

Intag 497a

France

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Day 1

Trying to stay awake!



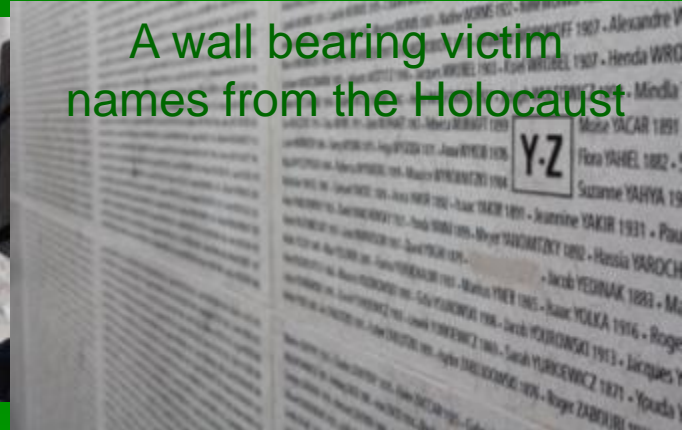
We headed up through the latin quarter to find something to eat. Near Notre Dame they were having a festival celebrating French artisans. I found the French version of dairy promotion. Being a former Dairy Princess, I was very thrilled!



Day 2

A little over ambitious...

A wall bearing victim names from the Holocaust



We were trying to take see as much of Paris as possible in the two weeks we were there together. We began with the Pompidou and followed that up with the Memorial de la Shoah (French version of the Holocaust Museum). We cut back over The Seine and stopped for some famous sorbet. I enjoyed a wild strawberry and pear concoction that tasted exactly like real fruit. Afterward we stepped on Point Zero outside Notre Dame which legend says will bring us back to Paris some day!



Day 3

Classes begin

A few of us visited Luxembourg Garden between class and dinner. It was beautifully landscaped.



Dinner with the whole group at Le Bec Rouge. My meal consisted of an octopus appetizer (never again) and fish entrée (absolutely delicious).

My view of the class



Andy, me, Kayla, and Olivia

Day 4

Just another day in Paris!



The day began by getting lost on our way from the dorms to the open air market. It was worth it! The sights, smells, colors, and sounds overwhelmed our senses. While many purchased fresh crepes for breakfast, I had a little jar of *fraise* yogurt!



A common sight along the streets of Paris.



After class, a few of us walked the length of the Champs-Elysee. The stores were all too expensive to even walk into so we just kept walking. The Arc de Triomphe was huge! A cold rain started cutting our evening short.

Day 5 Twist my arm and make me sample Champagne all day...



The Champagne region was a delight! The first stop was a wine high school (Crezancy) where students in an english class gave us a tour to earn extra credit points. Next stop was the Maison de la Champagne where we learned about the rules governing the process and industry. The countryside was painted the bright yellow of canola as we made our way to the last stop: Champagne Vazart Coquart. Our Host graciously answered questions about his business.



Day 6

Musee de Orsay



The Musee de Orsay was my favorite museum to tour in Paris. The atmosphere of the old train station created a genuine antique feeling that brought out the age and importance of the paintings.

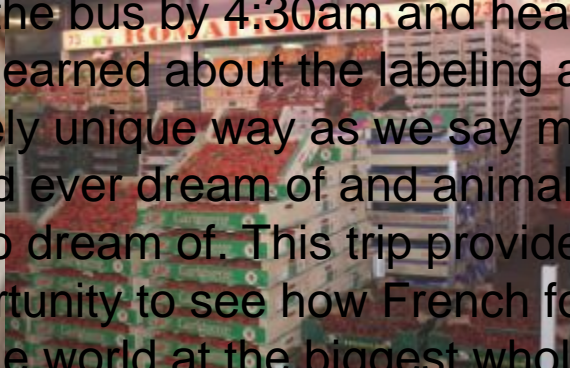
The paintings were arranged in a way that each one could be enjoyed without being overshadowed by others of its genre or subject.

Our tour guide was a unique person that brought up some interesting points about the artwork and had the group laughing.

Day 7

Food, Food, and more Food

Rungis is a wholesale market outside of Paris that covers more land than the Monaco (French Province). We were on the bus by 4:30am and headed to the fish market. We learned about the labeling and food chain in a completely unique way as we saw more cheese than we could ever dream of and animal parts that we never hope to dream of. This trip provided a once in a lifetime opportunity to see how French food moves throughout the world at the biggest wholesale market in France. And the day was just beginning...

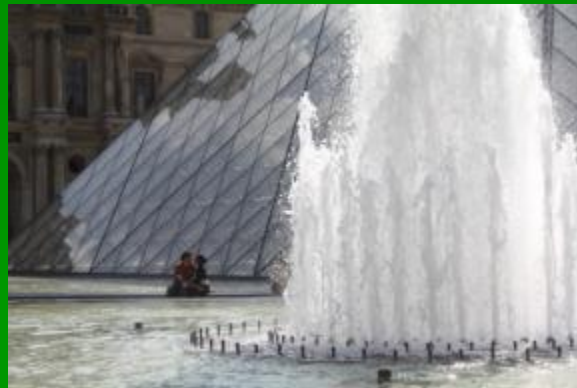


Day 7

Organic Food and finally the Louvre




The Organic farm was located on the south side of Paris and sold a tremendous amount of products that made many of us consider changing our vocation. The host didn't speak much English but that's okay because we didn't speak much French. We went to the Louvre after our return to the city and spent several hours enjoying the rare paintings. Afterwards, several of us had dinner at what became my favorite restaurant in Paris. No frog legs or snails for me!



Day 8

Simply Wonderful



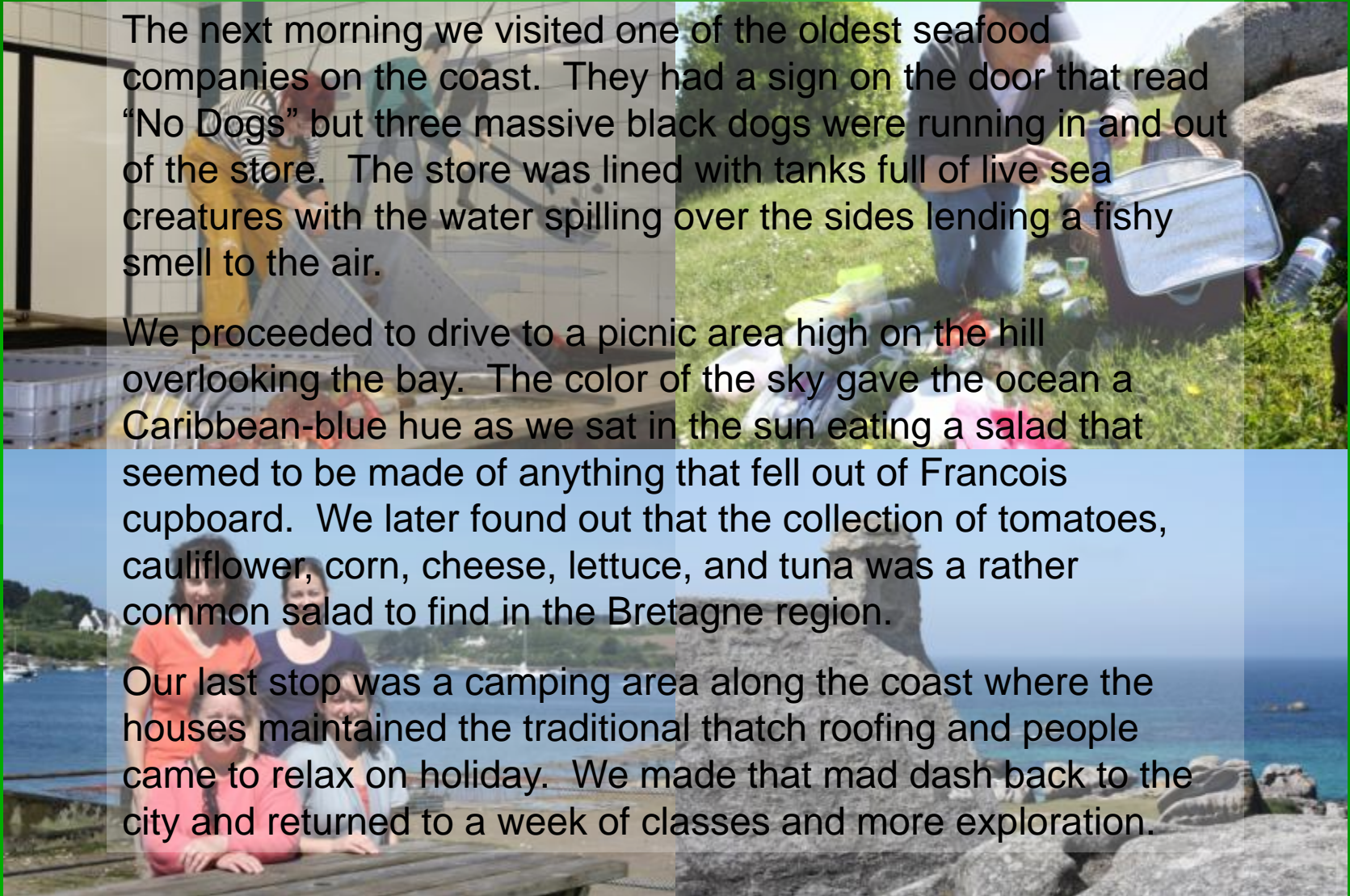
There is no way I can fit everything I want to say about my weekend in Bretagne into this page. Audrey, one of the ladies on the trip, arranged the weekend and her contact gave us the world's quickest tour of Bretagne. Audrey had employed the dairy farmer at her farm when he was in school. We learned that he was one of the dairy farmers that went on strike last year and dumped his milk on his fields in protest of the low milk prices.

Our second stop was a sheep farm. The experience of milking a sheep in France was one I'll never forget. I cultivated quite the taste for sheep cheese since that weekend.

We visited with our guide, Francois, and his wife before heading out to dinner. His wife spoke very little English somehow we managed to have a conversation about politics, healthcare, and taxes in our respective countries!

Day 9

On the coast then back to reality

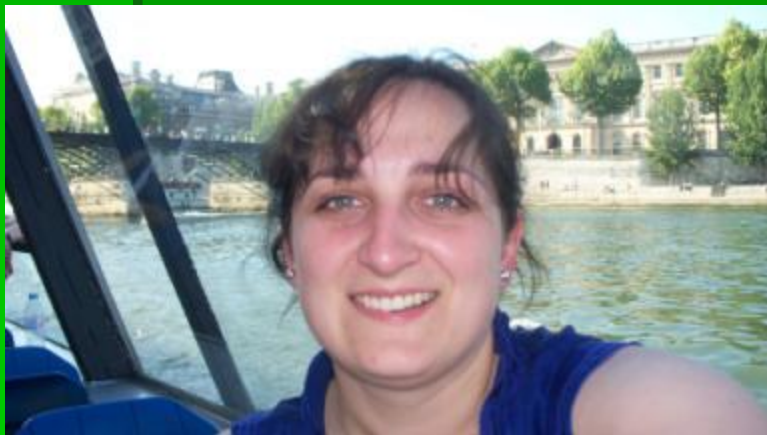


The next morning we visited one of the oldest seafood companies on the coast. They had a sign on the door that read “No Dogs” but three massive black dogs were running in and out of the store. The store was lined with tanks full of live sea creatures with the water spilling over the sides lending a fishy smell to the air.

We proceeded to drive to a picnic area high on the hill overlooking the bay. The color of the sky gave the ocean a Caribbean-blue hue as we sat in the sun eating a salad that seemed to be made of anything that fell out of Francois cupboard. We later found out that the collection of tomatoes, cauliflower, corn, cheese, lettuce, and tuna was a rather common salad to find in the Bretagne region.

Our last stop was a camping area along the coast where the houses maintained the traditional thatch roofing and people came to relax on holiday. We made that mad dash back to the city and returned to a week of classes and more exploration.

Day 10 The Gallery of Evolution and walking tour of Paris



Monday was Pentecost in France so we had the day off from classes. After enjoying a breakfast of sweet mint tea and honeyed treats at the Paris Mosque, we walked across the street to the Gallery of Evolution (note the Dodo bird in the upper right hand corner). The displays were all in French so that wasn't as interesting as it could have been. We went on a walking tour with Vincent, program coordinator, as our guide. The temperature was boiling hot but we saw the city! The day ended with boat ride on The Seine.

Day 11

There's always something



Back to classes but to make it fun we broke into groups for lunch and headed to the grocery store. Each group was assigned to bring back a different part of the meal, for example bread or vegetables. After class we enjoyed a cheese tasting party with a variety of types of cheeses from goat to cow and sharp to mild.

Day 12

Through the back gate of Versailles



A trip to Paris wouldn't be complete without visiting Versailles. And an agricultural trip wouldn't be complete without learning about some research being done in the field. We visited INRA and then plodded through the rain to the King's Garden for an informational tour. After, I roamed around the opulent gold-plated castle of Versailles in awe of the splendor.



Day 13

Be still, my heart

We had class again on Thursday but as soon as we could escape we headed for the Montmartre neighborhood. We headed straight up the hill to the Sacred Heart *Basilique*. I prefer this church over Notre Dame because it is less commercialized (no pictures allowed inside). Another stop was Place du Tertre known for its enterprising artists whose numbers have dwindled from past years. As we headed back, we watched a rain storm sweeping towards us from across the city.



Day 14

Bittersweet

After a day of presentations and the experience of accidentally purchasing a 12 Euro box of strawberries from a street vendor, we had one last tour: a section of the AgroParis Tech Library with very old books and first editions. Afterward, we enjoyed a rooftop social with several guest speakers and all classmates.



Day 15

Finally



My roommate and I finally decided to head out on our own with another girl, Nicole. First stop, Sainte Chappelle! I heard the stained glass was amazing but the sunshine wasn't cooperating and the jewels and detail on the walls caught my attention more.



Day 16

Anything else?



With the majority of the group heading home the next day, we spent Sunday trying to fit in anything we hadn't done yet. After visiting the French Statue of Liberty and my first short visit to the Eiffel Tower, we headed to the "French Franklin Institute" to learn about food and health.



Day 17-18

All by myself (nearly)



Nicole and I spent Monday looking for bakeries to expand our food experience. I was busy enjoying the graffiti!



On my last day I spent a few hours at the Military Museum and the Tomb of Napoleon. The French have a very interesting view on WWII.

