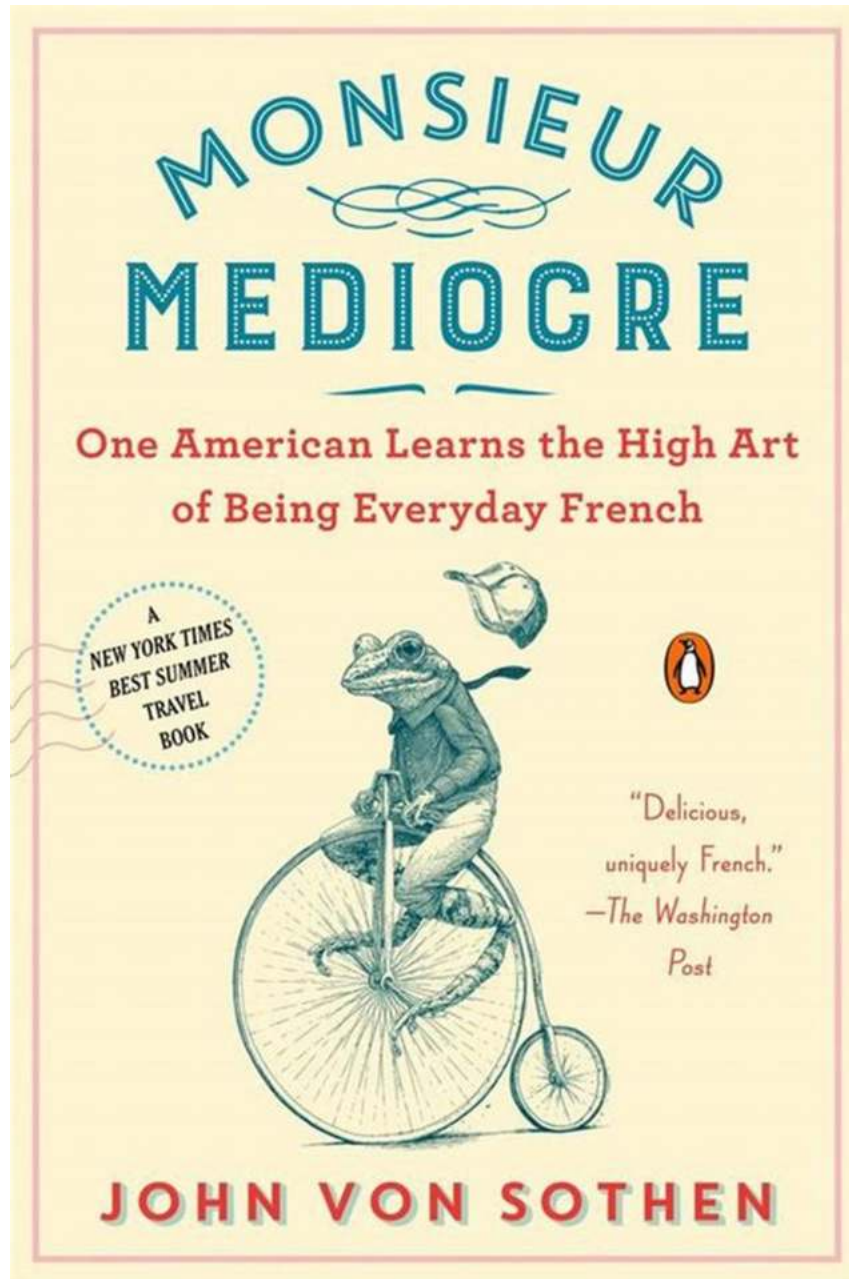
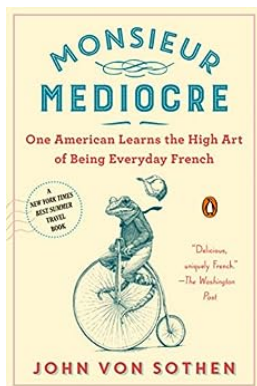


# One American Learns The High Art Of Being Everyday French



Living in a different country offers a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in a new culture, learn a new language, and adapt to a different way of life. This is exactly what I experienced when I decided to move from the bustling streets of New York City to the charming towns of France.

For an American like me, France has always had an air of sophistication and mystery. From the intricate art of French cooking to the refined fashion sense of Parisians, there is undoubtedly a certain allure that the French possess.



## Monsieur Mediocre: One American Learns the High Art of Being Everyday French

by John von Sothen (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1299 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 254 pages



But it wasn't just the allure that attracted me to France; it was also a desire to experience the everyday French lifestyle firsthand. I wanted to learn how to effortlessly sip on a cappuccino at a café, exchange pleasantries with locals at the farmer's market, and navigate the narrow cobblestone streets with ease. Essentially, I wanted to become an everyday French person.

### Facing the Language Barrier

One of the biggest challenges I encountered upon my arrival in France was the language barrier. While I had studied French in school, I soon realized that speaking a language fluently in a classroom setting and using it in real-life situations were two entirely different things.

However, instead of getting discouraged, I embraced this challenge as an opportunity to truly immerse myself in the language. I enrolled in a local language school, attended conversation meetups, and made a conscious effort to engage with locals in French whenever possible.

It was not an overnight transformation, but through consistent practice and perseverance, I gradually gained confidence in my ability to communicate in French. Whether it was ordering my favorite croissant at the bakery or striking up a conversation with a friendly stranger at a café, I found immense joy in finally being able to express myself in the language of my newfound home.

## **Embracing the Art of Everyday French**

Beyond the language, being everyday French also meant embracing the art of living in the present moment. I quickly learned that rushing from one place to another was not the norm in France. Instead, taking the time to savor a meal, engage in conversation, and appreciate the beauty of one's surroundings was considered essential.

This mindset was evident in all aspects of everyday French life, from the leisurely pace of a stroll through picturesque parks to the artful arrangement of fresh produce at local markets. The French have a remarkable ability to find joy in the simplest of moments and prioritize their well-being and quality of life.

Adapting to this mindset required a shift in my own perspective. I had to learn to slow down, appreciate the small pleasures in life, and let go of my American inclination to constantly be on the go. By adopting this more mindful approach, I not only experienced a greater sense of satisfaction and fulfillment, but I also formed deeper connections with the people around me.

## **Exploring the Rich Cultural Heritage**

Living in France also gave me the opportunity to explore its rich cultural heritage. From the magnificent architecture of Paris to the charming vineyards of Bordeaux, every corner of the country is steeped in history and artistic excellence.

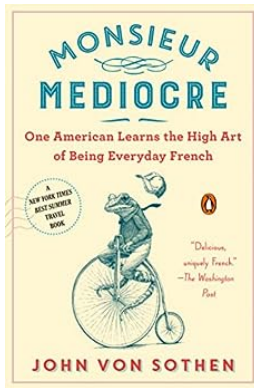
One of my favorite aspects of being everyday French was indulging in the vibrant arts scene. Whether it was attending a classical music concert at a historic theater or admiring the works of famous painters in world-renowned museums, I was constantly surrounded by beauty and creativity.

The French have a deep appreciation for the arts, and this passion is reflected in their museums, theaters, and public spaces. By immersing myself in this cultural tapestry, I not only gained a deeper understanding of French history and artistic movements but also developed a greater appreciation for the value of creativity and self-expression.

Living in France has been an incredibly enriching experience, allowing me to embrace the high art of being everyday French. From overcoming the language barrier to rediscovering the joy of simple pleasures, this journey has shaped me in ways I could have never imagined.

So, if you've ever dreamed of immersing yourself in a new culture and learning to appreciate the beauty of life's everyday moments, I encourage you to take the leap. Whether it's France, Italy, or any other destination that calls to you, the rewards of living abroad are countless.

Challenge yourself to learn a new language, embrace a different way of life, and discover the art of being everyday French. Who knows, you might just find yourself transformed by the experience, just like I did.



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A hilarious, candid account of what life in France is actually like, from a writer for Vanity Fair and GQ

Americans love to love Paris. We buy books about how the French parent, why French women don't get fat, and how to be Parisian wherever you are. While our work hours increase every year, we think longingly of the six weeks of vacation the French enjoy, imagining them at the seaside in stripes with plates of fruits de mer.

John von Sothen fell in love with Paris through the stories his mother told of her year spent there as a student. And then, after falling for and marrying a French waitress he met in New York, von Sothen moved to Paris. But fifteen years in, he's finally ready to admit his mother's Paris is mostly a fantasy. In this hilarious and delightful collection of essays, von Sothen walks us through real life in Paris--not only myth-busting our Parisian daydreams but also revealing the inimitable and too often invisible pleasures of family life abroad.

Relentlessly funny and full of incisive observations, Monsieur Mediocre is ultimately a love letter to France--to its absurdities, its history, its ideals--but it's a very French love letter: frank, smoky, unsentimental. It is a clear-eyed ode to a beautiful, complex, contradictory country from someone who both eagerly and grudgingly calls it home.



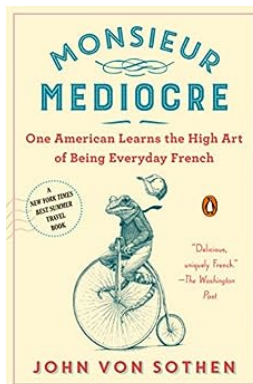
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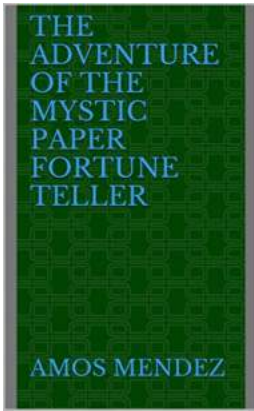
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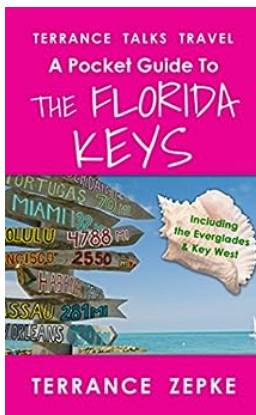
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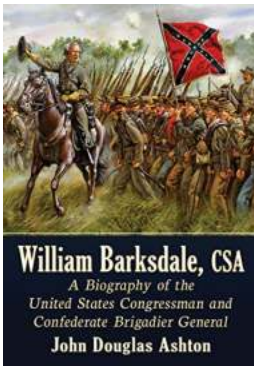
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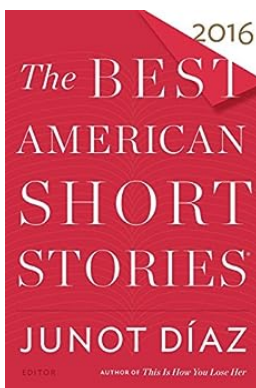
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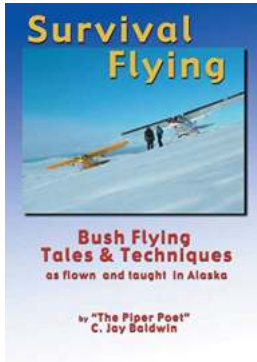
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