

Imagine a truly romantic city. You can't do better than Paris (going with your sweetie?). Fear not, love is all over—in a simple croissant, a statue, even in this **Inside Scoop** to take with your travel documents.

travel: delighting in the spirit of adventure • a vacation from home to explore places that are not your home • knowing life is different, knowing this is a joy of travel • enjoying the journey, not just the destination • a privilege best used with patience, humour and curiosity • fun • coming home with great tales •

Ohhh the Restaurants

With 8,000+ restaurants, you'll find something you like. While many offer translations be brave—point at something on the menu and order. A best buy is usually the "prix fixe" 3-course meal for a reduced price. Parisians eat late; restaurants often open for dinner at 5:30pm so it might be empty (but a good time to get a table).

Your Counsellor

Our knowledge and experience help turn dreams into first-rate vacations. Ask your counsellor about any details, including:

- airport information/transfers
- hiring local travel services
- must see attractions
- a few handy bon mots...

MaritimeTravel

We Know Travel Best.™

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Inside Scoop: **Paris**

Know before you go: travel isn't just your destination, it's also the journey

With most travel destinations, favourite things and top impressions come to mind immediately, but with Paris, oh Paris...it's hard to limit tips to two pages. Most definitely, it's a city for discoveries, just plan ahead for benefits such as seat selection, lodging and attractions.

- Be realistic: we know you want value for money in balancing choices and amenities with budgets. No matter what, aim to relax and enjoy. Special requests are requests only for such upgrades as room type (being Paris, a spurge is justified).
- Be aware of costly roaming charges on your cell phone. Internet access is widely available.
- Currency is the Euro. Banks/ATMs accept Canadian bank cards. Inform your bank and credit card company of the dates you'll be away. Stores and taxis don't like large denomination bills—use small ones.
- Some smokers find Paris alluring because of lax smoking laws—not true now. Be prepared for the now usual restrictions.
- You'll need adapter plugs (voltage converter) for France's 220 volt outlets. If you don't bring them, they're available at stores and many hotels.
- Your grade school French will come in handy. As in any country, if you don't speak the language, try—people often go out of their way to help.

Above all, travel with a positive attitude—patience and a spirit of adventure will carry you through any experience!

Getting Around

Take your most comfy walking shoes. We're not sure how women walk in 5" heels but don't be a slave to fashion when sightseeing. Paris covers 9 miles east to west, 6 miles north to south, for 33.5 square miles with the Seine river (so Left Bank and Right Bank) flowing through the city south-east to south-west. In 20 districts called "arrondissements," these number 1 to 20, spiraling clockwise. It helps to understand zip codes as Paris' city number is 75, the arrondissement's number at the end: 75005 is Paris' 5th arrondissement. As there's so much to see, remember the arrondissement where you're staying and plan escapades in priority:

- While you can rent a car, you need the skills of a race car driver and patience of a saint. We don't recommend it—ask your counsellor about the numerous other methods to get around, such as booking city tours, taxis, the subway/metro, buses, suburban rail lines and boats. If you can pay attention to the road instead of the sights, try a Segway tour.
- Ride a Vélib bicycle (vélo "bike," lib for "liberty") at metro stations and other locations. Ride free for 30mins and return it at any Velib' stand. Bikes are futuristically cool and it's a bargain; a day costs less than a coffee.

An "Imperative" in France

France says, "it is imperative" to buy travel insurance before arriving; ask your counsellor about Maritime Travel medical and cancellation/interruption insurance. EU passport holders can get reimbursed up to 70% of medical costs.

You Haven't Shopped Until Paris

You brought a second bag right? Not that we encourage reckless spending and accumulation, we just know France is one of those destinations that makes people sigh. Be prepared when you tell your friends where you're going—you'll get requests. Some of our favourite gifts are food items because of their obvious quality and usefulness. We always check out markets—flea markets in the street, secondhand stores, antique shops and if you can find one, a hypermarché, pretty much how it sounds—a hyper supermarket. You'll find rows (so many rows) of good affordable wine by unusual hardware, trendy and inexpensive clothes, lovely underthings and luggage. Great buys—tiny jars of jam (check labels to see it's Made in France), mustard (Dijon anyone?), biscuits and tea towels are all good buys. Be aware most shops close on Sundays and some also close Mondays. Leaving a shop or restaurant without saying goodbye is considered rude.

Your Airline

Sign up online for your airline(s) email or text flight notifications as your flight could be delayed (the plane might be flying in). Transport Canada can prohibit items as security risks, "Travellers should arrive at the airport earlier than usual, exercise patience and **contact their airline for further information on their flight(s).**" Airline staff are on duty some 2-3hrs prior: due to staffing/security, check-in closes 1hr before departure. If late, you're not entitled to board (or a refund). Unless booked ahead, seats are first-come first-served. Many airlines "code-share" flights. **Check-in and carry-on baggage**, check with your airline for sizes and weight. **Entry & Departure:** You must have a valid passport www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/index.asp. Keep a separate photocopy of all travellers' ID pages with your records or take a cell photo.



Get Packing Checklist and General Planning & Packing Tips at www.maritimetravel.ca/inside-scoops

- Your sense of adventure & humour!

Pack Strategically

The world is overrun with black bags so put coloured tape or ribbon on your luggage to spot it quickly. Put your name outside and inside and remove old tags. In carry-on, pack valuables such as jewellery, over-the-counter and prescription drugs in original containers. Pack most liquids/lotions/gels in checked bags (inside plastic bags) –due to carry-on restrictions, the maximum size container is 100ml(3.4oz). All must fit in 1 clear/resealable plastic bag of no more than 1 litre (often at airport screening). You may take baby formula, food or milk for a child under 2 years of age (0-24 months). See www.catsa.gc.ca/home for restrictions. Coming home, know your limits and exemptions, www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/bgb-rmf-eng.html.

 **Websites and emails in blue are hyperlinked; just click!**

Canadians: Emergency? Canada's embassy is at 35 avenue Montaigne, 75008 Paris, 33-1 44 43 2900, www.canadainternational.gc.ca/france/index.aspx. Or contact Global Affairs (collect if needed) 001-613-996-8885, sos@international.gc.ca.

Just a Warning, We're Going to Miss Many Great Things...

It's not because we want to, it's because there's truly so much to do in this city of love, city of light and city of hanging out at cafés that we're bound to miss something terrific. Please buy a baguette, cheese and fruit and head to a park for a picnic—besides a cost-effective lunch and sampling local food, it will also provide a much needed rest amidst nature. Otherwise seek out a bistros—they used to rule but wine bars with artisanal charcuterie and cheese have proliferated. Now, walking shoes on:

- While more than 60 venues part of the **Paris City Pass**, it also saves you time as you avoid lineups at many popular attractions including **Musée du Louvre** and **Musée d'Orsay**. Ask your counsellor. Museum closing days are usually Monday or Tuesday but many if they have extended evening hours, that's a good time to go—otherwise go when a site opens to avoid crowds (somewhat).
- Sites open 365 days a year include **Notre-Dame de Paris**, **Tour Montparnasse** and **Tour Eiffel**. Gustave Eiffel's tower was built as the 1889 World Fair's entrance and is the most famous and iconic landmark. First criticized as an eyesore, it was to be dismantled in 1909 but became valuable for communications. As tall as an 81-storey building with three levels; walk up or take an elevator to the first and second where there are restaurants (and many an engagement). The highest level is accessible only by elevator.
- **Notre-Dame de Paris** (cathedral) is the finest example of French Gothic architecture. Begun in 1163 and largely completed 1345, it suffered many desecrations (and restorations). In the 4th arrondissement, it was the setting of Victor Hugo's novel, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. The head organist position is one of the most prestigious anywhere! If you just even remotely like music, get to a concert—the music program is unparalleled.
- The **Montparnasse** area is on the Seine's left bank, 6th and 14th arrondissements. As the tallest skyscraper in France until 2011, **Tour Montparnasse** (voted one of the ugliest buildings in the world) provides a 360° view. If too high, you can get a 360° panorama of many sites from the ground on the **Place de la Concorde**, the city's largest square, 8th arrondissement, east end of the Champs-Élysées.
- The **Arc de Triomphe** is one of the most famous monuments. In the centre of **Place Charles de Gaulle**, west of **Avenue des Champs-Élysées**, it honours those who fought for France; the **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier** beneath. The **Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel** is west of the Louvre. Originally a royal fortress, the **Louvre** is home to a widely loved and a massive amount of art, including Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo.
- **Montmartre**, in the 18th arrondissement, has the **Basilica of the Sacré Cœur** on the hill's summit, a popular for nightclubs and cultural ventures.
- The **Champs-Élysées** is one of the most famous (and expensive) streets in the world. It runs through 8th arrondissement (northwest Paris) from Place de la Concorde at the **Obelisk of Luxor** that once stood at the Luxor Temple, decorated with Egyptian hieroglyphics. The street makes for a beautiful walk, especially in the evening. Either take a lot of money or hardly any...
- The **Château de Versailles** (Palace of Versailles) began as Louis XIII's hunting lodge, France's court and government there in 1682. The Hall of Mirrors was built as an "ostentatious display of royal power" to impress visitors and it works...you can't get out without at least once imagining you could live there. Look out the hall's central window, to what we're not telling... See the King's Grand Apartments, the gardens and Orangerie. Be sure to see Marie-Antoinette's estate, a fantastical private refuge (no one was allowed to visit unless they received an invitation). Wait!—we haven't told you about the fountains, **Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie**, the **Sorbonne**, **Grand Palais**, **Place des Vosges**, **Père Lachaise Cemetery** and...

Our 24/7 Emergency Service

We constantly survey airlines, local tour companies and hotels to ensure they meet our customer service standards, so don't let a problem ruin your holiday. Nearly all issues can be handled quickly on site—first seek help from the venue's local staff. Otherwise, call our Emergency Travel Service at **1-888-551-1181**. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable. Schedule changes can occur and airlines and tour operators have the right to change flight and/or tour times, alter, combine services or substitute accommodations. Your counsellor will work with you to ensure you receive information as soon as possible and ensure satisfaction. See your brochure and ticket terms and conditions.

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