

# PARIS

Gigi Griffis

## 10 LOCALS

TELL YOU  
WHERE TO GO,  
WHAT TO EAT, &  
HOW TO FIT IN



Unconventional Travel Guides

# PARIS

10 Locals Tell You Where to Go,  
What to Eat, & How to Fit In



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# CONTENTS

<b>About this Book</b>	4
<b>On Traveling Like a Local</b>	6
<b>The Interviews</b>	8
Mark Jutton <i>History-Lover. Theater Buff. Musician. Traveler.</i>	8
Forest Collins <i>Author. Foodie. Culturist.</i>	15
Camille Malmquist <i>Pastry Chef. Beer Connoisseur. Writer at Paris by Mouth.</i>	20
Daisy de Plume <i>Art Historian. Entrepreneur. Treasure Hunter.</i>	25
Danielle Perrin <i>Foodie. Wine Connoisseur. World-Traveler.</i>	33
Sam Hajjar <i>Startup Coach. History Buff. Design Enthusiast.</i>	40
Lisa Rankin <i>Entrepreneur. Foodie Tour Guide. Photographer.</i>	45
Emmanuelle Yigit <i>Shop Owner. Culture Addict. Traveler.</i>	50
Erin Koval <i>Writer. Teacher. Wanderer.</i>	56
Yassine Yassou <i>Entrepreneur. Bicyclist. Japanese Culture Enthusiast.</i>	60
Talal Gariani (Bonus Interview!) <i>Communicator. Sports Enthusiast. Traveler.</i>	63
About the Author	67
Acknowledgements	68

# ABOUT THIS BOOK

**This book is for people who want to see another side of Paris.**

To stroll past the main attractions, but also find the hidden-away *boulangerie* with the most delicious croissants in *Montmartre*. To discover that the nearby Palace of Versailles all started with a royal temper tantrum over the beautiful *Château Vaux-le-Vicomte*—which is open to visitors and just 90 minutes from the center of Paris. Or to know ahead of time that Parisians tend to dress well—and fitting in requires you to do the same.

In other words, this book is for people who want to get under the skin of another culture. Who want to rent apartments and live in local neighborhoods. Who want to eat in tiny restaurants without English menus. Who want to make friends with locals. Who want to deepen their experience of the City of Light.

**Think of this as a supplement to your traditional guidebooks.**

Use those for their handy place histories, lists of local hotels (if that's your style), restaurant pricing charts, and basic language lessons. And then use this to go deeper—to figure out how to find the most colorful neighborhood markets, the most delicious restaurants in the city center, and that hidden-away hot spring just outside the city.

Getting excited? Me too. (Just wait till you read some of these interviews!)

Now, a little orientation:

This book is split into 11 interviews (I started with 10, but couldn't resist giving you one more) with people who live all over Paris. Many of them have lived in their city for decades. Some were born and raised in the region. Others are expats who have fallen in love with their new country. And all of them love showing travelers the best their city has to offer.

Below each person's name, you'll see a short bio designed to help you understand his or her background. If you are passionate about food, look for someone whose short bio

# ABOUT THIS BOOK

includes “foodie” or “chef.” If you’re a culture lover, look for a culture lover. And so on and so forth.

Finally, many of the interviewees are also tour guides, artists, business owners, or bloggers. Watch for web addresses under their interviews if you'd like to learn more about their art, blogs, businesses, or tours.

Now, then, into the book...

# ON TRAVELING LIKE A LOCAL

Like many well-touristed European cities, Paris has two faces.

There's the face that most tourists see, full of busy shopping streets, crowded museums, and well-known monuments and attractions—like the Eiffel Tower, *Notre Dame*, and the *Arc de Triomphe*.

Many of these things are worth seeing and experiencing (as many of my interviewees will tell you); they're world-famous for a reason.

BUT.

They aren't the whole story of Paris.

There's another face, another story—one that the locals live every day—full of hidden-away wine bars, buttery *escargot*, forested parks, friendly, picnicking locals, and three-course lunches.

For me, the goal of any travel is to experience this other side of a city, to slip into the culture, to try to understand it, to feel—even if I am only there for a few days—like I am truly living in that place, experiencing it like a local would.

I'm sure many of you feel the same.

Which is, of course, the whole point of this book.

In over 15 years of short-term international trips and two years of traveling full-time, mostly in Europe, I've come up with a routine that makes me feel more like a local. **The most important thing I've found is simply this: the best way to live like a local is to ask locals.**

Which is why, for those of us who don't have a local friend to show us around, I've collected these interviews and written this book.

# ON TRAVELING LIKE A LOCAL

Before you dive into the interviews, though, here are five more ways to experience Paris (or any city, really) in a fresh, authentic, local-centric way:

**1. Travel slowly.** Spend some real time in a place. The only way to see all of Paris' hidden corners is to spend some real time exploring the city.

**2. Rent apartments,** preferably in a neighborhood full of local people. (Not sure how to find the right neighborhood? I've asked locals to tell us in the interviews you'll find in this book. Not sure how to find apartments? My personal starting point is *Airbnb.com*.)

**3. Shop at fresh markets, small butcher shops, and neighborhood bakeries.** This is where you'll find the best food (as opposed to the grocery store, though that can also be a welcome and wonderful adventure).

**4. Make friends with people who live there.** Ask people about their lives, their thoughts, and their cultures. Expats and locals are both incredibly fascinating and every conversation will teach you a lot.

**5. Try to fit in.** In Paris, this means relax, take walks, dress nicely, say *bonjour* to the shopkeepers, and don't believe the stereotypes.

It is these principles and this type of travel that I've molded the questions in this book around. So, if you, too, want to slow down and experience Paris in a different way, these interviews are for you.

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Mark Jutton**

History-Lover. Theater Buff. Musician. Traveler.

## **About Mark**

I'm originally from a small town called Stafford in the center of England, but I always longed to move to a city. At 18, I moved to London to study and, after eight years there, it was time for me to explore life outside the UK. I moved to California for a while, then traveled across the Middle East and the Balkans to satisfy a curiosity about the events that had predominated the news during my childhood (namely the 1991 and 2003 Iraq wars, the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict and its effect on neighboring countries, and the Balkan war that ended in the mid-1990s). These two areas of the world continue to hold a fascination for me.

After that, my career took me to Milan and, now, Paris, where I work in medical advertising.

In my free time, I continue to travel a great deal (taking advantage of the long French holidays). I go to a number of concerts in Paris and abroad, mainly classical music and opera. I am a classically trained pianist, so taking advantage of the wealth of classical culture and the money the French arts council invests in music and opera here is a dream for me.

I also love cinema and can be regularly found in a movie theater on a rainy Sunday or a cold winter evening when everyone else prefers to stay at home.

## **What To Do In Paris (The Basics)**

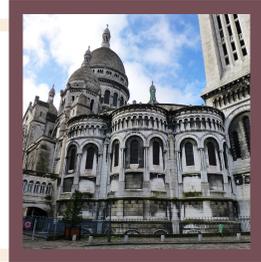
I always give a similar tour to guests when they arrive for the first time: I live in the northwest, so the major tourist spot in this area is the *Montmartre* neighborhood, which typifies the quaint bohemian Paris found in Toulouse Lautrec paintings—

# THE INTERVIEWS

that of can-can dancers, artsy cafés, and long philosophical conversations.

In *Montmartre*, you find the *Sacré Coeur* basilica, with its fantastic views over the city, the famous *Moulin Rouge* cabaret, the cute square around *Abesses*, whose ornate metro sign is often used in guidebooks and posters to advertise Paris, and the village of *Montmartre* which, while full of tourists, is a wonderful rabbit warren of winding cobbled streets, steps dotted with ornate street lamps, cafés, art shops, and lots of charm.

*“The Montmartre neighborhood typifies the quaint bohemian Paris found in Toulouse Lautrec paintings.”*



A tip I always give is to climb up to the *Sacré Coeur* one of the back ways, avoiding the steps directly in front of the basilica (where you can get annoyingly harassed to buy cheap bracelets and tatty toys).

A second area I love is the *Île de la Cité*, where the impressive gothic cathedral of *Notre Dame* is found. Queue up to wander around the interior or queue to go onto the roof, be among the gargoyles, and enjoy yet another fabulous view over the city.

From here, it's easy to explore the Latin Quarter, which is just south of the river. The Latin Quarter radiates south from *Saint-Michel* and, once you've slipped past the tourists that clog the streets directly around *Saint-Michel*, you can start to enjoy the streets housing the *Sorbonne* (the beautiful old university house), the *Panthéon* (a fascinating church-turned-

# THE INTERVIEWS

mausoleum), and the gorgeous *Jardin du Luxembourg*, where you can sit on small green chairs under trees (the lawns are largely forbidden to sit on) and watch Paris families while away an afternoon and old men playing *boules/pétanques* (the game of bowls, as it's called in the north vs. the south of France).

From the Latin Quarter, walk north through *Saint-Germain* where you'll find many designer shops.

Once you hit the river again, cross to its north side across the pedestrianized *Pont des Arts*, which is famous for carrying thousands of love locks (something that has become a Europe-wide craze in the last few years) and you will find yourself at the *Louvre* museum, famous for housing some of the world's greatest art pieces.

To the west of the *Louvre* is another large park called the *Jardin des Tuileries*, which spans all the way to the base of the *Champs-Élysées* shopping street. I am not a fan of the *Champs-Élysées*, but at one end of the avenue, you'll find *Place de la Concorde*, marked by the obelisk where executions used to take place during the French revolution and, at the other end, the *Arc de Triomphe*, where (once again) you can climb to the top and enjoy a view over the city (it's especially nice looking west toward *La Défense*, the financial district marked by the most modern buildings in the city).

Of course, there is also possibly the most famous Paris monument, the *Tour Eiffel* (Eiffel Tower) and the gardens surrounding it (the *Champs des Mars*); the *Hôtel des Invalides*, which is a large set of buildings dedicated to the military history of the country and the burial place for Napoleon; the *Montparnasse* tower; the *Musée d'Orsay* and its sister museum, the *Orangerie*; and the modern art complex at the *Centre Pompidou*. These are all worth seeing as well.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

The parks are places I love to hang out. In addition to the famous ones mentioned above, there are some wonderful green spaces a little further away, like *Parc Monceau*—a medium-sized green space in the seventeenth *arrondissement*—which is very popular with local families, joggers, picnickers, and walkers. Go for a stroll and take in the faux ruins and statues of poets and musicians.

Another wonderful park is *Parc de la Villette* in the northeast—home of the impressive concert and musical education center at the *Cité de la Musique*, as well as a portion of the beautiful *Canal St. Martin*.

The third park I'd recommend is the *Bois de Boulogne*—a huge, wild green space to the west, which is so full of forests and huge lakes that it feels like it is much further outside the city than it really is.

The three main cemeteries are also great strolling spaces for those who are interested in gothic mausoleums and looking for the resting places of famous poets, musicians, and public figures. There is a large cemetery at *Montmartre* near the *Place de Clichy* metro, another at *Montparnasse*, and the largest at *Père Lachaise* in the east.

A great area to feel quite Parisian is around the tenth *arrondissement* at *Canal St. Martin*, which is a popular spot to picnic in the summer, along the water lined by independent bars and restaurants.

A similarly fantastic picnic spot in summer is the relatively new pedestrianized stretch of the river at the south end and running east and west of the *Pont Alexandre III* bridge, which links the *Invalides* to the *Place de la Concorde*. Here, on most nights of the week in the summer and especially at the weekend, Parisians descend with picnics and drinks to sit alongside the river until the early hours of the morning.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Additional neighborhoods that may not figure into a first-time tourist itinerary, but are absolutely worth seeing, include the *Marais* (the Jewish and gay neighborhood, which is full of life all day and all night) and *Batignolles* in the north, which is a self-styled new hipster haunt.

A slightly grittier area that has recently turned hipster (to the chagrin of veterans) is the area just south of *Pigalle*. As the debauchery of Paris after the heyday of the *Moulin Rouge* has gradually subsided, this area has started to become the Brooklyn of Paris. Here, there is fun to be had at independent bars and clubs, with a dash of the unusual likely to be the norm!

## Where to Stay

The seventeenth *arrondissement* around *Villiers* is very bourgeois Paris and doesn't see many tourists. The fifteenth *arrondissement* is similarly residential, but maybe not as interesting to explore. Around St. Paul, the east of the *Marais* is bustling and central, as is *Bastille*, which is an interesting place to make a base just a little further east.

For those not wanting to stay right in the center, *Neuilly-sur-Seine* or *La Défense* could be interesting choices farther out and very Parisian (yet not lively) while still being easily accessible with public transport.

## Day Trips

Versailles and Chantilly are very accessible on public transport.

## What to Eat

The city serves up a collection of the best (and sometimes the worst) food from all over the country. Some classics: *steak tartare* (finely chopped raw beef with onions and seasonings), *magret de canard* (fattened duck breast), *sole meunière* (a special fried fish with butter sauce and lemon), *andouillettes* (intestine sausages—not for the faint of heart!), and any of the huge salads that can be served in most restaurants.

# THE INTERVIEWS

My personal favorites outside French cuisine include the numerous and fantastic Moroccan and Lebanese restaurants all over the city. A craze that is also popping up everywhere is fancy burgers and food trucks serving all sorts of cuisine that would not normally be associated with France.

A thing that is definitely worth taking advantage of is the lunch *formules* or meal deals in most restaurants during the week. These are two- or three-course meals (often with a glass of wine) that allow everyone to have a proper sit-down meal during the day and to try food that would probably cost much, much more in the evening. The prices can vary from 15 to 30 euros for such a deal and are very good value.

Visitors can also take advantage of the downloadable app *The Fork (La Fourchette)*, which scans the city for deals of up to 60% off meals, provided you take at least two courses. It's a great way to discover new places and also allows tourists with limited French to make a booking and have it confirmed without having to speak to someone over the phone.

## **Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)**

Restaurants include *Le Mechoui du Prince*, which is a fantastic Moroccan restaurant in the Latin Quarter on the same street as the very pleasant old wine bar/restaurant where they filmed scenes from the Woody Allen movie *Midnight in Paris*. Address: *36 Rue Monsieur le Prince*. Phone: +33 1 40 51 88 48.

Near *Bastille* and *St. Paul*, there is a place called *Chez Janou*, which specializes in southern French food. The interior is decorated very randomly, yet charmingly, with old posters, paintings, decorative tiles, and southern French nostalgia. The atmosphere is fabulously lively and convivial and tables are so close that you feel like you are part of your neighbors' meal, which often promotes conversation over some fantastic wines from Provence and Languedoc. Address: *2 Rue Roger Verlomme*. Phone: +33 1 42 72 28 41.

Down a small side street in *Saint-Germain* is a fun café/restaurant called *Le Petula*. It's quite modern and

# THE INTERVIEWS

relaxed, but always full. It's a great casual dining experience in an otherwise rather touristy area with a large menu and a good two- or three-course meal deal for lunch and dinner. Address: 6 Rue des Ciseaux. Phone: +33 1 44 41 01 09.

## Best Places to Take a Photo

I love the views from *Sacré Coeur*, *Montparnasse tower*, *Tour Eiffel*, or the top of the *Arc de Triomphe*.

Also, if you are brave, stopping in the center of the *Champs-Élysées* while the traffic lights are red and taking a photo towards the *Arc de Triomphe* is an impressive shot, especially if the sun is going down and setting behind the Arc.

*"The best places to take a photo: Sacré Coeur, Montparnasse tower, Tour Eiffel, or the top of the Arc de Triomphe."*



## Paris Inspirations

It's an evolving city, but with a foot very proudly stuck in the past. It's for this reason you have the juxtaposition of gorgeous old Haussmann buildings alongside the modern *Louvre* pyramid and the *Centre Pompidou*. It's the balance of the past and the desire to be part of the twenty-first century that inspires me.

*Photo by Moyan Brenn of [earthincolors.wordpress.com](http://earthincolors.wordpress.com).*

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Forest Collins**

Author. Foodie. Culturist.

## About Forest

Originally from Seattle, I've been an American in Paris for over a decade. I'm a freelance food and drink writer, founder of The Chamber Paris (a private social club for gastronomes), and author of the blog *52martinis.com* (a chronicle of my search for the best cocktail bars in Paris). I love living here, so I spend a lot of my free time exploring the city—its restaurants, bars, museums, architecture, off-the-beaten-path streets, parks, gardens, and unique or unusual things to do.

## What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

I'm a big proponent of relaxing into the daily rhythm of a place and making like the locals. And everyone eats—so what better way to do it than through food?

Have long, late, leisurely meals in French restaurants, linger all afternoon in a wine bar, and get lost in an open-air market while shopping for picnic supplies.

But, that advice works for almost any city. For Paris, my top five activities for first-timers are:

Head to the *Sacré Coeur* and spend a day walking the winding streets of *Montmartre*.

Take an evening cruise along the Seine for a different view of some of the city's main attractions (but skip the dinner cruises which aren't worth the money).

Visit *Notre Dame* and, if you're feeling energetic, climb the 387 steps to the top of the north tower to look its gargoyles right in the eyes.

Slip into the calm serenity of *Père Lachaise* cemetery.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Give in and take one of those hop-on/hop-off buses that will swing you by all the site-seeing biggies. Then the pressure is off to see everything and you can go back and spend time at the spots that really move you.

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

There is so much to Paris that I'm still discovering something new nearly every day. But, some of my favorite finds for repeat visitors are brunch on the terrace of the *Musée Jacquemart-André* (at 158 Boulevard Haussmann), *Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature*, Park *Butte-Chaumont*, oysters and wine on the street in front of *Le Baron Rouge* (a wine bar located at 1 Rue Théophile Roussel), *Les Berges de Seine* (a beautiful new public space with floating gardens and al fresco dining options), the *Serres d'Auteuil* botanical gardens, *Promenade Plantée* (a linear park on top of an old railway), and *Chez Robert Electron Libre* (an abandoned building repurposed into an art center on Rue du Rivoli).

## Where to Stay

*Montmartre*. Sure it's touristy, but slip around to the backside and you'll find nearly nothing but locals. And, if you're lucky enough to get to know residents of this beautiful butte and explore it with them, you'll see that it has never really lost its village feel.

## Day Trips

Versailles is an easy choice. I prefer the gardens to the grandeur of the chateau. And for a different kind of garden, visit Giverny to see Monet's garden and the waterlily pond that inspired his paintings.

## What to Eat

If you focus on nothing else, really explore the wine, cheese, and bread. It's such a part of everyday life here.

You can get traditional dishes like *terrines* (a coarse type of *pâté*), *foie gras* (fattened goose or duck liver), *charcuterie* (prepared meats), *duck confit* (a leg of duck cured in salt and

# THE INTERVIEWS

cooked in its own fat), *escargot* (snails), and *boeuf bourguignon* (traditional French beef stew) anywhere in France, so give them a go in Paris as well.

Recommendations that are more specific to the city include Pierre Hermé *macarons* (those little colored cookies), falafel in the *Marais*, and small plates at the new generation of wine bars (Verjus at 52 *Rue de Richelieu*, Bones at 43 *Rue Godefroy Cavaignac*, Septime at 80 *Rue de Charonne*, l'Avant Comptoir at 9 *Carrefour de l'Odéon*, etc.).

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

For a casual bar, try Red House. It's a laid-back, sometimes-loud, easy-going spot with a young and lively crowd. Tip: Hit it early in the evening for one of the best happy hours in town. Address: 1 B *Rue de la Forge Royale*.

For something more classic, try Bar Le Forum. Open since 1918, this is where you go for upscale sipping with a sophisticated after-work crowd. Tip: Check out their whisky selection; it's impressive. Address: 4 *Boulevard Malesherbes*.

For something trendy, try Mary Celeste. This light and airy spot serves up some of the city's best cocktails to a crowd of trend-setting foodies and cocktail lovers. Tip: Absolutely try some of their Asian-inspired small plates with drinks. Address: 1 *Rue Commines*.

And as for the restaurants...

For something casual, I recommend Verjus Wine Bar. There is a full restaurant upstairs, which is excellent, but I prefer making a meal of the small plates at the wine bar. Tip: Do not miss the fried chicken, which is legendary with local foodies. Address: 47 *Rue de Montpensier*.

For something classic, visit L'Ecailler du Bistro. This place can't be beat for some of the city's best oysters and seafood. Tip: Not into seafood? Try their adjoining Bistro Paul Bert, also a

# THE INTERVIEWS

local favorite for classics and meat dishes. Address: 22 Rue Paul Bert. Phone: +33 1 43 72 76 77.

For something gastronomic, try Septime. Having earned a spot on the World's 50 best restaurants list, this place offers exceptional new French food and excellent service. Tip: It's now next-to-impossible to get a reservation, so try for lunch if you're having difficulty reserving for dinner. Address: 80 Rue de Charonne. Phone: +33 1 43 67 38 29.

## How to Fit In

Of course there are common sense answers like be polite, learn a few words in French. But, more importantly, I'd say *relax*. Often, I see visitors get unnecessarily wrapped up in trying to figure out rules that are sometimes archaic and other times unnecessary. Like, should you kiss people as a greeting? (Answer: let them take the lead.) Should you use the bathroom as a guest in someone's home? (Answer: please do; it's a myth that no one does.) Should you say *bonjour* to shop owners? (Answer: yes.)

While it's great to make an effort to fit in, sometimes these never-ending rules send visitors into a panic and they forget to take a deep breath, look around to see what's going on, and just be nice. Parisians are people, too. They're unlikely to judge you for your manner of greeting and more likely to just connect with you if you're pleasant and friendly. And that makes for a better experience for both you and them.

I also asked my boyfriend this question to get a French person's take. He says to "drop your preconceived notions." He says French people bathe, shave their armpits, don't wear berets, and get tired of being asked about the same clichés all the time. Do people still think all those things? Apparently so, because he feels strongly about it.

So, I guess my advice is both: relax and be open-minded.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## **How to Meet Locals & Make Friends**

I'd start before even touching down by exploring things with Twitter, where you're sure to gather a few contacts for your destination. If you're feeling really proactive, you can even call for a Tweetup to get to know the local Tweeps.

Once on the ground, get out and do something with a group that shares your interest. Sign up for a Meetup event (there are tons in Paris). Try one of the local supper clubs (which change regularly, so best to look them up online before you go). Go to Sunday dinner at Jim Haynes, the “godfather” of supper clubs. Or attend one of the food and drink events we put on in The Chamber Paris, which—as a members-only club—is predominately made up of locals (though we encourage and enjoy having a few visitors in the mix for every event).

## **Best Places to Take a Photo**

In sunny summer months, get a drink and the perfect shot of the city from the Le Quarante Trois rooftop bar at the Holiday Inn (address: *4 Rue Danton*); it's one of the best views in town.

In the winter, make a classic *Montmartre* staircase your backdrop as you hold a bright yellow umbrella in the romantic rain.

## **Why Visit Paris?**

Paris is iconic, yet mysterious. It's easy to immediately fall for a breathtaking view of the Eiffel Tower, but it's when you tease out her hidden secrets that the infatuation develops into a deeper love.

*Find Forest at [thechamberparis.com](http://thechamberparis.com) and [52martinis.com](http://52martinis.com).*

# THE INTERVIEWS



## Camille Malmquist

Pastry Chef. Beer Connoisseur. Writer at Paris By Mouth.

### About Camille

I grew up in Portland, Oregon and now I live in Paris' eleventh *arrondissement*, in a lively, multicultural neighborhood. I am currently the pastry chef at Frenchie To Go in the second *arrondissement*, where I make traditional American treats like cheesecake, doughnuts, cookies, and bagels. I love taking these basic recipes and changing them throughout the seasons.

In my free time, I like to explore the city, visit museums and parks, and scope out craft beer shops and bars, which I write about for Paris By Mouth ([parisbymouth.com](http://parisbymouth.com)).

### What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

*Notre Dame* is pretty awe-inspiring. Apart from its intricate beauty, I'm always amazed by the history there. Just thinking about how many people have walked on those stones over the nearly 1,000 years that the cathedral has been standing puts me into a peaceful, zen-like state of mind.

I'd skip the *Louvre* in favor of the *Musée d'Orsay*, which is much more doable in a few hours and less likely to leave you with a sense of museum fatigue. Plus, while it's a parade of greatest hits from Monet, Van Gogh, and other heavy hitters, seeing these works in person really is a different experience from looking at a print.

And, of course, you can't miss the Eiffel Tower. Even if you don't have the time or patience to go to the top, you can enjoy the famous structure from the *Champ de Mars* park (with a picnic if the weather cooperates!).

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

The Rodin Museum is a neat little spot tucked away near *Invalides*; the sculpture garden is fascinating any time of year.

I always enjoy a visit to the *Jardin des Plantes*, too, maybe followed by a picnic just across the river at the Arsenal port or a mint tea at the *Grande Mosquée de Paris* in the fifth *arrondissement*.

If it's raining, the covered markets can provide a couple hours of entertainment. My favorites are *Marché Beauvau/Aligre* in the twelfth *arrondissement* and the St. Quentin and St. Martin markets in the tenth.

## Where to Stay

The area in the tenth *arrondissement* near the *Canal St. Martin* is great, with lots of good shopping, trendy restaurants, and strolling/picnicking opportunities on the canal.

The second *arrondissement* near *Rue Montorgueil* is nice for food shopping and feeling like part of the neighborhood.

And *Rue du Commerce* in the fifteenth has a charming small-city feel with good food shopping, local cafés, and several family-friendly parks, all within walking distance of the Eiffel Tower.

## Day Trips

The gardens at Versailles are everything they're cracked up to be, even though I find the *chateau* itself a little underwhelming. For a truly impressive *chateau* experience, Fontainebleau is well worth the trip.

Cathedral buffs will definitely want to make the trip out to Chartres.

And the Champagne region is only about 45 minutes away by train (I've been meaning to take a day trip to Reims or Epernay myself for six years now!).

# THE INTERVIEWS

## What to Eat

Traditional French cooking is getting harder to come by in Paris, but you can almost always find a good steak. Served with potatoes (fried, mashed, or roasted), Bearnaise sauce, and a green salad, it's an easy bistro classic.

Don't miss the cheese. French cheeses are stunning in their variety and artisanship. The cheese course at Astier at 44 Rue Jean-Pierre Timbaud in the eleventh *arrondissement* is legendary—and rightfully so.

*“Don't miss the cheese. French cheeses are stunning in their variety and artisanship.”*

*Photo by deathiscertainitshouruncertain on Flickr.*



Make sure to get some good bread, too. It's like nowhere else in the world. And while you're at the bakery, you really have to try the *croissants*. I love the Liberté bakery at 39 Rue des Vinaigriers in the tenth for both of these right now.

As for drinks, natural wine is sweeping the city and is usually served in places that are also really interesting to eat, like Chapeau Melon at 92 Rue Rebeval in the nineteenth, Au Passage at 1bis Passage Saint-Sébastien in the eleventh, or Frenchie Wine Bar at 6 Rue du Nil in the second, where the delicious cooking is focused on fresh, seasonal flavors.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

I adore Le Supercoin at 3 Rue Baudelique in the eighteenth *arrondissement*, where they pour only French craft beers at very reasonable prices. Les Trois 8 at 11 Rue Victor Letalle in the twentieth is another favorite for international microbrews—and

# THE INTERVIEWS

for the fact that they serve natural wine, too, for my friends who don't like beer. Verjus' wine bar at *47 Rue Montpensier* in the first is a Pèrennial favorite for their carefully chosen wines and the marvelous food that chef Braden Perkins cooks up to accompany them.

As for restaurants, I'm crazy about *Le Casse-Noix* at *56 Rue de la Fédération* in the fifteenth. The menu is always changing according to what's good in the markets, the food is always delectable, from *amuse-bouche* (bite-sized *hors d'œuvres*) to dessert (the *riz au lait* is some of the best anywhere!), and the value for the money is outstanding. Phone: +33 1 45 66 09 01.

Hidden deeper in the fifteenth, *Le Grand Pan* (at *20 Rue Rosénwald*) serves up mouthwatering *côte de boeuf* (prime rib) and *côte de porc* (pork chops) for two and sells wine by the liter. Phone: +33 1 42 50 02 50.

For lighter, more contemporary cuisine, I've loved meals at *Fish* (at *69 Rue de Seine* in the sixth; phone: +33 1 43 54 34 69), *Le Galopin* (at *34 Rue Sainte-Marthe* in the tenth; phone: +33 1 42 06 05 03) and *Clamato* (at *80 Rue de Charonne* in the eleventh; phone: +33 1 43 72 74 53).

And for a splash-out special occasion dinner it's hard to top the tasting menu at *L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon* at *5 Rue Montalembert* in the seventh. Phone: +33 1 42 22 56 56.

## How to Fit In

One of the most important things you can do is say *bonjour* to the shopkeeper upon entering a shop and *merci, au revoir* on leaving. It is considered very rude to omit these greetings.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

Go to a beer bar. Beer people the world over are a genuinely friendly bunch, always willing to share local tips and chat the evening away with perfect strangers. In Paris, *Le Supercoin* (mentioned above) and *L'Express de Lyon* (at *1 Rue de Lyon* in the twelfth) are particularly good for this kind of interaction.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Best Places to Take a Photo

The *Pyrénées* metro stop has a great view over the city, down a steep, bustling street with the Eiffel Tower straight ahead in the distance. *Trocadero* offers perfect, close-up views of the tower. The islands in the center of the city (*Ile de la Cité*, where *Notre Dame* is located, and *Île Saint-Louis*) have lots of neat hidden corners, as well as a lovely perspective on the river Seine and the buildings that line it. And the exterior of the *Louvre* is rich with photo ops, from the glass pyramid to the Tuileries gardens.

## Why Visit Paris?

Great food, incredible history, and beautiful details everywhere you look.

## Paris Inspirations

The food available to work with here just outshines most other places: the beautiful, seasonal fruits and vegetables, the wild game, the incomparable butter.

Also inspiring are the communities I find myself a part of. Working in a restaurant, I am part of a community of cooks, which overlaps with the food writing community I am often surrounded by and, more recently, a vibrant beer community has taken shape. It's exciting to be involved in these groups, who are active in shaping their respective scenes in Paris.

## Final Notes & Other Tips

I'd advise anyone planning a trip to Paris to be sure to leave time to just wander. It's easy to get caught up in planning every minute of every day, booking every meal, and so on, but it's so important to have time to explore on your own terms, too. You may discover something great all on your own!

*Find Camille at [parisbymouth.com](http://parisbymouth.com).*

# THE INTERVIEWS



## Daisy de Plume

Art Historian. Entrepreneur. Treasure Hunter.

### About Daisy

My name is Daisy. I'm originally from New York City's West Village and worked as a magazine editor before moving to Paris 10 years ago.

I met my Argentine husband here and have a multi-lingually-confused toddler named Storsh. We're happily tucked in the *Faubourg St. Denis* area of Paris, which is a 20-minute walk to where I spend most my time, at the *Louvre*.

Two years ago, I started a company (called THATLou) that runs themed treasure hunts at the *Louvre* (for the first time in my life actually putting my Art History degree to use!). I started the company because too many people find the *Louvre* overwhelming (and understandably so! If you took all three wings and made it into a straight line, it'd be eight miles long) and too many people make a beeline for the Mona Lisa, overlooking the world of treasures along the way. This is a crime that my treasure hunts are trying to solve by making the museum fun and interactive and making history and art history come alive for kids and adults, art-lovers and philistines alike.

Since starting, we've also expanded across the Seine to create THATd'Or (for the *Musée d'Orsay*, where you'll find the Impressionist masterpieces) and THATRue (three distinct hunts in the Latin Quarter). I've had an absolute ball developing it all.

### What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

If it's your first time, you really do need to see the major sites and neighborhoods—from *Montmartre* to the *Marais*, the Eiffel Tower and *l'Arc de Triomphe* to a night boat along the Seine, *Notre Dame* to the *Louvre*, *Pompidou*, *Musée d'Orsay*, etc.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Make sure to wander around some of the little-known quarters on quiet, traffic-less streets in between (for a break from the clusters of tourists around the main sites).

One site I like pointing out is *Père Lachaise*, the cemetery in the twentieth *arrondissement*. Tourists don't often think of cemeteries as places to visit, but Parisians will take a sandwich there to sit on a bench on the hill. It's gorgeous (with more than 5,000 trees in something like 50 varieties) and fascinating (with graves ranging from foreigners like Oscar Wilde, Chopin, Modigliani, and Jim Morrison to Frenchies like Balzac, Beaumarchais, Géricault, and Haussmann—the city planner who's responsible for the famous sweeping boulevards of Paris). This is well worth an afternoon.

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

For a perfect paragon of modernism, there's a house Le Corbusier built in 1923 called *Villa La Roche*. It's out in the sixteenth *arrondissement*, but has a small museum that makes it well worth trekking out to. It's also wonderful to see his famous furniture within its context.

Another treasure for photography lovers is the *Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson* in the fourteenth, near *Gare Montparnasse*. It's open late on Wednesday nights and is a gem of photography shows, with a permanent collection on the top floor of Cartier-Bresson's snaps, as well as his archives.

As for strolls, it's hard to top the area in the nineteenth near *Buttes Chaumont*, both for its park and also for a small network of cobblestone streets around the small lanes (called *villas*) at the *Botzaris* metro station. The *villas* are lined with two-story houses, all with verdant front gardens, with green trickling down the hill. The first flat my husband and I shared before marrying was half a block from the park, so I have very nostalgic memories of our romantic picnics on the grass.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Where to Stay

It depends on your budget. If money's not a problem, I'd recommend renting a flat on *Place Dauphine*, at the end of *Île de la Cité* (the larger island in the Seine, where *Notre Dame* is). *Place Dauphine* is a triangular place dating from the early seventeenth century (obviously from Henri IV's time, with its red brick *façade*).

Another possibly-pricey-but-truly-wonderful option would be an Airbnb flat overlooking the gardens of *Palais Royal*. Both of these places are lacking in tourists, yet are in the very center of town.

If you're on a budget, there's the *Hotel de Nestlé* in the sixth *arrondissement*, which is in the center of *Saint-Germain* and has an adorable rosé garden courtyard where you can escape after a day's touring with a lovely bottle of rosé.

*"[The Château Vaux-le-Vicomte] has divine candle-lit concerts in the summertime."*

*Photo by @lain G on Flickr.*



## Day Trips

Definitely visit the seventeenth-century *Château Vaux-le-Vicomte*, which was influential on many a *château* across Europe in its time. Nicolas Fouquet, the owner, was finance minister to Louis XIV. He hired (discovered, really) the gardener, Le Nôtre, to create its gardens, as well as architect, Le Vau, and painter, Le Brun, to create this perfect gem.

When the palace and gardens were finished, Fouquet hosted a fete to end all fetes, debuting Molière's *Les Facheux*, poems by La Fontaine, etc. All of the *intelligentsia* and nobility of

# THE INTERVIEWS

France were in attendance, including the Sun King himself. Such opulence, perfection, and grandeur grated on Louis XIV, who swiftly had Fouquet arrested (for life) and stole Le Nôtre, Le Vau, and Le Brun and set them to work to create Versailles!

Voltaire said of the famous party: "On 17 August, at six in the evening, Fouquet was the King of France; at two in the morning he was nobody."

It's only about 90 minutes from central Paris and has divine candle-lit concerts in the summertime and, if you'd like to get a sense of what a Christmas visit is like there, *Out and About in Paris* (a fantastic Paris resource at [outandaboutinparis.com](http://outandaboutinparis.com)) has a few posts on it.

It is well worth the short trip outside the city to see this perfect gem that sent Louis XIV into his fit of jealousy and gave us Versailles!

## What to Eat

Of course, it depends on your taste and gastronomic curiosity, but I personally adore classic, simple-but-rich French dishes, from a starter of *escargot* (snails...drowned in garlic and butter, please!) to a dish of *foie gras poêlé* (seared fattened goose or duck liver).

For less exotic, but no less delicious dishes, I like *Breton crepes* (made with buckwheat) or stick-to-your-ribs *Alsatian choucroute* (a variety of sausage, potato, and sauerkraut).

I'm also very happy with a simple picnic of *saucisson* (a type of cured pork sausage) and a good *baguette* with a myriad of cheeses. De Gaulle said, "How can you govern a country that has a variety of 246 cheeses?" I've lived here 10 years and am still investigating every last one of those cheeses, each glorious.

As for wines, I'm not quite so all-loving. My ideal bottle is a steely, crisp *Chablis* (from Bourgogne/Burgundy). This wine is understated and perfect, in my book.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Another pleasure is of the *Sauvignon Blanc* strand from the Upper Loire. Or a good bottle of *Sancerre* (red or white). Neither is sweet, nor heavy; both are subtle and my very definition of heaven.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

My standard favorite when guests are in town is PAN, located at *12 Rue Martel*. Its eclectic styles range from East Berlin stripped walls to Danish modern furniture and from gorgeous wood-paneled zig-zag floors to a shiny varnished ceiling that adds a richer dimension with its reflection. The food is delicious and the menu changes nearly daily. The service somehow makes you feel coddled, even though you remain aware of the waiter's superiority in that strange twist the French manage. Reservations advised (fashionistas cross town for it). Phone: +33 9 52 51 63 70.

If you have time to kill for an *apéritif* before dinner, there's a fabulously small hole-in-the-wall (without quite being a dive—it's just a small hipster haunt) called *Au Bleu Cérise* around the corner from PAN on *Cour des Petits-Ecuries*. They make a mean mojito and are among the few genuine small bars in Paris that have a proper ice grinder. As *Cour des Petites Ecuries* is tree-lined, cobblestoned, and traffic-free, you can take your drink outside for a lovely people-watching cocktail.

When we're feeling fancy and head out for date night, my husband and I never tire of *Macéo* (at *15 Rue des Petits-Champs*), right off *Palais Royal* in the first *arrondissement*. It's impossible not to feel like a king here, with their soaring ceilings lined with exquisite mouldings, service that lavishes you in luxury (I can't fathom a moment when owner, Mark Williamson, isn't charming) and food to linger over for hours. It's one of the few places in Paris that actually includes gastronomic cuisine for vegetarians, but, of course, also offers delights such as *carré de cochon Iberico rosé* (caramelized pork in a rosé reduction) with *écrasé de broccoli et purée de girolles* (crushed broccoli with a puree of my very favorite mushrooms). A peerless experience! Phone: +33 1 42 97 53 85.

# THE INTERVIEWS

For a last-minute casual dinner with friends, I'm very fond of Bistrot Bellet (at 84 Rue du Faubourg St. Denis in the tenth). It has a clean, modern design and simple, straightforward French dishes with a Mediterranean twist. My favorite table is actually the low, wide bar where you can get lost in conversation for hours facing a rich aquamarine-blue tile wall with a delicious steak and salad, followed by a naughty absinthe. Phone: +33 1 45 23 42 06.

## How to Fit In

Anglo tourists tend to ask Parisians questions in English without thinking twice. Many Parisians speak English, but if you just ask the simple "*parlez vous Anglais?*" (do you speak English?) before you light into a question, it will turn their disdain into a wealth of help.

It's also customary to say *bonjour* when you enter a store, restaurant, waiting room, etc. Even if you don't know the people, a simple hello goes a long way here and it's something that few tourists bother with.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

Language exchanges are a great way of meeting locals and learning French. There are a number of places that put local Parisians in touch with foreigners. There are also language socials you can find on *meetup.com*, which will get you to Parisians who'd love to practice their English and make friends.

## Best Places to Take a Photo

Well, given my passions, the first place that comes to mind for the most phenomenal view of Paris is in the *Louvre*. My favorite spot is the top central room (on the second floor of Sully, room A) at the apex of the *Louvre*. They provide you with a little window seat so you can linger over the top of IM Pei's pyramid, along the green of the Tuileries, with the glass-domed roof of the *Grand Palais* in the distance, the *Champs-Élysées* bringing your eye all the way out to the modernity of *La Défense*. No one goes there (which is why I make my Luxe Hunt

# THE INTERVIEWS

end there, so no one misses it). And seeing Paris on this axis is sublime!

I'm addicted to Instagram and have fun snapping the city from pretty much any point—from the metro to the Ritz (well, when it's not being renovated).

The top of the *Centre Pompidou* is pretty fantastic, from all sorts of directions. Another great place in the summer months is from the Paris Ferris wheel, which is sometimes at *Place de la Concorde* and sometimes alongside the *Rue de Rivoli* side of *Jardin de Tuileries*.

## Paris Inspirations

I'm surprised to hear myself say this, but the light and sky are my big inspirations. It's strange because it's grey so much of the time, but there's a harshness or a sharpness to the grey light that I'll never become accustomed to. It's like a blanket of comforting melancholy. And the clouds that sometimes pop out of nowhere at dusk can be fantastic. This northern European sky is completely foreign to me, despite having been here for more than a decade.

Of course, the history and culture of this place are also a huge inspiration. Just to walk past the walls and streets and trees (there's a tree in the fifth *arrondissement* that's been there longer than America and Argentina have existed as political entities) that have such weight of history pleases me to no end and makes me happy that my toddler, Storsh, will incorporate such history into his normal diet.

## Final Notes & Other Tips

On a sad note, beware of the Romanian children asking you to sign a petition or to look at gold rings. This is a scam/pick-pocketing strategy.

On a local note, go for a bag-painting workshop in the lovely *Marais* home of designer Kasia Dietz, who runs a variety of these creative experiences over macarons, cupcakes, or a full lunch ([kasiadietzworkshops.com](http://kasiadietzworkshops.com)).

# THE INTERVIEWS

On a culinary note, you cannot miss La Cuisine Paris, the divine cooking school overlooking the Seine in the heart of the *Marais*. From *croissant* classes to marketing and macarons, for kids, adults, and couples, this is a quintessentially French experience ([lacuisineparis.com](http://lacuisineparis.com)).

On a French wine note, take a wine class with Thierry Givone who shows you how to discern between regions, vines, and influences with his Wine Tasting in Paris classes ([wine-tasting-in-paris.com](http://wine-tasting-in-paris.com)).

On a touring-the-city note, why not have a wonderfully informative, fun personal guide through the city? Bryan Pirolli is an American currently teaching at and getting his PhD from La Sorbonne and he offers great private tours at [bryanpirolli.com](http://bryanpirolli.com).

On a budget? Pick up a set of *boules* (a special type of balls for the game of *pétanque*) and a bottle of wine (or *pastis* if you really want authenticity) and head for the nearest park.

And, of course, on a family note, don't overlook the trampolines in the Tuileries gardens after your treasure hunt at the *Louvre*!

Find Daisy at [thatlou.com](http://thatlou.com) and [thatdor.com](http://thatdor.com).

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Danielle Perrin**

Foodie. Wine Connoisseur. World-Traveler.

## About Dani

My name is Danielle Tellez Perrin and I am an American in Paris married to a charming Frenchman. Before being whisked off to the land of baguettes and wine, I was a Pediatric Emergency Room Nurse. Due to complications of transferring my nursing license, I am a Business English Teacher in Paris.

During my free time, I enjoy people watching while sipping a glass of wine (when I am not planning our next adventure around the world, that is).

*"My allegiance is to my country, but my heart belongs to Paris"*  
- Anonymous

## What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

The first thing you should do when you land on French soil is rush to the local *boulangerie* (bakery) for a fresh *baguette* and/or *croissant*! It is only then that you are properly nourished and energized to see the famous and infamous sites this city has to offer.

Not to sound cliché, but on your first trip you really must see the basic tourist spots: the Eiffel Tower (especially by night), the Louvre (Mona Lisa), *Arc de Triomphe*, *Champs-Élysées* (the big shopping street), the *Palais Garnier* (Paris Opera House), *Tuileries Gardens*, *Notre Dame*, the *Sacré Coeur* basilica, *Moulin Rouge*, and the Palace of Versailles. You cannot go to Paris and not see these sights.

After conquering the Paris tourist sights, I recommend switching modes from tourist to world traveler. Lose the map and forget the itinerary. Paris is a café culture renowned for people watching while enjoying a cup of coffee or sipping a glass of

# THE INTERVIEWS

wine. It is not the quantity but the quality of life that defines the Parisian lifestyle.

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

"A walk around Paris will provide lessons in history, beauty, and in the point of Life." Or so says Thomas Jefferson.

Once you've seen the main sights, take the road less travelled. Escape the tourist traps and crowds to wander the local neighborhoods (*arrondissements*). Each *arrondissement* has its own ambience and character, offering something different for everyone.

Some of my favorite places to wander include:

In and around the *Montmartre* neighborhood: past the *Sacré Coeur* basilica, around the *Abbesses* metro stop, past the Wall of Love (where love is written in hundreds of languages), by the *Moulin Rouge*, past the *Café de Deux Moulin* (from the movie *Amélie*), *Place de Tertre* (a beautiful square near the *Sacré Coeur*), *Bateaux Lavoir* (the former residence and meeting place of some of the great early-twentieth-century artists and writers), *Montmartre Vineyard*, *Pigalle* (famous for its sex shops), *Montmartre Cemetery*, and the *Dali Museum*.

In the Latin Quarter: *Jardin Luxembourg*, *Sorbonne* (the historical house of the former University of Paris), *Panthéon* (a church-turned-mausoleum), *Boulevard Saint-Germain*, *Café de Flore* (one of the oldest, most prestigious cafés in the city), *Les Deux Magots* (a café made famous by the likes of Ernest Hemingway and Simone de Beauvoir), *Saint-Germain-des-Prés* (a former Benedictine abbey), *Cours du Commerce Saint-André* (one of Paris' glass-roofed pedestrian shopping streets), *Saint Michel* (a pretty square with a famous fountain), *Shakespeare & Co.* (the famous bookstore), *Notre Dame*, and *Île Saint-Louis* (a pretty, natural island in the Seine).

In the *Marais* neighborhood: *Place des Vosges* (the oldest planned square in Paris), the *Picasso Museum*, *Bastille* (the

# THE INTERVIEWS

famous fortress), *Centre Pompidou* (a unique museum), *Les Halles* (a fresh market), and *Hotel de Ville* (the administration building).

In the *Bercy* area: *Parc de Bercy* (a public park along the *Seine*), *Bercy Village* (a cobbled, lovely pedestrian shopping area), and *Bibliothèque François Mitterrand* (the area around the National Library of France).

I also love pensive strolls around *Père Lachaise*—a haunting, beautiful cemetery where you'll find Oscar Wilde, Frederic Chopin, Edith Piaf, Georges Bizet, Jim Morrison, and Moliere, among others.

*"I love pensive strolls around Père Lachaise—a haunting, beautiful cemetery where you'll find Oscar Wilde."*



*Marché des Enfants Rouges* is a historical market, perfect for people watching.

*Parc des Buttes Chaumont* is the perfect spot for a picnic and escaping the city life with a bottle of wine or two. This is also the ideal location for a run or yoga.

*Marche aux Puces* is a famous antique market and wonderful to wander through.

Finally, the *passages couverts* (hidden passages with glass ceilings filled with boutiques and restaurants) are wonderful to stroll through. Full list: *Passage Jouffroy*, *Passage des Panoramas*, *Galerie Vivienne*, *Galerie Véro Dodat*, *Galerie Colbert*, *Passage du Caire*, and *Passage Brady*.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Where to Stay

I suggest renting an apartment for the true Parisian experience. There is something intimate and quaint about embracing a new culture when you live in a local's home. As far as neighborhoods, I recommend the Latin Quarter, *Montmartre*, or the *Marais*. Each *arrondissement* has its charms, so decide based on which neighborhood reflects your preference.

## Day Trips

A few of my favorites are Reims (about 45 minutes from Paris in the Champagne region), Chartres (capital of the Eure-et-Loir area), Mont Saint Michel (the famous island community of Normandy), Saint Malo (the walled port city in Brittany), and the D-Day beaches of Normandy.

## What to Eat

"For Paris is a movable feast." - Hemingway

When it comes to Paris, you must taste her to know her. From the fresh *baguette* and *croissant* to the *foie gras* (goose liver) to the crack of your first *crème brûlée*, food is the heart of the Parisian culture. If you don't believe me, note that there are over 350 cheeses in France...that's a different cheese for every day of the year.

Here is a list of my personal favorite French dishes:

Starters: *escargot* (snails), *foie gras poêlé* or *pâté* (goose or duck liver fried or served as a *pâté*), and *charcuterie* (meat products).

Main dishes: *magret de canard* (duck breast with honey), *bouillabaisse* (seafood stew from Marseilles), *confit canard* (duck confit), *coq au vin* (chicken braised with wine, garlic, and mushrooms), *moulets et frites* (mussels and fries), *galette* (a type of crepes), *boeuf bourguignon* (a well-known beef stew from Burgundy), and *raclette* (melted cheese and sometimes meat cooked on a special grill).

# THE INTERVIEWS

Cheeses: St. Felicien, St. Marcellin, *chevre*, *tommette d'espelette*, and truffle *brie*.

Desserts: *crème brûlée*, *soufflé* (chocolate, Grand Marnier, amaretto), *îles flottantes* (meringue on crème anglaise), *macaroons*, *mille feuilles* (layered pastries), and *profiteroles* (cream puffs).

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

I highly recommend using the website Paris by Mouth ([parisbymouth.com](http://parisbymouth.com)). They suggest restaurants, bars, cafés, etc. based on *arrondissement*, which I find helpful.

Some of my personal favorite restaurants include Le Galopin (with their exciting seven-course mystery dinner) at 34 Rue Sainte-Marthe, Frenchies (for fine French cuisine) at 5-6 Rue du Nil, Guilo Guilo (for sushi with French flair) at 8 Rue Garreau, L'Office (for more French cuisine) at 3 Rue Richer, Une Dimanche a Paris (for chocolate-inspired cuisine) at 4 Cours du Commerce Saint-André, and Mariage Frères (for high tea), whose multiple locations can be found at [mariagefreres.com](http://mariagefreres.com).

For reservations, phone Le Galopin at +33 1 42 06 05 03, Frenchies at +33 1 40 39 96 19, Guilo Guilo at +33 1 42 54 23 92, L'Office at +33 1 47 70 67 31, or Une Dimanche a Paris at +33 1 56 81 18 18.

I also love L'Avant Comptoir at 9 Carrefour de l'Odeon for French tapas and wine and La Compagnie de Bretagne (a gastronomic *creperie*) at 9 Rue De L'ecole de Medicine.

As for bars, my favorites are Experimental Cocktail Club at 37 Rue Saint-Sauveur, Le Silencio at 142 Rue Montmartre, Frenchie's Bar a Vin at 5-6 Rue du Nil, and La Bascule at 24 Rue Durantin.

## How to Fit In

The most common complaint French people make about tourists is how loud they are when they speak.

# THE INTERVIEWS

In addition to toning down our voices, it's also always a good thing to try to adapt to the French culture. For example, my in-laws were offended when American tourists (whom they met in a beautiful Burgundy vineyard) asked them where the closest McDonalds was.

It's important to understand that French people take pride in their cuisine and one of the easiest ways to earn their respect is by tasting and respecting said cuisine.

## **How to Meet Locals & Make Friends**

Like most international cities, Paris can be a difficult place to meet locals and make friends. And since there are many tourists or French people from different parts of France, it is difficult to meet true Parisians.

I suggest that you do what you love and be open to starting discussions. I have had interesting conversations with strangers while people watching at a café (granted, most of the people I met were tourists).

## **Why Visit Paris?**

The one thing I recommend to people when they come to Paris is to *slow down and enjoy her*. Do not rush from one tourist site to the next, but stroll and embrace the ambience of the city of light. It is not the destination, but the journey that is memorable.

Paris is a city of detail...breath the fresh *boulangerie* air, savor another glass of wine, spend another 10 minutes sitting on the park bench people watching, dance in the rain...Paris is a love affair waiting for you to open your heart.

Personally, Paris seduced me with her café culture. I love losing all sense of time while sipping a glass of wine and chatting with friends or people watching.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Whenever I forget why I fell in love with this city and get lost in the chaos of life, I take a stroll or sit in a café to remember that it is the quality of life that made me fall in love with Paris.

## **Paris Inspirations**

*"An artist has no home in Europe except in Paris."* - Friedrich Nietzsche

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Sam Hajjar**

Startup Coach. Entrepreneur. Design Enthusiast. History Buff.

## About Sam

I am a born-and-raised Parisian working as a coach/mentor for startups and entrepreneurs (for an accelerator and incubator platform in Paris at *50partners.fr*).

I am also the co-founder of a startup called WonderfulTime, whose mission is to provide travelers in France (and, quite soon, across major European cities) with the opportunity to meet and engage with a wide variety of talented, creative, and vibrant hosts to experience local culture and enrich their travel experiences.

## What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

I am very fond of history, architecture, and luxury design—and Paris is the perfect spot for all of that. Aside from the basics that everyone will have heard of, I suggest taking the time to discover or rediscover:

*Place Vendôme*, a square in the first *arrondissement*, which is the royal heart of Paris and a wonderful place for architecture and luxury lovers;

*Palais Royal* and its hidden (and not-so-touristic) gardens;

*Le Marais* neighborhood, with its cobbled streets full of trendy stores, art galleries, cafés, and restaurants;

And the riverbanks of the Seine (take a long walk from the Eiffel Tower toward central Paris, enjoying the islands of *Île de la Cité* and *Île Saint-Louis*).

I also recommend visits to the historical center of the city, the islands of *Île de la Cité* and *Île Saint-Louis*, the *Quartier Latin*

# THE INTERVIEWS

(make sure to stroll down the very authentic *Rue Mouffetard*), and nearby *Quartier Rive Gauche Saint-Germain-des-Prés* (which is to be loved for its chic art galleries, vintage shops, and luxury boutiques).

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

Hidden gems don't stay hidden for long here, but my somewhat-hidden gem recommendations would be:

*Espace Dali*, a private museum in *Montmartre* with a fantastic collection of Dali's art;

*Place des Victoires*, a circular place, located not far from *Palais Royal*, full of historical and architectural beauty (dating back to King Louis XIV). Make sure to visit some of its trendy fashion boutiques;

*Rue Montorgueil*, a street known for being the subject of a Monet painting, which is also the perfect spot for a lively immersion into Parisian life—full of lively restaurants, cafés, bakeries, fish shops, cheese and gourmet shops, wine shops, flower shops, and so on;

And *Parc des Buttes Chaumont*—a public park located in northeastern Paris on top of a hill overlooking the entire city.

*“Parc des Buttes Chaumont [is a] public park...on top of a hill overlooking the entire city.”*

*Photo by Vinicius Pinheiro on Flickr.*



## Where to Stay

Try *Haut Marais*, located in the third *arrondissement*, for a taste of trendy, bobo-chic (*bourgeois bohème*) Paris.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Choose *Oberkampf* for a taste of popular, young Paris, full of typical gourmet shops, restaurants, bistros, and bars.

Or try *Saint-Georges* in the ninth for a taste of nineteenth-century Paris, with its neo-classical architecture, its cultural activities, and its hyped French theaters.

## Day Trips

My first pick would be Mont Saint Michel, a spiritual and fantastically scenic place. It's a UNESCO World Heritage Site for a reason.

After that, I'd choose Burgundy and Sancerre for wine tasting, gourmet food, and authentic, marvelous countryside scenery.

Third (and finally), I recommend *Château de la Loire*—the cradle of French Renaissance castles, also famous for gastronomy.

## What to Eat

For dishes, do not miss the typical *croque monsieur* (a grilled ham and cheese sandwich), a true French bistro burger with real French fries (*frites*), and the French cheeses, especially the exquisite selection proposed by Master cheese-maker, Laurent Dubois, whose *fromagerie* can be found at 47 *Ter Boulevard* near the *Maubert* metro station. (For several other locations around the city, visit [fromageslaurentdubois.fr](http://fromageslaurentdubois.fr).)

For drinks, make sure to drink wine, wine, and wine—whatever color, grapes, and region you like. They are all amazing.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

For restaurants, start with *Le Caillebotte*, located at 8 *Rue Hippolyte Lebas*. This is probably the best new bistro of the year. Phone: +33 1 53 20 88 70.

I also love *Aux Enfants Gâtés*, located at 4 *Rue Danville* (phone: +33 1 40 47 56 81), and *PAN*, located at 12 *Rue Martel* in the tenth *arrondissement* (phone: +33 9 52 51 63 70).

# THE INTERVIEWS

For bars, here is a very local selection: Frenchy Bar à Vins at 6 *Rue du Nil*, the rooftop bar of Le Perchoir at 14 *Rue Crespin du Gast*, and Rosa Bonheur, located in *Parc des Buttes Chaumont*, which will give you a taste of an early twentieth-century open-air *guinguette* (tavern) and is trendy and has a nice view.

## How to Fit In

Before expecting service in a restaurant, café, or shop, make sure to say *bonjour monsieur/madame* (hello sir/ma'am) and ask nicely "would you please help me find this or that?" Too many people forget these small courtesies.

The French are very quickly offended by any negative comments about their attitude or their country in general, so be positive and kind.

The French usually dress in a sophisticated and fashionable style, not overly fussy: try not to be too casual.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

The first and obvious step is to learn and practice French. Many Parisians speak English, but a bit awkwardly. Once you master rudimentary French, you can mix quite easily with French in bars with a cool attitude and confidence.

Join in social activities. Locals take pride in their initiatives and their support and are usually quite open to talk and share.

## Best Places to Take a Photo

The best view of Eiffel Tower is from the *terrasse* (terrace) of restaurant Monsieur Bleu at 20 *Avenue de New York* in *Palais de Tokyo*.

For a memorable photo of a Parisian streetscape, choose *Rue Montorgeuil*.

For a great view of the Seine river, its bridges, *Île Saint-Louis*, etc., the rooftop of IMA (*Institut du Monde Arabe*) can't be beat.

# THE INTERVIEWS

And for a memorable photo of a typical Parisian bistro, I recommend Le Grand Café Capucines at *4 Boulevard des Capucines* near *Opera Garnier*.

## **Why Visit Paris?**

The city of light embodies the best-ever experiences in cuisine, art, architecture, luxury, and fashion. I think that there are few cities in the world that can match the appeal and the attractiveness of Paris.

Perfect for exploring on foot, Paris is full of food and fresh markets, antique markets, luxury shopping, cultural and historic buildings, rich and renowned museum treasures, fine food, wine tasting, distinctive art and painting galleries...the list goes on and on.

Aside from all our historic and cultural heritage, the main reason to visit Paris is the Parisians and the French lifestyle. Paris is a cosmopolitan city quite open to international influences and to foreigners, but the French also have a unique style. They enjoy life and are eager to share enjoyable and memorable moments with others.

## **Paris Inspirations**

Paris is about opportunities and lifestyle. A new, vibrant generation is rising up and reinvigorating our entrepreneurial community. Where else in the world can you be a guru of web and digital services and engage with major suppliers and customers, all while enjoying a coffee in a typical French café outside on a terrace in a beautiful and inspiring environment with your laptop on your knees?

*Find Sam at [wonderfultime.com](http://wonderfultime.com).*

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Lisa Rankin**

Founder, Flavors of Paris. Foodie Tour Guide. Photographer.

## About Lisa

I was born and raised in Toronto, Canada and moved to Paris two years ago. I own a company called Flavors of Paris, where I do small-group English-language walking and tasting tours in the neighborhood of *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*.

One of my new passions is photography. In my free time, I like to take photography workshops, explore the neighborhoods of Paris, and take photographs.

Of course, even when I am not working, I love to eat and to drink wine.

## What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

I think a bus tour of the city when you first arrive gives a good overview of Paris and its highlights.

At the risk of sounding shameless, a little neighborhood tour like the ones I run is also always a good idea. We take our clients to little artisanal food shops, markets, and restaurants that they wouldn't normally venture into. It gives people an insider's view of living like a Parisian and they can use that knowledge for the rest of their stay.

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

When I'm not thinking about eating, I love to shop. The *Clignacourt* flea market (officially known as *Les Puces de Saint-Ouen*) is the largest of its kind in Paris. It is like a rabbit warren of little streets, antique stands, and vendors where you can find all sorts of treasures from different eras. Be attentive to your wallets and purses there. It is a haven for pick-pockets, as well.

Another of my favorite places is the *Viaduc des Arts*. It was once a raised suburban railway that has now been converted into a center of art galleries and fine craft shops. Along the top

# THE INTERVIEWS

of the viaduct is a lush, green promenade known as the *Promenade Plantée*. If you are looking for a little break from the hustle of the city, this is the place to go.

## Where to Stay

The wonderful thing about Paris is that it is a city of neighborhoods. Each one has its own character.

*Le Marais* district is great for its color and vibrancy—and it has some wonderful ethnic restaurants.

Then there is *Saint-Germain-des-Prés* with its chic, artsy feel. It has a unique blend of high quality shops and restaurants with lots of great private galleries and independent bookshops. They don't call it "the neighborhood of arts and letters" for nothing.

*"Then there is Saint-Germain-des-Prés with its chic, artsy feel."*



Another great neighborhood is *Montmartre*. It is probably the most bohemian of the three I have listed. This is also the hilliest part of Paris, with lots of stairs, great views, and quaint eating establishments.

## Day Trips

The Palace of Versailles is one of those places that is so grand and so ostentatious, it's hard to get your head around it when you see it. The direct train takes just an hour from central Paris.

# THE INTERVIEWS

If you are a fan of the painter Claude Monet, his garden at Giverny is something spectacular to see. It is only about an hour outside of Paris and is an oasis of beauty.

## What to Eat

That is a huge question, especially when asking a gastronome. There are so many French dishes that are wonderful and they change seasonally. Here are a few classics:

*Beouf bourguignon* is a hearty beef stew made with sautéed beef marinated in red wine, garlic, potatoes, onions, carrots, and mushrooms. This is one of my all-time favorite dishes. It was also one of Julia Childs' and in her famous book, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, she declared it "certainly one of the most delicious beef dishes concocted by man."

*Crepes* are a type of pancake that comes in both sweet and savory forms. A *galette de sarrasin* is a buckwheat *crepe*. For me, nothing beats one of these filled with spinach, *crème fraîche*, ham, and an egg with a glass of cider (a traditional accompaniment) for lunch.

Onion soup (we leave out the "French" when we say onion soup because that's a given) is another classic. The onions are cooked down until they are soft and sweet and then it is baked in the oven with cheese on top.

*Confit de canard* (duck confit): There isn't anything more delectable than duck preserved and then cooked in its own fat, especially when it is served with duck fat-fried potatoes. If you are watching your waistline, this is not the dish not for you (but it's so good).

Although it does not originate from Paris, a *Niçoise* salad (with tomatoes, tuna, and boiled eggs) on a warm summer day always hits the spot for me.

Wine with dinner or as an *apéritif* is a must, but is another huge subject because the French produce so much of it.

# THE INTERVIEWS

One thing I really enjoy now and then is a *kir*. It's a French cocktail made with *Aligote* wine—a white from Burgundy—and *crème de cassis*, which is a blackcurrant liqueur.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

*J'Go*, located at 4 *Rue Drouot* and 4 *Rue Clément*, originated in Toulouse. They specialize in farm-to-table, hearty cuisine from the southwest of France. They have a relaxed, casual atmosphere and high-quality food. To book at the *Rue Drouot* location, call +33 1 40 22 09 09; for *Rue Clément*, call +33 1 43 26 19 02.

*Verjus*, located at 52 *Rue de Richelieu*, is an American-inspired tapas-style restaurant with a great little wine bar downstairs. Phone: +33 1 42 97 54 40.

*Le Pharamond*, at 24 *Rue de la Grande Truanderie*, offers Normandy-style cuisine in a gorgeous, art nouveau vintage interior with friendly wait staff. Phone: +33 1 40 28 45 18.

## How to Fit In

One of the first things I tell my clients is that *bonjour* (hello) and *au revoir* (goodbye) are two of the most important things you can say to open communication with and gain respect from the French. French people find it very rude when people don't acknowledge their presence. Shops and business establishments here are considered more of a private space than a public one, so when you enter it is common courtesy to acknowledge not only the staff, but the other customers as well.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

The more French you know, the easier it will be to meet French locals, because many of them don't speak English. My French is quite good, so I choose activities that are offered in French, rather than English.

You also have to be patient. French people are not as open at the beginning as the Canadian and American expat

# THE INTERVIEWS

community tends to be. However, once they do open up to you, they are wonderful friends.

## **Best Places to Take a Photo**

Paris is such a beautiful city. You can go almost anywhere to get a memorable photograph. The Luxembourg Garden is a particularly beautiful place. The bridges along the Seine are another of my many favorite spots to photograph. The *Pont Alexandre III* is the most ornate bridge in Paris and, with the Crystal Palace in the background, it makes a spectacular setting.

## **Why Visit Paris?**

Paris embodies all of the things I love in life: cuisine, art, architecture, and lifestyle. It is also such a beautiful city, enjoyable to walk in. Every time you turn a corner, there is something remarkable to see.

As a hard-core foodie, I have to recommend Paris for its' cuisine. It is a café culture here, where people take time to meet friends, relax, eat, and enjoy their meals. Food is an important part of their day and each meal is a meaningful experience to be savored.

## **Paris Inspirations**

There are many things that inspire me about Paris, but I think *passion* is the biggest one. The owners and staff at the little food shops on my tours are so passionate about their creations. They put so much care and attention into what they produce and are very proud of what they do. The money is secondary to their passion. If you feel that way about what you do in life, it gives you meaning and it makes every day special.

*Find Lisa at [Flavorsofparis.com](http://Flavorsofparis.com).*

# THE INTERVIEWS



## Emmanuelle Yigit

Traveler. Entrepreneur. Future Shop Owner. Culture Addict.

### About Emmanuelle

I'm Emmanuelle, a 32-year-old Parisian. I'm half Turkish and I believe that it is that heritage that nurtured my love for travel. I lived in Canada for four years and London for a year and now I'm back in Paris.

I worked in the cultural industry for eight years, then managed events for a web company, and now I'm an entrepreneur, in the process of creating a gift and accessories shop that will showcase young designers from France and around Europe.

The idea is to mix up the gift shop paradigm with do-it-yourself and lifestyle events (make your own jewelry, practice English while making cupcakes, personalize your gifts, work on your breathing by singing gospel music, etc.).

In my spare time, I am a bit of a culture addict. I have an a capella band with two friends and I spend most of my time dancing the Lindy Hop—a dance born in Harlem in the '20s that now has a second life. Dancing inspires me; it's so full of joy, creativity, and constant reinvention.

### What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

Some of the most beautiful must-see areas of Paris are the *Montmartre*, *Opéra Garnier*, and *Le Marais* neighborhoods, the docks of the Seine River (where traffic is forbidden on Sundays), and *Île Saint-Louis* (one of the natural islands in the Seine).

It's also wonderful to take in an exhibition at the great museums (*Rodin*, *Louvre*, *Orsay*, *Pompidou*...), to walk in the beautiful *Jardin des Plantes*, to have tea at the *Mosque de Paris* (the large mosque), to picnic at the *Jardin du*

# THE INTERVIEWS

*Luxembourg*, to take in a musical at *Theâtre du Châtelet* or a cabaret at the *Cabaret Lido*, or to visit the *Marché Richard Lenoir* food market on *Richard Lenoir Boulevard* on Sundays.

Most of these things are pretty touristic and can be crowded, so make sure to visit some of the hidden, lesser-known gems described below to really get a feel for Paris.

For more information on cultural gems, I recommend reading *Time Out: Paris* ([timeout.com/paris/en](http://timeout.com/paris/en)), *Paris Info* ([en.parisinfo.com](http://en.parisinfo.com)), *Le Bonbon* ([lebonbon.fr](http://lebonbon.fr), in French), or *Telerama* ([telerama.fr](http://telerama.fr), also in French).

*“Visit the Marché Richard Lenoir food market on Richard Lenoir boulevard on Sundays.”*

*Photo by Derek Key on Flickr.*



## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

Take a beautiful three-hour boat trip from *Bastille* to *La Villette*. It's very romantic and you can see where the Parisians live.

Take a walk around the *Canal Saint Martin* from *Rue du Faubourg du Temple* to *Rue de la Grange Aux Belles*. This is an incredibly beautiful walk.

Attend an exhibition in one of the smaller museums: *La Maison de la Photographie* and *Fondation Cartier* always have beautiful exhibitions. The *Musée de la Vie Romantique* has a cute little garden.

Attend a show or concert at *Le 104* at *5 Rue Curial*. This cultural place is very local. They have exhibitions, shows, concerts, restaurants, weekend activities, and amateur dancers training

# THE INTERVIEWS

every day. Go to the Bellerive (a café at 71 *Quai de la Seine*) after your show or concert for a lovely drink on the canal.

Play a game of *pétanque* (a ball throwing game that's all about precision) on the *Canal de l'Ourcq*. (If you want some free balls to play with, have a drink at the Bellerive and ask to borrow some.)

## Where to Stay

*Canal St. Martin, République, Bastille, Voltaire, Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, and, for the smaller budgets, *Canal de l'Ourcq* or near the *Buttes Chaumont*.

## Day Trips

*Château de Versailles* (the Versailles Palace) and *Bois de Vincennes* (the largest park in Paris, right on the outskirts, where the French kings' former residence is located) are my top picks. But, really, Parisians don't leave the city (it's something I need to do more of!); we have so much going on here.

## What to Eat

The only real difference between Parisian cuisine and typical French cuisine is the price (sorry, it's higher here in the city) and the service (we're not known for our kind waiters).

A few typical French meals you should try are *beef tartare* (raw beef with onions and spices), *poulet rôti* (baked chicken), and *escargot* (snails).

For those with a sweet tooth, the *Paris-Brest* (a doughnut-shaped dessert with praline cream), chocolate mousse, lemon tart, and *profiteroles* (cream puffs) are some classics.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

For restaurants, I recommend:

Chatomat: a small, tasty, and very refined gastronomic restaurant at a very decent price. Address: 6 *Rue Victor Letalle*. Book in advance! Phone: +33 1 47 97 25 77.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Vilia: a cute Italian place with a beautiful soul and very delicate food in a cozy and convivial atmosphere. Address: 26 Rue de Cotte. Phone: +33 9 80 44 20 15.

L'Hôtel du Nord: a very nice French place with good Parisian food. Address: 102 Quai de Jemmapes. Phone: +33 1 40 40 78 78.

A good restaurant review website for the city is [lefooding.com/en](http://lefooding.com/en).

For bars, I recommend:

Le Bellerive: this is my favorite bar! It's both trendy and local. You can watch old men playing *pétanque* nearby and little boats on the dock. They have nice music and good service. Address: 71 Quai de la Seine.

Le Perchoir: this nice rooftop bar is busy and tricky to get into in the summertime, but it's worth it for the view! Address: 14 Rue Crespin du Gast.

Comptoir Général: this is an amazing little place, out of time. It's trendy now, but it has a lovely *cabinet de curiosités*, a nice atmosphere, and a little garden outside. Address: 80 Quai de Jemmapes.

There is also Café A in the architecture school, which has a beautiful and quiet terrace. Address: 148 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

Go to the Bellerive (the café I mentioned above). Picnic on the canal during the summer. Come to a lindy hop party (look for Lindy Hop Paris on Facebook; the community is fun and open-minded).

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Best Places to Take a Photo

I recommend the *Sacré Coeur* (in *Montmartre*), *Pont Saint-Louis* (the famed bridge), the *Nuba Club* (a rooftop club overlooking the *Seine*), and the terrace of the *O Paris* (a little restaurant in *Belleville*).

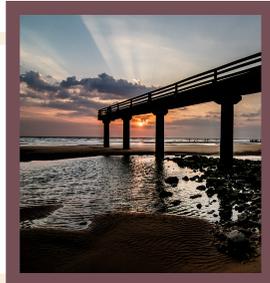
## Why Visit Paris?

It might sound a bit biased, but coming back from living or traveling abroad always reminds me how beautiful Paris is. It's incredibly photogenic and charming. I guess that's why it is the city of love.

Sometimes it can be a bit hectic, but as a city fan, I love that there are always people on the streets, that there is still life on Sundays.

*"If Paris starts to feel a little too city-like, Normandy is only two hours away!"*

*Photo by archangel12 on Flickr.*



## Paris Inspirations

Even if it's an old city, Paris is still growing and changing. There are cultural events for everyone and new initiatives that reinvent our way of life all the time.

I also love that each neighborhood has a completely different soul that reflects its inhabitants. We all have our very own little Paris—where we choose to live and to work.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## **Final Notes & Other Tips**

Oh, yes. I'm sorry about this, but Parisians are not always warm or welcoming. The service and the subway experiences are the worst on the pain scale...I'd advise you to walk or bike (day bikes, called Velib, are available at bike stations around the city) as much as possible or take the bus when you can.

If you are in an area that feels too touristy or crowded for your tastes, come back early morning or late evening.

If Paris starts to feel a little too city-like and you want greenery and nature, remember that Normandy is only two hours away!

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Erin Koval**

Writer. Teacher. Wanderer.

## About Erin

I'm originally from upstate New York, but I moved around a lot, primarily on the east coast of the US. I currently live in Paris, France.

For work, I teach English to young children and adults. In my free time, I go for walks, write in my journal, and try to spend time with people who are important in my life. I've been working on several novels based on my various trips and personal observations.

## What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

Definitely see the *Notre Dame de Paris*, the *Sacré Coeur* basilica, the *Montmartre* neighborhood, the Eiffel Tower, and the *Louvre*.

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

The *Marais* district is something most people don't really know about. It's the Jewish and gay district and it's a very vibrant and lively part of Paris. You can find small, quaint cafés and shops that aren't usually advertised in Parisian guidebooks.

For Asian cuisine-lovers, it's fun to wander in the second *arrondissement*, where you'll find a local Japanese or Korean restaurant every few steps. I love getting lost in this version of "Chinatown." (And for those who prefer Chinese and Vietnamese food, the thirteenth *arrondissement* has more of those restaurants.)

## Where to Stay

I recommend staying in *Montmartre* or the ninth *arrondissement* just below *Montmartre*. The area isn't too expensive and you're pretty close to great parts of the city.

# THE INTERVIEWS

## Day Trips

Giverny is a *must*. There you can visit the gardens of Monet (and it's only about an hour and a half by train and then 10 minutes by bus).

Versailles, the famous palace, is always recommended; plan to spend a whole day there if you want to see everything.

## What to Eat

I always tell people to try snails, even though they squirm at the thought. I also think people should try *gesiers* (bird guts, which are best mixed in salads) at least once in their lives. These are best at the great Basque restaurants located along the street, *Les 5 Diamants*, in the thirteenth district on a hill.

You must also order a cheese plate and try the *Roquefort*, a strong blue cheese from Toulouse.

If you're here in summer, try a soft *Cotes de Provence rosé* wine. Or, if you're interested in a stronger drink, a *ricard* or *pastis* (a licorice-flavored drink from the south of France that is refreshingly cool when the weather gets unbearably hot in the summer).

In the winter, or if you come down with a cold, try a *grog*, a hot drink from Normandy. After one cup of *grog*, you won't be worrying about your sinuses.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

Bars: Café de l'Industrie (in the Bastille neighborhood at 16 Rue Saint-Sabin), La Bascule (in Montmartre at 24 Rue Durantin), l'Academie de la Biere (at 88Bis Boulevard de Port-Royal), and Le 5e Cru (a very nice wine place at 7 Rue du Cardinal Lemoine).

Restaurants: Au Relais de la Butte (which looks down on Paris from Montmartre at 12 Rue Ravignan), La Piccola Toscana (for classic Italian food at 10 Rue Rochambeau), and Café de l'Industrie (for typical French fare at 16 Rue Saint-Sabin).

# THE INTERVIEWS

For reservations, call Au Relais de la Butte at +33 1 42 23 24 34, La Piccola Toscana at +33 9 51 04 46 35, or Café de l'Industrie at +33 1 47 00 13 53.

## How to Fit In

Tourists have trouble understanding why servers are so rude and the service is so quick (first, you flag down the server, who takes forever to deliver your drinks, and then, the moment he puts the drinks on the table, he wants you to immediately pay for them). It helps if you come here expecting that.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

The best way to meet locals is to frequent one café. Go to a small café, one that's not too busy. Talk to your grocer when he's checking out your purchases. I always make it a point to chat with my Starbucks baristas (and have gotten free drinks as a result—more than once!). If you make the tiniest of efforts, the Parisians will open up to you.

## Best Places to Take a Photo

*Trocadero* (the area across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower) is a good spot to get an Eiffel Tower shot with the beautiful plaza in the foreground. While you're there, though, be careful of the numerous guys selling cheesy trinkets.

Also, take the metro to *Richelieu-Drouot* and walk up *Rue Lafitte* heading north; you'll see the most iconic view of *Notre-Dame-de-Lorette* with the *Sacré Coeur* behind it.

Finally, take the metro to *Buttes Chaumont* and enter the park. Go left down the path and you'll discover a quintessential hilltop view of north Paris.

## Why Visit Paris?

People should visit Paris because of the history, architecture, food, and overall culture. Yes, you may not meet many natives on your trip, but Paris is such an old city, it's easy to find yourself in certain corners of the city feeling as though you've gone

# THE INTERVIEWS

back in time. I fell in love with the variety of this city; on any given day, I can get lost in a different era if I want to.

## **Paris Inspirations**

Although it seems kitsch, I am almost like Owen Wilson's character in *Midnight in Paris*; I get inspired just walking around the city and people watching. It's amazing what you discover when you see the city on foot.

## **Final Notes & Other Tips**

Not all Parisians are rude (so don't believe the stereotype). There are more things to do here than shop and, believe it or not, this city can be affordable if you have the patience and self-discipline.

# THE INTERVIEWS



## Yassine Yassou

Entrepreneur. Bicyclist. Japanese Culture Enthusiast.

### About Yassine

I was born in Suresnes, which is a city close to Paris. It's a beautiful area, where you can find green spaces and old shops.

In 2010, I decided to leave my job and start a new life as an entrepreneur. My first project was a social travel app. Then I created a video game in Finland. Now, I run a food delivery service in Paris.

In my free time, I like to ride my bicycle in green spaces around town. I also love good conversation and walking with friends.

*"On your first trip to Paris, take the metro to the Hôtel de Ville stop and walk along the Seine."*

*Photo by Joe deSousa on Flickr.*



### What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

On your first trip to Paris, take the metro to the *Hotel de Ville* metro stop and, from there, walk along the Seine. It's the best way to feel the energy of Paris.

If you would rather not walk, take a city bus (line 92 is the best) and you can see all of Paris for less than two euros.

# THE INTERVIEWS

Even though I'm not personally a fan of the touristic parts of the city, of course you should visit the Eiffel Tower, the *Sacré Coeur* basilica, and *Opéra Garnier* (our national opera house). I'd also recommend the Galerie Lafayette store (a beautiful, upmarket department store) and the eighteenth-century glass-ceiling shopping galleries around *Les Grands Boulevards* (they're called "*les passages couverts*" and you can find a list of them at [www.timeout.com/paris/en/shopping/les-passages-couverts-1](http://www.timeout.com/paris/en/shopping/les-passages-couverts-1)).

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

I like the Kawai Café (located at 20 *Rue de Nemours*, near metro stop *Parmentier*). It's a Japanese bar with manga, anime, j-pop, and fancy/amazing/tasty cocktails.

If Japanese culture isn't your thing (I get that; you are, after all, visiting Paris), don't fret. The area where *Rue de Nemours* meets *Rue Jean Pierre Timbaud* is amazing...full of wonderful bars with different atmospheres.

## Where to Stay

The area where *Rue de Nemours* meets *Rue Jean Pierre Timbaud*. This is the *République* Quarter and there are lots of nice bars and restaurants around.

## What to Eat

Well, here's something you won't expect: the US may be the top place in the world for junk food, but I think Paris takes second place. We love junk food. And, because our chefs are French, they like to do new twists on burgers, kebabs, and tacos—to make them more beautiful and tasty.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

For traditional and wonderful French food, try Le Club des 5, which has an incredible atmosphere and taste. Address: 57 *Rue des Batignolles*. Phone: +33 1 53 04 94 73.

Paris is such an international city, so I recommend trying not only the French food, but also other types of cuisine. For example, on *Rue Saint Anne* (in the Japanese quarter) you'll

# THE INTERVIEWS

find amazing Japanese restaurants. Also, parked in various places around the city, you'll find a food truck called *Le Camion Qui Fume*, which serves really good burgers (for daily locations, visit [www.lecamionquifume.com](http://www.lecamionquifume.com)).

## How to Fit In

At the *Champs-Élysées*, please don't stand in the middle of the street to take a picture of the *Arc de Triomphe*. Even if it's a good spot to take a picture, it's very, very dangerous for you and for those of us who are driving to work.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

The best way to meet people is to walk on *Quai de Seine* around 7 p.m. A lot of people like to have a picnic or drink there, so go and ask if you can join them (bring meat, bread, and wine).

## Final Notes & Other Tips

For a very different and special look at Paris, take metro line one and stop at *La Défense*. Then, take bus number 360 (from the bus terminal there) and stop at the *Mont Valerien* station (about a 20-minute bus ride away). This is my special, favorite spot—the most beautiful place in Paris.

# THE INTERVIEWS



**Talal Gariani**

Communicator. Sports Enthusiast. Traveler.

## About Talal

I'm Libyan stock, though born in Paris. I work in healthcare communication and advertising and my free time is clogged with synchronized swimming and water polo training, seeing friends, discovering restaurants, and travelling to other close destinations (usually European cities) on the weekends.

## What To Do In Paris (The Basics)

The touristy must-sees are the Eiffel Tower, *Grand Palais*, Statue of Liberty (the original, small-scale one is close to the Eiffel Tower), *Concorde* (one of the largest public squares in Paris), our museums (or at least the Orsay and the *Louvre*), *Montmartre*, *Champs-Élysées* shopping area, the opera, and *La Madeleine* church. Once you are done with those, you can really get into the more local Paris.

## Hidden Gems for Seasoned Travelers

I recommend having an early breakfast in the Abbesses area (be there by 8:45 a.m.) on the weekend before the tourists start flooding in. You'll get a wonderful whiff of village Paris.

The *Père Lachaise* cemetery is a beautiful promenade, quiet and refreshing from the city buzz.

Another beautiful thing to do is walk the banks of the Seine by sunset and picnic (weather permitting) by the edge of *Île Saint-Louis* (one of the islands in the river).

Head to *Parc des Buttes Chaumont* on Sunday evening for a drink at the Rosa Bonheur tavern (it's popular, so go early to make sure you get in). It is a jewel of a place and a brilliant place to socialize with the Parisians and get to know them.

# THE INTERVIEWS

The *Lamarck Caulincourt* area (around the metro station) is lovely, too. It is a bit isolated from the rest of Paris and that gives it a special and different feeling.

## Where to Stay

I recommend the eleventh and twentieth *arrondissements* around *Gambetta* or *Jourdain* for a true taste of Parisian life. The neighborhoods are trendy, with their hipster population (we call them bo-bo: *bohème bourgeois*) and yet still mixed.

## Day Trips

Versailles, of course, as well as the ubiquitous historic or famous places like Giverny. And once you've seen those, there is the *Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye* (a beautiful castle), *Vaux-le-Vicomte* (an amazing building with lovely gardens), the castle of Chantilly (with its beautiful art collection), and the beaches of Deauville and Honfleur.

North, you have Lille (one hour away by high-speed train) and, if you want to have an international day, Brussels is perfect for a day trip (just one hour and thirty minutes from Paris).

For food and beautiful settings, we have Lyon (two hours by train), which is well worth a visit.

## What to Eat

You have the local *brasserie*, where you can sample the typical dishes.

Specifically, you should try steak *frites* (steak with French fries – try the fries with Dijon mustard!), oysters (though only eat these in months that end in “er”), steak *tartare* (prepared raw meat mixed with parsley, onions, capers, and more – again, ask for Dijon mustard for a special experience), *confit de canard* (duck confit), *sole meunière* (fish fried in butter and served with steamed potatoes), *tartare de saumon* (a sashimi-like salmon), and other fish (like *lieu*, *lotte*, and *cabillaud*) pan-fried with veggies. My personal favorite is the *sole meunière*.

# THE INTERVIEWS

For dessert, try the classic *profiteroles* (cream puffs), *crème brûlée*, *crème caramel*, or *baba au rhum* (a small yeast cake drowned in rum).

I would also recommend going off the beaten foodie path and trying something different: Cambodian, African, or Arabic food, for example. Try some of the more expensive restaurants where food is being re-imagined; there are some gems hidden in the ninth (where new restaurants keep opening up), eleventh, eighteenth, and twentieth *arrondissements*.

## Where to Eat (Favorite Bars & Restaurants)

For bars in summer, I'd pick: Rosa Bonheur at *Parc des Buttes Chaumont* (arrive very early, as they restrict entrance and then you have to queue for a long time); The Mama Shelter, at *109 Rue de Bagnolet*; La Candelaria at *52 Rue de Saintonge* (the entrance to the bar is through the tiny door at the back of the taqueria); Marie Celeste, at *1 Rue Commines*, for its beautiful cocktails; and Le China, at *50 Rue de Charenton*, for its French colonial fumoir and excellent cocktails.

For restaurants, I'd start with a few around my neighborhood (of course, I'm biased): Septime at *80 Rue de Charonne*; Le Sot l'y Laisse at *70 Rue Alexandre-Dumas*; and Chatomat at *6 Rue Victor-Letalle*.

For reservations, call Septime at +33 1 43 67 38 29, Le Sot l'y Laisse at +33 1 40 09 79 20, or Chatomat at +33 1 47 97 25 77.

## How to Fit In

Don't talk loudly in restaurants or loiter in the middle of sidewalks or in front of the metro doors. The Parisians are a stressed people and do not like to be slowed down when walking. Learn some French words and expressions to show that you're making an effort.

## How to Meet Locals & Make Friends

Bars are a good start, especially the ones where you stand in an open-air space with your drink. Rosa Bonheur is the best example. Having to stand and drink reduces your private

# THE INTERVIEWS

space and opens everyone up to conversation. The Wanderlust, at 32 *Quai d'Austerlitz*, is another good place for this.

## **Best Places to Take a Photo**

For something iconic, the gardens of *Trocadero* near *Champ de Mars* are great for Eiffel Tower shots.

For something less expected, you'll find beautiful views of Paris from the *Parc de Belleville*. *Canal St. Martin* is another pretty and memorable place (especially on Sunday, when it's closed to traffic and invaded by the local families).

*Bastille* and the newly renovated *Place de la République* are also photogenic. The columns of *Place de la Nation* are a hidden, memorable photo opportunity, as is the eastern side of Paris, where far fewer tourists go.

## **Why Visit Paris?**

For its architecture and its people-watching culture.

## **Paris Inspirations**

Paris is small enough to walk and varied enough that I'm always discovering new things.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Gigi Griffis is a world-traveling entrepreneur and writer** with a special love for inspiring stories, new places, and living in the moment. In May 2012, she sold her stuff and took to the road with a growing business and a pint-sized pooch.

These days, she's living in the Swiss Alps, planning epic European adventures, and working on her next few books (watch for 100 Locals books for Prague, Rome, Florence, and Switzerland – coming soon!).

Love what you read here? Find more at [gigigriffis.com](http://gigigriffis.com).

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Love, Gigi

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