



A Passion for Paris: Romanticism and Romance in the City of Light

David Downie

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A unique combination of memoir, history, and travelogue, this is author David Downie's irreverent quest to uncover why Paris is the world's most romantic city—and has been for over 150 years.

Abounding in secluded, atmospheric parks, artists' studios, cafes, restaurants, and streets little changed since the 1800s, Paris exudes romance. The art and architecture, the cityscape, riverbanks, and the unparalleled quality of daily life are part of the equation.

But the city's allure derives equally from hidden sources: querulous inhabitants, a bizarre culture of heroic negativity, and a rich historical past supplying enigmas, pleasures, and challenges. Rarely do visitors suspect the glamor and chic and the carefree atmosphere of the City of Light grew from and still feed off the dark fountainheads of riot, rebellion, mayhem, and melancholy—and the subversive literature, art and music of the Romantic Age.

Weaving together his own with the lives and loves of Victor Hugo, Georges Sand, Charles Baudelaire, Balzac, Nadar, and other great Romantics, Downie delights in the city's secular romantic pilgrimage sites asking, Why Paris, not Venice or Rome?the tap root of "romance"?or Berlin, Vienna, and London?where the earliest Romantics built castles-in-the-air and sang odes to nightingales? Listen to *A Passion for Paris: Romanticism and Romance in the City of Light* and find out.

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