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Walk between Montorgueil and Notre Dame

Walk No. 1: Montorgueil to Notre Dame

Time:

1 ½ hours with no stops; recommended start time: early morning or late afternoon after 4 p.m. I added a few diversions at the end of the walk that are not included in the total walking time.

What's special:

Covers four arrondissements with different moods and ambiance, i.e., village/market life, the Pompidou art center, the monumental architecture of Saint-Eustache, Bourse de Commerce, Hôtel de Ville and Notre-Dame.

Added Note:

There are so many places along this stroll that you will want to go in and gape at the interiors. (je peux regarder? Can I look?)

It will give you a desire to eat your way across the walk in the cute, picturesque, antique cafés and restaurants along rue Montorgueil and hopefully the moon will be rising as you cross the Pont Arcole (bridge) at the Hôtel de Ville. (In Paris, a good moon rising begins two days before its full phase.)

The Walk

At Metro Sentier in the 2nd arrondissement, exit "les Petits Carreaux/rue Reaumur".

All around you is the fabric and garment district (only licensed buyers need enter).

Facing the green arch that reads "Marché Montorgueil" walk along the pedestrian street, rue des Petits Carreaux, laid with small stones called pavés (pavey).

On each side of the street are shops: butcher, fish, cheese, bread, pharmacy, grocery stores, clothes, etc. Monday-Saturday all of the commerce closes between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. for lunch and finally at 8 p.m.

Rue Montorgueil began as a commercial food area specializing in seafood. The street officially begins at the intersection of rues Saint-Sauveur and Léopold Bellan and Montorgueil and and Petits Carreaux.



Rue Montorgueil

The house numbers begin at 100 on the left and 71 on the right side of the street Montorgueil.

Look up on the left at no. 78 for a seafood restaurant from 1820. Upstairs in the dining room you will find the remaining five oil paintings on the plaster walls. Ask to see them.

Inside the bar is one of the zinc bar counters not confiscated during WWII.



Rocher de Cancale

Soon on the right at no. 51, you will see a sign for the Pâtisserie Stohrer. The man who opened this business first came to Paris in 1725 with Maria Leczynska. She would marry Louis XV. About 1864 the patisserie was decorated with the paintings of a celebrated painter of the period, Paul Buadry.



Pâtisserie Stohrer

Across the street from the patisserie is "Au Compas d'Or. The present 1930s hotel replaced the former "Le Compas d'Or" (The Golden compass) whose courtyard sheltered the stagecoaches headed to Dreux (west of Paris and Versailles).

Continue on rue Montorgueil and cross rue Etienne Marcel. You enter the 1st arrondissement and walking toward Les Halles, you pass the restaurant "l'Escargot", dating from 1832.

A taste of the near east is at no. 21. An authentic Arab market with many of the , beans, sweets, canned goods. If you want to take out this Moroccan Ali Baba prepares homemade couscous.

Chocolate craving stop

Charles Chocolatier at no. 17.

At the end of the street, turn right on rue de Turbigo toward the church, [Saint-Eustache](#). You will see the domed Bourse building (at the bourse, look at that tower with lightening rod -- [Colonne Astrologique](#). Continue toward the plaza, with the Bourse in front of you.

Go to the circular plaza and stand next to the stone sculpture (a the head on its side).

The sculpture in Place René Cassin is by Henri de Miller (1986). If you walk to the face of the sculpture, face the church, look up you will notice a sundial and carved elk head on Saint-Eustache. (No details, just interesting and different.)

To your right of the head and to the left of the fountain, walk along the lively, tree-lined path Saint-John Perse toward the modern glass buildings. You are also walking over Les Halles.



Les Halles

At the end of the alley is the restaurant le Sundeck, the Novotel hotel and rue Berger.

Dining hint

l'Atelier Berger, 49, rue Berger (this is the opposite way of our walk) – I recommend l'Atelier Berger for lunch and evening dining.

Don't be afraid of going with their suggestion of the day (for hours, see "Restaurants and Cafes").

When you arrive at Novotel, turn left onto rue Berger. The modern building you see in the distance is the Georges Pompidou Centre.

As you continue along rue Berger another 200 yards, it opens up onto a plaza on your right.

You are now standing over a former church and cemetery.



Fontaine des Innocents

Looking into the plaza you will see four arcades on the other side of the Fontaine des Innocents. If you passed through those arcades you would be on the street where Henri VI was assassinated.



Rue de la Ferronnerie

Continue rue Berger and cross Boulevard Sébastopol into the 4th arrondissement. The street names begin to change now. After crossing Sébastopol you are on rue Aubry le Boucher and then it becomes rue Saint-Merri.

The former municipal baths in this neighborhood is the red-brick building at 33 rue Saint Merri. Now it is a police station.

Walk through the Square Stravinsky past the fountain with the rotating sculptures toward the church. At the church turn right on rue du Cloître St. Merri (you will not see the street name right away) and go to the front of the church, St. Merri, on rue Saint-Martin.

Note: St. Merri was constructed between 1525 and 1552. During the Revolution, it was transformed into a saltpeter factory (sodium nitrate, potassium nitrate). In 1795 it was converted into a "temple du commerce" for the use of religious believers.

(Perhaps the term "temple du commerce" was a cover. During and after the Revolution, church property was confiscated and used for public purposes). It was finally given back to the Catholics in 1803. The church underwent renovations in 1865 and 1866. It has been designated a historical monument and is currently undergoing exterior renovations. You can still admire beautiful stained glass inside.

At the "hotel" sign and next street, turn left onto rue de la Verrerie (if you continued on Saint-Martin, you would come to rue de Rivoli).

On the corner of Verrerie and Saint-Martin is a three-star hotel, that describes its décor as Gothic. It is listed in the "Guide de Charme, Hôtels de Charme de Paris".

An old fashioned bar and hotel, aux Vieux Paris, remains at no. 72 rue de la Verrerie, that is a peak at the past.

Continue straight ahead, and once you reach rue de Renard, turn right and walk toward rue de Rivoli. You will see Notre-Dame in the distance.

Walking toward rue de Rivoli, let's cross over to the Hôtel de Ville. This is the city hall of the city of Paris, thus it houses administrative offices, a post office, a museum and is the place of grand receptions. Each arrondissement also has its own city hall.

The guillotine first made its appearance in this plaza in 1792. A doctor who lived in the 6th designed the guillotine. The machine was thought to be a more humane form of execution than previously used.

The city hall is lined with 107 statues representing people born in Paris; the 108th representation is a non-Parisian. The thirty statues that top the hall represent the 30 provincial capitals of France; and the statue by the clock represents the city of Paris. (At night because of the shadows, I noticed that children think the statues move.)



L'Arche Marion

You are now on your way to Notre Dame and have reached the end of this walk.

I hope it has been relaxing and romantic for you.

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Diversion no. 1 Saint-Eustache Church

You can listen to the organ and choir on Sundays at the 11:00 a.m. high mass. Otherwise, the church has some beautiful stained glass and a creche to the memory of the merchants of Les Halles.

Organ recitals on Sundays 5:30 p.m. (and sometimes Thursday evening at 8:30 p.m.)

Telephone: 01 42 36 31 05/ 01 40 26 47 99

<http://www.st-eustache.org/index.htm>

For the history of Saint-Eustache (in addition to the historical marker visit the church's link:

<http://www.st-eustache.org/nav/histoire.htm>



Saint-Eustache

The increasing population around the central market and the piety of a middle class individual, Jean Alais, are at the foundation of a chapel consecrated in 1223. At the crossing of the paths of Montmartre and Marée, the chapel became a parish church and went through several enlargements before being replaced by the actual church.

François 1st laid the first stone on August 29, 1532 although construction and consecration did not take place until April 26, 1637.

As part of Colbert parish, Saint-Eustache should have received a new façade due to the generosity of the minister of buildings, Mignard, but this was never accomplished.

Diversion no. 2 Colonne Astrologique

If you go all the way to the Bourse-round building-you will see on the far side a tower. It was built in the 1500s and is all that remains of Catherine de Médicis house.



Colonne Astrologique

This column was probably used as an observatory by the astrologists of Catherine de Médicis, this column was part of a home built by Bullant between 1572 and 1584 and was connected with the queen's apartments by a door on the first floor (second floor American).

The next owner was Bourbon-Condé, comte de Soissons, who in 1606 purchased, restored and occupied what was four buildings on an estate that today would be bordered by the streets of Berger, Vauvilliers, Coquillière (same street mentioned in Diversion no. 4) and Sauval.

His garden reached rue du Louvre. It was transformed into a casino at the beginning of the 18th century was

demolished in 1748.

Diversion no. 3 La Bourse de Commerce



La Bourse de Commerce

After the destruction of the Soissons house, the city of Paris built in its place a building to store and sell wheat and flour.

Constructed by Le Camus de Mézières between 1763 and 1766 in the form of a circle, its rotunda was topped off by a curved, wood roof, conceived by Legrand and Molinos. The carpenter Roubo assembled the roof. It contained 25 windows, including an additional curved window at the top (bay window idea).

The roof burned on October 16, 1802 and was replaced in 1811 by an iron coupole. Once again a victim of fire in 1854, this halle au blé was replaced by the actual Bourse de Commerce constructed by Blondel between 1887 and 1899.

Diversion no. 4 Kitchen wares

If you like to search out cookware and utensils, the area around Etienne Marcel is the place. The closest one that is practically next to Saint-Eustache and the Bourse is **E. Dehillerin** at 18 & 20 rue Coquillière 75001 (01 42 36 53 13).

It is the green building mixed in with the restaurants. The other stores are located on rue Montmartre, the back side of St. Eustache. Many of these businesses and the gourmet and every day foie gras/paté businesses are going the way of clothing stores.



Historical Markers Rue Montorgueil



intersection of Saint-Sauveur, Bellan and Montorgueil

A major place for gastronomie and commerce since the 18th century, this street marked the termination of the voyage from the seas of the north. The oyster market of rue Montorgueil was cut in two with the building of rue Etienne Marcel.

At no.59 stood between 1794 and 1845 the restaurant "Au Rocher de Cancale", celebrated for its seafood, immortalized in "la Comédie Humaine" by Balzac. The restaurant was frequented by Honoré Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Théophile Gautier, Eugène Sue.

At nos.60-63 the caterer "Au Rocher d'Etretat" held the sales office for the Société des Huître d'Etretat et de Dieppe (Society of Oysters from Etretat and Dieppe); the oysters from Fécamp were sold close to rue Tiquetonne (close to rue Etienne-Marcel).



Rocher de Cancale restaurant at the corner of Greneta and Montorgueil

The second Rocher de Cancale (Rock of Cancale) (Cancale is a town in Normandy east of St. Malo). In 1846, the first "Rocher de Cancale" established at no.59 de la rue Montorgueil was closed by Borel who, his fortune made, had just turned around and purchased the celebrated "Frascati" on rue Richelieu. No. 78 across the street, has been here since 1820 when an old wine merchant, Pécune, attentively hastened to grab the prestigious name of the restaurant. The second "Rocher +au Cancale" did not know the same success due to the success of "Philippe", close by at the "Compas d'Or". It is during the middle of the 19th century that the veneer neoclassic-inspired décor on the exterior was put in place on two floors in wood and plaster. On the corner of the building on rue Greneta (and rue Montorgueil) is the trademark for the restaurant is sculpted: a rock protecting the shellfish. Two room/salons on the first floor demonstrate the décor attributed to the painter and artist, Gavarni (1804-1866), who according to Edmond de Goncourt, painted them in 1837, before the trademark was changed (no more details on this.) Five octagonal panels have been preserved (as of 1921, 14 were still visible). Painted in oil on plaster, the themes represented are carnival gaiety, humorous individuals, garlands and still life of fruit, fish and game (you can go upstairs and have a look).



Pâtisserie Stohrer 51 rue Montorgueil

In 1725 at the time of her marriage with Louis XV, Marie Leczynska, came to Paris with her entourage, among them the pastry chef, Monsieur Stohrer. Five years later, Mr. Stohrer moved into and opened on rue Montorgueil a pastry shop whose specialties were going to be the "babas" and the "puits d'amour". Toward 1864, the shop was decorated by the painter Paul Baudry (1828-1886), who had just attained celebrity status with his decorations of the Hôtel Galliera and in the entry of the Opéra. The apartment building from the end of the 18th century, has a curious bas relief mounted above its doorway: a globe of the world surrounded by references to the Arts and Letters.



Les Halles tucked into a corner near the entrance to St. Eustache where the motorcycles are parked

As the city spread out, the marché de la Grève became too crowded and in 1137, Louis VI created a new market to the west of rue Saint-Denis. In 1181, Philippe Auguste transferred the large public market of Saint-Lazare and commanded the building of two long buildings called halls that were closed at night so the merchants could store and sell their produce. A third hall was built in 1265, followed by two fish halls. The halls were remodeled in a triangular design under Henri II (1519-1599) that lasted until the Second Empire (Nov. 1852 to September 1870. Baltard constructed the iron pavillions referred to in the writings of Zola. The end came in 1969 when the central markets left Paris and moved to Rungis making way for the Forum des Halls shopping center.



Fontaine des Innocents Place Joachim du Bellay

The Cemetery of the Innocents, the main cemetery of Paris, with more than two million tombs closed in 1785. The remains were transferred to the Catacombes. Since then the fountain has changed location three times. In the beginning, the fountain, decorated between 1547 and 1550 by Jean Goujon, it stood at the angle of rue Saint-Denis and rue Berger as part of the Church of Saints-Innocents and had three sides. After the destruction of the church, the fountain was dismantled and moved to the center of the market. Of course, it need a fourth side that Pajou provided and three new nymph sculptures by Houdon. In 1865, it was once again dismantled and moved to its present spot.



Rue de la Ferronnerie on the other side of Arche shoe store

Ravaillac assassinated Henri IV on this street on Friday, May 14, 1610. Planning to watch, from rue Saint-Denis, the preparations for the entry of Queen Marie de Médicis, who had been crowned at the Basilica Saint-Denis on Sunday, the king left the Louvre in his carriage with the leather curtains raised. The king was stuck in a traffic jam when two carts loaded with hay and with barrels of wine ran into each other. The street was only four metres wide; the width was further reduced by the small outdoor shops under awnings attached to the main buildings (still used today around Paris). Ravaillac took advantage of the opportunity to knife the king. Henri II had ordered the street's widening in 1554; however, it was not until 1669 that this work was accomplished to the measure of 11 meters.



L'Arche Marion

Since its beginnings, doing the laundry in Paris took place along the Seine. Toward the end of the Middle Ages (8th –15th c.) the activity was organized with the introduction of the first laundry boats.

Of limited size, the boats were simple barges with a flat bottom, covered against the bad weather by planks and thatched roofs.

Just before the Revolution about 80 barges were placed on the Right Bank (Hôtel de Ville side) because they received better exposure to the sun.

Closed down in 1805 under the pretext that the barges interfered with the navigation, the laundry boats would reappear even more numerous under the Restoration (1814-1830). Finally, in order to compete with the industrial laundries, they increased their capacity to the point of becoming floating cities.

The launderers worked close to the edge of the water, protected by the canopies. On the level above, were vast, covered rooms to hang the laundry to dry.

The most imposing of all of them was the Marion Arch formed by 12 barges at a length of 200 metres, moored between the Arcole Bridge and Notre Dame Bridge; two hundred fifty people could work there.<