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How To Be Parisian: Wherever You Are

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Synopsis

How to Be Parisian brilliantly deconstructs the French woman's views on culture, fashion and attitude. Bohemian freethinkers and iconoclasts, Anne Berest, Caroline De Maigret, Audrey Diwan and Sophie Mas cut through the myths in this gorgeous, witty guide to Parisienne savoir faire. These modern Parisiennes say what you don't expect to hear, just the way you want to hear it. They are not against smoking in bed and all for art, politics and culture, making everything look easy and going against the grain. They will take you on a first date, to a party and through a hangover. They will tell you how to be mysterious and sensual, how to make your boyfriend jealous and the right way to approach weddings and the gym, and they will share their address book in Paris for where to go at the end of the night, for a birthday, for a smart date, for vintage finds and much more. Full of wit and self-deprecating humour, How to Be Parisian explains those confusing subjects of clothes, makeup, men, culture and lifestyle as only a true Parisienne can.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I live in NYC where there's a lovesick affair with all things French -- I mean, there are buildings here named "The Left Bank". Walking thru the West Village? you hear just as many French convos as you do English. Every editor espouses "Get that French It-Girl look!". Heck, Isabel Marant is a worshipped idol with an altar on Broome Street. So when this book came my way, I just had to take a closer look. In short, it won't *teach* you how to be Parisian, but it will help you *understand* the Parisian. You can flip to any page and start reading, 'cause it's a mishmash of 40% bullet-point "list-icles" of Parisian aphorisms, do's + don'ts 30% filler photography by one of the authors 20%

inner monologues that show Parisienne's thought processes on life 10% filler artwork (gotta fill up more space!) The tone is informative, yet intentionally self-deprecating, 'cause, like, "let's not turn off the American audience with our snobbisms and superiority complex! After all, we need to sell books!" This makes the book engaging and easy to read at first.

Chapter 1: The Basics-Aphorisms: "make it look easy", "always be f*ckable", "be own your knight in shining armor"-Fashion No-No's: "wearing too much makeup", "sweatpants", "Ugg boots"-Mannerisms, Faux Pas, Famous Parisiennes

In essence, the Parisienne doesn't want to look primped 'n polished. She's naturally confident, having grown up with an excellent French education that has cultivated her in philosophy, arts, literature, and good taste. This is key--- she has so much substance that she knows she's worth it. No need to prove it with designer logos or bling. She's selfish in a good way, which can read as snobbish to Americans.

Chapter 2: Collection of Disjointed Listicles-Being Aloof: "talk softly so that people have to lean in to hear you", "Always look as if gazing into the sunset."-Dinner Party Talk: "if possible, get the conversation flowing with a controversial political statement"-Driving: "whenever she gets pulled over, the Parisienne begins to cry"-Recipe for Lemon Chicken and Pot Au Feu

This chapter is just as cuckoo as the Parisienne. To sum it up, she's full of contradictions. She's a feminist but watches porn. She'll smoke on her way to the countryside to get fresh air. She acts aloof but has anxieties.

Chapter 3: More Fashion + Culture Stuff-Lists of "essential" wardrobe items which you've seen in magazines/blogs 100x before (ballet flats, white shirt, scarf, trench...)-More random diary-like musings on books (Proust is a given), savoring the moment, poetic odes to sitting at cafes, aging gracefully

Chapter 4: Love

Few of these bullet points will work if you're seducing an American man. They're just not used to the cold, aloofness "game" unless one is extraordinarily pretty. This is not an instructional manual-- it's more to help you understand the liberal French attitude towards love and sex; where sexual jokes are totally normal in office environment, where having a lover on the side is natural. You just have to grow up in the culture to "get it."

Chapter 5: Filler Lists of Stuff-Recipes for crepes, baked apples, eggplant caviar + more-Parlor games to play at a dinner party-List of French words used in English + vice versa ("trompe l'oeil")-The authors' favorite Paris haunts, films, quotes

Ok, some redeeming moments -- the games are actually fun, and the recipes authentic. But the list of Paris hotspots will ultimately be out of date, and the inner monologues are repetitive and tired. There is a 2-page spread of a Paris photo for you to "cut out" and put in your pocket. Hmm... TRYING to fill up the book, eh? As i reach the end, it seems desperate to provide substance through lists. Well, i can get these bullet points from the 'Net without the overtly dreamy filler paragraphs.

i'm familiar enough with the French culture that this book is a throwaway for me. I wish the book was more like Chapter 4, which is the most

sociological and interesting. The inner monologues throughout also help in understanding this enigmatic creature. But the rest of this "book" of lists is easily found on various blogs and articles on French style. If you're new to Parisian culture, and don't want to scour Google for all the various info, then this book can be a good "101". You won't become Parisian after reading this book. But you can *definitely* understand her a little more after reading it.

I opened this book to read it and didn't close it again until I reached the end. I cannot say enough good things about this book. It is beautifully and carefully written, easily devourable, and full of the Parisian personality. The book "explains" how to be Parisian in a way that is so Parisian. It captures the essence of Paris and the Paris woman in 200 pages. I just bought a second copy and I'm carrying my first copy around with me in my purse at all times. What a fantastic read.

Great book.

Great read.

really fun ironic book. cool art. came on time and in fine condition.

Waste of money!! It is so overrated. Waste of time, pointless book. I expected something a lot more interesting.

I LOVE ANYTHING PARISIAN AND THAT INCLUDES THIS BOOK

Really meant as more of a coffee table book than a reading book. Its loaded with full-length pictures and lists. The ladies writing it have such a great sense of humor and after I read it, my mom had such a giggle sympathizing with her fellow European ladies. Kind of made being Parisian a little boring for me, but folks love flipping through it when I leave it around the house!

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