

Bastille & Eastern Paris

Neighbourhood Top Five

- ➊ Taking in a performance at the modern monolith **Opéra Bastille** (p198).
- ➋ Strolling the elevated **Promenade Plantée** (p189).
- ➌ Exploring Paris' only medieval castle, **Château de Vincennes** (p190).
- ➍ Meeting lions, white rhinos, giraffes and wolverines at the newly reopened **Parc Zoologique de Paris** (p190).



For more detail of this area see Map p410 ➔

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

While the area immediately surrounding the Bastille has spawned a clutch of faceless bars and restaurant chains, walking a little bit further north on rue de Charonne or east to Ledru-Rollin and Faidherbe-Chaligny will bring you to a much more interesting neighbourhood, filled with exciting restaurants, modest cafes and all the quirky, unusual shops that make a city great.



Best Places to Eat

- Le 6 Paul Bert (p192)
- Bones (p193)
- Septime (p195)
- CheZaline (p191)
- À la Biche au Bois (p193)

For reviews, see p191 ➡



Best Places to Drink

- Le Baron Rouge (p196)
- Le Pure Café (p196)
- La Fée Verte (p196)
- Pause Café (p196)
- Twenty One Sound Bar (p196)

For reviews, see p196 ➡



Best Entertainment

- Opéra Bastille (p198)
- Cinémathèque Française (p198)
- La Flèche d'Or (p198)
- Badaboum (p198)
- Barrio Latino (p198)

For reviews, see p198 ➡

Explore: Bastille & Eastern Paris

Bastille isn't known for its sights, but it's nonetheless a fascinating area to explore on foot. As it's still authentically residential in most parts, a wander will give you a taste of everyday life in one of Paris' most dynamic neighbourhoods. For a more voyeuristic glimpse, ascend to elevated park the Promenade Plantée, which looks down on the streets around you and offers the occasional peek through an apartment window.

Bastille's main attraction is not aimless *flâneurie* (urban strolling), however: this former working-class district doesn't exactly have the same visual knockout factor as central Paris. It's best for dipping your toes into a vibrant restaurant scene dominated by young, creative chefs; its scores of popular, inexpensive bars and cafes; and the profusion of evening entertainment, from avant-garde opera to indie rock.

You may be reluctant to leave the city behind with so much to explore, but an easy trip to the Bois de Vincennes, the city's largest park, never disappoints. From a castle and zoo to outdoor concerts, bike excursions, pickup football matches and picnics, it's one of the most-loved spots in the capital to unwind.

Local Life

➤ **Bistro Life** The 11e and 12e have an unusually high number of old-school bistros that have preserved much of their original decor, such as Chez Paul (p193) and neighbourhood favourites like Au Vieux Chêne (p193).

➤ **Market Life** Fabulous markets in this neighbourhood include classic Parisian street markets like the twice-weekly Marché Bastille (p191) as well as the twice-weekly Marché d'Aligre (p191), where food shops, wine bars and a rapidly increasing number of restaurants fan out into the surrounding streets.

➤ **Green Spaces** Eastern Paris just might have the city's best collection of parks. The Promenade Plantée (p189) and Parc de Bercy (p189) are easy escapes, but on weekends many Parisians decamp to the much larger Bois de Vincennes.

Getting There & Away

➤ **Metro** Lines 1, 8 and 9 are major east-west arteries, while line 5 heads south across the Seine and north to the Gare du Nord. Line 14 serves Bercy.

➤ **RER** The east-west RER A stops at Nation and Gare de Lyon en route to central and western Paris.

➤ **Bicycle** There are three Vélib' stations around place de la Bastille: on bd Richard Lenoir, bd Bourdon and rue de Lyon.