

EXPERIENCING SOME OF THE WONDERS OF PARIS

Unlike Hongkong, where eating in the best food outlets of 5-star hotels is, normally, more rewarding than eating in stand-alone restaurants, in Paris, France, the opposite is true.

Paris has many specialist restaurants that rival any and all food outlets of the best hotels in this magical city.

TARGET () ate at a different restaurant at least twice per day, during this medium's entire 4-day stay.

(This reviewer is living proof of the-above statement and he has a rotund belly as evidence of the very hard work, performed in sampling the food and select Parisian restaurants.)

Not one of these stand-alone restaurants bombed out although some of the restaurants along the Avenue des Champs-Élysées did not rate very highly, compared with the others that this medium experienced.

Then, again, the restaurants along Avenue des Champs-Élysées, within a stone's throw from the Arc de Triomphe – the Arc de Triomphe, without question, is one of the most iconic monuments of Paris – cater, mainly, for office workers, shop assistants and tourists, taking a break from their respective routines and, feeling puckish, stop off for a quick bite.

Very few really great restaurants of Paris are found along the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, but are tucked away in places that the usual tourist would not be able to find without somebody, volunteering local knowledge of where the best culinary arts are manifest.

TARGET was fortunate enough to have the services of the concierge of Hôtel de Crillon to assist in locating some of these wonderful, stand-alone eateries and making the necessary reservations.

Turning left from Hôtel de Crillon and walking down Rue de Faubourg Saint-Honoré, on what appeared to be a small side street is Le Soufflé, a restaurant, as its name implies, that specialises in creating soufflés.

**A Stroll in the Park on a Warm
Sunday Afternoon.
Rue de Faubourg Saint-Honoré is in
the Background**

The wine list of Le Soufflé is sparse, to be sure, but the food is exquisite, if one enjoys soufflés, of course.

These soufflés are not all deserts, as one may imagine, with some soufflés, being made of spinach, cheese, etc.

The walk, down the Rue de Faubourg Saint-Honoré is, by itself, something of an adventure, because the architect of modern Paris, Mr Georges Eugène Baron Haussmann, ostensibly a French civil servant and urban planner, during the reign of Napoleon III, who extensively redesigned Paris from 1852 to 1870,

determined that the Capital City of France must have new and wider boulevards, railway stations outside the central city, and new parks, in particular, the Bois de Boulogne.

The central motif of this inspired French civil servant was that the wide boulevards of Paris would open up to unveil a monument so that the actual residences and commercial units, along the boulevards, would fade, almost into obscurity, while, from the central core, would spring a monument to delight the aesthetic senses in man.

One has to experience this walk in order to understand, fully, how this French genius of urban planning turned Paris into a modern wonder of a capital city of a country – even to this day, 138 years, after he completed his monumental task.

Rue de Faubourg Saint-Honoré is festooned with imposing structures, stretching for miles, but all of the structures look, from the pavements, to be exactly the same, the same height, the same architectural splendour, the same magnificence.

And the central theme: Place Vendôme, a tall column, being a monument to the military successes of Napoleon Bonaparte, who ordered the recycling of some of his worn-out cannons in order to create this imposing, cast-iron historical record, on the top of which stands Napoleon in the dress of a Roman emperor.

The following is a list of some of the restaurants that **TARGET** experienced in Paris with accompanying remarks:

Le Soufflé	A small restaurant behind Place Vendôme, with a limited menu, but with a wide range of dishes, the emphasis, being soufflés of every description;
L’Espadon	The fine-dining outlet of Ritz Paris. This is the showcase food outlet of this hotel, but it is hardly worth a visit. It is expensive and not worth the walk to Place Vendôme. TARGET paid €183 for 2 people for a 3-course luncheon on Sunday, September 21, 2008. The restaurant was nearly empty when TARGET entered it at 12:50 p.m., but was forced to sit near the kitchen. At least, 2 other couples were heard complaining about the service and their seats on the day that this medium visited this restaurant. The staff appears to place guests according to their convenience, caring little for the comfort of customers;
Café di Roma	This is a no-no. It is located near the Arc de Triomphe on Avenue des Champs-Élysées and although there is little wrong with the food, it is nothing to write home to mom. One is jammed in between other small tables, making the total experience very uncomfortable. TARGET spent €55.50 for a 3-course meal for 2 people;
Le Dôme	This is an extraordinarily wonderful restaurant, specialising in seafood dishes, from the finest oysters to the famous blue lobster of Brittany. TARGET ate at this restaurant twice, once to sample the Bouillabaisse Marseillaise (for 2 people) and the Fine de Claire oysters, and once to sample the blue lobster. The cost for the Bouillabaisse Marseillaise and the oysters was €203, which included a bottle of Clos St ^e Magdeleine, Cassis, (€44) while the cost of the blue lobsters was €62 per lobster. TARGET drank 2 bottles of wine with the lobsters, a bottle of Mercurey (€53) and a bottle of Deutz Champagne (€77). This restaurant is located on Boulevard du Montparnasse and is famous for it, being the favourite restaurant for many writers and poets over many decades; and,
L’Auberge Bressane	This can only be described as a restaurant, catering, mainly for the locals of this area of Paris, to wit, Avenue de la Motte Picquet. It specialises in chicken dishes from Bressane. If one has not eaten this free-range chicken from Bressane, one does not understand how a chicken should taste. TARGET paid €184 for a 3-course meal for

2 people, which included Plat de Tripes, a Bressane chicken dish, soufflé Fromage, Crepe Suzette and a bottle of Gevrey-Chambertin, Vintage 2003, at €90. This is a must restaurant for anybody, visiting this magical city in order to taste the real Paris, seen through the eyes of the locals.

This reviewer fully intends to return to Paris – because there are so many other restaurants that need to be sampled.

But, first, this reviewer will have to work out in a gymnasium in order to lose more than just a few pounds.

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