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Ten Tips for Visiting Paris

1. **Cash.** You do not need to bring euros or traveler's checks. ATMs are everywhere, including the airport just outside the customs area at de Gaulle. ATMs typically have the best exchange rate. Ditto for credit card purchases. (But check with your bank card company to see if you are charged extra foreign purchase fee.)
2. **Taxi To Hotel.** Print out the name, address and small map if possible of your hotel. Hand to taxi driver at airport. Be sure to take: "TAXI PARISIEN" (lighted sign on top of cab). Cost from de Gualle will be about 50 euros plus 15% tip.
3. **Passport.** Make photocopy of your passports and list of your credit cards numbers. Keep in discrete place. Leave passports, other valuables in safety deposit box of your hotel room.
4. **Museum Pass.** At metro station or first museum stop, get the "[Paris Museum Pass](#)". You can buy a 2, 4, or 6 (consecutive) day pass. The latter is 60 euros. Access to over 60 museums and monuments. No waiting in line at Louvre, d'Orsay, Rodin, etc.
5. **Metro Passes.** Highly recommend metro/bus passes, which you should buy at metro station...will make all the difference as you explore the city. Two options, currently:
 - a. "[Carte Orange](#)". Good for Monday through Sunday (must buy by Wednesday). Need a 1" x 1" passport photo. Good for [Zones](#) 1 and 2, most popular, or up to 6. You get a plastic wallet to carry it in. About 16 euros for week ("carte hebdomadaire"), cheaper than second option; unfortunately, appears to be phasing-out sometime in 2008.
 - b. "[Paris Visite](#)". Good 1, 2, 3, or 5 days. Can buy any day, and you do not need a picture. Good for Zones 1-3 (30 euros for 5 day pass), or up to 6 (47 euros).
6. **Dinner Reservations.** Each morning, before you go out to explore, give a note to the hotel receptionist to make your dinner reservations for that evening. Reservations are a must, particularly in summer. Provide restaurant name and phone number on card. Parisians typically eat later than Americans. My wife and I like 8:15pm...a little early, before the crowd, but late enough to squeeze in an afternoon nap to help overcome jet-lag.
7. **Menu.** Food is wonderful in Paris, but try to bring a small translation book to interpret the menu. Nothing like getting herring head when you were expecting veal!
8. **Tipping.** Even though they say tip is included in meal, leave a little extra if you enjoyed your meal, like 2-5% on the table after you pay the bill. To call your waiter (and just about everyone else), say "S'il vous plaît"...the most important phrase in Paris.
9. **Summer Heat.** Paris can be hot in July, August...break often, drink lots of water!
10. **Departing Taxi.** The night before you depart, ask the hotel receptionist to book your cab for airport next day. Leave enough time, of course, based on traffic, etc.

Recommend travel books and sites give plenty of good advice on what to see, where to eat, etc. But, no need to overdo, as people tend to discover their own Paris!

Bon voyage! Charles