

72 HOURS IN PARIS

From a medieval-era college for monks to an elevated park built over a disused railway line, the offbeat gems of the French capital are often hidden in plain sight.

By PRACHI JOSHI

PARIS IS ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA, especially this year as the city gears up to host the 2024 Summer Olympics from 26 July to 11 August. And if you're planning a trip to catch all the sporting action, make sure to set a few days aside to tread an off-the-beaten path with this special three-day guide.

DAY 1

It's just an option. But try skipping the hotel breakfast and make your way to Rue Montorgueil, a foodie haven of restaurants, cafés, bakeries, and more in the city centre, instead. Start your feasting journey at Stohrer, Paris' oldest pâtisserie, founded in 1730 by Nicolas Stohrer, who was King Louis XV's personal pâtissier. Do take time to admire the ornate interiors and gilded ceiling before choosing your favourites from buttery croissants, fruit tarts, or perhaps a *baba au rhum* (rum-infused cake). Pop into the other stores nearby like Maison Collet for fresh baguettes, Le Repaire de Bacchus



The gardens of Jardin du Palais Royal offer an inviting setting for a serene outing.

for wine, and La Fermette for artisanal cheese; put together a picnic basket with your purchases and make the short walk to the elegant, landscaped Jardin du Palais Royal for an early, lazy brunch amidst the boxed hedges.

Brush off the crumbs and hop on a bus or the metro to the Latin Quarter, the former stomping ground of artists, writers, and intellectuals. Musée Curie is a good place to start your exploration; located in Marie Curie's former laboratory, the museum takes you through the family's works and achievements related to radiology. To celebrate the Paris Olympics this year, it will also host a temporary photographic exhibition from 10 April 2024 to 18 January 2025 that traces the sports that the Curies and other scientists enjoyed.

A stone's throw from the museum is the Pantheon, a grand, 18th-century, neo-classical mausoleum with a monumental dome that offers spectacular views across the city.



The sunset casts a golden glow over the magnificent Pantheon.

Within it lie the remains of notable French citizens, including Alexander Dumas and Voltaire, among others. And right next door is the striking Church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont. The stunning interiors of this Gothic-Renaissance structure, which contains

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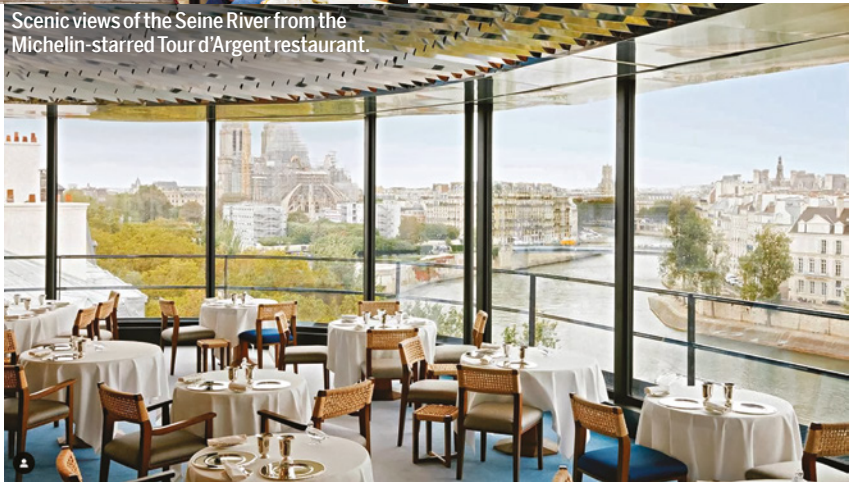
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Visitors flock the streets of Paris' cultural hub, Le Marais.



Tempting treats at the Tram Café.



Scenic views of the Seine River from the Michelin-starred Tour d'Argent restaurant.

the shrine of St. Geneviève, the patron saint of Paris, are a must-see.

Now would be a good time for a quick coffee stop. Luckily, Tram Café is merely a few steps away. This cosy outpost houses a small library, so pick a book to go with your cuppa. Suitably fortified with the brew, walk five minutes to reach Collège des Bernardins (but feel free to browse the charming bookstores on Rue des Écoles en route). The 13th-century college for Cistercian monks is one of the oldest buildings still standing in Paris; it was once also used as a prison and fire station, and is now a cultural centre. Take a peek inside (entry is free) and you may just stumble upon an art show or a concert.

After all the exploration on your first day, it's only fair that you enjoy a grand maiden dinner in Paris! Book a table at the Michelin-starred Tour d'Argent, which recently reopened after an extensive renovation and offers gorgeous views of the Seine River. Savour French haute cuisine like caviar with langoustine tartare, roasted blue lobster tail, and their famous pressed duck with duck liver sauce, before calling it a night.

DAY 2

It's a brand new day that's going to be all about indulging yourself and exploring the city's artistic side. Le Marais, the city's bohemian district, makes for a good start. Head straight to L'Éclair de Génie for their divine eclairs! The bakery is located just a few minutes from the 17th-century Place des Vosges (the oldest planned square in Paris), so get your goodie 'to go' and enjoy it in its tranquil garden. Wander around the covered arcades flanking it, as you slip in and out of art galleries, boutiques, and perfumeries. At one corner of the square, stands Maison de Victor Hugo, a free-to-enter museum

in the author's former apartment. Visit to see its original furniture, artworks, and artefacts, including a Rodin bust of Victor Hugo and a bronze cast of his right hand.

A blissful morning start deserves a dash of shopping, too. Which is ideal given that Le Marais is home to several design shops and concept stores. Do check out Merci (10 minutes from the museum), a three-storey boutique offering designer wear, homeware, and objets d'art. Or simply browse through any store that catches your fancy. Like the Kilo Shop—a vintage thrift store where you can shop by the kilo! By now, you may be feeling peckish,

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: EricBery/Shutterstock; Instagram @tram_restaurant; www.tourdargent.com

**Embracing Diversity:
Fostering Inclusivity
Among Students**



Aishwarya Rao
(Director at The Vivekalaya Group of Institutions)

We are privileged to witness the transformative power of education every day. Education, when approached with an inclusive mindset, has the potential to break down barriers and create a harmonious environment for all students. In today's globalized world, diversity is not just a word of the hour; it is a reality that demands our attention and proactive efforts to foster inclusivity. We believe in every step that is taken in cultivating an environment where every student feels seen, heard, and valued, regardless of their background, academic potential, or abilities. For The Vivekalaya Group of Institutions embracing diversity is not just a catch phrase for us; it is ingrained in our educational philosophy.

Diversity, in all its forms, enriches the educational experience. It brings together different perspectives, ideas, and talents, creating a vibrant community that prepares students for the complexities of the real world. However, embracing diversity is not a



passive endeavor – it requires intentional and sustained efforts to dismantle systemic barriers and create an inclusive space. One of the ways we are actively fostering inclusivity at The Vivekalaya Group of Institutions is through our comprehensive curriculum. We recognize the importance of representation in learning materials and ensure that our syllabus reflects a diverse range of voices and perspectives. This helps students see themselves in the content they study and fosters a sense of belonging.

Beyond the curriculum, various initiatives like celebration of cultural festivals, international days, and awareness campaigns create opportunities for students to share their unique traditions. Thereby, fostering understanding and appreciation, these events not only celebrate differences but also highlight the common threads that connect us all.

We at The Vivekalaya Group of Institutions have established dedicated support services and accessible infrastructure to ensure that every student, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate in the educational journey. Inclusivity is not just about welcoming differences; it is about creating an environment where every student can thrive. Furthermore, we have implemented training programs for

our faculty and staff to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to create an inclusive classroom. These programs focus on academic competency, sensitivity, and effective communication, empowering our educators to facilitate a learning environment that embraces learner diversity.

Fostering inclusivity also means promoting a culture of respect and open dialogue. To encourage and engage students in conversations about various perspectives and in respectful debates, where the final goal is to create an atmosphere where differences are not only accepted but celebrated, laying the foundation for a society that values differential learners and appreciates varied intelligence.

I believe that education is a powerful tool for social change. Diversity and inclusion are not just aspirational goals but integral components of our educational mission. By actively implementing initiatives that recognise differences, providing support for varied learning needs, and promoting a culture of respect, we are contributing to the creation of a society that is inclusive and accepting. Together, we can build a future where varied learning capabilities are not only embraced but appreciated and celebrated.

so, walk five minutes to Breizh Café, one of the best crêpe spots in the city (reservation recommended). Pick from their wide variety of savoury and sweet crêpes and pair it with a cider for a classic French lunch.

Appetite satiated, take a bus or tram to Coulée Verte René-Dumont, an elevated park built atop a disused railway line in Bastille! Here, you can explore its lush garden paths, admire both wild and manicured landscapes, and take in sweeping views over the less touristy parts of Paris. On Avenue Daumesnil, the high archways under this green pathway are home to the Viaduc des Arts, a collection of high-end boutiques, galleries, and artisans' ateliers. A stroll through gorgeous scenery or another bout of shopping—you decide what tempts you more. Either way, you'll have a great time!

You may be tired by now, so take a short taxi ride to Cavewoman Wines for a wine-tasting session with cheese and charcuterie. For dinner, book a table at Le Servan (barely 500 metres away) for inventive French-Asian fare.

DAY 3

Today may be a good day to savour that hotel breakfast as you'll need the energy to explore a splendid museum. No, we're not talking about the Louvre or Musée d'Orsay, but Fondation Louis Vuitton, nestled in the verdant woodlands of Bois de Boulogne on the—wait for it—Avenue du Mahatma-Gandhi! The boat-shaped glass-and-concrete building is nothing like what you've seen in Paris till now. It hosts a rotating calendar of contemporary art and culture programming; do check what you'd like to see. Then, grab a quick lunch at the museum's restaurant Le Frank and try some contemporary French and international flavours.

Next, hop aboard the metro or bus and make your way to Montmartre

for your 2:30 PM appointment with a unique excursion (the trip will take about an hour, so plan accordingly). Did you know there's a secret vineyard hidden in the heart of the city? Le Clos de Montmartre is one of Paris' last remaining vineyards—a small, steep patch amidst residential houses. Enjoy a guided visit and wine-tasting, followed by a look inside Musée de Montmartre, which showcases the history of the area. Do note that the vineyard is open to visitors only on Saturdays with prior booking.

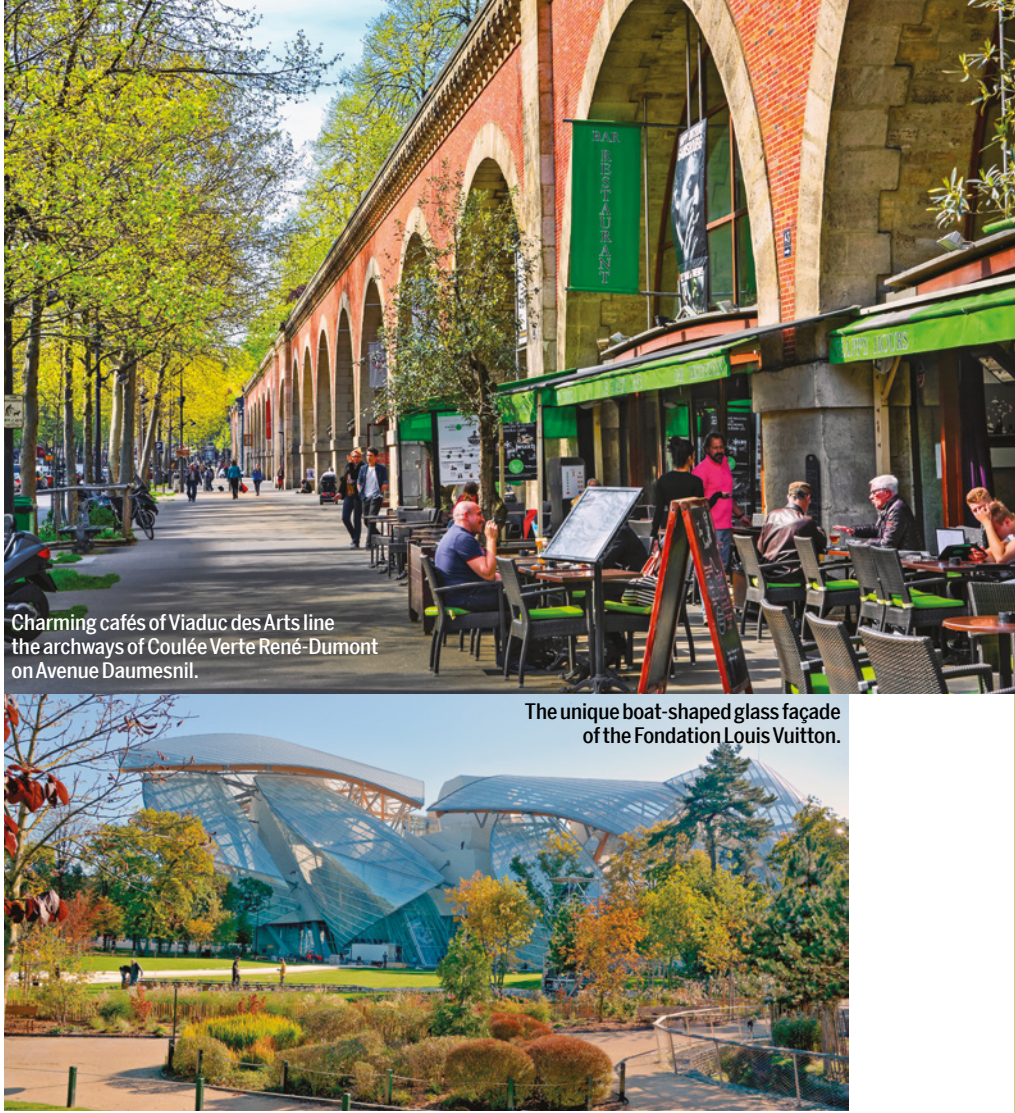
Finally, end your Paris sojourn in Pigalle at the foot of Montmartre hill. Once an old, derelict neighbourhood, it has undergone urban renewal and today, is one of city's trendiest areas. South Pigalle (abbreviated as

SoPi), particularly, is home to a slew of stylish cocktail bars, dance clubs, and restaurants. For dinner, head to Les Affranchis, a hip bistro serving creative French cuisine, followed by some Parisian revelry at Le Carmen, a short walk from the restaurant—the baroque, chandelier-lit club boasts live music and DJ sets. Top off the night with a vibrant cabaret performance at La Nouvelle Eve just across the street—you're in Paris, after all! ✨



GETTING THERE

Vistara offers non-stop flights to Paris from Delhi (five times weekly) and Mumbai (five times weekly, starting 28 March).



Charming cafés of Viaduc des Arts line the archways of Coulée Verte René-Dumont on Avenue Daumesnil.

The unique boat-shaped glass façade of the Fondation Louis Vuitton.

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ESCAPE

CHRONICLES OF IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

A FRESH, NEW START

Here are six ways to boost your mental and physical health with the rejuvenating spirit of spring.



▲ SOW AND GROW

Gardening is nature's way of enveloping us in a hug! From scarlet-hued succulent tomatoes to the sparkly green leaves of indoor plants, this activity helps you indulge your inner nurturer. A relaxation ritual, it unleashes tons of happy hormones to lift your spirits.

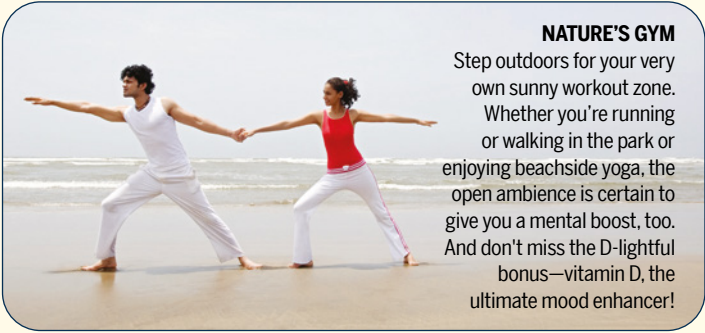
GET CREATIVE

Bring out your art and writing supplies—these stress-busters are sure to give you that zen feeling you crave. While painting offers your tired eyes a break from constant screen time, journaling your thoughts and fears is the secret sauce to ease your mind and conquer negativity.



DECLUTTER AND BREATHE

It's the season to let go of the old and welcome the new. And what better way to do that than with some much-needed tidying-up! Begin the process by discarding or donating what you no longer need, followed by eliminating hidden dust with a deep-cleaning spree. Spruce up your space with fresh flowers for a fragrant finale.



NATURE'S GYM

Step outdoors for your very own sunny workout zone. Whether you're running or walking in the park or enjoying beachside yoga, the open ambience is certain to give you a mental boost, too. And don't miss the D-lightful bonus—vitamin D, the ultimate mood enhancer!

GO WITH YOUR GUT

Level up your self-care game by indulging in a rainbow feast of veggies and fruits. With the temperatures rising, transform these delicious treats into vibrant slushes and smoothies. It's also a great way to soothe and replenish your gut and mind health.



◀ ENERGY CHECK

Elevate your home environment with an aroma diffuser. Harness the power of essential oils like sage, lemon, and rosemary, known for their cleansing properties. Or opt for grapefruit, sweet orange, or peppermint oil for some instant positive vibes.