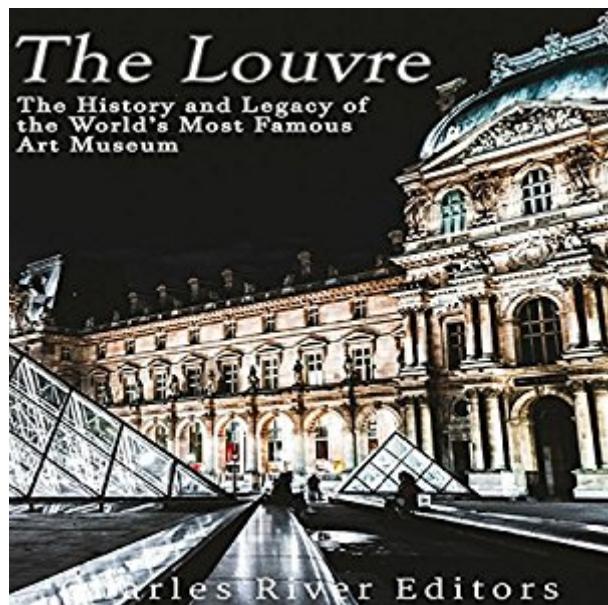


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# The Louvre: The History And Legacy Of The World's Most Famous Art Museum



## Synopsis

The Louvre. The very name conjures up scenes of art and elegance, and of long halls filled with beauty and people strolling through them whispering quietly among themselves about the glories they are witnessing. Even those who have never been to the Louvre know some of its most prized possessions, from ancient statues to Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa. As the world's largest museum, the Louvre is unquestionably the cultural highpoint of Paris, a city that has long been considered the cultural center of Europe. However, life is rarely as simple as one imagines, and the life of the Louvre is no different. While just about everyone is familiar with its history as an art museum, the Louvre's history goes back over 800 years, and it used to have far different purposes, both as a medieval fortress and a palatial residence for French kings. The Louvre bore witness to mass murder during the French Revolution, and there have been countless accusations of theft and other questionable actions since its opening. Furthermore, the museum is also a classic example of beating one's swords into ploughshares, for it has been largely stocked through the conquests of war. Its first collection was put on display by a king who wanted to share his personal art collection with his subjects. Following the French Revolution, the Louvre became a place of ascetic refuge, where those burdened by daily life could go, often at no cost, and visit some of the most beautiful pieces of art in the world. While the power-hungry Napoleon made war across the continent, he was also always on the lookout for beautiful and interesting items to send home to his people. Later, when rioters attempted to burn the building down, the museum portion of the palace survived, almost by miracle, and when the Nazis occupied Paris, they found that most of the items of value had been safely sent away. Ironically, when World War II was over, the museum became a safe house for items stolen by the Germans from around the world, and a conduit to get the pieces back to their rightful owners. Even now, in the 21st century, the museum is serving as a bridge to peace and understanding; its latest gallery was designed to showcase Islamic art in the hope of bringing together people from different cultures. This is, to say the least, quite a change of pace for a fortress originally intended to fight off invaders.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 1 hour and 33 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Charles River Editors

Audible.com Release Date: February 20, 2017

## Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B06VWQ7FGM

Best Sellers Rank: #138 in [Books](#) > Audible Audiobooks > Arts & Entertainment > Art #702 in [Books](#) > Audible Audiobooks > History > Europe #1440 in [Books](#) > History > Europe > France

## Customer Reviews

Doesn't mention the Azara Herm (oldest known bust of Alexander The Great), but does cover the architectural evolution of Le Louvre! This book is recommended to anyone interested in the otherwise obscure history of France's largest museum.

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