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## Almost French: Love and a New Life in Paris

By Sarah Turnbull



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### Almost French: Love and a New Life in Paris By Sarah Turnbull

The charming true story of a spirited young woman who finds adventure--and the love of her life--in Paris.

"This isn't like me. I'm not the sort of girl who crosses continents to meet up with a man she hardly knows. Paris hadn't even been part of my travel plan..."

A delightful, fresh twist on the travel memoir, *Almost French* takes us on a tour that is fraught with culture clashes but rife with deadpan humor. Sarah Turnbull's stint in Paris was only supposed to last a week. Chance had brought Sarah and Frédéric together in Bucharest, and on impulse she decided to take him up on his offer to visit him in the world's most romantic city. Sacrificing Vegemite for vichyssoise, the feisty Sydney journalist does her best to fit in, although her conversation, her laugh, and even her wardrobe advertise her foreigner status. But as she navigates the highs and lows of this strange new world, from life in a bustling quartier and surviving Parisian dinner parties to covering the haute couture fashion shows and discovering the hard way the paradoxes of France today, little by little Sarah falls under its spell: maddening, mysterious, and charged with that French specialty--séduction.

An entertaining tale of being a fish out of water, *Almost French* is an enthralling read as Sarah Turnbull leads us on a magical tour of this seductive place-and culture-that has captured her heart



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## **Almost French: Love and a New Life in Paris By Sarah Turnbull Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A bestseller in Turnbull's native Australia, this cute firsthand look at the hardships of settling into a city infamously chilly to outsiders gives a glimpse of the true nature of Parisians and daily life in their gorgeous city. Though Turnbull tells readers less about love than new life, it was in falling for a Frenchman that the journalist found herself moving to Paris, for a few months that stretched into years. The cultural relationship is challenging enough, leaving aside the more intimate personal story (though readers do learn enough about Turnbull's now husband to understand her decision to stay), and she writes of finding work, making friends, surviving dinner parties and adapting to the rhythms and pace of life with a Parisian boyfriend with humor and a developing sense of wisdom. Of the struggle to adapt to her new home in the mid-1990s, the author writes, "I've discovered a million details that matter to me--details that define me as non-French" no matter how much she tries to assimilate, while over time she grows to appreciate some perplexing aspects of French culture, as "[e]veryday incidences elevate into moments of clarity simply because they would never, ever happen in your old home," from developing her confrontational side enough to defend herself (in French) from rude remarks to receiving advice from "a terribly chic blonde who advises me to use eye-makeup remover on Maddie's [Turnbull's dog's] leaky eyes." This is an engaging, endearing view of the people and places of France.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School--This account of a 20-plus Australian woman's adventures as she tried to adjust to Parisian ways is both insightful and funny. Having taken a year off from her job with a TV network, Turnbull moved to Paris to be with her new lover, Frederic. She found that the French weren't interested in making new friends; were unwilling to discuss their jobs, hobbies, or much of anything except the food they were eating, planning to eat, or had eaten; and they wished to socialize in mixed groups--no girls' night out for them. But Frederic, with patience and aplomb, helped her overcome these obstacles, depicted in a series of vignettes that sketch many of the fascinations and foibles of becoming "almost French." She detested visiting Frederic's family in northern France, with its rainy, cold beaches, but finally warmed to his home, and was accepted by them. The couple's marriage was almost an anticlimax after a hilarious birthday celebration for 80 at the old home. This clash of cultures is, ultimately, a love story.

*Molly Connally, Chantilly Regional Library, VA*

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From [Booklist](#)

Turnbull, an Australian journalist, made a life-changing decision at age 27, when she took a yearlong leave of absence to travel the world. While in Bulgaria, she met a Frenchman, whom she arranged to visit later in Paris. The visit went well (despite her doubts in the intervening months about the wisdom of her decision and her alarm at finding adult comic books upon arriving at his apartment)--so well that she moved in soon after and has been living in France ever since, ultimately marrying the man who on their first meeting described himself as "maniac." (She later understood that he meant "neat freak.") Turnbull's account of navigating another culture, learning a new language, and reinventing her professional self is a delight to read, filled with observational humor. We know she's truly integrated when she gets a small terrier (that she then spends obscene amounts of money taking to a chic dog-grooming salon) and is able to flip insults back in French to a rude customer in a patisserie. *Beth Leistensnider*

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

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Have you spare time for just a day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? That's why, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or even read a book allowed Almost French: Love and a New Life in Paris? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with their opinion or you have various other opinion?

#### **Vivian Nava:**

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#### **Lillian Thrasher:**

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