



PARIS

Fashion capital, host to some of history's most significant art and architecture, and one of the most beautiful places in the world, the City of Light is home to all kinds of creative people.

WORDS SARA LIEBERMAN / PHOTOGRAPHY HERVÉ GOLUZA

Out & About

“LIFE MOVES PRETTY fast. If you don’t stop and look around every once in a while, you just might miss it.”

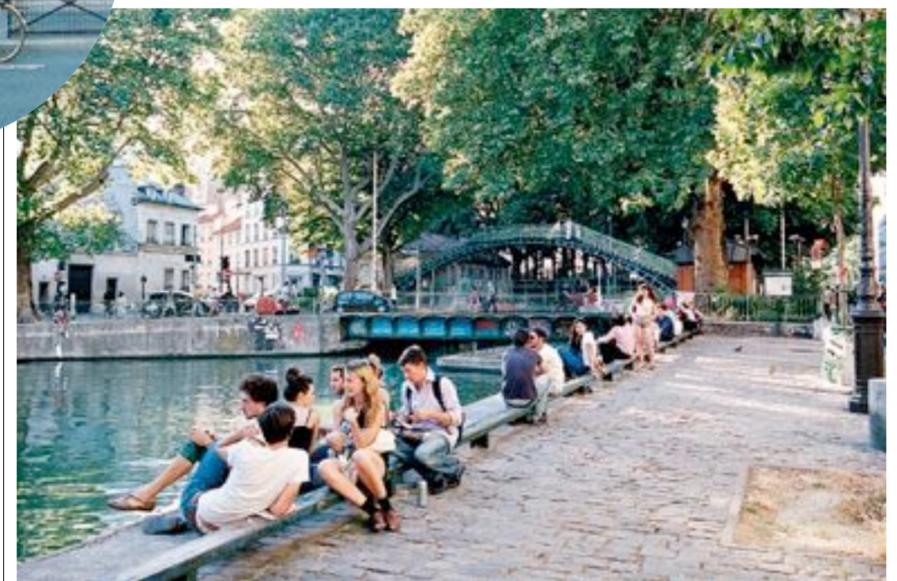
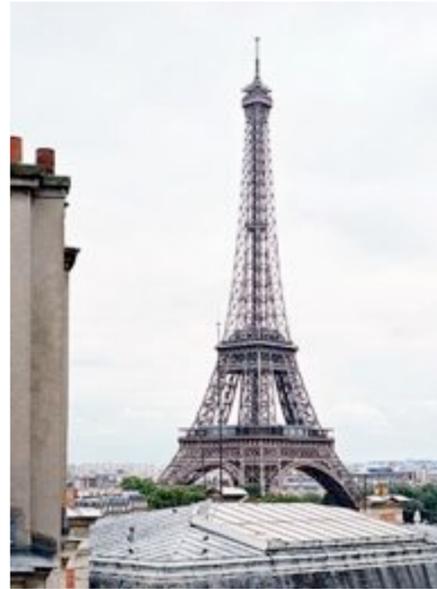
Sartre, Hemingway and Joyce may roll over in their graves at the notion of a Ferris Bueller quote being used to describe their great city, but c’est la vie; Parisians know how to move fast *and* how to slow down. They’re so brisk, they don’t wait for the Metro to stop before pressing the door to open and so escargot-like you could be sitting at a restaurant for 45 minutes before you obtain a ‘Bonjour’ and a menu.

There are other contrasts in the City of Light too. Waiters wear bow ties and tails to serve steak frites in view of the Eiffel Tower, while hipsters wearing A.P.C. brew Ethiopian coffee just off the canal in the 10th arrondissement. For every Renoir painting hanging in the Musée D’Orsay, there’s a mosaic sneakily installed on a building by French street artist Space Invader.

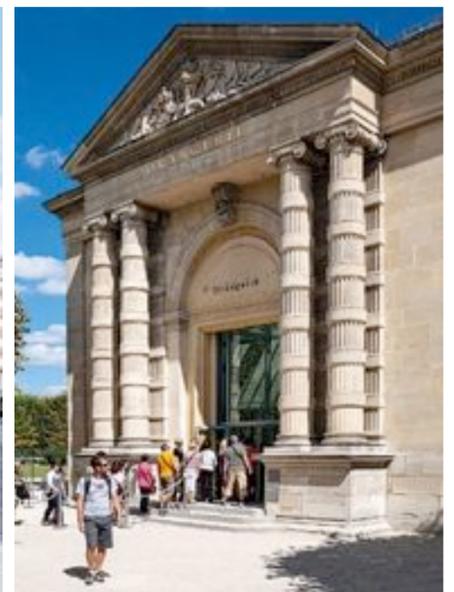
Whether it’s winter and the streets are snow-covered, or springtime and the parks are littered with lilacs, there is really never a bad time to visit Paris. Years ago, the creative elite – from Gertrude Stein to F. Scott Fitzgerald and Matisse – hung on the Left Bank at famous spots like Café de Flore and Les Deux Magots. Today, artsy types hoping to become the next Coco Chanel or Joël Robuchon are on the Right Bank in the Haute Marais toiling away in 21st century cafés.

In and around the ‘upper Marais’, the heartbeat of the world’s fashion capital, you’ll find designers like Stella Cadente decorating the Hotel Original, which offers guests a taste of a Wonderland even Alice couldn’t imagine with its whimsical décor. It’s also here, where the 3rd and 10th arrondissements meet, that movie director David Lynch opened the subterranean, semi-private club named Le Silencio, and chef Gregory Marchand serves non-French food like fish ‘n’ chips at his ironically named Frenchie. Meanwhile, along the nearby Canal Saint-Martin, très hip 20-somethings sit and watch the sky slowly turn Monet-like pastels at sunset.

Come for the fashion, for the food or just to stop and look around. Whatever your pleasure, there’s no missing the fast and the slow in the City of Light.



These pages, clockwise from top left. Paris’ most famous landmark, the Eiffel Tower; Louis Vuitton’s Cabinet d’Ecriture store; a colourful shopfront stands out on a Parisian rue; Merci café and boutique; Canal Saint-Martin, a popular hang-out for local hipsters; Musée de l’Orangerie; Chez Janou, a corner café; a canal boat; Shine boutique.





Inès-Olympe Mercadal

Shoe designer

IT'S HARD NOT to notice Inès-Olympe Mercadal. She's the one wearing oversized glasses and a vintage top with *tailleur epaulée* (shoulder pads), while shopping for mangos, Moroccan oranges and red onions at Tati, "the cheapest supermarket in Paris".

"I look like an '80s' working girl," says the 26-year-old shoe designer. "But I'm always wearing elegant clothes. I like to be dressed up no matter what."

With a très chic mother paving the way as head designer of Atelier Mercadal, their fifth-generation shoe business, it's clear that style runs in the family. That and striking good looks. With her dark-hued chignon that sits high atop her head and brows that perfectly arch, it's no wonder French photographer and music video director Cyril Danakil chose her as his subject for his 2007 exhibit at Shanghai's Museum of Contemporary Art.

Studying literature at the Sorbonne and writing for magazines like *Playboy*

and society and culture journal *Technikart* superseded being a muse and, eventually, Mercadal's passion for fashion prevailed. In 2011, she launched a vintage-style line for her family's 63-year-old business. Now, she joins her mother, Marie-Laure Mercadal, 52, in their showroom to create patent, suede and python pumps for Paris' hipsters. Mercadal travels to work from her two-roomed flat ("one for me, one for my clothes") in Barbes in the 18th arrondissement, the "exotic area of Paris that's home to bohème types", by cycling – in heels, of course.

"We like working together," says Mercadal of her mum. "We drink tea, discuss colours and materials and smoke cigarettes! Bad girls!"

Thankfully, all the smoking hasn't hurt her singing voice; Mercadal enjoys performing and does so at various venues and cabaret clubs like Chez Carmen and Les Folies de Pigalle.

But back to shoes: what should

we expect for the next season? Lots of bronze and gold, says Mercadal. "It makes me think about Studio 54 and those parties that I will never know," she says with remorse, before energetically piping up with: "I know and love this time in my city. I love it by day and by night."

MERCADAL RECOMMENDS:

A trip to Musée Galliera, which reopened in September with a retrospective of Parisian designer Azzedine Alaïa.

Walking over the bills and through the caves and waterfalls of the Parc des Buttes Chaumont in the 19th arrondissement.

Sipping the Patrick, a cocktail that mixes rum, Tabasco, spices and orange, at Le Scandale bar in Pigalle.



"I look like an '80s' working girl... I know and love this time in my city. I love it by day and by night."



Facing page. Inès-Olympe Mercadal in her 18th arrondissement flat.

This page, clockwise from top left.

Photographs and drawings; books in the living room; an armchair in the two-roomed apartment; Mercadal moonlights as a cabaret singer; photos of celebrities and friends; Mercadal's glasses and a selection from her extensive shoe collection.





Adam Tsou

Restaurateur

WITH A CHINESE father and an Italian-American mother, you'd think 33-year-old Adam Tsou's first foray into restaurant ownership might have taken a more spicy-noodle or saucy-mozzarella spin. Instead, the co-owner of Paris' popular Candelaria, divey rock 'n' roll bar Glass and the new Le Mary Celeste decided to focus on tacos and oysters.

"We wanted you to walk in and feel like you're in Mexico," says the one-time Wall Street banker of Candelaria, which has quickly risen to become one of the city's most talked-about hot spots since it opened two years ago.

With Le Mary Celeste, which debuted in February, Tsou wanted to turn traditional French dining on its head. "Most places that serve oysters [here] are white tablecloth. Our idea was to make it more fun and casual."

So far, so fun and casual. From the moment it opens to the moment it closes at 2.00am, the bright, seaside-inspired space is filled with local trendsetters

and expats from as far as Denmark and Venezuela, all looking to slurp shellfish and groove to tunes ranging from the Grateful Dead to Vampire Weekend.

"We want to serve the local community, but with international standards of creativity and taste," says Tsou, who manages the madness with co-owners Carina Soto Velasquez, his wife of three years, and Josh Fontaine, another American expat.

Tsou himself came to Paris in 2010 by way of New York (as well as Los Angeles and Connecticut, where he was born) in search of a reset.

"I asked myself, 'If I had two years to live, what would I want to do in those two years?' I said, 'I want to learn another language, I want to put myself in a different culture and I want to focus on a craft.' French is the mathematics of Western gastronomy so [Paris] seemed like a good starting point to do all three."

His timing couldn't have been better. "Young, motivated chefs, barmen

and baristas are finally opening places targeting locals, and executing at an internationally competitive level," says Tsou. Up until about five years ago, he adds, the focus had always been on serving tourists.

"It is the incredible romantic beauty and history of the city that brings people here. While I hope Paris will never change its timeless brasseries, it can, and should, live up to its historical roots as an innovator and centre for food and drink to be the true home of a would-be 'bon vivant'."

TSOU RECOMMENDS:

Going for Chinese food at Chez XU.

Trying the organic wines at Retro Bodega by Bastille.

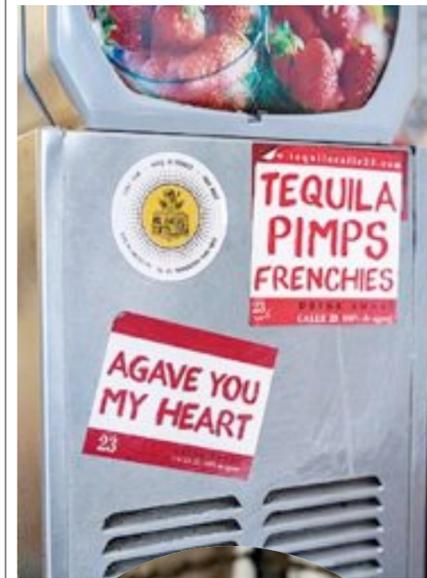
Walking by the Canal Saint-Martin around sunset.



"Young, motivated chefs, barmen and baristas are finally opening places... at an internationally competitive level."

Facing page. Adam Tsou, outside his Paris restaurant, Le Mary Celeste.

This page, clockwise from top left. A chainsaw and booze share wall space in Candelaria; a trio of fresh tacos; a window seat at Tsou's new Le Mary Celeste; Mexican soft drinks on display in Candelaria's window; a blackboard in the window at Candelaria; wine lists and cutlery at Le Mary Celeste; postcards; stickers on Candelaria's margarita machine.





Adeline Jeudy

Art gallery owner

AS SOMEONE WITH a PhD in art history who spent five years in Cairo, Egypt, specialising in medieval art, 33-year-old Adeline Jeudy knows a thing or two about archaic masterpieces. And yet the Brittany-born gallerist found fulfilment and success in contemporary art, with the 2007 opening of her Galerie LJ.

The modest, two-floored space concentrates heavily on what other people might call street art.

"I don't claim to be representing street artists," says Jeudy, "but young contemporary artists. In some of their practices they do stuff in the street but, when they show in the gallery, it's different."

Whatever she calls artists such as Swoon, known for her wheat-paste cut-outs, or AJ Fosik, who makes wildly colourful and tribal 3D masks, they're eons apart from the original masters of the French art world.

"These contemporary artists create work that's still considered 'folk art'

to a lot of collectors who favour a more intellectual kind of art, which is definitely preferred here in France. I don't think we've moved forward yet to the new generation," Jeudy says. "I have to do more work to get accepted [in Paris]. But it's a good challenge."

Part of that sees Jeudy (who lives near the gallery in a two-roomed apartment with "a lot of artwork and books") connecting with other creative outlets, specifically fashion. Galerie LJ has hosted presentations for Turkish designer Erdem and Indian designer Manish Arora, who after peeking at Fosik's masks in Jeudy's storage room felt instantly inspired to use them as a jumping-off point for a new collection – a classic case of art inspiring art.

"There is a lot of connection between fashion and art," says Jeudy, who herself sticks to more approachable labels like Zara and H&M. "Fashion is an art. We are feeding each other. I really like that."

She also really likes Paris and feels

lucky to be part of its burgeoning contemporary art scene.

"Paris is a small city. I like this human scale. I understand why people think it's the most beautiful city. I like the history. It hasn't been destroyed by the wars and you can see it in the buildings. Maybe I'm more sensitive to history because I studied it for so many years but, to me, it's important."

JEUDY RECOMMENDS:

Learning about young French designers at FR66 furniture store.

Eating French food cooked by the Argentine chef at Le Baratin in the Chinese District.

Donning 1920s' garb to participate in the annual Ride Béret Baguette city cycle event in the spring.



"There is a lot of connection between fashion and art [in Paris]. Fashion is an art. We are feeding each other."



Facing page. Adeline Jeudy in her Haute Marais Galerie LJ.

This page, clockwise from above.

The exterior of Galerie LJ; the small upper-level gallery space; Jeudy at work with intern Karol Sikora; Quentin Garel skulls on display; a risograph by Stefano 'Pane' Monfeli; three works by Antoine Corbineau.





Sofia Antonovich and Pierre-Yves Toudic

Designers and illustrators

IT ALL STARTED with a butterfly.

"Everyone has grey cars here: very classic and boring. Our idea was to make a butterfly sticker so you could recognize your car," says Sofia Antonovich. "We wanted to make something fun to add colour and ease the traffic and stress."

The butterfly notion took flight and led to the launch of a collection of whimsical decals and accessories featuring puppies and birds and flowers known as Les Invasions Ephémères and inspired by Paris and for decorating one's life within it. They're created by Antonovich, 33, the very opposite of grey and boring in her ethereal ensembles of worn-out denim, fur vests and faux-braid headbands, and her partner of 10 years, Pierre-Yves Toudic, also 33, who manages the business.

"It all happened so fast!" says Antonovich who, at the time of conceiving the business, was working in graphic design at *Cosmopolitan* magazine. The couple hadn't even

decided on prices when Paris' premiere department store Galeries Lafayette placed an order. International outlets ABC Carpet & Home and MoMA Design Store followed suit and soon enough 40 per cent of their orders were coming from Japan, with Europe and Scandinavia not far behind. The collection, which now includes key chains, iPad cases and keyboard covers, is produced mostly in France.

These days, the couple is solely devoted to working on their brand. Antonovich often works from the comfort of her home in the hip Paris suburb Montreuil, where she's inspired by the garden she hasn't planted, just outside the kitchen she doesn't care to cook in. "I try, but it's just not my thing," says the mum to two-year-old Victor. "I'm more of a terrace and glass of wine type."

A 30-minute commute on the Metro brings her right into the thick of Le Marais where she meets Toudic, who

prefers to come by car ("It's good to have some separation!" she says) and works from their boutique and showroom, which opened in 2010.

"It really is like the pictures and the postcards," Toudic says of the area. "It's where the tourists meet the neighbourhood locals – the 'real' Parisians – so it's such a nice area to work in."

ANTONOVICH AND TOUDIC RECOMMEND:

Viewing contemporary pieces of art at Hip Galerie d'Art on Rue Saint-Roch.

Having a drink and a bite at Le Comptoir Général.

Shopping at Montmartre boutiques Paperdolls and Così Loti for clothes and accessories.



Facing page. Sofia Antonovich, Pierre-Yves Toudic and two-year-old Victor in the garden of their Montreuil apartment.

This page, clockwise from top left.

Sofia's dressing table; the living room of the garden apartment; painted furniture; a collection of vases; a china cabinet filled with tableware; the couple's bird decals above a small cabinet; cushions on the living-room sofa.



"It really is like the pictures and the postcards... It's where the tourists meet the neighbourhood locals..."





Nicolas Liesnard

Musician

SOMEWHERE INSIDE MUSICIAN

Nicolas Liesnard's parents' Paris home, there's a photo of him, aged 5, playing a tennis racket like a guitar. He's since learned to play the real thing, but it's his talent on the piano that's become his baguette and butter.

After learning a piece called *D'un Wigwam*, which the 38-year-old describes as a "kind of Native American march", his love for American roots music began. It progressed to "Michael Jackson in the early '80s when *Thriller* came out," says Liesnard. "After that, my older cousins introduced me to big bands like Earth, Wind and Fire, Shalamar and Kool & the Gang."

But it wasn't until he saw B.B. King perform live in 1992 that the idea of playing music professionally started to fester. Two decades on, Liesnard, who has lived in Paris for 20 years, tours in singer Hugh Coltman's band.

"We share many similar influences," he says of Coltman. "He's opened my

ears to many artists and helped me discover the folk-song repertoire."

When he's not on the road with Coltman or one of the other artists he's played alongside, Liesnard spends his days composing and producing music for Plaît-il, a production company he and a fellow musician friend launched a year and a half ago.

"We wanted to make original music for videos or documentaries and series," he says. "Since the [Global Financial] Crisis, music for movies is one of the last domains where you can make money."

After a long day at his studio in Bagnole, a suburb just outside the 12th arrondissement, Liesnard often goes to work again - in the kitchen of his Montmartre flat. The food-loving Frenchman takes pleasure in cooking and can whip up the most delicious panna cotta with raspberry gelée.

But heating up stoves and tickling the ivories are not his only pastimes; Liesnard often explores the halls of the

Musée d'Art Moderne, and recently took his mum to see the Keith Haring show.

"Like most big cities, you can find anything from around the world when it comes to restaurants, cultural events and people in Paris," he says. "Artists have made it their haven for centuries; it's a crossroad for so many cultures."

LIESNARD RECOMMENDS:

A visit to Le Centre Pompidou, the renowned arts and cultural complex, followed by a glass of wine at nearby La Fusée bar.

Sipping a rum cocktail and dancing to Afro-Brazilian-funk music at L'embuscade in Pigalle.

Catching a performance at New Morning, where the greatest jazz, blues and world-music artists have played for the last 35 years.



"Like most big cities, you can find anything from around the world when it comes to restaurants, cultural events and people."



Facing page. Nicolas Liesnard at one of three pianos in his apartment.

This page, clockwise from top left. A piece of original music by Liesnard; the fridge is decorated with concert stickers; lanyards from gigs at which Liesnard has played; CDs and books in the living room of his Montmartre home; music momentos; Liesnard at his keyboard, accompanied by his cat Tahiti.





Anne-Cécile Comar

Architect

SHE'S NO OLD woman, but Anne-Cécile Comar could erect a house from, and possibly live in, her shoe collection, which features about 20 pairs of Tila March and 40 other pairs of heels, boots and flats.

Thankfully, the well-dressed professional (sample outfit: Prada, Vanessa Bruno, H&M and, of course, March, the popular French accessories brand) has chosen other materials from which to build her portfolio as partner at the architecture firm Atelier du Pont, which she helped launch in 2007 and now has 25 employees.

Comar's creations include Médiathèque library in Rennes, now an elite cultural centre, and the remodelling of a once-concrete courthouse in Bobigny into a predominantly glass-walled structure. Currently, she is in the process of turning a 1960s' parking garage in the Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt into a shopping and sports facility and working on two new housing developments slated for completion in 2014.

"We are a modern firm," boasts Comar, 49, who strives for renewal and contemporary design in a city she feels is a bit stuck in time. "Paris is too much like a museum. People are very attached to the past. But it has to be dynamic and to change. There should be a dialogue between contemporary and ancient architecture, where each time period is represented."

Her two-storeyed house is in the "touristy Latin Quarter", where the centuries-old Sorbonne and Notre Dame just across the river draw oohs and ahhs for their architecture is a prime example of the contrast she aims to create. The mother of three designed her home with her husband (also an architect) as an urban oasis with a terrace big enough to hold her weekly workout session with a trainer and four girlfriends.

"Every Saturday, our coach comes and trains us in pilates and other exercises. It's very hard because we talk

a lot, so he gets mad," says Comar with a laugh. Still, it's part of her routine, which also sees her taking advantage of the city's many native offerings, including buying organic legumes at Place Monge, a Sunday produce market in the 5th arrondissement.

"I love my home in Paris," she insists. "I don't have to leave for anything and I will never leave for anything."

COMAR RECOMMENDS:

A trip to Maison Grégoire boulangerie for traditional baguettes or fougasse with olives from Provence.

A visit to the Palais de Tokyo museum for playful, contemporary art that's great for kids.

An aperitif at Très Honoré, the multi-roomed restaurant and salon lined with mirrored murals.



"I love my home in Paris. I don't have to leave for anything and I will never leave for anything."

Facing page. Anne-Cécile Comar in her Paris office.

This page, clockwise from top left. A meeting room at Atelier du Pont, Comar's architecture firm; the exterior of the office in the 12th arrondissement; Comar at work with staff; red stairs lead up to the second level of the building; architectural models and samples of building materials and finishes.



Places



Paris Insider's Guide

GALLERIES & SHOPS

Louis Vuitton Cabinet d'Écriture:

If you set foot in only one LV store in your lifetime, let it be this one on Saint-Germain-des-Prés. It is an ode to all things writing, from ballpoint pen collections and D. H. Lawrence books to an ink bar featuring 12 different colours and decades-old LV trunks that belonged to Gaston-Louis Vuitton (the grandson of the great Louis).
louisvuitton.fr

Merci: Peruse racks of frocks from Isabel Marant, spritz yourself with oils from Aesop and bling up in jewels from Pascale Monvoisin at this multi-levelled, open-air shop opened by Bonpoint founder Marie-Francois Cohen.
merci-merci.com

Polka Galerie: This photography-focused gallery, opened by brother and sister Edouard Genestar and Adélie de Ipanema in 2007, displays French and international artists whose work is both provocative and challenging.
polkagalerie.com

Shine: Make a beeline for this boutique in the Haute Marais, where clothing from Alexander Wang, 'Theyskins' Theory and many others is arranged by colour and Saucony sneakers are jazzed up with studs, for cutting-edge but not cookie-cutter fashion.
shineparis.com

Les Fees: Homebodies will adore this interiors shop for its medieval-meets-modern skull goblets, sushi-shaped candles and plush throw pillows.

Homies: Just blocks away from the touristy Moulin Rouge at the top of trendy Rue Houdon in Montmartre, sits this miniature, modest and reasonably priced shop featuring sparkly clogs, trompe l'oeil tops and patterned Parisian scarves.

EAT & DRINK

Le Bistro Le Verre Volé: Reserve ahead to dine at this small, no-frills spot serving smoked mackerel over rocket and other of-the-moment bistro dishes. Bottles upon bottles of French wine line the space but, even if you ask for vin maison, you'll be satisfied.
leverrevole.fr

Ten Belles: Michael Jackson plays at 11.00am and expats and locals converse in Fren-lish while sipping the freshly brewed filter coffee of the day (no froth, no milk - always black) at this cool, bi-level coffee shop.
tenbelles.com

Lulu la Nantaise: Go crêpes crazy at this crêperie that opened in March and offers savoury options like goat cheese with mushroom, emmental and sausage, or sweet 'n' simple like lemon and sugar. The on-tap traditional French aperitif Ricard makes for the perfect liquid companion.

Chez Janou: Those looking for movie-time Paris will find it at this popular restaurant devoted to the cinema. The interior is done in such a way that whether or not the old-time cinema posters touting the film *Marius* by Marcel Pagnol are authentic doesn't

matter. Besides, you're there for the moules on the half-shell, skinny salted frites and a certain 'je ne sais quoi' that oozes from the kitchen to the tables on the terrace.

chezjanou.com

PLACES

Electric: What do you call a penthouse space where celebrities like Daft Punk come for a photo shoot and Parisian locals arrive en masse for a boozy party brunch? Electric, alright. This new, multi-use destination designed by uber-hip interior architect Mathieu Lehanneur features LED lights, customisable video projections and electrical wires fashioned to look like limbs of trees.

electric-paris.com

Musée de l'Orangerie: The Louvre is lovely, yes. But if you want to get lost in the lily pads of France's most famed impressionist, Claude Monet, head to the equally divine Musée de l'Orangerie, the space the artist created to house eight of his Nymphéas masterpieces.

musee-orangerie.fr

Canal Saint-Martin: If you feel like a part of a movie scene while sitting or strolling by the Seine, doing so along the 'The Canal' (from rue de Temple at Quai de Valmy up toward Gare du Nord) as it's known to locals, will leave you feeling part of a YouTube clip. It's the 'now' opposed to the 'then' of leisure-time Paris.

Tour de Montparnasse: While everyone else is flocking to Paris' Eiffel Tower, head up to the 56th floor of the city's self-declared only skyscraper instead. The panoramic platform offers a sensational 360-degree overlook of Paris' 20 arrondissements and beyond.
tourmontparnasse56.com

Bois de Boulogne: As the second largest park in Paris, this massive outdoor commons in the 16th arrondissement offers a host of opportunities to be one with nature. Our suggestion? Lie a blanket on the grass nearby Chalet des Iles restaurant, rent a little boat for a row around the island, then end up on the terrace of Chalet at sunset for a sip of rosé. 🍷
chalet-des-iles.com

*Urbis travelled to Paris from London via Eurostar, which operates 18 return trips daily, starting at €69. Accommodation at Paris' Hotel Saint Louis Bastille was provided by hostelbookers.com



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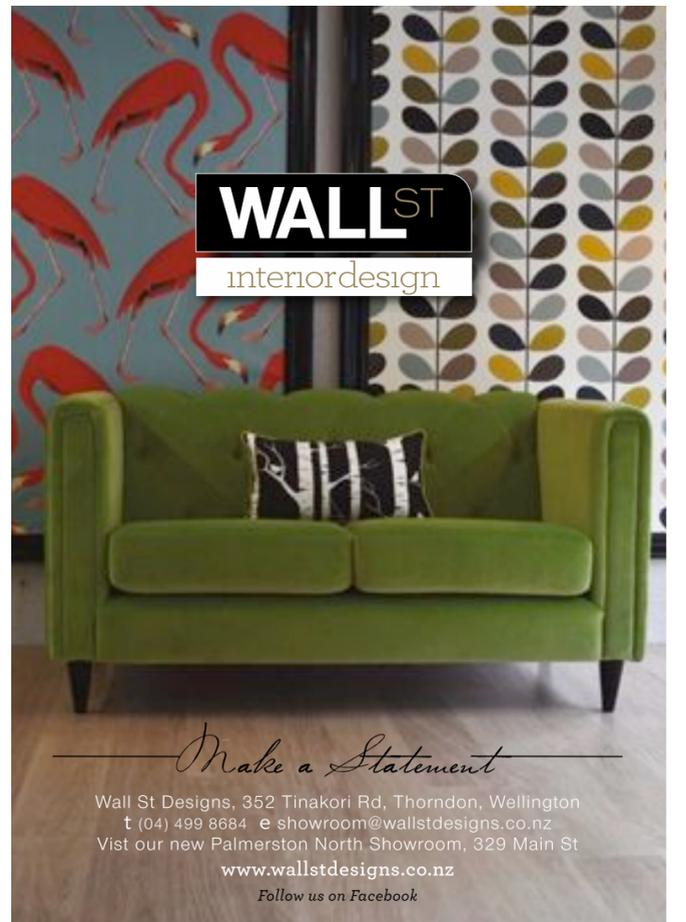


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