Escape to France:
travel tips from authors living in FRANCE
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Travel Trips from Authors Living in France

“I love Paris in the spring time
I love Paris in the fall
I love Paris in the winter when it drizzles
I love Paris in the summer when it sizzles

I love Paris every moment
Every moment of the year”

- “I Love Paris” by Cole Porter

Whatever time of year you visit the City of Light, a wonderful world awaits you. This guide, written by nine authors currently living in France, offers insider tips to Paris and other regions in France. We hope these tips give you a unique and memorable experience on your next trip to France!

1. Kristin Louise Duncombe, author of Trailing: A Memoir
2. Jennie Goutet, author of A Lady in France
3. Samantha Vérant, author of Seven Letters from Paris
4. Janice MacLeod-Lik, author of Paris Letters
5. Adria Cimino, author of Paris, Rue des Martyrs and Close to Destiny
6. Didier Quémener, contributor to anthologies Mystery in Mind, That’s Paris, and Legacy
Kristin Louise Duncombe’s Tips on Paris:

L’Etoile Manquante
34 rue Vieille du Temple, 75004

For a groovy cheese plate and a wonderful glass of wine go to L’Etoile Manquante, one of my favorite Parisian Cafés in the Marais. Even if you don’t have to pee, go to the bathroom to get a sight of the most far-out, “spacey” WC this side of the Atlantic. This café shows up in my memoir Trailing. It’s where I duck in to find cover from a rainstorm and my husband calls from Uganda to see if I’ll take him back.

Jeanne A
42 Rue Jean-Pierre Timbaud, 75011

Food lovers and Paris-soaker-uppers, do not visit the City of Light without a stop for lunch or dinner at Jeanne A, a fantastic little bistro in the Quartier Oberkampf of the wonderful 11th arrondissement of Paris. Save room for dessert because they know what they are doing.

L’Akteon
11 rue du Général Blaise, 75011
http://www.akteon.fr

Have kids with you in Paris? Take them to see a show at L’Akteon, a darling theatre with something for all ages. Even if you don’t speak French, the shows for the young (“jeunes public”) are easy to follow no matter your mother tongue. The theater is right across the street from a lovely neighborhood park, the Square Gardette.
Kristin Louise Duncombe’s Tips on Paris:

Pain de Sucre
14 Rue de Rambuteau, 75003
http://www.patisseriepainedesucre.com

Ever tried homemade artisanal marshmallow, otherwise known in French as guimauve? If you haven’t, you must. And the place to start is the extraordinary bakery Pain de Sucre, a mere stone’s throw from the Centre Pompidou.

Promenade Plantée
http://www.promenade-plantee.org

Sick of being part of the crowd of tourists? Get off the beaten path and walk the Promenade Plantée, near Gare de Lyon in the 12th arrondissement. A wonderful stroll is to be had, and if you get hungry or thirsty you can take one of the stairways down and pick from among the many lovely cafes along the Viaduc Des Arts.
Kristin Louise Duncombe is the author of **Trailing: A Memoir**, which was selected as one of the Best Indie Reads of 2013. In it she chronicles her experiences as the “trailing spouse” who followed her Médecins Sans Frontières physician husband to the frontlines of disaster and disease in East Africa. Her forthcoming title, Five Flights Up, is a narrative memoir about raising her bi-cultural family in France and how the family dealt with the (unexpected) transition to Lyon after having laid down “permanent” roots in Paris. Kristin is also a psychotherapist who works with individuals, couples, and families, and who specializes in issues affecting expats and immigrants, based on her own experience growing up around the world as the daughter of a U.S. Foreign Service Officer, and having lived as an expat most of her adult life. She is based in Lyon, France where she has lived for the last four years, after ten beautiful years in Paris, with her Argentinean husband and two kids!

http://www.kristinduncombe.com
https://www.facebook.com/TrailingAMemoir
https://twitter.com/KristinDuncombe
Trailing: A Memoir was VOTED ONE OF THE BEST INDIE BOOKS OF 2013!

Something unexpected occurs when Kristin Louise Duncombe moves to New Orleans to begin her adult life as a psychotherapist: She falls madly in love with a Médecins Sans Frontières doctor, abandons all of her plans, and follows him on a medical mission to East Africa. Faced with the dual culture shock of Kenya and life with the MSF team, Kristin struggles to craft a new existence in a context of mishap, witchcraft, and the life or death stakes of the MSF world.

Just when she has managed to establish a life for herself in Nairobi, a violent carjacking catapults her into a state of acute post-traumatic stress, and her life thereafter devolves into a world of intense anxiety that permeates every aspect of her existence. Forced to examine questions about her relationship, career, and personal identity, she struggles to save her marriage while facing the most difficult fight of her life: saving herself.

Duncombe’s debut, as humorous as it is harrowing, provides an insider’s view of an MSF marriage and the humanitarian crisis in East Africa. Probing deeply into her tumultuous search for identity, she captures the essence of the experience with extraordinary authenticity and honesty. An altogether life-altering journey to the core of the human soul, Trailing: A Memoir is a compulsive page-turner, as fascinating as it is life affirming.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1470159791
Jennie Goutet’s Tips on Normandy and Brittany:

Mont St Michel

Mont St Michel is a must-see if you’re visiting Normandy (or even Brittany since it’s practically on the border).

When you go:

a) opt for the baby carrier rather than the stroller because the roads are too narrow and steep, and there are lots of stairs,

b) pay close attention to the tide schedule if you don’t want your car washed away by the time you get out, and

c) try one of their specialties—either the naturally salted lamb from the herds that feed on the salted pastures left behind by the tide, or the foaming omelette of La Mère Poulard.

Book your table here: http://en.lamerepoulardcafe.fr with hotel suggestions on the bottom left corner of the website.

Deauville


Miss out on the Cannes Film Festival, held in May? Deauville hosts an American Film Festival every September. Book early and stay in the stately Hotel Barrière, where you can see signed pictures of all the famous actors who have stayed there, and sign up for a session at the Thalasso Spa just across the street.
Jennie Goutet’s Tips on Normandy and Brittany:

Etretat
http://www.residencehoteletretat.com

Etretat is known for its magnificent cliffs and wild beauty, and is definitely a site not to miss. Why not stay at the Manoir de la Salamandre that was built in the Middle Ages and restored in 1912? It’s magnificent, and you can have an entirely organic and home-cooked meal in the brasserie.

Normandy

Even if you’re not a history buff, it’s impossible to remain unaffected when visiting the Normandy Beaches, where you’re struck with the significance of what they meant for the Second World War. Don’t miss the museum at Arromanches, and the battlefield at Pointe du Hoc. And if you’re American, you’ll also want to see Omaha Beach and the American Cemetery.

If you are interested in history, but don’t know much about D-Day, I’ve compiled a short history of the day, and the events leading up to it, here: http://aladyinfrance.com/d-day/

Rouen
http://www.rouentourisme.com

Of course one goes to Rouen to visit the cathedral, but you can also visit the rest of the city using “le petit train” that departs in front of the cathedral on the hour and has tours in English (May through September). Other sites include the Church of Jeanne d’Arc, built on the square where she was burned at the stake in 1431, and whose 16th century stained glass windows were salvaged from St Vincent’s church that had been bombed out during the Second World War. You can also climb up to the belfry of “le Gros Horloge”—the big clock that was put up in the 1500s—and tour its inner workings. Rouen is accessible by train and makes a perfect day trip from Paris.
Jennie Goutet’s Tips on Normandy and Brittany:

St Malo
http://www.le-corps-de-garde.com/?lang=en

St Malo makes for an amazing date night if you’re staying in the vicinity. Have dinner on the rampart with a sunset view at Le Corps de Garde - Crêperie vue sur mer. Make sure to order a galette—the salty buckwheat crêpe Brittany is known for.

Dinard

If you’re staying in Dinard and wish to visit St Malo, or if you’re staying in St Malo and wish to visit Dinard, why not take the water taxi and make a pleasant day trip out of it? Tickets are 7.60€ round-trip for adults and 5€ round-trip for kids.

Dinan
http://www.fete-remparts-dinan.com

Dinan is one of the most beautiful cities in the Côtes d'Armor of Brittany, and is where you can find exquisite Breton hand-painted porcelain. And if the timing is right you can attend La Fête des Remparts, a medieval festival of the walled city, which is held in early summer on the even years.

Brittany Beaches

If you want to find the most pleasant Brittany beaches, I say avoid the overcrowded Dinard where you have to walk a long way (and crawl over people) to get to the water. Instead, bring a picnic lunch to the hidden beach of Pen-Guen with its perfect sand and rolling waves. I also love the beaches in Saint Briac. There’s Le Port Hue, though you need aquatic shoes to avoid getting stung by the weever fish (la vive) hidden in low tide, and there’s also Longchamp, which is the most impressive place to watch the waves at high tide.
Jennie Goutet is the author of memoir A Lady in France and blogs under the same name. She also wrote and illustrated the children’s book Happy People Everywhere, and is a contributing author to Sunshine After the Storm and That’s Paris: An Anthology of Life, Love and Sarcasm in the City of Light. She was a BlogHer Voice of the Year pick three times, and her writing has appeared in Huffington Post, Queen Latifah’s website, Mamalode and BonBonBreak. She lives just outside of Paris with her husband and three children.

http://aladyinfrance.com
https://www.facebook.com/aladyinfrance
https://twitter.com/aladyinfrance/
A Lady in France

At seventeen, Jennie Goutet has a dream that she will one day marry a French man and sets off to Avignon in search of him. Though her dream eludes her, she lives boldly—teaching in Asia, studying in Paris, working and traveling for an advertising firm in New York.

When God calls her, she answers reluctantly, and must first come to grips with crippling loss, depression, and addiction before being restored. Serendipity takes her by the hand and she marries her French husband, works with him in a humanitarian effort in East Africa, before settling down in France and building a family.

Told with honesty and strength, A Lady in France is a brave heart-stopping story of love, grief, faith, depression, sunshine piercing the gray clouds—and hope that stays in your heart long after it's finished.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1494400987
Samantha Vérant's tips on the Loire:

One Romantic Chambre d’Hôte and Four Romantic Castles in the Loire Valley

In my memoir, Seven Letters from Paris, instead of taking me to Paris (where I first met Jean-Luc in 1989), my prince charmante whisked me away on a rekindle-the-romance tour in August of 2009. Our second stop was the Loire Valley, where Jean-Luc and I visited castle after castle. Seriously, nothing screams romance like castles—all the refinement, elegance, and grace of days gone by. But where does one stay to take full advantage of the area?

In France, there are many types of accommodations to choose from—motels, hotels ranging from zero to five stars, gîtes (self-catered and furnished homes), auberges (inns), luxurious relais et châteaux (actual castles), or chambre d’hôtes (upscale bed & breakfast in a mansion/manoir). My heart skipped a few beats when I saw the chambre d’hôte we were staying in. Reminiscent of a castle, with bright and vibrant rose-colored hydrangea surrounding the main house and cream-colored bricks with grey, peaked, tiled rooftops and scalloped plaster molding, the very dreamy Château de Razay was where we unpacked our bags for two nights. Our delightful and very large room came complete with a four-poster bed with billowy white curtains. Très romantique.
Samantha Vérant's tips on the Loire:

**Château de Razay**
37 460 Céré La Ronde  
Tel: + 33 (0) 2 47 94 38 33  
http://www.chateauderazay.com

With our beautiful accommodation in place, it was time to set out and discover the region hand in hand. But there were more than three hundred châteaux to choose from! Thankfully, I was seeing France through the eyes of a Frenchman and, always the quintessential gentleman, Jean-Luc had already chosen his top four picks. And now I’m sharing them with you...

**Château de Chambord**
F-41250 Chambord  
Tel: + 33 (0) 2 54 50 40 00  
http://www.chambord.org

Originally built as a hunting lodge for François I, Château de Chambord is the largest château in the Loire Valley. This magnificent structure is almost indescribable. The immense roof seems to go on for miles with turrets reaching up to the heavens. Inside, aside from the beautifully decorated apartments, the double-helix staircase, which allows people to climb up... invisible to those who go down, is one of the architectural highlights of this château. The crowning jewel of the Renaissance, Château de Chambord is truly incroyable! Be prepared: tourists flock to this château year-round and reservations are highly recommended.

**Château de Chenonceau**
37150 Chenonceaux, France  
Tel: + 33 (0)2 47 23 90 07  
http://www.chenonceau.com

Known as the “château des femmes,” Château de Chenonceau sits in all her former glory, her stone cold beauty reflecting on the River Cher, her beautiful gardens open to the thousands of tourists that visit every year. Take a tea in the château’s gourmet restaurant l’Orangerie, explore the beautiful gardens, and, if you’re with your lover, steal kisses in the wondrous maze.
Samantha Vérant's tips on the Loire:

Château d’Azay-le-Rideau
Rue de Pineau, 37190 Azay-le-Rideau
Tel: +33 (0) 2 47 45 42 04

Located in a park-like setting and set on an island overlooking the Indre River, Château d’Azay-le-Rideau is another example of all the refinement and beauty found during the French Renaissance. Gilles de Berthelot, the wealthy financier of François I, built this château in the 1500s. Today, it’s one of the most popular châteaux in the Loire Valley. Although it was undergoing renovations when we visited, we still enjoyed exploring its magical grounds, admiring the château’s stunning reflection in the river.

Château d’Ussé
37420 Rigny-Ussé
Tél : + 33 (0) 2 47 95 54 05
http://www.chateaudusse.fr

Château d’Ussé is reputed to be both the inspiration behind Charles Perrault’s Sleeping Beauty (La Belle au Bois Dormant) and Walt Disney’s iconic castle. A true fairy-tale setting, this magical château is located on the edge of the Chinon Forest, on the banks of the Indre River, overlooking terraced gardens. If I could choose my favorite castle we visited, it would be Château d’Ussé. Everything about the château promises enchantment—the architecture with its grey-blue slate roofs and dormer windows, not to mention its towers and turrets. Go early and avoid the crowds.
Samantha Vérant

is a travel addict, a self-professed oenophile, and a determined, if occasionally unconventional, French chef. Over the years, she’s visited many different countries, lived in many places, and worked many jobs—always on the search for the one thing that truly excited her. Then, one day, she found everything she’s been looking for: a passion for the written word and true love. Writing not only enabled her to open her heart, it led her to southwestern France, where she’s now married to a sexy French rocket scientist she met over twenty years ago, a stepmom to two incredible kids, and the adoptive mother to one ridiculously expensive Bengal cat. When she’s not trekking from Provence to the Pyrénées, tasting wine in American-sized glasses, or embracing her inner Julia Child while deliberating what constitutes the perfect boeuf bourguignon, Samantha is making her best effort to relearn those dreaded conjugations. She is the author of Seven Letters from Paris: A Memoir.

http://www.samantha reverant.com
http://www.facebook.com/SevenLettersFromParis
http://twitter.com/samantha_verant
http://www.pinterest.com/samantha reverant
http://instagram.com/samantha_verant
Seven Letters from Paris: A Memoir

Twenty years, seven letters, and one long-lost love of a lifetime

At age 40, Samantha Verant’s life is falling apart—she’s jobless, in debt, and feeling stuck... until she stumbles upon seven old love letters from Jean-Luc, the sexy Frenchman she met in Paris when she was 19. With a quick Google search, she finds him, and both are quick to realize that the passion they felt 20 years prior hasn’t faded with time and distance.

Samantha knows that jetting off to France to reconnect with a man that she only knew for one sun-drenched, passion-filled day is crazy—but it’s the kind of crazy she’s been waiting for her whole life.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/140229722X
Janice MacLeod-Lik’s Tips on Paris:

Sunday Market on Rue Mouffetard
Rue Mouffetard, 75005
Closed Sunday afternoon and all day Monday.

If you are craving a Paris where time stands still, walk along Rue Mouffetard on Sunday mornings. Pick up your baguette, cheese, fruit and meat as you walk down this old market street, which has been in operation for centuries. You know that saying that all roads lead to Rome? Well that is true of this street. When the Romans came to France, they built a road back to the homeland. The original street still lies beneath the current cobbles. At the bottom of the rue you can sing and dance with a troupe who entertain shoppers every Sunday. Then sit in the park alongside the church and have a picnic. Or if people-watching is your thing, grab a seat at Tourn'Bride Bistro. It’s the perfect perch for catching all the street action, plus they have a nice Sunday brunch. This is where I penned much of my book Paris Letters. If you head toward the back of the restaurant you’ll see one of my Paris Letters on the wall.

TournBride is located at 104 rue Mouffetard, 75005. Open daily.

My home when I wrote Paris Letters is located at 140 rue Mouffetard, 75005.

Jardin des Plantes & the Firemen’s Ball
57 Rue Cuvier, 75005

For a quiet stroll with plenty of blossoms and statuary, head to Jardin des Plantes. There you’ll find a botanical garden, a zoo (with the most incredible collection of serpents), and museums dedicated to evolution and geology.
Janice MacLeod-Lik’s Tips on Paris:

I like Jardin des Plantes best for a morning jog. Up one side of the park and down the other with a cool-down stroll in the middle, admiring row after row of flowers. Plus, the firemen jog there around 8 am each morning. If you’re lucky, you’ll see them pull up with the fire truck for their daily run. They wear a blue and white running uniform, and one of them carries the dispatch phone so if there is a fire they can sprint back to the fire truck. For the children of France, being a fireman is regarded as the finest of all professions, even trumping professional soccer player. Each year on July 13th, the day before Bastille Day, the fire stations of Paris hold the Firemen's Ball where you can dance, drink and admire Paris's finest up close. The Firemen’s Ball is held at various locations.

Angelina for Thick Hot Chocolate
226 Rue de Rivoli, 75001

I have done an extensive study of the best hot chocolate in Paris. A hardship, I assure you. And it’s true what everyone says: Angelina has the best. It’s thick, rich and just the right temperature. You can sit and sip in the ornate tearoom, or do what I do: order it in the lobby and get it to go. It’s a fraction of the price and just as delicious. Plus, the line for the tearoom can be long on weekends. Take your chocolat chaud across the street to the Jardin des Tuileries and sit on the park bench facing the carousel to watch the horses go around and around. Second place chocolat chaud goes to Les Deux Magots, where Simone de Beauvoir rendezvoused with intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre. (PS They are buried together at Cimetière du Montparnasse in the 14th arrondissement.)

Jardin des Tuileries is located between the Louvre Museum and the Place de la Concorde in the 1st arrondissement.

Les Deux Magots is located at 6 Place Saint-Germain des Prés, 75006
Janice MacLeod-Lik’s Tips on Paris:

**Vedettes de Pont Neuf Boat Tour**
Square du Vert Galant, 75001

There is no better way to cap your stay in Paris than with the Vedettes de Pont Neuf boat tour. It starts on the western tip of Île de la Cité, the heart of Paris. Boats leave every half hour to hour depending on the season, you can buy tickets right there and then, and the cruise lasts an hour. It costs about 14 euros per person and it's even less when you buy your tickets online (currently 10 euros for an evening cruise). Personally, I tend to take spontaneous boat cruises based on how tired my feet are at the time. Hop on the boat and see most of the great monuments of Paris. Cruises are available day and evening. I prefer evening as it’s a great way to see how Paris truly lives up to its reputation as the City of Light.
Janice MacLeod-Lik is the author of the New York Times best-selling book Paris Letters, a travel memoir about how she left corporate life in California to travel abroad, and eventually become an artist in Paris. She began a mail subscription service and now sends illustrated letters to people around the globe. While living in Paris, she met the lovely Christophe and together they now go on new travel adventures. She blogs about her journey at janicemacleod.com and continues to paint and mail Paris Letters and Travel Letters. She has been featured on Huffington Post, National Geographic, Elle, Yahoo, Fodors, and Business Insider.

http://janicemacleod.com
http://www.etsy.com/shop/janiceartship
Paris Letters

Finding love and freedom in a pen, a paintbrush... and Paris

How much money does it take to quit your job?

Exhausted and on the verge of burnout, Janice poses this question to herself as she doodles on a notepad at her desk. Surprisingly, the answer isn’t as daunting as she expected. With a little math and a lot of determination, Janice cuts back, saves up, and buys herself two years of freedom in Europe.

A few days into her stop in Paris, Janice meets Christophe, the cute butcher down the street who doesn’t speak English. Through a combination of sign language and franglais, they embark on a whirlwind Paris romance. She soon realizes that she can never return to the world of twelve-hour workdays and greasy corporate lingo. But her dwindling savings force her to find a way to fund her dreams again. So Janice turns to her three loves—words, art, and Christophe—to figure out a way to make her happily-ever-after in Paris last forever.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1402288794
Adria J. Cimino’s Art Gallery & Museum Tips:

Paris itself is a work of art, housing many beautiful museums. And these museums hold many masterpieces. The vision is like that of a Russian matryoshka doll, with beauty found at each layer. In such a city, it’s only natural that two of the characters in my novel, Paris, Rue des Martyrs, are artists! If you’re visiting Paris, don’t go home without exploring the city’s artistic side. And the good news is, whether you’re traveling with adults or children, your explorations will be delightful. Check out a few of my favorites...

Petit Palais
Avenue Winston Churchill, 75008

The “little palace”—the name sounds elegant and accessible at the same time. As it is indeed. Most visitors to Paris don’t know that the permanent collection at the Petit Palais is actually free. So you can walk right in and look at an amazing collection of paintings and objects, and if the weather is pleasant, stroll around the lovely courtyard encircled by the museum. Since this is not a massive museum, it’s a good place to take children to introduce them to art.

Musée Jacquemart-André
158 Boulevard Haussmann, 75008

This museum, once the home of an art-collecting couple, is rarely on the tourist’s radar screen. And it should be! It is not like visiting an art museum, with only paintings or sculptures to be admired. At this museum, you will visit the furnished bedrooms and sitting rooms, and learn how the ballroom walls retracted to expand the room for grand events! During school holidays, the museum has special programs for children. My daughter loved dressing in a gown from the era and painting on an easel!
Adria J. Cimino’s Art Gallery & Museum Tips:

Palais de la Découverte
Avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 75008

Go to a science museum in Paris? Yes! Children (and adults) are delighted by the opportunity to watch an army of ants at work, experiment with pulleys (my toddler lifted about 200lbs!), and test their heartbeat with a variety of high-tech medical machines. Every little Parisian has had his or her first taste of science at this museum.

Centre Pompidou
Place Georges-Pompidou, 75004

This controversial modern art museum (hated by many for its clunky pipes-on-the-outside appearance) houses a lot of fun for children, and adults of course. From time to time, there is a special traveling exhibit that settles down here. My daughter and I were actually in the promotional video for the Frida Kahlo exhibit. When there isn’t a special kids’ exhibit going on, there are plenty of exciting activities for them in the designated area on the mezzanine level.


And finally, most of Paris’ museums—from Musée Galliera (the fashion museum) to the Quai Branly museum—offer special children’s activities, often on Wednesday afternoons, over the weekend, and during school holidays.
Adria J. Cimino is the author of novels Paris, Rue des Martyrs and Close to Destiny and is co-founder of indie publishing house Velvet Morning Press. She also is a contributor to short story anthologies That’s Paris and Legacy. Prior to jumping into the publishing world full time, she spent more than a decade as a journalist at news organizations including The AP and Bloomberg News. Adria is a member of Tall Poppy Writers, a community of writing professionals committed to connecting authors with each other and with readers.

http://adriainparis.blogspot.fr
http://ajcimino.com
https://www.facebook.com/AdriaJ.inParis
https://twitter.com/Adria_in_Paris
Close to Destiny

Does déjà vu have a deeper meaning?

A puzzling gift from a stranger in a hat shop. Whispers and footsteps in a dim luxury hotel. Dreams that transport to elegant parties where champagne flows like water. Kat is both frightened and intrigued by the events that have plagued her since she arrived in London, in a final effort to save herself from anorexia and recover from her latest suicide attempt.

Most disturbing is an encounter with a mysterious woman who introduces Kat to Will. And this lovely messenger has information she desperately wants to share with Kat: an incident from more than a century ago that could transform Kat's future. But will Kat listen?

http://www.amazon.com/dp/0692346945

Paris, Rue des Martyrs

Some encounters make a difference.

Four strangers in Paris. Each one is on a quest: to uncover a family secret, to grasp a new chance at love, to repair mistakes of the past. Four stories entwine, four quests become one, as their paths cross amid the beauty, squalor, animation and desolation of a street in Paris, the rue des Martyrs.

Rafael’s search for his birth mother leads him to love and grim family secrets. Cecile’s view of herself as an unsatisfied housewife is radically changed by the promise of a passionate liaison. Andre, an aging actor, troubled by the arrival of the son he abandoned years ago, must make a choice, to either lose his son forever or put aside pride and seek redemption. Mira travels to Paris to begin a new life and forget about love... or so she intends.

Four strangers, four stories, one riveting novel.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/0692335072
Didier Quémener’s Food & Wine Tips:

Markets

Whether you’ve been to Paris before or not, you must take a stroll through one of the many Parisians markets! Except for Mondays, you can find an open-air market (and covered) every single day of the week in the City of Light.

From Bastille to Aligre, Beauvau to Saint-Quentin, you’ll experience a whole world full of colors and produce! Don’t hesitate to wait in line since this is the one clue you need to remember: If locals are willing to wait to be served at certain stands, it means that what’s being sold is good quality at a good price! In general, Parisians are cheap, impatient and grouchy. So if they take the time to wait more than five minutes, it’s probably worth it...

So go seasonal, don’t be afraid to try new veggies, fruit and salads, and let your instinct guide you through the aisles!

Can you spell “fromage”?

You’re in Paris, what are you hunting for? Cheese, of course! It’s all over town: shops, restaurants, markets, supermarkets… Wait! Did I just say “supermarkets?” Let me correct that:

First commandment: “Thou shalt have no other but raw milk cheese.”

Second commandment: “Thou shalt not buy cheese at supermarkets.”
Didier Quémener’s Food & Wine Tips:

Okay, sometimes for health reasons, allergies, etc. you might have pasteurized cheese, which is fine (some are delicious!). So skip to the second commandment. If I catch you buying cheese in Paris at a supermarket, make sure you know how to run fast!

You mean to tell me that you’ve come all the way to the #1 worldwide tourist destination and you’re ready to buy crappy cheese at a supermarket? Come on! Cheese shops are everywhere. They carry the best, they’ll listen to you, they’ll guide you, and you’ll get samples…

Bottom line: Do not give your money to industrial groups, help local producers!

Wine with your cheese?

Now that you know where to buy cheese, you need wine to go with it! Same rule applies as the cheese second commandment: Do not buy wine at the supermarket!

French “cavistes” are on almost every street corner. Parisian wine shops are fun to go to: tastings, off-the-beaten-path wines, great prices… And amazingly enough, guess what you can often find a few steps away from a local wine shop? Bingo: a cheese shop! Hmm… I wonder why? (not!)

Goat, ewe, cow: Whatever the milk, whatever the taste (and smell obviously), there is a wine to match your pieces of heaven. Only one rule to follow: Do not drink your best wine while eating cheese! It’s pure nonsense. Why? Because wine flavors are so delicate and cheese can be so powerful that you might just end up wasting one, the other or both.

For the rest, red, white, sweet, dry… It’s up to you! Just have fun and don’t forget bread!
Didier Quémener’s Food & Wine Tips:

Bread?

If you live in the gluten-free world, skip this part and stick with your regular flour list (chestnuts, amaranth, rice, buckwheat, teff, potato, tapioca, millet, corn, arrowroot, hemp, etc.). You may find a few loaves in accord with your food allergies/restrictions in organic and gluten-free stores (not that common yet in Paris) and in good bakeries run by what we call “Artisans Boulangers.”

So what is an Artisan Boulanger? Basically, the only person you can blindly trust in Paris! He will select all of his ingredients; will wake up at 1:00 a.m. so that by 7:00 a.m. at the latest, your freshly baked bread is ready to go! Artisans Boulangers represent more than 70% of France’s bread sales and they are the only ones doing everything from scratch. Parisians (and French people in general), love their bread: one of the reasons why our bakers bake several times a day until late afternoon.

Look for the word “Artisan,” push open the door, take a whiff and go nuts! Life’s short, screw the calorie count and stuff yourself with bread!

Remember: It’s not bread that is linked to obesity; the chemicals, additives and other crap the industrial groups add to it are. You need details? Okay, read the list of ingredients of any bread you buy at a chain supermarket, for instance. The average is at least 15! Do you know what you need to make bread? Flour, salt, yeast and water: Bam! Think about it...

Restaurants, pastries and frozen food

If you’ve read my article on Medium, you already know how to stay away from what I call “fake food.” A three-course meal that will take more time to arrive on your table than to be prepared in the back of the kitchen, which by the way has more microwave ovens than employees, will be a horrible experience! I guarantee it.
Didier Quémener’s Food & Wine Tips:

The same goes for pastries. A pastry chef working at a bakery costs his/her employer a lot of money. Therefore, to cut costs, bakeries have a tendency of taking bad and wrong shortcuts. In order to avoid falling in the tourist trap and biting into a frozen sweet treat (like Ladurée frozen macarons for example... I know, I’m making lots of new friends here!), look in the window display. If you spot a selection of more than 20 different pastries, be assured that half of what you see is frozen, comes from outside of Paris, and is made by the ton to be delivered all over France.

And remember, anything that is too shiny is made to last more than one day. Listen to the crowd inside the place you’re entering: If you hear French, aggressive and rude Parisians inside, you’re in for a good pastry! If you hear more proper English spoken than crazy French people swearing non-stop, you might be disappointed...
Didier Quémener:
Executive chef, private chef, food & wine consultant. Lived in the US, now based in Paris. Does not wear a beret but eats freshly baked bread every day. Cooked his first meal at age seven, graduated from the Sorbonne, worked as a photographer and finally came back to the kitchen where it all started. Didier is French & American, therefore obnoxious, a wine snob and speaks loudly! Didier also contributed to anthologies Mystery in Mind, That's Paris, and Legacy.

http://www.chefqparis.com
http://www.foodme.fr/pages/lg/en
http://www.twitter.com/ChefQParis
http://www.twitter.com/FoodMeParis
That's Paris

Paris—the most romantic, beautiful and frustrating city in the world!

If you've ever traveled to Paris, lived in the City of Light or dreamed of setting foot on its cobblestoned streets, you'll enjoy escaping into this collection of short stories about France's famed capital. From culinary treats (and catastrophes) to swoon-worthy romantic encounters (and heartbreaking mishaps), this anthology takes you on a journey through one of the most famous cities in the world.

View this cosmopolitan metropolis through the chic eyes of Parisians, francophiles and travelers who fell in love with the city and haven't quite gotten around to leaving yet... That's Paris: a glimpse into living, loving and surviving in the City of Light.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/0692340114

Legacy

What will you leave behind?

Long after we've left this world, our legacy remains. Or doesn’t. Or remains only in the minds of those who knew us, those whose lives we’ve touched. Those we’ve written to, or about.

If you had a choice, what mark would you leave? How should people remember you? Should they remember you?

Within these pages, there is laughter, pride and hope. There is romance and rock and roll. Certain messages are eerie, while others bestow a sense of peace. The collection, through the discerning lens of each writer, runs the gamut of the human experience.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/0692346953
Tovi was born in Paris and he loves showing people around his city!
You will see that Paris with kids can be fun!

Parks & Gardens

Paris has many beautiful parks, which are perfect for outdoor activities. Tovi has picked his top 3 for you!

**Jardin du Luxembourg**
Rue de Médicis - Rue de Vaugirard, 75006

Surrounded by beautiful Haussmann-style buildings near the Latin Quarter, this park is one of the prettiest in Paris. It has the city’s oldest carousel and a fenced-in playground for kids.

**Jardin d’Acclimatation**
Bois de Boulogne, 75016
http://www.jardindacclimatation.fr

A children’s amusement park with animals and workshops, located in the west of Paris. It has lots to offer and kids will really enjoy it.
Tovi the Penguin’s Tips on Kid-friendly Paris, from Children’s Author Janina Rossiter:

Jardin des Tuileries
113 Rue de Rivoli, 75001

This park is located in the heart of Paris, you can have a nice walk from the Louvre to the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. Kids will enjoy the fountains, where they can sail boats in the water, and parents can have a rest on the green chairs.

Cafés & Kid Stores

A pain au chocolat for breakfast or enjoying goûter (snack) in the afternoon. Paris has some cafés that cater to families, offering activities conveniently combined with a little shopping area for kids’ items.

Mombini
22 rue Gerbert, 75015
http://www.mombini.com
Tuesday to Saturdays, 10h30 to 19h

This kids’ store has a small café that also offers events for kids. The owners have really done a great job—the décor is beautiful, creative and very kid-friendly.

Le Petit Café du Monde Entier
95 rue du Chemin Vert, 75011
http://www.petitcafedumonde.com
Monday 10h to 14h, Tuesday to Saturday 10h to 18h30
Sunday 11h to 18h. Brunch Sat/Sun 11h to 13h30.

This little cafe is located in the 11th arrondissement and also has a kids’ store. They serve soups, salads and sandwiches. The café/store offers a range of creative activities for little ones.
Tovi the Penguin’s Tips on Kid-friendly Paris, from Children’s Author Janina Rossiter:

Une Mère Une Fille à Paris
43 Boulevard Garibaldi, 75015
http://www.1mere1filleaparis.com
Tuesday to Saturday 10H to 18H30

A family friendly concept store with an enjoyable tea room.

Restaurants

Finding a highchair or a changing table in Parisian restaurants can be a challenge. Here are the right places for you to go!

Happy Families
5 Rue du Cloître Saint-Merri, 75004
http://www.happyfamilies.fr
Monday to Sunday 10h to 20h

Located in the center of Paris, next to the Hotel de Ville, this family-friendly restaurant has a play area and a workshop (atelier) for children. Have a look at their events calendar beforehand to see what events are on.

Les 400 Coups
12 bis rue de la Villette, 75019
http://www.les400coups.eu
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 12h to 15h
Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 10:30h to 18h

A restaurant with a play area for kids that offers a variety of activities and games for children up to 8 years old. Has children’s chairs and adapted meals.
Tovi the Penguin’s Tips on Kid-friendly Paris, from Children’s Author Janina Rossiter:

**Museums & Culture**

After playing in the park, now it’s time for some culture. These tips are good for rainy days but of course you can also do them when the sun is shining.

**Aquarium de Paris - Cinéaqua**
5 Avenue Albert de Mun, 75016  
http://www.cineaqua.com  
Open daily (Monday to Sunday) 10am to 7pm. Last entry 1 hour prior to closing.

The Aquarium is located just opposite the Eiffel tower, so you can easily combine the two activities. It’s always a great experience for kids to dive into the underwater world. So why not do it in Paris?

**Centre Pompidou / Children’s Gallery**
Rue Saint-Martin, 75004  
http://www.junior.centrepompidou.fr  
Every day except Monday 11.00h to 21.00h

The gallery offers activities for children aged 2 and up. It’s never too early to introduce your kids to art, and the children’s gallery at the Centre Pompidou is a great place to start.
Janina Rossiter

loves three things: design, France and her little family. She studied communication & illustration design at university, and has lived in Germany (her home country), England (where she met her husband), and now France (where she vows to stay). After graduating with a degree from university she worked as a packaging designer for a few years before setting off on her own and expanding into freelance design. She enjoys the creative energy of Paris, where she lives with her English husband and 2-year-old daughter.

With the arrival of her daughter, Janina’s love for painting and drawing found a new lease on life and, before long, she combined her passion for illustration with the wonderfully inspiring world of children. After that, it was simply a matter of time before Tovi the Penguin was born...

http://www.tovithepenguin.com
http://www.facebook.com/ToviThePenguin
http://twitter.com/Tovithepenguin
http://instagram.com/tovithepenguin

Also: Limited edition posters and post-its can be purchased on ETSY.
https://www.etsy.com/shop/tovithepenguin

Join the Tovi newsletter
http://eepurl.com/bgoYdB
Tovi the Penguin
Whether you are on a plane or in a beautiful park in Paris, it's always a good idea to read to your children. If you enjoyed Tovi’s Paris tour you might enjoy his picture books. There are available now, with more to come!

The Tovi the Penguin picture books are aimed at children aged 2-6, who hopefully will join Tovi in his mini-adventures, and learn something about life and the world around them. You’ll be surprised what an exciting time little penguins can have!

Tovi the Penguin Goes to London
It's raining again and Tovi and his friends decide to take a trip to get away from the bad weather. How about going to London? Will they have a good time? Let’s find out ...

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1505965233

Tovi the Penguin Goes Camping
Join Tovi and his friends on their latest mini-adventure! They have decided to go camping, so what could possibly go wrong? Let's find out...
Also available in French and German.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1500536598

Tovi the Penguin Goes Away for Christmas
Tovi and his friends are going away for Christmas. They’re very excited! But will Santa find them? Let’s find out...

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1500983934
Party Girl’s Guide to Paris, from author Vicki Lesage:

**L’As du Fallafel**
32 rue des Rosiers, 75004

I’m not the first to recommend this place and I won’t be the last, but that doesn’t mean I should leave it off the list! This restaurant is literally the best falafel restaurant in Paris. I mean, it has “Ace” right there in the name, but more importantly (and more objectively) there is always a mile-long line in front, while the other falafel restaurants on the same street are embarrassingly empty. Don’t be deterred by the queue—the line moves quickly and the food is totally worth it.

**Pat’s Hot Dog**
56 rue du Roi de Sicile, 75004

While hot dogs are not fancy nor typical French fare, Pat’s Hot Dog is worth a visit. It’s fun to see the French take on the American classic, and you won’t be disappointed. Load up with toppings then let half of them fall on the rue du Roi de Sicile as you shove the hot dog in your face. Classy? No. Delicious. Yes.

**Hôtel de Sully**
48 rue Saint-Antoine, 75004

This tiny garden is tucked between rue Saint-Antoine and the famous Place des Vosges. It’s relatively quiet and you can usually find a seat. I love meeting my husband there for lunch and chatting away in the place where aristocrats used to do the same thing centuries ago. Well, I’m guessing they didn’t eat ham and cheese sandwiches on baguettes but they certainly strolled the garden and gossiped, so I get to relive at least part of it.
Party Girl’s Guide to Paris, from author Vicki Lesage:

The Pure Malt
4 rue Caron, 75004

Billed as the only Scottish Pub in Paris (the others are Scottish-themed but are run by Frenchies), this is one of my favorite bars. In fact, it makes an appearance in the first chapter of Confessions of a Paris Potty Trainer. Great drinks and fast service from the gruff-but-friendly-underneath Shep (the owner), and it surprisingly affordable for the usually-pricey Marais. The best part? Shep’s taste in music and his openness to requests. I’ve passed many a tipsy night singing along at the top of my lungs. On second thought, you might not want to go there unless you’re sure it’s a night I’m somewhere else.

Château de Vincennes
Avenue de Paris, 94300

Castles are cool and everyone knows it. The problem is that most castles are inconvenient to visit. Not Château de Vincennes! This ancient fortress sits just a few minutes away from métro Line 1, making it easily accessible during a trip to Paris. When you walk across the drawbridge, I dare you to not pretend you’re a prince or princess. It’s impossible. Once inside, you can wander the grounds and imagine what life must have been like back in the day. And the best part is it's free! If you’re really into castles and churches, there are parts you can pay to explore more of. But I’m always perfectly content to strut around wearing my invisible crown, ordering around my invisible subjects. To each his own.

Eiffel Tower
5 avenue Anatole France, 75007

You can’t talk about Paris without mentioning the Eiffel Tower. Some people love it and dream of visiting it. Some people hate it and think it’s an eyesore or a tourist trap. But let’s get real. It’s cool. It’s photogenic and you’ll probably frame whatever photo you snapped of yourself in front of it and cherish it forever. It’s great to go off the beaten path and all, but you still can’t avoid Le Tour Eiffel unless you try really hard. So I recommend embracing it and visiting it in all its glory.
Party Girl’s Guide to Paris, from author Vicki Lesage:

That said, I’m not the biggest fan of actually going up in it. It’s not a fear of heights—I’ve been skydiving and hang-gliding thankyouverymuch—it’s a matter of lines, crowds, and cost. If you insist on going up in the monument, I recommend getting a speed pass. Life (and, likely, your time in Paris) is too short to spend waiting in line.

My favorite way to enjoy the beauty of the structure is to have a picnic on the Champs de Mars (the grassy lawn) in front of it. Because it's kind of hard to see the Eiffel Tower if you're IN the Eiffel Tower, am I right? A leisurely picnic of wine, cheese, and baguettes while admiring all 1000+ feet of the 19th century structure is undeniably enjoyable. And the Champs de Mars is one of the few places in Paris you’re actually allowed to—gasp—walk on the grass and have a picnic.

Refuge des Fondus
17 rue des Trois Frères, 75018

Melted cheese will always have a special place in my heart. Specifically, clogging my arteries. Totally worth it. My favorite place in Paris to enjoy fondue is Refuge des Fondus. I’ve been there literally 200+ times. It’s not just the cheesy goodness that keeps me coming back for more, it’s their quirky atmosphere and wine-in-baby-bottles schtick.

Yes, you heard that right—wine in baby bottles. It’s not the best wine, but it's cheap. I recommend three baby bottles, the equivalent of one bottle of wine. That will place you at just the right level of inebriation to sing “Happy Birthday” in Spanish to the party across the room (even if you don’t know Spanish) while still having the coordination to climb over the table upon exit (Did I mention that? Yeah, you have to climb over the table to get to your seat. Visit the restroom first because once you’re in, it’s not easy to get out.)

Don’t worry about it being a tourist trap. At any given time 25-50% of the restaurant is comprised of French people. I mean, yes, it’s a spot for tourists but you’ll still get local flair and a great night out. I recommend making a reservation because it’s tiny and fills up fast.
Party Girl’s Guide to Paris, from author Vicki Lesage:

The Long Hop
25 rue Frédéric Sauton, 75005

I met my French husband at The Long Hop, an English-speaking bar on the Left Bank. I've spent countless, memorable (sometimes fuzzy memories, truth be told) nights at this bar. On a visit to Paris, sure, you should immerse yourself in the culture and sip espresso at a café and eat dinner at an authentic French restaurant. Blah blah blah. When you’re ready to go out and have some fun at night, swing by The Long Hop for a drink or three. You never know who might meet...

...although I can pretty much guarantee you’ll meet my friend Etienne because he’s there every night. He’ll be sitting at the end of the bar with a pint. Tell him I sent you.

Promenade Plantée
Quinze-Vingts, 75012

The treasure of the Promenade Plantée is tucked away in the less-visited 12th arrondissement (where I live) but it’s definitely worth making the time for. It’s a three-mile elevated walking path with a wide variety of trees, shrubbery, and flowers. The French are ingenious like that—they take an unused railway structure and convert it into something that is both functional and beautiful.

Signs dot the trail, identifying the different species of wildlife that live in the area. If you go at dusk, you might even see “pipistrelle” (little bats) or “chauvres souris” (another type of bat, literally translated as “bald mouse”).
Amazon best-selling author Vicki Lesage proves daily that raising two French kids isn’t as easy as the hype lets on. In her three minutes of spare time per week, she writes, sips bubbly, and prepares for the impending zombie apocalypse. She lives in Paris with her French husband, rambunctious son, and charming daughter, all of whom mercifully don’t laugh when she says “au revoir.” She is the author of the Paris Confessions series, which includes Confessions of a Paris Party Girl, Confessions of a Paris Potty Trainer, Petite Confessions, and Confessions & Cocktails, and has also contributed to several anthologies. She writes about the ups and downs of life in the City of Light at VickiLesage.com.

http://www.vickilesage.com
http://www.facebook.com/vickilesagewriter
http://www.twitter.com/vickilesage
Confessions of a Paris Party Girl

Wine, romance, and French bureaucracy—the ups and downs of an American’s life in Paris.

This laugh-out-loud memoir is almost too funny to be true!

Drinking too much bubbly. Dating sappy Frenchmen. Encountering problème after problème with French bureaucracy. When newly-single party girl Vicki moved to Paris, she was hoping to indulge in wine, stuff her face with croissants, and maybe fall in love.

In her first book, this cheeky storyteller and semi professional drinker recounts the highs and lows of her life in Paris. Full of sass, shamefully honest admissions, and situations that seem too absurd to be true, you’ll feel as if you’re stumbling along the cobblestones with her.

Will she find love? Will she learn to consume reasonable amounts of alcohol? Will the French administration ever cut her a break?

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1494701529

Confessions of a Paris Potty Trainer

Diapers, tantrums, and French bureaucracy—the crazy life of an American mom in Paris.

Think French parenting is easy? Think again! Former party girl Vicki trades wine bottles for baby bottles, as this sassy mommy of two navigates the beautiful, yet infuriating, city of Paris.

How does she steer a stroller around piles of dog poop? Or find time for French administration between breastfeeding and business meetings? And will she ever lose the pregnancy weight with croissants staring at her from every street corner? This humorous memoir will have you laughing, crying, and wiping up drool right alongside Vicki as she and her ever-patient French husband raise two children in the City of Light.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1499276532
Petite Confessions

From champagne bottles to baby bottles, this memoirette offers a humorous look at an American mom’s decade in Paris.

Party Girl Vicki moved to Paris hoping to drink her fill of wine and fall in love. She accomplished her goal, but encountered many bumps along the way: romantic encounters gone awry, absurd French bureaucracy threatening her sanity, and two adorable but impossibly energetic kids keeping her on her toes. This memoirette takes you on a journey of the ups and downs of Vicki’s 10 years in the City of Light.

You’ll laugh, you’ll cry, you’ll want to open another bottle of wine.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/1508697345

Confessions & Cocktails

Drink up the good life in the City of Light!

If you’ve ever had one too many drinks and ended up spilling one too many secrets, this book is for you! This mini “memoirette” is a collection of stories about my life in Paris, designed to give you a taste of my writing style. Each vignette is paired with a sassy cocktail recipe that ties in to the theme of the essay.

So grab that cocktail shaker and let’s get this party started!

This mini book is available for free, just sign up on my mailing list!

http://eepurl.com/KCQ3P
Lizzie Harwood’s Tips on Paris:

As someone who has lived in seven countries, worked on four continents, and backpacked across Europe only to be stranded in Istanbul’s main bus depot... I like to go places but am somewhat paranoid. My tips explore your options for moving around the city and include my five top haunts for chilling when you’re knackered.

Metro vs. Bus

A pack of ten metro tickets is one way to hit the major attractions quickly as you zoom under the streets in one of Paris’s metro trains, another is to use a metro ticket in a bus—you can hop on and off for 90 minutes of quality bus time!

My pick of bus routes:

#42: scoots past the Eiffel Tower, pont de l’Alma for the golden Eternal Flame, past the Plaza Athénée and luxury stores of avenue Montaigne, near the Grand and Petit Palais museums, then down the Champs-Elysées and around Concorde to finish up at Madeleine Church and Opéra.

#69: includes the Eiffel Tower (again!) but winds through rue de Grenelle (best swanky shoe shops), crosses the Seine near Musée d’Orsay and through the Marais heading out to Père Lachaise cemetery: where I attempted to do a gravestone rubbing of Jim Morrison's tombstone in my memoir Xamnesia: Everything I Forgot in my Search for an Unreal Life.

#87: kicks off at the Eiffel Tower (encore!), passes through St Germain, kisses the Luxembourg gardens, shimmies through the Latin Quartier, crosses the Seine at Ile Saint Louis near Notre Dame before twirling around Bastille and on to groovy Bercy.
Lizzie Harwood’s Tips on Paris:

Water vs. Land

The many jet-propelled riverboats are fabulous for chilling while you take in the sights and peep under bridges. I like to wear a big floppy hat when it’s sunny because your head fries under those clear plastic rooftops. Take plenty of water if you have kids, and chat up the captain if you are one of my pretty nieces.

Walk vs. Roll

Some brave souls hire Velib’ (the city bikes you see all around town), others rollerblade every Friday and Sunday evenings, but with my terrible eyesight I’m likely to roll into the Seine. Read up on walking itineraries for ideas here: http://app.frommers.com/destinations/paris/658465#sthash.BgN1WXrW.dpbs or get lost and see where you end up. When you cross zebras wait for the green man plus be aware that cars will go if they believe they have wiggle room, it’s legal, so walk purposefully so they (also legally) have to stop.

Here Comes the Paranoid Bit...

I don’t want to sound like my mom – who got lost going out for milk and ran into numerous shady bars on rue Réaumur crying, “Je cherche la Bourse” (which, when you realize ‘les bourses’ is slang for testicles, is terrible), but here’s what to watch out for:

Don’t let friendly strangers “help” you buy travel tickets at machines – one best friend was fleeced 40 euros this way.

If you’re on the last metro (around 12:50 a.m.) don’t stay in a carriage alone with one drunken dude. The metro can be weird on public holidays: I got kicked in the jaw en route to my own wedding on métro line 9. Creepy stuff can happen.

Never leave your handbag/purse on the floor or out of sight, even in 5-star Hotel Meurice, a pal had her Hermès Kelly bag nicked while she sipped her café crème. That was an expensive coffee stop.
Lizzie Harwood’s Tips on Paris:

Café Know-how:

It’s more expensive on the terrace than inside and more expensive sitting at a table than standing at the bar – but if a waiter approaches and you catch the word “encaisser” it simply means he’s finishing his shift and you need to pay him – but you never have to leave. There are dudes who spend all day in cafés (directing lost mothers in search of a testicle) and you can too.

My Top Five Haunts to Kick Back In:

Fish Boissonnerie
69 rue de Seine, 75006
01 43 54 34 69

Restaurant co-owned by a New Zealander, Drew, who looks like Hemingway. Innovative, fresh menus and amazing wine have seen me very relaxed here many times. Closed Mondays.

Chartier
7 rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, 75009
Open 7/7 11:30am – 10pm

This hidden gem has served 50 million meals (take that, McDs!), serving real food for real cheap where the waiters tally up your bill by scribbling on your white-papered tabletop. No reservations.

Bistrot Vivienne
4 rue des Petit Champs, 75002
Open 7/7 12pm to 11pm

Backing into Galerie Vivienne (which burrows through into rue Vivienne), I like this bistrot and gallery of fun little boutiques so much that we named our second born after it!
Lizzie Harwood’s Tips on Paris:

**Maison Verlet**
256 rue Saint Honoré, 75001
Open 9:30am to 6:30pm

A sweet little tea shack in behind the Louvre and dangerously close to the hyper-trendy Colette at 213 rue Saint Honoré. If you make it through the Louvre and need to recharge, go here rather than Café Marly where you need a small dog and designer tote to be granted half-decent service. Closed Sundays.

**Experimental Cocktail Club**
37 rue Saint-Saveur, 75002
Open 7pm to 2am

The guys who behind this speakeasy bar are evil geniuses. Wonderfully strong cocktails, or was that just me, post-babies, trying to keep up with one of my pretty nieces on the lemongrass-laced concoctions? Great spot for an impromptu photo session on the cobblestoned alley outside under lamplight.

Enjoy your escape to France!
Lizzie Harwood’s love of her home country, New Zealand, spills over into her writing, as evidenced by the vibrant and quirky stories she tells. That isn’t to say she doesn’t adore her adopted country, France, where she lives with her husband and two children. When she isn’t writing, she’s editing and coaching fellow writers.

http://www.lizziehbooks.com
http://www.editordeluxe.com
https://www.facebook.com/lizzieharwoodbooks
http://www.twitter.com/lizziehbooks
Triumph: Collected Stories

A bouquet of quirky short stories told with intrigue and humor.

Triumph offers a glimpse into the lives of contemporary women around the world on the verge of breakdowns or breakthroughs.

Lizzie’s Triumph: Collected Stories, launched in February 2015, and a memoir follows in May 2015, chronicling her job taking care of VIPs in Asia and Paris, Xamnesia: Everything I Forgot in my Search for an Unreal Life.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00S8SQNNO

Xamnesia: Everything I Forgot in my Search for an Unreal Life

A juicy Paris extract of Lizzie’s forthcoming memoir of her life in Asia and Paris working for VIP clients, Xamnesia: Everything I Forgot in my Search for an Unreal Life, is free to thank you for signing up to my mailing list: http://eepurl.com/bkvg71.

http://eepurl.com/bkvg71
Go see the kids

A quirky literary fiction trilogy of a family flying in the face of normality.

Faye and Richard Ventures are off around the globe to see their seven kids. Trouble is the grown kids have secrets and messy lives. The real trouble is that Faye and Richard are in their eighties... with secrets and messy lives. Cue one hot intergenerational mess that not even Faye's white lies can fix.

http://www.amazon.com/dp/BooWJREUHG
AU REVOIR
ET À BIENTÔT