



Googling Paris

Ditch the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre. The world's most gorgeous capital has better surprises in store for you

Fareeda Kanga
mirrorfeedback@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @MumbaiMirror

ON THE WEB

Visiting a Google Lab in Paris (instead of Silicon Valley) is a necessary ritual in reinventing your idea of the capital. The cultural institute was built in 2011 with a simple agenda: to showcase the wealth of world-class art hanging in

museums and galleries across the globe to any member of the public via a computer.

The result is a non-profit initiative that collaborates with 1200 cultural organisations (museums and art galleries) in 70 countries to upload the world's cultural heritage online. So basically someone sitting on a computer in Mumbai can make a 'virtual trip' to Madrid's Prado or Moscow's Pushkin State Museum at the click of a button. "We build free

tools and technologies for the cultural sector to showcase and share their gems, making them more widely accessible to a global audience," says a Google spokesperson during our visit. What happens next though is straight out of a science-fiction movie: click on a button and thanks to the gigapixel technology that digitises artworks, you are transported to the ceiling of Opéra de Paris with a bird's-eye view of Marc Chagall's frescos.



(Left) The Google lab in Paris is changing the way we gaze at art; (above) The Off Paris Seine hotel is decadent and posh



"The 360-degree seamless video technology allows us to experience a virtual tour as viewers can jump from a gallery's interior into a high-resolution artwork image," says the spokesperson. For centuries, cultural institutions have collected and safeguarded our heritage. Powerful technologies such as these make it that much simpler for future generations. Equally delightful is the fact that our very own Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) and the Bhau Dhaji Lad museum are also on this platform.

ON THE RIVER

Yet another insider secret that just opened in June this year is a must-do for divas. The Off Paris Seine is a floating hotel that offers the most stunning views of the city from perspectives you never imagined – expect stunning vistas of both, the Rive Gauche and Rive Droite. Your choice of room determines the type of views you will enjoy as you wake up – either of the river or quay.

Parisian sartorial indulgences abound here, especially in the Sunset Suite designed by Maurizio Galante, where a palette of orange dominates the décor. And even as the city's swish set lights up the night by sipping on cocktails or dipping in the pool, everyone present is in agreement that the real star of the night is Paris itself in all its sparkling glory.