

Post



Scott Farnsworth

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Home (Baleyssague) & the Jardins de Sardi - May 20, 2022

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[Photos](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

Today we've promised ourselves not to drive too far. We want a break from the past few days and tomorrow we drive five plus hours to Avignon. We need to be in good shape.

Over coffee we see that we have a voicemail message from Pascal, our host. The audio transcription says something about the pullman coming today. We eventually figure out he's saying 'pool man'. We continue our relaxing and eventually the pool (young) man does show up. The girls hustle out to take care of him. We guys can't see him, since we're sitting inside, so we ask the girls if he's a hunk. Apparently he'll do. But he has some questions. We guess the questions... "Avec ou sans chemise?" (With or without shirt?).

Later in the morning we drive a distance to the 'Jardins de Sardi'. It turns out to be a very old, small fort, on a hill, that is now a family house. The family is fixing up the gardens to encourage (paying) visitors. We're here and we paid. They also have a tea room (with outdoor seating) and a gift shop. Workers are cutting marble nearby, yikes. We try to ignore that. It's time for our elevenses so we have four café au laits. 18€. We're getting used to the price of coffee here.

After coffee the young (20 year old) hostess gave us the starter tour. Between her English and our French we get most of it. There is an herb garden with artichokes and lots of flowers. Some are in bloom, others are past, and some are in the future. It's great how that works out. The family residence, at some point, started to sag and fall down the hill on one side, so they just chopped that off. Now you can't tell. I guess if you used to live there in the 1600s, when it was officers quarters, you'd notice the difference.

After the starter tour (which gets you past the residence) we are on our own. We walk down a very long pathway with trees lining both sides far into the distance. It is impressive except that the trees are quite young. They were planted within the past year. Come back in 10 or 20 years and it might really be something.

A highlight of the tour is the big pond. It had strategic significance in surviving sieges back in the day. There is supposedly a spring that feeds it, and some hidden storage that you access by swimming under the water in the pond. Sieges are less common now (unless you're in Ukraine) so we didn't take good notes.

Nowadays the pond just features impressive fountains and water lilies. We continue on to a smaller pond with lots of moss, more water lilies and tons of amorous frogs. The frogs like to sun on the lily pads and taunt the local cranes. When we approach they all jump in the water to safety. After a while the braver ones re-emerge and clamber back onto a pad to croak.

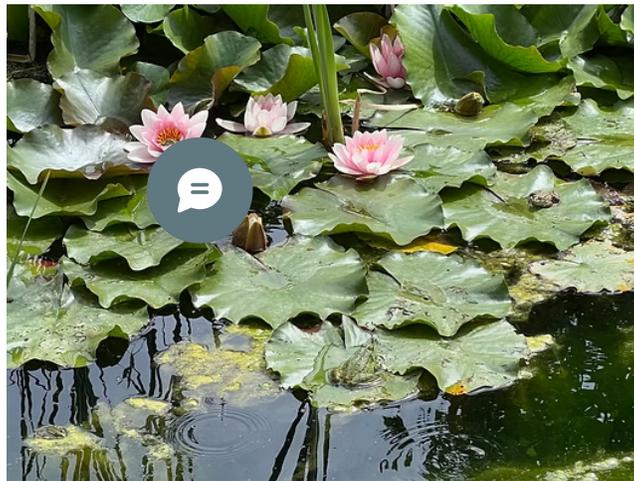
Mission accomplished at the garden, we make the short drive back home. We stop for gas in anticipation of tomorrow's five hour drive. At home we do some packing, cleaning, and requisite swimming. Karen makes a delicious tomato cheese tart and Ron prepares a wonderful salad. We eat and work on all the wine we've purchased. For dessert we have more of our strawberries and galette cookies. Life continues to be good. We'll miss this place.

Photos











[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

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