

MURIELLE'S SUGGESTIONS

PARIS

Paris Walks

www.paris-walks.com

2 hour walking tours in different neighborhoods of Paris. You do not need to reserve. You just show up at the meeting point and pay locally. The tours are informative and enjoyable.

Adults: 12 euros

Children: 8 euros

River cruise

Take a cruise at night on the Seine River. Different companies offer these 1 hour cruises. I love it at night because all the monuments are illuminated and Paris from the river is beautiful. No reservations required.

Concert at the Ste Chapelle. Gothic cathedral with beautiful stained glass. After a full day of visiting sites in Paris, sit down and enjoy an hour concert before dinner at 7.00pm. You can reserve on line or buy the ticket locally.

<http://booking.parisinfo.com/>

Take a tour to visit the Chateau de Vaux le Vicomte

Vaux le Vicomte was created by 3 men, brought together by Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's finance minister: landscaper Le Nôtre, architect Le Vau and painter and decorator Le Brun. The perfect harmony between architecture and landscape is the result of their brotherly genius. Right from its inaugural ceremony on August 17, 1661, Vaux le Vicomte raised the sun king's jealousy and became the pattern which inspired the whole of Europe.

<http://www.vaux-le-vicomte.com/en/>

Every Saturday evening from May to October, Vaux le Vicomte can be visited under the glow of 2,000 lit candles within the castle and its gardens. Thousands of flickering flames make for a romantic and magical visit. The estate is open until midnight for visits and diners.

Pere Lachaise Cemetery

www.pere-lachaise.com

This is your best one-stop look at Paris's fascinating, romantic past residents. Lined with 5000 trees, the peaceful paths of the cemetery allow you to meander and pay homage to

all kinds of artists, musicians, and writers such as Oscar Wilde, Edith Piaf, Jim Morrison, Chopin, Gertrude Stein, Moliere and many more. You absolutely need a map (available from any of the nearby florists) or you will get lost!

NEW IN 2015

Fondation Louis Vuitton

<http://www.fondationlouisvuitton.fr/en.html>

The Fondation Louis Vuitton is located next to the Jardin d'Acclimatation in the Bois de Boulogne, the famous park on the west side of Paris. With an area of 846 hectares, the Bois de Boulogne has 28 km of bridle-paths and 15 km of cycle-paths, as well as containing well-known waterfalls and numerous lakes, streams and ponds that have been the delight of many Parisians since the mid-19th century. Under the encouragement of Baron Haussmann, the Prefect of Paris, and of the Emperor Napoleon III, the engineer Alphand and the landscape gardener Barillet-Deschamps designed this great oasis of greenery from 1853 onwards, taking their inspiration from Hyde Park in London. The building was designed by the American architect Frank Gehry. A private cultural initiative, the Fondation Louis Vuitton's aim is to promote and support contemporary artistic creation for a wide French and international audience.

The Picasso Museum reopened last year after a major renovation.

<http://www.museepicassoparis.fr/>

The biggest collection of works by Pablo Picasso in the world is open to the public. The collection is displayed inside the Hôtel Salé which was renovated for the occasion, located in the heart of the Marais district.

This unique collection is composed of 5,000 pieces by the artist, more than 200,000 personal archives, and his own collection of some 150 works (Matisse, Cézanne, Le Douanier Rousseau, etc.)

Paris Day bike tour

<http://paris.fattirebiketours.com/>

Visit Paris on a 3h bike tour day or night, explore the beautiful Loire Valley by bike in just one day or spend the day in Versailles.

You can also skip the line at the Eiffel Tower and take a 2h tour.

Meudon

Home of Rodin, this gem of a town does not just offer art buffs a point of reference, but amazing views and a scientific heritage.

Rodin's country house, the Villa des Brillants, was renovated in 1997 and turned into a museum. You can roam his home and meet some of his best work, including the Gates of Hell and the Burghers of Calais works. The estate is split into 2 buildings, the hotel Biron and the chapel, with selected works present in both. The gardens of the estate are also a delight, full of hidden sculptures placed there by Rodin. There is a large ornamental garden, a relaxation garden and two thematic walks, perfect for thinking.

There is a lovely, if basic, little café in the gardens.

Also in Meudon is an observatory, overlooking Paris.

A Break from Paris

If you are looking for a break from Paris without actually leaving the city, then Saint Maur has a treat in store for you. Located out of the way, close to the Saint Maur-Creteil RER station is a little island on the Marne river, the Ile Brise-Pain.

There is a delightful walk taking in nature and a wide selection of French architecture, from traditional villas to impressive modernist homes.

From the RER stop, walk south along the Rue du Pont de Creteil until you cross the Marne. There, you will find a small footbridge onto the island. From here you can explore not only the Ile Brise-Pain, but neighboring Ile de la Gruyere and Ile Sainte-Catherine, both of which offer the same charm.

Do you like hats?

Virginie de Broc Milliner was awarded in 2011 ‘un des meilleurs ouvriers de France’ (one of the best craftsmen in France).

For half a century, “La Boutique a chapeaux” (the hat shop) has contributed its savoir-faire to the world of high fashion, of which it has become a respected partner.

Virginie De Broc designs all the hats. Hand-structured and hand-sewn, they are created for all occasions that require a hat and they make that necessity a pleasure. The summer and winter collections offer many options for ceremonies or for every day. The hats are made of felt, cloth or sewn straw.

<http://www.laboutiqueachapeaux.com/>

Ready for a treat?

Macarons from Laduree are out... the “Eclairs” are in. The oblong *choux*, an airy puff pastry also used to make profiteroles and beignets, is traditionally filled with vanilla cream and glazed with chocolate. Eclairs are typically offered in any patisserie with flavors such as chocolate, caramel and coffee. Chef Christophe Adam worked for 15 years at Fauchon, the upscale pastry mecca in Paris. During his tenure, he experimented wildly and developed more than 100 original éclair recipes.

In 2012 Adam opened “L’éclair de Genie” in the Marais district. Luscious flavors such as lemon yuzu, praline-hazelnut, and raspberry passion fruit draw crowds of French and foreign patrons daily.

Try it!

<http://leclairdegenie.com/>

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