



## SO VERY GAY PARIS!

**PARIS!** The synonym of romance, culture, fashion and festive taste buds. There are over 1800 listed monuments, 145 theatres and 380 cinemas in the gay-friendly Cité des Lumières. From bohemian Montmartre to gay Marais, from the romantic Seine to hedonistic Pigalle and its Moulin Rouge, Paris always surprises.

At 2pm on 28th June, thousands of people gathered at the Place d'Italie to take part in the Paris Pride Parade.

This year's theme was 'fighting against all discriminations' stating that no kind of hierarchy between discriminations should be valid.

Subjects such as the recognition of family structure, diversity and asylum rights for refugees prosecuted for sexual orientation were some of the hot subjects punctuating this demonstration.

The Parade 'danced' between Place d'Italie and République, and a concert started at 3pm at the end site. The concert's line-up was DJ Wet, Captain Comatose (Khan / Staxx), Patrick Vidal Big Band, Polyester, Marie France, Chris Korda, Aaron Carl and Laurent Garnier finishing at 9pm.

Eclectic sounds and the eccentricity of a Pride March with its floats, music, go-go boys, bikers and drag queens coloured the afternoon of the arteries blessed by this event's route. Hard to miss, were some firm butts and legs scattered in the crowd hinting at their Friday night activities. Such as the weekly ritual of thousands of sexy rollerbladers who visit Paris's main landmarks, through about 25 kilometres of the capital's streets and boulevards, skating away every dry Friday night!

Conveniently around the corner from the Parade's finishing line, is the gay district of the Marais. With the influx of party-goers, soon the whole area was drowning in people. COX at 15 Rue des Archives was the place to be, with happy drinkers overflowing onto the street.

After the apéritif, indulging in a French cuisine feast at one of the many restaurants that suit all budgets in this neighbourhood is an opportunity not to miss.

With over 20 lit up bridges, the Seine is a must in the list of places to visit for a romantic stroll. A walk along the river bank, soon finding the 18th Century Pont Neuf, you find Paris soon works its magic. For centuries, this bridge has inspired lovers from all over the world and has been the backdrop for many movies... This is the perfect spot for a moonlit kiss, getting you in the mood for the next step into the night. Just stay still and listen to what the river has to say.

Clubs, of course, are plentiful in Paris. However, one of the trendiest places to be in gay Paris, and probably the best known Parisian gay Club, is Queen at 102 Avenue des Champs Elysées.

This Saturday night was packed with beautiful men and boys dancing to the sounds of Mat Ste. Marie from Montréal, JC Vincens from Ibiza and Michael Kaiser, Queen resident who is also DJing at **Universe** on Pride night!

This varied and mixed crowd (typical of the Parisian scene) sure knows how to party, filling the beautiful multi-levelled venue. The dancers/strippers were mouth watering and well handled by the miming drag queen! Some energy left? Just around the corner, at 13/15 Rue de Berri was **Oh! Chéri(e)** at **Hustler Club**. From 6am till noon, this is definitely the after-hours to be at! Besides, in charge of the decks was our very own **Action** resident DJ Rob Sykes!

Before getting back to London, a nice French breakfast in one of the many cafés or bistros sure made us feel better and ready to sleep the whole journey back home.

Words by Jorge Balca, pics by Michael Holtermann.

Further information can be found at [www.paris-touristoffice.com](http://www.paris-touristoffice.com) and [www.legayparis.fr](http://www.legayparis.fr)

**Tour operator Manaround can be reached on 020 8902 7177**

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