

WINTER

25 WAYS TO ENJOY
PARIS IN WINTER

THE BEST HOT CHOCOLATE

7 TIMELESS FASHION LOOKS

IS THERE A LAKE UNDER
THE PALAIS GARNIER?

ICE SKATING IN PARIS

TOP BEAUTY PRODUCTS FOR
A WINTER GLOW

MAKING THE MOST OF
THE SHOPPING SALES

FREE
SAMPLE
EDITION

reBonjour

From BONJOUR PARIS, The Insider Guide

\$14.99

FROM THE EDITOR

Teeth-chattering cold, runny noses, overcast skies. The sun, barely visible during the day, sets in the middle of the afternoon. Blasts of arctic air sweep down the Seine. The leafless trees appear like ghostly silhouettes against the sky.

Let's face it: winter doesn't usually inspire rapturous poems. Wrapped in wool blankets and hunched over my teapot, I usually find myself daydreaming of tropical climes, far from the freezing, lightless latitudes.

But what if winter isn't a miserable season to be endured, but a moment to embrace indoor pursuits and the life of the mind? In recent years, I've tried to lean in—slowing down the pace, reading great novels, catching up on TV series (often with a candle burning), reflecting (instead of hibernating), and literally “wintering.” I've punctuated this activity with bracing walks through Parc Montsouris and nearby forests like Fontainebleau, followed by warming bistro meals with friends. I've come to love the seasonality that makes the subsequent flower-filled Paris spring positively magical.

In fact, winter could be the best time to explore Paris. Not only do visitors find fewer crowds and cheaper prices, but it's also a city that's made for indoor exploration. A culture capital, Paris is packed with museums and monuments. The restaurants and pastry shops are places of pilgrimage for foodies flocking from all over the planet, and the music scene is a thrilling showcase of styles and genres.

Our second issue of reBonjour is a celebration of winter, the oft-maligned season. We take an artistic tour of how the Belle Époque artists depicted Paris in the snow, go underneath the Palais Garnier, and explore the history of the city's famous covered passageways, the precursor to the modern shopping mall. From ice skating and the best hot chocolate, to skincare, shopping tips and top Christmas markets, we've curated this guide to provide a bounty of seasonal inspiration.

Vive l'hiver!



BONJOUR PARIS EDITOR

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The Insider's Guide Online since 1995

reBonjour

Food & Drink

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FRANCE MEDIA LTD, RUNWAY EAST, KINGS COURT, PARSONAGE LANE, BATH, BA1 1ER, UK
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Where to enjoy the holidays with a *vin chaud*



25 WAYS TO ENJOY PARIS IN WINTER

BY ELLEN A



© Ellen A

“Winter was come indeed bringing with it those pleasures of which the summer dreamer knows nothing...” Proust

Paris in January, February, March... the chilled and quiet months that make it possible to slip back easily into the 19th century: Proust's world of cozy interiors, the Garnier Opera House, and delectable hearty meals.

In addition to some of the obvious pleasures of less-trammeled museum corridors, we can warm up with cognac in the plush corners of the grand hotel bars. There are teatimes, cooking classes, *les soldes*, and the music halls and restaurants of rue de la Gaîté.

Why go to Paris in the coldest months? Because it's affordable, romantic, uncrowded, and full of extraordinary surprises both indoors and outside.

Here are 25 ways to make the most of a winter trip



© Ellen A

1. Catch the lowest airfares

January through early March post some of the lowest airfares from North American cities and elsewhere. French Bee has fares hovering around \$800 roundtrip from Los Angeles, San Francisco or Newark to Paris Orly airport.

2. Choose from a greater range of hotels and apartments

To be fair, staying in Paris is never cheap, but many hotels and Airbnbs will be available at a reasonable rate, particularly for longer stays.

With an apartment, you can bring pastries, cheeses, pâté, and even whole meals from a *traiteur* back to your place to enjoy. And it's a rule that if you make the coffee, your partner goes out to get croissants in the morning!

Choose a hotel instead if you'd like assistance with reservations, transport, and directions around town. Even two-star hotels can be quite nice, but they may not have an elevator, room service, or strong wifi. Most three- and four-star hotels will have many amenities and staff who speak English. Mid-range prices per night in winter will be about \$250 to \$400/night for a double.



3. Stay in the center of the city

A few classic hotels to consider:

Hotel Caron de Beaumarchais (3 star) romantic French period décor in a great Marais location.

Hotel Bachaumont (4 star) in the trendy 2nd arrondissement.

Or any of these well-reviewed places in the Latin Quarter:

Hotel Clément (2 star), **Hotel de la Ville (4 star)**, **Grand**

Hotels des Balcons (2 star), **Hotel de la Ville (4 star)**.

For a splurge, there are also luxury hotels like the **celebrity-secret Hotel San Regis** near the Champs-

Elysées, or **Le Narcisse** (restaurant, pool and sauna) in the chic 7th arrondissement.



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*p.s. Between this page and the next one
you're missing out on a myriad of tips and
activities to make the most of Paris in
winter, plus how the French celebrate
Christmas*



YOUR EVERYTHING GUIDE TO

Hot Chocolate in Paris

BY POPPY PEARCE



You’ve probably seen the viral videos: thick, velvety hot chocolate being poured over a cloud of whipped cream, the glossy liquid slowly swallowing it whole. The decadence alone is enough to stop you mid-scroll. French *chocolat chaud* is not your average hot cocoa. It’s richer, denser, and less sweet, yet infinitely more indulgent than its British or American counterparts. Forget powders and sachets; this is often pure melted chocolate, sipped rather than gulped. It coats your mouth in chocolatey bliss and is simply the perfect drink for this time of year.

Decoding the Menu

Chocolat chaud à l’ancienne— literally “old-fashioned hot chocolate.” This traditional French version is thick and rich, made by melting high-quality dark chocolate (often 70% or higher cocoa content) with milk or cream. The result is deeply intense and far less sweet than the versions you might know, allowing the flavor of the cocoa to shine.

Chocolat Viennois – the same decadent drink, but crowned with a generous swirl of *chantilly* cream: pillowy, whipped, and luxurious.

As a Brit, I was used to the watery type of hot chocolate made with Cadbury's Instant Hot Chocolate. But when I finally tried the viral *Chocolat Viennois*, everything changed. It was exactly what I'd hoped for – luxurious, rich, and comforting. Personally, I lean toward darker chocolate, so some of the sweeter, cream-topped versions can be a little much for me. But still, there's something undeniably irresistible about that first spoonful. The warmth, the texture, the slow melt of chocolate meeting cream. Perfection.



The Classics: Parisian Institutions

The following four are among the most famous – and most photographed – spots for *chocolat chaud* in Paris. The spots that have definitely appeared on your Instagram. Each is a Parisian institution, steeped in history and old-world charm. The price tag reflects the setting, but you're paying as much for the ambience as for the chocolate itself...

Carette

Chocolat Carette with Chantilly cream – €13.50

Served in elegant surroundings on Place des Vosges or Trocadéro, Carette's *chocolat chaud* is indulgent yet balanced. The thick cream slowly melts into the chocolate, creating that perfect Parisian moment of luxury.



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We share all the best spots for a hot chocolate in Paris plus a deeper dive into an iconic Parisian tea room, and we look at how Belle Époque artists depicted Paris under snow...



© Jonathan Mabey / Unsplash

7 TIMELESS WINTER LOOKS FOR PARIS

BY ANNE MCCARTHY



©Dan Gold / Unsplash

A chill is in the air in Paris, which means cozy, chic fashions are filling the streets. Among many things, what the French do well is timeless fashion – looks that are style-driven, not trend-driven. Someone like Josephine Baker, the Missouri-born French artist and icon who entered the Panthéon in 2021, embodied this so well with her stunning, over-the-top dresses, which would be just as stylish today as they were in the 1920s in Paris.

Here are seven timeless winter looks to cultivate when you're roaming the streets of Paris this winter season or sipping on a *café au lait* at the local café, or simply curling up at home with a good book. After all, who better to dress up for than yourself? When in Paris, do as the French do: Look good, and make it look effortless. You can achieve that by stocking your closet with these looks.

A Cozy Sweater Dress

A cozy sweater dress is my go-to winter favorite because it's not occasion-specific. You can wear a sweater dress to your Zoo work meeting with colleagues or throw it on for a date night at a trendy restaurant in the arrondissement. However, whenever you wear it, the sweater dress look distinguishes your own by selecting your



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For those who are eager to try a stretchy sweater dress affords lots of room for the ever-growing bun in the oven and provides cozy comfort for the final months.

p.s. Between this page and the next one you're missing out on a myriad of tips and activities to make the most of Paris in winter, plus how the French celebrate Christmas



© David Henry / Pexels

11 MUST-SEE COVERED PASSAGES

BY JILL AMARI



Since 1798, covered passages have become a staple of Paris's architecture. Most were built in the early 1800s, so by the time the Second Empire (1852–1870) was in place, the city boasted about 150 passages and galleries. Originally built as industrial hubs, covered passages quickly became trendy places to walk around, meet up with other locals, and shop. Well-lit and architecturally appealing, these passages provided shelter from bad weather and numerous shopping and entertainment options.

Unfortunately, many passages were demolished or closed down during the Second Empire, when Baron Haussmann nearly rebuilt

Paris from scratch and *grands magasins* popped up near Opéra and other spots. Since then, other passages have been privatized, while new passages, though few and far between, appeared in the 1900s and early 2000s.

Today, about 25 covered passages remain open to the public. The most well-known of these passages hold boutiques, art or jewelry studios, restaurants, bookshops, hair salons, and even hotels and apartments. Eleven covered passages truly stand out, whether for historical, cultural, or aesthetic reasons.



1. Galerie Véro-Dodat (1st arrt.)

Built in 1826, Galerie Véro-Dodat is known for its high-end boutiques and beauty parlors. Along this short passageway, you can find a Louboutin store, specialized boutiques, and an organic hair salon which recycles all the hair they cut. This gallery is a calm and quiet place to escape the bustle of the surrounding neighborhood, which is often filled with tourists as it's near the Louvre, Palais Royal, Bourse du Commerce, and Les Halles. Surprisingly, Véro-Dodat remains one of Paris's best-hidden galleries, despite its central location.



2. Galerie Colbert (1st and 2nd arr.)

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Who doesn't love a covered passageway in Paris? These shopping arcades have some of the best shops and restaurants you'll find!



© Freepik

WINTER SKIN SOS À LA FRANÇAISE

BY ELIZABETH CUMMINGS



© Africa Images

Who doesn't suffer from dry skin in winter? Whether it's your first visit to France or your fiftieth, a stop at the local *pharmacie* is always worth it to discover the latest in French skincare. From head to toe, here are a few *très français* essentials to keep your skin supple and happy all winter long.

Face

Product: Nutritic Intense Riche

Brand: La Roche-Posay



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*You're missing out on our selection of the
best products you can pick up at the
pharmacy while in Paris, and follow it with
a look at the history of hammams in the
city*



© Csondy / Getty Images Signature

STRATEGICALLY SHOPPING THE WINTER SALES

BY KAREN FAWCETT

In France the word *soldes* is not just marketing, it is a legal term. The state sets two official sale periods a year and lays down strict rules for them. The winter sales generally begin in early January and the summer sales in late June, and in most of France each *soldes* period now lasts four weeks. Outside those dates shops are free to run other promotions and private sales whenever they like, but they cannot label those offers *soldes*.

What many people do not know is that for the official *soldes*, items legally must already have been in the shop's stock, and paid for, for at least a month before the sales begin. Shops are not allowed to restock those lines specially for the *soldes* or quietly top them up once the discounts start. That is why it pays to do a little reconnaissance in late December. You can prowl the rails, try things on, and decide what you are going to pounce on once the prices drop. If you are a loyal client or even especially nice, the salesperson might put the items aside for you, but don't tell...



© Melle Bé / Flickr

If you are craving a specific item, buy it as soon as you can when the sale begins or, most likely, it will not be there when you mosey into the store two weeks later, especially since shops are not supposed to restock those sale items once they are gone. You can be more casual if it is not a must-have piece and you are not playing Russian roulette.



Make a list of what you actually need and zero in on those pieces first. Do not get distracted by a cooler you see or that perfect coat in your size. You'll go back to the store the next time you circle back.

In winter, it can be worth the effort by warmth as much as by neighborhood. Save a brighter, drier day for wandering the Marais, Saint-Germain or Canal Saint-Martin for smaller labels and boutiques.

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Dress for battle. Outside it may be icy, inside the department

stores it will be much warmer. Wear warm layers you can peel off easily, and a good top you can try things over without needing to strip in the changing room. Any fine pieces you see you can walk and stand in all day are non-negotiable.

Want to make savings? We look at all the best tips for making the most of your money in the winter sales 💰

A photograph of a narrow, snow-covered street in Paris. The street is lined with historic buildings, some with snow on their roofs and walls. In the background, the large, white dome of the Sacré-Cœur Basilica is visible against a hazy sky. Several people are walking on the street, some carrying umbrellas. A car is parked on the right side of the street. The overall atmosphere is quiet and wintry.

“Winter is not a season, it's a celebration.”

— Anamika Mishra



© Shutterstock

7 OF THE BEST CHRISTMAS MARKETS IN PARIS

BY JOY ANDERSON



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Although the tradition of Christmas, or Advent, Markets dates back to medieval times in places such as Germany and Alsace, in Paris, Christmas markets only started appearing in the mid-1990s, picking up more steam after the turn of the millennium. Today there are *Marchés de Noël* in almost every arrondissement of the city and each season it seems like a new one more is added to the list. So, in the spirit of Christmas, we say, “The more the merrier!”

From classics to one that's new to 2025, here are our favorites!

BONJOUR PARIS CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE



Here are 12 of our favorite picks for gifting this year...

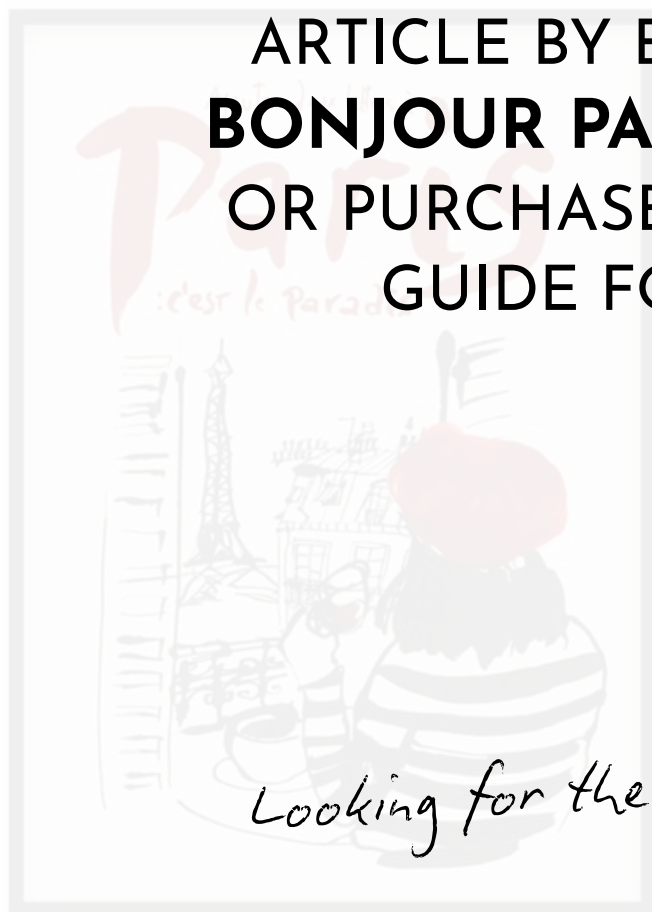


A coffee-table stroll
through Paris
\$30



Iconic foldable
Parisian tote from
Longchamp
\$155

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Personalized zinc
roof tile keyrings
\$25

Chic Parisian beret

Looking for the perfect gift? We've got you covered

Deserio
\$26

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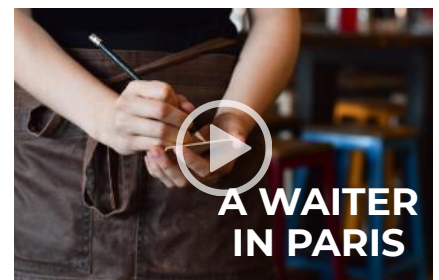
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