



# Find Your Sweet Spot in Paris

Since my childhood, family vacations have been centered around one question: “What are we going to eat?” With this very question in mind, my sister and I toured Paris by *pâtisserie* (pastry shop). Armed with Jamie Cahill’s book, *The Pâtisseries of Paris*—which lists the *pâtisseries*, *chocolatiers*, *cafés*, and *glaciers* of Paris by *arrondissements* (neighborhoods)—we discovered the charms of the French through their food. Here are some highlights of our favorite sweet spots in Paris.

## Angelina

Angelina is famous for its decadent hot chocolate—as thick and creamy as I imagine a melted chocolate bar would be. Nothing could provide a more divine sugar-coma. You can also indulge in a full meal or try their equally famous *Mont Blanc* pastry. The *Mont Blanc*’s crisp meringue is coated first with whipped cream and then with candied chestnut cream that is piped onto the surface in squiggles. The delicate earthy flavor of the chestnuts adds balance to this sugary dessert.

## Amorino

Gelato is the name of the game at Amorino. Flavors run from the traditional chocolate and hazelnut to more exotic flavors like passion fruit, mango, and coconut. I could not get enough of the mango, because, well, it tasted just like fresh, ripe mangoes with cream.

## À la mère de famille

This gem of a shop has been a French candy tradition since the 1700s. Their homemade caramels were a treat for both our eyes and our taste buds. These buttery-soft candies come in unusual but unbeatable flavors such as citrus, cherry, and—my favorite—chili pepper.

## Pierre Hermé

Pierre Hermé is a swank, upscale *pâtisserie*, and it’s definitely worth the splurge. Here we sampled their *deux mille feuilles*, an upgrade from France’s traditional *mille feuilles* (literally translated as two thousand sheets and one thousand sheets respectively), a heavenly layering of paper-thin pastry and cream. We also sampled the curiously green lemon mousse cake called *le désir*. In appearance it resembled a small bundt cake, but its creamy texture and flavor were so light and refreshing, I could have eaten six in one sitting.

## Jean-Paul Hevin

This *chocolatier* is dedicated to the flavor, texture, and simple presentation of their wares. Nothing in this shop will disappoint. As a bonus, the staff is more than friendly, and while we were there, they spent time explaining the confections as we (slowly) made our choices. Their Mexican almonds coated in caramel milk chocolate and powdered sugar had a light texture with a healthy crunch and were our particular favorite.

## Secco Pâtisserie-Boulangerie

Secco, just a short walk from the Eiffel Tower, was by far my favorite stop in Paris. We got a little of everything in this no-frills shop, from traditional French breads and pastries to seasonal creations with fresh wild strawberries, all at a reasonable price. The *sable* (butter cookie) with raspberry jam was a perfectly simple and delicious combination.

—Martha Ostergar



Angelina’s famous hot chocolate



*Le désir* from Pierre Hermé



*Sable* with raspberry jam from Secco