



Savouring the soul of

Paris

All the finest foodie things in life can be found, tasted and, in some cases, taken home in Paris. This brief trip into the glamorous metropolis goes to the soul of Parisian epicurean heaven, from petite to grand, basics to luxuries

Words by Tamara Thiessen

The little card I carry away with me from the boulangerie on Boulevard Malesherbes has a photo of a baker's hands in close-up, kneading dough. The card has a traditional look, and is marked with a classy signature, Eric Kayser Artisan Boulanger – and the caption 'Quality, love, savoir-faire, evolution & tradition... savour in short'. It further promises, 'From a base of natural leaven and rigorously selected flours, the pure butter viennoiseries, the fine patisseries, the gourmet sandwiches, all of the products are made on the premises'.

This is precisely the kind of assurance of quality and authenticity that French people expect – whether it is fancy or basic, when it comes to food, that flair is always there. And, as food products go, none are more essential – nor more artistic – than French breads. Having discovered this store by chance, I now set out to discover its products and partake of its pleasures. And I leave with bags stuffed full of all kinds of gorgeous looking doughy, bready, cakey things.

Paris is like a Louis XVI writing desk, packed with petite pullout drawers of epicurean surprises ready to be savoured by the casual stroller. It seems everyone knows to head to Fauchon for gastronomic souvenirs of Paris – from gorgeously packaged chocolates, foies gras, Champagne and even tea. But many of the smaller places for fine food – the *bonnes* ▶

