

MONTPARNASSE & 15E | PLACE D'ITALIE & CHINATOWN | MONTPARNASSE & SOUTHERN PARIS

1 Tour Montparnasse
(p249) Ignoring the 1970s smoked-glass exterior of this un-Parisian skyscraper and zipping to the top for a glass of Champagne on the terrace while taking in one of the finest panoramas over the city.

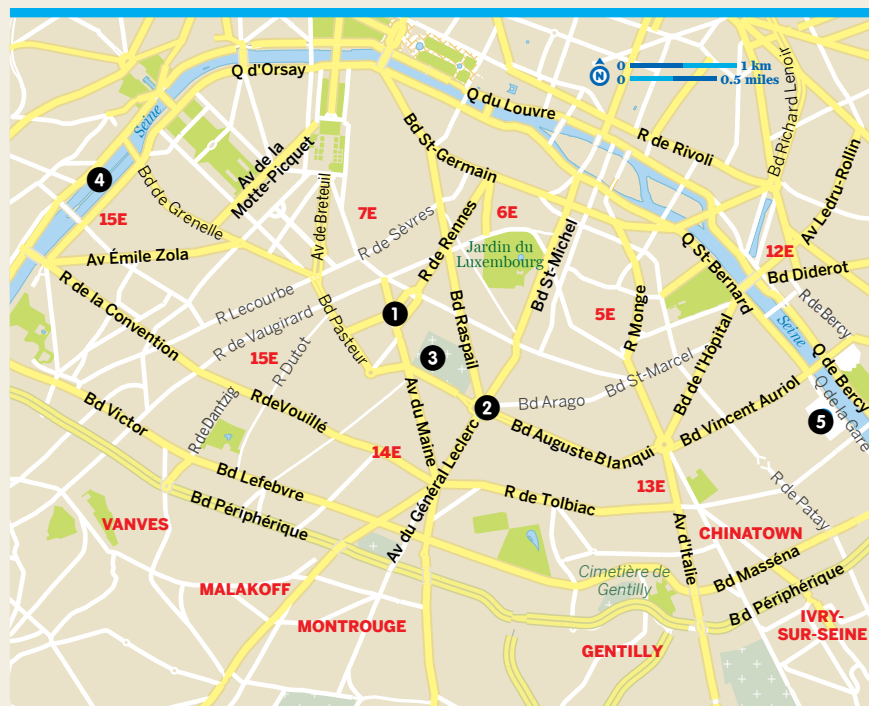
2 Les Catacombes (p248)
Prowling the spine-prickling.

skull-and-bone-packed subterranean tunnels of Paris' creepy ossuary.

3 Cimetière du Montparnasse (p250) Visiting the resting places of local luminaries, including Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and Serge Gainsbourg.

4 Île aux Cygnes (p250)
Traversing the tiny, tree-lined inner-city island from the Statue of Liberty replica towards the Eiffel Tower.

5 Bibliothèque Nationale de France (p250) Catching superb literary-themed exhibitions at France's book-shaped national library.



For more detail of this area see Map p410, 412 and p414 ➡

Explore: Montparnasse & Southern Paris

Tour Montparnasse is an unavoidable sight, but its observation deck offers an unrivalled spot for getting to grips with the lay of the land. At its feet are the cafes, brasseries and backstreets, now swathed by urban grit, where some of the early-20th-century's most seminal artists and writers hung out. The area's tree-filled cemetery is a peaceful spot to escape to – and to visit the graves of many of those same visionaries.

West in the tranquil 15e, take in more great views by strolling the Île aux Cygnes or boarding a balloon 'flight' in the Parc André-Citroën, one of the capital's most innovative open spaces. Other wonderful local parks in this greenified area include Parc Georges Brassens, with rose gardens and even a vineyard and apiary, as well as a stretch of the former Petite Ceinture steam railway line.

To Montparnasse's east, the ever-regenerating 13e is home to the country's national library, Paris' largest Chinatown and some striking street art.

The entire area is strewn with exciting neobistros. No matter where you end up for dinner, head back to the river to dance until dawn on the floating bars and nightclubs moored on the Seine's quays.

Local Life

- ➔ **Street life** Join locals shopping for flowers, cheese, charcuterie and more along traditional commercial street rue Daguerre (p255).
- ➔ **Track life** Explore Paris' former steam railway line on the parkland stretch Petite Ceinture du 15e (p252).
- ➔ **Breton life** Take a crêperie crawl through Montparnasse's 'Little Brittany' (p256).
- ➔ **Art life** Delve into the 13e's street art scene starting at Galerie Itinérance (p250).

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** Montparnasse Bienvenue is the metro hub for Montparnasse and the 15e. Bibliothèque and Place d'Italie are convenient 13e stops.
- ➔ **Bus** Buses fill the gap in areas lacking comprehensive metro coverage. From Gare Montparnasse, bus 91 goes to Bastille. Bus 62 travels from Bibliothèque to Javel via the southern *quartiers*. Bus 21 runs from Glacière to Châtelet. Bus 42 links Balard with Gare du Nord via the western 15e and Eiffel Tower.
- ➔ **Bicycle** Handy Vélib' stations include 5-7 rue d'Odessa, 14e; 13 bd Edgar Quinet, 14e; 2 av René Coty, 14e; and two facing place d'Italie, 13e.
- ➔ **Boat** The hop-on, hop-off Batobus has docks at Port de Javel Haut, 15e and quai d'Austerlitz, 13e.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The metro is tailor-made for cross-town trips, but to whizz around Paris' perimeter, hop on the T3 tram. From the Pont du Garigliano, 15e, it currently skims the city's edge as far as Porte de la Chapelle, 18e. An extension to Porte d'Asnières, 17e, is due for completion at the end of 2017, encircling some three-quarters of the city. Passengers use standard t+ tickets. For updates on Paris' trams, visit www.tramway.paris.fr.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Le Clos Y (p254)
- ➔ Le Beurre Noisette (p254)
- ➔ Le Casse Noix (p254)
- ➔ Le Grand Pan (p254)
- ➔ Jeu de Quilles (p254)

For reviews, see p253. ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Le Petit Gorille (p258)
- ➔ Félicie (p259)
- ➔ Le Rosebud (p259)
- ➔ Le Select (p259)
- ➔ Le Merle Moqueur (p259)

For reviews, see p258. ➔

Best Floating Clubs

- ➔ Le Batofar (p259)
- ➔ La Dame de Canton (p259)
- ➔ La Plage Parisienne (p259)

For reviews, see p259. ➔