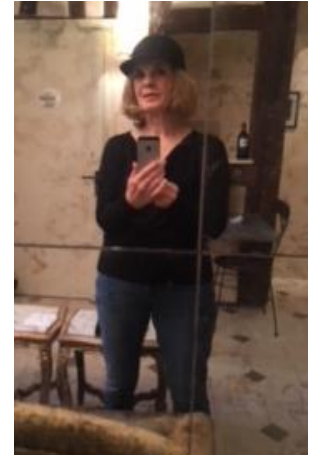




## **Paris Solo Trip Notes December 7-17, 2017**

### **Headlines**

- Can we ever get enough of Paris? Last year I went through 5 times, and had a lengthy stay 4 times.
- Solo? Tom encourages me, but feel no sympathy, as we will go together in February.
- Stayed in St Germain des Pres in a tiny studio apartment with a perfect location and well appointed.
- Will be staying in a grand apartment in the Palais Royal in February (which is larger than our house). Maybe that bathroom is larger than the entire studio.
- Walked and walked. Easily 8 miles most days.
- Ate and ate. Easily added an extra 3 pounds due to lush baguettes with butter, country pate and fresh cheeses.
- Got cold and more cold with the rain and wind so bought a hat. Then a second warmer hat.



**The Top 10 Most Beautiful Cities in the World:** Brugge, Budapest, Rome, Florence, Amsterdam, Rio de Janeiro, Lisbon, Prague, Paris and

Venice. See pictures at:

<https://www.ucityguides.com/cities/top-10-most-beautiful-cities.html>



**A 1920 Christmas card in honor of Gustave Eiffel.** Found in the British Museum. Thank you Bev and Nola.

Yes! Audrey Hepburn's saying memorialized on a cocktail napkin: Paris is Always A Good Idea.



"We travel not to escape life, but for life not to escape us" —Anonymus

### **Politics:**

I like their new young President Macron a lot. The French did too, at first, but now his popularity is down with the French but I think not with the world. We shall hope.

Re Brexit: A political opportunity for France? Here is about rebranding from Parler Paris: Many of you may have seen the article in the New York Times by David Segal, on December 10th, "As Brexit Looms, Paris Tries a Business Makeover." If you didn't, read it now, then take notice of what's in my proverbial crystal ball. The British are leaving Britain thanks to Brexit. Americans are leaving the U.S. thanks to Donald Trump. The French who once left France for greener pastures in Europe, North America and other parts of the world will return to France thanks to Emmanuel Macron and his encouraging policies. That's already happening.

All of these people, but mostly the young French who return to their beloved France, will bring with them a new proficiency in the English language, an entrepreneurial spirit, an optimistic viewpoint and

a love of France that will inject a new spirit and vibrancy into the very fabric of the nation. With that there will be positive change for a much brighter future and a new way of looking at equality, economics and growth.

Per Adrienne Leeds, of Parler Paris, who sells real estate: “Mark my words. Now is the time to invest in France.” I suspect she is correct.

**Paris vs New York City?** Here’s an excellent view and comparison and I agree.

<http://adrianleeds.com/component/acymailing/archive/view/mailid-1189?key=lsxhp0kd&subid=24080-ATadbyKRrygw2m&tmpl=component>

Can Paris become the world’s most visited city? - [http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20171109-can-paris-become-the-worlds-most-visited-city?ocid=global\\_travel\\_rss&ocid=global\\_bbccom\\_email\\_13112017\\_travel](http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20171109-can-paris-become-the-worlds-most-visited-city?ocid=global_travel_rss&ocid=global_bbccom_email_13112017_travel)

**Books:** I have a lot of favorite Paris-linked books. A long list by Parler Paris is at the end of the itinerary.

*The Flâneur Discovers Paris, a Step at a Time* - This is the kind of item on my Paris list to do. Wander. I liked the author and book. Read it last December while in Paris.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/fashion/the-flaneur-discovers-paris-a-step-at-a-time.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share>

The word describes those who take advantage of a wanderer’s paradise: the streets of the city, filled with charming shops, stirring landmarks and ephemeral encounters.

*Paris Letters* – by Janice MacLeod. Beautiful art. Lovely story.

*A Paris Year* – by Janice MacLeod. Reading this book is what created the February trip. Tom loved the reminders and needed to see Paris again. I have kept the book. I have gifted the book. Highly recommended; it’s a quick read, a nice review.

**Language:** Remember when you had to speak French to manage traveling in France? When the French couldn’t be bothered with tourists? That has sure changed. Now everyone speaks English. Ask anyone on the street a question, and they’ll stop and take all the time you need. They’ll even walk you to your destination. They’ll follow you to offer and add an aside or suggestion. Very sweet. Very smart.

**Bicycles for rent:** Now it’s not just docked Velib for rent, but a new model that has a tracker, an App, and they are parked anywhere. Just check your App for the closest location, grab the bike, and drop it wherever you wish. No docking station needed.

**Notes sent during trip:**

**Dec 8**

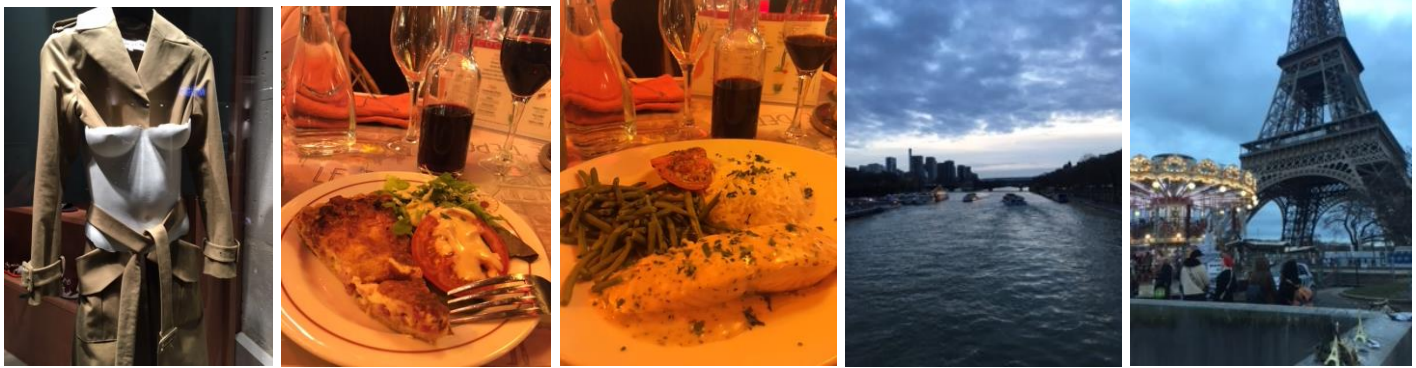
I had a very long walk as much because I got quite lost or at least turned around. I was over in the Luxembourg Gardens area and now I’m in the student quarter at Le Depart Saint Michael. I had about 2 1/2 hours of walking pre-dinner.

Being a cat type and able to go any which direction has its problems in Paris. There are too many places I want to go. At one point I was on my way to Le Grande Colbert and after going the wrong direction and being over beyond the Luxembourg Gardens I gave that up. I knew it was getting late and Le Grande Colbert would be full. This is Friday evening and the town is bustling.

I have a rather long walk home which will guarantee sleep.



The menu was two courses for €20 and a Demi carafe of Bordeaux was a bit under eight euros.



### **Mon Dec 11**

I've been in Paris three days now with a concerted effort to not rush, not have a to-do list, and just wander. It is not as easy as it sounds. Every corner gives choices. Every corner has at least a couple of directions I want to go. Yet I have 10 days and I return in February.

I'm here solo at Tom's suggestion - probably with the hope that I'll get my Paris walking out of my system before we both come back in February. I'm in the same little studio apartment in St. Germain de Pres where I stayed a couple years ago. It is probably smaller than the size of the bathroom where we will stay in February. Honest.

Until today the weather was just cool and damp. Today was heavy wind in the morning and pouring rain in the evening. I don't mind at all and each day I have stayed outside and on my feet for three to five hours, enough to have sore hips. I put on a lot of miles and that's just what I had hoped to do.

One day I had a lovely time getting lost having gone by the famous Bon Marche department store and their Egregiously expensive food court (I shopped at the monoprix) and onto Luxembourg Gardens only because I got lost. The streets in the old Left Bank can be confusing. I wandered through the student quarter also known as the Latin Quarter and ended at a favorite brasserie.

The next day I headed toward the Eiffel Tower and walked all of my long street called rue Grenelle, via the Invalides where there is Napoleon's tomb, and wandered the food street called rue Cler where I will have a food tour on Tuesday. I lost myself enough in the streets to be surprised to come out at the military school and then walked all of the Champs DeMars Park with the Eiffel Tower in full view the whole time.

Something was going on at the Eiffel Tower because you couldn't get near. I read they have an ice skating rink underneath. Police and the walkways required us to go way around a long block. I crossed the river through hordes of tourist and hawkers with my destination being the Place Trocadero and another favorite brasserie where I dined in view of the flickering light show of the Eiffel Tower. I remember the first time I saw the lights play on the Eiffel tower was in an apartment with a big skylight and suddenly I looked up at one or two in the morning for my first view. Wow. I finished my evening by walking along the river to Place Concorde where the Ferris Wheel is brightly lit. It was still quite a long ways to home via Boulevard St Germain.

Today was still another direction following my nose out toward the Louvre through the Tuilleries and into the Palais Royale where we will be staying once again in February. I tried to eat at the Passage Vivienne and also went by the Grande Colbert but neither menu struck me quite right so I went on through the newly developed and strikingly odd Forum des Halles and the Canopy which is all new, full of shops and eateries and even more with shoppers. It's like they tried to outdo the Pompidou center where I went next. The economy appears to be very good. My goal was to get to the Marais where I stayed last year and remembered that they closed streets to traffic on Sundays. I went by both Carnavalet and the Picasso museums but decided to keep walking and went on farther yet to the Place de la republic (where the bombing occurred) where I found a sweet little café to rest my legs. They needed it after many hours of walking.

I can't send many pictures because the software quit allowing me to send large files. That's why so far I have no Lake Placid trip report: Notes are stuck in my phone.



Pictures include my walk thru the design center, by the famous literary cafés, the new Les Halles, Pompidou Center and that last one caused many of us to laugh. The container is to recycle bottles - was it full, or was somebody having fun, or maybe it was the results of a great big party.



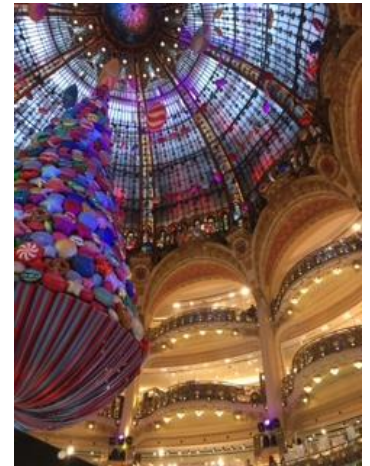
## Dec 12

Where to walk next? There are just too many choices and thus I put on the back burner those places Tom will want to visit in February. The Christmas lights of Paris are always a special delight so I headed for the Louvre, the Palais Royale, and walked up toward the opera. Rue de la opera is filled full of shops and just beyond are the famous galleries with galleries Lafayette windows and dome being the highlight. The place was absolutely infested even before the bus load of Asians were dropped off and took over departments like Louis Vuitton and just couldn't spend their money quick enough. I was looking for a hat to stay warm and help in the heavy wind but I gave up the hordes and ended up in a little boutique.



There are a number of famous brasseries and cafés that have been frequented by the literary geniuses. I had remembered The Grande café de Capucines more for its decor then its seafood. I've given myself one memorable meal a day and taken breakfast and late evening meals in the apartment.

I tackled the crowds once again walking like Forrest Gump must have and finally found my way back to the Paris Opera Garnier. I had no idea what my ticket would bring me only that I wanted inside. By the time I got there I didn't even mind paying €12 for a small glass of champagne.





Opera Palais Garnier isn't the oldest but it's the glorious. (The oldest wasn't giving a performance now.). When we lived a couple hours away and were into ballet because of Alayna's ballet studies, we attended some notable performances at Opera Garnier. Since then we have only been inside when we brought tourists to tour inside. The backstage tour is certainly worth the visit and even multiple times.

What did I see? La Clemence de Titus. I had good seating location in Category 1, first balcony aisle to see this Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Opera. But it was a hard drop down seat my sore hips hated. The story:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_clemenza\\_di\\_Tito](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_clemenza_di_Tito)

*About: Let us see whether my clemency or the treachery of others will be the more constant. Titus, Acte II, scène 17 - If the liaison between Titus and Berenice inspired one of the greatest French playwrights, it was the Roman Emperor himself, an incarnation of absolute sovereignty, that occupied the central position in what was to be Mozart's last opera. Marking a return to opera seria in its formal constraints and choice of subject, the work nevertheless defies expectations, its humanity shining forth through an obscure clarity in which the hidden melancholy of a score composed by an already declining Mozart is discernible. Willy Decker's streamlined production offers an exploration of the nature of power in which forgiveness and reconciliation are examined in all their strength and fragility. Also:*

*The Emperor's March - Every revival of La Clemenza di Tito offers the opportunity for the Emperor's bust - one of the monumental elements of the set - to travel between the Ateliers Berthier and the Palais Garnier.*

Humorous story from entry: I offered to take a photo of two older women standing out front in line. They had just arrived from Australia and were thrilled they were going to see Don Quixote. C'est pas Don Quixote. They argued, the guards agreed with them despite their tickets showing it to be at Opera Bastille. I finally got enough French out to get an older man to agree and nod at my showing them the map which clearly had the two opera houses marked. Finally they got a taxi to rush to Place Bastille. I wonder if that's why there's a line of taxi out front at the start? We've been confused about staging before and most recently In Barcelona.

It was near 11 PM when I started my walk home. It was a long ways and again putting me at about 10 miles for the day yet again avoiding the underground metro in lieu of seeing more. Here's a rare view of the Louvre without hordes of tourists.



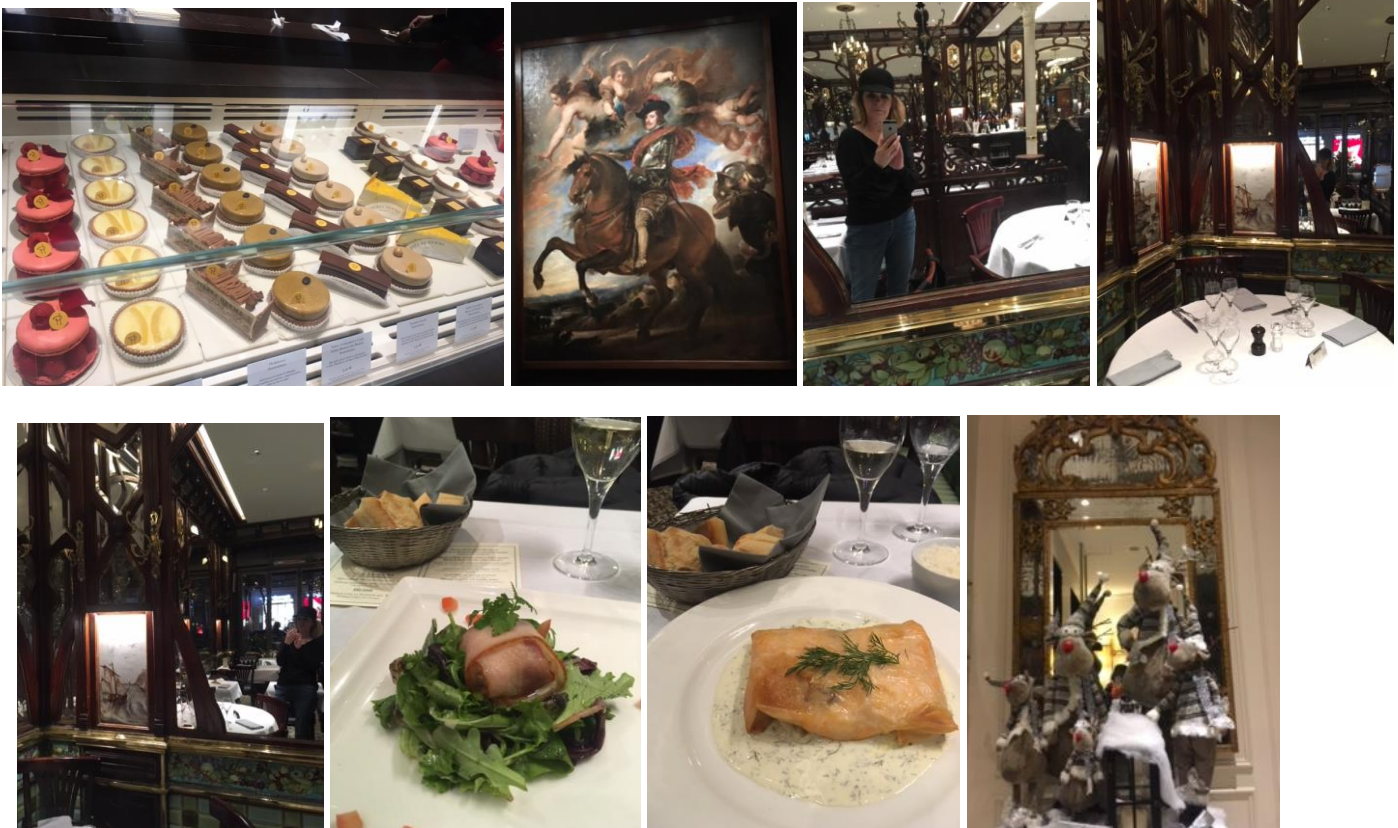


## Dec 15

Finally. I am tired of the rain. Were I a tree, I would have moss growing on both sides. I did a walking food tour in the rain and got drenched. I've walked from St. Germain up to the top of Montmartre and Sacré Coeur where I got windblown and soaking wet both inside and out. Inside from all the sweat hill climbing and zillion of steps and outside from the pouring rain. I did a guided walking tour of St Germain and again got very wet. I bought a hat because I was cold and wet and windblown. I added my down filled hood on top of the hat.

Yet I would still choose the potential cold and rain over the hordes of tourists. It is no wonder Paris is high on the list of tourist spots and listed among the 10 most beautiful cities in the world. By the way, we have spent plenty of time in each of Venice, Paris, Prague, Lisbon, Rio de Janeiro, Amsterdam, Florence, Rome, Budapest and number one Brugge. Five of those are on our current list within the next six months. Only one of those have we only been to once. Six of those I have traveled to in the very recent past. Life is sweet.

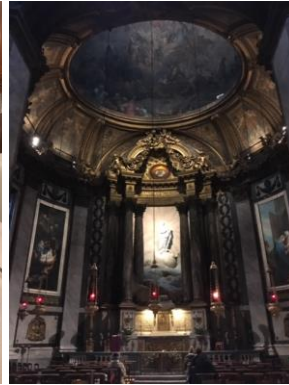
Maybe I should have gone into more museums to keep out of the rain but I was in my Forrest Gump mood and wanted to put on miles and see every inch of Paris that my legs would allow. Yet I did go into the Luxembourg museum because of the short run special on Peter Paul Reubens. It was a collection from around the world with many that I've seen in other locations.



Tom, no I didn't have your fillet with fois gras. Smile. The place was best our first time here but still dramatically lovely.



I did the afternoon food tour and then to Luxembourg museum to see the special on Rubens. Many of the Rubens paintings we have seen in other countries. It was quite the collection.



### **Sat Dec 16 - Au Revoir Paris**

They say all good things come to an end? Non. My Au Revoir to Paris is only temporary and Paris finally gave me a blue sky and no rain. We shall meet again in February. And maybe still again when I do an Alsace and Lorraine hiking trip.

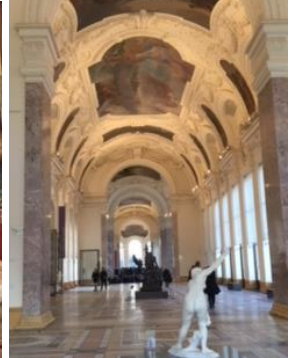
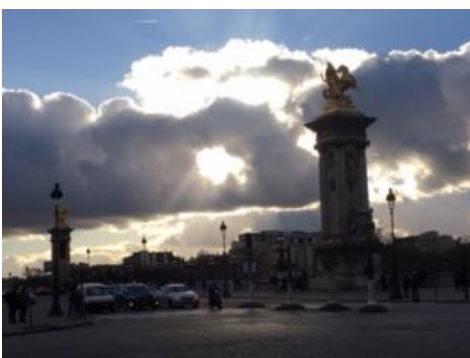
It has been a lazy trip and I find that I have not accomplished much of anything on my to do list. But that's what this trip is about – doing whatever hit my fancy at the moment and walking every bit of Paris that my legs would allow was always in my mind. I had 8 to 10 mile days and hill climbs up to Sacre Coeur and went in pretty much all directions touching most major sites.

I remain surprised at how many pastry and chocolate shops exist and the prices are mind boggling and I don't know who buys them. A tiny chocolate is a euro and it's hard to get a macaroon for that little.



100 euros for some of these boxes of chocolate? The competition is such that the flavor offerings are also mind boggling. I had a macaroon that was truffled.

This is a wonderful and famous bridge but I took the picture because suddenly there was some light shining through the clouds and a little bit of blue sky.

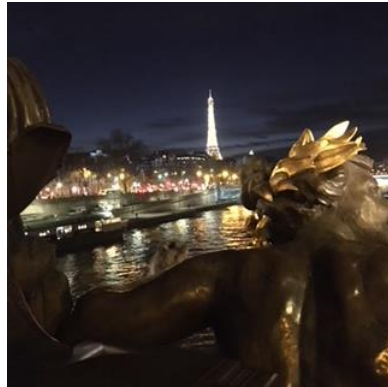
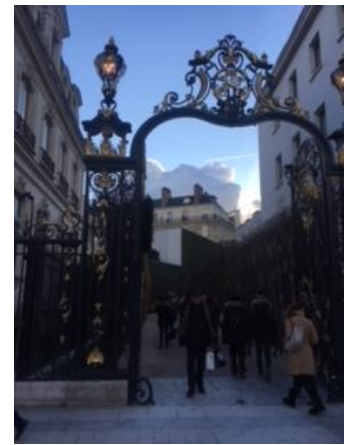


Winston Churchill stands guard outside the Petite Palais which is across the street from the Grande Palais with this huge dome and where I think of early impressionist showings where they were not accepted. Now look at them!

Inside the grand hall of the Petite Palais where I could have seen a special Dégas exhibit where I willing to stand in a mile long line. Lines for security are bad enough. I did spend some time in their permanent exhibit where Tom and I have wandered many times. I was on my way to the Champs Elysee Christmas Market but alas, the Christmas market has been kicked out. Apparently the piles of pallets and the begging and then worse yet the merchandise coming from China caused authorities to say no more. The rights belong to the Ferris Wheel owner who is in jeopardy of being kicked out too. I would be sorry. Walking along the river, walking back along the main drag, along rue St Honore, the lights of the Ferris Wheel are a constant. It is hard to not always be pointing your camera toward it, just like we do with the Tour Eiffel.

I did walk the length of the Champs Elysee and back and took in another noted brasserie Alsace.

I'd never walked through this beautiful Irongate until today and it is home to Abercrombie and Fitch. It is really worth the visit as you walk through a long avenue of tall hedges then enter from the back side of the Château. I wonder if they make enough sales as inside is full of tourists. It must be in some guidebooks but it is not in any of mine and should be.



From Rond Point to Place de Alma is a decadent shopping street probably better than Rodeo Drive and certainly better than our now bastardized Fifth Avenue. It is Worth Avenue on steroids. We used to enjoy walking down Georgia V and into that hotel and salivating over the cars in the area, but now they're all around this street and the Hotel Plaza Athenee. The shoppers were serious and the Limos were gathered in wait even a couple blocks away as there were so many. Can you just hear the billionaire saying oh let's hop on our plane to Paris and the limo will pick us up and drop our stuff at the plaza Athenee and we'll shop till we drop. Or it might be just a little middle-of-the-road Asian who I've heard figured out about taking second mortgages and are traveling in big debt. They seem absolutely loony in the lines to the big name shops and carrying around multiple bags. Many of them are loud, boisterous, spit on the streets, and I'm so grateful that someone has taken over the ugly American role.

The lights were twinkling on the Tour Eiffel as I crossed another bridge. There is a kid and all of us and I was delighted. It was a fitting (temporary) Au Revoir.



## ***Itinerary***

### **Thu Dec 7**

6:15pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#57

### **Fri Dec 8**

7:35am Arrive Paris Charles de Gaulle CDG

Taxi to apartment

Apartment Saint Germain des Pres studio at 51 rue de Grenelle, 75007 Paris  
Tele in apt: 01 45 48 73 10 – entry codes in file and at Code

Renting agent: Paris Vacation Apartments [www.parisvacationapartments.com](http://www.parisvacationapartments.com)  
Tele of office 011 33 1 42 64 20 03 email: [pva2rent@gmail.com](mailto:pva2rent@gmail.com)  
Cell of Daria: 337 60 69 16 52 Cell of Clara: 06-63-60-67-14; [clara.pva1995@gmail.com](mailto:clara.pva1995@gmail.com)  
Back-ups: Fanny 06 24 41 22 84 or Fred 06 11 23 29 98

*SAINT GERMAIN BEAUTIFUL STUDIO - Exceptional location! This quiet and bright luxurious studio apartment (22 square meters - 237 square feet), is situated in the famous St Germain des Prés close to the Musée Maillol, in the heart of Paris fashion, galleries, antique shops, traditional market streets and restaurants. It is also just a few minutes from the famous "Cafe Flore" and "Les Deux Magots", the Musée Rodin and the Musée d'Orsay. This beautiful completely renovated and fully equipped studio, with its elegant ancient marble floors and high light wooden beam ceiling, is the perfect flat for a couple (or a couple with a child) wanting to experience the true Parisian life style in a chic, elegant and authentic neighborhood.*

### **Mon Dec 11**

7:30pm Opera at Palais Garnier – La Clemence de Titus – ticket paid and in file  
Seating: Category 1, first balcony seat 52S

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Opera. The story: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_clemenza\\_di\\_Tito](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_clemenza_di_Tito)  
*About: Let us see whether my clemency or the treachery of others will be the more constant. Titus, Acte II, scène 17 - If the liaison between Titus and Berenice inspired one of the greatest French playwrights, it was the Roman Emperor himself, an incarnation of absolute sovereignty, that occupied the central position in what was to be Mozart's last opera. Marking a return to opera seria in its formal constraints and choice of subject, the work nevertheless defies expectations, its humanity shining forth through an obscure clarity in which the hidden melancholy of a score composed by an already declining Mozart is discernible. Willy Decker's streamlined production offers an exploration of the nature of power in which forgiveness and reconciliation are examined in all their strength and fragility.  
The Emperor's March - Every revival of La Clemenza di Tito offers the opportunity for the Emperor's bust - one of the monumental elements of the set - to travel between the Ateliers Berthier and the Palais Garnier.*

### **Tue Dec 12**

2:30pm Paris Cafés and Food Tasting tour with [www.Paris-Walks.com](http://www.Paris-Walks.com).

*Learn about the history and variety of French food, see some excellent bakeries and chocolate shops, celebrated historic cafés and restaurants, and some which have recently become the favourites of food lovers, in the Left Bank/St Germain area. Meet at metro rue du Bac. Price: 27€ (includes tastings). Reservation made and confirmed by Oriel at Tele 01 48 09 21 40. Instructions: Meet at metro rue du Bac (line 12) at the exit, (there is just one exit) The guide will be waiting for you wearing a Paris Walks badge. Please arrive 5 minutes before the start time and check in with her, she will have a name list. Fee for the tour 27€. Deposit paid 20€ per person. Please pay the guide the remaining 7€ per person in cash on the day.*

### **Thu Dec 14**

10:30am Meet Richelle for [www.Paris-Walks.com](http://www.Paris-Walks.com) - Saint Germain-des-Prés

*This tour captures the essence of Paris on the Left Bank: the old abbey church of St Germain, the city's oldest church, charming streets lined with bookstores and literary cafés. Old squares, artists' studios, the famous Paris Fine Arts School, Hemingway's favourite restaurant, the hotel where Oscar Wilde died, the beautiful St Sulpice church, and the truth behind the mysterious gnomon and rose line of the Da Vinci Code. Meet in front of the Church of St Sulpice (short walk from metro St Sulpice)*

### **Sun Dec 17**

6:30am Depart apartment via taxi – to be arranged by PVA office

9:25am Depart Paris Charles de Gaulle CDG via UA#56

12:25pm Arrive Newark EWR

### **Emergency – print and carry:**

American Embassy and Consulate

2, avenue Gabriel - Paris 8<sup>th</sup> Tele: 01 43 12 22 22 (American Nationals) Metro: Champs-Elysées

Registered with State Department in case of emergency - <https://step.state.gov>

Apartment: 51 rue de Grenelle, 75007 Paris

Apt Managers: [www.pva2rent@gmail.com](mailto:www.pva2rent@gmail.com) Daria: 337 60 69 16 52; Clara: 06-63-60-67-14

### **Tourist Ideas:**

Visit Le Papillon on rue Mouffetard – per Janice at Paris Letters

Evening boat tour

Fashion Show

Museums: Louis Vuillon new museum; Haussmann Perfume Museum; Rodin newly renovated;

Picasso newly renovated; Carnavalet if now open

Chateau d'Vitcom

La Chapelle if sunshine; evening concert? Tour?

Petite Palais

Shakespeare & Co book store

Musee d'Orsay and eat

Best Street In Paris the rue Martyrs - walk up into Montmartre

Bon Marche and food court

Eat at Trocadero

Nothing at the old opera called Opera Comique?

Walk series of passages from Palais Royal up and into Montmartre



Paris vs New York City? Here's an excellent view and comparison and I agree.

<http://adrianleeds.com/component/acymailing/archive/view/mailid-1189?key=lsxhp0kd&subid=24080-ATadbyKRrygw2m&tmpl=component>

BBC - Travel - Can Paris become the world's most visited city? - [http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20171109-can-paris-become-the-worlds-most-visited-city?ocid=global\\_travel\\_rss&ocid=global\\_bbccom\\_email\\_13112017\\_travel](http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20171109-can-paris-become-the-worlds-most-visited-city?ocid=global_travel_rss&ocid=global_bbccom_email_13112017_travel)

The Flâneur Discovers Paris, a Step at a Time - This is the kind of item on my Paris list to do. Wander. I liked the author and book Read it last December while in Paris.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/fashion/the-flaneur-discovers-paris-a-step-at-a-time.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share>

The word describes those who take advantage of a wanderer's paradise: the streets of the city, filled with charming shops, stirring landmarks and ephemeral encounters.

Must do: Opera Comique - <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Op%C3%A9ra-Comique>

Can't decide where to stay in Paris? A guide for every type of traveler. - The Washington Post

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/cant-decide-where-to-stay-in-paris-a-guide-for-every-type-of-traveler/2017/06/01/4fd3f93a-422d-11e7-8c25-44d09ff5a4a8\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.5bc15044b79f&wpisrc=nl\\_travel&wpmm=1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/cant-decide-where-to-stay-in-paris-a-guide-for-every-type-of-traveler/2017/06/01/4fd3f93a-422d-11e7-8c25-44d09ff5a4a8_story.html?utm_term=.5bc15044b79f&wpisrc=nl_travel&wpmm=1)

A Night in White -- <http://adrianleeds.com/component/acymailing/archive/view/mailid-1119?key=8P75aaNP&subid=24080-ATadbyKRrygw2m&tmpl=component>

Dior Opens- the Largest Fashion Exhibition Ever to be Held in Paris -

<http://www.crfashionbook.com/fashion/g10256571/dior-opens-the-largest-fashion-exhibition-ever-to-be-held-in-paris/>

Adrienne Leeds of Parler Paris on her book reading list: We must consider there is a vast difference between books in English about a city where English is spoken, verses books in English about a city where French is spoken. Only a fraction of the English language books are sold in France, for example...as there are only a handful of English language bookstores left in Paris (a sad case of affairs) and therefore all these books about Paris are mostly sold in the U.S., Canada and other English-speaking countries...or by online merchants from anywhere to anywhere, of course.



Time Out Paris Book Stores

To find English language books in Paris, do visit and patronize those who have weathered the storm of online book purchasing. The following is a description borrowed from [Time Out](#) (I cannot take credit!):

**The Abbey Bookshop** - Celebrating 20 years in business, the tiny Abbey Bookshop is the domain of Canadian renaissance man Brian Spence, who organizes weekend hikes as well as dressing up in doublet and hose for a spot of 17th-century dancing. The tiny, narrow shop stocks old and new works, a specialized Canadian section, and highbrow subjects down the rickety staircase. Several thousand more books are in storage, and he can normally order titles for collection within two days.

**Berkeley Books** - An offshoot of San Francisco Books in the next street over, Berkeley opened in 2006 and as well as the shop runs a well-organized website with an online catalogue and calls to buy, sell and exchange. In store, the range of literature, criticism, history, philosophy, religion, poetry, literary journals (including a shelf devoted to back issues of the Paris Review), cookbooks and children's books is arranged by genre and studded with treasures, though the space lacks some of the haphazard charm.

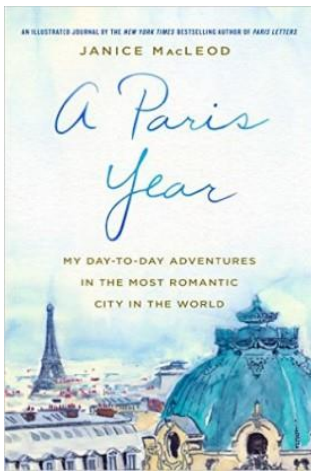
**Galignani** - A long, gleaming space lined with dark wood and crowned with a mezzanine overlooking an intimate reading area, Galignani on the Rue de Rivoli is as chic as its location. It claims to be the first English language bookshop on the continent, but that's not really important – though pricey, Galignani probably has the best overall selection of fiction, non-fiction, fine arts books, guides and gift titles in English in the city.

**San Francisco Books** - A delightful little rabbit warren of a second hand bookshop, San Francisco Books was founded by a group of ex-pats in 1997 and seems to have grown organically out of the conversations of book lovers. Tweedy gents hang around the front desk discussing politics and poetry, while browsers squeeze politely past each other in the narrow spaces between the stacks, ferreting out fiction, guides, DVDs, biographies, pamphlets and much more.

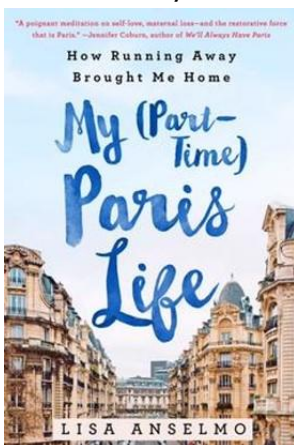
**Shakespeare & Company** - The original Shakespeare & Co, run by Sylvia Beach and beloved of Hemingway and his ilk, closed in the 1940s during the occupation of Paris (the site at 12 Rue de l'Odéon bears a plaque). In 1951, wandering spirit George Whitman opened Le Mistral at 37 Rue de la Bûcherie, re-naming it in 1964 in homage to Beach's legacy (he also named his daughter after her).

**WH Smith** - It's not the most beautiful space inside, despite its vaulted Rue de Rivoli windows. Still, while at home the UK newsagent WHSmith mostly sells romances and thrillers in airports and train stations, its outlet in Paris remains one of the best-stocked English language bookshops in the city. A healthy amount of literary fiction, serious nonfiction and contemporary novels supplement the staples, and the range of magazines (at the back, next to the vending machines) is mind-boggling. Meanwhile, I could probably open my own book store, but I wouldn't want to sell them, so let's call it a "lending library" instead, although I'm loathe to lend them out, too, for fear of never seeing them again (that happens too often). The latest additions to the Leeds library include (alphabetical order):



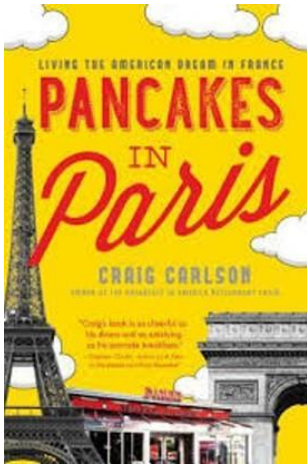


\* *A Paris Year: My Day-to-Day Adventures in the Most Romantic City in the World* by [Janice MacLeod](#) - This one arrived in the mail most recently and to my total delight. It's hot off the press and like nothing that's ever been on my shelf before, filled with beautiful writings, illustrations and photos, in hard cover -- "Part memoir and part visual journey through the streets of modern-day Paris, France, *A Paris Year* chronicles, day by day, one woman's French sojourn in the world's most beautiful city. Beginning on her first day in Paris, Janice MacLeod, the author of the best-selling book, *Paris Letters*, began a journal recording in illustrations and words, nearly every sight, smell, taste, and thought she experienced in the City of Light. The end result is more than a diary: it's a detailed and colorful love letter to one of the most romantic and historically rich cities on earth. Combining personal observations and anecdotes with stories and facts about famous figures in Parisian history, this visual tale of discovery, through the eyes of an artist, is sure to delight, inspire, and charm." The only problem is that it might not get schlepped around because of its weight, but it's the kind of book should always be on the table for your guests to pick up and peruse to their delight, too!

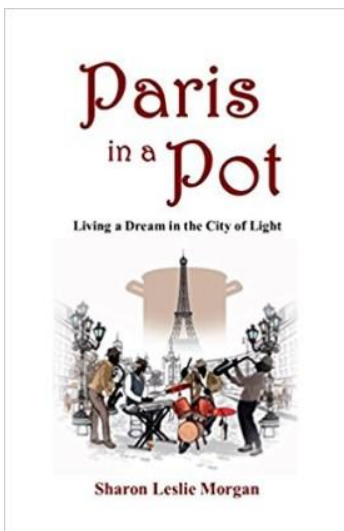


\* *My (Part-time) Paris Life: How Running Away Brought me Home* by [Lisa Anselmo](#) - Lisa Anselmo spoke last December at [Après Midi](#) and of course, we've grown to be close friends. I've got a mention in the book thanks to a few heart-rendering moments in her quest to create her new life in Paris. Her memoir will move you to tears, so be prepared to fall in love with her story... "Poignant, touching, and lively, this memoir of a woman who loses her mother and creates a new life for herself in Paris will speak to anyone who has lost a parent or reinvented themselves. Lisa Anselmo wrapped her entire life around her mother, a strong woman who was a defining force in her daughter's life--maybe too defining. When her mother dies from breast cancer, Lisa realizes she hadn't built a life of her own, and struggles to find her purpose. Who is she without her mother, and her mother's expectations? Desperate for answers, she reaches for a lifeline in the form of an apartment in Paris, refusing to play it safe for the first time. What starts out as a lurching act of survival sets Lisa on a course that reshapes her life in ways she never could have imagined. But how can you imagine a life bigger than anything you've ever known? In the vein of *Eat, Pray, Love and Wild*, *My (Part-Time) Paris Life* a story is for anyone who's ever felt lost or hopeless, but still holds out hope of something more. This candid memoir explores one woman's search for peace and meaning, and how the ups

and downs of expat life in Paris taught her to let go of fear, find self-worth, and create real, lasting happiness."



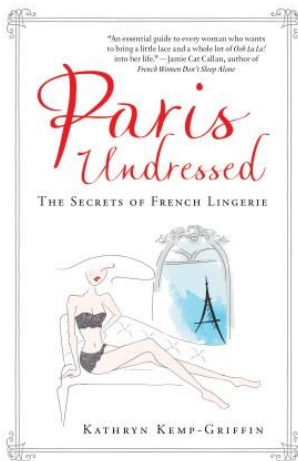
\* Pancakes in Paris: Living the American Dream in France by [Craig Carlson](#) - Craig Carlson will be speaking at [Après Midi](#) on July 11th, so don't miss it. The memoir is hilarious and so is Craig, plus his pancakes are delicious! This is truly the story of survival and success in the City of Light! "Craig Carlson was the last person anyone would expect to open an American diner in Paris. He came from humble beginnings in a working-class town in Connecticut, had never worked in a restaurant, and didn't know anything about starting a brand-new business. But from his first visit to Paris, Craig knew he had found the city of his dreams, although one thing was still missing-the good ol' American breakfast he loved so much. Pancakes in Paris is the story of Craig tackling the impossible-from raising the money to fund his dream to tracking down international suppliers for "exotic" American ingredients... and even finding love along the way. His diner, Breakfast In America, is now a renowned tourist destination, and the story of how it came to be is just as delicious and satisfying as the classic breakfast that tops its menu."



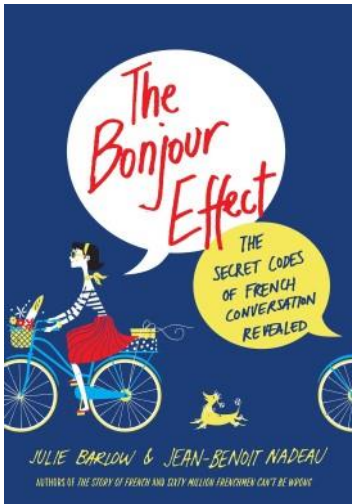
\* Paris in a Pot: Living a Dream in the City of Light by [Sharon Morgan](#) - First, I earmarked every page where Sharon mentioned our relationship and then I cried like a baby when I got to the end, where she describes her despair before leaving Paris and Bojangles. She republished the Nouvellettre® I wrote as an epitaph for which she was "both sad and glad":  
\*\*\* BYE BYE TO BOJANGLES - I met Sharon Morgan the first day she arrived in Paris in 1999. She came to Paris with a suitcase, a manuscript for an African American cookbook and an idea to open her own restaurant. I knew from the start she was a force to be reckoned with and someone who would be a part of my life for years to come. It didn't take her long before she was hosting "Soul on Sunday" at a well-established soul food restaurant and catering holiday events for our Parler Parlor French/English Conversation Group (best known for her Thanksgiving Dinners, 4th of July Barbecues and Anniversary extravaganzas). Sharon searched high and low for the perfect restaurant spot and opened Bojangles on January 3, 2001 with a packed house of aficionados, live entertainment and



down-home soul food cooking I'd match with the best of them. Bennie Luke, long standing barman from Chez Haynes, became host and bartender. Friday nights, Sharon whipped up spicy Louisiana Creole gumbo (the first one she tested was in my very own kitchen) that rivals any gumbo ever served in New Orleans (don't tell my mother whose gumbo is also a winner). Bojangles became home for the African American community -- its singers, musicians, artists and friends. You could go there at any time and find the "regulars" who would make you feel like part of the family, even if your ethnic background was more like mine ("honky") than theirs. The keys on the piano got banged, the singers wailed gospel and blues, the guitars were strummed, people sang and danced and ate up pork chops and chicken wings. It was easy to be there often. Then, the neighbors complained about the music and a battle ensued. And the music stopped. And the people stopped coming. That's when Sharon said, "I came, I tried, I had fun and now I'm tired." So, Sunday night, March 30th, Bojangles gave its final farewell dinner to 100 or more aficionados. The friends came, the musicians and the singers came, the lawyers and the cooks and the waiters came...everyone who had a part in the creation and sustenance of Bojangles. Sharon sang "Summertime" best she ever sang it, I downed a bowl of Louisiana gumbo for the last time and I cried when I left with my Bojangles souvenir T-shirt (that I symbolically slept in last night). A sad moment wondering if I would now lose my connection with this community I never would have had without Sharon Morgan and Bojangles. They both will be sorely missed.



\* Paris Undressed: The Secrets of French Lingerie by [Kathryn Kemp-Griffin](#) - Kathryn spoke this past February 14th (how apropos) at [Après Midi](#) about "It's What's Underneath that Counts" and her book is a delight, complete with a garter belt bookmark. Ladies, it's time to pull your sexy lingerie out of the drawer and put it on your bodies! "American women wear underwear. French women wear lingerie. French women seem inherently more confident in their bodies, able to embrace the sensuality of life and love. What's their secret? Lingerie. Yet, despite an insatiable curiosity for all things French, most women still find lingerie an enigma, a tangled mélange of silk and lace, and are confused about how, when, and where to wear it. (Hint: it's not just for special occasions.) Many aspire to having a drawer full of silky, lacy undergarments, but have no idea where to start: How should my bra fit? How exactly do I wear a garter belt? Do bras and panties always have to match? With illustrations by French lingerie designer Paloma Casile, Paris Undressed: The Secrets of French Lingerie will help women feel at ease with their figures and show them how to integrate a lingerie lifestyle à la française to enhance their own femininity, confidence, and joie de vivre. It will transform the way women perceive their undergarments ? and their bodies ? and reveal how to co-ordinate a lingerie wardrobe to reflect personality and to meet lifestyle needs with the right dose of reverie. The book also includes a hand-selected guide to the most confidential addresses and lingerie boutiques in Paris, and discloses where to find the perfect bra, couture camisole, or cheeky panty. Paris Undressed goes behind the seams, combining cultural references, expertise, and practical advice to inspire every woman to reconsider her underwear drawer."



\* [The Bonjour Effect: The Secret Codes of French Conversation](#) by [Julie Barlow et Jean-Benoit Nadeau](#) - I loved their book "Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong" so much that I actually ordered this one online, had it sent to my daughter in New York, who brought it to me in her luggage. I haven't read it yet, but can't wait. They got it so right with "Sixty Million..." that surely they've nailed it this time, too. Even after 23 years of living in France, I'm sure to learn something from them. "Most of what we know about the French comes from what the French say about themselves. Yet how are we supposed to understand a people who say non when they mean yes, who never say "I don't know", even when they really don't, and who argue at the drop of a hat? Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow spent a decade traveling back and forth to Paris and living there. In *The Bonjour Effect* they chronicle the lessons they learned after returning to France to live, for a year, with their twin daughters. In a book as fizzy as a bottle of French champagne, they reveal the most important lesson of all: the French don't communicate, they converse. To understand and speak French well, one must understand that French conversation runs on a set of rules that go to the heart of French culture. Why do the French like talking about "the decline of France"? Why does broaching a subject like money end discussions? Why do the French become so aroused debating the merits and qualities of their own language? Through encounters with school principals, city hall civil servants, gas company employees, old friends and business acquaintances, Julie and Jean-Benoît explain why, culturally and historically, conversation with the French is not about communicating or being nice. It's about being interesting. After reading *The Bonjour Effect*, even readers with a modicum of French language ability will be able to hold their own the next time they step into a crowded bus, a beloved boulangerie, or a bistro on the Left Bank."

[See more here.](#)

This is a good start, n'est-ce pas? I'm taking all these to the beach! Aren't you?