



## A Paris All Your Own: Bestselling Women Writers on the City of Light

*Eleanor Brown (Editor) , Michelle Gable (Contributor) , Jennifer Coburn (Contributor) , Cathy Kelly (Contributor) , Julie Powell (Contributor) , Lauren Willig (Contributor) , Therese Anne Fowler (Contributor) , Maggie Shipstead (Contributor) , more... Meg Waite Clayton (Contributor) , J. Courtney Sullivan (Contributor) , Ellen Sussman (Contributor) , Susan Vreeland (Contributor) , Megan Crane (Contributor) , Paula McLain (Contributor) , Jennifer L. Scott (Contributor) , Cara Black (Contributor) , M.J. Rose (Contributor) ...less*

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**A collection of all-new Paris-themed essays written by some of the biggest names in women's fiction, including Paula McLain, Therese Anne Fowler, Maggie Shipstead, and Lauren Willig, edited by Eleanor Brown, the New York Times bestselling author of *The Weird Sisters* and *The Light of Paris*.**

"My time in Paris," says *New York Times*-bestselling author Paula McLain (*The Paris Wife*), "was like no one else's ever." For each of the eighteen bestselling authors in this warm, inspiring, and charming collection of personal essays on the City of Light, nothing could be more true.

While all of the women writers featured here have written books connected to Paris, their personal stories of the city are wildly different. Meg Waite Clayton (*The Race for Paris*) and M. J. Rose (*The Book of Lost Fragrances*) share the romantic secrets that have made Paris the destination for lovers for hundreds of years. Susan Vreeland (*The Girl in Hyacinth Blue*) and J. Courtney Sullivan (*The Engagements*) peek behind the stereotype of snobbish Parisians to show us the genuine kindness of real people.

From book club favorites Paula McLain, Therese Anne Fowler (*Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald*), and anthology editor Eleanor Brown (*The Light of Paris*) to mystery writer Cara Black (*Murder in the Marais*), historical author Lauren Willig (*The Secret History of the Pink Carnation*), and memoirist Julie Powell (*Julie and Julia*), these Parisian memoirs range from laugh-out-loud funny to wistfully romantic to thoughtfully somber and reflective.

Perfect for armchair travelers and veterans of Parisian pilgrimages alike, readers will delight in these brand-new tales from their most beloved authors.

Content:

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a French Woman

Too Much Paris

Paris is Your Mistress

A Myth, a Museum, and a Man

French for "Intrepid"

Paris, Lost and Found

Failing At Paris

The Passion of Routine

Investigating Paris  
My Paris Dreams  
We'll Never Have Paris  
Reading Paris  
Finding Paris's Hidden Past  
Secret Eatings  
Until We Meet Again  
A Good Idea?  
Paris Alone  
Thirty-Four Things You Should Know About Paris  
What is it about Paris?

## **A Paris All Your Own: Bestselling Women Writers on the City of Light Details**

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## **From Reader Review A Paris All Your Own: Bestselling Women Writers on the City of Light for online ebook**

### **Sarah Swann says**

Great anthology! Now I really want to go to Paris. I like the fact that not all of these stories are just glowing love letters to the city. There are some stories of hardships there and some authors didn't have good experiences and don't love the city. I liked the different takes on it. My favorite was Paula McClain's and now I can't wait to read *The Paris Wife*.

\* I was sent a review copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

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### **Rhiannon Johnson says**

Read my full review here:  
<https://ivoryowlreviews.blogspot.com/...>

Disclaimer: I was given a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. I received no additional compensation.

This collection of 18 essays was just what I needed in terms of reading material. Since arriving back from Book Expo (a month ago!), I've not gotten much reading done. Most of my time has been spent getting my daughter ready for her study abroad trip to London and trying to keep up with the day to day mountain of daily duties in addition to working. After Kali left on her trip a few days ago, I set about to deep cleaning the house and reclaiming my office (her room when she is home from school). In between tasks, I took to reading *A Paris All Your Own*. I could start some laundry, read an essay, run to the store, read an essay, do a bit of work, ...you get the point. I enjoyed some essays more than others but will probably reference the book as a whole when speaking to friends about traveling. I've learned to never expect too much when traveling and you've got to be able to roll with the punches. Almost every writer in this collection talked about unmet high expectations or unexpected but highly enjoyable side tracks. I've learned, (through trial and error) that you have to let go a bit and make each journey your own. For example, back to Book Expo, my 1st trip to NYC was not filled with typical tourist destinations. Upon my return I was asked if I visited this or that attraction. When I told them "no" and the places I did visit, I was usually met with strange looks. But I had the perfect NYC trip...for me. This weekend my daughter is going to Paris, and hopefully she'll have the perfect Paris trip...all her own.

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### **Paige says**

This book was everything I hoped it would be. I thoroughly enjoyed it. This was edited and put together so well. Even the size, weight, and the tactile experience was lovely with this book. The memoirs, with each

author contributing an experience of Paris, were also a pleasure. Each one was unique and this created a complete and complex whole, with a variety of tones and voices. The overriding theme was that Paris is a unique city, different than anywhere else, and each person has her own Paris.

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### **Lesa says**

After Eleanor Brown researched her own book, *The Light of Paris*, she wondered why people love Paris so much. And, she was surprised to see how many female, heterosexual, white women, bestselling authors, had written about Paris. So, she went to seventeen other women writers from the United States, England, and Ireland, and asked them to write about their experiences in Paris. The result is a collection of essays, *A Paris All Your Own*.

Brown's question actually was, "Why do we love writing - and reading - stories about Paris?" Why are we obsessed with it? Each woman had a different answer. Some, like Brown, did not fall in love with the city. She saw it just as another city. Michelle Gable, author of *A Paris Apartment* and *I'll See You in Paris*, made the mistake of going with her parents, husband, and children. The family trip was a disaster. Her daughter's favorite part of the trip was the plane, and the family preferred London. M.J. Rose wrote of the romance of the city, as did Meg Waite Clayton. Clayton's essay, entitled "Thirty-Four Things You Should Know About Paris", is fun. She honeymooned in Paris, and admits they may have missed a few things. But, she makes suggestions.

One of my favorite essays was by Cara Black, but I'm prejudiced. I know Cara, and she's given me tips for my first trip to Paris. Cara's essay, "Investigating Paris", talks about her love of the city, the mystery of it as it links to the writing of mysteries and Georges Simenon's Inspector Maigret. But, she also says Paris will always be a mystery.

You'll recognize many of these authors - Paula McLain, Susan Vreeland, Lauren Willig. And, if you read the book, you'll realize you've seen many of the other names as well.

I appreciated the notes after each essay. Brown tells who the authors are, where to find their websites and other social media contacts, lists the Paris books. Then, each author lists their favorite Paris moment, their least favorite, the song that reminds them of Paris, and a suggestion. "In Paris, you must..." It's those suggestions, "In Paris, you must..." that I'm going to take with me to Paris. My conclusion? Paris is different for everyone, as is any city. And, in my opinion, every trip is special, if you make it so.

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### **Kate Olson says**

I'll preface this with the fact that I have never been to Paris, but am obsessed with reading about it.....if a title or book description has Paris in it, I. am. in.

This book of 18 essays includes an astounding collection of female writers, all with books set in Paris, and provides a thoroughly well-rounded take on visiting, as well as living and writing in (and about!) Paris. I say well-rounded not because the essays cover all different topics (although many do), but because the authors are refreshingly diverse on their feelings about Paris. This is a love letter to Paris, but it's also a letter home to your parents from Paris-camp about why it's not as amazing as Mom promised and you really just want to

go home. There is love, but there is also loneliness. There are amazing sights and experiences, but there are also rainy days and an inability to communicate in French.

There are essays that are laugh-out-loud funny, and there are essays that are incredibly detailed accounts of the history of Paris during different time periods, as well as essays about mother-daughter relationships and romantic relationships - and more! I adored reading about how these authors all wrote about Paris, but also how they researched their books and ensured the authenticity of their stories. Authors who weren't able to visit Paris before starting their books, but read and read and read extensively and went to Paris later.

It's hard to really describe this whole book since it's such a diverse range of essays, but here are my overall takeaways:

- 1) I still want to visit Paris
- 2) I should learn French, but even if I do it won't be usable in Paris so I should just speak English and admit that I'm a tourist
- 3) Go without an agenda or schedule
- 4) Sit and watch people
- 5) Eat all the food
- 6) Drink all the wine
- 7) Hotel rooms are small
- 8) SO MUCH HISTORY
- 9) Lines for major attractions are so so long - buy tickets ahead if you can, maybe skip some of the most touristy stuff
- 10) Walk and walk and walk and see the REAL Paris

This is a must-read for anyone who longs to visit Paris, or reads books set in Paris.....or anyone who loves reading about writing in general!

Thanks to Net Galley for the advance copy of this title for review - all opinions are my own.

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### **Susan (The Book Bag) says**

A trip to Paris is on my bucket list of places to visit someday. I have always wanted to go there. It just seems like such a beautiful, romantic place to be so how could I not love a whole book about Paris? People have a passion for Paris, whether it's real or their fantasy.

*A Paris All Your Own* is a wonderful anthology of Paris stories written by eighteen fabulous authors. The book is full of personal stories about the Paris that each of these women experienced. Some of the experiences were wonderful, like you would expect, and then some of them were not. It just goes to show that everyone's expectations and experiences are different.

Some of the women are authors that I have read before and I loved reading their stories. Others were new-to-me authors and I enjoyed the little taste that I got of their writing style. Each chapter was a little autobiographical glimpse into the author's life. I learned about their personalities which is something that you typically don't get in their normal work.

And at the end of the chapters, each author lists some interesting facts for the reader, such as what a person

must do when visiting Paris and a list of things to skip. It's sort of like a little travel guide for Paris. Bonus!

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### **Claudia says**

Anthologies are usually a mixed bag for me and this one was no exception. However! I felt like I really liked/love most of the stories here. There were about 3 or 4 that really didn't do it for me, but for the most part the stories made me want to be in Paris again, this time with the eyes of someone without too-high expectations of a place she'd always wanted to visit.

If you love reading about Paris I wholeheartedly recommend this anthology.

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### **Catherine ? says**

I've read books that took place in France (honestly, what reader hasn't?), but *this* book was the only one so far that actually made me appreciate it for both its romantic stereotype and what it simply is - a city.

My favorite essay was probably M.J. Rose's - I'm a hopeless romantic, and that essay must've added to my long list of unrealistic expectations for romance.

Oh, and finally, this book made me really, really, REALLY want to learn French.

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### **Kathryn says**

This book was quite good. Each chapter was written by a different woman author who has written a novel or novels associated with Paris. Each woman shares her personal experience visiting the city of light. Each story was incredibly different and interesting. A fun read especially since I have never been to Paris.

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### **Amina says**

- 1) Get passport
- 2) Read this book ???
- 3) Ponder which you would love more, the bread or chocolate
- 4) Realize the answer is both and this is why pain au chocolat exists
- 5) Fantasize about whisking self away to Paris
- 6) Repeat step #3
- 7) Wonder if it would ever occur to hubs to whisk you away to Paris [or anywhere]
- 8) Try to recall dusty high-school French
- 9) Look on Yelp where to find #4
- 10) Start mulling next adventure
- 11) Allons-y!

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### **Rebecca says**

A highly enjoyable set of 18 autobiographical essays on writers' experiences with "a city so exquisitely beautiful it tricks you into believing you are owed an equally picturesque life" (as Maggie Shipstead puts it). For all the beauty and romance these women might have sought – and sometimes found – while in Paris researching their books, there was also plenty of disillusionment awaiting them: rain, overcrowded tourist destinations, getting lost, language confusion, haughty French people, family quarrels, and floundering relationships. So this book is by no means a falsely rosy picture of traveling abroad; it interrogates and adds nuance to many of the stereotypes about the delights of Paris.

At the same time, it celebrates what's undeniably wonderful about the place: the hidden corners as well as the big-name attractions, and the amazing food available in pretty much any boulangerie. Shipstead's essay is probably the best, but there are also terrific contributions from Paula McLain, Therese Anne Fowler, Jennifer Coburn, Julie Powell, and Michelle Gable. Pieces by authors I was unfamiliar with were pretty much on par with those by authors I'd read and loved before. If you have a special love for Paris, or have always wanted to visit, or just enjoy armchair traveling, this collection won't disappoint you.

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### **Nancy Elliott says**

This is a lovely collection of short essays and stories for anyone who loves Paris. As an extra added attraction for Francophiles, each author ends her piece with a list of books about Paris, both those she has written herself and her favorites by other authors. Lots of ideas here for 'French nuts' like me!

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### **Bookishfolk says**

Such a great book and perfect to read while in the planning phase of visiting Paris. I furiously took notes while reading and although I borrowed it from the library, I think I'll buy it and scribble more notes inside the book! Great insight into Paris, and not just the touristy, typical spots. In fact, the writers barely mentioned those spots and instead talked about little parks, perfect cobblestone streets, cafes where people are crammed together drinking coffee and reading a book, or the restaurants that serve the most delicious, cheap Nutella crepes. The best part of the book-not every person's experience was rosy and beautiful and charming...but there was something about each story that just made me fall in love with Paris more and more. Highly recommend!

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### **Kim says**

"A Paris All Your Own" is an anthology of eighteen stories. More than just a collection, it's a literary guidebook, filled with out of the way places often accidentally discovered. It's as much a reflection of the writers themselves as it is a reflection of the City of Light. These stories are funny, introspective, sad, honest, relatable, and most importantly personal.

Even though there are eighteen different authors, there are several running themes throughout the collection. The main one concerns expectations. Paris comes with a mindset. It's been chronicled for centuries. Parts have been destroyed, and others saved. Monuments and museums are everywhere. It's a city known for indulgence, for love, for style, for class, and for culture. It's simply Paris.

After each story is the author's social media information, their book pertaining to Paris, and recommendations of what you "should" and "shouldn't" do while there. This was my favorite part. My exploding TBR thanks the editor for this.

Instead of critiquing each individual story, I have decided to sum up each story in one word. It's up to you to decide if your interest is piqued. (I also concede that if you aren't, the fault is mine, not the author's.)

J. Courtney Sullivan - expansive  
Michelle Gable - intimate  
Ellen Sussman - invigorating  
Susan Vreeland - informative  
Megan Crane - apprehensive  
Paula McLain - biographical  
Eleanor Brown - honest (my favorite)  
Jennifer L. Scott - elegant  
Cara Black - literary  
M.J. Rose - intense  
Jennifer Coburn - inspirational (another favorite)  
Cathy Kelly - alliterate (literary and literal love of a local)  
Rachel Hore - surprising  
Julie Powell - mouthwatering  
Lauren Willig - misplaced  
Therese Anne Fowler - empowering  
Maggie Shipstead - productive  
Meg Waite Clayton - endearing

I highly recommend this collection. I was an Anglophile, but now I consider myself a Francophile in training.

Thanks to GoodReads for sponsoring this giveaway, and thanks to Flatiron Books for sending me the ARC.

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### **Sue says**

I must start this review by telling you that I travel a lot and Paris is absolutely my favorite city to visit. If I was a little younger and a lot braver, I would probably live there but I think it's a little late in life for me to make such a change. I love reading books about Paris when I can't be there and this book didn't disappoint me - in fact, I loved it. I have read books by all 18 of the authors who contributed and since they all write different types of books, the essays all took different slants on their love or lack of love for Paris. As with any anthology, I loved some of the essays and wasn't too crazy about others. Whether you've visited Paris or want to visit or just enjoy reading about that beautiful city, this is a great book to read.

