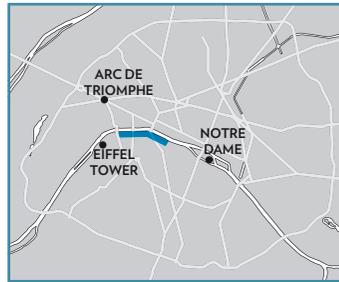


Musée d'Orsay

The grander, western part of Faubourg St-Germain accommodates the Musée d'Orsay, with its unparalleled collection, and several embassies and ambassadorial residences in elegant 17th–18th-century hôtels particuliers. Here too is the Musée de la Légion d'Honneur. Palais Bourbon is home of the Assemblée Nationale.

Quai Anatole-France (map p. 586, B1–C1) runs between Pont Royal and Pont de la Concorde, in front of the Musée d'Orsay. The improvement of a vast section of the southern banks of the Seine was begun in 1708 and completed at the beginning of the 19th century. Quai Anatole-France received its present name in 1947. The Passerelle de Solférino (1997–9), a single-span footbridge, links the southern embankment to the Tuileries Gardens. It is named after a bloody battle fought in Lombardy in 1859, at which the combined forces of Piedmont and France, under Vittorio Emanuele and Napoléon III, were victorious over Austria. It was on visiting the battlefield that Henry Dunant was moved to found the Red Cross.

Wide steps below the Musée d'Orsay descend to a floating garden, restaurants and sports and play areas.



MUSÉE D'ORSAY

Map p. 586, C1. Métro 12 to Solférino or RER C to Musée d'Orsay. Open Tues–Sun 9.30–6, Thur until 9.45pm; closed Mon; T: 01 40 49 48 00 or 01 40 49 49 78. There are frequent temporary exhibitions (Level 5), concerts, films and symposia.

Like most major museums, the Musée d'Orsay cannot display all its works at any one time and the presentation is constantly changing. The key works will, for the most part, remain on display, and overall themes and categories will be maintained, although there may be changes in emphasis. The location of artworks is updated every morning before the museum opens: for the latest information consult the museum website (www.musee-orsay.fr) under the heading 'The Museum in Motion', and 'Calendar' for daily events.



MUSÉE D'ORSAY
One of the old station clocks on Level 5.

A statue of the goddess Nemesis shows her with a wheel in her hand and a small figure squashed under her right foot.

Later works of the 3rd–5th centuries include several busts and heads and a statue of Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus, partly restored in the 19th century, as a priestess of Isis. There are also elegant decorated pillars from the agora, Thessalonica (early 3rd century AD) and a superbly-carved marble sarcophagus

from St-Médard, France (3rd century AD) with the myth of Dionysus and Ariadne on one face and of Selene and Endymion on the other.

Art from Roman Gaul and Christian North Africa includes an antique porphyry urn which was used by Count Caylus for his tomb in Auxerre. The display ends with funerary mosaics and relief sculptures as well as ‘school books’ of wooden tablets.

ESCALIER DARU

The **Winged Victory of Samothrace (1)** was restored to its natural shade of white in 2014. The monument, which weighs 29 tons, is made of different kinds of marble (the breast and left wing are of plaster). In a case nearby is the mutilated right hand found during further excavations in 1950; it may have been held aloft to announce a naval victory. It puts the probable date of the statue at 220–185 BC. Below the *Winged Victory* are restored reliefs from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia (c. 460 BC).

THE WINGED VICTORY OF SAMOTHRACE



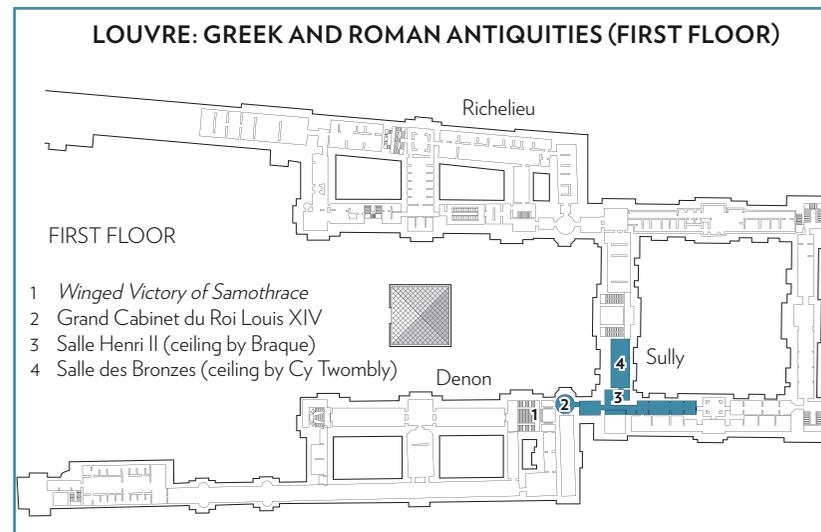
The *Winged Victory* came to light in excavations in 1863 at the Sanctuary of the Great Gods on the remote Aegean island of Samothrace. The exquisite figure of the flying divinity, Nike, who alights on the prow of a vessel with her drapery pressed against her by the wind, was almost certainly part of an extravagant monument of Rhodian workmanship, erected in the sanctuary to celebrate and give thanks for a great Greek naval victory. This was not an uncommon practice of the period. Much of the piece's significance depended on the original setting: the whole ensemble stood, between mountain and sea, in a pool filled with water and rocks carved to appear like billows. The sanctuary was most frequented

by night, and lighting with flickering lamps may have added to the sculpture's powerful effect. Great antiquities often lose their ‘presence’ when committed to a museum gallery; but the *Winged Victory's* dramatic setting on the landing of the Escalier Daru gives it a new and different power, ensuring its survival as one of the iconic images of antique art.

N.McG.

GREEK AND ROMAN GLASS, BRONZE AND TERRACOTTA

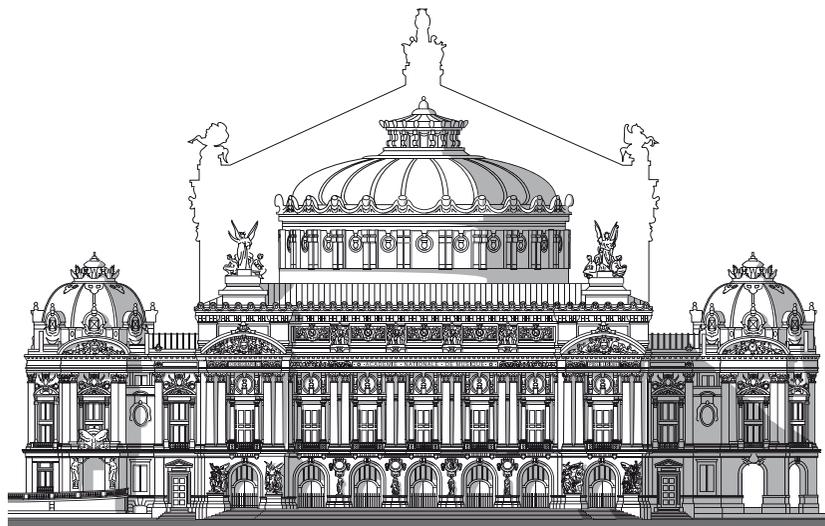
The collections of Greek and Roman antiquities on the first floor contain many precious *objets d'art* as well as glassware, pottery and smaller sculptures.



The **Grand Cabinet du Roi Louis XIV (2)**, built by Le Vau c. 1660, is dedicated to some 100 pieces of Greek and Roman glass. The **Salle Henri II (3)**, with a ceiling decorated by Braque in 1953, and the **Salle des Bronzes (4)**, its ceiling painted by Cy Twombly in 2007–9, contain Greek and Roman bronzes and precious objects. The **Treasure of Boscoreale** is a collection of superbly decorated silver objects, buried when Vesuvius erupted in AD 79, and discovered in 1895 in a fine state of preservation. There are also mirrors, jewellery and utensils. Among outstanding pieces of Archaic Greek art are a Minotaur, a statuette of Athena and *Silenus Dancing* (all 6th century BC). Classical Greek statuettes (5th century BC) include a 1st-century BC athlete's head, said to have been found at Benevento, Italy, and probably from Herculaneum. From Roman Gaul is the statuette of a local divinity in silver-plated bronze known as *Fortuna* (1st quarter

3rd century BC), from the Lyon area. Other Roman objects include the *Apollo of Piombino*, a 1st-century BC bronze figure with copper encrustations—lips and nipples—which was retrieved from the sea near Piombino, Italy; *Aphrodite Untying her Sandal* (?1st century AD), with inlaid gold jewellery, from Syria; and the helmet of a Thracian gladiator (3rd quarter 1st century AD).

The Salles Charles X (in the old Musée Charles X) are devoted to **Greek terracotta figurines**, arranged chronologically, geographically and thematically and including objects from Tanagra. The Campana Gallery is named after Marquis Giampietro Campana's superlative collection of **Greek vases**, purchased in 1861, which the Louvre considers to be one of the most complete in the world. Some 2,000 vessels (800–400 BC) can be studied chronologically or thematically according to the various decorative motifs.



OPÉRA GARNIER

A visit to the interior of the Paris Opera House provides an insight into its drama and opulence even if you are not planning to attend a performance.

The first opera house in Paris was established in 1669, by Perrin, Cambert and the Marquis de Sourdeac, on the Left Bank between the Rue de Seine and Rue Mazarine. The first director was Lully (from 1674), under whom it acquired its secondary title of Académie Royale de Musique. The present Opéra, an appropriately lavish monument to the grandiosity of the Second Empire, was built in 1861–75 to the designs of Charles Garnier. It was inspired by the 18th-century Bordeaux Opera, but aimed to capture a nobler clientèle than the wealthy bourgeois Bordelais. It should have been one of the most splendid symbols of the Second Empire, within easy reach of the Louvre and the Palais Royal, but it was not completed until 1875. The main façade, seen from Avenue de l'Opéra, is elaborately adorned with coloured marbles and sculpture. On either side of the arcade opening into the vestibule are gilded allegorical groups, including (right) a copy of *La Danse* by Carpeaux (original in the Musée d'Orsay). Higher up, between the monolithic columns of the loggia, are medallions and gilt bronze statues of composers and librettists. Behind the low dome of the auditorium is a triangular pediment crowned by a statue of Apollo of the Golden Lyre.

VISITING THE OPÉRA

The visit starts not where the audience would arrive, but via the columned **members' rotunda** leading to the **Pythia Fountain**, an extravagant affair below the Grand Staircase (with a bronze sculpture of the priestess of Apollo at Delphi sitting on her tripod). The white marble stairs are 10m wide and the balustrade of onyx and rosso and verde antico is lit by elaborate chandeliers.

On the first floor where the staircase divides, is the entrance to the stalls and the theatre, flanked by caryatids. The **auditorium**, with five tiers of boxes, is resplendent in red plush and gilt. The dome, resting on eight pillars of scagliola, was painted in disturbing contrast to the rest of the décor in 1964 by Chagall, with murals inspired by nine operas. The huge stage is 60m high, 52m wide and 37m deep. Behind it is the **Foyer de la Danse** (the scene of many paintings of ballet dancers by Degas), with a mirror measuring 7m by 10m. At the end of a long gallery is the **Salon du Glacier**, with Belle-Époque decoration.

From the **avant-foyer** is a fine view of the Grand Staircase, and at its extremities are the Salon du Soleil and the Salon de la Lune. The avant-foyer has glass doors (in the centre of which is Carpeaux's bust of Garnier) leading to the **Grand Foyer**, all pomp and grandeur, lined with mirrors and with a painted ceiling. From here is access to the **loggia** and a splendid view down the Avenue de l'Opéra towards the Louvre.

The **Library-Museum** of the Opéra, now a department of the Bibliothèque Nationale, was created in 1866 to conserve all the documents since the opera's creation. Paintings, photographs and maquettes are exhibited, but the reading room itself is reserved for researchers. The charming museum displays in rotation its collection of the scores of all operas and ballets performed here since the Opéra's foundation, as well as over 100,000 drawings of costumes, photographs, paintings and memorabilia.

CHARLES GARNIER

Garnier (1825–98) began his career as an architect's assistant while studying at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He went on to take top place in the Grand-Prix de Rome in architecture, which qualified him to attend the French Academy in Rome. He remained there from 1849–53 and travelled extensively in Greece and Italy. He presented his fourth-year submission at the Paris Salon in 1853.

After working on a variety of projects he concentrated on the competition for a new opera house, announced by Napoléon III in 1860. He was the winner from among 170 candidates. His neo-Baroque design was fashionable during the Beaux Arts period and its pioneering framework of metal girders assured that it would not only withstand fire, but also support the huge weight of the building.

Garnier's other projects include the Théâtre Marigny (1883; *map p. 581, D4*) and the Grand Concert Hall in the Monte Carlo Casino (1875–9). From 1896 he retired to the house he had built at Bordighera on the Italian Riviera.

The Musée d'Orsay has a display (at the end of the central aisle) which presents all aspects of the construction, decoration and the town planning involved in building the Opéra Garnier, which became the most emblematic building of the Second Empire.

Immediately behind the Opéra, on Boulevard Haussmann, are two famous department stores (*map p. 581, E3–F3*): **Galleries Lafayette** (1898), facing Place Diaghilev (*40 Blvd Haussmann*), with three levels of balconies overlooking the main hall, which is covered with a glass dome; and **Printemps** (1889; remodelled since; *64 Blvd Haussmann*), which has a panoramic view from Level 9.

WALK TWO: AROUND PALAIS ROYAL

The area of the Palais Royal (map p. 587, D1), laid out in the 17th century, is central yet discreet. Close to the financial district of Paris, the old palace now encompasses government institutions, shops and restaurants, and elegant old apartment blocks with galleries around a formal Parisian garden. Close by are the Théâtre Français, the Bourse (Stock Exchange) and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

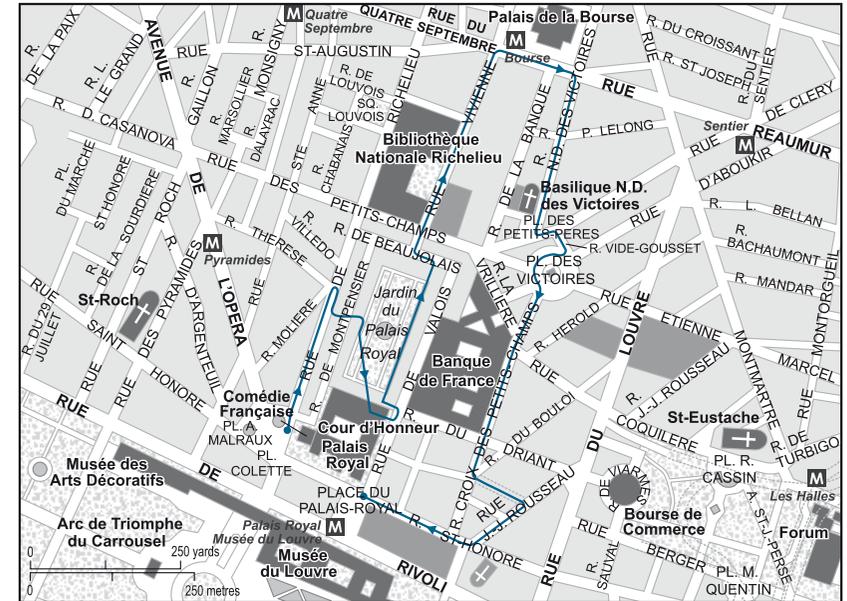
To begin the walk, take Métro 1 or 7 to Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre.

THE THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS, BETTER known as the **Comédie-Française** (tickets, T: 0825 10 16 80, www.comedie-francaise.fr; guided visits in French organised by CNM; see p. 540) and which is part of the Palais Royal, presents a profusion of Tuscan columns to Place André-Malraux and Place Colette. Built from 1786–90 by Victor Louis for the Théâtre des Variétés, it was remodelled in 1900 after a serious fire and much restored. The company originated in the Comédiens-Français created by Louis XIV in 1680, seven years after Molière's death, which brought together two rival troupes: l'Hôtel de Guénégaud, Molière's former company, and the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The company had many homes before settling here in 1799, led by the great actor François-Joseph Talma. In 1812 Napoleon signed a decree (when he happened to be in Moscow) reorganising the Comédie-Française, which is still a private company with 37 shareholding member actors and 20 contracted actors. The chair in which Molière died in 1673, while playing the part of Argan in *Le Malade Imaginaire*, is in the public foyer protected by a glass case. The theatre also owns several statues of actors and dramatists, including a seated statue of Voltaire by Houdon, *Talma* by David d'Angers, *Dumas fils*

by Carpeaux, *Mirabeau* by Rodin and *George Sand* by Clésinger; also a portrait of Talma by Delacroix and other paintings. The auditorium ceiling was painted by Albert Besnard in 1913.

Follow **Rue de Richelieu** north from Place André-Malraux. The minuscule restaurant L'Incroyable at no. 26 is named after the *incroyables* who, in the 18th century, were the male version of the *merveilleuses*, the post-Terror generation of fops who dressed and behaved outrageously. Further on, on the corner of Rue Molière (left), is the **Fontaine Molière** by the architect Visconti (1844), with a bronze statue of the playwright by Gabriel Seurre and supporting marbles by James Pradier.

Slip through the tiny alley of L'Incroyable into Rue de Montpensier, and then turn left and rapidly right into the large rectangle of the **Jardin du Palais Royal**, a calm and decorous oasis giving the lie to the turbulence and notoriety of its past. The buildings on three sides create a harmonious ensemble and under their arcades are specialist shops and varied restaurants. Enfilades of lime trees planted in 1970 flank a formal parterre enlivened by colourful flowers and a fountain. The houses and galleries were the work of the architect Victor Louis and built as a speculative



venture in 1781–6 by Philippe-Égalité (so called because of his democratic views), descendant of the Orléans side of the royal family. At the time he was heavily in debt, and shops and cafés were let out. The square became a fashionable place to be seen and smart restaurants opened, including the Grand Véfour (see p. 312) under the northwestern arcades. Over the years the cafés became the rendezvous for political activists, literati and—since the police were excluded from entry—for various insalubrious goings-on, especially prostitution. On 13th July 1789 Camille Desmoulins delivered from the garden the fiery harangue which precipitated the fall of the Bastille the following day. Charlotte Corday purchased the knife to kill Marat from one of the shops here. Café du Caveau at nos. 89–92, which had flourished during the *Ancien Régime* and

the Revolution, later became a meeting place of the partisans of the Resistance. Famous residents of Palais Royal have included the multi-talented Jean Cocteau, author of *Les Enfants Terribles* (1929), who spent the latter part of his life at no. 36; and Colette, author of *Le Blé en Herbe* (1923) and *Gigi* (1945), among many other novels, who lived in Palais Royal from 1927–9 and again from 1932 until her death.

The **Cour d'Honneur**, the main courtyard of the old palace, is separated from the gardens by the Galerie d'Orléans, a double Doric colonnade by Fontaine (1829–31), which was restored and cleared of its shops in 1935. In 1985–6 the pools of the Galerie were adorned by Pol Bury's mobile steel spheres (1985) and the Cour d'Honneur received Daniel Buren's 250 black-and-white, candy striped marble columns

also means a musical scale in French. Works inspired by Brittany include the colourful *Regatta at Perros Guirec* (1897), with a disturbing use of perspective. Breton subjects by other painters include Sérusier's sombre *The Old Breton Woman* (c. 1898) and Émile Bernard's *Landscape with Wrack* (seaweed), painted in 1888. From 1906, under the influence of Cézanne, whom Denis met in Provence that year, Nabis paintings became more colourful and luminous: *The Beach and a Red Bonnet* (1909) is an example. Denis was married twice: in *Self-portrait* he is shown at his easel in the garden of the Priory with both his wives and his children in the background. The museum also has paintings by Édouard Vuillard and Paul Gauguin.

Maurice Denis was commissioned to decorate a narrow room for Baron Denys Cochin's property in Melun, taking the themes of the legend of St Hubert and of Beau Pécopin as told by Victor Hugo in *Le Rhin*. The seven panels, painted in 1896–7, bring together all the Nabis precepts of harmony, decoration, symbolism and colour and introduce members of the Cochin family as well as Victor Hugo. Gabrielle Thomas's dining room in Meudon is reconstructed here with the ten panels of *Eternal Spring* (1908), painted by Denis.

In 1919 Denis (with Auguste Perret) restored the badly neglected chapel, which was re-consecrated in 1922. Perret designed the woodwork while Denis planned the decorative scheme. Colleagues helped with the murals and Denis's family and friends modelled for the *Life of Christ* and the *Last Supper*; *St Louis* introduces an element of patriotism and the geometric *Crucifixion* refers to the horrors of the First World War. There are objects designed by Denis, together with Daum.

The gardens contain bronzes by Bourdelle and the workshop built by Auguste Perret in 1912 when Denis (with Perret and Bourdelle) began the large decorations for the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. The gardens have been adapted for public use.

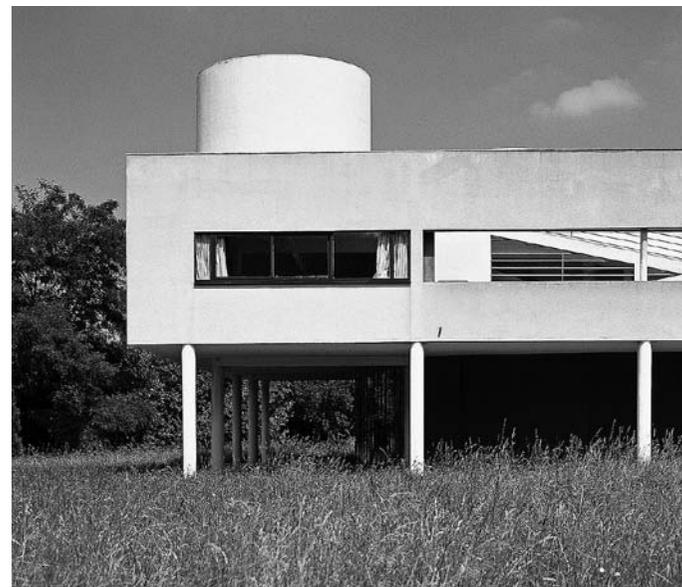
THE NABIS

Maurice Denis was co-founder and principal theorist of the Nabis, a group named by the poet Cazalis. *Nabi* is the Hebrew word for prophet and the members of the group were all were searching for a new way forward in painting. Maurice Denis (*le Nabi aux belles icônes*), Pierre Bonnard (*le Nabi très japonais*) and Paul Ranson studied at the Académie Julian and were inspired by a painting on a cigar-box by fellow student Paul Sérusier, which became known as *Le Talisman* (it is now in the Musée d'Orsay) and was crucial in disseminating new ideas learned from Gauguin. Édouard Vuillard and Ker-Xavier Roussel, Felix Vallotton and Aristide Maillol also joined the group and adapted the Nabis principles to their personal approach. They are represented in the museum.

CHAMBOURCY & POISSY

MAISON ANDRÉ DERAÏN

64 Grande Rue, Chambourcy. RER A to St-Germain-en-Laye and bus R4 (direction Chambourcy Collège) to the Mairie, then a 3-min walk. Closed for renovations at the time



POISSY
Villa Savoye by Le Corbusier.

of writing, www.maisonderain.free.fr or inquire at the Tourist Office (T: 01 39 22 31 31). This 18th-century house, La Roseraie, was from 1935 the home of André Derain. It is now privately owned. The studio, which can be visited, is preserved intact.

VILLA SAVOYE

82 Rue Villiers, Poissy. Map p. 577, A1. RER A to Poissy (Zone 5) and then bus 50 to Les Éillets. Open Wed–Sun May–Aug 10–6; March–April and Sept–Oct 10–5; Nov–Feb 10–1 & 2–5. Closed Tues and 1 May, 1 Nov, 11 Nov, 25 Dec–1 Jan. Guided tour in English Wed and Fri, 11.00 T: 01 39 65 01 06, www.villa-savoie.monuments-nationaux.fr.

At Poissy, 33km northwest of Paris, is Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, built in 1919–31 for Pierre and Eugenie Savoye, who lived here until 1940. The villa was damaged when expropriated during the Second World War but has since been returned as near as possible to its original state. Known as *Les Heures Claires*, the house was designed to take advantage of the site which then commanded views towards Paris (now obscured). A seemingly simple design, it incorporates the architect's basic tenets. From the exterior it presents a white box on *pilotis* or stilts, with a flat roof and a horizontal rhythm. The interior reveals a more complex articulation of space and light, combining large windows and a roof terrace with practical living spaces.

