

Post



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Cassis - May 25, 2022

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Ants! We have ants. There are ants on our food (fruits, crackers, wine bottles, etc.) that we left on the counter. They're also up in Bonnie and Doug's room, the one closest to the kitchen. With everything de-ant-ified and put into the refrigerator, or zip lock bags, we try to kill (smush) the ants, one by one. The home owner has been notified and he'll be dropping off some ant traps this afternoon.

Today we're driving to the Mediterranean coast, to Cassis. When we think of Cassis, we think of the liquor, but it doesn't come from this town. This Cassis is a small port town known for hosting vacationers looking for beaches and a good time in a French national park.

It's a 90 minute drive, on the auto-route, passing by Aix and Marseille, depending on your route. We're in two cars, of course, and stay together. The drive down is interesting, looking at the different industries and especially agriculture. We drive over a big canal.

Once in Cassis we head for the center of town and look for the signs for public parking. In the parking garage, ticket in hand, we head below ground where we're promised lots of open spots. We do find some, but we also find (as is so common in French parking garages) spotless, shiny, painted floors. All the car tire squeal on the floor as you drive around.

In town we're immediately at the edge of a big outdoor market. We see all of the usual vegetables, fruits, meats, fish, clothes, kitchen accessories, etc. Our short term target, of course, is coffee. We find a good looking café and install ourselves, combining two tables for our large-ish group. The cups have dainty, small handles and Bonnie doesn't feel the cup slipping from her grasp and she lifts it. Most of the coffee goes on her, up til now, perfectly white pants. Slight panic ensues but we eventually regain our composure.

Post-coffee and market we head to the Petit Train Touristic. It's not a real train, of course, but looks like one. For eight euros each we are driven around the town to all of the notable sights. There are some pretty views of the Mediterranean and some amazing vacation houses. It's spring and we're by the coast so there are lots of flowers in bloom. We also see restaurants that remind us it'll be time for lunch soon.

Back in town we go our separate ways to explore, promising to regroup somewhere nebulous in time for our lunch reservation. Karen and I stop for a requisite beer (so I can post it in my beer-based social app). Reconnected with Ron and Nancy we head off for our lunch spot. It's a good 30 minutes walk, so we best get started. Within five minutes we decide between the distance, the heat, and the steepness of the route we're going to switch to a closer restaurant.

Lunch is good and we have a great view of the harbor. Bonnie got the mussels she'd been craving and the rest of us got various fish. Our waitress is fun and we shouldn't have dessert but do.

Our afternoon is already planned. We'll be on the proverbial three hour boat tour. We climb aboard with thirty or more other holiday makers. It's still quite warm and sunny so we stay in what shade there is on the boat. The highlight of the tour, well really the whole thing, is going into seven different inlets of a big, French national park. It's a rocky coastline and there are people peppered here and there on the rocks, sunning and drying off from swimming. The rocks are quite impressive. There are trees ("Port Trees") somehow growing out of the rocks without any obvious soil.

Getting to all seven inlets takes quite a while and we see people the whole way. We've come quite a ways and so have the people we're seeing on the shore (on foot!). We see kayakers who also have a long paddle back ahead of them. We see fish but very few birds.

Once back on shore we know we have a long drive ahead of us, so we don't dawdle. That is, except for the essential gelato. We (Scott, Bonnie and Doug) choose to head straight back, while Karen, Ron, and Nancy stop in Aix for sightseeing and a refreshing, licorice-flavored Pastis.

We're finally all back together and the ant traps are set. Karen, Ron and helpers make another delicious dinner and we while away the evening sipping wine and marveling at the view. Another successful day.

Photos

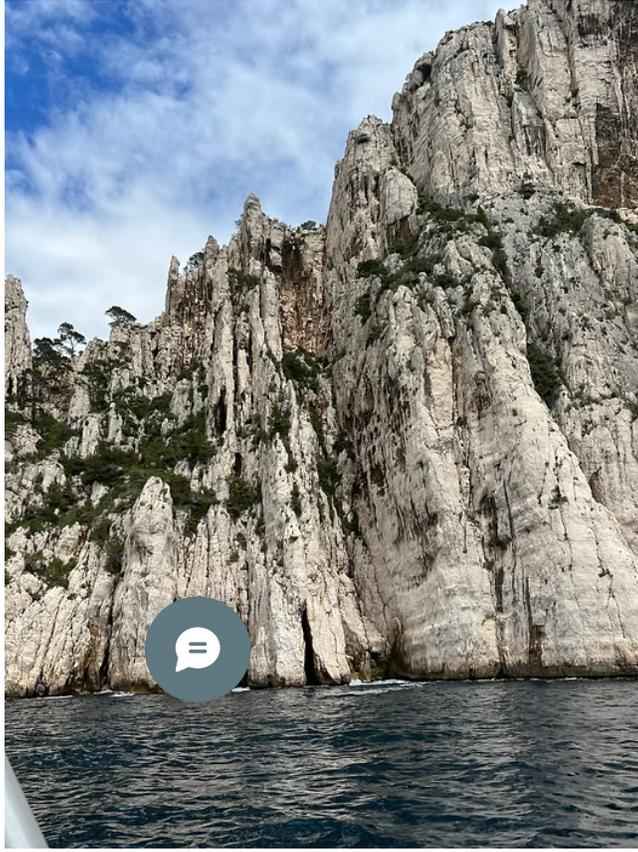






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