

# Just won the lottery? Blow it big style on a luxury break in Paris

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THE George V hotel has been a Parisian landmark since it opened in 1928. It is located right in the heart of the city's fashion district, just off the Champs-Élysées, and it has always been a favourite with the rich and famous – Marlene Dietrich would book a suite for years at a time, and it was here that Paul McCartney and John Lennon wrote 'Can't Buy Me Love'. It is breathtakingly beautiful both inside and out, decorated with more than 20,000 square metres of marble, and its walls adorned with 17th-century tapestries. The hotel is renowned for its stunning floral designs, which stand in giant art-deco glass urns and are created from a weekly shipment of 17,000 roses and lilies.

## Getting there

ScotRail (0845 755 0033) offers packages to Paris. These consist of return travel to London from all stations on the Glasgow, Edinburgh, Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen sleeper routes, transfer from Euston to Waterloo by London Underground and transport from London to Paris by Eurostar. From the Eurostar terminal at Paris Gare du Nord, take the Métro line D in the direction of Melun/Malesherbes, then change at Châtelet les Halles for the RER line A and get out at George V. The hotel is just a short walk down the nearby Avenue George V. British Airways (0870 850 9850, [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)) and Air France (0870 1424343, [www.airfrance.com](http://www.airfrance.com)) both fly daily from Scotland to Paris.

## Eating in

Dining at the George V is a special experience. Its flagship restaurant, Le Cinq, has three Michelin stars, and serves fantastic modern French food under the guidance of executive chef Philippe Legendre. I had the carpaccio of Dublin Bay prawns followed by Duclair duck with avruga caviar, and roasted Victoria pineapple for dessert. The whole thing was extraordinary. But you won't get much change from €200 for this – and that's before you choose one of the 40,000 bottles in the cellar. In summer you can dine al fresco in the picturesque marble courtyard at the heart of the hotel.

## Room service

The hotel's 245 bedrooms (which includes 61 suites, 30 of which have a private terrace) are among the largest and most luxurious in Paris. Those on the upper floors of the eight-storey building enjoy uninterrupted panoramic views across the city's skyline, from the Sacré Coeur to the Eiffel Tower. Artworks and chandeliers are commonplace, but the blue-and-cream colour scheme ensures the rooms aren't overbearing. The huge



marble bathrooms are stocked with the finest Bulgari toiletries, and little touches such as signed photographs of famous guests (a picture of *High Noon* star Gary Cooper graced my bedside) make the rooms truly memorable.

## Plus

If you want to pretend you are a celebrity or even royalty for a night, there's no more convincing way than to check into the George V.

## Minus

There's a risk you may get used to all the luxury – and that could prove very expensive indeed.

## Location, location, location

Central Paris is on your doorstep. The Arc de Triomphe is a ten-minute walk away – though it may take a bit longer to get there if you can't resist the temptations of the designer boutiques on the Avenue George V itself. Then there are the shops

and bars of the Champs-Élysées, which is just minutes away, and both the Place de la Concorde and Eiffel Tower are also within strolling distance.

## What's the damage?

The George V does not pretend to be within everyone's budget, and it isn't. Its most basic rooms (hugely luxurious by most standards) start at €650 per night, and we can all dream of staying in the presidential suite, a snip at €7,500 per night. Presidents obviously aren't expected to bother leaving their room to use the hotel's immaculate swimming pool, spa, sauna and fitness centre – the suite comes complete with a mini-gym, a steam bath and a sauna.

## BOOKING INFO

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