



# Paris

ebook Edition

lonely planet

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# THE AUTHORS

## **Steve Fallon**

Steve, who has worked on every edition of *Paris* and *France* except the first, visited the ‘City of Light’ for the first time at age 16 with his half-French best friend, where they spent a week drinking *vin ordinaire* from plastic bottles, keeping several paces ahead of irate café waiters demanding to be paid, and learning French swear words that shocked even them. Despite this inexcusable behaviour, the PAF (border police) let him back in five years later to complete a degree in French at the Sorbonne. Now based in East London, Steve will be just one Underground stop away from Paris when Eurostar trains begin departing from Stratford in 2010. *C’est si bon...* Steve was the coordinating author and wrote the Introducing Paris, Getting Started, Background, Sleeping, Gay & Lesbian Paris and Directory chapters. He also cowrote the Neighbourhoods, Shopping, Eating, Drinking and Nightlife & the Arts chapters.

## **Nicola Williams**

For Nicola, a British journalist living and working in France for the past 12 years (home is a hillside house with Lake Geneva view in Haute Savoie), it is an easy flit to Paris where she has spent endless amounts of time eating her way around and revelling in the city’s extraordinary art and architecture. When she’s not working for Lonely Planet, she can be found in the Alps skiing or hiking, strolling around Florence or having fun with family in Britain and Germany. Nicola has worked on numerous other Lonely Planet titles including *France, Provence & the Côte d’Azur* and *The Loire*. Nicola wrote the Sports & Activities, Excursions and Transport chapters. She also cowrote the Neighbourhoods, Shopping, Eating, Drinking and Nightlife & the Arts

chapters.

## **PHOTOGRAPHER**

### **Will Salter**

In the last 12 years, Will has worked on assignment in over 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific region as well as Antarctica. He has produced a body of award-winning work that includes evocative images of travel, portraits and sport. He sees photography as a privilege, a rare opportunity to become intimately involved in people's lives. Will is based in Melbourne, Australia, with his wife and two children. His website is [www.willsalter.com](http://www.willsalter.com).

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## **LONELY PLANET AUTHORS**

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# GETTING STARTED

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## WHEN TO GO

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Paris is a dream destination for countless reasons, but among the most obvious is that it requires so very little advance planning. Tourist literature abounds, maps are excellent and readily available, and the staff at tourist offices are usually helpful and efficient. Paris is so well developed and organised that you don't have to plan much of anything before your trip.

But this is fine only if your budget is unlimited, you don't have an interest in any particular period of architecture or type of music, and you'll eat or drink anything put down in front of you. This is Paris, one of the most visited cities of the world, and everyone wants a piece of the action. First and foremost, book your accommodation well ahead. And if you have specific interests – live big-name jazz, blockbuster art exhibitions, top-end restaurants – you'll certainly want to make sure that the things you expect to see and do will be available or open to you when you arrive. The key here is advance planning ([Click here](#)).

## WHEN TO GO

As the old song says, Paris is lovely in springtime – though winterlike relapses and heavy rains are not uncommon in the otherwise beautiful month of April. The best months are probably May and June – but early, before the hordes of tourists descend. Autumn is also pleasant – some people say the best months of the year to visit are September and October – but of course the days are

getting shorter and in October hotels are booked solid by businesspeople attending conferences and trade shows. In winter Paris has all sorts of cultural events going on, while in summer the weather is warm – sometimes sizzling. In any case, in August Parisians flee for the beaches to the west and south, and many restaurateurs and café owners lock up and leave town too. It's true that you will find more places open in August than even a decade ago, but it still can feel like a ghost town in certain districts. For more information on Paris' climate, [Click here](#).

To ensure that your trip does (or perhaps does *not*) coincide with a public holiday, [Click here](#). For a list of festivals and other events to plan around, see below.

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## **DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...**

- an adaptor plug for electrical appliances
  - binoculars for viewing detail on churches and other buildings
  - an immersion water heater or small kettle for an impromptu cup of tea or coffee
  - tea bags if you need that cuppa since the French drink buckets of the herbal variety but not much of the black stuff
  - premoistened towelettes or a large cotton handkerchief to soak in fountains and use to cool off in the hot weather
  - sunglasses and sun block, even in the cooler months
  - swimsuit and thongs (flip-flops) for Paris Plages or swimming pool
  - a Swiss Army knife, with such essentials as a bottle opener and strong corkscrew
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## **FESTIVALS & EVENTS**

Innumerable festivals, cultural and sporting events and trade shows take place

in Paris throughout the year; weekly details appear in *Pariscope* and *L'Officiel des Spectacles* [Click here](#). You can also find them listed under 'What's On' on the website of the **Paris Convention & Visitors Bureau** ([www.parisinfo.com](http://www.parisinfo.com)). The following abbreviated list gives you a taste of what to expect throughout the year.

## **January & February**

### **FESTIVAL DES MUSIQUES DU NOUVEAU AN**

[www.parisparade.com](http://www.parisparade.com)

The New Year Music Festival, relatively subdued after the previous night's shenanigans [Click here](#) with marching and carnival bands, dance acts and so on, takes place on the afternoon of New Year's Day at the Palais de [Chaillot](#) at Trocadéro.

### **LOUIS XVI COMMEMORATIVE MASS**

[www.monuments-nationaux.fr](http://www.monuments-nationaux.fr)

On the Sunday closest to 21 January, royalists and right-wingers attend a mass at the Chapelle Expiatoire ([Click here](#) marking the execution by guillotine of King Louis XVI in 1793).

### **FASHION WEEK**

[www.pretparis.com](http://www.pretparis.com)

Prêt-à-Porter, the ready-to-wear fashion salon that is held twice a year in late January and again in September, is a must for fashion buffs and is held at the Parc des Expositions at Porte de Versailles in the 15<sup>e</sup> arrondissement (metro Porte de Versailles), southwest of the city centre.

### **CHINESE NEW YEAR**

[www.paris.fr](http://www.paris.fr)

Dragon parades and other festivities are held in late January or early February in two Chinatowns: the smaller, more authentic one in the 3<sup>e</sup>, taking in rue du Temple, rue au Maire and rue de Turbigo (metro Temple or Arts et



Métiers); and the larger, flashier one in the 13e in between porte de Choisy, porte d'Ivry and blvd Masséna (metro Porte de Choisy, Port d'Ivry or Tolbiac).

## **SALON INTERNATIONAL DE L'AGRICULTURE**

[www.salon-agriculture.com](http://www.salon-agriculture.com)

A 10-day international agricultural fair with produce and animals turned into dishes from all over France, held at the Parc des Expositions at Porte de Versailles in the 15e (metro Porte de Versailles) from late February to early March.

**March–May**

## **BANLIEUES BLEUES**

[www.banlieuesbleues.org](http://www.banlieuesbleues.org), in French

The 'Suburban Blues' jazz and blues festival is held over five weeks in March and April in the northern suburbs of Paris, including [St-Denis](#), and attracts some big-name talent.

## **PRINTEMPS DU CINÉMA**

[www.printempsducinema.com](http://www.printempsducinema.com), in French

Cinemas across Paris offer filmgoers a unique entry fee of €3.50 over three days (usually Sunday, Monday and Tuesday) sometime around 21 March.

## **FOIRE DU TRÔNE**

[www.foiredutrone.com](http://www.foiredutrone.com), in French

This huge funfair, with 350 attractions spread over 10 hectares, is held on the pelouse de Reuilly of the Bois de Vincennes (metro Porte Dorée) for eight weeks from late March to mid-May.

## **MARATHON INTERNATIONAL DE PARIS**

[www.parismarathon.com](http://www.parismarathon.com)

The Paris International Marathon, usually held on the first Sunday of early April, starts on the av des Champs-Élysées, 8e, and finishes on av Foch, in the

16e. The **Semi-Marathon de Paris** is a half-marathon held in early March; see the website for map and registration details.

## **FOIRE DE PARIS**

[www.foiredeparis.fr](http://www.foiredeparis.fr)

This huge modern-living fair, including crafts, gadgets and widgets, and food and wine, is held from late April to early May at the Parc des Expositions at Porte de Versailles in the 15e (metro Porte de Versailles).

## **ATELIERS D'ARTISTES DE BELLEVILLE: LES PORTES OUVERTES**

[www.ateliers-artistes-belleville.org](http://www.ateliers-artistes-belleville.org), in French

More than 200 painters, sculptors and other artists in Belleville (metro Belleville) in the 10e open their studio doors to visitors over four days (Friday to Monday) in mid-May in an event that has now been going for two decades.

## **LA NUIT DES MUSÉES**

[www.nuitdesmusees.culture.fr](http://www.nuitdesmusees.culture.fr), in French

Key museums across Paris throw open their doors at 6pm for one Saturday night in mid-May on 'Museums Night' and don't close till late. Some also organise special events.

## **FRENCH TENNIS OPEN**

[www.rolandgarros.com](http://www.rolandgarros.com)

The glitzy Internationaux de France de Tennis – the Grand Slam – takes place from late May to mid-June at Stade Roland Garros (metro Porte d'Auteuil) at the southern edge of the Bois de Boulogne in the 16e.

**June–August**

## **FOIRE ST-GERMAIN**

[www.foiresaintgermain.org](http://www.foiresaintgermain.org), in French

This month-long festival of concerts and theatre from early June to early July