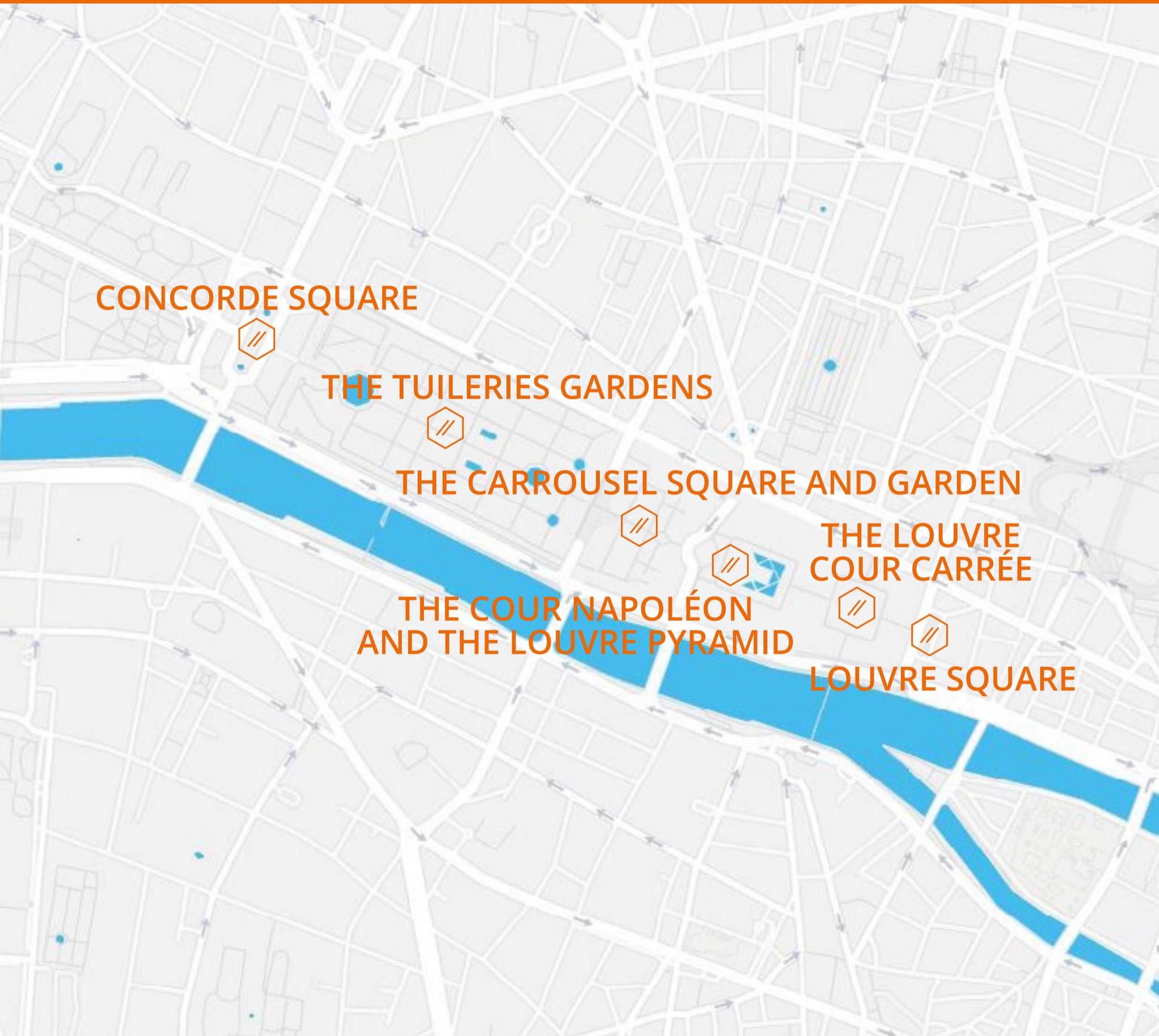




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Circuits
PARALLÈLES
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FROM THE LOUVRE
TO THE CONCORDE SQUARE

THE TOUR: FROM THE LOUVRE TO THE CONCORDE SQUARE



Length:

- 2H30 walking,
- ½ day walking and (partly) visiting the Louvre Museum

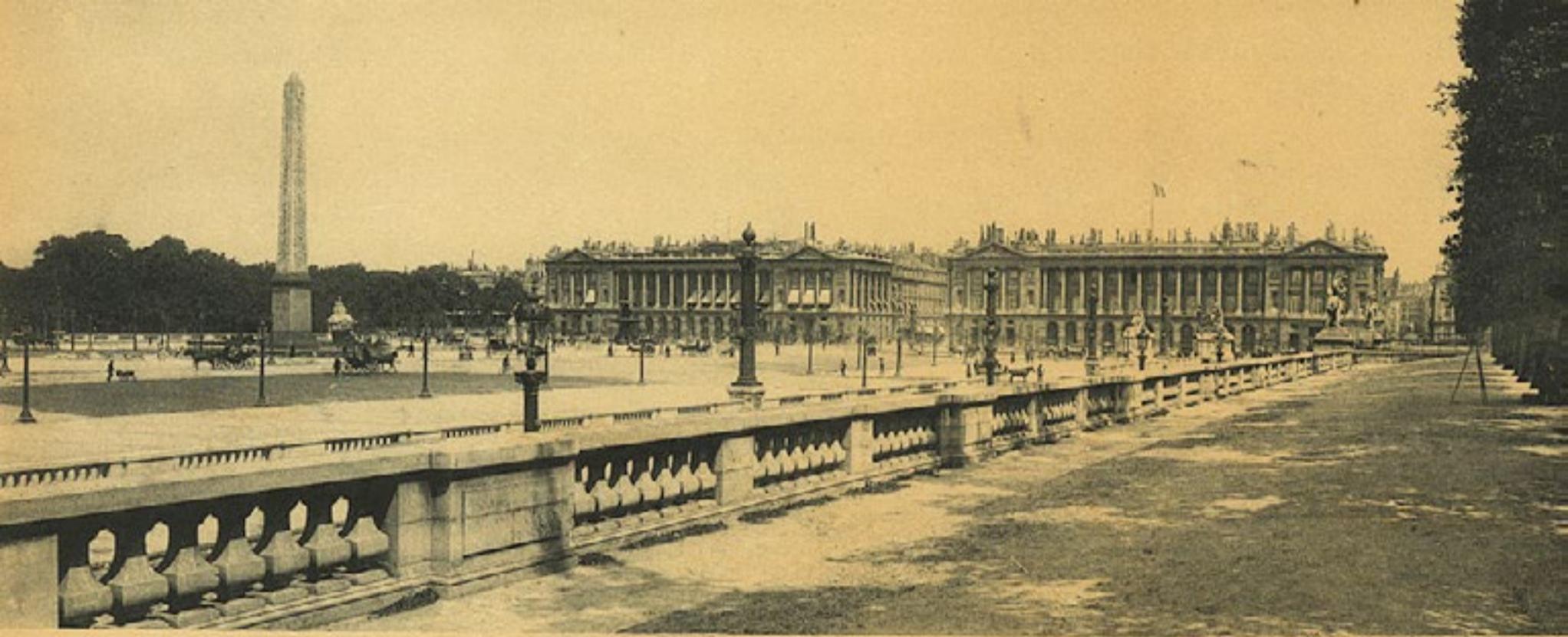
Public : all

Means of transport: by foot

 **Access for persons with reduced mobility:** yes

Total length: 3.5 km to 4.5 km – from Rivoli station to Concorde station

 **Starting point:** Place du Louvre (Louvre-Rivoli station, underground line 1 or bus line 21, 69, 72, 76, 81)



Paris. — Place de la Concorde vue de la Terrasse des Tuileries

If you manage to put aside the scaffoldings, the Ferris wheel and the billboards, which accompany some events, **it is one of the most beautiful squares in Paris.**

Do you realise how prestigious its environment is? The Champs-Élysées and the Arc-de-Triomphe de l'Étoile (Triumphal Arch of the Star) to the West, the Louvre and the Tuileries behind you to the East and the Bourbon palace (the national assembly) beyond the Concorde bridge to the South. Eventually, there is the Royal Street to the North which begins with two prestigious buildings, the Hôtel de Crillon on the left and the Hôtel de la Marine on the right, and ends with the Church of the Madeleine, visible from the square. Nothing less than that, not to mention its decoration.

LA PLACE DE LA CONCORDE

Inaugurated in 1763, its first original name was Place Louis XV. At the whim of the successive political regimes, it was named place de la Révolution in 1792, place de la Concorde in 1795, place Louis XV

again in 1814, then place Louis XVI in 1826 and place de la Charte for a few months in 1830, before finally getting its current name in August 1830. There is no question of changing it again.

Built from 1755 to 1775 by Jacques Ange Gabriel, royal architect of Louis XV, the place de la Concorde is the only one among the five royal squares in Paris to be open. It is also the largest one (359 metres long and 212 metres wide).

At the root of its construction is the terrible fever, which almost laid Louis XV down. Against all odds, the King recovered. In order to celebrate this healing, the very devoted representatives of the City of Paris decided to raise a royal square. A first contest was launched to find the best location. The plots taken on, at the end of the Tuileries, were at the time quite under urbanised and most of them had the advantage of belonging to the King. A second contest was launched to arrange the space. The final project, realised by the architect Gabriel, was a synthesis of the best propositions made by the candidates.



The general aspect of the current square is relatively close to what it looked like at the time, except that the Concorde bridge did not exist yet and that the statuary decoration evolved in the course of time.

This royal square lived glorious and joyful times but also the most tragic times of French History.

A first tragedy took place in 1770. More than a hundred people were trampled when a panic broke out after the fall of a rocket from a firework in honour of the dauphin (actually the future Louis XVI) and Marie-Antoinette d'Autriche's wedding. The newlyweds should have seen there a bad omen...

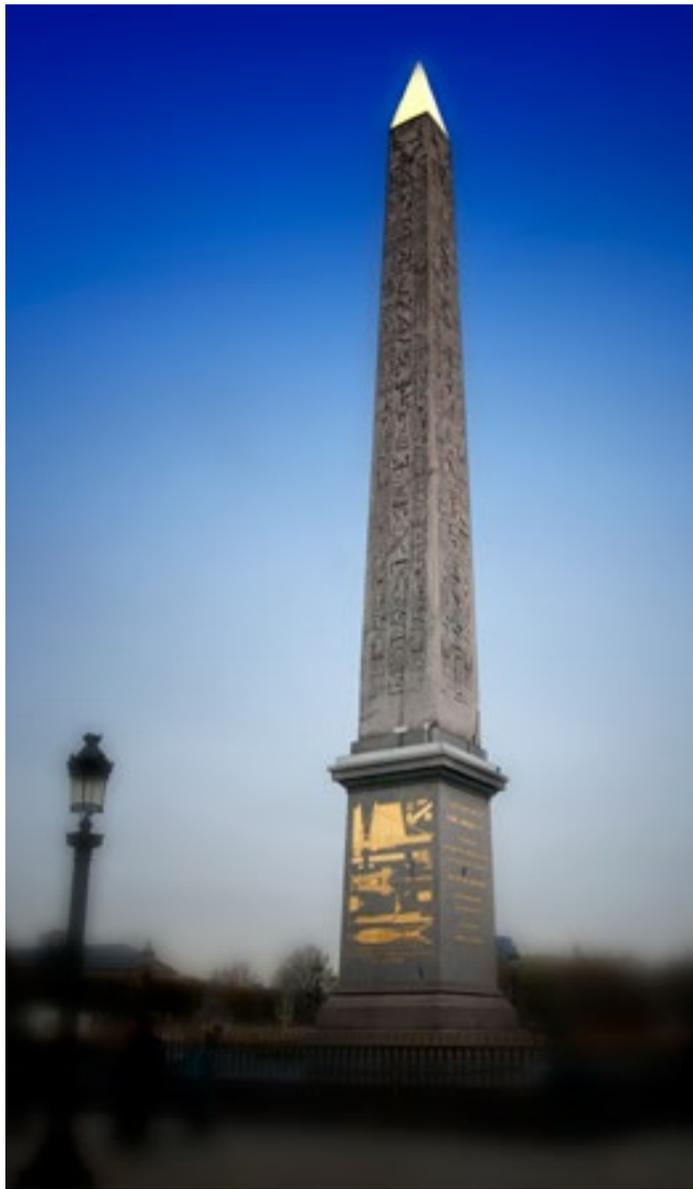
In 1789, the Revolution had started and popular gatherings were occupying the square.

The equestrian statue of Louis XV, which stands in the middle of the square, was knocked down in 1792. Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette were guillotined there, as well as Madame du Barry, Danton, Robespierre and many others. Between 1793 and 1794, more than a thousand people were also sentenced to death on this same square.

It is difficult to forget the horror and violence, which reigned there during the bloody episode of the Terror. Projects succeeded one another to refurbish the square but nothing was really suitable. The solution would come by a roundabout road.



21st January 1793 – The death of Louis Capet (Louis XVI) on the place de la Révolution



In 1831, the viceroy of Egypt offered the two pink granite obelisks at the entrance of the Louxor temple to France as a sign of good relationship. Sculpted under Ramses II in the 13th century B.C., each of both monuments weighs 230 tons, is 23 metres high and is covered with hieroglyphs.

A beautiful but rather cumbersome present! Only one of the obelisks travelled to France (the second one was officially given back to Egypt in 1981). This travel was a technical prowess. **When it arrived in France in 1836, it was placed in the middle of the place de la Concorde** at the behest of King Louis-Philippe, for whom this obelisk symbolised the possible reconciliation between royalists and republicans, as no political connotation was attached to it.

During that same period, the architect Hittorff transformed the square and set up the current layout. **The eight statues placed around the octagonal edges of the square symbolise the greatest French cities of the time:** Marseille, Lyon, Bordeaux, Nantes, Rouen, Brest and Strasbourg.

The incredible odyssey of the Louxor obelisk

https://youtu.be/cm_MSfybY5U

