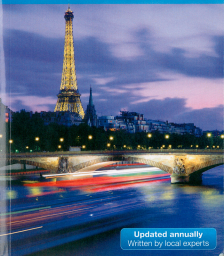


TimeOut

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Paris



Updated annually
Written by local experts

Shakespeare & Company

A Left Bank literary institution.

Despite the international reach of the worldwide network of book retailers, Paris is home to a healthy number of specialist bookstores. Of these, the most famous is **Shakespeare & Company** (see p240), once described by Henry Miller as a "wonderland of books."

The first Shakespeare & Company was founded in rue de l'Odéon in 1919 by Sylvia Beach, and rapidly became a literary hub. In 1932, Beach was the first to publish Joyce's *Ulysses*, before eventually being closed down during the German occupation in 1941. Ten years later, American Francophile George Whitman moved his extensive personal collection of European and American literature into a little shop on rue de la Harpe and opened his own literary den, in much the same vein as Beach's original. When Sylvia died in 1982, Whitman's store adopted her name **Shakespeare & Company**.

George Whitman is now in his nineties, and his daughter Sylvia (named after Beach, of course) has taken over the business, which continues to boast the best selection of English language books in the city, and hosts regular readings and workshops. Upstairs, the "Tumbledown Hotel" (every room crisscrossed to the rafters with bookshelves) provides temporary lodgings for literary travelers, who can earn their keep by helping out in the shop.

In recent years Sylvia and her team have pulled off something of a coup by selling up the Shakespeare & Company Literary Festival (see www.festivalshakespeare.com). The festival four-day event (next edition set for June 2010) is no small-time affair: at last count attracted over 5,000 visitors.

Paul Auster and Siri Hustvedt were the headliners in 2009, together with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Alain de Botton, Jung Chang, Victoria Greenlee, Amélie Nothomb and Catherine Millet.

"We don't put them up in posh hotels, but they love to come," Sylvia says. "It's completely different from other literary festivals. Here we have a glass of wine in the bookshop and you glance round and see Paul Auster shuffling in an untanned writer. They love that aspect of the festival, and of course, they love to come to Paris." Most of the readings and debates are held in a mezzanine in square René where next to the store, with some special events in locations such as the Hôtel de Ville.

Back in the shop, it's as if modern life left this place behind: books from floor to ceiling, a dusty piano, and Colette the dog. From his room above the shop, George can still be seen looking out of the window, keeping an eye on his old friends – many of them literary luminaries who might pop by to pick up a new edition, chat with Sylvia or give a reading.

Zel

11 rue Debilly, 2nd fl (01 42 78 09 69) www.zel.fr AP St-Germain-Prest
Open 11am-7:30pm Mon-Sat. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p409 L3.

Zel's designer is the daughter of fashion photographer Peter Lindbergh. The trendy children's separates have a classic Italian look, in soft cotton-cobweb with adorable details like silver patches on the jackets. Also, sheepskin jackets and hats are part of the look. Other locations: 32 rue de Richelieu, 1st fl (01 42 88 61 84); 52bis rue de St-Hipp, 6th fl (01 42 52 82 82) and toddlers (01 42 52 45 22).

Toys & books

Traditional toyshops abound, department stores (see p239) go overboard at Christmas. For children's books in English, try WH Smith (see p242) or *Deveraux's* (see p242).

Arrête de Mère

29 rue St-Louis-en-l'Île, 4th fl (01 42 34 67 68). AP Puteaux
Open 10:30am-7pm daily. Credit AmEx, MC, V. Map p409 K2.

Yael's Art is a great place for Christmas shopping, with traditional wooden toys from eastern Europe, games, puppets and finger puppets.

Franc Junior

19 rue Vauv, 6th fl (01 36 34 03 03) www.franco-junior.com
AP Vauv. Open 11am-7:30pm Mon-Sat. Credit AmEx, MC, V. Map p409 L3.
Purse carrier bags, toys, DVDs, CDs and CD-Roms for the under 10s. Bookbinding and other activities (Wed, Sat) take place for three or four kids and up. Other locations throughout the city.

Au Hain Bleu

51 rue Malherbe, 8th fl (01 42 65 20 60) www.auhainbleu.com AP Malherbe
Open 11am-7pm Tue-Sat. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p409 H4.

The city's best toyshop, decorated like a circus tent, draws gangs of wonder from children. Wooden dolls' houses, pirate ships and gingham dollies made in last more than one generation. Photo p242.

Robopolls

107 bd Beaumarchais, 3rd fl (01 44 78 61 28) www.robopolls.com AP Filles du Calvaire
Open 11am-1pm, 3-7pm Tue-Sat. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p409 L5.

This is the only store in France devoted entirely to our friends electric, and as such it attracts game-lovers of all ages. It's an adult's dream as a shop, with displays including dancing humans, while iPad tablets that sing and read, and even robotic vacuum cleaners. Models such as Robopolls and Marmotte's "build-your-own" robot sit at the top of kids' (and hipster) Christmas lists.

Village Joué Club

23 bd des Capucins, 2nd fl (01 42 61 41 41) www.villagejoue.fr AP Richelieu Grand Opéra
Open 11am-5pm Mon-Sat. Credit AmEx, MC, V. Map p409 H4.

Village Joué Club, the largest toy store in Paris, is spread out on ground level and in second passage des Filles.

FASHION

All the world's big-name designers have their windowed stores in Paris. In addition to international chain juggernauts H&M, H&M and Zara, high street has its fair share of local designers: think *Kiam*, *Jeanyte* and *Finde*. The highest density is in the *Parade des Hautes* (see p409), on nearby rue de Rivoli, between the metro stations of Châtelet and Louvre-Rivoli, and around Gabriel Lippet and Printemps.

Designer

A-pec

41 rue de France-Joazeux, 4th fl (01 42 34 67 62) AP Bonaparte or St-Paul
Open 11am-7pm Mon-Sat. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p409 L6.

Every *l'Esprit*'s mid-price boutique takes a highly conceptual approach to fashion. Although really to wear rather than wear: every article will be given out on one occasion; Maud's assistants will be happy to advise.

• Maud's original shop (p24) de Vogue, 4th fl (01 42 87 03 88) is now home to the costumes of Noël Tanzi, protégé of the old master.

Azzedine Alaïa

7 rue de la Harpe, 4th fl (01 42 72 18 18) AP Hôtel de Ville
Open 11am-7pm Mon-Sat. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p409 K3.

Keeping the doorknob game you enter to the factory-style structure in the store building up Alaïa's reputation and now trend, where the 70-year-old Tunisian creator continues to succeed with his original. Showing haute couture creations are in the back room, and many shoes bordering on fetish are scattered among the mannequins and rails.

Batocollage

30 av George V, 8th fl (01 47 30 21 11) www.batocollage.com AP Alma Marceau or George V
Open 11am-7pm Mon-Sat. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p409 L6.

With Nicolas Ghesbriès at the helm, the Spanish fashion house is ahead of Japanese and Belgian designers in their obsession. Playing fabrics contrast with dramatic cuts, producing a sophisticated urban style that the fashion darlings won't wait to slip into. Bags and shoes are also available.

