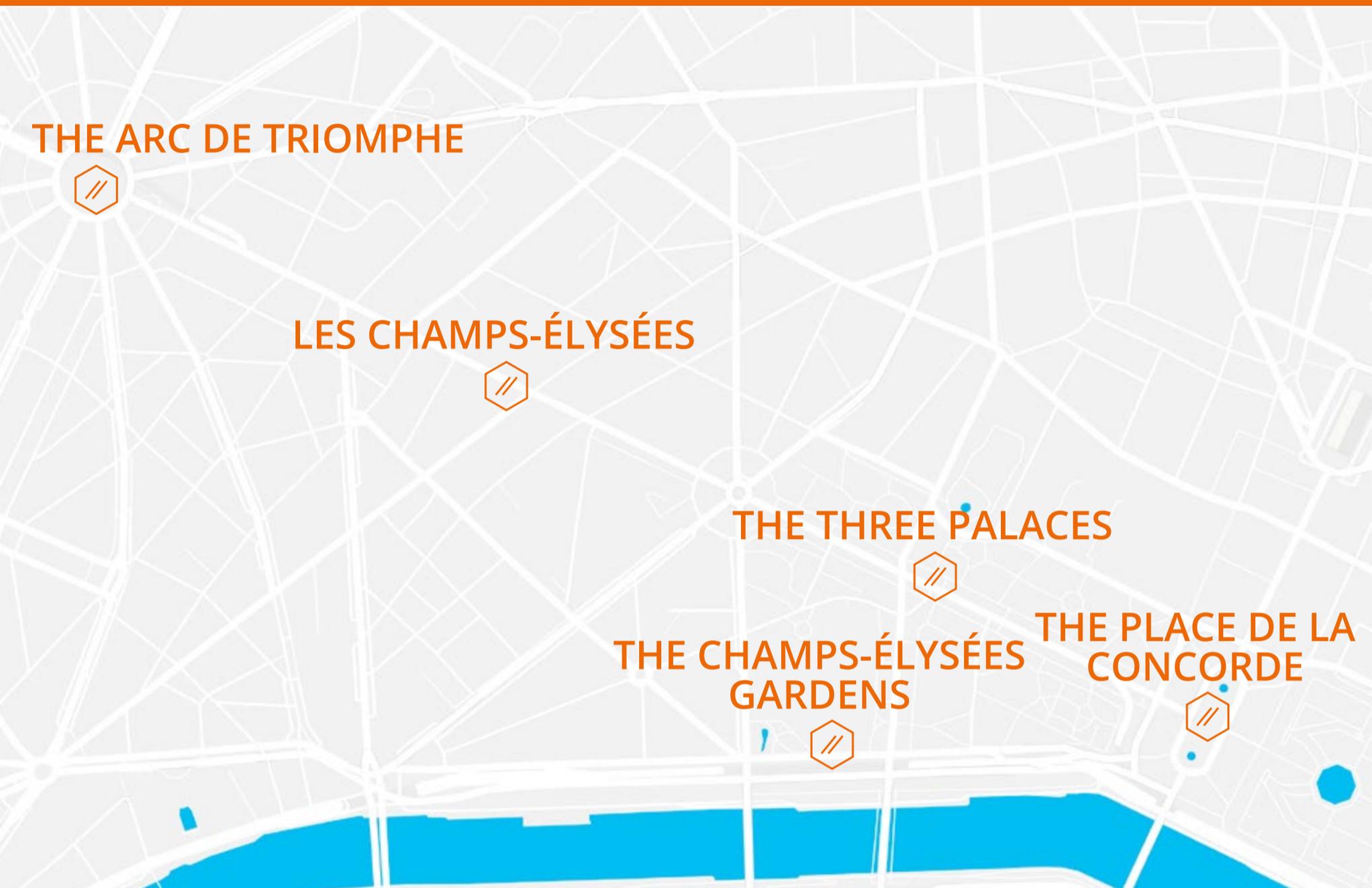




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Circuits
PARALLÈLES
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THE ROYAL ROAD :
FROM THE PLACE DE LA CONCORDE
TO THE ARC DE TRIOMPHE

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Length :

- 3H00 walking,
- ½ day with the visit of one of the three museums,
- the entire day with the visit of one of the three museums and the ascent to the patio of the Arc de Triomphe.

Public : All

Means of transport : By foot

 **Access for Persons with Reduced Mobility :** yes, if accompanied for the ascent of the Arc de Triomphe by lift.

Total distance : 4 km

 **Starting Point :** Concorde metro station (metro lines 1, 8 and 12)



Go out of the Palais de la Découverte. Take the avenue F.D. Roosevelt on the right to reach the rond-point des Champs-Élysées (Champs-Élysées roundabout). On the way, on your right, you will see the Théâtre du Rond-Point.

The Théâtre du Rond-Point

The theatres of the avenue des Champs-Élysées have gone through many lives. This one is no exception to the rule.

In 1838, the architect Hittorff who had already worked on the place de la Concorde, **built a rotunda** at the corner of the avenue des Champs-Élysées and the avenue Franklin Roosevelt, **at the behest of Louis-Philippe. This rotunda had to house a panorama, recent invention meeting with great success. It consisted in a huge 360 degree circular rack the public could admire on the central platform, thus giving the impression to be part of the landscape.** It was the ancestor of our current Geodes. But in 1838, they were ruled by propaganda and the panoramas shown were the great Napoleonic battles, the fire of Moscow, the Battle of Eylau and the Battles of the Pyramids.



This rotunda was destroyed in 1855 and rebuilt on the current Théâtre du Rond-Point location. Then, it was called **Panorama national (National Panorama)**. The emblematic battles of Napoleon 1st kept being shown.

The enthusiasm for panoramas passed. The new-fashion was skating-rinks. No problem! The Panorama national became the Palais des Glaces (Ice Palace). It went through transformations necessary for the new activity. The Parisians' taste for ice-skating lasted around one century.

In 1981, the building started its theatrical career. The first troupe to settle in this theatre was Renaud-Barrault's one, a mythical French couple of actors with a demanding repertoire, who began their career in the opposite theatre, the Théâtre Marigny. The theatre presented contemporary works (Beckett, Duras, Sarraute...).

In the course of the successive directions, the Théâtre du Rond-Point was renovated and transformed many times. It kept the spirit of its creators while opening onto the cultures of the world and multidisciplinary artistic activities.

The Théâtre du Rond-Point is currently directed by Jean-Michel Ribes and presents only works from living authors.





Move until the rond-point des Champs-Élysées. Cross the avenue Montaigne on the left, the street of the famous luxury brands. Then, take the Champs-Élysées on your left towards the Arc de Triomphe.



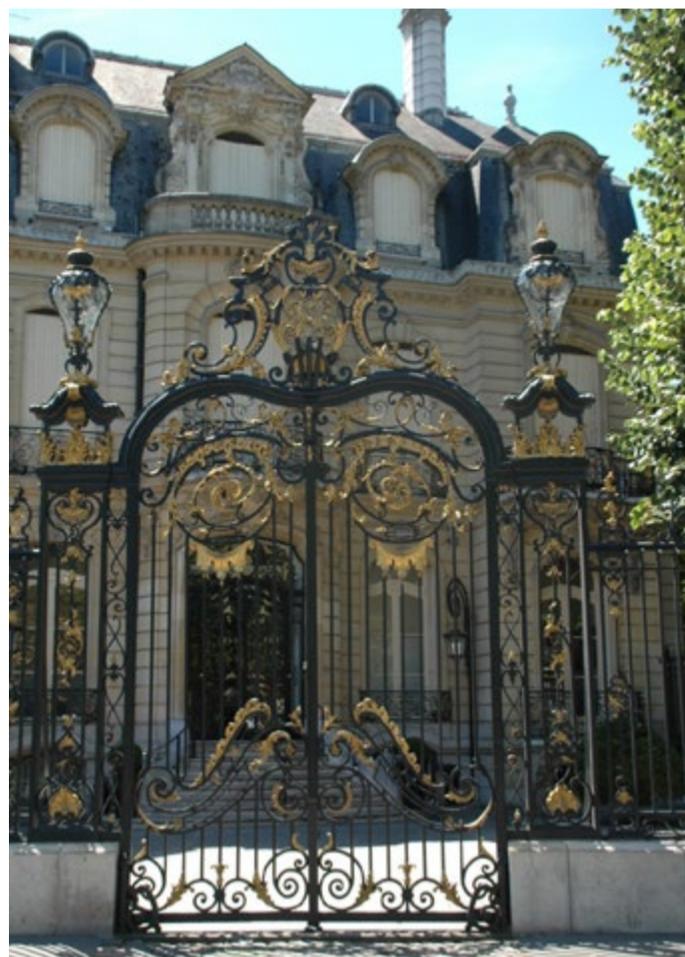
At the corner of the avenue Montaigne and the Champs-Élysées is the hôtel Marcel Dassault. Built in 1844, it was bought in 1952 by Marcel Dassault, plane builder, journalist and politician.

He settled the headquarters of his companies here. Nowadays, after important transformations, the prestigious private auction house Artcurial occupies the premises.

Keep going back up towards the Arc de Triomphe, you will find some other points of interest different from commercial brands on this part of the avenue.

 n°23

This passage leads to an American world famous ready-to-wear shop. The interest of this detour is to cast a glance at the interior garden nicely reorganised, giving onto the back of **the hotel de la Païva, which entrance is at no 25.**



n°25 The hotel de la Païva.

It is one of the rare hotels in the Champs-Élysées to have resisted the frenetic commercial transformation of the avenue. **Built in the years 1856-1866, it was occupied by the Marchioness de la Païva.** It was sold and became a famous restaurant which shut down in 1898. It was then bought by a Swiss banker who sold it to the Travellers Club in 1903, an English private club still forbidden to women nowadays. **Recently restored, the interior decoration is luxurious. Some remarkable elements remain such as yellow onyx big stairs, a Moorish style bathroom and the ceiling painted by Paul Baudry, famous academic painter... The hotel has been listed Historical Monument since 1980.**

But most importantly, the story of the Marchioness could be a novel. To make it short, Esther Lachmann, from a modest environment in Poland, married a first time at 17 years-old with a poor tailor. She ran away, emigrated to Paris and started to be a courtesan.

Then, she married a rich pianist without having previously divorced. Dismissed by the latter's family, she collected rich lovers. In 1851, she married again with a noble

Portuguese and took his title and name, Marchioness de Païva. Soon, they separated but she kept her name which she found elegant and started her collection again...

In 1852, her new lover, the Count Von Donnersmarck, cousin of the German chancellor Von Bismarck, had this private mansion built for her with the contribution of famous artists. She wanted it to be « the most beautiful house in Paris ». She had literary salons there gathering intellectuals and artists, among which were the poet Théophile Gautier and the politicians Léon Gambetta or Adolphe Thiers. Only men! Women refused to mix with this scandalous courtesan. In the meantime, the Portuguese husband committed suicide. She was able to marry the Count.

In 1870, during the Franco-prussian War, she got involved in politics. Suspected to be a spy, she left France in 1877.

A few pictures of the Hotel de la Païva :

The hotel de la Païva can be visited but you need to book a very long time in advance.

<https://youtu.be/9iXH-w8qeog>

