



# Art in Paris

**April 26 - May 3, 2011**

**Plan your arrival in Paris for the morning of April 26**

**Plan your departure from Paris for May 4**

Immerse yourself in the art and history of Paris, and feel the heartbeat of one of Europe's great cities! The Louvre and a wealth of other museums—including the Orsay and Rodin Museums—will be “in your backyard.” Take your time and explore their vast and exquisite collections. Architectural icons like Notre Dame are woven into a centuries-old cityscape. Day trips from Paris will let you experience Claude Monet's home at Giverny, the palace of Versailles, and the chateau and gardens at Vaux le Vicomte. Sip a café au lait; stroll down a shaded allée; feel the chic of the Champs Elysées! Paris is a city like no other!

Your guide on this Parisian art adventure is award-winning art educator, Amy Osaki, founder of Walking Softly Adventures, who studied and lived in Paris. Let Amy reveal the unique aspects of Paris to you in a way that avoids the hassles and the crowds. Explore what is new as well as what is timeless, and savor well-known masterpieces as well as the little known secrets of the City of Light.

Customize your trip to Paris! Come early or stay longer by adding extra nights at the hotel. Take advantage of all the museum visits included in the itinerary, or pick and choose, as you desire. Opt out of some of the museum visits in favor of more time relaxing, or set off to explore other museums not on the schedule.

## **Day 1**

**Overnight Paris**

**Dinner included**

**Theme: “We are in Paris!!”**

The trip begins at our hotel this afternoon with a trip orientation meeting and an introduction to our neighborhood. In celebration of our arrival in the City of Light, enjoy an afternoon walk through the streets of Paris. Our route includes major monuments and new attractions on both banks of the Seine from the Eiffel Tower to Notre Dame. This evening we'll enjoy a welcome dinner at a small Parisian restaurant.

## **Day 2**

**Overnight Paris**

**Breakfast included**

**Theme: “Old Paris”**

Beneath the modern city lie the roots of the original settlement of the Parisii (the original tribe) as well as the remnants of Lutetia (the ancient Roman city). If you know where to look, you can actually see physical evidence of the city's two thousand year history! We focus today on the banks of the Seine and the two islands, Ile de la Cité and Ile St Louis. Begin with a visit to the Louvre, formerly home to French kings and now the repository of one of the great art collections in the world. Start with the history of the building itself, from the archeological remains of the earlier fortress to the decorated royal rooms. Then see the masterworks in the galleries including the Venus de Milo, the Winged Victory of Samothrace, the Mona Lisa, and the Coronation of Napoleon. This afternoon cross the river to the Musée de Cluny which features a Roman bath built in A.D. 200 as well as a fabulous example of medieval domestic architecture along with a collection of art from the Middle Ages. Among the many treasures in the museum is the tapestry of the Lady and the Unicorn, and an outstanding new medieval garden. Continue to the island in the river Seine and the cathedral of Notre Dame thereby completing a route along both banks of the river and through a thousand years of history. If you wish, you can return on your own to the Louvre this evening since the galleries will be open until 10 PM.

### **Day 3**

#### **Overnight Paris**

##### **Breakfast and lunch included**

**Theme: “It doesn’t pay to upstage the king.”**

Step into the era of Louis XIV, the Sun King, and unravel the rivalries and risks of the royal court. In the late 1600’s before King Louis XIV turned his father’s old hunting lodge at Versailles into a palace, the king’s finance minister, Nicholas Fouquet, created the masterpiece of Vaux le Vicomte. Today travel east of Paris to the chateau. A masterpiece of excess, the architecture, interior design and landscape design are extraordinary. The king was invited to the opening feast, and was furious! His subject had a more spectacular palace than he. Fouquet was arrested, imprisoned, and never returned. Louis had the design team (Le Brun, Le Notre, and Le Vau) taken to Versailles where they began work on the king’s palace. Today we will see what the fuss was all about. Have lunch at the castle, and return to Paris later in the afternoon. If you wish, the Orsay Museum is open this evening until 9:45 PM.

### **Day 4**

#### **Overnight Paris**

##### **Breakfast included**

**Theme: Versailles (King Louis)**

Travel by train to the palace of Versailles, home to the kings Louis XIII, XIV, XV, and XVI. Enjoy an exclusive, private tour of the castle far from the madding crowds during which you’ll visit the King’s bed chamber, the King’s private suite, and the royal opera. Linger in the opulent chateau, stroll through the extensive grounds, and return to Paris this afternoon. The remainder of the afternoon and evening are at your leisure. Consider returning the Louvre for one of the special exhibitions; the galleries are open until 10 PM.

### **Day 5**

#### **Overnight Paris**

##### **Breakfast and dinner included**

**Theme: 19th century and Impressionism**

Adjacent to the former royal palace of the Louvre are the newly renovated Tuileries Gardens. Whet your appetite for a feast of Impressionist art by beginning the day viewing the newly renovated galleries of the Orangerie Museum housing Monet’s water lily paintings. The new installation is stunning. Linger and enjoy the excellent collection of 19th and early 20th century art by Cezanne, Derain, Matisse, Rousseau, Soutine, Picasso and Modigliani. Cross the Seine on a the new pedestrian bridge (Passerelle Solférino), to enter the Orsay Museum and its new exhibition of Impressionist art. The curators have selected masterworks from the world’s greatest collection of French Impressionist art and present them in the context of the entire period from 1848-1914. The exhibit encompasses art from the Barbizon School (Corot and Rousseau), the Realists (Courbet, Daumier), the Impressionists (Manet, Monet, Morisot, Renoir), and the Post-Impressionists (Van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat). Enjoy dinner together this evening.

### **Day 6**

#### **Overnight Paris**

##### **Breakfast and lunch included**

**Theme: Monet, Giverny, and Impressionism in the 19th century**

Today depart Paris by train from the Gare St Lazare (a 19th century engineering marvel that Monet captured in one of his paintings) and travel one hour west of Paris into Normandy. Leave the modern hustle behind and step off the train at Vernon filled with half-timbered medieval buildings and a Romanesque church. Travel three miles east to the village of Giverny where you’ll visit Monet’s home and garden. Here is where the artist lived from 1883 until 1926. Our visit is timed to capture the best of the late spring bloom! Leisurely explore the house and gardens and the secrets of the village typically overlooked by the rushing crowds. Enjoy lunch at an excellent small restaurant housed in a brand new museum. Visit the Hotel Baudy which housed American artists, and pay homage at the newly restored church where Monet married his second wife and where he was buried. Linger, savor, and relax amidst the beauty of a place that inspired Monet and over a century’s worth of artists from France, the United States, Japan, and beyond. Return to Paris by train.

## **Day 7**

### **Overnight Paris**

#### **Breakfast included**

A day at your leisure. Whether you decide to return to a favorite museum (Louvre or Orangerie) or discover a new one (such as the Pompidou), Amy will be happy to offer her suggestions for a fulfilling day in the city. Or you might decide to just relax and fall under the spell of Paris.

## **Day 8**

### **Overnight Paris**

#### **Breakfast and dinner included**

#### **Theme: Rodin and Monet (19th century)**

Continue to revel in the masterworks of the 19th century at the Rodin Museum which houses the largest collection of his art anywhere in the world. The museum occupies the 18th century hotel where Rodin lived and worked from 1908 until his death in 1917. Art by Rodin and Camille Claudel fills the rooms. Here is the heart of the neighborhood where Amy lived while a student at the Sorbonne and the Louvre. Perhaps you'll take some time to sample the wares of les pâtisseries in a quest for the best pastries in the neighborhood. Complete the homage to Impressionism at the quiet Musée Marmottan which houses Monet's Impression Sunrise which inspired the name "impressionism." A farewell dinner caps off your art adventure in Paris! Your lodging tonight and breakfast tomorrow morning are included.

## **Other Details about this Trip**

**Dates:** April 26 - May 3, 2011

**Price:** \$3,495

**Single room for entire trip:** \$1000 additional.

**Lodging:** Eight nights in a small hotel in Paris.

**Meals:** Eight breakfasts, two lunches, and three dinners are included.

**Trip Begins** at hotel in Paris, France

**Trip Ends** at hotel in Paris, France

**Trip includes:** Expert guide, Paris Museum Pass (unlimited admission to over sixty museums and historic sites), local transportation, special tours.

## **Other Resources**

Check out the article "The Cradle of Paris" by Gully Wells in the July 2007 issue of Conde Nast Traveler Magazine to discover what Honoré De Balzac meant when he talked about the "gastronomy of the eye."

Visit the Orsay Museum's website.

Set off on a virtual visit to the Louvre.