

# Left Bank Allure

Paris, France

Paris isn't short of new boutique hotels, but Villa-des-Prés – elegantly restored and filled to the brim with contemporary art – is one for your little black book



In Paris, location is everything. Which is good fortune indeed if your weekend address is nestled within the charming streets of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. In fact, the recently opened Villa-des-Prés – a discreet hotel residence on Rue de Buci – is right at home amongst the galleries, bookshops and cafes of this storied section of the City of Light. A short walk from the Seine, the neighborhood's legacy of art and culture is felt around every corner, and for guests, the lobby and spacious suites of Villa-des-Prés build on what sits outside its doors.





In reality, the cut-stone facade and wrought-iron balconies are all that's left of the original building, first constructed in 1911. Inside, a major renovation has brought Villa-des-Prés into the 21st century, with interior designer Bruno Borrione's material palette of rosewood, leather, brass and stone creating a refined environment with warmth and comfort at its heart. A central courtyard is open in warmer months, and is surrounded by seating and a cosy ground floor bar. The same elegant, down-to-earth quality extends into every space.

"The furniture has been chosen to offer the harmonious variety you'd find in a home: a desk that doesn't necessarily match the chair, a side table that might have been an heirloom, a beloved lamp that has been there forever..." Borrione explains.





Geometric stained glass and tactile finishes are pleasing to the eye and touch, but they're just the backdrop for the real showstopper – a gargantuan art collection throughout the public spaces and each of the 34 guest rooms, including 14 spacious (by Parisian standards) suites.

This was thanks to curator and gallerist Amélie du Chalard, who commissioned more than 50 original works especially for Villa-des-Prés by an array of French contemporary artists. In reception, a horizontal abstract landscape by Ludovic Philippon sets the tone: art is everywhere.



In addition to oversized paintings, guest rooms also have pillows embellished with never-seen-before Picasso drawings, with permission granted especially from the artist's estate. Notably, these dainty features manage to compete for attention with the sexy red lacquer and mosaic detail of the en suite bathrooms – a sight to behold. Guests can take a dip in the tub after returning from the hotel's subterranean pool and sauna facilities.

It must be noted, the service provided by friendly, helpful, smiling staff stands out in Paris. "We attach enormous importance to service," concludes hotel manager, Jérôme Didier. "Our aim is to tailor each stay to suit the individual guest, down to the smallest detail." Et voilà.

### Villa-des-Prés →

*Images* c/o Villa des Pres

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