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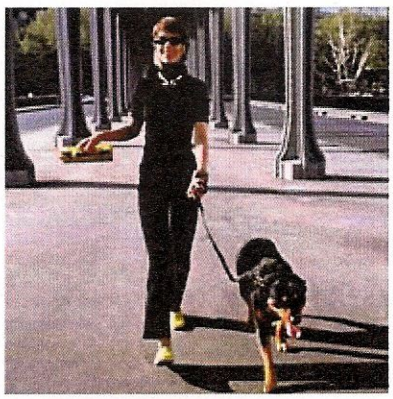
La Parisienne—How *Does* She Do It?

by Sarah Colton



She's got it right and she knows it: The tilt of her head, the shrug of her shoulders, the fit of her jacket, the sway of her hip. Don't be fooled by her nonchalance. You're looking at a highly trained and disciplined practitioner of the most ancient and venerated of Parisian art forms: feminine guerilla war games. She gives nothing away and takes no prisoners. The spoils? Turf, power and, most importantly, her own amusement. She will have the last laugh.

Schooled from birth at her mother's knee, *La Parisienne* is armed with numerous tricks, honest and otherwise. Here are her top 10 secrets.

1. Body tone: More than a workout, a *work over*. Time spent in spas or on cures are integral to her rigorous schedule.
2. Body trim: A strict diet of the finest food and wine on the face of the earth, and absolutely nothing between meals! (Gallic bone structure and a high-strung Parisienne metabolism help.)
3. An excellent haircut: De rigueur, for as she well knows, "Even when you are nude, you are wearing your hair." Every Parisienne has her favorite coiffeur to whom she has been entrusting her hair for years.
4. The right style: She'll pay the price—full if necessary—for design, color and cut. Adept at bargaining, she would never, however, purchase something "almost" right, at any price.
5. Perfect fit: She has a seamstress (maybe her mother), for alterations. She takes excellent care of what she has, and is not above hand washing and precision ironing.
6. Less is more: La Parisienne has hardly any clothes at all compared to her Yankee cousin. But because they are exactly right, she wears them with esprit again and again. (The American thing about not wearing the same outfit twice in the same week is unheard of in France.)
7. Adornment: La Parisienne considers herself naked without perfume, makeup and a manicure—judiciously applied, for highlighting and camouflaging her game at will.

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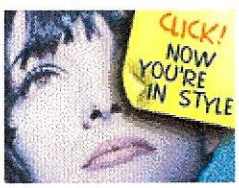
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