

# Five Tips for a Stress-Free Trip to the Louvre with Kids

*(When You Know Nothing About Art)*



An e-book from



The Museum Treasure Hunt Experts

If you're planning on visiting the Louvre, you'll know it can be a daunting task. Add in a couple of kids, and the idea of a fun family day out in the world's largest museum can start to seem like a far-off dream.

You've scoured the web and gathered a list of hints and tips on visiting Paris with kids as long as your arm, and you've dutifully taken note of your friends' and family's advice about the best entrance, best tickets and best time to visit the Louvre, to ensure you skip the lines and avoid the crowds. With all the contradictory advice out there, it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

And to top it all off, you're no art aficionado, and perhaps you're wondering whether you'll be able to answer your kids' questions about the masterpieces the Louvre museum is sure to offer.

This e-book is here to cut through the noise and show you that visiting the Louvre is one of the best things to do in Paris with kids, and that you don't need a degree in Art History to enjoy it. With a little preparation, you can make sure your kids enjoy your trip to the Louvre so much they're dragging you back at the end of the day.

## **TIP #1: DO YOUR HOMEWORK (OR COPY OURS, WE WON'T TELL)**

Have you bragged to your family and friends about your upcoming trip to Paris? If so, anyone who has visited before will almost certainly have told you about the **top-secret** entrance to the Louvre, where there will be **no line** and **no waiting time**. Sound too good to be true?

Unfortunately, it probably is. There *was* a time when a little inside knowledge could knock a few hours off your waiting time, but these days, a thing called the internet exists, meaning that your “top secret” entrance is probably known to anyone capable of a quick Google search.

Be wary of anyone telling you about the time they got in without a line. Lines, crowds and waiting are, unfortunately, a part of visiting the Louvre – especially in the high season. But don’t panic! With a little planning and management, the crowds don’t need to ruin your day.

Luckily, we’ve done the research for you – here’s our brief guide to the Louvre’s tickets, entrances, lines and crowds.

# WHICH LOUVRE TICKETS SHOULD I BUY?

There are three basic types of ticket which will get you entry into the Louvre:

## 1 TICKETS BOUGHT ON SITE

You can buy tickets for the day of your visit in the ticket office within the Louvre lobby. It's simple enough, but you **will** have to wait in line for a significant amount of time – often several hours, so we don't recommend this unless you're not pushed for time.

## 2 E-TICKETS



By far the most convenient option, you can [buy your e-tickets to the Louvre on their website](#): simply pick your date and time, and you're done. These also tend to have the shortest lines when entering the museum.

## 3 MUSEUM PASS

If you're visiting several museums while in Paris, you might consider the Paris Museum Pass, as it gets you entry to over 60 monuments and museums, including the Louvre. You can get it at several points of sale throughout Paris, or online before your trip, and they do passes for 2, 4 or 6 consecutive days. However, it's only really worth it price-wise if you plan to visit at least 2 museums or monuments a day.

# WHICH LOUVRE ENTRANCE IS BEST?

## 1 LOUVRE PYRAMID (best for e-tickets, Museum Passes, other tickets)



The main entrance to the Louvre is through the iconic glass pyramid. While the temptation may be to run screaming from the lines, the pyramid is often the best and easiest way to enter the museum – *if* you've bought your tickets in advance. The pyramid entrance is divided into *three* lines: Looking at the pyramid face-on, the right-hand side is for visitors *without* tickets – and yes, this can be *extremely* long. On the left, however, there are two separate lines, one winding one for Museum Passes and untimed tickets, and one straight (often short) one which is reserved for visitors with e-tickets (and other tickets with a set time). So [grab your e-tickets](#) before you arrive, and you'll be inside in no time.

## 2 PORTE RICHELIEU (best for e-tickets, if the pyramid is busy)

If, for some reason, the pyramid is looking busier than usual, you might try the Porte Richelieu. However, please note that while this entrance generally doesn't have much of a line, it is *only* for visitors with e-tickets – so if you have Museum Passes (or no tickets at all), stick with one of the other options.

## 3 CARROUSEL DU LOUVRE (best if you're already inside or it's raining)

You can enter the Carrousel du Louvre – the Museum's huge underground shopping mall – either from rue du Rivoli, which runs alongside the Louvre, or near the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel. From the inside, you can also enter the Louvre. There's a line for those with tickets, and another (long) one for those without. Be warned, though – these lines are often as long (or longer) than those at the pyramid, so unless you're already inside, it's usually not worth the extra walk.

## 4 PORTE DES LIONS (best for under 25s)

The final option is the Porte des Lions, towards the end of the Denon building. This can be a good option as there's rarely much of a line. It's also the dedicated entrance for EU Citizens under 25, who enter for free – so if you're a young group, this might be a good option. However, be aware that this entrance doesn't take you to the lobby – you'll end up in the Arts of Oceania section, and have to wade through a lot to get your bearings.

# WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT THE LOUVRE?

As the most popular attraction in Paris after the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre can get pretty crowded. If you're in Paris for a few days, you may be able to choose your time wisely to make sure those crowds – while not invisible – are not quite as intense.

## BAD TIMES TO GO

### WEEKENDS

Skip the Louvre on the weekend and spend your time frolicking along the Seine instead – naturally, the museum is much busier than during the week. If you absolutely must visit on a Saturday or Sunday, go in the afternoon.



### HOLIDAYS

The Louvre is open most holidays, to allow people working in Paris the chance to visit. However this of course means that the museum tends to be *packed* those days – avoid it!

### ANY TIME IT'S FREE ENTRY

Getting into the Louvre for free sounds great, right? The Louvre is free for everyone on the first Sunday of every month from October – April, so if you want to save some *centimes*, yes, you could go one of those days. However, please don't go and expect the museum not to be filled to the rafters. And as for the 14<sup>th</sup> July, when the Louvre is also free in the height of the high season – don't even think about it if you enjoy being able to breathe!

## GOOD TIMES TO GO

### WEDNESDAY OR FRIDAY EVENING

The Louvre is open late (until 9.45pm!) and depending on the time of year, an evening visit can be fairly quiet (relatively speaking, at least!).

### (THURSDAY) MORNINGS

For some reason, people are always convinced that the morning will be quieter than the afternoon. It seems that everyone has the same idea, so in general the morning is actually the busiest time of day. However, if you're an early bird and prefer a morning visit, Thursdays tend to be quietest.



Daisy de Plume  Founder

## DAISY'S TIP

"Though you should avoid the Louvre on free entry days, it's also free for under 26s of any nationality on Wednesday and Friday evenings, when it's quiet! And remember it's always free for under 18s, so don't pay for the kids!"

## TIP #2: PLAN BEFORE YOU GO (WITH THE KIDS INVOLVEMENT)

You wouldn't go to the supermarket without making a shopping list, or go on vacation abroad without learning a few key phrases. Likewise, if you're visiting the Louvre Museum, a little bit of preparation ahead of time is a good idea. If you're visiting Paris with kids, this is a great opportunity to get them excited for visiting the Louvre before you even leave home! Here are three things you can do ahead of time to make sure your trip to the Louvre with kids goes smoothly:

### 1 CHOOSE AREAS TO FOCUS ON

If you arranged it in a straight line, the Louvre Museum would be 8 miles long. These 8 miles contain some 35,000 works of art – so it should come as no surprise that you won't be able to see all of it in one day. Instead of stressing about the things you won't see, why not spend some time before your trip selecting the areas you don't want to miss? To get the kids engaged early, get them involved! Sure, they may not be art aficionados (yet), but if your little ones have been learning about the Ancient Egyptians at school, bring their studies to life by taking them to see the many artefacts, sarcophagi – and even a *mummy* – that the Louvre's Egyptian collection offers. If they don't have specific interests you can focus on, just ask them. Would you rather look at paintings, or statues? Ancient Greeks, or Romans? If you spend just a little bit of time looking at what the Louvre has on display before your trip, you can start the process of getting the kids excited to see art before you even board the plane.

#### DAISY'S TIP

"If you're stuck, try browsing the departments [on the Louvre website](#). Each department has photographs of the seven most popular works, so you can have the kids memorise them (or print it out) and try and find them once you're there!"



Daisy de Plume,  **THAT Muse** Founder

## 2 USE YOUR KIDS' INTERESTS

Think there's nothing in the Louvre to interest your little ones? Think again! With a collection of over 35,000 objects, you can make the Louvre's collections relevant to almost anything. We've suggested two ways to incorporate things your kids might already love...

### Harry Potter and the Louvre Museum

If your kids are Potter-heads, don't miss:

- Ingres' *Oedipus and the Sphinx*... for a riddling sphinx like the one Harry battled in Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
- Colomb's *St George Slaying the Dragon*... for a dragon – do you think it's a Chinese Fireball? A Welsh Green? Or perhaps the dreaded Hungarian Horntail...
- Reni's *Deianeira and the Centaur Nessus*... for a centaur who doesn't look like he'd be a very good Divination teacher (unlike Firenze).

Images:

Left: Oedipus and the Sphinx, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Center: St George Slaying the Dragon, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Right: Deianeira and the Centaur Nessus, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)



### PERCY JACKSON AND THE LOUVRE MUSEUM



Kids into Percy Jackson? Be sure to look for:

- Coysevox's *Neptune*... Neptune is the Roman name for Poseidon, who (spoiler alert!) turns out to be Percy Jackson's real father.
- Puget's *Perseus & Andromeda*... which features a glorious and gruesome detail of Medusa's decapitated head (plus, Perseus is the mythological inspiration for Percy!).
- *Jupiter of Smyrna*... No Lighting Thieves here! This statue of Jupiter (the Roman name for Zeus) shows the god brandishing his famous lightning bolt.

Images:

Left: Neptune, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Center: Perseus & Andromeda, detail of Medusa, by [Annie Caley-Renn](#)

Right: Jupiter of Smyrna, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)



### 3 WATCH MOVIES!

## Four movies to watch before taking the kids to the Louvre

#### 1 BAND OF OUTSIDERS (1964)



Jean-Luc Godard's French New Wave film, *Bande à Part* (released as *Band of Outsiders* in North America) may not be the most kid-friendly (if they don't like reading subtitles) – but there's one scene which is worth a watch. In it, the three main characters dash through the Louvre, skidding past famous works of art, in an attempt to beat the record for the fastest visit to the museum. Just don't try and recreate it when you're there!

Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9i771qYngY>

#### 2 BELPHEGOR, PHANTOM OF THE LOUVRE (2001)



The 2001 French fantasy movie, *Belphegor, Phantom of the Louvre*, was the first movie to be filmed on location inside the Louvre Museum. Is it a good movie? No. But is it a terrible movie? Well... yes, it's pretty bad. But it does contain plenty of interior shots of the Louvre, which might make it worth a watch (if nothing else, your kids will marvel at how far CGI effects have come in the past two decades).

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouiAiW5WsnE>

#### 3 THE DA VINCI CODE (2006)



Probably the most famous movie to be set in the Louvre, the 2006 adaptation of Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code* is not for all kids (it's rated PG-13). But if yours are older, it's a hard one to beat for stunning scenes of the Louvre, and spots to scout out once you're there (even if the story is a bit silly – and the "history" questionable!).

Clip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_HKGZRuroE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_HKGZRuroE)

#### 4 WONDER WOMAN (2017)



The most recent movie on the list, there's plenty to recommend about Warner Bros' 2017 adaptation of DC Comics' *Wonder Woman* – not least a pretty shot of the outside of the Louvre in the opening scenes. Watch the movie for fun – but remember to strut past the pyramid pretending to be an Amazon Princess in disguise (spoiler alert!) when you're at the museum.

Clip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbmwWcT\\_BIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbmwWcT_BIQ)

# TIP #3: MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME IN LINE

Make sure your kids know beforehand that the fun will begin *before* you even enter the museum. Here are a few things you could use your waiting time for:

## 1 WATCH MOVIE CLIPS

If you were short of time before your trip – or as a strategic move to drum up excitement while waiting in line, you could even have your kids watch clips from some of the movies mentioned on the previous page on your phone while you wait – see if they can spot where they're standing in relation to the outdoor scene in the Da Vinci Code! You can use YouTube to download some clips beforehand.

## 2 FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH THE MAP

Have you picked out sections of the Louvre you and the kids want to see? [Download a copy](#) of the Louvre's map on your phone (there are paper versions inside), and ask the kids to help you figure out where certain areas are – then see if they can point in the right direction from outside. Kids get bored easily when parents are poring over maps... so get them involved!

## 3 WATCH A BEYONCE VIDEO... NO, REALLY!

You might look a little strange to others in the queue as you start blasting out Beyoncé (ok, maybe use headphones) – but if they glance at your phone screen they'll soon understand. The video to the Carters' 2018 song *APES\*\*IT* was filmed in the Louvre. As the title suggests, the song does contain strong language so may not be suitable for younger kids – but might make it all the more interesting for older ones! As you watch, try to remember the spots in the Louvre where the Carters were singing, so you can try and spot them while you're inside.

### DAISY'S TIP

"If you're doing a THATMuse Treasure Hunt at the Louvre, you could use the time in line to read some of [our blog posts](#), which contain tidbits which might win you bonus points!"



Daisy de Plume,  Founder

## TIP #4: BUILD IN SOME BREAK TIME

There's no getting around the fact that the Louvre is enormous. For little ones (with little legs), it's especially important to break it up. Here's our quick guide to places to eat and things to do near the Louvre.

### THATMuse's favourite places to eat near the Louvre

There are no fewer than fifteen cafes, restaurants and takeaways located throughout the Louvre and its shopping mall, the *Carrousel du Louvre*, so there's no need to leave the museum if you don't want to. If you want to get some fresh air (or you've had your fill of museum fun), here are our recommendations for places to eat with kids near the Louvre:

#### ① LE CAFÉ MARLY (for the best view)

The closest restaurant to the Louvre, if you nab a seat on the *terrasse* you'll have a view of the Louvre's pyramids. Sure, the service is typically *parisien* (rude), but worth it for the view (the food is overpriced, and nothing spectacular, but perfectly fine). **93 rue de Rivoli - €€€€**

#### ② CAFÉ BLANC (for basic French bistro fare)

A favourite of THATMuse, Café Blanc is just far enough away from the Louvre to not be full of tourists (and the amplified prices that come with them). It's basic French bistro fare (croques monsieurs, burgers, fish), served up by friendly staff, at decent prices. **10 rue Croix des Petits Champs - €€**

#### ③ MACÉO (for something exceptional)

The only restaurant on this list serving up truly exceptional food, Macéo comes with a price tag (the cheapest set menu is around 40€). If you want to splash out (and your kids have adventurous palates), this is the place to be. **15 rue des Petits Champs - €€€€**

#### ④ LE FUMOIR (for a French feel)

Le Fumoir is about as "typically Parisian" as a restaurant can get – and yes, that includes the slightly snobbish attitude of the staff. But it's not too pricey, the food is decent, and it's a pleasant walk (through the *Cour Carrée*) from the Louvre. **6 rue de l'Amiral Coligny - €€€**

#### ⑤ PICNIC IN THE TUILERIES (for something different)

If the weather's nice, why not forgo the restaurant altogether, and sit down for a picnic in the Tuileries gardens? There's no shortage of places to grab takeaway sandwiches in and around the Louvre – and you can let the kids blow off some steam while you eat.

*Pssst! Want more info about where to eat near the Louvre, plus other tips on visiting Paris with kids? Check out [our blog!](#)*

# THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS NEAR THE LOUVRE

At THATMuse, we want kids to have fun in the Louvre. But museums can be tiring (for adults too!) and kids need some kid time. Here are our top things to do near the Louvre with kids (which can be done before or after your museum visit, or as a quick museum break!)

## 1 EXPLORE THE JARDIN DES TUILLERIES



Just a stone's throw from the Louvre, the Jardin de Tuilleries is a great place for kids to run around. Grab some snacks for a post-museum picnic, or check out the playground and boat pond. If the kids are really bouncing off the walls, why not go on a scavenger hunt for the garden's trampolines? The kids can blow off some steam for only a few euros!

## 2 PLAY HIDE & SEEK IN THE PALAIS ROYAL OR COUR CARÉE



The exterior of the Louvre is divided into two courtyards: the *Cour Napoléon*, where you'll find the famous glass pyramids, and the *Cour Carrée*, a pleasant and quiet square which is perfect for a game of hide-and-seek! Only a few steps further, the forest of columns and enclosed garden of the *Palais Royal* is also a good spot for this.

## 3 COUNT THE FISH IN THE COUR NAPOLÉON



While the three glass pyramids and surrounding fountains take the spotlight in the Louvre's enormous *Cour Napoléon*, there are also some great opportunities for a Louvre treasure hunt. Try asking the kids how many of these great, gaping fish they can spot around the courtyard!

## 4 GO ON A HARRY POTTER TREASURE HUNT!



Ok – this one can't really be done as a break from the Louvre as it takes a couple of hours, but it is a good way to break up the day. After a quick lunch in the neighbourhood, you could spend the afternoon hunting down connections between Paris and the world of Harry Potter with a [THATMuse Harry Potter](#) (which starts in the Louvre's *Cour Carrée*).

Images:

First: Jardin des Tuilleries, by [THATMuse](#)

Second: Palais Royale, by [THATMuse](#)

Third: Cour Napoléon fish by [Annie Caley-Renn](#)

Fourth: Emily playing THATMuse Harry Potter, by [Annie Caley-Renn](#)

## TIP #5: MAKE IT A GAME

If there's one thing we know at THATMuse, it's that **making a museum into a game** is the best way to make it **fun and engaging** for kids (and adults too!). Of course, we believe the best way to do this is to book one of our **museum treasure hunts at the Louvre** (and also the **Musée d'Orsay, British Museum, V&A and Natural History Museum!**) – but there *are* ways you can make a fun museum game for you and your kids on your own. Here are our suggestions for a few **museum games for kids**.

### *Three fun games you can play at the Louvre with kids*

#### 1 THE Imitation Game

Perhaps the simplest game you can play in a museum with kids, it's also one of the best. As you walk around the museum, have the kids do their best impressions of the paintings and sculptures they see. Snap photos as you go for some fun memories! If you'd like to make it a competition, you could have another family member judge the photos and decide which kid did the best impression.

#### 2 THE MINATURE MUSEUM TREASURE HUNT

This is a simple game, that just requires a little preparation. Before your trip to the Louvre, sit down with the kids and have a look at the museum's online collections – they're helpfully divided into [departments](#). Ask the kids to pick several items from the list (or, if you have older kids and fancy a challenge, choose them at random!). Make a note of the information provided about where the object can be found in the museum, and have the kids search for them once you're there. This way, the kids get to choose *themselves* which pieces they want to see, and will get a sense of achievement once they find them.

#### 3 THE POSTCARD GAME

This game is a great one as it requires little to no preparation. When you arrive at the museum, head straight to the gift shop, and ask the kids to pick out a few postcards of works of art in the museum (the Louvre has plenty of these, and they're cheap). Then, challenge the kids to a museum treasure hunt, using the museum's map to assist you in your quest to find the pieces on your postcards. The kids will enjoy finding the real version of the object in the photo they have in front of them. How do we know this? Well, it's the premise behind all of our [museum treasure hunts](#) in London and Paris!

# WANT MORE MUSEUM FUN?

Does the idea of planning a trip to the Louvre with kids still sound a little overwhelming?

Our Louvre treasure hunts are ideal for injecting a bit of competition into your family's Louvre visit, and ensuring that kids and adults alike leave with a sense of ownership of this great museum.

**But don't take our word for it! Here's what some of our clients have said about their Louvre treasure hunt experiences:**

★★★★★ “The BEST way to experience the Louvre!”

*From ShaanS74 on TripAdvisor, April 2019*

★★★★★ “Brought the family together!”

*From Chilger2018 on TripAdvisor, July 2018*

★★★★★ “The best way to visit the Louvre with tweens and teens!”

*From Maria A on TripAdvisor, November 2018, May*

★★★★★ “Fun for everyone!!”

*From Laura R on TripAdvisor, May 2018*

★★★★★ “Terrific fun with plenty of learning opps!”

*From KrispyKris on TripAdvisor, August 2018*

**Contact THATMuse to book your Louvre treasure hunt today!**

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The Museum Treasure Hunt Experts

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