

ROAD SCHOLAR – INDEPENDENT PARIS: PEOPLE, PLACES, CULTURE

SAT. SEP 23 (D) Orientation, Welcome Dinner

Afternoon: Orientation: 5:30 p.m. The Group Leader will greet everyone and lead introductions including our resident instructor. We will review the program theme, the up-to-date Daily Schedule and any changes, discuss safety guidelines, emergency procedures, roles and responsibilities, and answer any questions you may have. Road Scholar "Independent" programs are designed for participants who want high-level Road Scholar instruction, a few group activities, and who are capable and comfortable setting out on their own for a significant part of the day/night. There will be several hours each day of educational content, a number of meals on your own (excluded from the program cost) to enjoy what you like, and substantial free time for personal independent exploration. Our Group Leader and resident instructor will accompany scheduled field trips. We have also set aside some free time for personal independent exploration. The Group Leader will often be available during free time to accompany informal excursions, activities, or meals that have been excluded from the program cost. You are welcome to join if you like, with any associated costs on your own. In addition to expert led lectures and field trips, two outstanding benefits of this program are the included Paris Visite Pass and Paris Museum Pass we will use for some field trips. They will make your free time and personal independent exploration easier and more rewarding. Indicated times are approximate. Program activities, schedules, and personnel may need to change due to local circumstances. In the event of changes, we will alert you as quickly as possible. Thank you for your understanding.

Dinner: At a nearby restaurant, enjoy a welcome dinner featuring traditional French food with plated table service including choice of appetizer, entrée, and dessert, plus a glass of wine; other beverages available for purchase. In France, meals are accompanied by complimentary bread ("pain") and water ("eau" or "l'eau"), so you need not ask for them.

Evening: At leisure. Continue getting to know your fellow participants, settle in, and get a good night's rest for the day ahead.

SUN. SEP 24 (B,L) Paris Origins, Île de la Cité, Sainte-Chapelle, Notre-Dame

Activity note: Afternoon field trip via Paris Métro, accessed by walking up and down flights of stairs; elevators/escalators not available in most stations.

Breakfast: At the hotel, breakfast buffet

Morning: We begin the day with a lecture by our resident Instructor (who is also a licensed Guide) on the origins of Paris from Roman development through the Middle Ages. Archaeologists estimate that the area has been inhabited for about 9,000 years. What eventually became Paris began in the 3rd Century BCE when members of the Parisii tribe settled on an island in the Seine River. We will then board a motorcoach for a panoramic view of some of the most famous monuments and Paris sites as our Paris expert continues to present aspects of the city's history and architecture through the ages. We will also stop for photos as permitted in approved areas. Our motorcoach exploration concludes on the Île de la Cité in the vicinity of Notre-Dame Cathedral.

Lunch: As a special highlight, we will see a chef demonstrate his culinary art then have lunch featuring the dishes he has prepared.

Afternoon: Join the Group Leader on an excursion to the Sainte-Chapelle and Notre Dame. Begun in 1239, the Sainte-Chapelle, one of the glories of Gothic architecture. Construction on the Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris began in 1163 and was not finally completed until 1345. Damaged and restored a number of times, it remains one of the largest and finest examples of Gothic architecture anywhere. Afterwards, enjoy a free afternoon for independent exploration.

Dinner: This meal has been excluded from the program cost and is on your own to enjoy what you like. The Group Leader will be happy to offer suggestions and give directions.

Evening: At leisure.

MON. SEP 25 (B) Latin Quarter, St. Germain des Prés, Seine River Cruise

Activity note: The night when the Seine River cruise actually takes place depends on local schedules and circumstances, and will be discussed during Orientation.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Our local expert will help you experience the Latin Quarter like a student during a walking field trip through the neighborhood. The University of Paris and its core college, the Sorbonne, were founded on the Left Bank (Rive Gauche) about 1257, one of the first universities in the world. This quickly became the intellectual heart of the city, called the Latin Quarter as Latin was the language of the educated classes. Over succeeding eras, it attracted artists, writers, and bohemians. Among the highlights we will see are the Sorbonne, Cluny Museum, and Boulevard St Michel.

Lunch: On your own to enjoy what you like. There are many options to choose from in the Latin Quarter.

Afternoon: Free afternoon for personal independent exploration. This would be a good opportunity to spend more time in the Rive Gauche neighborhood known as St. Germain des Prés. Once a gritty haven for artists, philosopher, and writers, many of whom frequented the famed Café Les Deux Magots or the Café de Flore, it has become an upscale neighborhood that still retains much of its historic ambience. It is also the home of Café Le Procope, the oldest café-restaurant in France (1686) that was a favorite — at different times! — of Voltaire, Danton, Hugo, Balzac, Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: We will re-group at the hotel for an evening cruise along the Seine to view the magnificent illuminated monuments lining the river. If you have other plans for this evening, the Group Leader will provide you with a cruise ticket you can use at your leisure.

TUE. SEP 26 (B) Parisian Open Air Market, Marais, Musée Carnavalet

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: With our Group Leader, enjoy an optional market visit. We will head out to experience the sights, sounds, and scents of a traditional open-air market and experience Paris like a Parisian.

Lunch: On your own to enjoy what you like. You might want to create a picnic lunch from specialties at the market or dine at a nearby café. The Group Leader will be happy to offer suggestions and give directions.

Afternoon: Free afternoon for personal independent exploration. You are also welcome to join the Instructor on an informal excursion in the Marais District, or return later on your own. The Jewish Quarter here was once the most populous Jewish community in Europe. Perhaps the most famous feature is the superb Place des Vosges, the oldest planned square in Paris, built by King Henri IV in the early 1600s. Among the highlights of the Marais is the Carnavalet Museum, one of the capital's most distinctively "Parisian" museums situated in the remarkable architectural setting of two townhouses. Here you can trace the story of Paris from pre-history (4600 B.C.E.) to the present day. The Musée Carnavalet is also an art gallery exhibiting mostly original works inspired by Paris.

Dinner: On your own to enjoy what you like.

Evening: At leisure.

WED. SEP 27 (B) Palais-Royal, Musée du Louvre

Activity note: We will depart on our day's journey via Metro. Explore the Louvre at your own pace.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: With the Instructor, take the metro to the Palais-Royal. This "village in the city" that faces the Louvre was a seat of power and high position for centuries. It was built by Cardinal Richelieu in 1629 and bequeathed to King Louis XIII. It went through a series of royal owners and became the focal point of a lively social scene with notable theaters, restaurants, and promenades that attracted many visitors. The Palais-Royale was also a center of free speech in the period leading up to the Revolution. We will explore some of the covered passageways, hidden courtyards, and learn about its history through the centuries.

Lunch: On your own to enjoy what you like.

Afternoon: Free afternoon for personal independent exploration. You are also welcome to walk to the Louvre, which is nearby. The Musée du Louvre is the largest museum in the world. Its unrivaled collection includes the most famous painting, the "Mona Lisa," and the most famous sculpture, the "Venus de Milo" as well as thousands of other masterpieces.

Dinner: On your own to enjoy what you like.

Evening: At leisure.

THU. SEP 28 (B) Musée d'Orsay, Independent Exploration

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Our group field trip this morning is to the Musée d'Orsay. Led by our Instructor, explore the world's largest collection of Impressionist paintings at the Orsay Museum on the Left Bank (Rive Gauche) of the Seine. The first work of art is the building itself, the former Gare d'Orsay railway station, built for the Universal Exhibition of 1900. The collections of painting, sculpture, and decorative objects show the tremendous diversity of artistic creation in the western world from 1848-1914, showcasing many of the most remarkable works of the early modern era including the Impressionist, post-Impressionist, and Art Nouveau movements.

Lunch: On your own. The museum has three options for dining, or you might like to eat at a nearby brasserie.

Afternoon: Free afternoon for personal independent exploration. Today is a good opportunity to go via Métro and walking to the church of Les Invalides in the Musée de l'Armée with the extraordinary Tomb of Napoleon. Another highlight is the Rodin Museum and sculpture garden. The story of how this museum developed is almost as fascinating as some of Rodin's iconic sculptures, such as "The Thinker." It is housed in the exquisite Hôtel Biron, an architectural jewel amid nearly 7 acres of gardens and grounds.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: At leisure.

FRI. SEP 29 (B, D) Musée de l'Orangerie, Montmartre

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Led by our instructor, we will take a field trip to explore the collections of the Musée de l'Orangerie and view Monet's magnificent Nymphéas (Water Lilies). Situated in the heart of Paris at the corner of the Tuileries Gardens, the museum was constructed in 1852 as an actual orangery (shelter for orange trees), with a variety of uses in subsequent eras. When it was repurposed and refurbished after 1921, the great Impressionist artist Claude Monet began work on eight huge panels of "Les Nymphéas" (Water Lilies) — regarded as the ultimate expression of his artistic ideas — that were installed after his death. The museum also contains works by Cézanne, Matisse, Modigliani, Picasso, Renoir, and other great artists of Impressionism and Modern Classicism.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: Free afternoon for personal independent exploration. Consider taking the Métro up to the "village" of Montmartre, home of many artists during Impressionist and post-Impressionist periods. This is an opportunity to explore popular Place du Tertre (Artist Square), Sacré Coeur Basilica, or simply to meander through the neighborhood and see streets that inspired so many artists. Return to the hotel at your leisure.

Dinner: Our congenial farewell dinner in a nearby restaurant features a 3-course meal with choice of entrée and wine; other beverages available for purchase.

Evening: At leisure. Say farewell to new Road Scholar friends and prepare for departure in the morning. If you need assistance with transfer arrangements for travel tomorrow, please consult with the Group Leader.

SAT. SEP 30 (B) Program Concludes

Breakfast: At the hotel