



The charm of Paris - as with so many cities - is its hidden spots and unknown treasures.

When it comes to discovering a city, the best part is gradually feeling more like a local: discovering new places and compiling your own list of favourites.

But of course, it doesn't hurt to have a head start - and insider recommendations are the best way to get off on the right foot! So, we'd like to share our own list of favourite spots in Paris, so you can start on a list of your own, or add to one that's already several pages long... ;)

Allons-y !



Judy, our Fondatrice, is a foodie, fashionista, people-watcher and an insatiably curious Francophile.

It's hard to get a list from her because she rarely remembers places by their names and addresses... Rather, she'll take you around the streets of Paris via Google maps (preferably with a glass of bubbles) and stroll down all her favourite streets with more than a couple wrong turns - which is exactly how we got this list. Here are a few of the diverse places you may find her.

Anytime day or night

[Café Charlot](#) - for *petit déj* ou *une verre*. The coffee isn't great and the food isn't gourmet, but Judy loves this place because of the great vibe it has; perfect for just hanging out. Located in [Le Haut Marais](#), it buzzes all day with locals - French and expats. You're sure to feel local too. And almost around the corner is [Merci](#) which is perfect all day too; for breakfast in the used book cafe, lunch downstairs overlooking the garden courtyard, next door in the *ciné café* or shopping before or after all of these. Phew!

Brunch and lunch

How is this for diversity? - [Café Pinson](#) established in 2013 and [Drouant](#) 1880 and both are on her list for lunch and brunch, which is growing in popularity with the French!

Pinson is also in the 4ème near le Café Charlot. It's the cosy ambiance she is drawn to here, as well as the food, which is all made in house: organic, gluten free raw, and even vegan - yes in Paris!

Drouant, on the other hand, is a three star Antoine Westerman historic restaurant on rue Gaillon in the 2eme. Since [1914](#) Drouant has welcomed *les jurés du [prix Goncourt](#)* and since [1926](#) those of [prix Renaudot](#). Judy loves Drouant for Brunch or lunch - opt for the terrace in summer.

Seafood

And now that you are on rue Gaillon just cross the road for one of Judy's two seafood favourites. Both of these are minuscule!

[L'Ecaille de la Fontaine](#) in the 2ème is more elegant upstairs (for dinner) but wonderful downstairs sitting next to the oyster shucker (for lunch). Over in the 6ème she loves [Huîtrerie Régis](#): it only has 14 seats plus the terrace (which Judy loves when the weather permits). There are other wonderful places to eat seafood in Paris but Judy loves the scale of these places.

Queueing

Queueing is common at le boulangerie, fromagerie et al and you'll find it at Yves Camborde's [Le Comptoir](#) in the 6ème. Following the 'small' theme, what was a neo-bistro and now is classique - if you like wonderful food and don't mind tight confines. You'll often find Judy at the top of the queue around noon sun worshipping in winter and under the umbrella for shade in summer. She says being pleasant to the queue *maitrise* can be challenging but is worthwhile ;)

Lunch or Dinner

New and old Bistros - the new are the neo-bistros - and the innovative young chefs who are passionate about the provenance of every item they buy and cook. Don't miss [Spring](#) and [Racines 2](#) in the 2ème, [Bones](#), [le 6 Paul Bert](#) and also les [Déserteurs](#) in the 11ème. Then there are the 'old' meaning the traditional - Judy's favourites are [Bistrot Paul Bert](#) in the 11ème and [Le Baratin](#) in the 20ème near le Parc Belleville.

Cocktails

Judy regularly has martinis with Oscar (Wilde, that is) in the sexy bar at [l'Hotel](#) in the 6ème, and also chatting and sipping champagne surrounded by candles, elegance and piano music in [Bar 228](#) at the five star hotel le Meurice in the 1ère.



Our Editor-at-Large, Hannah, is a Melburnian through and through - which means she loves nothing more than a great cup of coffee. So whenever she goes to a city, she tends to tour the sights via the best coffee. While the long version of this list is incredibly extensive, her top five are:

[Coutume Café](#), 7th - the staff here are lovely, the coffee is excellent and they even have siphoned coffee and iced lattes. It's also a great place to get some work done, kick back with a book or have a delicious brunch.

[Holybelly](#), 10th - busy during brunch and lunch hours (as any good café should be) but they make a fantastic coffee here. It's also down the road from [Tuck Shop](#), which is a fab place for lunch too.

[Téléscope](#), 1st - a gem tucked away in the 1st, it's the perfect escape from the crowds near the Louvre and Rivoli. And it's right near some of Judy's shopping recommendations below - ideal for taking a break to refuel between vintage Chanel purchases...

[The Broken Arm](#), 3rd - this place is light, airy, quiet and has a lovely relaxed atmosphere. They serve a deliciously fragrant café filtré, and an excellent iced latte for warmer days. Check out the très bobo adjoining boutique with choice pieces from Carven, Kenzo, Cédric Charlier, Nike, 3.1 Philip Lim and more...

[Fondation](#), 3rd - this tiny hole-in-the-wall café isn't far from The Broken Arm, and has all the usual hip café fare: granola, banana bread, granola on toast...



Did Judy tell you that she loves to walk? Or to *flâner* to be precise... This is her usual shopping methodology too, which has been proven to uncover extraordinary French pieces over the years: hats, brooches, cashmere wraps, silk scarves, shoes, boots and quite a vintage wardrobe. In summer however it's often pale linens; stylish with that oh so casual French touch.

There are too many places to name individually, so she's tempted us with her favourite streets. Allow yourself time and just wander and you too will find favourites! Some of the streets Judy loves to wander (often with the intention of shopping): [rue Charlot](#), [rue du Cherche-Midi](#) and [rue de Grenelle Avenue Montaigne](#) for *les grands marques*. [Lanvin](#) on [rue Saint Honoré](#) and [Christian Lacroix](#) at [Place Saint-Sulpice](#).

Just make sure that you don't miss the true vintage boutiques in Paris: [Les Trois Marchés de Catherine B](#) on [rue Guissard](#) in the 6ème, as well as [Gabrielle Geppert](#) and [Didier Ludot](#) at the [Palais Royale](#). Then there's the extraordinary [La Petite Robe Noire](#), *bien sûr*, where you can meet the fabulous, beautiful and ever so stylish Dominique who is probably one of Paris's chicest shop assistants.

Judy's list of 'vintage' boutiques also ranges to top end '*Depots-vente*' - and she's not inclined to just make a list because she says it's much better for you to discover your own extraordinary gems! Look for the side streets et *les ruelles* like [Passage de la Petite Boucherie](#) and [rue de l'Echaudé](#) off [rue de Bourbon le Chateau](#) and [rue Jacob](#), 6ème and [rue Saint-Roch](#) and [rue Saint-Honoré](#) in the 1ère.

Of course let's not forget the two historic department stores: [Le Bon Marché](#) and [Printemps](#).

And Judy will break her rule to tell you about [Merci](#) in [Le Haut-Marais](#) at 111 Blvd Beaumarchais. Founded in 2009 by founders of Bonpoint children's clothing, Bernard and Marie-France Cohen, the pair realised that Paris lacked a place that brought together the best in fashion, design, household goods, and friendly eating options. The founders decided that the proceeds of this investment would serve to fund an endowment to pay for educational projects and development in south-west Madagascar. It was and is their way of saying 'thank you' for the life they've enjoyed.



There are the big ones - the [Louvre](#), [Musée d'Orsay](#), [Centre Pompidou](#) - but some of the best collections (and not to mention charm) are certainly found in the smaller *musées de Paris*. In fact, we love them so much, we even run a regular column on the topic: 'Paris museums off the beaten track'. MyFrenchLife™ correspondent Gemma King is our go-to on all things Museum-related, and her favourites include:

[Musée de la Vie Romantique](#) - As the name suggests, the [museum's focus](#) on Romanticism, and features a range of manuscripts, sheet music, paintings and personal artefacts.

[Musée Gustave Moreau](#) - Gemma associates her visit to the Moreau museum with a feeling of discovery. There is something so private and secretive about the unassuming little museum, tucked away in a small residential street. Even on a Saturday afternoon, she can't remember many people being there at all: no street noise, no queue for tickets, no bustling crowd elbowing for space...

[Musée Carnavalet](#) - When it comes to museums, Paris has a charm all of its own. And the Musée [Carnavalet](#), established in 1880 in the stately Hôtel Carnavalet, is perhaps the most 'Parisian' of Paris museums. With a vast collection of artworks, furniture and historical artefacts, the Carnavalet tells the story of the French capital, from its Roman origins as the town of [Lutèce](#), right up to the twentieth century.



Sometimes holidays aren't all play and no work - *des temps en temps* we need to catch up on a few emails, or maybe upload some happy snaps to Facebook (just to make everyone jealous). Hannah's favourite places to work in Paris are...

[L'AntiCafé](#) - this concept is so brilliant we can't believe it doesn't already exist everywhere! You pay for the time you spend at the café, and wifi plus all the food and drink you can possibly have are free. Our favourite is the [rue de Richelieu café](#) but there's also one in [Beaubourg](#).

[NUMA](#) - this coworking space in the 2nd has space on the ground floor for walk-in workers, and it's free so long as there's a space for you! It's a great place to attend events and meet those involved with the startup community in France. Although there's a café downstairs, try the nearby bar-cum-café [Lockwood](#) for a well-deserved coffee break, and head to [Frenchie-to-go](#) for lunch - both are just a stone's throw away. After work, head to [Frenchie bar-à-vins!](#) ;)

Cafés: if you're just working for an hour or two, there are plenty of fantastic cafés with wifi around the city. Coutume, Holybelly and Tuckshop all have wifi, as well as [Loustic](#) in the 3rd. Most listings on [Foursquare](#) (either in comments or the official details) tell you if the café has wifi or not.

It's best not to try this around lunchtime or on weekends though - you might find the waitstaff get a bit sick of you lolling around on a laptop with just one other coffee when there is a line out the door. Go in the morning or afternoon though, and they'll be very happy to see you.