

CIGRE 2016

**A short guide to Paris and the CIGRE Conference
(Updated 6/6/16)**

Traveling from the airport (Paris CDG) to the city

Taxis: follow the airport signs to a taxi rank at your terminal. The fare should be about 68 euro (to Palais des Congres) and should take 35 minutes depending on traffic (be aware the time and fare can double if the traffic is heavy).

Shuttle Bus: Trip Advisor provide details of 'easy go shuttle services' with reasonable fares from £14 one way, booking can be made in advance, visit the link: https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g187147-d7886944-Reviews-Easy_Go_Shuttle-Paris_Ile_de_France.html for more information.

By Bus: Operated by Air France, the shuttle bus called **Le Bus Direct**, Bus Number 2 departs for Porte Maillot (for the Palais des Congres & nearby hotels) and the Etoile (Arc de Triomphe). The fare is €17 per person for a single ticket (billet simple) and €29 for a return (billet aller retour).

***Important update: when you receive your email from CIGRE instructing you to print your delegate e-badge you will see a link to print off a free Air France Le Bus Direct ticket* This would be the recommended mode if you're staying close by to the Porte Maillot/Arc de Triomphe.**

By Train

The quickest & least expensive way to get to Paris from Roissy-Charles de Gaulle (CDG) Airport is by taking the **RER B suburban city train** leaving from either CDG Terminal 2 or Terminal 3/Roissypole. However, if you have luggage this may not be the most convenient mode of travel. Also, be aware that the train can be hot and crowded.

There will be numerous signs through the terminals pointing towards the Paris RER train.

The price should be €12.10 for adult tickets for the RER B train to Paris.

The RER B train line runs north-south through the centre of Paris, stopping at Gare du Nord, the London to Paris Eurostar station, then at Châtelet Les Halles a station hub with connections to 4 metro lines and 3 RER lines available.

The express RER B train will go directly from Aéroport CDG to Gare du Nord, without stopping at any stations in between. The regular train will make about 9 stops in between CDG Airport and Gare du Nord. You'll save roughly 12 minutes by taking one of the express trains, but even the non-express RER B will get you to Paris (Gare du Nord) in about 34 minutes.

The train passes through some rough parts of the City and is subject to pickpockets and con artists so keep a careful watch on your valuables!

Arriving by Eurostar

The Eurostar arrives at the Gare du Nord railway station. From here you can connect to both the Metro and the RER. For a taxi follow the signs to the taxi rank at the side entrance of the railway station.

Getting Around

Taxis in the City

It is not easy to find a taxi in Paris. You cannot hail a taxi. You are more likely to find them at taxi stands on large avenues. Licensed taxis have a sign saying "Taxis Parisiens" on them. Taxis don't have a common colour or type; you will recognize them by the taxi sign on top of the car. If it's lit up, it means that it is available. There are several taxi companies that you can call: Les taxis bleus, Taxis G7. All taxis apply the same rates, which vary according to the time range and the day of the week. There is a minimum fare of €7 and then € 1.30 per km. You don't have to tip taxi drivers.

(You could use one of the Taxi Apps as well, such as UBER).

Paris Metro

The metro operates every day including public holidays from around 6am to 0.30am. Times of the first and last trains vary depending on the point along the line that you are departing from. Trains are less frequent on Sundays and public holidays. Frequency between most trains range from 2 minutes during rush hour up to 8-10 minutes during off hours, holidays, and Sundays.

Metro Tickets & Passes

There are a wide variety of tickets available including single ride tickets, books of 10 or 20, single day passes, multi-day passes, Monday to Sunday week passes, monthly passes and year passes.

Single tickets for the Metro are known as "Ticket t+". These tickets are valid for a single continuous journey of any length, throughout the Metro system, including changes to other Metro lines and RER interurban trains within Zone 1. These tickets are sold as single units at €1.80 or in books of 10 called a Carnet at a discount €14.10

A day ticket is called the **Ticket Mobilis** that is good for unlimited rides on the Metro system during operating hours for the day it is used. Physically it's a coupon of about the same size as the Paris Metro Ticket t+ and costs €7 for stations in central Paris.

Week long tickets are sold in the form of plastic contactless smartcards known as the **Carte Paris Visite**. This pass is available for 1, 2, 3 or 5 days and costs

between €12.30 and €39.30.

Staying connected

Free WiFi

Thanks to the Mairie de Paris and the Région Ile-de-France, you can use your laptop or smartphone to surf the internet in more than 400 Parisian museums, city halls, libraries and parks. Look out for a purple oval that says Paris Wi-Fi. The service is available between 7.00am at 11pm. All you have to do is join the Orange wifi network and follow the registration cues. You will go through a few steps to set up a login and password. You will then have 2 hours free access to the Internet. Remember to switch your smartphone ROAMING to off to avoid a nasty bill when you get home.

The Palais des Congres will also have free delegate WiFi.

Do I or don't I?

Tipping

In France the law demands that the service/cover charge must be included in all prices displayed in bars and restaurants. However, it does not indicate that tipping is not welcome or expected in return for good service. As long as service has been good, you should generally leave a little extra by rounding up the bill. If you are in a bar, it would be appropriate to round the bill to the next euro and in a restaurant a little more, up to 10% if you're feeling generous - but it always depends what value for money you felt you got and how good the service was.

Staying safe

In general, Paris is a very safe city. The most prevalent crime by far is petty theft. Pickpockets and scams, of which there are many. While not common, purse snatching and muggings do happen. Violent crime is rare.

In general, remember to be aware of pickpocket as they act by trying to distract you. Avoid showing off expensive phones or a lot of money in the public transportation or in open areas. Never leave bags unsecured under tables and chairs

Shopping

Regulations dictate that most stores and shops in Paris stay closed on Sunday. This regulation is rooted in religious tradition, but is now primarily based upon the idea that retail workers should not be made to work on Sundays. However,

particularly in areas frequented by tourists, a growing number of stores, shops and shopping centers in Paris are now open on Sunday.

Eating Out

There are numerous restaurants and cafes in and around the Palais des Congres to suit all tastes. You can always ask at your hotel reception for a recommendation or speak with 'seasoned' CIGRE members who will have their favorites. In the past, the registration pack has included a useful list of restaurant nearby. For a dinner cruise on the River Seine ask about the Bateaux Mouche.

Museums and Galleries

Paris has a wealth of world famous museums and galleries (the author's favorite is Musée de l'Orangerie).

- ☐ **The Louvre**, One of the finest museums in the world of art and culture. Home of the Mona Lisa and innumerable others. Enormous building and collection, plan at least two visits. Métro *Palais Royal-Musée du Louvre*
- ☐ **Musée d'Orsay**, Incredible collection housed in a former railway station. Works by the great artists of the 19th century (1848-1914) including Monet's "Blue Water Lilies, Renoir's "Bal du moulin de la Galette", van Gogh's "Bedroom in Arles", Whistler's "The Artists Mother", etc. RER *Musée d'Orsay* or Métro *Solférino*
- ☐ **Rodin Museum**, His personal collection and archives, in a charming home with garden. Métro *Varenne*
- ☐ **Picasso Museum**, Contains the master's own collection. Visitor should note this museum will be closed until 2012 due to renovations of the building. Métro *Saint-Paul* or *Chemin Vert*
- ☐ **Musée Marmottan-Monet**, Over 300 paintings of Claude Monet. Also, the works of Berthe Morisot, Edgar Degas, Édouard Manet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. "Impression Soleil Levant" by Monet is on display. Métro *La Murette*
- ☐ **Musée de l'Orangerie**, [Jardin des Tuileries] Houses "The Water Lilies" (or "Nymphéas") - a 360 degree depiction of Monet's flower garden at Giverny. Also, impressionist and post-Impressionist paintings by Cézanne, Matisse, Modigliani, Picasso, Renoir, Rousseau, Soutine, Sisley and others. Métro *Concorde*
- ☐ **Musée Delacroix**, Housed in the home of painter Eugene Delacroix. Métro *Mabillon* or *Saint-Germain-des-Près*
- ☐ **Centre Georges Pompidou**, The museum of modern art. The building and adjoining Stravinsky Fountain are attractions in themselves. Métro *Rambuteau*

A special view of Paris

There are many places you can go to see a skyline view of Paris, for example the top of the Tour Eiffel, the Arc de Triomphe or the Sacre Coeur. However, the Hotel Concorde La Fayette has a bar/lounge on its 33rd floor with an outstanding view. There are special express lifts/elevators from the lobby of the hotel that will take you there. Be warned, the drinks are not cheap and they become even more expensive after midnight!

CIGRE Logistics

The venue for CIGRE is the Palais des Congres situated close to the Paris city ring-road (the Périphérique), to the west of the Arc de Triomphe. The nearest Metro station is Porte Maillot.

At one end of the complex is the Palais des Congres with shops on multiple levels connecting to the Hotel Concorde La Fayette (recently rebranded Hyatt) at the other end. Across the road is Le Meridien Etoile hotel.

Once you arrive at the Palais des Congres follow the signs to the conference registration where you will be given your CIGRE 'pack'. This will detail the program for the week and the supporting events. Take a few moments to read through the details.

Remember to pick-up your ticket for the conference social event.

The event is largely self-contained within the venue, including a large theatre for the opening sessions and numerous conference rooms. The exhibition grows bigger every year with an impressive number of international vendors. Take the opportunity to discover what promotions the vendors might be organizing. These range from technical seminars (some off-site) through to social events.

Lunch is not provided during CIGRE so the delegates tend to use the facilities in the shopping area or one of the local restaurants in the adjacent streets.

A favourite place for a quick sandwich and coffee at lunchtime is the "Pomme de Pain" down in the basement of the Palais de Congres but it does get busy. There are several other sandwich and coffee shops in the basement, including Starbucks close to the escalators.

Coffee is provided outside of the technical sessions during the morning and afternoon breaks.

There is a supermarket in the basement of the Palais where you can buy a snack

or stock up on bottled water for the sessions (be aware that the conference rooms can get rather hot and stuffy). There is also a convenient coffee shop next door to the supermarket that also sells snacks/pastries.

CIGRE UK Networking Opportunities

There are two CIGRE (UK) networking opportunities:-

Sundays Cocktail reception. But you need to attend the opening ceremony to gain access.

Monday's CIGRE UK Welcome meeting at 17.30 to 18.30: an informal networking opportunity for UK members will be organized in the exhibition area.

Tuesday's CIGRE (UK) Networking Event: If you are registered for this event, then your admission card can be collected from the Courier Messages rack by the CIGRE Reception Desk. The Reception will take place between 6.30pm and 8.30pm at Société Immobilière et de Service du Cercle de L'Union Interalliée, which is located at 33 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. The two nearest Metro stations are Concorde and Madeleine.

Thursday's CIGRE Soiree.....remember to pick up your tickets when you register.

Technical Sessions

CIGRE technical sessions are different to most conferences you will have attended.

Although papers have been submitted, the authors do not present their paper at the conference. ☐ Instead perhaps a year before the conference a number of "Special Reporters" were appointed from each Study Committee for each of the Preferential Subjects which are the themes for the sessions

The SR is the chairman for the topic. The SR has read all the papers for the topic and prepared perhaps 15 or 20 questions based on the papers. In theory you should have received your CD with the papers and the SR questions by now.

At the Sessions, anyone can present a contribution as a response to any of the questions. Contributions are usually required to be submitted as PowerPoint slides a week or more before the conference – refer individual SC rules.

Depending on the topic and degree of popularity of responses, contributions may be limited to just two minutes, which is enforced. Many contributors are aghast when the SR tells them to cut half of their slides out – this is a process usually organised on the day before each Study Committee session so find out who, when and where your contributions need to be sent to as you may need to submit a week before you and then meet with the SR the day before the session.

The session itself is therefore a process of these prepared contributions being

presented. With a maximum of a few minutes each and a couple of slides, they need to be short and snappy. Some are better at this than others noting that there are cultures from all over the world trying to present technical issues in English often as their non-native tongue.

What it means for you though is that to follow the questions and the contributions you generally need to have read or skimmed all the papers for that Session!

So having covered the exhibition and the technical sessions, you will hear of lots of people meeting all over the place. These are generally the Working Groups who take advantage of everyone being in the same place at the same time. Generally they welcome observers even if they have not been members or corresponding members so respect the fact that these groups have been meeting a few times throughout the year already and are in widely different stages in their work cycle.

The problem is that for each Study Committee there are several WGs so there is inevitably a multi-conflict of where you would like to be. Sometimes you will need a special invitation from the WG Chairman prior to going to Paris to get in to the Palais if the WG is not during the week – they often start on the weekend before.

And finally

I hope that this short guide is of some use. I have included my own experiences, from fellow delegates and information gleaned from the Internet.

A useful link on the CIGRE website for tours and accommodation:

<http://www.cigre.org/Diaporama/Tours-activites-accommodation-attending-the-CIGRE-Session-2016>

Enjoy this unique event.....and enjoy Paris!