

Photo: DXR · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons

FREE GUIDE · PARIS

Musée d'Orsay

Manet, Monet, Renoir, Degas, Van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin — the 7 must-see works of the greatest museum of Impressionism, explained one by one



Tickets Visit

tickets and guides to monuments

Your visit at a glance

I magine a train station from 1900 turned into the most important museum of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism in the world. Beneath its great vault of iron and glass hang the Monets, Renoirs, Degas, Van Goghs and Cézannes you learned by heart without knowing it: it's like strolling through your favourite postcards, with the Seine on the other side of the window. The museum is big and tempting, so the trick is to go for the essentials. This tour brings together the seven must-see works of the Orsay —the ones you really can't miss—, with the context to understand why they're brilliant and 1, 2 and 3-hour routes so you can choose according to the time you have.

At a glance

PRICE

approx. €16 · €12-13 reduced

FREE ENTRY

1st Sunday of month · under 26 EU

HOURS

Tue–Sun 9:30-18:00 · Thu until 21:45

TIME

2-3 h (the 7 works)

WORKS HERE

The 7 must-sees

METRO

Solférino (L12) · RER C



Part of Tickets Visit

tickets-visit.com is part of Tickets Visit, the network of tickets and guides to monuments.

With this free guide you already do a great visit: the essentials, with a route. If you want to make the most of it, at the end I'll show you the complete version.

Before you go in: book your skip-the-line ticket

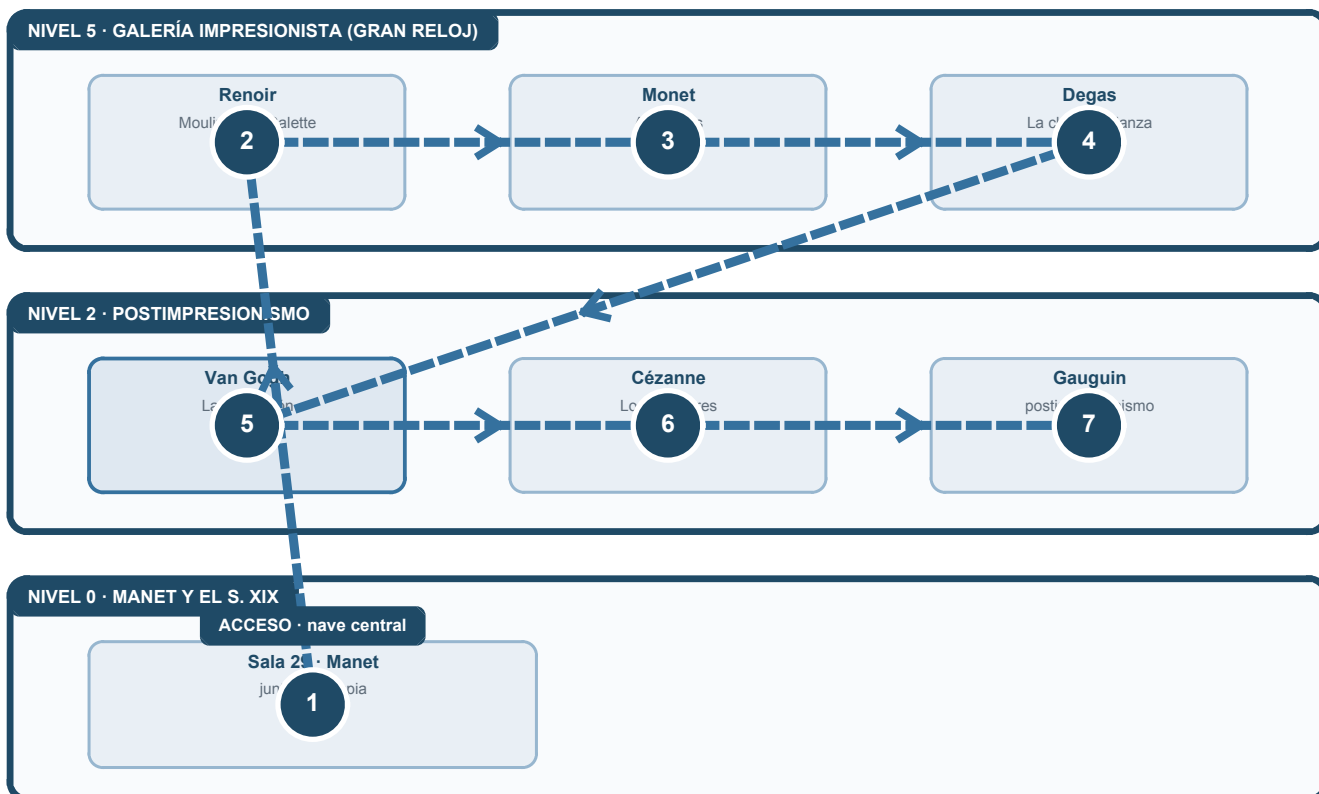
On Civitatis, with free cancellation. Skip the ticket-office queue.

» **Buy your ticket**

The map and the route

Organise your visit by floor to avoid going up and down more than you need to. On the GROUND FLOOR you greet the great nave of the old station and see Manet's 'The Luncheon on the Grass' (1), alongside 'Olympia' and the realism of Courbet and Millet. Then head up to the FIFTH FLOOR, the jewel of the museum: the Impressionist gallery beside the great clock, with Renoir (2), Monet (3) and Degas (4). Stay on the same FIFTH FLOOR for Post-Impressionism —Van Gogh's bedroom (5), Cézanne's card players (6) and the Gauguin rooms (7)— and, if you've any strength left, the Nabis, Art Nouveau and Rodin's sculpture terrace. Follow the numbers on the stops: they run in the most comfortable order for making your way around the museum.

MUSEO DE ORSAY · NIVELES DE LA ANTIGUA ESTACIÓN (ESQUEMA, NO A ESCALA)



El recorrido zigzagüea: se empieza abajo con Manet, se sube al nivel 5 (impresionistas, junto al gran reloj) y se baja al nivel 2 (postimpresionismo). Colección en reorganización; ubicaciones orientativas.

Visiting order: GROUND FLOOR: 1 'The Luncheon on the Grass', Manet (next to 'Olympia') — HEAD UP TO THE 5TH FLOOR — 2 'Dance at the Moulin de la Galette', Renoir › 3 'Poppies', Monet › 4 'The Dance Class', Degas (Impressionist gallery, beside the great clock) — STILL ON THE 5TH FLOOR — 5 'The Bedroom', Van Gogh › 6 'The Card Players', Cézanne › 7 Gauguin (Post-Impressionist rooms)

Schematic layout by area; the number shows the visiting order. Not to scale: follow the museum's own floor plans and signs on the day.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

1

The Luncheon on the Grass (Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe) — Édouard Manet

Ground floor, second half of the 19th century rooms (next to 'Olympia') · 10

Manet paints a naked woman lunching with two clothed men, and the Paris of 1863 is scandalised. What's provocative isn't just the nude, but that it's a real woman who looks straight back at you. With this canvas, modern painting effectively begins.



The Luncheon on the Grass, Édouard Manet, 1863. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Public domain · Wikimedia Commons



LOOK AT IT LIKE THIS

The woman's eyes: they look straight at you, something unthinkable for the public of 1863.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

The scandal over this painting was so monumental that even an emperor had to step in. In the full guide we tell you who made the move and how that rejection, without meaning to, set modern painting alight.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

2

Dance at the Moulin de la Galette — Pierre-Auguste Renoir

Fifth floor, Impressionist gallery · 10

A popular open-air dance in Montmartre, full of young people on a summer Sunday. Renoir captures the movement, the chatter and above all the sunlight filtered through the trees. It's Impressionism at its most luminous and joyful.



Dance at the Moulin de la Galette, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1876.

Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Public domain · Wikimedia Commons

**DON'T MISS THIS**

The bluish patches of light on the clothes and the ground: sunshine slipping through the leaves, not shadows.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

How do you paint a whole party in motion without anyone posing... or almost anyone? Renoir's trick, and who the dancers in the painting really were, await you in the full guide.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

3

Poppies (Les Coquelicots) — Claude Monet

Fifth floor, Impressionist gallery · 8

A field of poppies on a summer's day, with Monet's family out for a walk. The flowers are just red touches that your eye turns into a whole field as you step back. Pure Impressionism: an instant of light caught on the wing.



Poppies (Les Coquelicots), Claude Monet, 1873. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Public domain · Wikimedia Commons

**THE TRICK**

The poppies up close: loose red patches that only become flowers when you take a step back.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

The two little figures in the field aren't anonymous models: they hide a very personal story of Monet's. In the full guide we tell you who they are and why they appear twice in the same painting.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

5

Van Gogh's Bedroom in Arles (La Chambre) — Vincent van Gogh

Fifth floor, Post-Impressionist rooms · 10

Van Gogh's own bedroom in Arles, painted as a symbol of rest and of his dream of a house of artists. Flat, intense colours meant to convey calm directly. But the tilting floor and the crooked walls let his inner tension show through.



Van Gogh's Bedroom in Arles, Vincent van Gogh, 1889. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Public domain · Wikimedia Commons



WHERE TO LOOK

The 'crooked' perspective of the floor and walls: the calm he was after, with a tremor underneath.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

The full story of this stop (twice the text), its «ONE FACT» box and all 7 stops of the route, one by one.

Practical tips

Best times

Come first thing (around 9:30) or try the Thursday late opening, when it's open until 21:45 and there are far fewer people. Head straight up to the 5th floor (the Impressionists) the moment you're in: it's the most crowded, and by mid-morning it fills up.

Buy your ticket in advance

The Orsay is one of the most visited museums in Paris and the ticket queue can eat up a good chunk of your time, especially in high season and on the first Sunday of the month. Buying your ticket online and booking your time slot lets you enter through the reserved access with almost no wait. Arrive a few minutes before your time.

Getting in free

Admission is free for everyone on the first Sunday of each month (go early, there are queues). And always free for under-18s and for EU residents aged 18 to 25; bring a document proving your age and nationality.

With children

It's a museum that rewards little ones: Degas's ballerinas, Van Gogh's blazing colours and the giant clock all draw them in. Set them a challenge: spotting animals in the paintings or peeking through the giant clock. Better a short visit focused on the 5th floor than trying to see it all.

Accessibility and services

The museum is wheelchair accessible, with free loan and adapted access, and there's free entry for people with disabilities and their companion. Inside there's a café (the one by the great clock is spectacular), a restaurant, a bookshop-store and a cloakroom for leaving backpacks and coats: a good spot for a break halfway round.

Combine it

You're right in the heart of Paris: the Orsay sits just across the Seine from the Louvre and the Tuileries Garden. You can cross the footbridge and string art and stroll together. One tip: don't do the Louvre and Orsay on the same day; they're exhausting. Leave the Orsay for a morning or the Thursday late opening.

Practical info

Address: Esplanade Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (formerly 1 Rue de la Légion d'Honneur), 75007 Paris. Guide price: general admission around €16; reduced and the Thursday late opening a little cheaper (around €12-13). Guide hours: Tuesday to Sunday from 9:30 to 18:00, with a late opening on Thursdays until 21:45. Closed on Mondays, 1 May and 25 December. Note: between 2026 and 2028 the museum is renovating its reception areas, so there may be changes. Always check prices and hours on musee-orsay.fr before you go.

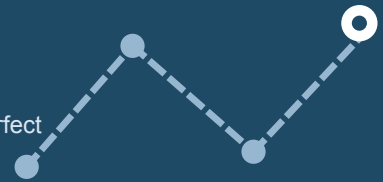
Official website: www.musee-orsay.fr

PLAN YOUR TRIP · FREE

The Tickets Visit Planner

Build your day-by-day route, discover what to see nearby and plan the perfect itinerary around the city. Free, no sign-up.

» **Open it at planner.tickets-visit.com**



Before you go in: book your skip-the-line ticket

On Civitatis, with free cancellation. Skip the ticket-office queue.

» **Buy your ticket**

THE COMPLETE VERSION

Take the complete visit

With this free guide you already cover the essentials. The PREMIUM is your complete visit to Musée d'Orsay: every work with its story, a 3-step looking guide for every painting, the cheat-sheet for your phone and the tips to skip the queues. For less than the price of a coffee.

In the free guide you miss out on:

- 4 The Dance Class (La Classe de danse) — Edgar Degas**
Fifth floor, Degas rooms · 8
- 6 The Card Players (Les Joueurs de cartes) — Paul Cézanne**
Fifth floor, Cézanne rooms · 8
- 7 Gauguin and the burst of Post-Impressionism**
Fifth floor, Gauguin rooms · 10

PREMIUM Guide · Musée d'Orsay

€4.99

one-off payment · yours forever

- ✓ All 7 works (the free guide has only 4), each with its story.
- ✓ «What it represents» and «How to look at it» in 3 steps: a looking guide for every painting.
- ✓ The «Route on one page» cheat-sheet for your phone, plus 1-, 2- and 3-hour routes.
- ✓ The timeline, the keys, the artist bios and a glossary to understand it all.
- ✓ As a PDF and offline: use it inside the museum without spending data.

Facts checked against official sources · instant download · secure card payment.

Get the complete guide · €4.99

tickets-visit.com/guia-gratis-orsay ›

RISK-FREE GUARANTEE

If the guide doesn't help on your visit, write to us and we'll refund the €4.99. No questions asked.

For comparison: a guided tour costs €30-60 per person. This guide walks you through with the same detail, everyone travelling with you can use it, and it's yours forever.

Still no ticket? Book skip-the-line

On Civitatis, with free cancellation. Skip the ticket-office queue.

» **Check availability and prices**

A guide produced editorially by Tickets Visit. tickets-visit.com is an independent website and is NOT the official website of Musée d'Orsay, nor is it affiliated with it. Images are free from Wikimedia Commons (credit under each one). Information is indicative, checked in August 2026; confirm hours and prices on the official website. Bookings handled through Civitatis (affiliate link).