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Hotel les Pleiades, Barbizon - Luxury spa hotel in historic artists' village near Paris

 recommended by [Gillian Thornton](#)



Hôtel les Pleiades, Barbizon

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Once a woodcutters' hamlet on the western fringes of the vast Fontainebleau Forest, Barbizon is synonymous with a school of mid-19th century artists who stayed here whilst painting landscapes in the open air. Today the village is popular both with art fans and those seeking a rural break within easy reach of both the French and English capitals.

From Paris, just catch the train to Fontainebleau station, a 10-minute taxi ride away. From London, take Eurostar's Disney Express service to Marne-la-Vallée or travel to Lille, and then pick up the TGV to Disney. Barbizon is barely an hour's drive from the gates of the Magic Kingdom.

The Hôtel Les Pleiades occupies a historic building right in the heart of Barbizon village on the Grande Rue, with ample private parking accessed from the road behind the hotel. Once home to artist Charles-François Daubigny, it has seen painters such as Corot, Millet and Rousseau pass through its doors, as well as Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson.

Major refit

Closed for many months for major renovations, the Pleiades reopened in July 2009, offering 20 stylish rooms and suites that are minimalist in design but which offer maximum comfort and tranquillity. Prices until June 2010 start at €190 for a standard room, rising to €650 for the penthouse suite.

Decorated in natural colours with highlights in russet red, my suite included a spacious double room, large bathroom with separate shower, and comfortable sitting room with balcony overlooking the hotel's rear garden and outdoor pool. Toiletries were by Molton Brown and extra comfort factors included well-stocked sweet jar, complimentary water, and savoury bread squares.

Spring 2010 saw the opening of the hotel's new fitness room, spa treatment rooms, and indoor pool. There's a chic modern bar with deep black and white sofas where you can enjoy live jazz on Thursday evenings and a spacious terrace at the front of the hotel for al fresco dining in summer.

Super service

Chose from the main restaurant where chef Philippe Geneletti has been awarded a Michelin star for his inventive cuisine (around €90 a head inc wine), or the Atelier brasserie and tea room - once Daubigny's house - for



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 Les Pléiades

rates: 250 € - 650 €, class: ★★★★★

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historic and quaint Marais district. [...]

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more traditional fare (around €39 inc wine). Sadly, both were closed during my off-season Sunday-night stay - a great excuse to go back for a second visit. Live jazz is also being introduced some weekend lunchtimes in the brasserie.

Service is friendly and attentive without going over the top and Director General Olivier Robinet clearly intends to use his years of international top-level experience to make Les Pleiades into the ultimate pampering destination.

A popular eating place for Parisians at weekends, the Pleiades makes a great stopover hotel as well as a luxury short break destination in its own right, close to the chateaux of Fontainebleau and Vaux-le-Vicomte as well as the pretty villages along the Seine and Loing. But bear in mind that Parisians leave the city like lemmings in the big summer break and the hotel is therefore closed for the first two weeks of August.

[Grande Rue 21, Barbizon, France](#)

Cost standard double room: £££

Services spa, parking, hotel restaurant, hotel bar, room service, business services, internet access

Average customer rating

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