

Title:

What is the oldest bar in Paris?

Word Count:

1061

Summary:

French people love drinking and eating out. Paris overflows with bars, wine bars, cafés, bistros

Keywords:

Paris hotels, Eiffel Tower, Paris France, Paris metro map

Article Body:

Let's begin by wandering down rue Mazarine from the Odéon square. Bingo? We almost immediately

It opened in 1686, mainly to offer coffee. This beverage's fashion had been recently imported

Voltaire and... God

The Café Procope was an early favorite rendez-vous of actors from the Comédie Française - the  
Voltaire recounts that one day, he and a host of like-minded philosophers wanted to discuss a  
At a nearby table sat a gentleman who had time to read his newspaper several times over. Then,

There is a problem with the Le Procope's claim, however. The owner, Mr. Procope, born in Pale

But then there are other candidates.

Treasures of Paris islands

Another site to visit is Ile St-Louis, an island on the river Seine, which was built basically

Our first find is Les Anisetiers du Roy (The King's aniseed liqueur makers), a restaurant local

Both are indeed Procope contemporaries, and have been serving eats and drinks since they were

A thought nags the tavern researcher, however: none before the 17th century??? Impossible!!

Fifteenth century poet François Villon did indeed dedicate *^tout aux tavernes et aux filles~* (

A famous tavern of the time was the Pomme de Pin (Pinecone), on Ile de la Cité (the second isl

Remnants of the 19th Century

Hmm... Ancient Ile de la Cité looks a good place for more fieldwork.

Systematic research reveals that today's taverns around Notre Dame all date from the 19th cent

Ah, but wait. Let's take a look down an authentically quaint sidestreet on Ile de la Cité, rue

We come at No. 4 upon the Réserve de Quasimodo, a wineshop-cum-eatery located in the old build

The Réserve de Quasimodo pretty much ignores (although not scorning) the tourist hordes around  
Prior to that, in 1950, it was bought by Austro-American illustrator Ludwig Bemelmens, best kn

A photo from 1869 proves the place was then a wine-bar and wineshop.

## A Foiled Suicide

Skipping back a century-and-a-half from then, right around 1719, we come to a legend about Cartouche.

The legend: Cartouche and gang were ^working~ the popular and crowded Pont-Neuf bridge one day. ^Hang on, there, Sir,~ Cartouche is said to have shouted, pulling the fellow back down from a ledge. The ^gentleman bandit~ invited said creditors to the St Nicholas Tavern at No. 4 rue de la Colonne. More libations ensued among the creditors, only too pleased to celebrate their unexpected win.

And The Winner Is....

The St. Nicholas Tavern itself pre-dates Le Procope by a wide margin.

The tavern got its name from the patron saint to whom local clergymen had erected a statue in the courtyard.

The statue of St. Nicholas was torn down in 1792 during the French revolution. It used to be a landmark.

The tavern itself is attested here in... 1240.

We got our winner.

(article written in collaboration with Arthur Gillette)

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