

# Latin Quarter

## Neighbourhood Top Five

**1 Musée National du Moyen Âge** (p207) Time-travelling back to the Middle Ages at France's foremost medieval museum.

**2 Institut du Monde Arabe** (p210) Visiting the fascinating exhibits inside the stunning Jean Nouvel-designed building before heading to the top to catch

the incredible panorama from the roof.

**3 Jardin des Plantes** (p209) Strolling around Paris' sprawling botanic gardens and visiting its historic greenhouses, zoo and the many branches of the Natural History Museum located here.

**4 Shakespeare & Company** (p219) Browsing the shelves of Paris' most magical bookshop and refuelling at its wonderful new literary-themed cafe.

**5 Panthéon** (p209) Paying homage to France's greatest thinkers buried beneath this domed neoclassical mausoleum.



For more detail of this area see Map p398 and p400 ➔

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

While hungry first-time visitors are often drawn into the maze of tiny streets between the Seine, rue St-Jacques and bd St-Germain, you'd be wise to simply avoid this area altogether. Instead, consider grabbing some bread, cheese, charcuterie and wine from local speciality shops and enjoy some multimillion-dollar views with lunch or dinner. Best bets? The quays along the Seine, the place du Panthéon (a fave with students) and the leafy Jardin des Plantes.

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Restaurant AT (p215)
- ➔ Shakespeare & Company Café (p210)
- ➔ Sola (p215)
- ➔ Café de la Nouvelle Mairie (p212)

For reviews, see p210. ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Little Bastards (p217)
- ➔ Caffé Juno (p216)
- ➔ Mosquée de Paris (p208)
- ➔ Le Verre à Pied (p216)

For reviews, see p215. ➔

### Best Jazz Clubs

- ➔ Café Universel (p218)
- ➔ Le Caveau des Oubliettes (p219)
- ➔ Le Petit Journal St-Michel (p219)
- ➔ Caveau de la Huchette (p219)

For reviews, see p218. ➔

## Explore: Latin Quarter

The centre of Parisian higher education since the Middle Ages, the Latin Quarter takes its name from the classical language spoken here by students and professors until the French Revolution. A serene spot to begin the day is in the botanic gardens, the Jardin des Plantes, before sipping sweet mint tea in the Mosquée de Paris or strolling through the engaging Arab World Institute.

But there's no better strip to see, smell and taste the Latin Quarter than the thriving market street rue Mouffetard, so it's worth combining a flit from food stall to fabulous food shop with lunch at one of the restaurants utilising its produce (skip it on Mondays, when the market stalls are shut).

After admiring the Panthéon's vast interior, the hollow of the afternoon is a contemplative time to meander through the Musée National du Moyen Âge for the ultimate medieval history lesson.

After dinner at a local bistro, head down into a medieval cellar (many used as Revolutionary prisons) for jazz and jam sessions, or join the area's students in the quarter's lively pubs.

## Local Life

➔ **Sporting life** Join the locals playing boules and football in the 2nd-century Roman amphitheatre Arènes de Lutèce (p217).

➔ **Academic life** Clink drinks during extended Latin Quarter happy hours and there will almost certainly be a student or academic affiliated with the Sorbonne sitting next to you.

➔ **Cinema life** Independent cinemas are scattered, screening cult, classic and rare films.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Metro** The most central metro stations are St-Michel by the Seine; Cluny-La Sorbonne or Maubert-Mutualité on bd St-Germain; and Censier Daubenton or Gare d'Austerlitz by the Jardin des Plantes.

➔ **Bus** Convenient bus stops include the Panthéon for the 89 to Jardin des Plantes and 13e; bd St-Michel for the 38 to Centre Pompidou, Gare de l'Est and Gare du Nord; and rue Gay Lussac for the 27 to Île de la Cité, Opéra and Gare St-Lazare.

➔ **Bicycle** Handy Vélib' stations include 42 rue St-Severin, 5e, just off bd St-Michel; 40 rue des Boulangers, 5e, near Cardinal Lemoine metro station; and 27 rue Lacépède, 5e, near place Monge.

➔ **Boat** The hop-on, hop-off Batobus (p334) docks opposite Notre Dame on quai de Montebello.