



Chez Paul has been a local favourite since the 1940s

Historic locations

✕ CHARTIER ❶

Founded as a soup kitchen in 1896, Chartier hasn't strayed far from its original mission to provide simple and satisfying food, with dishes like snails, steak cuts and veal stew making up the reasonably priced menu. The setting is grander – a Belle Époque dining room beneath a vast, light-strung ceiling (restaurant-chartier.com; 7 Rue du Faubourg Montmartre; mains from £7).



Despite humble origins, Chartier's décor is pure Parisian grandeur

✕ LE TRUMILOU ❷

This Parisian institution has clocked up more than a hundred years of custom in the same spot overlooking the Seine near Notre Dame. The menu is as authentic as a Parisian bistro gets, and changes depending on what's on offer at market, but canard aux pruneaux (duck with prunes) and ris de veau grand-mère (veal sweetbreads) are specialties (letrumilou.fr; 84 Quai de l'Hôtel de Ville; closed mid-Aug; mains from £11).

✕ CHEZ PAUL ❸

This long-standing local haunt in the Bastille district appears little changed since Monsieur and Madame Paul opened their bistro here in the 1940s. With its pavement tables, tiled floors and cosy interior cluttered with old knick-knacks and photos, it's still the archetypal bistro, and offers classic dishes such as steak tartare (the house speciality) and beef stew. Be sure to book ahead (chezpaul.com; 13 Rue de Charonne; mains from £12).

MINI GUIDE

PARISIAN BISTROS

For a delicious slice of traditional French cooking, it's hard to beat a bistro. The boulevards and backstreets of Paris offer a fantastic selection – from veteran joints to new arrivals reinventing the classics.

Traditional dishes

✕ LE ROI DU POT AU FEU ❹

Resolutely traditional down to its red gingham tablecloths, the big draw of the 'King of Hotpots' is the pot au feu, a stockpot of beef, root vegetables and herbs, with the stock served as starter and the meat and vegetables as main course. It's hearty, no-fuss nourishment, perfect for the start of a night out (00 33 1 47 42 37 10; 34 Rue Vignon; closed Sun & Aug; pot au feu £14).



Enjoy beef cooked in wine for 10 hours at Bistroy les Papilles

✕ BISTROY LES PAPILLES ❺

A beautiful bistro and deli with elegantly dressed tables and walls lined with wine and local produce, Bistroy les Papilles offers a quality of food that ensures its narrow interior is packed out every night. Its market-led menu is different every day, and is complemented by an exceptional wine list from its extensive wine cellars. Try its marmite du marché, or 'pot of the market' (lespapillesparis.fr; 30 Rue Gay Lussac; closed Sun, Mon & mid-Jul–mid-Aug; four-course menus £26).

✕ LE HIDE ❻

This tiny bistro round the corner from the Arc de Triomphe has won rave reviews for its traditional French cuisine – cooked up by a Japanese chef. Inside a bright, simple space, Hide Kobayashi serves up dishes such as côte de veau (veal chop), épaule d'agneau (shoulder of lamb) and monkfish in lemon butter, as well as a scrumptious selection of classic desserts (lehide.fr; 10 Rue du Général Lanrezac; closed Sat lunchtime, Sun, mid-May & mid-Aug; mains from £15).

Contemporary cuisine

✕ JADIS ❷

Jadis is a leading example of Paris's 'neo-bistro' trend, combining the convivial feel of a traditional bistro with top restaurant-style dining. Rising star Guillaume Delage creates daring dishes such as spider crab with buckwheat blinis and an unforgettable chocolate soufflé (bistrot-jadis.com; 208 Rue de la Croix Nivert; closed Sat & Sun, & mid-Aug; mains from £14).



Le Buisson Ardent offers an inventive take on bistro classics

✕ LE BUISSON ARDENT ❸

Housed in a former coaching inn in the Latin Quarter whose walls are lined with pretty old murals of pastoral scenes, this local favourite serves up creative, contemporary variations on traditional bistro food. Tasty options include roast zander in seaweed butter with a young leek and lemongrass fondue (lebuissonardent.fr; 25 Rue Jussieu; closed Sun dinner & mid-Aug; mains from £18).

✕ LE COMPTOIR ❹

A bright, Art Deco space in the Relais Saint-Germain hotel, this gourmet bistro is going down a storm with the gastronomes of Paris. The handiwork of renowned chef Yves Camdeborde, it offers innovative updates on bistro classics – suckling pig with lentils, for example – with an emphasis on seasonal produce (hotel-paris-relais-saint-germain.com; 9 Carrefour de l'Odéon; three-course menus from £45).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS

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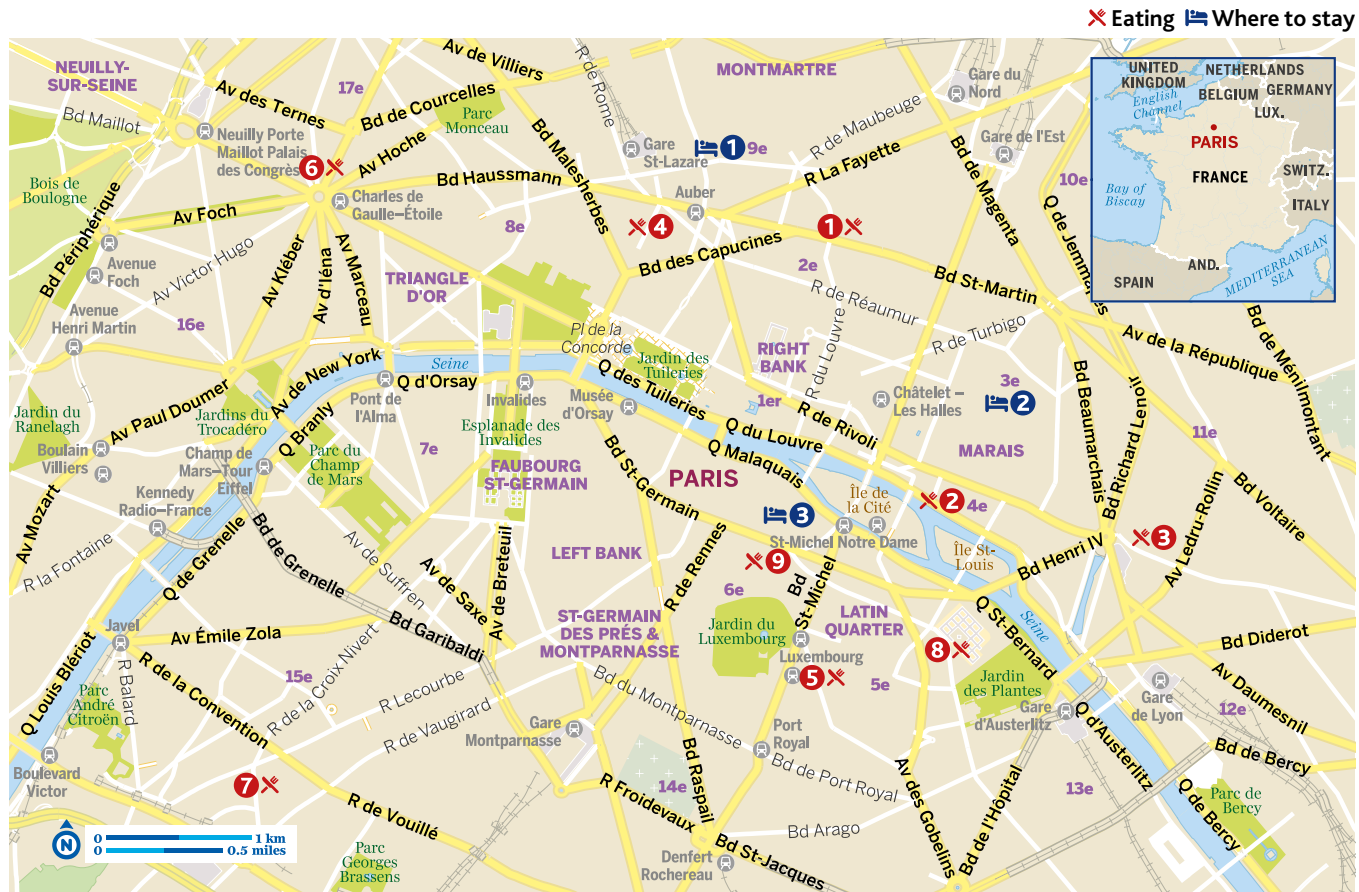
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MINI GUIDE

Parisian bistros



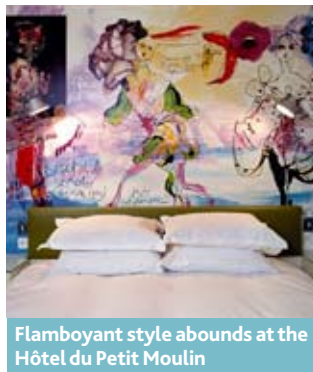
Paris essentials

TRANSPORT

Eurostar runs from London to Paris Gare du Nord (from £70 return; eurostar.com). Air France, BA, easyJet, Flybe and Jet2 fly to Paris Charles de Gaulle from UK cities including Belfast, Edinburgh and Manchester (from £80; easyjet.com). The quickest way to get around Paris is the Metro. Single tickets and bundles of ten are available, as are Carte Mobilis, which grant unlimited travel between certain zones, and Paris Visite passes, which also include discounts at some sights (bundle of ten tickets £10; one-day Carte Mobilis, zones 1-2, £5; three-day Paris Visite ticket, zones 1-3, £17; ratp.fr).

WHERE TO STAY

① **Hôtel Langlois** is a slice of Belle Époque Paris. Built in 1870, its richly decorated rooms are full of historic touches such as sandstone fireplaces and authentic objets d'art (hotel-langlois.com; 63 Rue Saint-Lazare; from £115).



② **Hôtel du Petit Moulin** in the Marais was previously the site of the oldest bakery in Paris, and bears its beautiful façade. Inside, 17 themed rooms run riot with rich fabrics and colourful murals (hoteldupetitmoulin.com; 29-31 Rue de Poitou; from £170).

③ **Relais Christine** is a luxury hotel in a 17th-century mansion built on the ruins of a medieval abbey. Many of its elegant rooms overlook a verdant garden, while breakfast is served in a 13th-century cellar (relais-christine.com; 3 Rue Christine; from £295).

The know-how



BISTRO MENU DECODER

- Bœuf bourguignon**
Beef stewed in red wine.
- Blanquette de veau**
Veal stew with a creamy sauce.
- Bouillon**
Broth.
- Coq au vin**
Chicken braised in red wine.
- Foie gras de canard**
Duck liver paté.
- Pot au feu**
Meat and vegetable hotpot.
- Rillettes**
Shredded, potted meat or fish.
- Riz au lait à l'ancienne**
Old-fashioned rice pudding.
- Tartare de bœuf**
Steak tartare.
- Tarte tatin**
Caramelised apple tart.

TOP TIP

By law, French restaurants must include the 15 per cent service charge on the bill. There's no obligation to tip beyond this (many don't), but leaving a few coins shows appreciation: rounding up by €1-€2 is common, and 5 per cent is truly generous.

FURTHER READING

Lonely Planet's *Paris* (£12.99) is a comprehensive guide to the city, while *Pocket Paris* (£7.99) and *Discover Paris* (£14.99) offer a good overview of its highlights. Find guides, reviews and musings on eating out at the Paris By Mouth blog (parisbymouth.com). For a taste of bistro cooking at home, try *French Bistro: Seasonal Recipes* (£19.95; Flammarion), a beautifully illustrated collection of classics by a top bistro chef.

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