

# IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE FRENCH CULTURE





# SALUT

*Did you know that more than 70 million people visit France every year?*

*That's more than the country's population!*





# INTERESTING FACTS

*France is the world's number one travel destination, which is no wonder since it has many amazing things to offer. Taking into account their history, traditions, cuisine, picturesque villages, the language, architecture, wines, art... you simply wouldn't know where to turn to first.*

If you asked any seasoned traveler for advice, they would probably recommend a quaint Patisserie in which you could enjoy light conversation with the locals, as well as a light dessert...like a macaron!

Located in Western Europe, France is home to 66 million people. You probably already know that it encompasses many different landscapes: from port cities, villages and medieval castles, to beautiful mountains and Mediterranean beaches. France seems to have it all.

We don't even need to mention that Paris is known worldwide for couture fashion, art museums and incredible monuments, including Louvre and the Eiffel Tower. France actually has 37 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Don't even get us started on their sophisticated cuisine and wine...which many consider to be the best in the world.

# PEOPLE

*French people enjoy a high standard of living, with excellent education, health care, life expectancy and civil liberties. Figures, since France is recognized as the cradle of liberty and equality, as well as the center of exquisite cuisine and one of the best wine producers in the world.*

The French take immense pride in their country and embrace style and sophistication. France is a country of romance and passion, and even though they're often described as passionate lovers, the French have strong family values.

It's true that families have few children, but parents take their roles as guardians very seriously. In fact, the French government awards the parents who have managed to raise several children "with dignity".

They are mainly Catholics, and value formality highly. Some foreigners interpret this as being rude, but the French are extremely proud of their country and language...as they should be.

However, this means that tapping someone on the shoulder saying "Where's the Louvre?" in English, probably won't be as welcome as in some other parts of the world. In most cities, you will probably manage to get by speaking English.

Still, if you don't at least start the conversation by "Bonjour Monsieur, parlez-vous anglais?", you'll probably get the chance to witness that infamous French "rudeness".

English may be the international language, but it is far from being the only language, and nobody agrees with this fact more than the French.



# THE LANGUAGE

French language descended from the spoken Latin language of the Roman Empire, like Spanish and Italian. However, you might say that it is the “least Latin” of all romance languages, since it evolved from the spoken Latin in Gaul, and has been influenced by other languages, such as Celtic and Frankish language. Unlike the Spanish and Italian language, it has lost its original Latin rhythm, and its accent is truly unique, compared to other romance languages.

It is also the second most widespread language worldwide, and is the native language in more than 2 dozen countries across 5 continents.

French is also the official language of the International Olympic Committee, the United Nations and the International Red Cross.

*“I have been learning French with Amelie for three months now, in preparation for a holiday in France. I’ve loved my French classes every week. Amelie makes me feel relaxed as soon as I walk through the door and we chat away while French simply sinks in. Her lessons are appropriate for me, adjusted to my level of knowledge, but challenging at the same time. She is a bright, happy and funny teacher, and I love our classes and the feeling that my French is steadily improving, week after week.”*

*Dr. Caetlin Jopson, Woolloowin*

*The language in Paris remains quite formal, but the South of France is much more laid back. Some words and phrases to get you started...*

## ENGLISH

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## FRENCH

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## PRONUNCIATION

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Yes/No

Oui/Non

wee/nong

Yes, please/No, thank you

Oui, s'il vous plaît/Non, merci

wee, seel voo play/nong, mair-see

Please

S'il vous plaît

seel voo play

Thank you

Merci (madame/monsieur)

mair-see (mah-dahm/mer-syer)

You're welcome

Il n'y a pas de quoi

eel nyah pah der kwah

Here is/are

Voici...

vwah-see

Hello/Good morning/afternoon

Bonjour, (madame/monsieur)

bong-zhoor, (mah-dahm/mer-syer)

Hello/Good evening

Bonsoir (madame/monsieur)

bong-swahr, (mah-dahm/mer-syer)

Goodbye

Au revoir

oh rer-vwahr

How are you?

Comment allez-vous?

kommahng tahlay voo

# HISTORY

*Throughout its long history, France has been the home of many influential thinkers, artists and scientists.*

*Here is a short overview of some significant events throughout French history.*

## **58-51 B.C.**

Roman emperor Julius Caesar conquers Gaul, which is now France.

## **486-511 A.D.**

A tribe called the Franks rules the region. The land is named for them.

## **1429**

Joan of Arc leads French troops against the English at Orléans, ending a siege by the British during the Hundred Years' War between France and England.

## **1643-1715**

Louis XIV, the Sun King, reigns longer than any French ruler. In this era, France gains power throughout Europe.

## **1789**

On July 14, citizens storm the Bastille, a Paris prison. The French Revolution begins. Each year on July 14, France celebrates Bastille Day, the event that led to the royal family being overthrown.

## **1804**

Military hero Napoleon Bonaparte crowns himself emperor after leading France to victory over Europe's strongest nations. In 1815, Napoleon is finally defeated at Waterloo in Belgium.

**1903**

Henry Desgrange founds the Tour de France, the world's most popular and important bicycle race.

**1914-1918**

France battles Germany in World War I.

**1919**

Versaille, France is the location of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, which ends World War I.

**1940**

Germany invades France during World War II. In 1945, Britain, France, the U.S. and other allies defeat Germany, Japan and Italy.

**1944**

After four years, Paris is freed from German occupation. General Charles de Gaulle heads a provisional government in Paris.

**1981**

François Mitterrand is elected president. He is in office for 14 years, becoming the longest-serving president in French history.

**1991**

Edith Cresson becomes France's first female Prime Minister.

**1994**

The Channel Tunnel opens, connecting Britain and France under the English Channel.

**2002**

Euro bills and coins are introduced. The euro now is used for all transactions in 12 participating European Union countries.

The French Revolution was an influential period of social and political upheaval in France.



# THE CUISINE

*During the past decade, French cuisine has been somewhat overwhelmed by many different cuisines from all over the world. However, popular French TV chef Manu has put French food back on the map, and quite rightly so. France is a country of gourmands.*

Cheese and wine are a large part of their cuisine, and the French hold the title of world's largest cheese consumers. If you are up for experimenting and you like playing with your senses, order a serving of diverse French cheeses and taste-test several types of wine.

As one would imagine, the French LOVE their wine. France is the home of many grape varieties, such as Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, which are now planted throughout the world. Their wine-making practices have also been adopted by other countries.

The French love to socialize, and do so around lengthy dinners that include several courses, either at home or at a restaurant.



There are over 5000 restaurants in Paris alone, and there are many food guides to help you decide which ones to visit – the most famous one being Michelin Guide Rouge. You may have heard of the term “Michelin Star” – which is a hallmark of superb dining quality.

Make sure you visit a café along the famous Avenue Des Champs-Elysees - probably the most famous avenue in the world. Also, don't forget to visit a French vineyard at a chateau at Bordeaux or Bellet!



In 2010 French cuisine earned a spot on UNESCO's World Heritage List. The "gastronomic meal of the French" — defined as "a festive meal bringing people together for an occasion to enjoy the art of good eating and drinking" took its place alongside other embodiments of cultural heritage on UNESCO's list celebrating world art forms and traditions.

**Some French food include:**

- Baguettes
- French Martini
- Truffles
- Chocolate Eclair
- Camembert
- Crepes
- Cassoulet
- Crème Brule
- Cheese or Chocolate Soufflé
- Steak Tartare
- Coq au Vin
- Quiche Lorraine

The list of popular foods is endless.



*Have you always dreamed of correctly pronouncing French dishes? Have you always wanted to know how to tell a person what your favorite food is in French? Or to be able to easily converse in a restaurant or a café?*





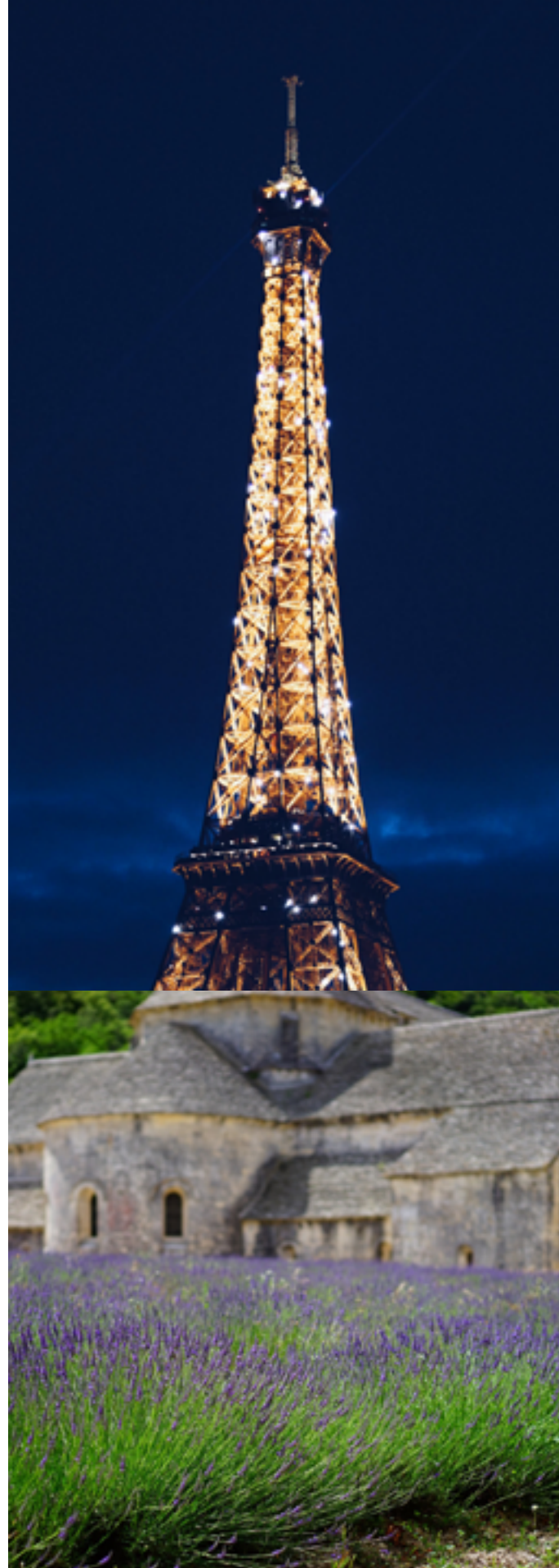
# PLACES TO DISCOVER

*Where do we start? France is rife with magnificent architecture and beautiful scenery.*

You're likely not to miss the Eiffel Tower, Paris's renowned monument. The Eiffel Tower was built in 1889 by Gustave Eiffel for a fair. When built it was the world's tallest monument. The French government wanted to tear it down after the fair, but its popularity made them not do so.

Paris – the “City of Lights” is beautiful to see at night. It has 296 illuminated sites that consist of hotels, churches, fountains, bridges and national buildings.

Paris is also home to The Moulin Rouge a fun entertaining show that sells out in advance. See world-renowned showgirls and French Cancan dancers strut their stuff on the historic stage!



# PLACES TO DISCOVER

Paris is a shopper's paradise with many famous fashion designers, such as Dior. You may like to take part in a shopping tour. Paris is home to many of France's famous monuments including:

## ARC DE TRIOMPHE

This site's at the top of the Avenue des Champs-Elysees at the centre of Place de l'Etoile. You can walk to the top of it and enjoy the view. It was built in honour of the French Imperial army of Napoleon.

## THE CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE-DAME-DE-PARIS

Considered a jewel of Gothic architecture and one of the finest churches in Europe. It was built from the Middle-ages and is known for The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, a 19th century novel written by Victor Hugo.

## PALAIS DU LOUVRE

The Louvre is the world's largest museum. It is a majestic palace which was also the former residence of the Kings of France. Its glass pyramid opens into the garden of the Tulleries. Today it is a home to many famous art pieces, including the Mona Lisa and the Venus de Milo.



# PLACES TO DISCOVER

*Further south, The French Riviera has divine scenery as it boasts a Mediterranean coastline and has a population of two million. Pebble beaches, coastline views and billion dollar homes captivate tourists.*

You may like to cruise the Cote D'Azur or take a short trip to visit Monte Carlo. You may like to visit the Riviera when the infamous Cannes Film Festival is on or check out Nice – a usual mix of real city-grit, old world opulence and year round sunshine. It has something for everyone including backpackers, loved up romantics and families. The nightlife is buzzing and it has a thriving art scene.

If you have an interest in cycling you need to add Le Tour de France to your bucket list. This is the most famous and prestigious road bicycle race in the world. It is held every year over three weeks in July. Participants travel through France and its nearby countries.

If you're travelling with your family you may like to visit Disneyland Paris or Le Puy du Fou – a very popular historic theme park which puts on performances of falconry, jousting, magic and music as well as gladiator fight reconstructions. It also has a reconstructed medieval town and 18th century village.

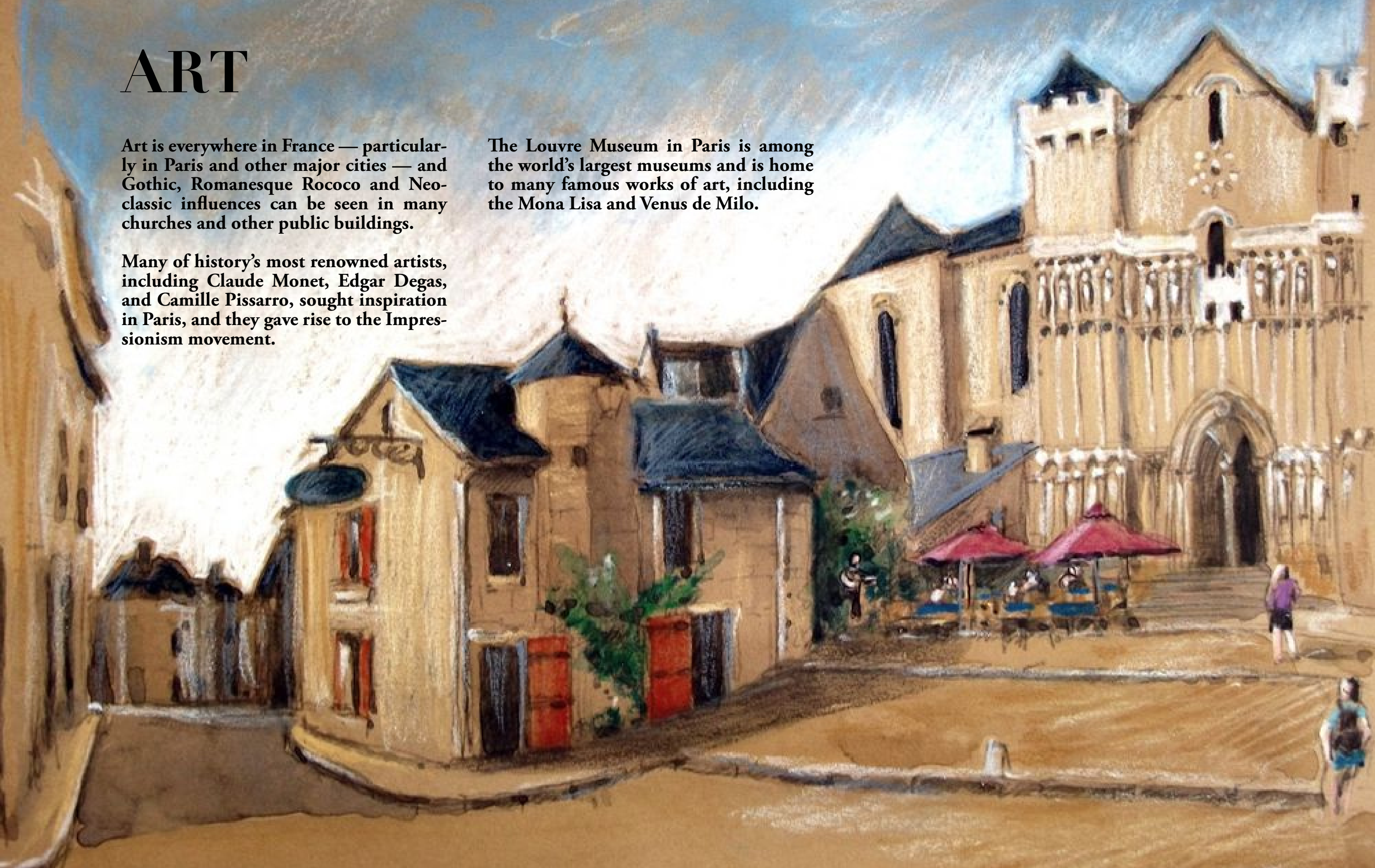


# ART

Art is everywhere in France — particularly in Paris and other major cities — and Gothic, Romanesque Rococo and Neoclassic influences can be seen in many churches and other public buildings.

Many of history's most renowned artists, including Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Camille Pissarro, sought inspiration in Paris, and they gave rise to the Impressionism movement.

The Louvre Museum in Paris is among the world's largest museums and is home to many famous works of art, including the Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo.





# Learning French Is A Lot Easier Than You Might Think!

Although you may appreciate the French culture from afar, experiencing it firsthand is an entirely different matter.

Even though you might have already traveled to France, or are only planning on doing so, knowing even the basic phrases in French will make your experience there much more enjoyable.

So...

**LEARN ONE OF THE MOST  
BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGES IN  
THE WORLD IN THE EASIEST  
WAY POSSIBLE**

Head over to **French Lessons Brisbane**  
and enroll in our online French course

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