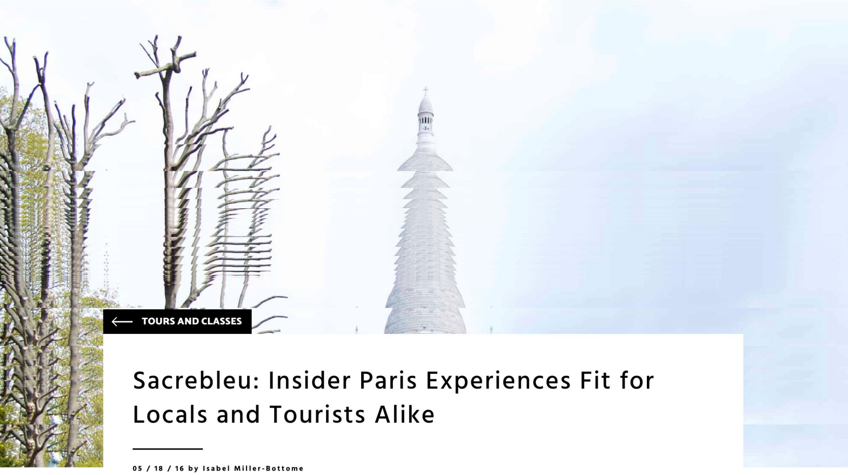

TOURS AND CLASSES

# Sacrebleu: Insider Paris Experiences Fit for Locals and Tourists Alike

05 / 18 / 16 by Isabel Miller-Bottome

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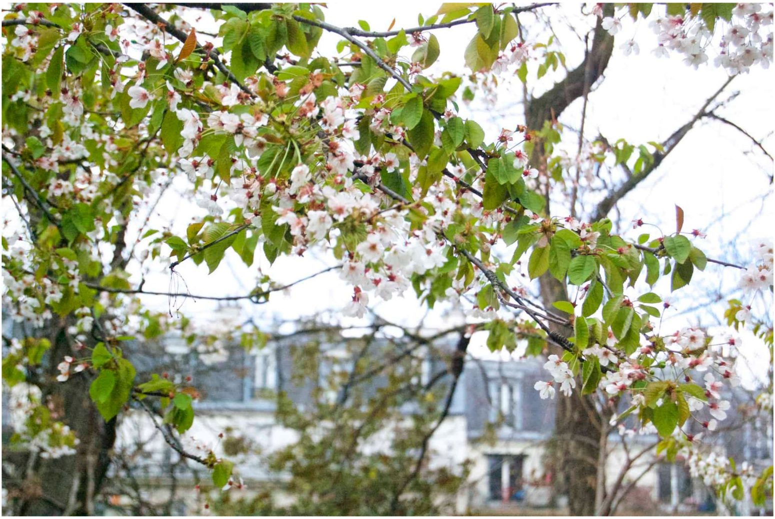
I've lived in Paris on and off for the last two years, so I was curious what I would learn about my adopted city from Stephanie of , who, I soon realized, is not your average Paris guide.

Before we met, Stephanie wrote to me to find out my age, interests, favorite kinds of stores and food, and whether I preferred to walk or drive around the city. Normally, Stephanie likes to set up a Skype call to meet each client and get a sense of who they are, what they want to see in Paris, how they travel, and answer any questions before they arrive.



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MARLETTE
PRÉPARATION BIO POUR PAINS
MARLETTE
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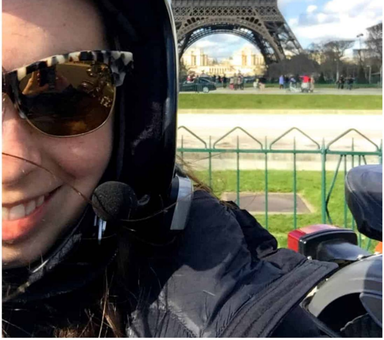
“Why don’t we create something really Parisian?” Stephanie proposed. “For instance, the girl who can eat Chinese food in Belleville and drink champagne in a five-star hotel in the same day wearing the same clothes?”

Stephanie delivered on her promise with a tour of the city that reflected my interests and style and felt more like an afternoon with an old friend: rediscovering classic monuments and neighborhoods with fresh eyes, stumbling upon friendly shops and cafés, and discovering hidden historic corners I would never have noticed on my own.

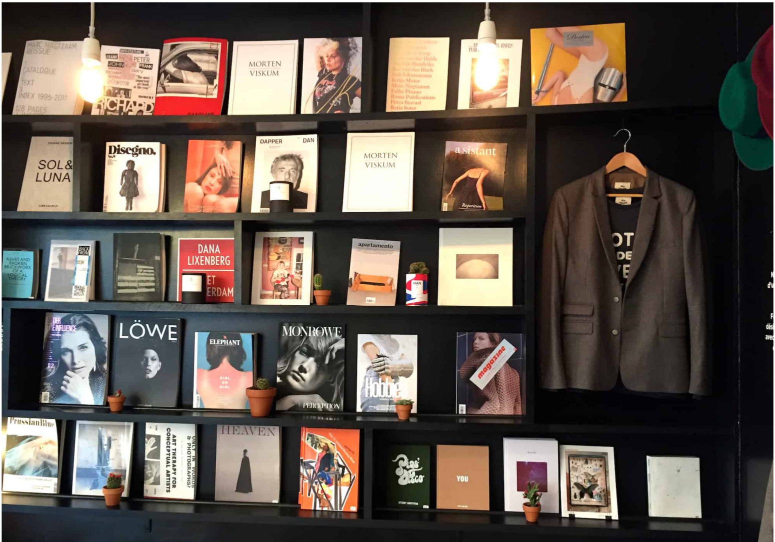
9e Arr.
RUE DES MARTYRS
TRAITEUR
le Grand Jeau

Our day began at local rue des Martyrs haunt . We enjoyed a leisurely breakfast of *oeufs à la coque* and I picked up one of their homemade, organic mixes for *fondant au chocolat*, per Stephanie's tip. We burned off the salted butter by climbing the cobblestone streets up to the top of Sacré-Coeur, which was bathed in chilly morning sunshine.

Whereas a regular guide would have arranged a van or bus, I found a gleaming, 40s-era motorcycle and a smiling gentleman in vintage pilot attire waiting for us in the quiet Place Jean Marais behind the basilica. Rémy runs – another small, innovative Paris endeavor – that offers motorcycle tours across the city. Zipping through traffic in a sidecar down the Champs-Élysées, past the golden statues of Pont Alexandre III, the quiet streets of the 16ème, and finally the Eiffel Tower lit regally against a clear sky… it was the perfect mix of classic Paris from an offbeat point of view that is sure to delight any seasoned local.



The cars and crowds of tourists subsided as we rode past the five-star hotels and office buildings of the chic 8th and 17th *arrondissements*. Rémy finally dropped us, windswept and exhilarated, on a corner in Les Batignolles – the slightly quiet, more affordable neighborhood west of Montmartre, little known to tourists and populated by artisanal cafés (DOSE, Terres de Cafes), boutiques, and gastronomic bistros. We stopped in , a concept store stocked with sustainable and internationally sourced designer and leather goods, books, vinyl, wall art, and jewelry. We couldn't resist leaving with candles made by a local producer, , each inspired by a district of Paris.


MORTEN VISKUM
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CAFÉ MONTMARTRE

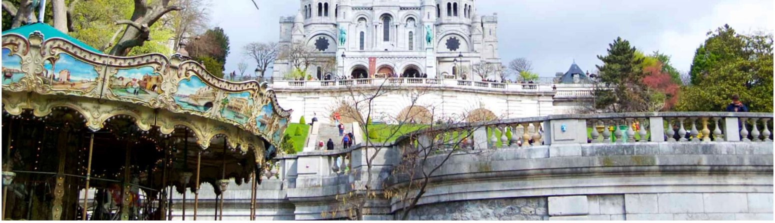
Stephanie then led us to our lunch destination, , further down rue des Dames. Opened by Marc Cordonnier, ex-chef of Septime, I'd first heard of the reputable bargain *neobistro* when it opened a year ago and had been dying to try it.

We skipped dessert to save room for our last stop, the recently opened boutique, , which has since become my go-to to satisfy an afternoon sweet craving or pick up a box as a hosts gift.

DIVORCE ME
out Chocolat de Valrhona
MARRY ME
Chocolat noir & fleur de sel
JE VEUX UN CÂLIN
Chocolat au lait & fleur de
JE T'EPOUSE DANS L'HEU

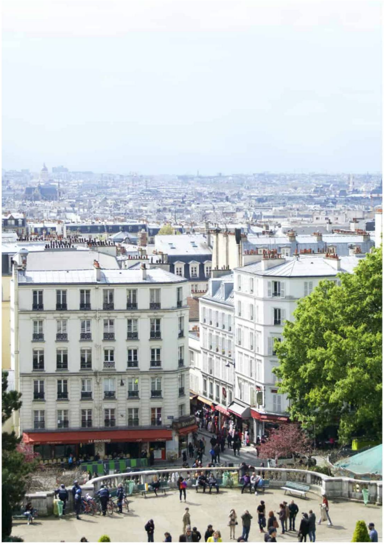
3,50€
Contient: Blé, œuf, lait
Camargue
3,50€
Contient: Blé, œuf, lait
BOG
Pâte au chocolat & fondant à la cacahuète
3,50€
Contient: Blé, œuf, lait,

Stephanie has lived in Paris her whole life, with a several-year stint in Florida, where she perfected her English and founded Sacrebleu within a friend's popular neighborhood French bakery. Unlike many concierges, Stephanie does not earn commission. Her catalogue of personal recommendations ranges widely from five-star hotels, Michelin starred restaurants, designer stores and spas, yoga studios, authentic *cabarets*, and all manner of *addresses insolites* (hidden). Her favorite recent discovery? A combination nail and tea salon, , where you can indulge in a homemade tea and dessert with your manicure.



Sacrebleu guests can choose from tour packages, such as the "Tout Organic" (featuring organic/vegan Michelin-star meals, a detox spa and yoga studio facing the Eiffel tower) or the "Tres, tres chic!" (find that vintage Hermès bag you've been searching for, champagne tasting, a floral arranging workshop, a unique perfume workshop, etc.), and each can be tailored specifically to you, with the help of her network of English-speaking drivers, guides, and local Parisian business owners.

I arrived home at the end of our day with a full stomach, many additions to my list of favorite Paris addresses, and a new insider friend in Paris.



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Calling all foodies! Don't miss Bénédicte's .

What's the best way to enjoy Paris in the summer? An artisanal picnic basket, with fresh baguette, French cheese and wine, and a cozy blanket, delivered to you by .

Sacrebleu Paris is featured on Luxury Travel Magazine as a travel service for discerning tourists. Take a peek .

*Written by Isabel Miller-Bottome for the . All photos by Isabel Miller-Bottome. Looking for a fabulous vacation rental in Paris, London, Provence, or Tuscany? Check out .*

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