

Bonjour Paris - Q&A With Elisa Kitson, Founder of The KitSon

By [BP Editor](#)

The KitSon is a Paris-based forum where leading CEOs, politicians, scientists, and journalists meet to share their views “off the record.”

What New Year’s Resolution have you made for 2008?

To lay the foundations for a second intelligentsia club in another European capital.

What book are you currently reading?

[La Guerre ne fait que commencer](#) by Alain Bauer and Xavier Raufer.

What is your favorite sport or hobby?

Karate.

Who is your favorite historical figure?

Margaret Thatcher.

Who is your favorite living person?

My daughter.

If you could choose another profession, what would it be?

I wouldn’t choose another profession.

What do you think is the worst bad habit to have at work?

Procrastination.

What quality or qualities do you most value in your business associates?

Determination and perseverance.

Is there anything you’d like to improve about your own work practices?

Learning how to turn off the computer.

As someone at the top of your profession, what keeps you inspired or makes you hit the ground running in the morning?

My debates are highly successful. They are the “talk of Paris.”

What do you consider has been your greatest achievement in business?

Bringing together under the same roof CEOs, top diplomats, scientists, and journalists from



different countries while keeping our shared information “off the record” and at the same time bonding cultures.

What advice or useful tip would you give to someone who is just starting out in business?

I started a business in France, a country in which it is very hard to “tick all the boxes” because invariably the boxes don’t exist. It feels at first as though everything is against you. The social charges and taxation are off-putting to say the least! You may want to give up, but with determination, perseverance, and hard work, one can actually beat the system.

What is your favourite tourist secret ?

To have lunch at the "Le Marche des Enfants Rouges". With its iron-gate entrance it's easy to miss. The name literally means "Market of the Red Children". It is the oldest food market in Paris, built in 1615 under the rule of King Louis XIII. The market, in the Marais district, sells freshly prepared food that you can eat right there on small tables with plastic tablecloths.

What is your favourite restaurant for a "tête à tête"?

Without a doubt, I would say "1728", 6 rue d'Anjou, 75008 Paris. The atmosphere is special from the start in a romantic setting of a great apartment of the late 17th Century. The cuisine is a mixture of traditional French dishes with an Asian influence.

Where do you go to find that unique little Parisien gift?

I love to visit The Passage Choiseul in the rue des Petits-Champs in the 2nd area. It is nothing fancy, just a bazaar of shops and gift boutiques that has been unchanged since it was created in 1827.

As far as the Eiffel Tower is concerned, for me it's synonymous of "home"!

About Elisa Kitson

Elisa Kitson created The KitSon, the unique “bonding cultures” debate club in Paris where leading CEOs, politicians, scientists, and journalists meet to share their views “off the record.” With high-quality guest speakers, the objective of these debates is to create a global network in which journalists, writers, philosophers, business executives, and politicians can debate matters of current concern with their international counterparts, while at the same time creating an opportunity for dialogue on a wide range of topics that will both enrich and inform. For information on upcoming debates go to <http://www.thekitson.com/>.

As a journalist, Elisa began her career in the international press at The Daily Telegraph in Paris in 1989, followed by stints at The Financial Times, The Independent, and Monitor Radio. She was communications advisor to Dow Jones Newswires and to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and she actively participated in the launch of the Sustainable Development Institute in Paris. For the past eighteen years she has been the communications officer for the Anglo-American Press Association in Paris.

Elisa Kitson is Anglo-Swedish and speaks fluent French, English, and Italian. She has lived in Paris since 1980.

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