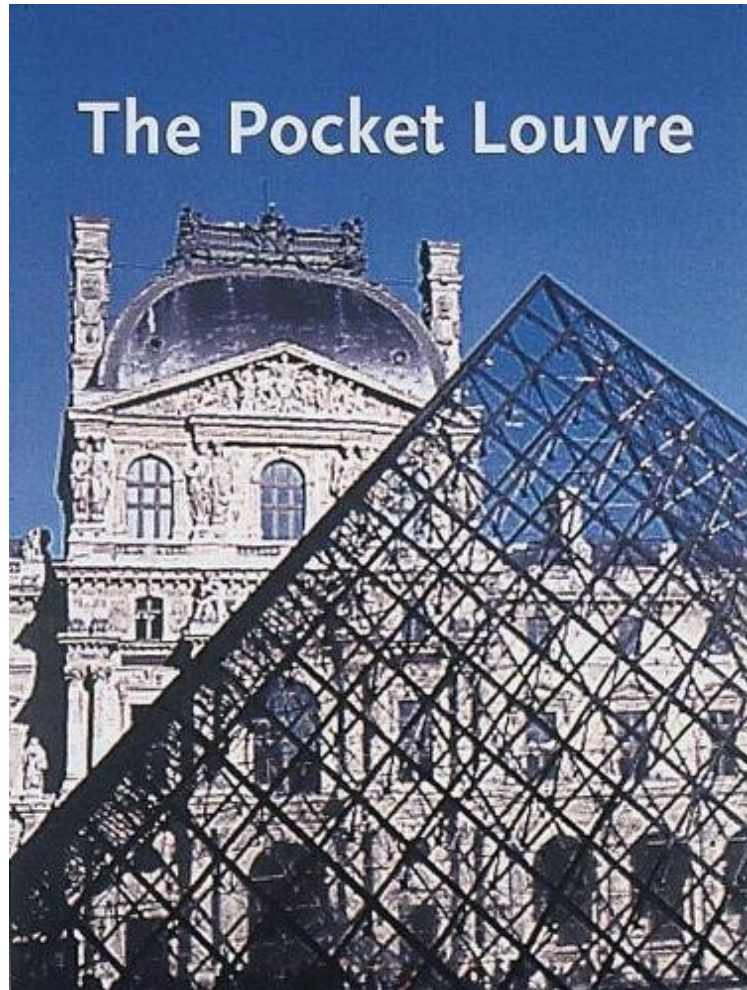


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The Pocket Louvre

Claude Mignot

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Claude Mignot : The Pocket Louvre before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Pocket Louvre:

31 of 31 people found the following review helpful. Visiting the Louvre? This One May Help...By RayThe Pocket Louvre is a professionally rendered small-format paperback with two goals: first, to present a set of full-color reproductions of many of the Louvre's most famous works, and second, to assist the viewer in organizing trips to the Louvre in order to see these works in person. The book does a good job of meeting both goals. Whether you are planning on visiting the Louvre or just want a chance to see reprints of some of the more famous works held therein, you'll likely find what you need here. The Louvre is a mega-museum so immense in size that it makes some of the world's other museums look like booths at an indoor mall. The building complex is so vast, and the museum's holdings so extensive, that it would easily require multiple return visits over some period of time to even begin to see any

significant amount of it in any detail. The buildings themselves which house the Louvre have been added to and reworked over some 500 years, and so any visitor to the gallery (there were over eight million of them in 2006 alone) will be met with sprawling galleries, staircases large enough to hold small homes, interconnecting passages, an underground complex, central eating and shopping areas, and more. It can make the unprepared feel faint of heart and can be overwhelming even if one has visited more than once in the past. The Pocket Louvre helps the visitor navigate through this vast setting by breaking the complex into manageable sections by art genre, and then provides written descriptions of the path to take to see the principal works for each. In addition, the book gives us alternatives: do we want a short, or a long, trip? For each, we are provided directions, suggestions, and even some small-scale maps to help us both plan and execute our trip. The photos in *The Pocket Louvre* are first-rate. Images are crisp, clear, with good color reproduction, and because the entire text is on semi-gloss paper, possess excellent overall quality. Because the book itself is small enough to be carried to the Louvre itself, it also means, however, that the photos are small, as well. You'll be able to get a very nice review of the art in the Louvre by reviewing the text, but don't think you are getting a coffee table-sized art book. Nevertheless, the photos are reproduced well enough to enjoy using the book as a virtual tour through the museum, and the descriptions of each, though minimal, are informative enough to help us understand what we are looking at. A true bargain at its price, and a useful aid for a Louvre visit, the book should be in the library of every art lover, art historian, or past or future Louvre visitor.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not really for your pocket
By greensleeves
I wish I had understood that this is a lovely little coffee table book, but it is two inches thick and very heavy. There is no pocket in the world that this will fit into. I was looking for something small that would give a map of the museum and some information about the content of and highlights of each of the permanent collections. It was inexpensive, so I will not bother returning it, but it is not useful as a guide book.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A Necessity for a true art lover
By Jonna Hayden Robinson
I ordered this book because it is impossible to know about all the masterpieces at the Louvre. While it is short on description, it is very accurate as to the locations of the paintings. I could not take the book with me, but I noted the room numbers. It saved so much time. I was able to walk by entire rooms until I found the correct art work. The only painting that I found out of order was Goya's "The Marquesa de la Solana" which is not on the first floor with the rest of Goya's works. I discovered it by accident on the second floor in a room full of portrait treasures. The museum guards at the Louvre are not very knowledgeable....they told me the work was under restoration (their standard answer). This book is very valuable for the true art lover who wants to see more than the Grande Gallerie and the Mona Lisa.

**Note: I was at the museum at the end of June 2011. Leonardo da Vinci's "Virgin and Child with Saint Anne" is not on display. When I asked a guard, he referred me to the "The Virgin of the Rocks"I had to explain to him that they were two different paintings. So, I would hesitate to trust any responses from the guards at the Louvre.

Encyclopedic in its scope and exhausting in its magnitude, the Louvre has vast collections ranging from the 6th century B.C. to the mid-19th century. Its impressive architecture goes back 800 years, to its origins as a fortress guarding medieval Paris. In its contemporary incarnation, recently reconfigured and rebaptized "The Grand Louvre," it spreads over four levels and boasts more than 30,000 works of art; its galleries, shops, and offices occupy some 1.6 million square feet, of which some 645,000 are dedicated to exhibitions. Such daunting dimensions can make the museum feel like an endless labyrinth to uninitiated visitors. For them, *The Pocket Louvre* is a unique and essential resource, including: -A handy user's guide with information about access to the museum and its many services, from cafes to a post office to shops.-Suggested itineraries for visits of varying lengths and for visitors with differing interests.-A history of the Louvre and its architecture.-A history of the collections.-An illustrated catalog of 500 masterpieces, all in color, with useful brief commentaries.

About the Author Claude Mignot is a professor of art history at the University of Tours, specializing in the history of Parisian art and architecture from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.