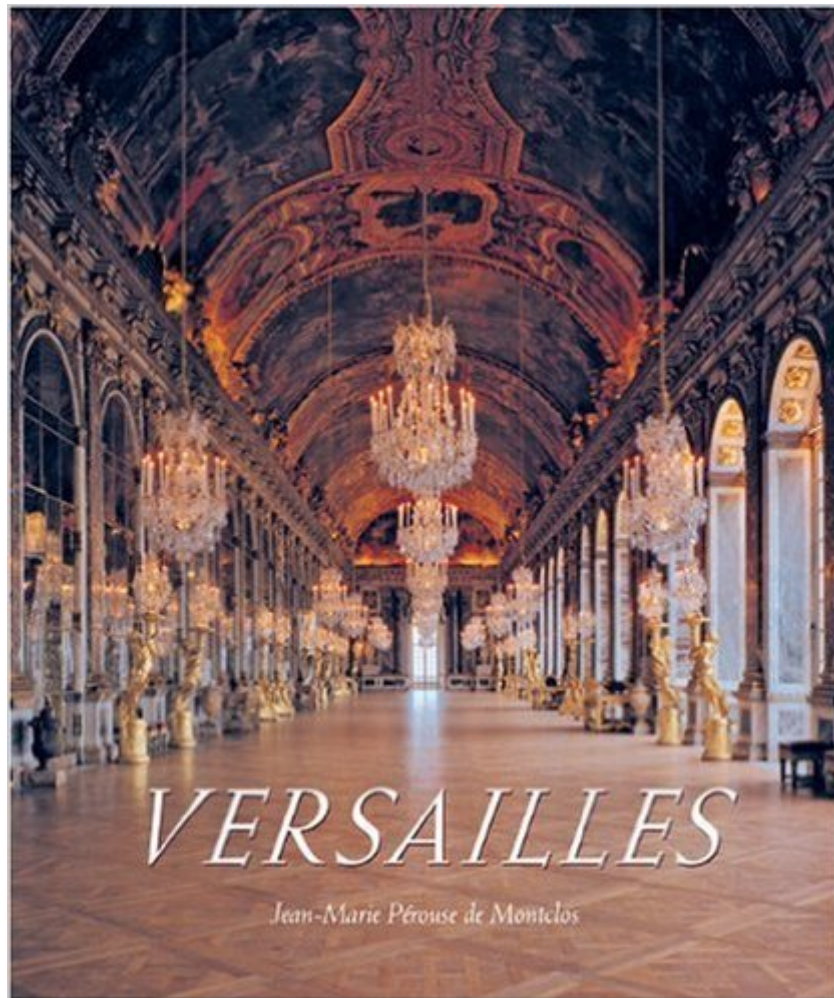


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# Versailles



## Synopsis

In this opulently illustrated volume, the eminent French architectural historian Jean-Marie Proust traces the transformation of Louis XIII's modest hunting lodge into the fabulous chateau we know today as the extravagant height of the French monarchy. Robert Polidori's sublime photographs show Versailles' architecture, interiors, and gardens, from sweeping aerial views, to grandiose views of the elaborately decorated palace ceilings, to intimate photographs of the paintings and sculptures that grace the walls and gardens. The exquisite artistry of each carefully considered decorative detail reveals Versailles in all its magnificence. The photographs show all the beauty and ornate decoration of Versailles, in every season and from every possible perspective. Polidori presents quiet, warmly-lit landscapes of the gardens and pools, dramatic visions of the colonnades, and expansive views of the vast, airy, luxurious salons. The text is a scholarly study of the history of the evolving aesthetic of this remarkable palace, attesting not only to its importance as the ultimate expression of European absolutism but also to its significance as an experimental design workshop that was to become widely influential.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is THE BEST book there is on Versailles (which is probably why its normally a hundred bucks!) There is only one problem I have ever had with the book and that is the poor physical quality. I had to order it twice because my first copy fell completely apart within a few weeks. Needless to say I was not happy at all when that happened. Every copy that I have seen (in libraries, other bookstores) has the same problem. Normally, I would not have tried again after that, but I HAD to

have this book. My second one has also begun to separate from the binding, so I rarely read it... but when I do, I use **\*\*EXTREME\*\*** care. I think the main reason for this is the size and weight of the book, so if you decide to purchase it, keep that in mind. I recommend turning the pages *\*slowly\** and not leaving it completely flat and/or open for any long period of time. Also, store it horizontally, NOT vertically... the pages are so heavy, they will end up tearing themselves out!

I knew when I first visited Versailles in 1986, that I did not see everything. When I found this book I was floored! It answered all my questions about the social life of Versailles, and gave me a thorough foundation on the history of the French Court. As a lover of historic architecture and garden design, I can honestly say that this book is a DREAM!!! French Architectural historian Perouse de Montclos brilliantly traces the history of Versailles from hunting lodge to this incredible architectural masterpiece. The photographs are fabulous, the text first rate. My favorite section was the one devoted to the extensive grounds and fountains. If you are a collector of "coffee table" books on architecture, add this one to your collection!!

What an amazing book, it is nothing short of spectacular. The pictures are vivid and the book quality is of the highest caliber. The other reviewer was correct in noting that the reader has to be careful with this book, the pages are so heavy that it will pull from the binding if you are not careful when positioning the book. I have always had a fascination with Versailles and this book really captures the chateaux, it makes you feel like you are strolling the gardens and taking in the sumptuous wonders of the palace. Unlike other books on Versailles this one is complete, it covers everything and in striking detail. I urge anyone with any interest in Versailles to buy this book, even used at 200 U.S., it is a bargain. I assure you you will not be disappointed in this book.

There is a very significant difference between the two books titled Versailles both by Jean-Marie P<sup>er</sup>ouse de Montclos and Robert Polidori, of the same size (except thickness), and in almost identical dust jackets. The one by Abbeville Press with ISBN 1558592288 has 424 pages, and the other by Artabras with ISBN 0896600521 has only 160 pages.

I received this book as a present, too add to my building library on books on European monarchy's and this book has quickly become one of my favorites. It is massive and I would recommend setting it on a flat surface, coffee or end table would be best I think. It is filled with photos of random nooks and crannies within Versailles and of course photos and things we are all familiar with, like the Petit

Trianon and all the beautiful fountains or gardens. It also includes a few photos that I find almost haunting or eerie, pathways engulfed in fog you almost expect someone to appear in it. I think this book would be great for any one who loves beautiful photographs or enjoys all things French.

I highly recommend this book. I visited the Palace of Versailles in July 2008 and, although this book was originally published in 1997 and the pictures are dated compared to today's Palace, the book covers more sections of the Palace than the actual tours do. There are no people in the photos, whereas the tours are crowded and often two or more tours are going on each room as you walk through the Palace, so the book allows you to study the rooms more carefully and in more detail than while you're there among the crowds. The colour photos are amazing and actually show more furniture than are in some of the rooms today.

I will not repeat what many other members very eloquently wrote about this treasure. I am just here to confirm all they say is true. This is perhaps the greatest Versailles book there is. The photos are huge and very vivid. You do not just see some soulless catalog images: you see a true achievement in interior and landscape photography. The colors and the mood, which every single frame here displays, are nothing short of magnificent. It truly captures the unique and ever-lasting magic of Versailles. It is huge and heavy, and I, too, store it flat. I feel like it is a very prized book of my collection, and I treat it with the utmost respect that it rightfully deserves. Just like how the authors and the team behind this masterpiece have treated this greatest palace of all times, I too fully cherish its beauty and magnificence.

Without a doubt, the most beautiful and informative book ever on the Palace of Versailles.

Architectural history, decorative wonders, sumptuous furniture, this book explores it all! THE BOOK for all lovers of Versailles or eighteenth century French art.

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