



MUSEUMS

The following list is not intended to be totally comprehensive. I have included the major museums and some of our favorite smaller and lesser known ones. At the beginning of the list are new or recently reopened museums. All museums have a last admission from 30 to 60 minutes before closing; it is advisable to arrive at least an hour or two before closing, depending on the size of the museum. The larger museums start closing off sections well before closing time; personnel try to have everybody out of the museum by the time of closing. If there are “blockbuster” shows, it’s a good idea to purchase advance tickets so you don’t have to wait in interminable lines. Details of where to buy tickets in Paris is listed under the Louvre entry.

Musée du quai Branly

This is a completely new museum featuring the art of Oceania, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, incorporating the collection in the old Ethnography Museum. We loved the architecture and the gardens and the concept of the museum, although there has been some criticism of the way it is organized, which is not traditional. A lot of zigging and zagging is needed, but for us it worked. The collection is fabulous with the Americas being the least impressive. We spent over four hours here which is I am sure a record for us. Rumor has it that it will eventually be renamed the Jacques Chirac Museum.

Address 37, quai Branly

Métro Alma-Marceau

Open daily (except Monday) 11 - 7 (Tues, Wed, Sun); 11 - 9 (Thurs, Fri, Sat)

Musée de l’Orangerie

After being closed for more than six years it reopened in May of 2006. Here you can see the magnificent Monet “Water Lilies” done between 1914 and 1926; there is also a fine permanent collection and well as temporary exhibitions.

Address Jardin des Tuileries

Métro Concorde

Open daily (except Tuesday) 12:30 - 7, Friday till 9

Jeu de Paume, site Concorde

The sister of the Orangerie on the other edge of the Tuileries, housing contemporary art and photography exhibits. The most recent exhibition we saw was the excellent Steichen exhibit that is travelling the world.

Address 1, Place de la Concorde (access through Jardin de Tuileries)

Métro Concorde

Open daily (except Monday) noon - 9 (Tues); noon - 7 (Wed-Fri); 10 - 7 (Sat & Sun)

Musée des Arts Décoratifs

I don't really know how long the major portion of this museum was closed, but it seems at least a decade. It is now completely reopened and houses a fantastic collection of interior design, furniture, ceramics, glassware clothing, etc. from the Middle Ages to the present. We spent close to four hours here and could have stayed longer if our feet would have permitted. It is actually in the Louvre Palace.

Address 107, rue de Rivoli.

Métro Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre

Open daily (except Monday) 11 - 6 (Tues, Wed, Fri); 11 - 9 (Thurs); 10 - 6 (Sat & Sun)

Petit Palais

Another museum that recently reopened after a long and superb restoration, it actually houses the "Musée de Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris." It has an outstanding collection of decorative arts, furniture, painting, sculpture and glassware. The collection of Art Nouveau glass is by far my favorite. Emile Gallé, and his contemporaries are very well represented and fabulous (if you like Art Nouveau glassware). It is across from the Grand Palais.

Address Avenue Winston Churchill

Métro Champs-Élysées Clemenceau

Open daily (except Monday & holidays) 10 - 6

Grand Palais

The west side of the palace has been a prime venue for excellent temporary exhibits; many of the "blockbusters" needing advance ticket purchase to avoid long lines are held here. The east side with its huge and magnificent atrium has been closed since 1993 when it was declared unsound. The incredible Art Nouveau restoration is now open for cultural and commercial exhibitions, and if there happens to be anything there it is certainly worth seeing for the building. The contemporary art fair we attended was fair at best, but being able to see this restored section of the palace was well worth the price of admission. It is hard to miss, across the street from the Petit Palais, and around the corner from the galleries whose information is listed below.

Address 3, Av. General Eisenhower, square J. Perrin

Métro Champs Élysées-Clemenceau

During exhibitions, open daily (except Tuesday) 10 - 8, Wed & Fri till 10pm

Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris

As the name would imply this museum is dedicated to art of the 20th and 21st centuries. After a long renovation, when it reopened we saw a major Bonnard exhibition there. Although the lines to get in were very long and it was a very large exhibition, once we got inside the crowds had disappeared. This is because the space around each painting was unusually large. Paris takes a very long time to renovate a museum, but they certainly do it right. In every instance the restoration is about as perfect as it can be.

Address 11, avenue du Président Wilson

Métro Alma-Marceau

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 6

Musée du Louvre

This is as you probably know one of the largest and most famous museums in the world. It occupies 34 pages in the Michelin Green Guide to Paris. It is so vast and the collections so broad in scope that it is best to have a plan before entering. We find it best to decide ahead of time which particular section interests us most. It may be Egyptian antiquities, Greek antiquities, Italian school, Northern schools, Etruscan, or any one of many others. Pick one or two areas of interest and come back another day to see other areas that you may not have had time for. Because of the 35-hour work week in France we have found that many museums close sections off on certain days because there are not enough guard personnel available to have all sections guarded at the same time. The information desk has a list of what will be closed each week.

One tip about visiting Le Louvre: Buy your tickets before going to the museum. They are available on the web at www.ticketweb.com or at www.louvre.fr. With tickets purchased beforehand you merely walk into the museum past the very long lines of people waiting to purchase their tickets. If you don't purchase the tickets before you get to Paris you can get them at many stores in Paris including Fnac, Virgin Megastores, Le Printemps, Les Galeries Lafayette, Le Bon Marché, BHV, and others. There is a Virgin Megastore at the Carrousel du Louvre off the rue de Rivoli. Tickets for other large and popular museums and "blockbuster" exhibitions can also be purchased in advance at these places.

Métro Access to the museum is from the Palais Royal Musée du Louvre Métro station on the number One line.

Open daily (except Tuesday) 9 - 6, Wednesday 9AM - 9:45 PM & on Monday part of the museum is open from 9AM - 9:45 PM

Musée d'Orsay

This famous museum was converted from a railway station to a museum by the architect Gae Aulenti and inaugurated in 1986. This is the same person who transformed the old San Francisco Public Library into the new Asian Art Museum. It is most known for its amazing Impressionism collection, but there are many other areas of interest such as the Art Nouveau collection, Symbolism, Neo-Impressionism, etc. It is a great, but not a huge museum, and can be seen in about four or five hours. Compared to the Louvre's 34 pages it only occupies 5 pages in the Michelin Green Guide.

After entering, go to the information desk and pick up a free plan of the museum which will be of great help in planning your visit. It shows what is in each gallery and where the galleries are located. Visiting the website at www.musee-orsay.fr can be very helpful before you visit.

Address Entrance is on the Seine side from Quai Anatole France
Métro Solferino.

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 6, Thursday 10 - 9:45, & Sunday 9 - 6

Centre Georges-Pompidou Musée National d'Art Moderne

This museum was considered to be futuristic and very avant-garde at the time it opened in 1977; a major restoration was done recently and it reopened in 2000. The permanent collection was reorganized in 2007 and viewing now has a greater coherency. It has one of the largest and best collections of modern art in the world. In addition to viewing all of the incredible art in the building be sure to go to the sixth floor for some of the best views of Paris. Their website at www.centrepompidou.fr can be quite helpful as it will tell about temporary exhibitions and other special events.

Entrance to the museum on Place Georges-Pompidou is very close to the Rambuteau Métro station.

Open daily (except Tuesday) 11 - 9

L'Atelier Brancusi

On the grounds of the Centre Georges-Pompidou are four Brancusi workshops restored to their original condition. Price of admission is included in admission to the Pompidou.

Open weekdays (except Tuesday) 1 - 7

Musée National des Arts Asiatiques – Guimet

This museum was totally renovated at a cost of over \$50 million. The result is absolutely spectacular. Their collection of Asian Art has always been superb, but now it has the very finest in museum architecture and display. There are sections of art from Cambodia, India, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, etc. and the Chinese art collection is unusually fine.

Address 6, Place d'Iéna

Buddhist Panthéon

Considered to be an annexe to the Guimet, it has some fine examples of Japanese Buddhist sculptures.

Address 19, avenue d'Iéna

Métro for both Iéna

Open daily (except Tuesday) 10 - 6

Musée Luxembourg

Houses temporary exhibits, many times necessitating advance ticket purchases. In the past Raffaello, Modigliani, Archimboldo, etc. Many times the exhibits are smaller than anticipated, and padded with items supposedly giving historical background (inexcusably including photo reproductions in the case of the Raffaello).

Address 19, rue Vaugirard

Métro Odeon or St. Sulpice

Open daily, including holidays. Hours vary (consult Pariscope for particulars)

Musée Picasso

An outstanding collection of the master's work was donated to this museum by his heirs. There are more than 200 paintings plus many sculptures, drawings, etc. The museum is chronologically organized and one can get a very good idea of his evolution by following the museum plan which reveals the various phases that this great artist went through. The website is www.paris.org/Musees/Picasso/ and it has a lot of practical information to help plan your visit.

Address 5, rue de Thorigny in the Hôtel Salé

Métro Chemin Vert

Open daily (except Tuesday) 9:30 - 5:30 (April to September till 6:00)

Musée Marmottan-Monet

A special underground gallery was built to house 65 paintings by Claude Monet as a result of a bequest from his son. The collection of Monet paintings here is probably the most important of his work. There are also canvases by Renoir, Sisley, Pissarro, Gauguin, etc. For some reason this museum is not crowded, and there are plenty of places to sit and view the large canvases. It is a particularly pleasurable museum experience.

Address 2, rue Louis-Boilly

Métro Ranelagh or La Muette

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 6

Musée Dapper

The original museum had one or two shows a year of sub-Saharan African art. The subject or focus was different each time, and every show was excellent. In its new location there is a space devoted to contemporary African art as well as the major space utilized for classic exhibitions around specific themes, for example, most recently Animal Imagery. The new location is more spacious so the pieces are displayed in an even more striking fashion.

Address 35, rue Paul Valéry (off avenue Victor Hugo)

Métro Victor Hugo

Open daily (except Monday & Tuesday) 11 - 7

Musée National du Moyen Age

This museum is famous for the amazing "The Lady and the Unicorn" tapestries which are outstanding examples of late 15th century Belgian weaving; it is worth the visit to see this masterpiece. There are other fine items in this museum such as the 15th century alabaster work from Nottingham, 12th and 13th century stained glass from Ste-Chapelle, Rouen, etc. and some beautiful stained glass works of partridges from the 15th century. Perhaps the most exciting piece for me is the 16th century tapestry of the grape harvest. Barrels, picking knives, and other items portrayed are identical to those used today.

Address 6, Place Paul-Painlevé

Métro Saint-Michel

Open daily (except Tuesday) 9:15 - 5:45

Institut du Monde Arabe

This is one of the more outstanding and famous examples of 20th Century architecture in Paris. It was set up by France in conjunction with 20 Arab countries to feature Islamic culture. There are several facilities, but it is the museum that holds the most interest for the casual visitor. The permanent collection of the museum has works of art from the 9th Century on showing Islamic history in the form of sculpture, carpets, and architecture. There are some fine examples of tapis (kilims) and ceramics. On our most recent visit there were two very good temporary exhibitions. Another place to check in Pariscope to see if there are any exhibitions of interest to you.

Address 1, rue des Fossés-Saint-Bernard

Métro Jussieu or Cardinal Lemoine

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 6

Musee Rodin

A beautiful setting for Rodin's sculptures. Readers pointed out to me that I had failed to include this museum in the Guide. After revisiting the museum I was reminded why it is not one of my favorites, though it does deserve to be included. There is a particularly nice garden for walking.

Address 79 rue de Varenne

Métro Varenne

Open daily (except Monday) 9:30 - 4:45

The following museums are as interesting for their feeling of historic Paris as they are for their collections:

Musée Jacquemart-André

One of our favorite museums in Paris it is in a late 19th Century mansion and has a fine collection of French, Flemish, and Italian art of the 17th and 18th Centuries. There are also paintings by Rembrandt, Della Robbia, Uccello, Botticelli, etc. The architecture is wonderful and the su-

perb double staircase is worth the visit. Included in the price of admission is an excellent audio guide in English that allows the visitor to go into several layers of information in each room as desired. It gives a fine idea of Parisian aristocratic life in the latter part of the 19th Century.

Address 158, boulevard Haussmann

Métro Miromesnil

Open daily 10 - 6

Musée Cognacq-Jay

There is much to be seen in this beautifully done museum. The 18th century furniture collection is outstanding with Louis XIV, XV, and XVI rooms. There is also Meissen porcelain from the 18th century, Aubusson tapestries, and wonderful wooden ceilings. Oil paintings by a 20 year old Rembrandt, Fragonard, Canaletto, Watteau, and many others can be seen in beautiful, quiet, and uncrowded surroundings.

Address 8, rue Elzévir

Métro St.-Paul

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 6

Musée Nissim de Camondo

This beautiful mansion overlooks the Parc Monceau. The Louis XVI interior with its eighteenth century furniture, tapestries, and a fine porcelain collection is well worth visiting.

Address 63, rue de Monceau

Métro Monceau

Open daily (except Monday & Tuesday) 10 - 5

Musée Cernuschi

Located right next to The Nissim de Camondo, and easily combined in the same visit. It is devoted to ancient Chinese art as far back as the Neolithic period. We've also happened upon a free Sunday musical concert here.

Address 7, avenue Vélasquez

Métro Monceau

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 5:40

Musée Gustave Moreau

This interesting museum was Moreau's house and has a vast collection of his works including paintings, drawings, and water-colors that he bequeathed to France. Although Moreau died in 1898 his influence on later more modern artists is readily seen in his work. In addition to his art you can see some very nice ceramics and furniture.

Address 14, rue de La Rochefoucauld

Métro Trinité or St. Georges

Open daily (except Tuesday) 10 - 12:45 and 2 - 5:15

Musée de la Vie Romantique

Although there is some nice art to be seen here this place is worth a visit just for the setting. The museum is actually a house where Ary Scheffer worked for many years. It is set back from the street, and it has a lovely garden. When you walk in from the street you feel as though you are in a village rather than in the heart of Paris.

Address 16, rue Chaptal

Métro Pigalle or a short walk from the Musée Gustave Moreau

Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 5:40

Fondation Dubuffet

If you have any interest at all in the work of this artist you have a treat in store for you. As you enter from the very bustling major street you will find a setting much like the one in the previous paragraph except that this has two houses that date back to the 18th century. Dubuffet's house is set further back between the two old houses and the garden. It is difficult to believe that you are in Paris and not in a village; it certainly gives a good idea of what Paris was like over 200 years ago. The Dubuffet house has a very large collection of work from his private collection. To discover it after probably walking by it dozens of times was a wonderful experience.

Address 137, rue de Sévres

Métro Duroc

Open Monday through Friday 2 - 6

Musée Eugène Delacroix

He was a leader of the Romantic painters, but there are occasional touches of modernity in his later works. He lived in this studio-home from 1858 until his death in 1863. While the museum has a nice collection of his personal belongings, sketches, drawings, and paintings, it is the location of the home that is exceptional. It is on a tiny street in the very heart of St-Germain-des-Prés bordered by busy streets such as rue Bonaparte, rue Jacob, and very close to the always noisy and bustling Boulevard St-Germain. The studio and the sizeable garden are a haven of tranquility. After seeing the studio-home we sat on a comfortable bench in the garden and felt like we were in the countryside rather than in the heart of one of the busiest places in Paris.

Address 6, rue de Furstemberg

Métro Saint-Germain-des-Prés

Open daily (except Tuesday) 9:30 - 5

Maison de Balzac

The great French writer, Honoré de Balzac lived here between 1840 and 1847. He wrote some of his last works here and in addition to the library and some of his personal belongings there are temporary exhibitions relating to his work. This is another one of those places where the secluded setting and the garden make it a worthwhile visit. It is in the heart of Passy, an interesting area that is definitely off the tourist track.

Address 47, rue Raymond
Métro Passy
Open daily (except Monday) 10 - 6

Musée Bourdelle

House, garden and studio of this student of Rodin, a sculptor of grand monuments in his day, are turned into a museum of his work, and when we visited there was a fine exhibit of Henry Moore's sculpture as well.

Address 16, rue Antoine Bourdelle
Métro Falguiere
Open daily (except Monday & holidays) 10 - 6

The following places do not have permanent collections, but we have seen excellent temporary exhibitions at all of them; check Pariscope to see if there is anything of interest; some are listed under the Museum section, and others are under the "arts expositions" section by the name of the artist which makes it a little harder to find:

Fondation Mona Bismarck

All exhibitions we've seen here have been outstanding, for example, an excellent selection of 7,000 years of sculpture from the Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller collection. The exhibitions are small, but each one has been beautifully organized with well-chosen examples. Added advantage: no entrance fee.

Address 34, avenue de New York
Métro Alma-Marceau or Iéna
Open daily (except Sunday & Monday) 10:30 - 6:30

Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain

This building had the same architect, Jean Nouvel, as the Institut du Monde Arabe, and it is a very successful and striking contemporary design. The back garden, with plants and trees native to the region, is an integral part of this museum's experience. We've seen sculptures by Jean-Michel Othoniel, who designed the whimsical Métro station on Place Colette for the Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre stop, displayed both inside the main floor and in the garden. Another interesting exhibit was Agnes Varda and her installations inspired from the isle of Nourmoitiers.

Address 261, boulevard Raspail
Métro Raspail
Open daily (except Monday) 12 - 8

Pinacothèque de Paris

Originally this museum appeared in the space vacated by the original Baccarat Museum, with a showing of Jacqueline Picasso's private collection of her former husband's works, but as of 2007 it has moved to a townhouse behind the Madeleine where we saw a very comprehensive retrospective of Soutine's work.

Address 28, Place de la Madeleine

Métro Madeleine

Open daily during exhibitions, 10:30 - 6

Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

Changing exhibitions of photographers who worked in the same spirit as the great French photographer. We've seen fine exhibitions of Inge Morath and Helen Leavitt. There are also a few photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson and documentary videos.

Address 2, Impasse Lebouis

Métro Gaîté

Open Tuesday through Friday 11 - 6:30, Saturday 11 - 6:45, and Wednesday 11 - 8:30

The following are museums that focus on special interests or themes:

Manufacture des Gobelins

Although there are some fine examples of tapestries, this is not technically a museum; it is really a workshop where tapestries and carpets have been made for over 300 years. You can learn how the process is done and can observe the craftsmen as they do their art. Guided tours which take one hour and a half are given Tuesday to Thursday at 2:00 and 2:45. The tours are in French, but it is the only way to see this fascinating place in action. It took us several attempts to get on a tour as they get filled rather quickly. I would suggest getting there early or perhaps call ahead at 01-44-61-21-69.

Address 42, avenue des Gobelins

Métro Les Gobelins

Musée d'Art Naïf Max Fourny

This unusual museum is in the Halle St-Pierre, a 19th century cast iron former textile market. It will not be to everyone's taste. The art is primitive and stretches the boundaries of what we call contemporary art, but we have seen some very interesting things on several visits. There are artist's works from many countries in continually changing exhibitions on the first floor in addition to the permanent collection on the ground floor. Also, the surrounding area near Sacré-Coeur is a very interesting area to explore.

Address 2, rue Ronsard

Métro Anvers

Open daily 10 - 6; closed in August

Musée d'Art et d'Histoire du Judaïsme

The museum has a nice collection of Jewish artists such as Soutine, Chagall, Modigliani, etc. and temporary exhibitions that may be of interest. Pariscope will have those listed.

Address 71, rue du Temple

Métro Hôtel de Ville or Rambuteau

Open Monday through Friday 11 - 6, Sunday 10 - 6

Musée Baccarat

This museum has reopened in a new location, and it is quite sumptuous, complete with a red carpet entrance and grand stairway. There are hundreds of examples of works from this famous crystal maker. The collection goes back to about the middle of the 19th Century. If beautiful glass holds any interest for you, this is a place you will not want to miss. The collection of crystal chandeliers in a hallway is quite amazing as are the collections made for various heads of State, governments, and for many international expositions.

Address 11, Place des Etats Unis

Métro Kléber

Open daily (except Sunday) 10 - 7

Musée National de la Céramique Sévres

Since it is located across the Seine and out of the city limits of Paris, it is not listed in the Paris Green Guide. To get there, take the number 9 Métro line to Pont de Sévres and walk across the bridge to the museum. Ceramics have been made here for centuries and are still being made today. There is an outstanding collection of ceramics from all of France including Nevers, Moustiers-Ste-Marie, and other famous areas. There are some particularly wonderful pieces from the late 19th and early 20th Century as you enter the first room of the museum.

Open daily (except Tuesday) 1 - 5

Musée de l'Automobile

Visit this museum collection of over 100 vehicles in combination with a visit to La Défense, where it is located. Nearly 50 skyscrapers, the largest shopping center in Europe, as well as the headquarters of many major corporations are centered here. There is also some nice modern sculpture including a monumental fountain by Agam. This is a good example of urban development at the outer edge of the city that does not muck up the architectural integrity of the center.

Address The museum is located in a modern building called La Colline.

Métro La Défense (Grande Arche)

Open daily 12:30 - 7:30

Musée de la Musique

Located in Parc de La Villette, this relatively new museum shows over 900 musical instruments from the collection of 4,500. A headset included in the price of admission is digitally controlled so that, for example, when you walk up to view the glass harmonica, you will hear a selection from Mozart's Concerto for Glass Harmonica.

Address 221, avenue Jean-Jaurés

Métro Porte de Pantin

Open daily (except Monday) noon - 6; Sunday 10 - 6

Musée Grévin

Usually referred to as the "wax museum," it was founded by Grévin, a caricaturist, in 1882. You will see amazingly lifelike effigies of famous politicians and artists and a history of France from the Revolution to the present. The museum was recently renovated and many new characters were added. If you have not been it is worth one visit because it is quite unique, but not the sort of place for return visits.

Address 10, boulevard Montmartre

Métro des Grands Boulevards

Open Monday through Friday 10 - 6:30; Saturday & Sunday 10 - 7