

Bastille Day – July 14th – le Quatorze Juillet

France's national holiday is July 14th. You can register for BIFD from 14:00 to 16:00 at ESPCI, 10 rue Vauquelin, which will exceptionally be open for this purpose, and visit experiments at 16:00.

But you can also do many other things!

The July 14 activities are well-described here: <http://en.parisinfo.com/>

The big event in the morning is a parade down the Champs Elysées, during which President Hollande and other important people watch various battalions, including the engineering students from the elite Ecole Polytechnique, march in full costume.

In the evening are fireworks, launched from Place Trocadero, just across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower. Darkness falls very late in Paris at this time of year, so the fireworks start at around 23:00 and last about half an hour.

You can see the fireworks from the base of the Eiffel Tower, but many thousands of other people will be trying to do the same thing. For safety reasons, access to the area will be restricted by the police starting in the late afternoon. (Note that the fireworks are **not** visible from the hill of Sacré Coeur, but they are visible from the Tour Montparnasse.)

The best way to see the fireworks is from a boat on the Seine. You can reserve a dinner cruise. This is expensive (about 100 euros), but you are guaranteed to see the fireworks.

The latest ordinary (no dinner) boat cruises on the Seine also allow you to see the fireworks in a very inexpensive (10 euros) but spectacular way, but there is no guarantee of anything.

Here are some boat companies, whether for Bastille Day or any other time:

–Bateaux Vedettes du Pont Neuf 01 46 33 98 38 Square du Vert Galant, 75001 Paris

<http://vedettesdupontneuf.com/home/>

–Bateaux Parisiens Port de la Bourdonnais, 75007 Paris /<http://www.bateauxparisiens.com/>

–Bateaux Mouches Port de la Conférence, Pont de l'Alma, 75008 Paris

<http://www.bateaux-mouches.fr>

<http://www.francetourisme.fr/croisiere-seine-paris.html>

But Paris on a summer evening is a special experience, even without fireworks.

Another activity practiced on July 14th are popular dances, “fireman’s balls” (bals des pompiers.)

There may be other popular dances in other places too, like squares, town halls, parks.