



Bateaux-Mouches Croisière-Promenade – What We Saw

As we set off from the quay near Pont de l'Alma, Paris slowly unfolded in a panorama of history and architecture. Here's what we passed, in order, heading downstream first and then back:

1. Pont Alexandre III – Paris's most ornate bridge, built for the 1900 World's Fair. Look for its golden winged horses, nymphs, and cherubs — a symbol of Franco-Russian friendship.
2. Grand Palais & Petit Palais – Two monumental exhibition halls from the 1900 Exposition Universelle, one crowned with a vast glass dome, the other housing a charming fine arts museum.
3. Place de la Concorde & Obelisk of Luxor – The largest square in Paris, once site of the guillotine during the Revolution.
4. Assemblée Nationale (Palais Bourbon) – The neoclassical seat of the French Parliament, facing the Place de la Concorde across the river.
5. Musée d'Orsay – The former Beaux-Arts railway station turned world-class museum of Impressionism and 19th-century art.
6. Louvre Museum – Its long, classical river façade reminds us of its royal origins before becoming the most visited museum on earth.
7. Pont Neuf – Ironically named “New Bridge,” it is the oldest surviving bridge in Paris (1607), known for its stone masks and its view of...
8. Île de la Cité & Square du Vert-Galant – The historic heart of Paris. This tiny park at the island's tip is named for Henry IV, the “Green Gallant.”
9. Conciergerie – The medieval royal palace turned Revolutionary prison where Marie-Antoinette was held before her execution.
10. Sainte-Chapelle – Though barely visible from the river, it hides one of Europe's most breathtaking stained-glass chapels.
11. Notre-Dame Cathedral – Currently under restoration after the 2019 fire, still a commanding presence with its towers and flying buttresses.
12. Hôtel de Ville (City Hall) – Seen as we passed on the return, a neo-Renaissance masterpiece and seat of the Paris mayor.
13. Pont des Arts – The romantic pedestrian bridge once covered in lovers' padlocks, now restored and offering postcard views.
14. Pont de l'Alma & Zouave Statue – Our starting and ending point. Parisians measure Seine floods by the level of this Zouave soldier's boots!
15. Eiffel Tower – The grand finale: we saw the Iron Lady from water level, perhaps even catching her first sparkle of the evening lights.

