

## PART ONE

# UNDERSTANDING PARIS

## A BRIEF HISTORY *of* PARIS

ONE OF THE GREAT ADVANTAGES of visiting Paris is the closeness to history that the experience offers. Everywhere you look you're reminded of what transpired here in an earlier epoch, from the Romans and the Gauls through the Prussians and the Germans, the American liberators in the 1940s all the way to Lance Armstrong's seventh Tour de France win in 2005. As a basic crutch for orienting yourself to the city and its traditions, here is an overview of Paris's colorful history. According to the travel writer Robert Cole, the Parisian view of its own history is the reverse of "all roads lead to Rome." Everything great in France began in Paris and spread outward.

### LES PARISIIS AND THE ROMANS

THE FIRST SETTLERS ON THE LARGEST ISLAND in the Seine (now Île de la Cité) were the Parisii, a community of Celtic fishermen and boat people governed by Druidic religious practices, who arrived during the third century BC. In the year AD 52, the Romans arrived and began constructing the first buildings on the Left Bank of the river up the hill that consists of today's Montagne Sainte-Geneviève, in the 5th arrondissement. Here, as well, were the ruins of the Cluny Baths and the Arenes de Lutèce, where Julien was proclaimed emperor in AD 360. The Romans named their settlement Lutetia Parisiorum, which lent itself to the legend that the city was founded by Helen of Troy's lover, Paris. After refusing to send delegates to Julius Caesar's Assembly of Gaul, the Celts revolted against Roman domination and set fire to the city and bridges, but they were ultimately crushed by Caesar's legion, which camped at the site of today's Louvre. Lutetia spread to the Left Bank, which took on the name the Latin Quarter.

## BARBARIAN INVASIONS

THREATENED BY ATTLA THE HUN (and subsequently saved by the visionary Christian Geneviève, who was made patroness of the city) and the warring Franks, the town began to take on wings as the Frank King Clovis declared it his capital and his official residence in 508. It is believed that the site of present-day Paris was a stopping-off point between Marseilles and Britain along an ancient trading route. Abbeys and chapels flourished on the Right Bank as well as the Left, as witnessed by Saint Germain L'Auxerrois and Saint Germain des Prés, and the city took on a unique religious importance. The western Frank kingdom of Neustria was referred to by the end of the ninth century as Francia, which became France. Over time, the residents of Francia looked to the governors of this kingdom for political direction. Hugh Capet emerged as ostensibly the first king of Francia and the founding monarch to rule France.

## CHARLEMAGNE

OVER THE NEXT FOUR CENTURIES, Paris was occupied and deserted by the Merovingians and by Charlemagne and raided by the Normans. It wasn't until near the end of the first millennium, under the Capetian dynasty, that Paris gained importance as a royal capital and urban economic center. Under the reign of Philippe-Auguste, a wall was erected around the city. The principal streets were paved in cobblestone (*pavé* in French), and the first bridges joining the Right and Left banks were built. Notre-Dame was erected on Île de la Cité in 1163, and the university sector on the Left Bank was conceived in 1215, with the Université de Paris becoming the primary theological and philosophical center in medieval Christianity. Here was where Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and others taught. The Palais Royal functioned as the political core of the capital. Flourishing due to its floating merchants (from which Paris's coat of shields is derived) and a vibrant silver market, Paris grew to over 100,000 inhabitants by the 13th century, becoming the largest city in the western Christian world.

## RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

INSURRECTIONS FOLLOWED, and the 1300s were marred by massacres and invasions by regional tribes. Joan of Arc besieged the city in 1429 while Paris was under the rule of the English, and in 1438 the legitimate monarch Charles VII took control.

It wasn't until François I, known as a Renaissance prince and patron of the arts, that Paris became the official residence of the king. Renaissance structures replaced medieval ones, and Paris witnessed the construction of its Hôtel de Ville, the Tuileries, and the Pont Neuf, Paris's first stone bridge.

The 1500s were bloodied by religious wars (the Protestant Reformation, Huguenots) and a devastating famine (1589), forcing King Henri

III, who was later assassinated, to flee. Henri of Navarre proclaimed himself Henri IV (1589–1610) and assumed the reins of the city; under Henri IV, major architectural additions were commissioned: the Place de Vosges, place Dauphine, l’Horloge. Under Louis XIII the city experienced the construction of new areas—the Marais, the Bastille, and Saint Honoré—walled in along a periphery that vaguely followed today’s Grands Boulevards. The Île Saint Louis was refurbished, and new communities sprung up on the Left Bank, especially near the Luxembourg Gardens, which were built by Marie de Médicis.

## LOUIS XIII AND LOUIS XIV

PARIS’S IMPORTANCE AS A CULTURAL CENTER grew as the Royal Imprimerie was built and the Académie Française was established. The powerful Cardinal Richelieu left his administrative mark on the style and form of government under Louis XIII (he’s buried in the chapel of the Sorbonne). Nonetheless, Louis XIV (the Sun King), known for his maxim “The State Is Me,” preferred his château in Versailles. But to glorify the monarchy, under the auspices of the famed Colbert, great additions were made to Paris: the colonnade of the Louvre, Les Invalides, the arches at the Portes Saint Denis and Saint Martin, the Place Vendôme, and many other points of great architectural beauty.

The arts and music flourished in the city, and the logical next step in urban development was the creation of the café, a place for intellectuals, writers, and artists to meet. The 18th century enjoyed the opening of the first restaurants, le Procope and la Régence, and the first theaters, l’Odéon and the Comédie Française. Business, banking, and commerce gained an increasingly important foothold, and property prices rose steadily. Interest and development of the law as a discipline mounted. A group of thinkers called the Encyclopedists met and gained influence, contending that all knowledge was finite and could be catalogued and distributed. The city expanded to the west and north, and by the time of the French Revolution in 1789, the population had risen to 650,000 within the city walls.

## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

KING LOUIS XVI AND HIS FAMOUS WIFE, the Austrian-born Marie Antoinette (of “Let them eat cake” fame), ascended the throne in 1774. At first popular, the couple made rather damning public-relations errors, and those, combined with harsh conditions, food shortages, and inept governing, sparked public revolts and riots. Inspired by the American Revolution and the ideological concept of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, revolution broke out. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were guillotined at the Place de la Concorde, renamed the Place de la Révolution. “*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*” became the motto of the Republic.

The Bastille prison was stormed on July 14th, 1789, the start of the French Revolution and the *Fête nationale* to this day. The First Repub-

lic dates from 1791 to 1799, followed by the reign of Napoléon Bonaparte, under a regime called the Consulat (echoing the Romans). The monarchy returned to power between 1815 and 1848 with the Bourbons. From 1848 until 1852 France entered its Second Republic, with Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (the nephew) at the helm. The next 20 years are called the Second Empire. Then in 1871, the French installed the Third Republic and ended the monarchy for good.

## **NAPOLÉON I (NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE)**

NAPOLÉON'S VISION WAS TO MAKE PARIS the capital of Europe, and he proceeded to build the Arc de Triomphe and the column at Place de la Vendôme and opened the Ourcq canal, bringing drinking water into the city. The markets, public high schools (*lycées*), and slaughterhouses were developed. The Madeleine and the Pantheon were built, and the sewer system was installed. Napoléon's reign marked the First Empire. This popular general as emperor profoundly modified the legal code and administrative structure of France. After an eventful rise and fall from power, Napoléon regained power in 1815 only to be defeated the same year at the Battle of Waterloo. He abdicated and was sent by the British to the island of Saint-Hélène, where he died in 1821. His son, Napoléon II, succeeded him.

It was the Second Empire under Napoléon III (Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoléon I) that gave Paris its new look, with the creation of a centralized administration and economic, social, and cultural services. The period was characterized by the writings of Honoré de Balzac and Victor Hugo, as well as Alexandre Dumas, Musset, and Nerval, and the music of Rossini, Chopin, Liszt, Wagner, and Offenbach.

## **HAUSSMANN AND THE NEW PARIS**

IN 1860, PARIS WAS ORGANIZED into 20 arrondissements, each with its own mayor and city government. Preoccupied with urban development and questions of security, the urban planning of the city was overhauled and remodeled by the celebrated architect Haussmann, who conceived the wide boulevards (rue de Rivoli, avenue de l'Opéra) and the wide sidewalks in the upper-class areas, driving the hordes of working-class poor into the outer districts, primarily to the east. Vast parks on both sides of the city were erected, Bois de Vincennes (for the poor) and Bois de Boulogne (for the rich), as well as numerous new bridges and the Opéra Garnier.

## **COMMUNE DE PARIS**

RAPID GROWTH OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY helped contribute to the city's mounting population of 1.8 million inhabitants by the year 1871. An imbalance of the social and economic classes ensued, and in 1830 and 1848 popular uprisings ripped through the capital, culminating in the celebrated and dramatic revolution, between March

## French Periods and Rulers

**The Gallo-Roman Period** 3rd century BC to AD 360

Gallo-Romans build the City of Lutetia in AD 1.

**Early Middle Age** 450–885

Clovis makes Paris his capital. Charlemagne abandons Paris.

**The Capetians** 12th century–1300

Notre Dame is built. Sorbonne is built.

**The Valois** 1337–1590

Charles V builds the Bastille and a wall around Paris. Henri VI is crowned king of France.

**The Bourbons** 1590–1790

Henri IV converts to Catholicism. Île de St. Louis is developed. Treaty of Versailles is signed.

**The French Revolution and First Empire** 1789–1814

Louis XVI adopts red, white, and blue as the colors of France. Louis XVI is executed. Napoléon Bonaparte creates the police system. Napoléon is coronated at Notre-Dame.

**The Restoration** 1815–1848

Battle of Waterloo. The Fall of Louis-Philippe.

**The Second Republic** 1848–1870

World Exhibitions in 1855 and 1867. Town planning is undertaken by Baron Haussmann.

**The Third Republic** 1870–1940

Napoléon III goes into exile. The Paris Commune is suppressed. World Exhibition at the new Eiffel Tower. First Métro line opens in 1900. Paris is occupied by the Germans in June 1940. Liberation of Paris, August 25, 1944.

**The Fourth Republic** 1946–1958

DeGaulle forms provisional government. Second wave of expatriate writers and artists settle in Paris. France confronted with Algerian war for independence.

**The Fifth Republic** 1958–present

General strikes in 1968. Building of the Périphérique in 1973. Pompidou Center opens in 1977. Socialist President Mitterrand wins in 1982. Jacques Chirac elected in 1995. Nicolas Sarkozy elected in 2007.

and May 1871, of the Commune de Paris, immortalized by Hugo's *Les Misérables*. The Prussians then besieged the city.

## THE THIRD REPUBLIC

THE THIRD REPUBLIC (1870–1940) followed this time of unrest, and prosperity and economic stability retook the city as marked by the

Exposition of 1889 and the construction of the Eiffel Tower. The construction of the Grand and Petit Palais followed, as did the building of the Alexandre III bridge. In 1886, Bartoldi's Statue of Liberty, a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States, was transported and installed in New York harbor. In 1889 the Moulin Rouge opened in Clichy.

The Impressionist painters Renoir, Monet, Sisley, and Pissarro portrayed the day in attractive and gay colors and scenes, and by the beginning of the 20th century, Paris had established itself as the international capital of art, attracting painters from around the world to such noted centers of cultural life as Toulouse-Lautrec's Montmartre, the Bateau Lavoir, and La Ruche. Cabarets opened, and the Sacré Coeur Basilica was erected.

## **WORLD WAR I**

THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE, in which Paris taxis carried troops to the battlefield for lack of transport, saved Paris in the early days of World War I. The peace treaty to end the war was signed in Paris. Following World War I, the city's geographic boundaries moved outward as the new building material, concrete, was introduced. With the Russian Revolution, Paris was inundated with eastern aristocratic expatriates, who contributed to the rapid growth of bistros (the Russian word for "rapid," thereby meaning fast food).

## **BETWEEN THE WARS**

NEW CAFÉS OPENED ON THE BOULEVARDS, and the area of Montparnasse became a magnet for artistic and literary life, with disillusioned souls settling in Paris to write, paint, and drink. The city became the studio for André Breton, Jean Cocteau, Aragon, Éluard, Picasso, and the writers James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, and Gertrude Stein, the core of expatriates came to be known as the Lost Generation. Art Deco flourished, and the Paris Métro expanded.

## **WORLD WAR II**

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS BEGAN gaining attention as fascism grew in Europe, generating the need for the creation of the workers party, the Front Populaire, in 1936.

In June 1940, the German *Wermacht* marched through the Arc de Triomphe and began the Occupation of Paris. France was partitioned, and Philippe Pétain led the Vichy Government. By July 1942, large numbers of French Jews had been gathered up and deported to Nazi concentration camps, and France experienced a political and social rift between German collaborators and the Resistance fighters, a wound from which the country has never fully healed. In August 1944, General Charles de Gaulle and his army marched down the Champs-Élysées, marking the Liberation of Paris.

**THE FOURTH REPUBLIC**

THE FOURTH REPUBLIC WAS CREATED when Charles de Gaulle formed a provisional government. Paris stabilized and regained its position as the capital of fashion, style, and art. A second wave of expatriate writers and artists settled in the City of Light, repelled by the repressiveness and conservative mood in the postwar United States. In the late 1950s and 1960s, the Saint-Germain-des-Prés area of Paris became the headquarters of leading French intellectuals, led by existentialist Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir.

Handicapped by its colonial past, especially in North Africa, France was violently confronted with the Algerian war for independence. This conflict brutally divided the country and led to the collapse of the Fourth Republic and the popular demand that Charles de Gaulle restructure the government.

**THE FIFTH REPUBLIC**

CHARLES DE GAULLE WAS CALLED UPON to form the Fifth Republic of France. In 1965, de Gaulle pulled France out of NATO. In May 1968, general strikes and student protests against the outdated administration of President de Gaulle crippled the country; rioting broke out in the Latin Quarter, and the country came to a halt. De Gaulle was forced to step down and was succeeded by Georges Pompidou.

**THE SOCIALIST YEARS**

IN 1982, SOCIALIST LEADER FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND was elected president of France, beginning a 14-year period of socialist domination of French politics. Selected French industries were nationalized. Mitterrand launched his great spending spree on major architectural legacies. I. M. Pei was commissioned to renovate the Louvre, and his controversial Pyramid was inaugurated for the bicentennial of the French Revolution in 1989; the new Bastille Opéra opened as well. The Grande Arche at La Defence was inaugurated.

In 1994, the Eurotunnel connecting France and England began commercial service. France signed the Treaty of Maastricht, an important commitment toward the goal of a unified Europe. In 1996, Mitterrand died in office.

**TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM**

JACQUES CHIRAC, THE MAYOR OF PARIS and the leader of the conservative Right Wing RPR Party, was elected president of France after Mitterrand's death. The euro, the single currency of the European Union, was adopted as the official money of France and ten other European countries. In 1997, Chirac called for new elections and ended up in a coalition government, with Socialist Lionel Jospin as prime minister. In 1999, France participated in the NATO war on Yugoslavia while attempting to maintain a sense of political and economic sovereignty from the United States and its American model for

globalization. The Right Wing was weakened by scandals and infighting, and the political future of French government seemed uncertain. Jospin ran for president in the 2001 presidential elections, was surprisingly beaten in the first round by xenophobic right-winger Jean-Marie LePen, and retired from politics. President Chirac beat LePen in a landslide in the second round; he then went on to win the legislative elections and selected the relatively unknown Jean-Pierre Raffarin to form a solid right-central government. In 2002, the euro replaced French banknotes and coins. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States, Chirac and the French nation opposed President Bush's unilateral decision to invade Iraq, threatening to use France's veto in the United Nations had a second resolution come to a vote. This set off a rabid wave of anti-French media and public sentiment in the United States, which affected tourism in France. Most of the Franco-American tension had subsided by 2003. We are now in a new period of Franco-American political cooperation, and the real tension comes in the form of economic trade wars between Brussels and Washington, D.C., with the Chinese commercial potential hovering above. The traumatic defeat of the May 2005 French referendum on the European Union Constitution fractured the political alliances of the country and perplexed both the Right and Left. President Chirac, who had put all his eggs in the OUI column, took a solid hit and obliged to reshuffle his cabinet, replace Raffarin with Dominique de Villepin as Prime Minister, and elevate his youthful rival Nicolas Sarkozy to Minister of the Interior. Nicolas Sarkozy was elected president in 2007. He defeated Ségolène Royal, the Socialist opponent, in a heated campaign. Sarkozy is the first president of France born after World War II.

## The LANGUAGE: *Français*

IN PARIS ONE SPEAKS FRENCH (*Français* [frahn-say]). So much of your experience will be flavored by your ability to communicate. If you speak some French, so much the better; your linguistic abilities will be applauded. If you have a notion of French, use it. Abandon all fears of seeming ridiculous. You'll be commended for your effort and respected by Parisians for not automatically assuming that everyone on earth must speak English. If your French is as clumsy as a six-pack of Coke falling down the stairs, try anyway, and use your hands. Point. Smile. Shrug your shoulders. Do anything but fall into the "get me some ketchup, *garçon*" mindset.

The French take their language and culture seriously and are constantly reminded of their dwindling influence in the world. It wasn't all that long

### **unofficial TIP**

The worst attitudinal error you can make in Paris is to convey either ignorance or arrogance when it comes to the language. It's okay that you don't speak French, but look apologetic about it.



ago that French was the official diplomatic language on earth. Ever wonder why the text in your passport is bilingual with French as the second language? Fortunately, both the tourists and the Parisians have made major headway over the last generation in gaining language skills. More tourists handle themselves well in French today than was true 20 years ago. And, similarly, more Parisians can get by in English today, recognizing the international need for a universal language (and understanding that it is no longer French), and enjoy doing so.

At the bare minimum, arrive with a few humble, rehearsed phrases proving that your French at least starts and stops with *bonjour*, *au revoir*, *merci*, *rendezvous*, and *combien*.

## GETTING LINGUISTICALLY EQUIPPED: PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS?

YOU MIGHT KNOW SOME FRENCH or may be willing to give it a try, but knowing a word and being able to say it are two different things. French pronunciation can be daunting in that letters are silent and lots of words are not pronounced like they appear. The worst is when words in French are the same as in English but you can't make them sound right. Try pronouncing the French for hospital, *hôpital*—it's pronounced "ooh-pee-tal." How *beaucoup* ends up sounding like

"bo-kew" is beyond most tourists' imaginations. The toilet becomes "twa-let," instead of the English "toy-lit." Many guidebooks offer travelers lists of terms and phrases, but without the articles that precede them and, more importantly, easy-to-use phonetic transcriptions, you might as well give up before

### **unofficial TIP**

We have added a pronunciation guide only to words that you most likely might need to pronounce.

you contort your mouth and lips into incomprehensible sounds. It won't come out as recognizable French.

So—for those who need it—we have included next to each French word in italics a transcription of the sound. The syllable that is in bold is the one that you stress. *D'accord?* (**dac**-core?) All right? We just want you to be able to look at a cluster of letters, pronounce it, and find that someone is rushing off to fetch you another towel or bring you the salt and pepper. Just read these transcriptions out loud as if they were in English. Purse your lips, raise your shoulders, and let the music and passion take over. You're speaking French.

## SURVIVAL FRENCH

START OUT BY BEING ABLE to ask in French whether the person in front of you speaks English. To be safe, start every sentence with either *pardon* (pahr-**dohn**) or *excusez-moi* (**ex**-coo-zay **mwa**). *Parlez-vous anglais?* You'll get as an answer either *oui*, *un peu*, or *non, pas de tout* (yes, a little, or no, not at all). If you get the latter, you'll want to set the record straight right away that you also do not speak French. *Moi non plus. Je ne parle pas français.* Or, *je parle un peu* (I speak a

little bit). *Merci*, of course, is thank you, and *merci beaucoup* is thank you very much.

Get in the habit quickly of greeting your hotel concierge or the chambermaid with *Bonjour, monsieur* or *Bonjour, madame*. On your second day try adding *Comment allez-vous?* (**co-mo tah-lay voo**) or *Comment ça va?* (**co-mo sah vah**), which means, how are you? They'll be impressed. But be warned: Do not ask people on the street whom you have not already met, *Comment ça va?* They'll probably ignore you anyway, thinking you're weird. Strangers usually do not talk to each other. Yes, you can err on the friendly side.

Remember that French is far more formal than English, and the rules of language need to be respected. A basic difference between English and French is that French uses the *tu* and *vous* form for you. When addressing anyone other than a close friend, family member, or child, you should only use the *vous* form. French people who work together in the same office for years do not change over to the *tu* form. So don't initiate familiarity; let the French person do it. In any case, most Parisians understand that Americans and their language are naturally casual and familiar, so tourists usually are excused their innocent murder of French formalities.

When greeting or taking leave of someone, don't be surprised if a hand is extended your way. Shake it. You may repeat this formal act with the same person several times in the same day. For a note on *les bises*, that charming succession of little kisses that Parisians are always giving each other, see the Introduction.

### Saying Hello and Goodbye

*Bonjour, madame* (bohn-**jzoor** ma-**dahm**).

*Au revoir, madame* (oh rev-**war** ma-**dahm**).

*Bonjour, monsieur* (bohn-**jzoor** miss-**yiuh**).

*Au revoir, monsieur* (oh rev-**war** miss-**yiuh**).

(These days, when you don't know the marital status of a woman, use *madame* instead of *mademoiselle*.)

A more casual greeting is simply *Salut* (sah-**loo**).

### Other Useful Phrases

*Enchantez* (on-shahn-**tay**), which means pleased to meet you.

*Je suis ravi de faire votre connaissance* (dzjuh **swee** ra-**vee** duh **fair** voh-tra ko-ness-**sahnz**), which means pleased to make your acquaintance (very formal). You'll either impress them or make them laugh.

*Combien ça coûte* (**comb-bee-yen** sah **coot**). How much does it cost?

*Ooh la la!* (yes, people do say this when impressed or surprised.)

## NUMBERS *and* PRICES: *the Euro*

AS IS ALWAYS TRUE, NUMBERS CHANGE—phone and fax numbers, opening and closing times, and especially prices. For those of you

## MISNOMERS

- The French do not hate Americans, though they are often passionate about politics both in public and private. In fact, the French love affair with American contemporary culture is vast. You'll never be the object of any blatant and personalized display of anti-Americanism, unless of course you are wearing a loud button on your shirt: WE LOVE THE DEATH PENALTY. Not a popular opinion in Europe.
- French fries are really Belgian in origin and are simply called *les frites* in French. The way of cutting potatoes into thin strips was originally French.
- The French have no idea what French dressing is. The most common salad dressing is called *vinaigrette*, resembling Americans' idea of Italian dressing.
- The French don't think of French bread as particularly French. It's just a *baguette* or stick of bread.
- French cuffs don't mean a thing in France. They're *manchette*.
- There is no such thing in France as the French kiss. Open-mouthed tongue kissing has no national boundaries, and aside from *les bises*, the formal greeting that marks most encounters, is really the only kind of kissing that counts here.
- French windows are just normal windows for the French.
- Don't look for a French harp. It doesn't exist in France. The same is true for the French knot or French omelet.
- French pastry in France is just *pâtisserie*.
- Of course, French toast, having nothing to do with France, is logically called *pain perdu* (lost bread).

## MISNOMERS, PART 2

The French, however, have their own misnomers for you:

- A *café américain* is a full cup of weak coffee, American style. (We agree, Starbucks has improved the item a lot. Speaking of Starbucks, they've achieved an invasion of Paris, about which the locals seem pretty blasé.)
- A *bar américain* is the kind of bar you stand up and drink at.
- A *cuisine américaine* is a kitchen with a center counter or bar, open and roomy; in other words, a kitchen.
- A *voiture américaine* is a big and sporty car like a Cadillac.
- Homard à l'américaine is lobster cooked with tomatoes and shallots, as is never done in America.
- And novels that are *traduit de l'américain* means that they are translated from American (as opposed to English), as if American were its own language.

who have really been out of the loop, the French franc has been replaced. In the spirit of being the most accurate and helpful, we list all prices in this guide in euros (€) only. Where we describe pretravel purchases or services and products with U.S. list prices, we have included U.S. dollar prices. Everything else is in euros only.

To make conversion easy for you, we have included a handy chart indicating equivalent prices in U.S. dollars, British pounds, and the euro. The euro was officially converted at 6.55957 (rounded out to 6.55) francs and, after a weak first year at 10–15% lower than the U.S. dollar, charged back and has steadily climbed to over 35% stronger than the U.S. dollar. Thus, as of this writing, 1 euro is about \$1.35, or think of a U.S. dollar as about €0.73. Expect fluctuations. Although some *Unofficial Guide to Paris* financial insiders believe that the euro will slide back a bit, expect the dollar to remain weak. Make sure you check rates before making reservations and purchases, and remember, your holiday may either cost you a third more than you had hoped or require that you make a few adjustments or sacrifices. One way or another, do not let a hundred bucks spoil an otherwise fantastic stay in Paris.

**unofficial TIP**  
To get a quick idea if something in euros is expensive, think of the conversion as one-to-one, one U.S. dollar is one euro, and then fine-tune according to the exchange rate. Or think of the cost of something in euros as the price in dollars before you add the tip or sales tax.

#### CURRENCY CONVERSION TABLE

(Supposing that €1 equals \$1.35 U.S. and £.67 U.K.)

EUROS		U.S. DOLLARS	BRITISH POUNDS
€0.10	=	\$0.13	£0.07
€0.20	=	\$0.27	£0.14
€0.50	=	\$0.67	£0.34
€1	=	\$1.35	£0.67
€2	=	\$2.70	£1.34
€5	=	\$6.70	£3.40
€10	=	\$13.30	£6.70
€20	=	\$26.60	£13.40
€50	=	\$67.00	£34.00
€100	=	\$135	£67.00
€200	=	\$270	£127
€500	=	\$670	£334