



The Most Magical Places to Go During Christmas in Paris

Place Vendôme

Place Vendôme is one of Paris' most beautiful historic city squares. The square dates back to the late 17th century when a massive column was erected in the center of the square by Napoleon Bonaparte.

Today, the square is home to high end shops like Cartier, Chanel, and Dior. You'll also find the luxurious Ritz Paris hotel here.

During the holiday, the square is decked out with glittering Christmas trees, golden lights, holiday window displays, and a carousel.

We visited at sunset and the glow of the lights against the pink sky was nothing short of magical!

Jardin des Tuileries Christmas Market

Paris has a handful of festive Christmas markets, and the Jardin des Tuileries Market is our favorite!

The market is set against the backdrop of the historic 16th century Tuileries Gardens, and is one of the largest Christmas markets in Paris.

You'll find wooden chalets selling handcrafted gifts and a variety of foods like crêpes, raclette, hot chocolate, roasted chestnuts, and mulled wine.

They also have fun holiday-themed activities including a Ferris wheel, small ice skating rink, carnival games, and Santa's fun house.

Galleries Lafayette

Galleries Lafayette Haussman is a luxury department store that opened in 1912 and features stunning Belle Époque architecture.

It is hands-down the prettiest store in Paris, and it sparkles even brighter when it is glammed out for the holidays.

The main attraction is the massive Christmas tree display found under the glass dome in the center of the store. The display changes each year, but it is always mesmerizing.

You can get up close to the tree on the Glasswalk that extends high above the store floor below. The Glasswalk is free to visit, but you do need to [reserve a time](#).

Head to the rooftop terrace for panoramic views of Paris and grab a drink at the Ice Cube Bar.

You'll also find gorgeous holiday window displays on the sidewalk outside of the store. The nearby Printemps department store also has holiday window displays.

Galerie Vivienne

Paris is known for its hidden passages and covered arcades. Galerie Vivienne dates back to 1823 and is one of the prettiest historic covered passages in Paris, especially during the holidays.

This elegant arcade is adorned with mosaic tiles and a soaring glass roof. During the holidays, it levels up with twinkling lights, oversized bows, and festive wreaths. It's the perfect spot for holiday shopping and photos!

Galerie Vivienne is located near Palais Royal if you want to walk through the beautiful former royal gardens and take a photo at Colonne de Buren. This art installation was first constructed in 1885 in the Palace courtyard and consists of 260 striped columns of various heights.

Rue Saint-Honoré

Rue Saint-Honoré is a historic street in the heart of Paris. The street dates back to the Middle Ages and is known as the site where Joan of Arc was wounded in 1492 during the Hundred Years' War.

Today, Rue Saint-Honoré is a world-famous shopping street home to high-end retailers such as Louis Vuitton, Hermès, Chanel, Prada, Gucci and more. During the holidays, the street is draped with twinkling lights and the stores go all out with festive over-the-top light displays.

Our favorite holiday displays are on the exterior of the Chanel and Dior stores located on the corner of Rue Saint-Honoré and Rue Cambon. The elegant displays change each year, but they are always impressive.

Saint-Germain-des-Prés Christmas Market

The Saint-Germain-des-Prés Christmas Market is a quaint and charming Christmas market. It has a cozy vibe with decorated stalls selling artisanal gifts and gourmet foods.

It is not nearly as big as the Jardin des Tuileries Market, however, we love the location of this market in the heart of the historic Saint-Germain neighborhood. Over the years, this neighborhood has been home to countless writers and artists such as Hemingway, Picasso, Voltaire, Rousseau, and more.

The market is set up in front of Eglise de Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the oldest church in Paris dating back to 558.

I love the contrast of the cheery holiday stands set against the imposing Parisian Romanesque and Gothic chapel in the background. If the church is open, you can go inside to admire the nativity scene and Christmas decor.

Le Village Royal

Le Village Royal is another hidden passageway and Paris gem. The entrance is tucked away off Rue Boissy D'Anglas and leads to an open-air courtyard lined with local boutiques and cozy cafes.

During the holidays, the courtyard is filled with beautiful Christmas decorations that really add to the ambiance and make for great photo ops. The best time to visit is in the evening when the lights are glowing.

Avenue Montaigne & Champs-Élysées

Avenue Montaigne and Avenue Des Champs-Élysées are part of the "Golden Triangle of Paris", a holy trinity of luxury that also includes Avenue George V. These streets are lined with ritzy upscale shops and Micheline-star restaurants.

During the holidays, the streets become festive eye candy with dazzling lights and opulent window displays.

Champs-Élysées is one of the most famous shopping streets in the world. During Christmas, it becomes a glittering boulevard of lights spanning from Place de la Concorde to the Arc de Triomphe.

Avenue Montaigne is my favorite street during Christmas, every tree lining the street is wrapped with thousands of white lights.

The original House of Dior is also located on this street at 30 Avenue Montaigne. This is where Christian Dior established his first couture house in 1946 and they always put on an impressive light display each year.

Open-Top Christmas Lights Bus Tour

One of the best ways to see the City of Lights is on an [Open-Top Christmas Lights Bus Tour](#). On the 3-hour tour, you will drive by the best holiday light displays and major landmarks in the city.

Our route included Place Vendôme, Jardin des Tuileries, Champs-Élysées, Arc de Triomphe, Avenue Montaigne, the Eiffel Tower, and the Louvre.

Our driver even timed it perfectly so that we would drive by the Eiffel Tower right as the light show began.

The tickets are reasonably priced and it's a great way to see the main highlights in a short amount of time. We really enjoyed it!

It did get pretty chilly up top, but you can move down to the inside of the bus if you get too cold.

Mademoiselle Angelina

For the best hot chocolate in Paris, head to Mademoiselle Angelina. This sophisticated Belle Époque-style cafe has been a beloved Paris institution for over 120 years.

This renowned Parisian tea room is famous for its rich hot chocolate and delectable pastries. It's the perfect spot to warm up on a cold winter day!

The original location is across the street from Tuileries Gardens at 226 Rue de Rivoli. There is always a line wrapped around the sidewalk, so you can expect a long wait.

I recommend going to the location next to Jardin du Luxembourg. The cafe is cute and cozy and offers the same menu without a long wait.

Paris is filled with so many other darling street cafes that are decorated for the holidays, you'll find them on every corner!

Palais Garnier

Palais Garnier is arguably the most opulent and beautiful building in Paris. The historic Baroque opera house first opened in 1875 and was THE place to be seen in high society.

Today, visitors can take a [self-guided tour](#) or a [guided tour](#) of the grand opera house. You'll get a chance to see the Grand Foyer, my favorite room in the opera house. It reminds me of a miniature Hall of Mirrors in the [Palace of Versailles](#)!

During the holidays, one of the most magical things you can do is watch the Nutcracker Ballet at Palais Garnier. The ballet isn't performed every year, and sometimes it is held at Opera Bastille, but check the [calendar of events](#) for upcoming shows.

Place Louis Lépine

Place Louis Lépine is a public square situated between Sainte-Chapelle and Notre-Dame Cathedral. This is where you'll find Marché aux fleurs, a well-known organic flower market.

During the winter, the market transforms into a holiday wonderland with a forest of Christmas trees and stalls selling handmade gifts and whimsical decor.

While you're in the area, I highly recommend touring Sainte-Chapelle. This is my favorite church in Paris and you will be blown away by the stained glass windows!

To visit the church, you'll need to purchase a combo ticket that includes visiting the Concierge. This is where Marie-Antoinette was imprisoned before being beheaded and it's an interesting place to visit. For more information and recommendations, see our guide [Paris in 4 Days: The Ambitious Traveler's Guide](#).

Notre-Dame Christmas Market

The Notre-Dame Christmas market is held across the Siene River at Square René Viviani. You'll find a collection of holiday stalls selling festive treats and handcrafted goods with views of the cathedral.

While your there, be sure to make [reservations](#) to visit Notre-Dame Cathedral. It is free to visit, but the timed reservations help manage crowd control.

The cathedral re-opened on December 7, 2024 after being closed for 5 years due to the devastating fire in April 2019.

I also recommend getting a crêpe at Crêperie du Cloître next to the cathedral. It's one of our favorite crêpe shops in Paris!

If you're looking for more Christmas markets to visit in the city, the Marché de Noël de la Tour Eiffel has wooden stalls decorated for Christmas and the twinkling lights of the Eiffel Tower in the background. Pure Christmas magic!

Église de Madeline

Paris is filled with so many incredible churches, but La Madeleine is perhaps the most unique.

This Roman Catholic church stands out due to its neoclassical architecture and looks more

like an ancient Greek temple surrounded by 65-foot tall Corinthian columns.

The current cathedral was dedicated in 1842, and as an interesting side note, the funerals of Frédéric Chopin and Coco Chanel were held here, along with other notable French citizens.

Although the cathedral doesn't look like a traditional church from the outside, the inside feels more traditional with intricate carvings, detailed frescoes, and soaring domed ceilings.

At Christmas time, you'll find a small crèche, or nativity scene, at the front of the church and wreaths hung on the columns. They also hold Christmas concerts throughout the holiday season which would be incredible to experience.

I also love the view from the church steps at Christmas time. It looks out over Rue Royale which is decorated with Christmas lights all down the street.

Le Grand Palais Ice Skating

One of the best places to get into the holiday spirit is at Le Grand Palais where you'll find one of the largest indoor ice-skating rinks in the world.

This stunning Beaux-Arts building was constructed for the 1900 Universal Exposition and becomes a winter wonderland with sparkling lights and festive music.

Book tickets in advance, especially for evening sessions when the rink glows under the lights.

Conclusion

Christmas in Paris truly is an unforgettable experience! The city itself is such a dream and it gets even better when you add festive Christmas markets, magical light displays, and delicious holiday treats. I hope this guide will help you discover the best places to go in Paris during Christmas for an unforgettable trip!