ForeWord Reviews

Paris for Families
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Save those pennies and hike a few stairs, take the metro instead of a taxi, and live like a local in an apartment instead of a three-star hotel. That's the advice Lain, author of London for Families and London for Lovers dishes up in this matter-of-fact, tell-it-like-it-can-be family travel guide.

Readers will quickly discover "when and how to go, what to see (and what to avoid), how to deal with everyday life in a place you may never have visited before, and how to do it in a way that will leave some money in your bank account at the end of the day."

The first section covers the basics of planning, arriving, and living in Paris. Cut costs by avoiding the busiest times of the year, stay long enough to relax, make sure everyone in the family has a say, and budget all of your expenses per person/per day—this advice is reiterated at the end of the chapter in a convenient checklist format. Black-and-white photos, hand-drawn illustrations, and maps break up the often humorous text.

"Countless hotel chains with telephone numbers you can call for free are eager to welcome you to Paris, carry your bags, and turn down your bed at night. At a price that would give an oil baron pause." Lain goes on to show how to "do the legwork from home and come up with a great temporary home in Paris." Worksheets at the back of the book provide questions that should be asked.

Sidebars scattered throughout the book provide instant money or hassle-saving tips. "Tip: a common scam in busy Metro stations is for a person to approach you with an offer of tickets at 5F each. Don't buy them," and Lain explains why.

The second part of the book advises on the "tourist" part of the holiday, from visiting museums to structures to graves, ghosts and ruins. In addition to central Paris attractions, one chapter focuses on the outskirts including "probably the finest science education facility in the world for children," The City of Science and Industry.

Paris for Families is replete with ready-to-use, simple-to-understand information garnered from years of personal experience. Lain presents the facts, adds a dash of fun and cooks up the perfect recipe for a family-friendly holiday.

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