

# [PDF] The Flaneur: A Stroll Through The Paradoxes Of Paris

Edmund White - pdf download free book

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## Books Details:

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Author: Edmund White  
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## Description:

If a place is best known by its particulars, then Edmund White is an expert on Paris. Fortunately, he's generous with his secrets: he reveals a Paris not found in any other guide in this first book in the Writer and the City series. White's Paris is seen on foot, as a *flâneur*, a stroller who aimlessly loses himself in a crowd, going wherever curiosity leads him and collecting impressions along the way. Paris is the perfect city for the *flâneur*, as every *quartier* is beautiful and full of rich and

surprising delights. But this is no typical tour of monuments and museums; it is much more intimate and surprising. As a flâneur of Paris for 16 years, White knows where to find the very best of everything--silver, sheets, plum slivovitz. He can tell you where to get Tex-Mex surrounded by a dance rehearsal hall, where to rent an entire castle for a party, or even where to get Skippy peanut butter. He eschews the pearl-gray city built by Napoleon and roams the places where the real vitality lives, the teeming *quartiers* inhabited by Arabs and Asians and Africans, the strange corners, the markets where you can find absolutely anything in this city that accommodates all tastes. White's Paris is a place rich in history with a passion for novelty and distractions. So a walk through the Jewish ghetto leads to the history of the little-known Musée Nissim de Camondo, with its impressive collection of Louis XV and Louis XVI furniture, created by a family of Jewish bankers ultimately killed in the Holocaust. White shares other favorite and obscure museums, such as the Hôtel du Lauzun, where writers like Balzac and Charles Baudelaire and the painter Edouard Manet met for long evenings of music and hashish-induced hallucinations. Reminiscences in Montmartre reach back to the thriving jazz culture created by African Americans in the years between the world wars and include stories about Josephine Baker, Richard Wright, and James Baldwin. While White may ignore Notre Dame, he has fascinating tidbits to share about kings and queens and their heirs who still fight for the throne. The variety of Paris, White remarks, is matched by the voraciousness and passion of its people. With his own remarkable flair, he reveals a thriving and alluring city where tourists rarely tread. --*Lesley Reed* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**From Publishers Weekly** The first in Bloomsbury's new, "occasional series" The Writer and the City, White's (The Married Man) collection of impressions stands in marked contrast to many travel books published today. The organizing principle is the combined force of White's perception, imagination, frame of reference and voice. He moves seamlessly from an eyeglasses museum to the Hotel de Lauzun--home to Baudelaire as a young man--and a discussion of the poet's dandyism and struggle with syphilis. White includes personal memories and anecdotes of gay Paris--in both senses of the phrase--past and present. "To be gay and cruise is perhaps an extension of the flâneur's very essence, or at least its most successful application," even as the flâneur's wandering is "meant to be useless." White describes his own favorite cruising spots as well as those of Louis XIV's homosexual brother, and notes that Napoleon officially decriminalized homosexuality. Other gems include a visit to the street where Colette lay bedridden with arthritis and spied on Cocteau across the way, and a discussion of the expatriation of African-Americans like Josephine Baker (Cocteau said of her, "Eroticism has found a style") and Richard Wright (who wrote of Paris, "There is such an absence of race hate that it seems a little unreal"). White's charming book is for literati, voyeurs and aesthetes, and for travelers who love familiar terrain from a different viewpoint.

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