



## Top Tables Paris: Great Restaurants in the City of Lights



*Filet de bouef at La Poule au Pot, courtesy Nicolas Lobbestael*

Indagare's favorite hot spot restaurants change all the time, but there are also some staples in each of the cities we love that never go out of style. Here is our current short list of great restaurants in [Paris](#).

### Great Lunch Spots



The Seine and Eiffel Tower

### Near the [Eiffel Tower](#):

- **[L'Ami Jean](#)**: This lively bistro serves marvelous southwestern-French cuisine—don't miss the legendary rice pudding for dessert.
- **[La Fontaine de Mars](#)**: This classic Left Bank bistro is a perpetual favorite and a mainstay on the crowded rue Saint-Dominique. The cozy hideaway near the Eiffel Tower champions traditional French dishes like steak frites and duck confit, and boasts a charming atmosphere.
- **[Les Cocottes](#)**: A cozy and refined neighborhood spot from chef Christian Constant, Cocottes is a go-to for simple salads, sandwiches, omelettes or *cocottes* (casseroles) of vegetables or lamb.
- **[Girafe](#)**: This beautiful, hot spot restaurant from the team behind [Loulou](#) and [Monsieur Bleu](#) has a terrace with stunning views of the Eiffel Tower and a menu of fresh Mediterranean fare.
- **[Ducasse sur Seine](#)**: For an only-in-Paris experience, Alain Ducasse's Ducasse sur Seine is a stunning boat restaurant that offers prix-fixe lunch and dinner cruises and afternoon tea from its docked location right in front of the Eiffel Tower.
- **[Forest](#)**: About a 20-minute walk across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower, Forest is the rooftop restaurant atop Musée d'Art Moderne.



The dining room at Benoit, Paris courtesy of C. Sarramon

### Near **Notre Dame Cathedral**:

- **Le Comptoir du Relais**: This cozy, ten-table bistro in the center of St.-Germain is just about the toughest restaurant to score for a dinner reservation, so go for lunch, when it's first come, first served.
- **Benoit**: Alain Ducasse's beloved bistro (it first opened in 1912) serves traditional French cuisine in a classically Parisian dining room.
- **Baieta**: This highly regarded new Nicoise bistro in the 5th is run by chef Julia Sedefdjian, the first female chef in France to be awarded a *Michelin* star (in 2016, when she was just 21!).



The dining room at Loulou, Paris

### Near the [Louvre](#):

- **Loulou**: Set in the beautiful [Musée des Arts Décoratifs](#), Loulou offers a mix of French and Italian Riviera-inspired cuisine. The truffle pizza is a must-order and the terrace is the best place to dine when the weather is nice.
- **Clover Grill**: This casual spot from *Michelin*-starred chef Jean-Francois Piegé focuses on charcoal grilled food, mainly top quality meats, but there is also fish, lobster and fresh vegetables.
- **La Poule au Pot**: After a stylish revamp in 2018, this institution (which has been open since 1935 and is now led by chef Jean-Francois Piège) is a top spot for a traditional feel and timeless classics, including buttery snails, veal stew and cherry clafoutis.
- **La Bourse et La Vie**: This tiny bistro—featuring a *brocante* décor that mixes 19<sup>th</sup>-century mirrors with 1960s-style globe light fixtures—is helmed by French-trained American chef Daniel Rose, who serves up French staples like *pot-au-feu* and oysters *gratinée*. Don't miss the only-at-lunch steak frites.
- **CoCo Restaurant Palais Garnier**: This chic new hotspot is adjacent to the historic Palais Garnier Opera House, a 15-minute walk from the Louvre.
- **Madame Rêve Café**: This gorgeous 19<sup>th</sup> century style brasserie has been packed since its fall 2021 opening. The menu is modern Mediterranean with a

special focus on fresh seafood.



Lunch and coffee at Café de Flore

### **Near the Left Bank/Orsay:**

- **Le Récamier:** A Left Bank institution, where soufflés are a specialty of the house, with new ones such as Creole and vanilla added monthly to the more traditional choices. Snag a seat on the terrace.
- **Café de Flore:** This icon is one of the oldest cafés in Paris (it was a favorite of Pablo Picasso and other creative types) and offers great people-watching on its terrace and simple fare such as a delicious club sandwich and *omelette et salade*.
- **Société:** This restaurant serves up crowd-pleasing food (nothing too adventurous) and a glamorous crowd that is enhanced by the sexy atmosphere. La Société has an enviable location right on the Place St. Germain.
- **Le Bar des Prés:** This cozy restaurant has booths, leopard-print floors and a long bar, where Japanese chefs prepare fantastic sushi and dishes such as mini lobster rolls and a crispy curry galette with avocado.

### **Near the Marais:**

- **Carette:** This famous tea salon has an enviable location on Place des Vosges,

overlooking the beautiful square.

- **Breizh Café:** Arguably Paris's best creperie, Breizh is a tiny spot worth stopping at for their innovative sweet crêpes and savory *galettes*.
- **Chez Janou:** This casual corner bistro is popular with both travelers and locals who come for its classic Provençal dishes (think moules gratinées and ratatouille).
- **Wild & the Moon:** A hot spot adored by model-esque Parisians, Wild & The Moon offers all-day vegan and gluten-free cuisine in its compact dining area (it's better to grab a quick bite here or something to-go as it gets busy). There is a location in the Marais as well as several others throughout the city.

**Related:** [Healthy Dining in Paris](#)

**Near Rue St. Honore shopping:**

- **Hotel Costes:** Stylish visitors adore this hip eatery with a lovely courtyard. The service can be a touch spotty but Costes is one of the best spots to see and be seen in the city.
- **Le Castiglione:** This family-run café is a supremely charming place for lunch. (Yes, the café dog belongs to the owner, whose father ran it before him.) You can eat inside, where there's a zinc-topped bar, or outside, under the red-awnings at café tables.
- **Balagan:** Two Israeli star chefs head up this chic restaurant known for its Middle Eastern dishes such as salmon tataki with cherries and Persian-style sea bass with tahini beurre blanc.
- **Café Lapérouse:** Designed by Cordelia de Castellane (the designer behind Baby Dior and Maison), this new restaurant in the courtyard of Hôtel de la Marine has a menu comprised of French comfort food with dishes like lobster salad, smoked salmon, *sole meuniere* and *chateaubriand*.
- **Mimosa:** Mimosa is helmed by the great chef Jean Francois Piège, with interiors meant to evoke the Riviera spirit of the 60s with lots of nautical references. It is one of the toughest reservations to get at the moment.

**Near Avenue Montaigne shopping:**

- **L'Avenue:** An eternal hot spot, with good food and even better people-watching, L'Avenue has one of the best outdoor dining patios on the Right Bank. The well-executed—if somewhat predictable—cuisine includes salads, soups, quiches and tartines.
- **Shirvan:** This sleek modern bistro brings a Silk Road sensibility to French cuisine in dishes like eggplant tempura with Moroccan spices and tandoori

chicken with mint sauce.

- **Le Drugstore:** Designed by Tom Dixon, Le Drugstore offers casual fare with a menu that ranges from “Finger Food” selections like shrimp beignets and gruyère madeleines to classics like burgers, croques monsieurs and Caesar salads.
- **Le Taillevent:** One of Paris’s most storied gourmet restaurants, Le Taillevent has been remade with a sumptuous redesign and a new Italian chef, whose menus emphasize quality and local produce with fresh takes on classic French dishes.
- **Le Relais Plaza:** This historic brasserie is known for its beautiful art nouveau interiors and is helmed by new, cool chef Jean Imbert, who has made the traditional French menu a bit less formal—think delicious roast chicken or warm lentil salad.



The terrace at La Veranda at Waldorf Astoria Trianon Palace

#### Near **Versailles:**

- **La Veranda at Trianon Palace:** Chef Gordon Ramsey’s restaurant at the Trianon Palace hotel serves fine French food in an elegant dining room.

## Great Dinner Options



Turbot with truffles at Le Clarence

### Big Night Out

- **Le Clarence:** Located in a six-story, 19th-century townhouse just across from the Grand Palais, Le Clarence evokes the atmosphere of a Bordeaux chateau and serves superb two-*Michelin*-starred cuisine and wines from the owner's line, Chateau Haut-Brion.
- **Pierre Gagnaire:** This fascinating haute cuisine spot serves innovative cuisine from its eponymous chef.
- **Epicure:** Le Bristol's three-*Michelin*-starred restaurant offers a gastronomic experience in an oak-paneled dining room or a tented room that overlooks a beautiful courtyard garden.
- **Maison Russe:** This hot spot has garnered more buzz than any other Parisian establishment this season, with its chic boutique and bar on the first floor and opulent dining rooms on the second. The three floors above house seven lavish private dining rooms.





Empanadas at Anahi

## Hot Spot

- **Fleur de Pavé:** A vegetable-forward spot that opened in summer 2019 from chef Sylvain Sendra and his business partner and wife Sarah. “It may be my favorite restaurant in the world,” said Indagare founder and CEO Melissa Biggs Bradley after visiting it in June 2021.
- **Septime:** A hot spot since opening in 2011, Septime is located in the 11<sup>th</sup> arrondissement and offers a unique five-course *carte blanche* tasting menu everyday.
- **Contraste:** This new hot spot from chefs Kevin de Porre and Erwan Ledru allow both to flex their Michelin-starred expertise in a creative menu showcasing innovative flavors and ingredients from land and sea.
- **Monsieur Bleu:** This iconic restaurant in the Palais de Tokyo serves trendy nouvelle cuisine (burgers, lobster rolls, small plates) to a chic and arty crowd and has stunning Eiffel Tower views.
- **Anahi:** This Argentine eatery in the Marais serves delicious South American cuisine, including flavorful dishes like sea bass ceviche and *wagyu* beef quesadillas in a tiny, white-tiled dining room that is regularly filled with beautiful patrons.
- **Manko:** Located inside an old Paris auction house, Manko has a glamorous

and buzzy vibe and serves imaginative Peruvian fare like Amazonian flank steak or *lomo saltado* (a Peruvian specialty of wok-sautéed sirloin).

- **Gigi:** A sexy, sceney spot with Eiffel Tower views, Gigi is a “festive” restaurant with nightly music that serves Italian cuisine and is frequented by a stylish crowd of Parisians.
- **Le Pré Catelan:** This legendary spot with amazing French cuisine by three *Michelin*-starred chef, Frederick Anton, is great for serious foodies who want a countryside meal without leaving Paris.



The dining room at La Bourse et La Vie

## Local

- **La Régalade St. Honoré:** This no-frills restaurant in the 1st has a small bar and simple tables, but the bistro food—squid ink risotto, chicken stuffed with foie gras and served with vegetables—has a loyal fan base.
- **Aux Prés:** A jewel box of a restaurant in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Aux Prés is an atmospheric neighborhood restaurant from famed French chef Cyril Lignac. With just a handful of tables, a beautiful bar and floral wallpaper, the chic eatery serves delicious international fusion cuisine like crispy salmon rice, caramelized eggplant with miso and a beef rib for two.
- **Chez Fernand:** Located on the Left Bank, Chez Fernand is an old fashioned

and cozy brasserie with a traditional and classic French menu. It's not fancy, but it's also not touristy.

## Classics



The exterior of Le Soufflé

- **Le Récamier:** A Left Bank institution, where soufflés are a specialty of the house, with new ones such as Creole and vanilla added monthly to the more traditional choices. Snag a seat on the terrace.
- **Chez La Vieille:** Another classic from chef Daniel Rose, Chez la Vieille occupies a two-story restaurant and has a low-key bar on the first floor plus an elegant dining room with a handful of tables on the upper level. Menu highlights include leeks vinaigrette, duck terrine and chicken *célestine*.
- **Le Soufflé:** Stepping into this old school, Right Bank restaurant feels like you are going back to an earlier era. Opened in 1961, Le Soufflé specializes in the dish for which it is named; the chef has more than 20 flavors in his repertoire, but you can also get staples like sole meunière and steak.

## Newcomers

- **Trente-Trois:** Open only a few months before Covid lockdowns, Trente-Trois

holds the record for shortest time for a restaurant to be open and receive a *Michelin* star.

- **Joia:** The latest restaurant from French chef H el ene Darroze, this 2nd arrondissement spot serves sophisticated but cozy food such as wild mushroom with foie gras and egg yolk confit and a make-your-own guacamole. Don't miss the second-floor cocktail bar.
- **Hugo&Co:** This new contemporary French bistro in the Latin Quarter is earning high praise for its easy-going international comfort food like stracciatella cheese with black olives and *tonkatsu*-style breaded pork cutlet topped with a fried organic egg and red-curry sauce.
- **Baieta:** This highly regarded new Nicoise bistro in the 5th is run by chef Julia Sedefdjian, the first female chef in France to be awarded a *Michelin* star (in 2016, when she was just 21!).
- **Balagan:** This buzzy Right Bank watering hole, serving Mediterranean fare, was opened by two of Jerusalem's hottest chefs.
- **Maison:** From lauded Clown Bar chef Sata Atsumi, Maison serves reimagined French dishes in the 11th arrondissement.
- **La Plume:** Madame R eve just opened their sleek and stylish rooftop restaurant, with amazing Paris views and a Japanese French fusion menu.

***Contact Indagare for assistance planning a vacation to Paris, including accommodations at the hotel that is right for you, reservations at the best new restaurants and more.***

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- Indagare on December 10, 2021

