



Newsletter **MIND MATTERS** Newsletter
Making Life Interesting
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For Thoughtful, Active People

An Educational Program for Lifelong Learners

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TRIP TO PARIS: August 2009



As part of its expanded educational and cultural offerings, Minderful Center will be offering tours within Arizona, nation-wide and international. The first of these tours will be a one-week stay in Paris in August 2009. The size is limited; deadlines apply.

LEADER: I have organized and am leading this tour because Paris is one of the great cultural, culinary and intellectual destinations of the world. I have lived in Paris twice, speak French, and know my way around the city well (I have also traveled in 42 countries). I would like to share my love of this fantastic city and culture with others who also can appreciate what this city has to offer.

DATES: Phoenix to Paris: Monday 10 August 2009 * Paris to Phoenix: Tuesday 18 August 2009



HOTEL: Hôtel La Perle: 7 nights, breakfast included. I worked with a French tour company that deals only with France so that I could find just the right hotel and neighborhood. It is located on a quiet side street on the Left Bank, the 6th arrondissement, a short walk to La Seine River, the Luxembourg Gardens, the heart of the Latin Quarter, and many other remarkable sites, with a métro station (Mabillon) a few minutes away. It is also only a few blocks from where I used to live, so I can personally recommend this location as one of the most quintessentially Parisian neighborhoods you could be in.

GROUP: I am offering this trip to only lifelong learners associated with the former Senior Program at SCC or the new Minderful Center, plus accompanying relatives or friends. One of the many pleasures of this trip will be to have like-minded traveling companions, some of them your classmates

already, with whom you can appreciate the cuisine and art and architecture and *essence* of Paris. Note that the group will be limited to only 16 or 17 participants in order to allow an easy camaraderie to develop within a small group. A minimum of about 12 will also be required to make the trip viable.

TRANSPORTATION: The French company will arrange for a van to meet us at Charles DeGaulle Airport and transport us to the hotel. Within Paris, I plan on all travel being by métro (subway) or bus or train (and maybe river boat) because that is easiest, fastest and above all, the best way to get a sense of the life of the city. This is not a trip in which people line up en masse for tour buses that whisk them from spot to spot on a rigid schedule, insulated from the culture they came to see. We will be part of Paris. I

will plan everything and lead the way, as well as teaching you how to navigate the transportation system.

TRANSPORTATION-ATTRACTIONS CARD: The tour includes a "Paris Visite" card purchased in advance. This is a wonderful feature of the Paris Tourism Office. The card allows unlimited use of the entire Paris transportation system and unlimited entry to most of the major attractions (e.g. Louvre, Musée d'Orsay, etc.) in the Paris area. No standing in lines, no handling money at ticket counters. This will save a great deal of time and hassles with payments, and makes it easy for individuals to strike out on their own if they wish and visit or re-visit places of interest.

ITINERARY: To understand a great city, you can't rush. I am planning this as a relaxed experience, more *savoring* this great city than trying to hit as many tourist spots as possible. The first half of each day, after leisurely croissants and café au lait, will be devoted to one important site: Le Louvre, Le Musée d'Orsay, Le Centre Pompidou, L'Opéra, etc. The rest of the day will focus on a particular neighborhood of Paris, such as the very trendy Marais, artistic Montmartre, Le Quartier Latin, Île de la Cité, strolling La Seine, the ultra chic 16th arrondissement, famous food shops and markets, and other unique, charming areas of Paris made for wandering and sitting at sidewalk cafes and being part of Parisian life. However, although there will be a set itinerary for each day, it can be varied according to group wishes, and individuals are free to create their own day if they have a particular cultural, artistic, architectural interest they wish to explore. Since we will be using the metro, we can alter our schedule at any time. With your "Paris-Visite" card you can go anywhere you want anytime, and never be lost since there is always a métro station within a few blocks of anywhere in central Paris. Just hop on and return to "Métro Station: Mabillon".

We will gather in the evening for dinner, find a little bistro, and discuss the day. And maybe go to a nightspot if our "mature" bodies still have some get-up-and-go.



PREPARATION IN SCOTTSDALE: For those participants who live in the Scottsdale area, I will hold a class (3 - 4 hours) the week prior to departure. This will include learning to recognize about 15 indispensable words in French that will allow you to move around Paris with much greater confidence; how to navigate the métro system so that you can travel confidently on your own in Paris from the first day and never be lost; basic French customs; information about Paris; important travel tips; and more.

COST: One person paying half of double room. Includes: One round-trip airfare for one; one double room (two occupants); one airport transfer to hotel; one Paris-Visite Card (subway/bus, museums, etc.); planned itinerary and guide (John). The cost is not yet set exactly due to (1) final conversion rate dollar-to-Euro, (2) final locking in of airfare, and (3) final number of participants. It will be very close to \$2,300 U.S., possibly lower. Double for a couple. Single travelers will be offered the option of sharing a double room with another single traveler to reduce their costs; single rooms cost only slightly less than double rooms. A group of 16 will cost less per individual than a group of 10. Act fast. Convince your spouse. Find a friend. Invite your children.

CONTACT: If interested, John@Minderful.com or (480) 619-9993. Hotel rooms are already booked, but we need to act fast to reserve flights and retain the hotel reservations.



Give it some serious thought.....then contact me



Couples.....Relive the Romance