

SUMMER ISSUE

PARISIAN GUIDE

THE MAGAZINE FOR EXPATS AND ENGLISH-SPEAKERS

5

TAX DEDUCTIONS
EVERY EXPAT SHOULD
NOT OVERLOOK

THE FRENCH SECRET GETAWAY OF
CAP FERRET

BOATHOUSE
ON THE SEINE

An Alternative to Renting a Flat in Paris



Tax Deductions Every Expat Should Remember



Finally! An Anglo-Guide to French Ingredients

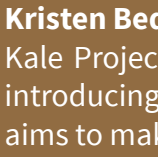


Cure Your Kid's Boredom with these Activities

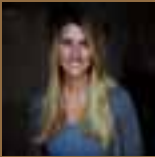
CONTRIBUTORS



Lolita Villa is a freelance writer and teacher. Aside from contributing regularly to Entrepreneur Magazine and occasional book projects, she handles bridge programs for French and other foreign students in the Philippines.



Kristen Beddard moved to Paris in 2011. She founded The Kale Project in 2012, taking on a personal mission of re-introducing the leafy-green vegetable to the French and aims to make it available in markets all over France.



When not busy writing print, TV and online communication for int'l. ad agencies, **Sylvia Sabes** works as a journalist for Afar Magazine and The Girls Guide to Paris, hoping to inspire others to discover the Paris that captured her heart 40 years ago. Check out her blog, FindingNoon.com.

Mary Campbell is an American Food Stylist in France. She is a mother of three Parisians who is deeply in love with a Frenchman and equally as passionate about French cuisine. Find samples of her work at Eatinginparis.com.



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Expat Profile:
Amy Thomas
Author



An aerial photograph of the Cap Ferret peninsula in France. The peninsula is a narrow strip of land, mostly covered in green pine forests, with a long, straight beach running along its western side. The beach is bordered by a dense line of trees. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a clear, pale blue. The peninsula is surrounded by water on three sides, with a small bay to the east.

CAP FERRET

THE LITTLE KNOWN FRENCH COASTAL GETAWAY

By Kristen Beddard

Imagine a vacation spot where you can dine next to French movie stars while still wearing your sundress from the beach. Getting the best of both worlds seems far-fetched, but fortunately it's not – and this place exists in France.

Of course there are the usual spots, such as chic Cannes and Saint-Tropez, or quaint Provence. If you want trendy and tranquil, however, it's Cap Ferret, where it's possible to enjoy a meal by the shore then wander around town in your bathing suit. Vanessa Paradis and Johnny Depp found this little-known getaway cool enough to have spent a few summers here; it has a relaxed, New England vibe thanks to its mix of oyster shacks and art galleries.

Take care though not to confuse Cap Ferret with Cap Ferrat, the distinctly posh holiday destination in the French Riviera. This one, a narrow strip of sand, is the peninsula 60 kilometers from Bordeaux, tucked between the Atlantic and the Bassin d'Arcachon. With beaches and pine forests to the west and the calm bay to the east, it is home to some of the cleanest waters in Europe and there is more than enough for everyone to see, eat and do here.

THE LITTLE KNOWN FRENCH COASTAL GETAWAY

CAP FERRET

WHERE TO STAY

Cap Ferret does not have an abundance of hotels, but if you book early enough you can find a few gems dotting the dunes. The most talked about is La Maison du Bassin, which has an enclosed bar and lounge hidden behind tall foliage. The ambience – straight out of a Bruce Weber photograph – creates a cozy backdrop for dinner or post-dip drinks.

For guests staying longer than a few days or those traveling with family, the best option is to rent a house or apartment. Like all vacation towns, Cap Ferret has multiple

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{ For those staying longer than a few days or traveling with family, the best option is to rent a house or apartment. }



WHERE TO STAY

Continuation

rental agencies to choose from. We stayed in Le Canon and would do so again given the central location within the peninsula and the proximity to the oyster bars. It's an easy ten-minute drive to the beaches and to the main town. Le Canon is surrounded by restaurants, shops, grocery stores and markets, most within walking distance.

Should one prefer to go camping, there are many dedicated sites five minutes from the shore.



THE LITTLE KNOWN FRENCH COASTAL GETAWAY

CAP FERRET

WHAT TO DO

There are several beaches to explore on the Atlantic side. As it is against the law to build any establishments on this portion of the coast, only two have food options resulting in an unobstructed view of the horizon and the World War II bunkers behind you. If surfing is your thing, the *Ecole de Surf de Cap Ferret* offers lessons and weekly camps.

Hiking, you say? There are over 785 square kilometers of trails throughout the pine forests for running, walking and biking. These

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WHAT TO DO

Continuation

will take you from one sandy slice of paradise to the next, perfect for a fun day trip.

While there are smaller markets throughout each of the towns, do not miss the Cap Ferret market. It is open from 8 am to 1 pm in the summer time and features textiles, clothes, jewelry and cosmetics.

For shorter excursions, ferries can take you to and from Cap Ferret. You can go for a picnic lunch and spend the day on the Dune du Pilat, Europe's highest sand dune. It's a bit surreal to walk only on fine, loose grains for an entire day, but the experience yields spectacular views of the bay and is something you won't likely get to do elsewhere.

You can also explore Bird Island or the town of Archachon, where the Phillipe Starck-designed restaurant La Co(o)rniche Pyla-sur-Mer is located. If you're more of a thrill-seeker, you can soak up the sights by paragliding.



THE LITTLE KNOWN FRENCH COASTAL GETAWAY

CAP FERRET

WHERE TO EAT

Ostréiculture, or oyster farming, has enabled Cap Ferret to maintain its rustic charm over the years and forms a large part of its economy.

When wild oyster production began to decline in the mid-19th century, Napoleon III brought the practice back to the area, which has been known for its bivalves ever since. After daily *apéros* with freshly shucked oysters and local white wine by the bay, a similar meal somewhere else will not taste as fresh. Catching a glimpse of the farmers tending to the endless oyster beds while one is on board a ferry underscores just how important this enterprise is to the locals.

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{ In Le Canon, there is the Quartier Ostréicole, where you can pick and choose a new place each day for your oyster and wine apéro. }



WHERE TO EAT

Continuation

In Le Canon, there is the Quartier Ostréicole, where you can pick and choose a different place for your daily oyster and wine *apéro*. Strolling through the dusty path, past the colorfully painted oyster shacks, is like stepping back in time.

If you can spare an afternoon to watch the world go by, head from Le Canon to Chez Boulan, the oyster institution in Cap Ferret. Situated on the bay, the garden – with its mismatched wooden tables and chairs – is straight out of Alice in Wonderland.

If you're still craving more seafood, then the best recourse is dinner at Chez Hortense. Since 1938, the restaurant has served what many consider to be the best *moules frites* in France, a well-guarded house recipe. (Our best guess is that it's a mix of parsley, white wine, lemon and parmesan cheese.) If you manage to reserve a table, you may get the chance to spot French celebrities such as Marion Cotillard.

There are other places around the Marché Cap Ferret that are worth your while. The first, Lemoine, is a café with an outpost in Paris. It has roots in southwestern France and is a top spot in which to grab a seat in the sun and people-watch. Don't miss their famous *cannelés*. For a more substantial meal – and a break from traditional French fare – try Le Bistro de Peyo, located in the covered market. It serves Basque-style tapas and Spanish wines by the glass. It's hard to get a standing space during lunch, so either get there early or arrive after the rush.



THE LITTLE KNOWN FRENCH COASTAL GETAWAY

CAP FERRET

Some Useful Tips



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Other restaurants to sample in Cap Ferret:

Pinasse Café
Allée Bélisaire
Tél. : +33 5 56 03 77 87

Le Bistro de Bassin
5, rue des Pionniers
Tél. : +33 5 56 03 72 46

So Phare Away
32, avenue Nord du Phare
Tél. : +33 5 56 60 22 87

Restaurant O D'ici
62, avenue de l'Océan
Tél. : +33 5 57 70 59 13

STARTING OVER IN **PARIS**

Parisian Guide talked to Amy Thomas about what it was like to forge new beginnings in the most romantic city in the world. As an associate creative director for Ogilvy & Mather, she was recruited in 2009 to work on Louis Vuitton’s digital advertising.

In addition to gleaning two years’ worth of delicious memories, Amy has managed to write a book about her experiences, *Paris, My Sweet: A Year in the City of Light* (and Dark Chocolate). Aside from contributing to publications such as the New York Times, New York Post and National Geographic Traveler, she also maintains two blogs: www.godiloveparis.blogspot.com and dessertfordinner.com.

What made you move to a new city? What made you choose the French capital?

I had a years-long love for and obsession with Paris. When the opportunity to move there for my job walked through my door, I was all too happy to say yes.

What were the most difficult things about moving here?

Leaving my friends and family. Leaving comfort and security. Fear of the unknown.

What was the first Parisian thing you fell in love with?

The sound of an ambulance. I was 19, it was my very first day in Paris – I spent a semester at the American University of Paris – and when I heard the siren, I knew I was very far from home.



How did you cope with homesickness?

I blogged. And ate sweets.

“ YOU JUST HAVE TO
OVERCOME
YOUR FEAR OF
SOUNDING DUMB
AND
STUDY AND TRY! ”

**READ FULL
INTERVIEW**





How did you go about building a community of friends in a new city?

The great thing about moving to a new city is that you have to put yourself out there like you normally don’t. I was more open to joining language or expat groups, being outgoing, chatting with people and giving everything a try at least once. You stay busy, but it’s not always fulfilling – you’re connecting with people based on one interest rather than on a ‘soul to soul’ connection you have with friends.

But I did get there. In my second year, not only meeting friends through other friends and at my job, I met a whole community of expat bloggers who were just wonderful. I’m still very close to a handful of them.

How did you deal with the language barrier?

You just try your best. I studied the language. I always tried to speak in French, whether at a store, restaurant, on the bus, at the office. You just have to overcome your fear of sounding dumb and study and try!

What is one thing that every expat should do in Paris?

Whatever speaks loudest and truest to them—Paris is a different feast for everyone.

What were the best and worst things that you discovered?

The worst: how positively *blasé* the French can be – shrugging their shoulders, impassive face, *peu important*. The best: they really do pursue pleasure – there’s so much for Americans to learn there!

What touristy thing would you love to do but haven’t yet?

Paris Authentic. It gives tours in those old 2CV cars and I just love the idea of being driven around the city. Paris is such a walking city, and I love roaming and Velibing, but it would be such fun to be chauffeured around while seeing the sights!

Any money tips or advice for new expats in France?

If you’re keeping funds in the US, find a bank that won’t charge you for converting dollars and euros and vice versa. Similarly, restrict your ATM and credit card usage as the fees can be crazy.

Would you mind sharing some of your favorite places?

Rue Montorgueil, a wonderful pedestrian street, for its food shopping and people watching. Nearby, I love Experimental, one of the very first cocktail bars in the city, which has fabulous drinks and bartenders. There’s a lunch chain called Cojean that I love for its easy, healthy sandwiches and salads. Café Flore and Café La Palette, both in Saint Germain, are quintessentially Parisian. My favorite chocolates are from Jean-Paul Hévin, and at the top of my pastry list is Du Pain et des Idées, Stohrer and Boulangerie Julien.

How would you contrast Paris and New York? How are they the same and in what ways are they different?

Each city is so seductive for its own reasons. New York has scale, energy and passion. Paris has

grace, romance and history.

New York, for instance, has skyscrapers, lofts, Central Park, yellow cabs, Grand Central, FDR, Brooklyn Bridge and never-ending avenues. On the other hand, Paris has La Tour Eiffel, the Seine, the grand plane tree-lined boulevards, hidden courtyards, the Vélibs and *hôtel particuliers*.

As for places to eat and drink, New York has everything from bakeries, delis and pizza joints to cocktail dens, mega-restaurants and pretzel carts. Paris, meanwhile, has comptoirs, chocolatiers, patisseries, boulangeries and outdoor markets. The differences are dramatic, but both cities appeal to people for their architecture, food, fashion and art.

Where can one find the best French food in Paris?

Just about anywhere – all the specialty shops. I love the salads in cafés and a good old Nutella street crêpe. Some of my favorite restaurants include La Régalade Saint Honoré, Café Constant, Bistrot Paul Bert, Chez l’Ami Jean, Derriere and Le Verre Volé.

You have a very important guest coming over and you have to take him or her to somewhere quintessentially Parisian. What’s the first place that comes to mind?

Luxembourg Gardens. They’re so iconic. They’re regal yet relaxed and scream “Paris” to me.

What should expats know about the locals?

Paris is the most visited city in the world. The locals, understandably, can be nonplussed about the “foreign invasion.” Be self-aware: at least try to speak their language and practice – or at least respect – their customs, such as *politesse* and dress codes.

Can you name a fellow Parisian you’d love to share a drink with?

Alex Lobrano, the journalist and author of Hungry for Paris. I met him at a reading once. He has a warm, relaxed disposition, but he’s positively worldly and plugged in. I’d love to talk to him about dining in Paris and all of his European travels.

You’re surviving on your last 30 euros. How would you spend it?

I’d create my own moveable feast. I’d walk and walk and walk—maybe start in the fourth *arrondissement*, cross over to the 12eme, 11eme and 10eme. I’d stop in boulangeries and patisseries for pastries and *une demi-baguette*. I’d get a Nutella crêpe somewhere along the way, some chocolates, and perhaps *une tranche* of quiche and then have a quiet little picnic along the canal, amidst all the bobos doing the same.

List 5 things that should be in one’s Paris survival list.

Plan of Paris, Converse, a bike helmet, Skype, and a sense of humor.



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Summer

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HOUSEBOATS

by Lolita Villa

Coming to Paris can be a wondrous experience. But trust me when I say that you haven't seen anything until you've experienced a *peniche*. The Seine is the centerpiece of Paris, a 776 km waterway, home to some of the most important commercial activities in France. But did you know that you can live there, too?

Many people – especially expats – live on the Seine at varying lengths throughout the year. There's nothing like the changing sights outside the window, the cozy summer breeze wafting through your room, or sipping cocktails on deck under the *Tour Eiffel*. Boathouses are the norm here, and you'll find a unique river culture when you join a community of people serenely floating down a life of dreams.

ARE HOUSEBOATS FOR EVERYONE?

Many houseboats are almost or more than a century old. And yet these can hide within it an interior of relative luxury and modern comfort. Most are equipped with central heating, wi-fi Internet, modern fixtures, satellite TV, a jacuzzi or garden – even a landline phone.

Many expats, especially from the UK, Australia or the US, make up a large portion of the houseboat community, and there is a tendency for boathouse owners to look out for each other. Living on a river is a very unique lifestyle, and you can most certainly find other sympathetic boat owners who will lend a hand, offer helpful tips or discuss concerns on what is happening around your marina.

One of the obvious perks is living at the heart of Paris – without the traffic. Bicycles are often loaded onto the deck for a quick drive into town. Best of all, if your houseboat is fit for travel, you can unmoor yourself anytime you're ready to shout "Anchors away!"

There are downsides too, such as not receiving post which unsurprisingly gets lost because of your unusual address, the one linked to the number on the boat. The upkeep and maintenance should be diligently observed, such as addressing rust and leaks right away. Be wary when you find little creatures on board such as duck eggs hatching in the plants. They might need a little help getting back to the mother ducks in the water.

Mobility also limits your social life so make sure you don't mind spending 90% of the time with your mates. It's just not that easy to jump on a neighboring boat for tea or have extended chats with another boat floating the other way. However, there will always be entertainment when you get on board into one of the floating restaurants and bars. The logistics and transport can also be trying when appliances need to be taken to town for repairs.

BOAT-RENTALS AND PENICHE-HOTELS

Don't splurge on a houseboat just yet. Do the trial by going on a cruise onboard a *peniche*-hotel or a bed and breakfast, which is always a pleasant experience. Houseboat rentals can be cheap, and you can get a chance to find a good deal online. You can book a houseboat for as long as you want – whether a weekend or half a year.

You might want to try *Le boudoir de serendipity*, which is a fascinating guest riverboat from the 1930s, overhauled by its owners to have modern conveniences. It can be booked for a single night for 140 to 190 euros a night. You can also negotiate rates for an extended stay. Its designer rooms feature arty furniture and different themes, while the owners provide jovial company that put guests in a pleasant mood.

Another option is the *Bateau Simpatico*, a romantic townhouse-style Dutch barge that was first launched in 1916, and has since been reconverted into a vacation boat. It has luxury amenities and a prestigious address on the left bank of the Seine and the Avenue de Suffren at the foot of the Eiffel Tower.





BUYING A HOUSEBOAT

One can find houseboats for sale for every budget, but it would be wise to prepare on average 200,000 euros and up. An online search would yield good leads on eBay or a booking site such as Feel Paris, which showcases a wide variety of floating residences for sale or for rent.

A few tips: Before forking out any lottery earnings, make sure that you don't buy something based on first impressions. Make a personal visit and see whether you find an unkempt dock which may indicate a negligent owner. Look for a clean appearance, or chipped paint, faded gel-coat, mildew, or rotting wood especially in the roof. Lights that don't work, gas leaks and bad odors must be noted. Checking the engine, the generator and the plumbing is also crucial. A careful inspection may save you a lot of headaches from repairs or an overhaul.

If you are serious about making an investment, it would be wise to hire an experienced houseboat surveyor beforehand.

COSTS OF LIVING

If you've bought your houseboat in cash, congratulations! But don't expect to be completely rent-free. Owning and piloting a houseboat is going to cost you. Allot budget for annual maintenance and fuel, which depends on how frequently you are on the move. Although it is a romantic thought to spend your life following the river to different lands, houseboats come with its set of administrative fees and obligations – you are in Paris, after all.

That's why most of the time you might be moored on a private marina, and thus, must pay the mooring fee (100 to 200 euros per month). To have the right to navigate the boat through different waterways, you will need a license from *Voies Navigables de France* (VNF), which is the national waterways board. Allot up to 400 euros for this, including permits. An International Certificate of Competence may also be acquired from any legitimate sailing school in the country. Just like a car, you would need to register your boat and pay the minimal fees. Lastly, it would not be France if you did not get a violation ticket for over speeding and excessive noise.

If you're not that sure about getting a houseboat for life, get a weekend cruise and see if the river life suits you. Summer is the best time to do so.

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FRENCH FOOD FINDS

How to Wade Through the Elaborate Vocabulary Surrounding Dairy

By Mary Campbell

Part 1 of 2



JUST when you think you are starting to make real progress with your French, a new level of detail emerges: In France even the animals speak a different language. It's true, *mes amis* – it isn't *quack quack*. Here, ducks go *coin coin*! Parisian pups don't *woof*, they *ouaf*; and the glorious French cow *meuuuhhhs*.

Cooking a family recipe using the equivalent French ingredient is not any easier. Here we will focus on the mainstay of dairy or *produits laitier*: milk and butter.

The French take their dairy seriously. Entire aisles are dedicated to the stuff, both in the refrigerated section and on the shelves. The milk and cream that is stocked in grocery stores is UHT, which stands for *ultra haute temperature* or ultra-high temperature pasteurization. Fresh milk is immediately blasted with a super high heat then cooled, which sterilizes the milk and allows it to keep at room temperature for three months or more. However, once UHT milk or cream is opened, it must be kept in the fridge and lasts as long as fresh milk or cream does.



ONCE you have decided which side of the aisle you are shopping on, then you need to wade through the elaborate French vocabulary surrounding the various kinds of milk:

- **Entier**

whole milk, denoted by a red cap or label

- **Demi-écrémé**

skim milk, denoted by a blue cap or label

- **Écrémé**

non-fat milk, denoted by a green cap or label

These are the most important terms to master. But if you would like to plunge further into the nuances of French milk here are a few more:

- **Cru**

raw or unpasteurized, milk in its purest form and with the most pungent flavor



- **Microfiltré**

milk that has been purified with an ultra-fine filter which removes 98% of the bacteria and treats the milk without heating, leaving its natural flavor intact

- **Bio or Biologique**

indicates that the product is organic

- **Lait fermenté or Lait Ribot**

Fermented milk is popular in North Africa. Lait Ribot is a traditional drink from Brittany. Both correspond roughly to

buttermilk and are perfect for all your pancake-making and chicken-frying needs.

If you are looking for a milk-like non-dairy drink or *boisson*, then swing by your local organic shop where you will find:

- **Lait de riz** - rice milk
- **Lait de soja** - soy milk
- **Lait d'amande** - almond milk
- **Lait d'avoine** - oat milk



PASS ME THE BUTTER, PLEASE

THE French slather their morning baguette with butter and pack it into their delicate pastries. But you won't find it at the lunch or dinner table. In restaurants, the bread basket arrives with your meal and is meant to help you sop up all those lovely French sauces on your plate and to accompany any cheese or *charcuterie*. The one exception to this rule is oysters, which are served with rye bread and very salty butter.



Note these useful vocabs:

- **Beurre doux** - unsalted butter
- **Beurre demi-sel** - salted butter
- **Beurre salé** - very salty butter, typically from Brittany and reserved for the strong of heart
- **Beurre aux cristaux de sel** – semi-salted butter which is spiked with crunchy flakes of sea-salt

If you have your kitchen now fully stocked with butter and dairy, here is a wonderful use for it: a creamy chilled dessert infused with vanilla and sitting on a bed of toasty caramel.



OEUFS AU LAIT

(Serves 4 to 6 people)

Ingredients:

500ml whole milk - *lait entier*
Half a vanilla bean (or a spoonful of vanilla extract)
4 egg yolks and 2 whole eggs
150g white sugar - *sucre semoule*
1 spoonful of water

Procedure:

Bring the milk and vanilla bean to a boil and then turn off the heat and let that delicious vanilla flavor infuse the milk. In the meantime, beat the eggs and sugar together until the mixture is a pale straw color. A minute or two with a whisk should do it. Pluck out the vanilla bean from the milk, scrape the seeds into the milk and toss the pod. If you are using vanilla extract, heat the milk and pour in the extract, no need to let the milk sit.



Now slowly pour in the warm milk mixture into the eggs while mixing constantly with your other hand. If you don't mix while you pour you'll end up with scrambled eggs.

In a clean pan, pour the sugar and the spoonful of water. Set it on medium high on your stove and let it bubble and cook until it is a uniform caramel color.

Then pour the hot caramel into a pan or several small ramekins to coat the bottom. You can now pour the egg mixture on top of the caramel and bake in a water bath for 20 minutes, the mixture should be firm but wobbly in the center when you shake it. Let the *oeufs au lait* cool for at least an hour before diving in with a spoon.

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WORLDS OF WELLNESS IN PARIS

Feeling stressed out? Moving to a new country can be a lot of work, from understanding the nuances of another language and adjusting to the culture to figuring out how to prepare dishes using unfamiliar ingredients. Several weeks of intense disorientation can indeed make one feel like taking a break from it all.

But you can go on that much-needed holiday without stepping too far from your adopted home. Sylvia Sabes explores some spas in Paris that blend exotic appeal with accents of luxury, and transport weary individuals to worlds of wellness and relaxation.



LES CENT CIELS

Les Cent Ciel is just outside the city limits, yet feels worlds away. Standing just a few blocks from the metro, this dream location resembles a modern-day Ottoman harem, with a candle-lit stairway that leads into a terra cotta sanctum. The hostess guides you into a locker room adorned with an oriental carpet and wine-stained walls. Downstairs is a pool, a sauna and a tiled hammam, with wide warm seats and a fountain bathed in gentle light. Make sure to request for an argan-soaked massage before taking a blissful nap.

Where	
45 bis Avenue Edouard Vaillant 92100 - Boulogne Billancourt	Phone: 01.46.20.07.01 Metro: Porte de St. Cloud
When	
Hamмам, Sauna, pool	Men and women (swimsuit required) :
Women only :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mon, Wed to Fri 5pm to 11pm• 2nd and last Sundays of each month from 10am to 10pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mon, Wed to Friday 10am to 5pm• Tues 5pm to 11pm• Sat 10am to 9pm• Sun 10am to 8pm except the 2nd et last Sunday of each month	
How Much	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From €40 for a simple hammam to €290 with massage, clay, facial and a meal	



WISSAÏ

Thai women clad in traditional embroidered silks welcome you into interiors filled with eastern scents, warm wood and gold tones. After slipping into loose, comfortable clothes – allowing movement – patrons will be stretched and pulled in every direction. The firm rhythmic pressure activates pressure points and relaxes tired muscles. Floral tea follows the treatment, prolonging the pleasure. You'll be reaping the benefits for several days.

Where

71 Avenue Raymond Poincaré
75016 Paris
Phone: 01.42.22.00.70
Metro: Victor Hugo

80 Rue de Vaugirard
75006 Paris
Phone: 01.45.53.29.23
Metro: Rennes

When

Mon to Sat 11am to 9pm

How Much

Massages start at €40 for 30 min.



AFTER THE RAIN

After the Rain, the spa at the Saint James & Albany, is actually Swiss, but the hotel is quite popular with the Spanish. When booking your treatment, it is advised to show up early to take advantage of their pool and hammam. Zen design – dark greys with splashes of red – marks the underground cellars, setting the stage for relaxation. After a few laps and a session in the hammam, a facial treatment will make you feel as docile as a kitten, sipping flavored water and tea while nibbling on snacks such as fresh fruit and candied orange rind.

Where

Hotel Saint James & Albany
202 Rue de Rivoli
75001 Paris
Phone: 01.44.58.43.77

When

Spa:

- Mon to Thurs 9am to 9pm
- Fri and Sat 9am to 10pm
- Sun 10am to 8pm

Pool and fitness facilities:

- Mon to Sun 7.30am to 10pm

How Much

€100 for a 45 minute massage to €760 for a 6 hour mini spa, access to the pool and hammam included



DIOR INSTITUT

The Hotel Plaza Athénée is so chic that I felt like a princess as I walked past the courtyard garden to the elegant spa, a piece of paradise painted in iconic Dior grey. Gym facilities and a hammam can be used before treatment. The establishment specializes in making you look picture-perfect, and before you head out to face the world once again, spend some time in the large rest area for tea and healthy treats.

Where

Hotel Plaza Athénée
25 Avenue Montaigne
75008 Paris
Phone: 01.53.67.65.35

When

Mon to Sun 9am to 9pm

How Much

Antistress massage €170 access to the hammam and fitness center included



SPA L'OCCITANE

With its pale wooden stairs lined with dried flowers, L'Occitane, situated in the chic Saint Germain neighborhood, makes you feel like you're in the French countryside. The treatment rooms are decorated in the same sophisticated country tones. Their new *Massage Décontraction Bien Etre*, created in partnership with a physical therapist, is a combination of intense breathing exercises and body positions.

Where

47 Rue de Sevres
75006 Paris
Phone: 01.42.22.88.62
Metro: Sevres Babylone, Rennes, Vaneau

When

- Mon to Wed and Sat 9.30am to 7.30pm
- Thurs and Fri 9.30am to 8pm

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WAYS TO REDUCE TAXES FOR FAMILIES AND EXPATRIATES

PART 1 OF 2

The tax system *can* be notoriously complex, more so for new arrivals who are unfamiliar with how it works. But you can lower your tax liabilities, depending on your circumstances. Whether you're welcoming another member to the family or moving into France on an expatriate contract, here are two of five scenarios on how to cut the dreaded tax bill:

REDUCING INCOME TAX FOR FAMILIES

Mr. and Mrs. X have three dependent children. Mr. X earns €75,000 a year and Mrs. X €45,000.

Under the current tax rates (for 2013 income, tax payable in 2014), if they paid tax individually and did not take into account the family, Mr. X's tax bill would come to €17,286, while his wife's would be €7,890. On an individual basis, the total tax liability would be €25,176.

However, if you are married or have entered into a PACS, the parts familiales system will apply, and it is calculated on the income of the whole household. Thus, each spouse/PACS partner is considered one part. The first two children are considered a half part each, then the third and subsequent children a whole part each.

The household's taxable income is divided by the number of parts. The income tax scale rates are then applied to this lower figure, and the income tax computed then multiplied by the number of parts.

In this case, the family has 4 parts, so the total income of €120,000 is divided by four, making €30,000 per part. Using the normal income tax scale rates (see table), the income tax bill on this €30,000 is €3,390 (rounded up), which when multiplied by four makes a total tax bill for the household of €13,560.

This results in an annual savings of €11,616.

However, there is a limit to the permitted adjustment to household income. If the effect of calculating your parts produces a tax bill which has been reduced by more than €2,000 per half part, compared to what it would be without reference to the parts, then the tax is recalculated. An individual adult will receive one part, and a married couple will always receive two parts. The tax is then calculated on this basis, and then you make a deduction of €2,000 per half part. So, in this example, the tax saving above of €11,616 will not stand, as it exceeds €2,000 per half-part. The recalculated tax liability would be €16,780, which is not quite as if all parts are included, but is still a saving of €8,396 – representing a 33% tax saving over individual taxation.

This is before any tax credits which may be applicable are deducted, including deductions against employment income. If you are over 65, you would also be entitled to a small deduction, which reduces for income over around €14,510, and is withdrawn where that individual's income exceeds €23,390.

This works very well to lower the household tax bill for UK expatriates, particularly those where one spouse has a significantly higher income than the other. A couple where the husband is paying higher tax rates (40%) on their pension income in the UK, would probably pay less tax in France than if they remained a UK resident. With this system, significant amounts of tax can actually be saved by moving to France!

Income in France is additionally subject to social charges (separate from social security which also needs to be paid), which are currently 8% on salaries and 15.5% on investment income.

Income tax table for 2013 income (in Euros), with tax payable in 2014

Net income subject to tax	Income band	Tax rate	Tax on band	Cumulative tax
Up to 6,011	6,011	0%		
6,011 – 11,991	5,980	5.5%	329	329
11,991 – 26,631	14,640	14%	2,050	2,379
26,631 – 71,397	44,766	30%	13,430	15,809
71,397 – 151,200	79,803	41%	32,719	48,528
Over 151,200		45%		

Income tax is payable in arrears in France, and the 2014 rates will not be available until the end of the year.

THE IMPATRIATE REGIME

France offers special tax incentives for individuals coming in to work from another country. The rules differ a little depending on if you are seconded or directly hired from abroad. There are rules as to who qualifies and who does not. You have to become a French tax resident under the domestic rules, and cannot have been resident here at any time in the proceeding five years.

The legislation introduces the concept of an impatriate premium, all or part of which can be exempt from tax. There is a list of what expenses form part of the premium and which do not.

The regime also provides that remuneration for days spent working outside of France undertaken in the direct and exclusive interest of the employer may be outside of French taxation. It must be in proportion with remuneration for the days worked in France.

For example, Mr Y is a UK citizen and resident. He is employed by a UK company but will be assigned to a French company in Paris. He will move to France and become tax resident. His job entails frequent travels abroad.

His salary in France will be €150,000 (after employee social security charge but before tax). He can negotiate to have it set up as follows:

- Salary: French days - €60,000
- Salary: Non-French days - €30,000
- Impatriate premium: €60,000

He then has two choices: The first is to exempt the impatriate premium (subject to the taxable salary not being reduced below a reference salary) and cap the overseas working days at 20% of the balance of the salary. The second option is to exempt the full amount of the impatriate premium plus overseas work days, but capped at 50% of the total net remuneration.

Under the first option he would end up with a taxable salary of €80,000. Under the second, his taxable salary would be €75,000. Using a basic income tax calculation (see table), an annual salary of €75,000 would generate a €17,286 tax bill (rounded up, and excluding social charges). If the full €150,000 was taxed, tax would be much higher at €48,036.

This system could therefore provide significant tax savings for those who qualify. The legislation is long and complicated though, so it would be best to seek professional advice.

Blevins Franks specializes in providing integrated and detailed tax and wealth management advice to expatriates in Europe. You may call them at 0-805-112-163, send an e-mail to france@blevinsfranks.com or visit www.blevinsfranks.com.

Note: Tax calculations are rounded up to the nearest Euro. The tax rates, scope and reliefs may change. Any statements concerning taxation are based upon our understanding of current taxation laws and practices which are subject to change. Tax information has been summarized; an individual should take personalized advice.

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TOP PICKS FOR KIDS' ACTIVITIES IN PARIS

Even kid-friendly cities such as Paris can be no match for today's livewire kids. When you've done your limit of the usual places (Jardin de Luxembourg or Paris Plage), it can quickly leave one wondering what next weekend's agenda will be.

Here are our top picks of activities that will keep the children busy, whether they fancy a bit of fossil hunting or just playtime outdoors.

Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle

This place promises to be more than just another day at the museum. Start with the *Grande Galerie d'Evolution* for a fascinating discovery of 7,000 different species and marvel at the diversity of nature. It is sure to offer something for parents and kids alike - from the immense hall that features a majestic procession of animal wildlife to life-sized models of a giant squid and Sumatran tiger. Find out what the perished quagga (partly-stripped zebra) and the vanishing narwhal (unicorn of the ocean) look like in the hall of threatened and extinct species (*Salle des Espèces Menacées et des Espèces Disparues*) while educating the little ones on the importance of protecting these animals. Afterwards, wind down from all the walking by heading to the Children's Gallery (*Galerie des Enfants*) where kids can discover an entire area dedicated to interactive activities.



Parisian Guide Tip:

If the kids would like to try some real-life bone-digging after the visit, an excavation activity (*chantier de fouilles*) is offered on Wednesdays from 2 to 5pm and on weekends from 10am to 5pm. Slots are limited for the activity so be sure to register early. More info: <http://www.mnhn.fr/le-museum/> (Entrance fees: €7 for 27 years and older; closed on Tuesdays)



The Alternative: La Maison Deyrolle

Take a peek at this curiously unique boutique not far from the metro of *rue de Bac*. The ground floor entrance is a seemingly typical gardening store and bookshop. But head upstairs and watch your children's faces as they discover a fantastic shop specializing in the world of taxidermy (the art of mounting animal skin to give it a lifelike appearance). Understandably not for the squeamish, you can find various well-preserved items on display from butterflies, an owl, and a peacock to a polar bear, giraffe and even an elephant. All the animals are for sale ranging from 10 euros for a beautiful beetle to thousands of euros for a keepsake tiger. More info: <http://www.deyrolle.com/magazine/> (Free entrance)

Ferme et Cueillette de Gally

Take a break from the city, get back to basics and head to this 40-hectare farm market near the *Château de Versailles*. It offers a fun alternative for kids to get hands-on experience on harvesting fruits and vegetables directly from the trees and branches instead of just picking them from shelves in the supermarket. Depending on the season, the family can choose from strawberries, cherries, blueberries, prunes and apples during spring to summer. The kids can also head to the farm's petting zoo where they can touch and feed local sheep, goats and cows. Check their website for a list of what's on offer for the season.



Parisian Guide Tip:

From the month of July, *La Ferme de Gally* welcomes everyone to 4 hectares of pure fun in a giant labyrinth. Everyone is welcome to participate, obviously while keeping the little ones in sight. Towards the end of summer, the farm organizes an evening to get lost in the maze where participants bring lamps to find the exit path with the help of hints and clues. A barbeque is also set up allowing families to prepare and enjoy freshly grilled lunch or dinner.

More info: www.ferme.gally.com (Entrance Fees: €4.10 adults, €3.50 for 3 years or older)



The Alternative: Parc des Buttes Chaumont

If you're looking for a change from Paris' perfectly manicured and landscaped parks away from the tourist crowd then head to *Parc des Buttes Chaumont*. This breathtaking 25-hectare urban sanctuary is Paris' third largest park and has an interestingly rich history. Prior to its transformation into a garden showcase by Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann, its previous incarnation was that of a battlefield, execution ground, and a gypsum quarry. Its current majestic yet relaxed landscape is the perfect place to stroll with its picturesque swan-dotted lake, luscious green lawns and imposing waterfall that leads to a stalactite-filled grotto. One of its most iconic features is the mini Greek temple called Belvedere of Sybil with its Corinthian style columns (after the ancient Roman Temple of Vesta). It offers spectacular views of Montmartre from 30m above ground. This romantic style park has much to offer kids with its open-air puppet theatre, pony rides and crepe stands while adults will not tire of exploring its nooks and crannies through kilometers of bridges and walkways.

More info: www.butteschaumont.free.fr (Free entrance)

Menagerie du Jardin des Plantes

The Menagerie in the *Jardin des Plantes* (same grounds as the *Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle*) was originally built in the 17th century to house the animals of the royal family, making it one of the oldest zoological gardens in the world. It now houses small to medium sized birds, reptiles and mammals most of which are threatened with extinction. Being at the center of Paris and right along the Seine, it makes for a great day trip with the family. Have a good laugh with the kids while monkeying around with Nanette, the Bornean orangutan or just watch the big cats with the little ones. There are also pretty pink flamingoes, a caracal (desert lynx) and Maya, the red panda.

Parisian Guide Tip:

Bring your own snacks for an impromptu picnic within the zoo or just to feed the goats in la petite ferme. On summer weekends, curious kids can meet some zookeepers for an insight on the care of the animals. More info: <http://www.mnhn.fr/le-museum/> (Entrance fees: €11 adults, €9 for 4-16 years old).

The Alternative: Aquarium Tropical de la Porte Doree

For kids who are more into water creatures, visit the *Aquarium de la Porte Doree*. While it is admittedly more intimate than its larger counterpart in Trocadero, the aquarium still showcases about 5000 animals and 300 species from Africa, the Americas and the South of Asia. Offer your children a fascinating afternoon in a mysterious and colorful world of primitive and electric fishes, legendary piranhas, alligators and sharks. More info: <http://www.aquarium-portedoree.fr/> (Entrance fees: €5.00 adults, €3.50 for 4-25 years old; Fees during special exhibitions: €7 and €5.50 respectively, closed on Mondays)

The Parc Zoologique de Paris

The *Parc Zoologique de Paris* (or *Zoo de Vincennes*) finally opened its doors on April 2014 after a 5-year renovation. Aimed at giving visitors the experience of total immersion, the climate-controlled zoo features 180 species in 5 different biozones (Europe, Madagascar, Amazon-Guyane, Patagonie and Sahel-Soudan). Visitors will be treated to a global tour of animal biodiversity with mainstays such as giraffes, lynx and jaguars to endangered and lesser known species such as the Humboldt penguin, fossa, radiated tortoise, dwarf crocodile and wolverines.

More info: <http://parczoologiquedeparis.fr/>



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NETWORKING SECRETS FROM THE FRANCO-BRITISH CHAMBER

Two of the most challenging things you might do in a foreign land are to do business and make friends. Fortunately, these activities require a similar approach and efforts can be combined to hit two with one stone. Though you might make friends without doing business, it will make the task all the easier if you do business by making friends.

When moving to a country like France (where you need to adjust to a foreign market, learn local laws and regulations, and get familiar with the nuances of local culture) you are faced with a very daunting task indeed. Keep these tips in mind to help you make inroads into new communities, get along with the locals, and establish solid networks:

Practice sincerity

At networking events, you come, make small talk, exchange contacts and make the best of it from there. This is poor form and lacks the element that makes your efforts effective.

We've heard numerous clichés such as “People don't buy the product; they buy you.” So if you had a choice between doing business with two people of seemingly equal talent, the tie breaker will likely be the one to whom you feel the most affinity with.

Put business out of your head for a minute and try to see through the ocean of business suits and cards. Developing real relationships is the best way to engage new people in business. Asking people how they find their host city or a new favorite restaurant goes a long way. Throw

sincere compliments, really listen to what the other is saying and you will reap the benefits that genuine interest brings. If your passion and belief in your business and your desire to connect and make friends radiates from within, this would make a world of difference, rather than coming into the door with the hungry look of someone who wants to make a sale at all cost.

Obtain intentional friendships

You've gotten your people techniques down pat and now you can focus on a more strategic move. Identify what kind of contacts you want in your network. Perhaps you need more suppliers instead of new clients. Or you need more CEO-types for strategic partnerships. Make a profile of the kind of people that you want more of, and make sure you find yourself in their circles. However, never turn away from people who are not “in your target range.” Referrals and recommendations are also a great source of business.

Furthermore, do not come to a function armed with your best colleagues hanging onto each other's arm. As an adventure, make it a point to come alone. Or at least give orders for your team to spread out and not sit next to each other.

Develop your personal brand and tagline

Work on your packaging beyond the cleanly pressed suit, the right touch of perfume or that perfectly done hair. Make sure your appearance communicates the message you want and is in keeping with the kind of event you are going to. The right look might be trendy and fashionable for drinks with smart, young technopreneurs or austere and formal for dinner with industry veterans.

Once you're satisfied with your visual packaging, ask: do people sit up and pay attention when you say who you are? Give your “tagline” a thought and try to come up with something short and sweet. I once made the acquaintance of someone who introduced himself as ‘The Mt. Everest Doctor’. He had the distinction of being appointed as the official physician of an expedition team to Mt. Everest and made that as his brand. He was so much more than that, of course, but it was something that people never forgot.

Join an organization of like-minded people

Organizations such as the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce in Paris have been assisting the development of British, French and international businesses in France by bringing everyone under one roof and facilitating their integration into their new host country.

Being a member means entering into a network of experts in a wide range of professions and businesses willing to provide advice on how to increase visibility, generate business and eventually move forward. Through the Chamber's SME Business Pack, one can also take advantage of an exchange platform of practical information for SMEs and entrepreneurs wishing to start up or expand a business in France. Their website, social media outlets and online newsletters allow you to integrate in a vibrant business community while reaching out to the wider world.

Invite business in

In the first few weeks and months of a new enterprise, you must seize the initiative. Don't wait for business to come to you; explore the market in a proactive fashion and invite it in.

Networking is an essential activity for establishing connections and forging useful partnerships. At this juncture your business will benefit from attending relevant local functions such as the Franco-British Chamber's conferences, lunches and receptions. These are often staged in high-profile settings such as the British Ambassador's Residence in Paris or the Marriott Champs-Élysées Hotel, where the Chamber hosted the Mayor of London Boris Johnson. The Chamber has helped a great number of businesses connect in such a way, from British expatriate entrepreneurs and small companies in the regions, to large international corporations opening offices in the center of Paris.

For further information, contact the Franco-British Chamber at information@francobritishchamber.com



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