The grands boulevards

Les grands boulevards

French Songs Series

Les chansons françaises

Visit this video (copy-paste) or listen to FRENCH ETC. audio
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feSimsyf9zw

Culture Capsule

The grands boulevards is more than a stretch of boulevards in Paris. It’s a true cultural experience not to be missed when visiting the city. It’s the heart of Paris nightlife with its theaters and brasseries.

On a map, the grands boulevards stretch from Bastille to La Madeleine, surrounding the business district on the Paris right bank.

Paris was actually founded on the left bank by the Romans, about 2,000 years ago. It was called Lutèce – Lutecia – then. In the Middle Ages, the right bank started developing to finally become the most important part of Paris. The right bank is where power and money sit these days.

Paris used to be divided in three parts: la Cité, today’s île de la Cité, l’Université, today’s rive gauche, la ville today’s rive droite. Now, Paris is divided into two: la rive gauche, representing knowledge and culture, and la rive droite, representing power and business.

The grands boulevards originated in the 17th century. Paris used to be surrounded by large city walls up to then. The Sun King knocked the Northern city walls down and built a wide alley bordered with trees instead. Because of its beauty and accessibility for carriages, les grands boulevards quickly became popular as the heart
of entertainment with its theaters and cheap restaurants that stay late in the night.

In 1862, Napoléon III wants to make Paris a showcase in Europe in the hope to revive the economy just before the 1867 Universal Exhibition. He asks Haussman to transform the look of Paris drastically. He created la Place de la République and la Place de l’Opéra, crossroad between luxury, business and entertainment. Les grands boulevards – with its jewel l’Opéra Garnier – is also a result of this. It is almost the Paris we still see today. Along with l’Opéra Garnier, he builds the palatial Grand Hôtel and its famous restaurant: le Café de la Paix. Drop by and admire the glass roof room. At the time of construction, the hotel was one of the biggest ones in Europe with 800 luxurious rooms. The grande salle of the Grand Hôtel was just restored and is indeed very impressive. It has rooftop mirrors and chandeliers, 48 Caryatids of musicians all around the roof. Famous customers are authors Guy de Maupassant, Gustave Flaubert, Émile Zola, double-agent and femme fatale Mata Hari, mythical actress Sarah Bernhardt.

Le Théâtre des Variétés hosts mythical musical – and non musical comedies by Jacques Offenbach, Sacha Guitry and Marcel Pagnol. The theater was just restored and is exactly alike the original one created in the beginning of the 19th century. The gorgeous crimson seats and guardrails are beautifully contrasted with the myriad of bright crystal chandeliers.

Le Passage des Panoramas, right next to it, is what would be today the equivalent of a shopping mall. It’s an inside alley full with luxurious shops and where you can chiner rare items to bring back. It used to be a fashionable place-to-be-seen. It has been a large window display for many famous authors who found inspiration there to write their plays that would be later played at a nearby theater.

Olympia Concert Hall: iconic concert hall where Piaf, Brel and our famous Johnny Halliday have become popular. It’s the dream of every singer to sing at the Olympia Concert Hall.

Le restaurant Chartier, canteen-style with a neo-gothic décor is a must when you are visiting Paris. Waiters in habit will take your order on the paper cloth. You’ll have to share your table with other guests, and that’s the fun of it. You get to meet lots of people this way. It’s busy, busy, busy. To give you an idea, its peak serving day served 1,900 people, I love the set of drawers that used to host the regular customers who rented them to leave their napkin and silverware. It’s very convivial. There is generally a long line.

Watch classic movie Marcel Carné’s Les Enfants du Paradis to relive the atmosphere that les grands boulevards radiated before Napoléon III knocked it down to build la Place de la République.
# vocab in context

Écoutez la baladodiffusion /frenchetc.org/ et répétez

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>flâner</td>
<td>to stroll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>tant de</td>
<td>so many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>on n’a qu’à</td>
<td>all you have to do is</td>
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<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>ampoule</td>
<td>blister</td>
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<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>foule</td>
<td>crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>étalage</td>
<td>display</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>cafard</td>
<td>blues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ne pas pouvoir se payer</td>
<td>to not be able to afford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>faire plaisir à quelqu’un</td>
<td>to make someone happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>dès</td>
<td>as soon as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>filer</td>
<td>to split</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>espoir</td>
<td>hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>colère</td>
<td>rath</td>
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<td>ø</td>
<td>vibrer</td>
<td>to thrill</td>
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<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>cœur</td>
<td>heart</td>
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<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>chant</td>
<td>song</td>
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<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>cri</td>
<td>scream</td>
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<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>le long de</td>
<td>along</td>
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<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>se coucher</td>
<td>to go to bed</td>
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<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>tard</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>apercevoir</td>
<td>to spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>jusque</td>
<td>until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>retrouver</td>
<td>to go back</td>
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<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>donner sur</td>
<td>to overlook onto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>parvenir</td>
<td>to reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>rumeur</td>
<td>murmur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m/f</td>
<td>enchanteur, enchanteresse</td>
<td>enchanting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Song**

Écoutez la baladodiffusion /frenchetc.org/ et répétez

**Les grands boulevards**

J’aime flâner sur les grands boulevards
Y a tant de choses, tant de choses
Tant de choses à voir
On n’a qu’à choisir au hasard
On s’fait des ampoules
À zigzaguer parmi la foule
J’aime les baraques et les bazars
Les étalages, les loteries
Et leurs camelots bavards
Qui vous débitent leurs bobards
Ça fait passer l’temps
Et l’on oublie son cafard

Je ne suis pas riche à millions
Je suis tourneur chez Citroën
J’peux pas me payer des distractions
Tous les jours de la s’maine
Aussi moi, j’ai mes petites manies
Qui me font plaisir et ne coûtent rien
Ainsi, dès le travail fini
Je file entre la porte Saint-Denis
Et le Boulevard des Italiens

J’aime flâner sur les grands boulevards
Y a tant de choses, tant de choses
Tant de choses à voir
On y voit des grands jours d’espoir
Des jours de colère
Qui font sortir le populaire
Là vibre le cœur de Paris
Toujours ardent, parfois frondeur
Avec ses chants, ses cris
Et de jolis moments d’histoire
Sont inscrits partout le long
De nos grands boulevards

J’aime flâner sur les grands boulevards
Les soirs d’été quand tout le monde
Aime bien se coucher tard
On a des chances d’apercevoir
Deux yeux angéliques
Que l’ont suit jusqu’à République
Puis, je retrouve mon petit hôtel
Ma chambre où la fenêtre donne
Sur un coin du ciel
D’où me parviennent comme un appel
Toutes les rumeurs, toutes les lueurs
Du monde enchanteur
Des grands boulevards

**Song Translation**

Listen to the Podcast /frenchetc.org/ and repeat

**The grands boulevards**

I like to stroll on the grands boulevards
There’re so many, so many
So many things to see
All you have to do is choose randomly
You get blisters
If you zigzag among the crowd
I like the dives and the bazaars
The displays, the lotteries
And their chatty peddlers
Who deliver their fibs
It makes time pass by
And you forget you had the blues

I’m not a millionaire
I’m a lathe operator at the Citroën car factory
I can’t afford entertainment
Every day of the week
So I have my little quirks
That make me happy and don’t cost anything
Thus, as soon as work ends
I split to Saint-Denis gate
And the Boulevard des Italiens

I like to stroll on the grands boulevards
There’re so many, so many
So many things to see
You can see long days filled with hope there
Days with rath
That make the people go out
There, the heart of Paris thrills
Always blazing, sometimes rebellious
With its songs, its screams
And nice memorable moments
Are written out all along
Our grands boulevards

I like to stroll on the grands boulevards
On evening nights when everyone
Enjoys going to bed late
You might be able to spot
Two angelical eyes
That you might follow all the way to Republic Square
And I go back to my small hotel
My bedroom where the window overlooks
Onto a corner of the sky
Where reach like a call
All the murmurs, all the lights
Of the enchanting world
Of the grands boulevards
Grammar Point

“Et leurs camelots bavards” - Plural of adjectives

- The plural of most adjectives is formed by adding an –S to the singular adjective.
  - grand --> grands
  - petit --> petits
  - bon --> bons
  - bleu --> bleus
  - grande --> grandes
  - petite --> petites
  - bonne --> bonnes
  - bleue --> bleues

(big, tall)
(short, small)
(good)
(blue)

However, there are other rules.
- Adjectives ending in –s in the singular form stay the same in the plural form.
  - français --> français (French)
  - gras --> gras (fat)
- Adjectives ending in –x in the singular form stay the same in the plural form.
  - heureux --> heureux (happy)
  - peureux --> peureux (fearful)
  - merveilleux --> merveilleux (marvelous)
- Some adjectives ending in –eu in the singular form take an –x in the plural form.
  - Bleu is an exception.
  - hébreu --> hébreux (Hebrew)
- Some adjectives ending in –eau in the singular form take an –x in the plural form.
  - beau --> beaux (beautiful)
- Some adjectives ending in –al in the singular form become –aux in the plural form.
  - royal --> royaux (royal)
  - légal --> légaux (legal)

And last, but not least, there are the colors. They take an –s most of the time, except in 2 instances:
- when the color is also a fruit or a vegetable, the plural form remains masculine and singular
  - une jupe orange --> deux jupes orange (two orange skirts)
- when there are 2 compound colors, the plural form remains masculine and singular
  - une jupe bleu clair --> deux jupes bleu clair (two light blue skirts)

Related: Place of Adjectives – Paper&Pencil game

www.frenchetc.org
Grammar Point

“Toujours ardent, parfois frondeur” - Temporal adverbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a long time</td>
<td>longtemps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>après</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>again</td>
<td>encore, derechef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all of a sudden</td>
<td>subitement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>already, soon</td>
<td>déjà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>toujours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as soon as</td>
<td>dès que</td>
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<tr>
<td>as soon as</td>
<td>aussitôt</td>
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<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>auparavant</td>
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<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>avant</td>
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<td>during</td>
<td>cependant</td>
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<td>during</td>
<td>lors de</td>
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<td>during</td>
<td>pendant</td>
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<td>early</td>
<td>tôt</td>
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<td>finally</td>
<td>enfin</td>
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<td>first</td>
<td>d'abord</td>
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<tr>
<td>firstly</td>
<td>premièrement</td>
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<tr>
<td>for now</td>
<td>pour l'instant</td>
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<tr>
<td>formerly</td>
<td>jadis</td>
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<tr>
<td>formerly</td>
<td>naguère</td>
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<tr>
<td>formerly</td>
<td>autrefois</td>
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<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>dès</td>
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<tr>
<td>from now on</td>
<td>désormais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from now on, from then on</td>
<td>dorénavant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from time to time</td>
<td>de temps en temps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the mean time</td>
<td>entre-temps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the old days</td>
<td>autrefois</td>
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<tr>
<td>late</td>
<td>tard</td>
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<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>jamais</td>
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<tr>
<td>no more</td>
<td>plus</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>French</td>
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<tr>
<td>now</td>
<td>maintenant</td>
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<tr>
<td>often</td>
<td>souvent</td>
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<tr>
<td>recently</td>
<td>récemment</td>
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<tr>
<td>right then</td>
<td>aussitôt</td>
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<tr>
<td>secondly</td>
<td>deuxièmement</td>
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<tr>
<td>since, for</td>
<td>depuis</td>
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<tr>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>parfois</td>
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<tr>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>quelquefois</td>
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<tr>
<td>soon</td>
<td>bientôt</td>
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<tr>
<td>soon</td>
<td>tantôt</td>
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<tr>
<td>soon after</td>
<td>sitôt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>still, again</td>
<td>encore</td>
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<tr>
<td>suddenly</td>
<td>soudain</td>
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<tr>
<td>the day after tomorrow</td>
<td>après-demain</td>
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<tr>
<td>the day before yesterday</td>
<td>avant-hier</td>
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<tr>
<td>then</td>
<td>alors</td>
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<td>then</td>
<td>ensuite</td>
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<td>puis</td>
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<td>aujourd'hui</td>
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<tr>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>demain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until</td>
<td>jusque + à...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until + phrase</td>
<td>jusqu'à ce que</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when</td>
<td>lorsque</td>
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<tr>
<td>when</td>
<td>quand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday</td>
<td>hier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice

Fill in the blanks according to the clues.

Définitions – Clues

Across
7. secondly
8. formerly, in the old days
9. during
10. always
11. before
12. never

Down
1. all of a sudden
2. yesterday
3. sometimes
4. soon after
5. recently
6. from now on

Solution - Answers

Across
7. deuxièmement
8. autrefois
9. pendant
10. toujours
11. avant
12. jamais

Down
1. subitement
2. hier
3. quelquefois
4. sitôt
5. récemment
6. désormais
Grammar Point

“Je suis tourneur chez Citroën” - About occupations

Three things to know when talking about occupations in French.

• It is idiomatic to say I am a teacher – je suis prof – when you want to say I am A teacher. There is no article in French.
• If you say Je suis danseuse, it means that you are dancing as a professional. You may not say Je suis danseuse if dancing is a hobby for you, or even if it’s a passion of yours. It sounds conceited in French culture. I want to say that you dance for fun, you’ll say Je fais de la danse instead.
• Although it is changing quite a bit, particularly in Canadian French, a lot of professions only have the masculine gender. The mayor – Mme LE maire. Again, we see more and more Mme LA maire. The debates are hot between French « puristes » who want to keep ‘male professions’ male and people who would like to see the language evolve with its culture.

Before translating these sentences, review the vocabulary lists called “Occupations” at http://www.frenchetc.org/2008/08/30/occupations/

Practice in context

1. She became a lawyer after she turned 50.
2. They are both handymen and CEOs.
3. He will be a vet, that’s for sure.
4. You are not farmers, you are gardeners.
5. He’s a bus driver during the day, and a trapeze artist at night. (He has two jobs)
6. He’s a bus driver during the day, and a trapeze artist at night. (He’s a bus driver as a job and a trapeze artist for fun).

Answers
1. Elle est devenue avocate après 50 ans.
2. Ils sont à la fois bricoleurs et PDG.
3. Il sera vét, c’est sûr.
4. Vous n’êtes pas fermiers, vous êtes jardiniers.
5. Il est chauffeur de bus dans la journée et trapéziste le soir.
6. Il est chauffeur de bus dans la journée et il fait du trapèze le soir.

Online: http://www.frenchetc.org/2008/08/30/about-occupations/
Related: Vocab List http://www.frenchetc.org/2008/08/30/occupations/