

Art History for Kids



Book V:
Realism, Impressionism,
& Post-Impressionism

Let's Learn!

Realism, Impressionism, & Post-Impressionism

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Let's Learn!

Realism & Impressionism

Realism was an artistic style that evolved as a direct reaction to Romanticism – the style that seemed melodramatic and impractical to Realist artists. Painters of this era opted for accurate and realistic expression of true-life events. Their paintings showed every day people engaged in ordinary events or situations. The most exaggerated example of realist paintings were the *trompe l'œil* (TROHMP LOY) or “trick the eye” paintings.* These optical illusions were of scenes in “actual size” (usually a mural) that looked so real that the viewer felt like he could actually reach out and touch the objects in the painting or step right into the scenery.

* A great book for viewing some examples of *trompe l'œil* is [A Trick of the Eye: Trompe L'œil Masterpieces](#) by Ekhard Hollmann and Jurgen Tesch.

Unlike Realism, **Impressionism** was a style that emphasized the overall feel or “impression” that the painting achieved rather than showing exact and accurate details. Impressionist painters wished to convey a sense of knowing just what a scene looked like or felt like at the time it was painted. Elements like weather, location and time of day were of utmost importance in providing the viewer with that sense. Blending of color to create a smooth and flawless finish with realistic hues mattered less. Paint colors were not mixed, leaving their true brightness to shine. It is easy to see the variety of paint colors an artist used or his thick brushstrokes in a piece of Impressionist art. Because of the extra texture and color, it is sometimes difficult to see the details of the painting from up close. Viewers must step away from the painting to really “take in” the entire scene.

Impressionists begin taking painting outside or “*en plein air*” (AW PLEN AYR). The still life paintings or portraits that had traditionally been completed indoors in an artist’s studio were now being done outdoors to truly capture the feeling that the painter wished to communicate. These *en plein air* paintings done on site provided a snap shot of the event or scene through the eyes of the painter.

Edgar Degas (French, Realist & Impressionist Painter & Sculptor) 1834-1917

Edgar Degas was born in Paris, France and was the oldest of five children. Degas' father always encouraged Degas to explore his interest in art. Even though Degas spent some time studying law, he left school to become a painter. Degas spent time in Italy where he was able to study the paintings of the Masters of the Renaissance. He frequently copied their paintings to learn their techniques. In a seven year period, Degas had copied over 700 works of other artists! He applied the skills he learned to paint historical pieces and original portraits of his own family members.

At the age of 38, Degas traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana in America with his brother, René. Here he painted *Courtyard of Houses in New Orleans* which shows part of the inside of a room of his uncle's house where he and his brother stayed. It may have been in this very room that Degas created this painting. While in New Orleans, he also painted *Portraits in a New Orleans Cotton Office* – a wonderfully realistic piece showing the hustle and bustle in an office – probably that of his uncle who ran a cotton business.

While Degas would originally be classified as Realist painter, he organized the first Impressionists' Art Exhibition at the Salon de Paris (sah-LAW DEH pah-REE) at the Academy of Fine Arts. He rejected the impressionist style at first but ended up participating in the exhibition and almost every one thereafter. As an early impressionist painter, Degas painted mostly jockeys and race horses, but later began to paint ballerinas. His paintings of dancers are his most popular.

In his career as an artist, Degas created more than 2,000 oil paintings. He also created over 150 bronze and wax sculptures. Many of his sculptures were also of horses, racers and dancers. His only sculpture to ever be exhibited during his lifetime was the *Little Fourteen Year Old Dancer*.

Realism:

Portrait of Marguerite de Gas, the Artist's Sister

<http://www.abcgallery.com/D/degas/degas71.html>

Portrait of Hilaire de Gas, the Artist's Grandfather

<http://www.abcgallery.com/D/degas/degas2.html>

Courtyard of Houses in New Orleans

<http://www.abcgallery.com/D/degas/degas11.html>

Portraits in a New Orleans Office

<http://www.abcgallery.com/D/degas/degas13.html>

Impressionism:

Race Horses

<http://abcgallery.com/D/degas/degas25.html>

Dance Class

<http://abcgallery.com/D/degas/degas32.html>

Little Fourteen Year Old Dancer (sculpture)

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsb/ho_29.100.370.htm

- This bronze dancer has a cotton skirt and a satin hair ribbon!

Horse at a Trough (sculpture)

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsb/ho_29.100.433.htm

John Singer Sargent (American, Realist Painter) 1856-1925

John Singer Sargent was the son of American parents but was born in Florence, Italy. As a boy he traveled around Europe extensively and attended l'École des Beaux Arts in Paris. He also studied with a French portrait artist. At the age of 20, Sargent visited the United States for the first time.

At the age of 23, Sargent was hired to paint the portraits of a well-known French poet and playwright and his wife. This was the beginning of Sargent's career as a portrait artist.

Sargent documented his travels around the world through his art. After a trip to Spain, Sargent painted two paintings that were hung in the Salon of Paris, *Fumee d'Ambre* (foo-MAY DAHM-brah) and *El Jaleo: Danse de Gitanes* (ELL ha-LAY-oh DAWS DEH ZJEE-tah). The latter was highly acclaimed.

A few years later, Sargent painted a portrait titled *Madame X* which is not considered one of his best pieces. The portrait showed a woman with bare shoulders, something very uncommon at this time. The painting was hung in the Salon in Paris, but received a lot of criticism because of the way the woman was dressed. Sargent was so discouraged that he left Paris and moved to London thinking his career as a portrait artist was over.

Sargent continued to paint, however, and visited America on occasion. He began to experiment with the impressionist style of painting and befriended

Claude Monet. (See Sargent's painting titled *Claude Monet Painting at the Edge of a Wood*.) He created what would be the first piece of impressionist art produced in Britain, a painting called *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose*.

Sargent frequently painted portraits of his sister, Violet Ormond. In these pieces, Sargent experimented with light and color. Sargent quickly reestablished himself as an exemplary portrait painter and painted more than 500 portraits. Many of his portraits were of wealthy American and European families.

At the end of his career, Sargent moved away from portrait painting and began creating landscapes. He frequently traveled between Europe and America and painted what he saw. In all, Sargent produced more than 2,000 watercolors and over 900 oil paintings during his lifetime. In his final years, Sargent was hired to paint murals for the Boston Public Library, the Museum of Fine Art and the Widener Memorial Library at Harvard.

Portrait of Edouard Pailleron

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent22.html>

Portrait of Madame Edouard Pailleron

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent29.html>

El Jaleo: Danse de Gitanes

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent30.html>

Madame X

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent14.html>

Claude Monet Painting at the Edge of a Wood

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent29.html>

Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent1.html>

A Gust of Wind, Mrs. Violet Ormond, the Artist's Sister

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent5.html>

Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain

<http://abcgallery.com/S/sargent/sargent17.html>

Winslow Homer (*American, Realist/Naturalist Painter*) 1836-1910

Winslow Homer was born in Boston, Massachusetts. His mother was a watercolor painter who encouraged him to pursue a career in art. At the age of 19, Homer took a job as an apprentice to a lithographer (or engraver and printmaker). By age 21, he had established himself as a successful freelance illustrator and supplied magazines, including *Harper's Weekly*, with his illustrations. A few years later, Homer began to take painting lessons and opened a studio in New York City.

Harper's Weekly continued to employ Homer. They hired him at age 25 to sketch scenes of the American Civil War which lasted from 1861 to 1865. Homer went straight to the battlefield to draw realistic illustrations of soldiers, battle scenes and camp life. His sketches were not especially well-known, but the subject matter would continue to be represented in Homer's work over the years. When Homer returned from the war, he created a number of paintings showing scenes of war. Some of his best include *Prisoners from the Front* and *Sharpshooters on Picket Duty*. His serious and realistic works showed soldiers as heroes.

Homer traveled to France. Here he began to paint landscapes. Over the years he continued to paint outdoor scenes including those depicting farm life and children at play. As a painter he joined The Tile Club, a group of artists who would meet to discuss artistic styles and ideas. Homer began to paint with watercolors instead of oil paints and soon after, gave up illustration all together to devote himself to painting.

In his 40's, Homer traveled to England where he stayed on the coast. He developed a passion for painting seascapes, fisherman and their families (See *The Tempest* and *The Fisherwoman*). When he returned to the United States two years later, he moved to Maine where he would live the rest of his life. Here he continued to paint seascapes and landscapes. In the winter, he would often travel to islands in the Caribbean to paint warmer seascapes but also painted cold winter scenes of Maine. Some of his most notable works, including *Mending the Nets* and *The Fox Hunt*, were created during this time.

Prisoners from the Front

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/homr/hob_22.207.htm

Sharpshooter on Picket Duty (sketch for *Harper's Weekly*)

http://www.sonofthesouth.net/Homer_Letter/Winslow_Homer_Sharpshooter.jpg

Sharpshooter on Picket Duty (oil painting)

http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/display_image.php?id=854

Home Sweet Home

http://www.artchive.com/artchive/h/homer/homer_home.jpg

The Tempest

http://www.artchive.com/artchive/h/homer/homer_tempest.jpg

The Fisherwoman

<http://www.artchive.com/artchive/h/homer/fisherwoman.jpg>

Mending the Nets

http://www.artchive.com/artchive/h/homer/homer_nets.jpg

Sponge Fishing, Nassau

http://www.artchive.com/artchive/h/homer/sponge_fishermen.jpg

The Fox Hunt

http://www.artchive.com/artchive/h/homer/fox_hunt.jpg

Claude Monet (French, Impressionist Painter) 1840-1926

Born in Paris, France, Claude Monet (moh-NAY) moved with his family to the small town of La Havre where his father owned a grocery store. As a young boy, Monet painted caricature portraits and hung them in the local art supply store. An artist named Eugene Boudin who worked in the store convinced Monet that he should try his hand at landscape painting *en plein air*. As he later attended art schools where he would hone his skills, Monet befriended other rising painters like *Cézanne*, *Renoir* and *Manet*. In 1869 Monet and Renoir painted scenes of *La Grenouillère* (LAH gren-wah-LAIR), a floating restaurant on the Seine River. Their paintings were the first to show the new style that would later be called *Impressionism*. It was with his painting *Impression: Sunrise*, painted five years later, that the term “Impressionism” was finally used to describe the era’s style of painting.

Monet’s wife, Camille, modeled for many of his paintings. It is her face and body that appears in many of his outdoor scenes. In his painting, *Women in the Garden*, all four women are actually Camille!

Monet, who spent a great part of his life as a poor man, sometimes depending on his friend Renoir for food, earned more money as his paintings became more popular. He was eventually able to leave La Havre and move to Giverny (zhee-vayr-NEE), France where he had a sizable studio in which to keep his large paintings. The property on which he lived had beautiful gardens that Monet tended to with great care. It is said that he hand-washed each of the lilies and

lily pads in his pond everyday. The purpose for his diligence was to create the perfect landscape for his *en plein air* paintings. Many of Monet's most well know paintings are scenes from Giverny including scenes of haystacks, cliffs, trees and flowers. Many of these paintings were done on huge, 6' x 14' canvases. Monet used primary colors (red, yellow and blue) in dabbing strokes to create his sunny landscapes.

La Grenoillère

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet21.html>

Impression: Sunrise

<http://abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet36.html>

Women in the Garden

<http://abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet8.html>

Rue Saint-Denis, Festivities of 30 June, 1878

<http://abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet67.html>

The Picnic

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet7.html>

Haystack. Snow Effects. Morning

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet118.html>

Haystacks. End of Summer. Morning.

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet119.html>

The Rouin Cathedral

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet104.html>

The White Water Lillies

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet111.html>

Water Lilies

<http://www.abcgallery.com/M/monet/monet146.html>

Pierre-August Renoir (French, Impressionist Painter) 1841-1919

Pierre-August Renoir was born in Limoges (lee-MOWZH), France. The city of Limoges was and still is a major manufacturer of fine porcelain (or white clay) plates, vases, platters, pitchers and small collectable boxes in all shapes and sizes. These porcelain wares were hand painted by local and international

artists. Renoir began his career as an artist decorating Limoges plates with flowers. When machines began to be used for decorating porcelain, Renoir practiced his painting skills by decorating fans.

Renoir traveled to Paris to study the art of the French Masters and eventually moved there. He befriended other artists like *Monet*, *Cézanne* and *Bizelle*. He and Bizelle shared a studio and painted portraits of each other.

Renoir later spent time with Monet. Side by side they painted *en plein air* pictures of *La Grenouillère*, a floating restaurant on the Seine River. Compare their paintings. What are the similarities and what are the differences? What do you think the artists “impressions” of the scene were? As Renoir and Monet studied the way the water looked, they realized that the shadows on the water were not brown or grey or black as most artists had painted them. With closer observation they found that the shadows reflected all the colors around the water – the blue of the sky, the green of the trees, the white of the clouds. In fact, Renoir refused to use the color black in any of his paintings. Instead he used dark shades of blue. What other colors can you see in the water in his painting of *La Grenouillère*?

One of Renoir’s best impressionist paintings, *La Moulin de la Galette*, was created almost a decade later. All of the models for this painting were Renoir’s friends. Can you see the sunlight shining on the people in the painting? Did you notice all of the blue shadows?

Renoir was an artist that refused to let injuries or illnesses keep him from creating art. When he broke his right arm, he painted with his left. As an older man he developed arthritis that crippled his hands and eventually left his right arm paralyzed. Despite the pain the arthritis caused, he would strap a paintbrush to his wrist and hand so that he could paint.

Frédéric Bizelle at His Easel by Renoir

<http://abcgallery.com/R/re noir/re noir7.html>

Portrait of Pierre-August Renoir by Bizelle

<http://abcgallery.com/B/bazzile/bazzile5.html>

La Grenouillère

<http://abcgallery.com/R/re noir/re noir11.html>

La Moulin de la Galette

<http://abcgallery.com/R/re noir/re noir86.html>

The Luncheon of the Boating Party

<http://abcgallery.com/R/re noir/re noir30.html>

Girl with a Watering Can

<http://abcgallery.com/R/renoir/renoir22.html>

Mary Stevenson Cassatt (American, Impressionist Painter) 1844-1926

Mary Cassatt was born in Allegheny City (now a part of Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania. Before she was even ten years old, Cassatt traveled to Europe with her parents and lived in France and Germany. While there she learned to speak both languages. After four years abroad, the family returned to the United States and settled in Philadelphia. At the age of fifteen, Cassatt expressed an interest in going to art school. She attended a school in Philadelphia, but after four years decided that she wished to study abroad. At the age of nineteen she left for France to study with the Impressionist painters in Paris. At this time, however, women were not allowed to attend *L'École des Beaux Arts* (lay-KOHL DAY BOWS ART), Paris's best art school. Instead, she took private lessons from a local artist.

Cassatt studied art in France over the next few years, exhibiting some of her paintings. She returned to the United States for a year and then visited Spain where she studied the art of *Rubens*, *Velázquez* and *Titian* at the *Prado Museum*. Some of the art she painted during this period, like *Toreador* and *Spanish Dancer Wearing a Lace Mantilla* featured typical Spanish scenes and clothing.

Cassatt continued her travels to the Netherlands and Italy, but finally returned to Paris. She was joined there by her sister Lydia, who became a model for many of Cassatt's paintings. (See *The Cup of Tea* and *Lydia Crocheting in the Garden at Marly*.) Cassatt soon became a well-established portrait painter.

While in Paris, Cassatt befriended Impressionist painter *Edgar Degas* who admired her work. Not many women were painters at this time and Degas was admittedly surprised that a woman could paint so well!

At the peak of her artistic career, Cassatt mainly painted scenes of mothers and children. (One reason is because at the time it was considered inappropriate for her to paint a picture of a man that was not related to her!) In addition to painting, many of Cassatt's pieces were created with pastels.

Spanish Dancer Wearing a Lace Mantilla

<http://www.abcgallery.com/C/cassatt/cassatt8.html>

Child in a Straw Hat

<http://www.abcgallery.com/C/cassatt/cassatt15.html>

The Child's Caress

<http://www.abcgallery.com/C/cassatt/cassatt39.html>

The Bath

<http://www.abcgallery.com/C/cassatt/cassatt41.html>

Mother and Child (pastel)

<http://www.abcgallery.com/C/cassatt/cassatt43.html>

Maternal Kiss (pastel)

<http://www.abcgallery.com/C/cassatt/cassatt49.html>

Let's Have Fun!

Realism, Impressionism & Post-Impressionism

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Let's Have Fun!

Realism, Impressionism & Post-Impressionism

Blending with Chalk

Let's Get Ready!

- Chalk
- Paper
- Hairspray (aerosol)

Try creating some art with chalk and then smooth out the lines and blend the colors with your fingers as Degas did. Teachers should spray finished art with aerosol hairspray to set the chalk and keep it from smudging.

Dancers in Dramatic Play

Let's Get Ready!

- Dancers' costumes or tutus
- Mirror
- Radio or CD player

Fill your dress-up area with dancers' costumes and put on some classical music for your students. Encourage them to try a little ballet in front of the mirror.

Wax or Clay Sculptures

Let's Get Ready!

- Modeling Clay or Wax (Knetwachs for Kids by Mercurius USA – www.mercurius-usa.com – Colorful and warms and softens as you knead it)
- Glitter to add to modeling clay for a special effect

Let older children try sculpting a dancer or a horse – two of Degas' favorite subjects.

Dancers' Feet

Let's Get Ready!

- Washable paints
- Paper plates
- Tub with warm soapy water
- Tub with warm clean water
- Towels
- Large sheets of paper
- Newspaper or an old sheet for the entire work area

Pour paints onto paper plates – one color for each plate. Working with children one at a time, allow them to remove shoes and socks and step their left foot into one color paint and their right foot into another. Let them dance on a large piece of paper, their footsteps creating the art. When finished, have them wash feet first in the soapy water bucket and rinse in the clean water bucket. Dry thoroughly.

1st Position, 2nd Position, Etc.

Let's Get Ready!

- Dancer's Positions Templates (one copy of each) – see pages 42-46
- Crayons (2 colors)
- Scissors
- Tape

Cut out each of the dancer's Positions feet. Color all right feet one color and all left feet another. Tape feet to the floor in their correct position. Let children try out the positions by putting their feet on top of the paper footprints. This is a great activity for practicing left and right.

Live Model Portraits

Let's Get Ready!

- Live model – a teacher or classmate
- Paints (tempera or watercolors)
- Brushes
- Paper
- Easel, optional

Sargent painted hundreds of portraits. Let your students paint one too using a live model as reference. Let a student or another teacher sit for them (a short 5 minute sitting will be plenty) as they get the basic lines down for their image, then let them add more detail at the end of the sitting.

Painting of a Favorite Trip

Let's Get Ready!

- Paints (tempera or watercolors)
- Brushes
- Paper
- Easel, optional

Before there were cameras, artists had to capture their memories of trips or vacations in their paintings. Allow your students to paint a picture of their favorite trip or vacation and then share some stories about that time with their classmates.

Paint a Landscape

Let's Get Ready!

- Paints (tempera or watercolors)
- Brushes
- Paper
- Easel, optional

Take a walk to a spot nearby your school. Bring painting supplies and let students paint an outdoor landscape.

Blending Colors

Let's Get Ready!

- Liquid watercolor paints or watered down tempera
- Eyedroppers
- Coffee filters or thick paper

Homer was a master at blending colors in his paintings. Let children watch colors blend. Give each child a coffee filter. Then provide watercolors and eyedroppers. Let them select colors to squeeze onto the filter and watch as colors blend and bleed together.

Ocean Scene on a Rock

Let's Get Ready!

- Paints (tempera or watercolors)
- Brushes
- Rocks (one for each child)

Homer loved to paint seascapes on the rocky beaches of Maine. Let children paint a picture of ocean on a rock. Provide them with blues, greens and whites to create colorful waves.

"The Fox Hunt"

Let's Get Ready!

- Fox (see template page 47)
- Brushes
- Construction paper (light blue)
- Glue
- Shaving cream

Have children color and glue their fox to the center of a piece of construction paper. (Older children can cut out and color their own fox as well.) Create a mixture of 3 parts shaving cream, 1 part glue. Let children paint on this mixture around their fox to look like the snowy ground. (Mixture will dry with a 3D texture). Let them create paw prints in the snow using their finger tips.

Time of Day Sequencing Cards

Let's Get Ready!

- Camera
- Photographs of the same locations at different times of day
- Index cards
- Glue stick
- Marker

Monet studied the way that light fell at different times of the day on his landscapes. See if your students can put pictures of the same landscape photographed at different times of the day (early morning, mid-day, sunset, night) in the correct sequence (i.e. from earliest to latest). Take photographs of familiar places at different times. Glue photos to index cards (laminates if possible). Shuffle up the pictures in a series and see if your students can put them in chronological order. This activity can be made self-checking by numbering the back of the index cards.

Imitation Oil Paints

Let's Get Ready!

- Tempera paints
- Brushes
- All purpose flour
- Q-tips, cotton balls, etc.

Oil paints are much thicker than the ones children are used to. Let them experience painting with a thicker, oil-paint like substance. Mix flour into a batch of tempera paint to create your imitation oil paint. Let them try applying paint to paper with various instruments like, Q-tips, cotton balls or fingers.



HERE'S A BRIGHT IDEA...*Parents are great resources for building your art supply cabinet. Let them know at the beginning of the school year that all kinds of surplus or unused office supplies can be used for school art projects. Anything from medical supplies (swabs, gauze, syringes, tongue depressors, etc.) and fabric scraps to unused coffee filters, tile or paint chip samples and empty paper towel tubes can be useful.*

Haystacks

Let's Get Ready!

- ❑ Paper (optional)
- ❑ Yellow construction paper haystack
- ❑ Glue
- ❑ Straw or raffia (cut into 3" pieces)
- ❑ Tempera paints (white, brown, yellow)
- ❑ Brushes

Cut out a haystack shape. Allow children to paint the surface of their haystack with glue and apply pieces of straw or raffia. When completely dry, provide children with white, yellow and brown paints that they can mix to create different haystack colors. Let them paint over their haystack with these color mixtures.

Lily Matching

Let's Get Ready!

- ❑ Water lily Template (page 48) 1 small and 1 large for each child
- ❑ Crayons
- ❑ Bag or box in which to hide large lilies

Play a lily matching game. Make the same number of copies of the Water Lily Template as the number of children in your group. Cut out each small and large lily. Color each small lily a different color. Color a large lily to match each of the small lilies. Pass out the small lilies to each child (one per person). Pull a large lily out of a bag or box. The child with the matching lily should come up and retrieve the match from the teacher. Continue until all children have received their lily's larger match. This is a great way to review color vocabulary in native or second languages.

Variation:

- Tape large lilies on the wall, to bookshelves, etc. around your classroom. Pass a small lily to each child. Have them search the room to find and retrieve their matching large lily.

Let's Get to Know Each Other!



Art All Around Us – Paris, France

Bienvenu! Welcome! Glad you've come to visit Paris, France. There's plenty to do and see in this city rich with culture, art and architecture. Let's start in the center of the city at the *Arc de Triomphe* (ARK DEH tree-OHMF). This gigantic arch was built by architect Chalgrin as requested by Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte who wished to honor the French army. The arch symbolized the entrance to the city through which the soldiers would march when they returned from battle. The *Arc de Triomphe* is the location of the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* where a soldier was buried to represent the millions of soldiers who fought for France.

The *Arc de Triomphe* is also a wonderful spot from which to see the sites of France. Climb to the top and you can see for miles. The *Arc de Triomphe* sits like the hub of a wheel with streets coming in from all sides like spokes. The main street is called the *Avenue des Champs-Élysées* (ah-veh-NEW DAY SHAWS ay-LEE-say). Travel the Champs-Élysées from the *Arc de Triomphe* to the *Place de la Concorde* (PLAHS DEH LAH caw-CORD) and you'll pass by a multitude of offices, cafés, shops, restaurants, theaters, and cinemas and even the presidential palace. On *Bastille Day* (a French national holiday held on July 14th – much like our 4th of July), a grand military parade marches down the Champs-Élysées. The world famous *Tour de France* bike race also finishes here.

Looking for another great place to see the sites from up high? You can't miss the *Eiffel Tower*, France's most famous monument and one of the world's most well-known structures. Built in 1889 by Gustav Eiffel, the tower is made of over 18,000 pieces of iron. It weighs more than 10,000 pounds (almost as much as 2,000 elephants!) and took more than two years to build. More than 200 million visitors have visited the *Eiffel Tower* since it opened. Inside you can ride an elevator to three different floors where you can site see, watch a movie, visit the gift shop or eat in the Eiffel Tower restaurant. If you'd rather walk, you'll have to climb 1,665 stairs! From the top floor of the Eiffel Tower you'll be able to see the whole city of Paris. To keep the tower looking its best...