

FRANCE

— Paris · Strasbourg —

“Paris is not a place that can be covered in few days. The ones I keep coming back to are: little overhyped, confused emotion, a sense of belonging and being outcasted at the same time.”

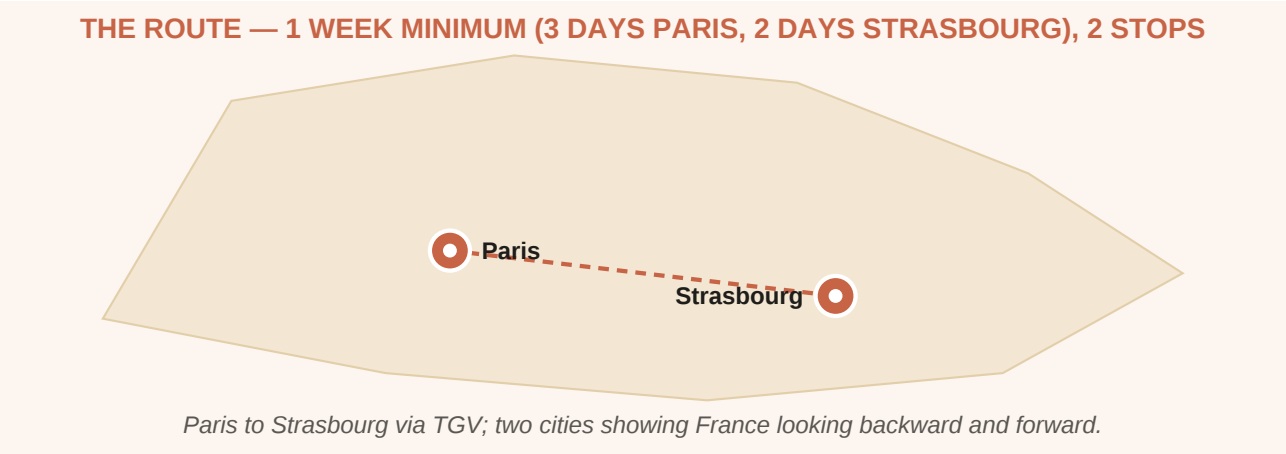


desk2destinations.com · Honesty over hype. Slow over rushed. Practical over pretty.

By Ayushi & Harshit Jain

France at a glance

France from the traveller's view is two cities: Paris the icon that disappoints and transcends by turns, and Strasbourg the hybrid that feels both countries at once. Skip the packaged tours in Paris; get lost. In Strasbourg, eat Alsatian food and climb the cathedral.



Best time	September-October or February-March; avoid August
Visa (IN)	Schengen (Indian passport)
Currency	EUR (€)
Getting around	TGV trains connect Paris and Strasbourg in 2 hours and 15 minutes; fast and reliable.
If we did it again	In Paris, we wish we'd spent less time in museums and more in cafes. In Strasbourg, we wish we'd stayed longer.

The top 10 — our personal highlights

Ten moments worth flying back for. Ranked roughly in the order they made us go “oh.”

- 1 Eiffel Tower climbing at sunset · Paris**
Climb the stairs to the 1st floor; reserved for those who move slowly.
- 2 Canal Saint-Martin in winter · Paris**
Quiet, mist-hung, the Paris that locals live in.
- 3 Père Lachaise Cemetery · Paris**
Oscar Wilde's lipstick-kissed tomb and three centuries of funerary art.
- 4 Strasbourg Cathedral and 330 steps · Strasbourg**
142 meters of Gothic ambition; the Astronomical Clock at 12:30 p.m.
- 5 La Petite France golden hour · Strasbourg**
Half-timbered houses, canal streets, tarte flambée warm from the iron.
- 6 Musée d'Orsay Impressionism · Paris**
Monet, Van Gogh, Renoir in a former railway station; better than the Louvre.
- 7 Montmartre in rain · Paris**
Streets spilling with restaurants, the macaron shop that smells like sugar and rain.
- 8 Baeckeffe slow-cooked casserole · Strasbourg**
Three meats, Alsatian wine, bread, the kind of food that mends things.
- 9 Galerie Vivienne 19th-century arcade · Paris**
Covered shopping with mosaic floors; the Paris of antiquity dealers.
- 10 Trocadero at night with Indians waving flags · Paris**
August 15th homesickness turned into a moment of belonging.

Paris

The Iron Lady, canals, cemeteries and second visits that are better than first

Paris rewards a second visit more than a first. On the second time, skip the Eiffel Tower lines and the Louvre crowds. Instead: Canal Saint-Martin in the morning quiet, smaller museums, the 19th-century passages, cafes where you sit until it's dark. Paris only gives up its real self slowly.



Top 5 here

- 📍 **Canal Saint-Martin walk** — Morning or winter; quieter than the main sites; genuinely Parisian
- 📍 **Musée d'Orsay Impressionist collection** — Better than Louvre; housed in a belle-epoque railway station
- 📍 **Père Lachaise Cemetery** — Oscar Wilde, Jim Morrison, 200 years of funerary art and grief
- 📍 **Galerie Vivienne covered arcade** — 19th-century passage with mosaic floors; rare books and prints
- 📍 **Eiffel Tower late afternoon (book ahead)** — Climb to the 1st floor; the city opens from there

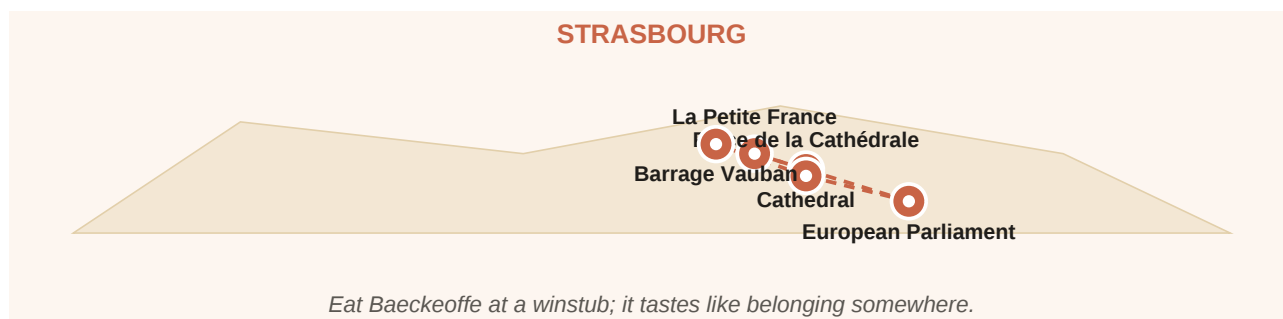
Days	3-4 days minimum; one for museums, one for wandering, one for being still
Where we stayed	Left Bank for cafe culture; Marais for galleries; either, really.
Getting around	Metro efficient; buy 10-journey ticket or daily pass.
Where we ate	Café croissants, bistro wine, bread that justifies the trip, macaron shops
Reality check	Touristy in patches; genuinely beautiful elsewhere; the city reflects your mood

→ Read the full Paris guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/france-paris.html

Strasbourg

Between France and Germany, with half-timbered houses and Gothic ambition

Strasbourg is what happens when two countries can't agree on a city and decide to share it. Gothic cathedral, half-timbered La Petite France, Alsatian food that combines French technique with German portions, and the European Parliament building standing witness to postwar ambition.



Top 5 here

- **Strasbourg Cathedral and 330 steps** — 142 meters of Gothic; the Astronomical Clock at 12:30 p.m. is mechanical theatre
- **La Petite France at golden hour** — Canal district with overhanging houses; tarte flambée from a window table
- **Cathédrale Notre-Dame climb** — 330 vertical steps to panoramic views over Rhine plain into France
- **Baeckeoffe casserole at a Winstub** — Slow-cooked three meats in Alsatian wine; the essential Alsatian experience
- **European Parliament Quarter** — Modern architecture; a glimpse of how postwar Europe rebuilt itself

Days	2-3 days; one for the cathedral and La Petite France, one for food and wandering
Where we stayed	Old town centre; Strasbourg is small and walkable.
Getting around	TGV from Paris 2.15 hours; connections to Germany (Baden-Baden) easy.
Where we ate	Tarte flambée, Baeckeoffe, Kugelhopf, Riesling wine, pretzels to a different standard
Reality check	Compact, genuine, genuinely beautiful; no pretence necessary.

→ Read the full Strasbourg guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/france-strasbourg.html

Costs — where the rupees went

Mid-range, vegetarian-friendly, two travellers splitting stays. Numbers are per-person, rounded honestly. Flights vary the most.

Accommodation	Paris budget hotels: 60-90/night; 50-75/night	Strasbourg: 950-1300 for 7 days
Food	Paris cafes: 8-12/coffee, 12-18/lunch; 10-15/meal	Strasbourg: 350-500 for 7 days
Transport	TGV Paris-Strasbourg: 50-90 return; metro/tram: 15/day pass	150-250 for 7 days
Attractions	Eiffel Tower: 14-28; Cathedral d'Orsay: 14	Strasbourg: 5; Musée d'Orsay: 14 100-150 for 7 days
Food (regional)	Croissant: 3-4; Macaron: 2; Tarte flambée: 8-12; Crêpe: 4-6	included in food
Museum pass (Paris)	2-day or 4-day pass available; covers 60+ attractions	48-66 optional
Day trips	No major day trips required; both cities walkable	0
Misc	Tips, incidentals, coffee on café terrasse	100-150 for 7 days

Total: 22,000-28,000 per person

One last thing

Buy Paris Museum Pass if doing multiple museums; skip the Louvre, do Musée d'Orsay instead.

Follow [@desk2destinations_](#) on Instagram for new diaries and reels, or drop us a note via desk2destinations.com/contact.html. If we got a city wrong, or you want one we haven't covered yet — that's the place to tell us.