

Post



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Flying over the alps - September 25, 2023

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SUMMARY

After a great breakfast and final stroll around Ljubljana we headed to the airport and arrived in Paris in time for dinner. Great food, plenty of wine and a stroll through the streets of the 6th Arrondissement. Ah, Paris! - Karen

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DETAIL

Karen feels a little better this morning. Is it the meds? A good night's sleep? Or the fact that today we fly back to Paris? She feels good enough to have us eat with our four friends. The food, again, is delicious. I'm not sure it's worth €50s a person, but we enjoy it.

We're mostly packed and don't have to leave our rooms before it's time for our taxi to the airport. We leave our bags in our rooms and head out for one last walk around Ljubljana. The girls have some truffles to buy.

It's not raining, yay. Walking to the dragon bridge we pass the big open air market. The produce and fruit are top quality with vibrant colors and neatly arranged. Nancy introduces her little dragon Rigz to one of the huge dragons guarding the bridge. We take pictures and other tourists take pictures.

We wander through town. It's more interesting today with all the stores open for business. We find the truffle shop and the girls set to it, figuring out what they should buy and how we're going to get it back to the states. From our truffle hunting experience in Istria we know we don't want the whole truffles in a jar, but rather the sliced truffles preserved in olive oil. But that means we're flying with liquids and Karen and I, with our tight connection in Newark, were wanting to carry our luggage on board. Maybe Nancy, who is checking her luggage, can carry it back for us.

Across the street is a thrift shop, something I can't ignore. It's called The Kilo Shop. That seems like a strange name until I realize they sell everything by the Kilo. They put out the new, good stuff on Monday and on that day the cost is €22/kilo. The cost goes down by two euros per day until Sunday when everything is only €10/kilo. Much cheaper, but is that silver zoot suit you were eyeing still there? Decisions, decisions. I have neither needs nor room in my luggage so I just enjoy the concept.

We find a nearby pharmacy, open today, and cough lozenges and other minor meds are purchased. Ron and I get two 'flat whites' at a fancy coffee shop. We have to choose from where we wanted our coffee beans. Truth be told it is really good. Spoiler alert: Costa Rican beans.

At the hotel we check out and pay our bill. I didn't know how much our room would be going into this, and after I paid the bill I wished I still didn't know. We wait in the lobby for our taxi, taking advantage of free time for us all to polish off a box of cookies. Less to schlep.

At the airport a big sign tells us at which check in desks we'll be serviced, and when they'll open. Not for a while. Some people are already in line and we join them, killing time on our iPhones and inspecting the big adverts on the walls around us. One is for an unfortunately named watch company. The name is a combination of the country name and the word "watch", so it's called "Slowatch". It reminded us of the fiasco when Chevy tried to market the Nova in Latin America.

Checked in and through security we look for a lounge that maybe one of our credit cards will let us into. They have one and I can get Karen and myself in. Can I get my family in, too? Ron and Nancy? Yep, no problem. Mike and Liz use their card to get in.

It's nice. There's seating and lots of food and drinks. They have good beer on tap and pretzels. It's the last time we can likely have a good Slovenian beer for a while so we partake. They have salads and desserts and so much more. We shouldn't eat but we do.

Our plane is an older E190, built by Embraer I think, a Brazilian aircraft manufacturer. It's an Air France flight but is run by an outfit called HOP! We hope it's no relation to iHOP. There's an aisle in the middle and two seats on either side. Karen gives up her seat next to me in the exit row to Ron who is of above average height. Very sweet. Ron and I get to chat during the flight and can hear poor Karen coughing further back in the plane. Poor dear.

As we're in an exit row the stewardess must explain the operation of the exit door. She can tell we're American and so does it in English, giving a bit of a knowing glance to the French speakers in the other exit row seats. Americans... you know...

Flying out we can see the lake we walked around and we see the Alps we've been in for a while now. They seem to go on forever, but after ninety minutes we do get to Paris and Charles de Gaulle airport. The terminal we come into looks like it's assembled from small temporary buildings. We retrieve our luggage after a lengthy wait and head off to the shuttle bus to get to a real terminal, one with a RER regional train headed into Paris.

We get our train tickets and get them properly validated, after a bit of a false start. On the train we're all able to sit, which is good as it's at least a 45 minutes ride. Our luggage is between our legs, to allow others to sit, so it's not terribly comfortable.

At one point two conductors enter our car and converge on each other from either end, closing a net. They're ensuring everyone has a valid ticket. Thank goodness we got our ticket validations straightened out before we left. I stuff my ticket into my pocket... won't be needing that til we exit. CRAP! Did I just put it next to my iPhone with its nifty MagSafe charging system? Did I just demagnetize yet another ticket. Crap. Hopefully not.

At the exit everyone gets through but me. Since I have my luggage and it's a fancy new exit, I'm not getting through. "You all go ahead without me, I'll be fine." Karen leads the group out to find our hotel, a good fifteen minute walk away. I try to reach someone on the intercom but that doesn't work. I'm told to go down three levels. I do, carrying my suitcase. Nothing there. I go up again, three flights, on the other side. I go down a very long hall, full of rush hour commuters. I find a human who can help and he opens a special door for dummies like me.

I get to the hotel just five or so minutes after the rest of the group. They're mostly checked in and the manager has complimented Karen on her amazing French. "You must be from Canada" she says.

We drop our bags and look for the restaurant that was so highly praised in Trip Advisor. It's just two doors down! A table for six is just leaving as I arrive. "Save this table for us, I'll be right back!" Great dinner, great inexpensive French wine. Good time.

One last evening stroll through the cool Paris evening before bed. Our walk takes us through back streets, and between the Saint Michel church and the Café aux Deux Magots. We finish up strolling down Boulevard Saint-Germain along with many relaxed Parisians taking in the evening air. We're in Paris. All is good. Time for bed.

Photos



Karen feeling better. Feeling up to having breakfast!



Scott playing with his food. Combining his fruit smoothie and his fruit plate to make a happy meal.



Headed out again, this time, no rain! Yay.



The three bridges



The outdoor market



Practicing our Slovenian. Š is pronounced Sh, so it's Champignon, like the French Champignon. On the right, cut off, are Šitaki (Shitaki) mushrooms.



Rigz taking on the bigger dragon. Starting with the tail.



We're going to miss the fun architecture here!



Rigz, having dispatched that dragon goes after the whole city (or at least a model thereof).



Mmmm. Truffles.



Fun! Thrift shop by the pound (OK, kilo).
Today's Monday :-)



FARNSNIENTE





Also didn't take advantage of the airport's 5' x 5' coffee shop for those who want to smoke indoors.



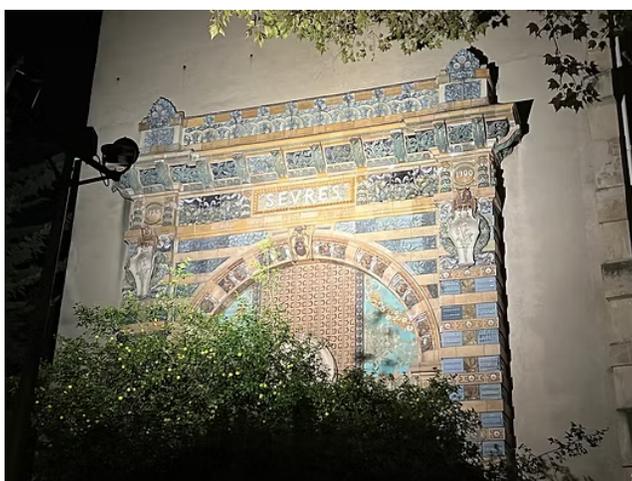
Lake Bohinj that we walked (most of the way) around.



One small part of the Alps. Still snow and it's almost October.



In Paris. 72 degrees. Walking down the foodie street of the rue de Buci.



Wall art along the Boulevard Saint-Germain



Planning tomorrow in Scott and Karen's room.

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