



# A Passion for Paris: Romanticism and Romance in the City of Light

*David Downie*

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"A top-notch walking tour of Paris. . . . The author's encyclopedic knowledge of the city and its artists grants him a mystical gift of access: doors left ajar and carriage gates left open foster his search for the city's magical story. Anyone who loves Paris will adore this joyful book. Readers visiting the city are advised to take it with them to discover countless new experiences." —*Kirkus Reviews* (starred)**A unique combination of memoir, history, and travelogue, this is author David Downie's irreverent quest to uncover why Paris is the world's most romantic city—and has been for over 150 years.**

Abounding in secluded, atmospheric parks, artists' studios, cafes, restaurants and streets little changed since the 1800s, Paris exudes romance. The art and architecture, the cityscape, riverbanks, and the unparalleled quality of daily life are part of the equation.

But the city's allure derives equally from hidden sources: querulous inhabitants, a bizarre culture of heroic negativity, and a rich historical past supplying enigmas, pleasures and challenges. Rarely do visitors suspect the glamor and chic and the carefree atmosphere of the City of Light grew from and still feed off the dark fountainheads of riot, rebellion, mayhem and melancholy—and the subversive literature, art and music of the Romantic Age.

Weaving together his own with the lives and loves of Victor Hugo, Georges Sand, Charles Baudelaire, Balzac, Nadar and other great Romantics Downie delights in the city's secular romantic pilgrimage sites asking , Why Paris, not Venice or Rome—the tap root of "romance"—or Berlin, Vienna and London—where the earliest Romantics built castles-in-the-air and sang odes to nightingales? Read *A Passion for Paris: Romanticism and Romance in the City of Light* and find out.



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