

# Louvre & Les Halles

LOUVRE | LES HALLES

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Musée du Louvre** (p108) Getting lost in the mother of all museums, with timeless masterpieces every which way you turn.
- 2 Centre Pompidou** (p116) Contemplating Europe's largest collection of modern art and admiring the view from the top of one

of the city's most whimsical buildings.

- 3 Jardin des Tuileries** (p118) Meeting Monet's waterlilies, picnicing in the park and revelling in Paris at its symmetrical best.
- 4 Église St-Eustache** (p119) Feasting on exquisite sacred art and soulful music in this Gothic landmark.

- 5 Jardin du Palais Royal** (p120) Browsing designer boutiques beneath the arcaded galleries and letting the kids run free amid Daniel Buren's zebra-striped columns.



For more detail of this area see Map p372 and p376 →

## Explore: Louvre & Les Halles

The banks of the Seine make an enchanting starting point. A wonderful exploratory loop snakes westwards along quai des Tuileries, past the sculptures and green lawns, pools and fountains of Jardin des Tuileries, to the Musée de l'Orangerie and Jeu du Paume. Continue on foot north to ritzy place Vendôme, then loop back east along shop-chic rue St-Honoré to the Palais Royal.

Set aside at least half a day for the Musée du Louvre. Avoid museum fatigue by combining the often-intimidating art gallery with a long lunch or a picnic and invigorating mooch around the designer galleries and manicured gardens of Jardin du Palais Royal. Serious art lovers will likewise want to set aside another half-day minimum for the Centre Pompidou.

Once you cross into Les Halles, the timeless sophistication of the Louvre area disappears. Instead, unwary passers-by are solicited with bright lights, jostling crowds, painted ladies and the swinging jazz clubs of rue des Lombards. Day and night the mainly pedestrian zone between the Centre Pompidou and Forum des Halles is packed with people, just as it was for the 850-odd years when Paris' main *halles* (marketplace) for foodstuffs was here.

## Local Life

➔ **After-work drinks** Rue Montorgueil has a good selection of cafe-bars, but it is rue St-Saveur's cocktail clubs (p128) and the hip bars on rue Montmartre that steal the late-night show.

➔ **Museums** Forget Tuesday when the Louvre (p108) and Centre Pompidou (p116) are closed; go local and visit during late-night openings (less crowded) or one-off cultural events and happenings.

➔ **Japantown** Busy rue St-Anne, just west of Jardin du Palais Royal, is loaded with Asian eateries, though the best choices are found in the side streets.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Metro & RER** The Louvre has two metro stations: Palais Royal–Musée du Louvre (lines 1 and 7) and Louvre Rivoli (line 1). Numerous metro and RER lines converge at Paris' main hub, Châtelet–Les Halles.

➔ **Bus** Major bus lines include the 27 from rue de Rivoli (for bd St-Michel and place d'Italie) and the 69 near the Louvre Rivoli metro (for Invalides and Eiffel Tower).

➔ **Bicycle** Stations at 1 place Ste-Marguerite de Navarre and 2 rue de Turbigo are best placed for the Châtelet–Les Halles metro/RER hub; for the Louvre pedal to/from 165 rue St-Honoré.

➔ **Boat** The hop-on, hop-off Batobus (p334) stops outside the Louvre.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Some of Paris' top tables are here, but you need to book in advance: plan at least a month ahead for a table at Frenchie (p127), Yam'Tcha (p127), **Spring** (p127) or Verjus (p122). Frenchie has a neighbouring wine bar where you simply rock up and wait for a stool to feast on lighter creations from the same talented chefs.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Frenchie (p127)
- ➔ Yam'Tcha (p127)
- ➔ Verjus (p122)
- ➔ Spring (p127)
- ➔ Uma (p122)

For reviews, see p121. ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Experimental Cocktail Club (p128)
- ➔ Lockwood (p128)
- ➔ Telescope (p128)
- ➔ Le Garde Robe (p128)
- ➔ L'Ivress (p129)

For reviews, see p127. ➔

## Best Entertainment

- ➔ Le Grand Rex (p131)
- ➔ Comédie Française (p130)
- ➔ Louvre Auditorium (p130)
- ➔ Le Baiser Salé (p129)
- ➔ Théâtre du Châtelet (p130)

For reviews, see p130. ➔