



Paris

Dining on a dancefloor, a decadent townhouse in Pigalle, a major music venue opening – Paris will not disappoint clients looking for culture and gourmet cuisine this summer

AUTHOR: ROWENA CARR-ALLINSON



Paris might be synonymous with indulgence, but thankfully its beauty is often in its daring difference. Its culture, retail opportunities and gourmet cuisine are renowned the world over, but the good news, for visitors and locals alike, is that it's constantly evolving, for the better.

In addition to the classics, such as the **Grand Palais** (grandpalais.fr/en), currently hosting a Jean Paul Gaultier retrospective, the Picasso museum has reopened in the Marais area. Just after the Charlie Hebdo attack, the brand new **Paris Philharmonic** (philharmoniedeparis.fr/en) finally opened its doors too, after an eight-year build. Designed by Jean Nouvel, it can host up to 3,000 people and was something for the city to be proud of at its lowest ebb.

Another recent addition is the Frank Gehry-designed **Louis Vuitton Foundation** (fondationlouisvuitton.fr) in the Bois de Boulogne. Also on the horizon: the revamped **Musee de l'Homme** (museedelhomme.fr) at the Trocadero. Meanwhile, the newly rehabilitated "Quais de Seine" (lesberges.paris.fr) is a great place for a walk. The embankment has been pedestrianised across several stretches, including at Solferino, les Invalides and Port du Gros Caillou. You can even rent Zzz containers by the afternoon for your own personal space with an unbeatable view.

It's all go on the hotel front too. After welcoming the Mandarin

of "grand apartments" joining forces with Thierry Despont, who oversaw the Carlyle in New York and Claridge's in London, as well as local interior gurus Chahan Minassian, Cyril Vergniol and Tristan Auer.

Meanwhile, other new properties to open in 2015 in town include **La Reserve** (lareserve-paris.com), a Belle Epoque 30-room hotel just off the Champs-Elysees with a 16-metre indoor pool, restaurant and a Nescens spa, as well as the Jacques Garcia designed boutique hideaway, the **Hotel Maison Souquet** (maisonsouquet.com). Set in Pigalle, this townhouse captures the spirit of Montmartre and the decadent days of the city's pleasure houses.

Hipsters will want to book into the new **Bains Douches Hotel** (hotelsbainsdouches.com), once Marcel Proust's favourite bath-house and a nightclub in the 1970s designed by a young Philippe Starck. You can now eat on his famous black and white tiled dance-floor, which has become the restaurant. Another newcomer is the **Molitor M Gallery** (mgallery.com), the Art Deco bathing palace now celebrating its first birthday.

In the capital's kitchens, organic, healthy and ethical is still the dish of the day, with seasonal and local and regional produce going strong.

The 10th arrondissement is where it's at, with the Faubourg St Denis seen as the beating heart of a new generation of hot brasseries and cafes, born alongside the traditional old school brasseries like Julien and Flo's. Try 52 Faubourg, **Chez Jeanette**

Don't leave without: Trying a Kouing Amman, a rich, buttery, caramelized puff pastry speciality now served at the city's poshest tables, including the Four Seasons' George V, where new head chef Christian Le Squer is making it all about his Breton heritage.

Oriental, Shangri-La and Peninsula over the last couple of years, the City of Love is waiting with baited breath for the re-opening of the Ritz, due to be unveiled this winter and the **Hotel de Crillon** (crillon.com/en), delayed until mid-2016. The palace on Place Vendome will remain true to its soul but benefit from updated bathrooms, larger guestrooms (having lost 16 rooms) and a retractable roof over the garden courtyard. The spa and gym, as well as Escoffier cooking schools will be revamped but don't expect touchscreens in the rooms, the style remains classic.

Fashionistas will appreciate Karl Lagerfeld putting his design genius to work in two suites under the concept

(chezjeannette.com) or the tiny yet super-hip **Paris New York** (pry-hamburgers.fr) to experience the best burgers in town. Another must on the Faubourg is **Julhes** (julhesparis.fr), which brings hip style to fine grocery stores ("epicerie") and has delicious cheese displays. The area is also home to chef of the moment **Christophe Michalak's** new cookery lab (christophemichalak.com), a blessing for sweet-toothed fans arriving in their droves.

Pictured

- 1. Mandarin Oriental
- 2. Jean Paul Gaultier at Grand Palais
- 3. La Reserve Paris
- 4. Hotel Maison Souquet
- 5. Paris Philharmonic
- 6. Molitor M Gallery