

Do you have a partnership with any similar companies in Paris or other major cities? –Scala Reale client, June 2004

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Rome and Paris. November 2, 2004—The Rome-based travel consultancy Context:Rome announced today the launch of services in Paris and the opening of a branch office in the 19th arrondissement. This expansion includes an extension of the critically-acclaimed Scala Reale walking itineraries from Rome to Paris.

“Paris is an obvious next step,” said Context:Rome director, Paul Bennett, today from their offices in the Monti neighborhood of Rome. “Several of our clients have urged us to develop Scala itineraries in other European cities, like London and Paris. There’s been some buzz about it in travel chat rooms too. So, it’s a pretty natural move.”

Context:Paris will begin with a limited selection of services, based on what Context:Rome has been successfully providing its clients for several years, including: **cell phone rentals, museum tickets, car services, language workshops**, and such boutique services as **orientation chats** and pre-arrival **apartment stocking**. However, just as in Rome, the organization will revolve around **thematic walking tours** of the city and its museums led by a network of scholars and professionals. Though small—twelve docents as compared with thirty-eight in Rome—the Paris network is composed of Ph.D. students finishing their dissertations, art historians teaching in universities, and a variety of professional writers, architects, and artists. The vocabulary of itineraries is being developed and honed with a similar view to creating a college seminar-like experience for clients. Among current itineraries are Paris as Palimpsest and The Learned City (an exploration of Paris as intellectual center through the centuries).

Context:Paris will be overseen on the ground by Brenna Fleener, who worked for a year in the Context:Rome office in Rome before moving up to Paris in September.

“On one level things are quite simple for us,” said Bennett, “We just have to replicate what’s been so successful in Rome—a combination of superior walking tours and trip-enhancing services. But this will only carry us so far. Paris is complex and it’s radically different from Rome, with a different history and cultural context. Since, at base, what we really do is give clients a deeper experience of a place, Brenna’s got her work cut out. She went out to explore two months ago and hasn’t returned yet.”

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