placed on boats at this spot for deportation to concentration camps. You descend steps and become surrounded by walls. Don't miss this memorial. It's both moving and disturbing.

As you leave the memorial, exit out the gate, turn right on quai Archevêché. Head to the pedestrian bridge.

You are now on the bridge **Pont St-Louis**. Continue across this bridge to the **Île St-Louis**, a residential island within the city, often swamped with tourists during high season. The vast majority of the buildings on this island date back to the 1600s, making for a beautiful place to stroll, especially the small side streets. There are interesting shops and several good restaurants.

After you cross the bridge you'll be on the narrow **rue St-Louis-en-l'Île**, one of the most beautiful streets in all of Paris. The highlight of this street is at number 31. Tourists and Parisians alike line up at the carry-out window of **Berthillon** for the best-known ice cream in Paris. Over thirty flavors, from *chocolat blanc* (white chocolate) to *pain d'épice* (gingerbread). It's open on Sundays, except in August.

After visiting the islands, take the métro to the St-Sulpice stop.

ALTERNATIVE PLAN

If you had enough of visiting churches and don't want to visit a park, head to the **Musée Picasso**. It has the largest Picasso collection in the world (not to mention works by Renoir, Cézanne, Degas and Matisse). *Info*: 3rd/Métro St-Sébastien or St-Paul. 5 rue de Thorigny. Tel. 01/42.71.25.21. Open Apr-Sep 9:30am-6pm, Oct-Mar 9:30am-5:30pm. Closed Tue. Admission: €6.50, €4.50 ages 18-25, under 18 free. Free the first Sun of the month. www.musee-picasso.fr. Currently closed for renovations.

The **Eglise St-Sulpice** is located on an attractive square with a lovely fountain (the **Fontaine-des-Quatre Points**). This church has one of the largest pipe organs in the world, with over 6,700 pipes. You'll notice that one of the two bell towers was never completed. Inside are frescoes by Delacroix in the Chapel of the Angels (Chapelle des Anges), a statue of the Virgin and Child by Pigalle, and Servandoni's Chapel of the Madonna (Chapelle de la Madone). Set into the floor of the aisle of the north-south transept is a bronze line. On the two equinoxes and the winter solstice, the sun reflects onto a globe and obelisk

and from there to a crucifix. The obelisk reads: “Two scientists with God’s help.”

You may find fans of the wildly popular novel and movie *The Da Vinci Code* looking around the church, where it was the scene of a brutal killing. *Info:* 6th/Métro St-Sulpice. place St-Sulpice (between the boulevard St-Germain-des-Prés and the Luxembourg Gardens). Open daily. Admission: Free.

There are plenty of cafés on and around the square. Now take a short walk to the heart of the Left Bank.

The **Jardin du Luxembourg** (Luxembourg Gardens) are famous, formal French gardens filled with locals and tourists. Lots of children around the pond playing with wooden sailboats. There’s a replica of the Statue of Liberty in the western part of the gardens. The Statue of Liberty in New



York was a gift from the French. (By the way, there’s also a replica of the Statue of Liberty along the Seine River in the 15th Arrondissement at the bridge Pont de Grenelle just west of the Eiffel Tower).

Also here is the **Palais du Luxembourg** (Luxembourg Palace), the home of the French Senate. Tours of the palace are by reservation only. The **Musée du Luxembourg** at 19 rue Vaugirard occupies a wing of the Palais du Luxembourg and features temporary exhibitions of some of the big names in the history of art. *Info for museum:* Tel. 01/40.13.62.00. Admission: Depends on the exhibit. For information on exhibits visit www.museeduluxembourg.fr. *Info for gardens:* 6th/Métro Cluny-La Sorbonne. A few blocks south of boulevard St-Germain-des-Prés (off of the boulevard St Michel). Admission: Free.

Have a snack or a glass of wine at one of the cafés in the garden and relax on your Sunday in Paris.

50 OPEN ROAD'S BEST OF PARIS

End your weekend in Paris at one of the famous cafés on the place St-Germain-des-Prés. If you're a tourist, you'll fit right in at one of Hemingway's favorite spots, **Café Les Deux Magots**. Another famous café and a favorite of tourists and Parisians alike (next door to Les Deux Magots) is **Café de Flore**. Have a drink and enjoy the great people-watching. *Info:* 6th/Métro Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Both cafés are open to at least 1am.

