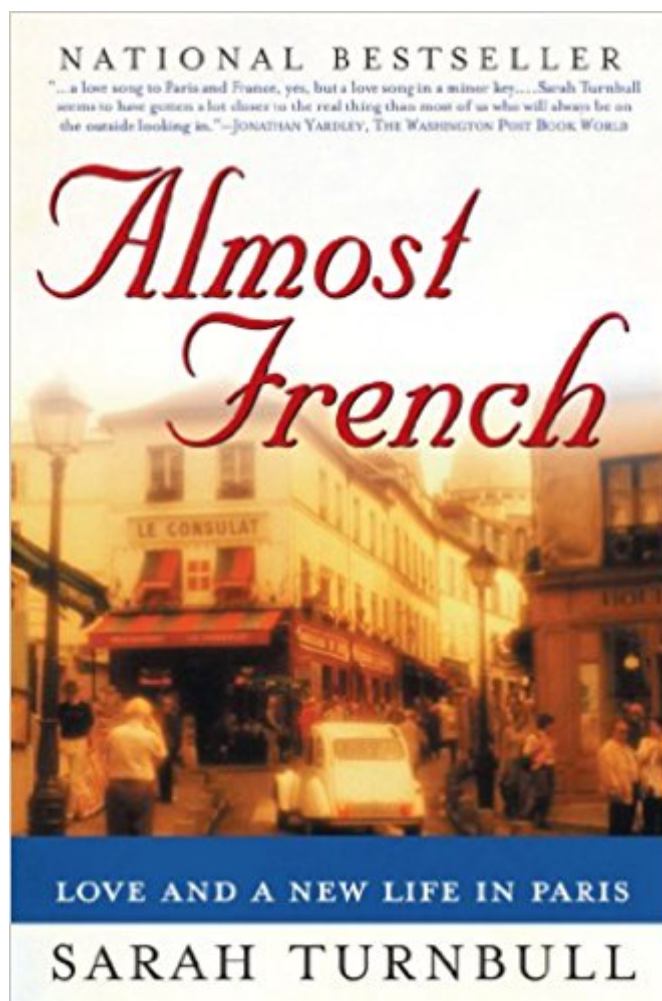


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Almost French: Love And A New Life In Paris



Synopsis

The charming true story of a spirited young woman who finds adventure--and the love of her life--in Paris. "This isn't like me. I'm not the sort of girl who crosses continents to meet up with a man she hardly knows. Paris hadn't even been part of my travel plan..." A delightful, fresh twist on the travel memoir, *Almost French* takes us on a tour that is fraught with culture clashes but rife with deadpan humor. Sarah Turnbull's stint in Paris was only supposed to last a week. Chance had brought Sarah and Frédéric together in Bucharest, and on impulse she decided to take him up on his offer to visit him in the world's most romantic city. Sacrificing Vegemite for vichyssoise, the feisty Sydney journalist does her best to fit in, although her conversation, her laugh, and even her wardrobe advertise her foreigner status. But as she navigates the highs and lows of this strange new world, from life in a bustling quartier and surviving Parisian dinner parties to covering the haute couture fashion shows and discovering the hard way the paradoxes of France today, little by little Sarah falls under its spell: maddening, mysterious, and charged with that French specialty-seduction. An entertaining tale of being a fish out of water, *Almost French* is an enthralling read as Sarah Turnbull leads us on a magical tour of this seductive place-and culture-that has captured her heart

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Customer Reviews

A bestseller in Turnbull's native Australia, this cute firsthand look at the hardships of settling into a city infamously chilly to outsiders gives a glimpse of the true nature of Parisians and daily life in their gorgeous city. Though Turnbull tells readers less about love than new life, it was in falling for a

Frenchman that the journalist found herself moving to Paris, for a few months that stretched into years. The cultural relationship is challenging enough, leaving aside the more intimate personal story (though readers do learn enough about Turnbull's now husband to understand her decision to stay), and she writes of finding work, making friends, surviving dinner parties and adapting to the rhythms and pace of life with a Parisian boyfriend with humor and a developing sense of wisdom. Of the struggle to adapt to her new home in the mid-1990s, the author writes, "I've discovered a million details that matter to me—details that define me as non-French" no matter how much she tries to assimilate, while over time she grows to appreciate some perplexing aspects of French culture, as "[e]veryday incidences elevate into moments of clarity simply because they would never, ever happen in your old home," from developing her confrontational side enough to defend herself (in French) from rude remarks to receiving advice from "a terribly chic blonde who advises me to use eye-makeup remover on Maddie's [Turnbull's dog's] leaky eyes." This is an engaging, endearing view of the people and places of France. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Adult/High School—This account of a 20-plus Australian woman's adventures as she tried to adjust to Parisian ways is both insightful and funny. Having taken a year off from her job with a TV network, Turnbull moved to Paris to be with her new lover, Frederic. She found that the French weren't interested in making new friends; were unwilling to discuss their jobs, hobbies, or much of anything except the food they were eating, planning to eat, or had eaten; and they wished to socialize in mixed groups—no girls' night out for them. But Frederic, with patience and aplomb, helped her overcome these obstacles, depicted in a series of vignettes that sketch many of the fascinations and foibles of becoming "almost French." She detested visiting Frederic's family in northern France, with its rainy, cold beaches, but finally warmed to his home, and was accepted by them. The couple's marriage was almost an anticlimax after a hilarious birthday celebration for 80 at the old home. This clash of cultures is, ultimately, a love story. Molly Connally, Chantilly Regional Library, VA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Sarah Turnbull is a twenty-something journalist from Australia taking some time off to backpack around Europe. She meets Frederic and goes to visit him in Paris and ends up staying. Sarah has a lot of problems with the language, the politics and each chapter is mainly about various facets of her life in France. Frederic does not live in Paris proper, so eventually he and Sarah buy an apartment in

the city and we learn the intricacies of French real estate. When they decide to have a window put in, they have to do it on the sly to avoid all the red-tape and then pay off any neighbors that complain. I skimmed most of the politics stuff, but I enjoyed all the food discussions and her foray into fashion journalism. My favorite chapter was when she and Frederic decide to get a dog, Maddie. The French may be very reserved but not when it comes to their pets. Sarah finds her fellow Parisians become very talkative and interested in Maddie. I love that dogs are welcome in all the cafes, shops, and even the butcher shops. And they have lots of very fancy dog groomers that are not just for the rich but anyone that does not want to be scorned and yelled at for not taking proper care of their dogs. This was billed as a look at love and life in France but it is much more life than love. Which is fine, no one needs another sappy, romantic memoir. I enjoyed this very much and is a great addition for any Francophile. my rating 4/5

I read this book while on vacation in the south of France. Someone had left it in the villa we were staying (group of American and British families). I had such a good time reading it I felt I had to buy it (thanks to whomever left it behind in the villa!). The book is an easy read and so insightful. It reminded me a lot of what my wife used to say about moving to America from England and some of the challenges of figuring out a new culture and trying to fit into a group of well established friends. Funny in many places and also written from the heart, I'd definitely recommend it. Especially if you're planning a trip to France. It has a ton of useful insights into the French culture. I read it in a few days while there and noticed things straight away at the beach and in the towns that came straight from the book....it had me going "ha - she mentioned that" many times on the trip. Definitely worth a purchase, you won't be disappointed.

I bought this book (on paper) when it first came out. One of my best friends had lived in Paris for several years and I was fortunate to have been able to visit many times. This book gave me a small glimpse of what she went through being a stranger in a strange land. For some reason this weekend I decided I had to read it again so purchased it for my kindle. And it's still as good a book years later. Sarah is a very good writer and, perhaps, a better story teller. Her experiences are interesting and enlightening. Her sense of humor and her ability to relate the same are exquisite. I feel badly for those French women who wouldn't give her the time of day - she is the sort of person that most women would (underline) want for a friend. As mentioned, I love this book. I wish she would write a sequel as I would love to know how everything has turned out..

I'm actually re-reading this book in Paris right now. A friend loaned me her copy when I went to France a few years ago. If you'd like some insight into the French psyche then this book has it. Sarah tells of her real life experience of meeting a Frenchman while working in Bucharest (she is Australian). Within a very short time she moves in with Frederique and is still there seven years later when she writes this book. She beautifully describes her love/ hate relationship with Paris, one of the world's most beautiful, incredible cities but often one of the most inhospitable. If you dream of moving to France one day or just want to read about someone who took the leap then this is the book for you. Her experience is difficult yet romantic and beautiful; that's Paris for you!

I bought this for a trip to Paris. It seemed like an interesting true story, and I enjoy reading books set in the locations I am traveling in. I was pleasantly surprised by this. I felt like it really helped me understand French culture a little better. As an American who speaks only the amount of French learned from Pimsleur's first level of language CDs, I was really nervous about going to Paris as the reputation of Parisians is that they are really snobby. This book was great because it was written by a backpacker who visits Paris and ends up staying there. Her experiences with Paris and Parisians helped me understand a different perspective on locals seeming snobby or why everyone had dogs. I'm sure someone who is a native French-person or has lived in Paris for decades might find the viewpoint simplistic, but I found it enlightening and entertaining at the same time. A perfect read for a trip to Paris.

I really enjoyed this book! I always wanted to live in France and Paris would be my preference. But living in Paris as an expat I worried that I would never be considered Parisian, my biggest fear. I would mess up the French language so to be mocked. She experiences my fears right from the beginning, the language barrier, the lack of work, the expense of such a dreamy city but she has the support of a newly found boyfriend. As the story develops, she writes of the various neighborhoods, the history and how she enjoys all the sounds, smells and the regulars who live in her eclectic section of Paris. I am living my Paris life vicariously through Sarah Turnbull! It is a very nice story that I highly recommend if you have ever had any interest or dream of living in Paris.

I loved this book, and bought two copies for my friends, both married to men from other countries, dealing with assimilation, cultural differences and nuances of social norms. This is a well-written book, and we enjoyed discussing topics triggered by reading it.

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