

WorldDenver Presents:

STAYCATIONS

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PARTY IN PARIS

Bonjour! Vive la République! Welcome to France! Put on your beret, grab your croissant, and let's explore the Arrondissements in the City of Light. In 1795, Paris was divided into twelve districts, but it wasn't until the expansion in 1860 by Napoleon III and Baron Hausmann that the surrounding communes were welcomed and thus the additional 8 arrondissements were created. Each arrondissement has a claim to fame, from Moulin Rouge in the 18th to the Arc de Triomphe in the 8th. Don't confuse your arrondissements with quartiers, though! Quartiers are neighborhoods within each district, and can have the same name as another neighborhood in a different arrondissement!

CULTURE

Found in the 1st arrondissement, the Musée de Louvre is the largest and most visited museum in the world. By some accounts, it would take one visitor who spends 30 seconds on each piece of art 100 consecutive days to get through them all, without factoring in bathroom breaks or sleep! As the most expansive art gallery in the world, the Louvre houses more than 35,000 works of art in the fortress-turned-palace-turned-museum. Its tumultuous history also includes the Nazi occupation, where soldiers used the museum as a storehouse for stolen art. Wander the halls, and see if you can decipher the Mona Lisa's smile.

CUISINE

Hold onto your butter and berets... while the croissant is a momentous part of French history, the golden half moon pastry is Austrian in origin! The Viennese 'kipferl', a crescent-shaped pastry made of denser bread, was believed to be the ancestor of the croissant. The kipferl is thought to have been created after the defeat of the Ottomans in 1683. The half moon shape was created as a reference to the Ottoman flags, an honor to the bakers who prevented the Turks from tunneling underneath their city by giving alarm to the town. Try your hand at making your own croissants this weekend, complete with melty camembert cheese, and enjoy the pastry the French perfected.

COCKTAIL

The novelist Alec Waugh dubbed this "the most powerful cocktail in the world" and he was only partially referring to its potent combination of gin and champagne. The original French 75 was a highly advanced piece of artillery used to cover an open field with deadly fire in World War I, making it nearly impossible for the enemy to advance. An American reporter based in Paris wrote, "Should France issue victorious from the present war, her success will have been due, more than any one other thing to her 'Soixante-quinze': her famous rapid fire, explosive shell, seventy-five millimetre cannon," which inspired phrases likening the lethal potency of the drink to the gun, such as "both knock you flat." Handle with care, as the potency of this cocktail has not distilled in 102 years.

