

Post



Scott Farnsworth

Sep 26, 2023 · 6 min read

# The case of the disappearing fountain - September 26, 2023

Updated: Oct 6, 2023

## ***SUMMARY***

Ron and Nancy did a foodie tour of Montmartre and Scott moved me and himself to our VRBO. Mike, Liz and I had signed up for a tour of the Rue Monge outdoor market and a cooking class at Le Foodist. Our group of 12 was assigned different tasks and over about a three hour period we make cauliflower soup, salmon with orange butter sauce, ratatouille, and poached pears with vanilla ice cream and hot chocolate sauce. It was good fun and all quite tasty and our Very Opinionated chef instructor was a hoot. The six of us met up for a picnic dinner on

the Champs de Mars to see the lights on the Eiffel Tower twinkle. - Karen

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

### ***DETAIL***

Today should be a busy, exciting day. For many, that is, but not so much for me. During our trip planning, for this last Paris visit, Karen and others found foodie walking tours and cooking classes. Karen asked which I wanted to attend and I told her. So today I'm doing none of those while Ron and Nancy do the Montmartre Foodie walking tour and Mike, Karen, and Liz do a cooking class somewhere. I opted out of both so my assignment is to move Karen and myself (and our luggage) from our hotel in the 6th just off the Boulevard Saint-Germain over to our VRBO-type apartment in the swanky 7th. It's a 1.6 mile walk and the route is entirely flat.

Karen's still coughing and not feeling great, but is excited about the cooking class. Our room at the Grand Hôtel de l'Univers doesn't include breakfast, so we just drink instant coffee in our room. I'm always delighted at how quickly water boils using 220 volts. Alone I shower, dress and pack, listening to a podcast. The trick with doing this move will be that I'm hauling both our suitcases and both of our daypacks. It'll work out, I'm sure.

I check out and wrangle the bags to the street. It's cool so I have on some layers. With the luggage schlepping I warm up quickly. It's midmorning so there's not a lot of pedestrian commuters with whom to compete. My route takes me along the Boulevard Saint-Germain which has a lot to look at. Eventually I turn slightly left, off the wide boulevard. Soon I'm crossing the big grassy area between Les Invalid and where the Alexander III bridge crosses the Seine. I'm sure it's a "Champs de something", but I've never found a formal name.

Approaching our address I'm delighted to see lots of small restaurants and businesses on our street, the rue St-Dominique. This looks like a fun area. Not so fun is that the street is totally torn up and there are pipes being added or replaced underground. There are solid barricades dividing the pedestrians from the cars from the roadwork. As such the sidewalks are even narrower than their normal narrowness. With my two bags I'm constantly waiting for others to pass or passing while others wait for me. At number 70 I stop and message our host, Tania. I'm a bit early so I park the bags, scout out where I'll get my brunch/lunch, and surf on my phone.

Before long Tania shows with her full rolling grocery cart in tow. Between the two of us we have a lot of luggage, and the apartment is not on the ground floor. On the street, over the sound of jack-hammers, she explains about the keys and the fobs and the door code. Inside she lets me know we're in the second building, so we shouldn't hear any of this cacophony from the street, yay! There's no elevator, boo, but the apartment is just one floor up (on the European first floor), yay. We go through four doors to get to the stairway to the back building.

Tania says they're redoing the building's electricity so they have, essentially, movers blankets protecting the stairs and walls. It's a bit of a mess, not a good first impression. There's no sign on the door, no number, it's just the "back building, first floor, left". Hopefully we won't be directing a lot of people here.

Other than the size and location the place is fine, no more than that. No one is going to be gushing over the luxury of the furniture, kitchen or bath. Tania says the medium sized refrigerator was recently new (yay) but they bought one, by mistake, with no freezer (crap). They do have a counter-top mini ice maker, which should be interesting.

Eventually we part ways, our luggage safely in the apartment. I'm starving and head towards the boulangerie. Tania says she's headed to the photo developing store (remember those??). With my jambon fromage sandwich and bottle of water I hike towards the foodie street, rue Cler, just up the way.

Full and unburdened, I walk around for a while, eating and sight seeing. I eventually hop the #86 bus back towards our hotel where I'll be meeting back up with the gang. I sit in the lobby of our hotel of last night and work on the blog. Eventually I make my way back to where we had dinner for a beer. They ask if I want anything else and I say some fries would be nice. The plate is overflowing.

Eventually Karen, Liz and Mike appear, full of instructions, advice and opinions from their French cooking instructor. Ron and Nancy aren't far behind. We plan our meet up later for a picnic dinner on the Champs de Mars, looking up at the Eiffel Tower, and go our separate ways. Karen and I stop at a small grocery for plates, cups, wine, cheese, etc. to add to our dinner. We make more stops for bread and tomatoes.

Back at our apartment Karen gives her first impression: "Oh". No, it's fine. If someone gave us this apartment as a gift we'd be thrilled. It's warm so we open the front and back windows are rewarded with a nice breeze. We relax, make ice, wash up and eventually pack for our picnic. We're meeting next to the fountain, on the side facing the Eiffel Tower, on the only street that crosses the Champs de Mars. There can't be any messing up those instructions, eh?

It's a nine minute walk to the Champs de Mars. As we approach we see lots of chain link fences and fancy guards dressed in black with walkie talkies. This can't be good. We quickly gather this is all for an event for Fashion Week that's currently going on. The road that crosses the Champs de Mars has been taken over and there's a fence along either side, assuredly to keep the beautiful people in and safe and us riff-raff out.

Where the fountain normally sits is now a cordoned off area with a huge temporary black structure built atop. There are a zillion lights, stairs majestically going up each of the four side, curtain walls and presumably a cat walk in the middle. We will not be meeting anywhere near this currently invisible fountain. No worries, I'll just call or message Ron and Mike with my phone and make a new plan. To make things easier we've previously authorized each other to see where we are, it should be no problem. (Where's my phone?) I've left my phone at the apartment, crap. We do have Karen's phone but we haven't done that same location sharing thing.

After much ado, and gnashing of teeth, we eventually meet up and park ourselves on a blanket on a patch of grass off to the side of the Champs, with a perfect view of the Eiffel Tower. Wine, cheese, bread, olives, etc. are broken out and soon all of the troubles of the meet up are forgotten. We people watch and gaze at the Eiffel Tower silhouetted against the dark blue evening sky. Periodically we brush away the salesmen dashing about trying to sell cheap wine and champagne, we have more than enough.

At the top of the hour, at eight, we watch for the twinkling lights, but they never appear. It must be too light still. At nine o'clock we are rewarded by the hourly light show. Pictures and movies are captured. Full and over served we pack up the picnic leftovers and head back towards our hotels. Karen and I get the other four to a bus stop and ensure they have tickets, know how to use them, and know which bus to take and where to get off. We bid everyone a slurred "Bonne Nuit" and Karen and I walk 'home'. We reopen the windows and crash, unaware that we'd not put the leftover food into the fridge.

---

## Photos



**Vacations in Paris**  
**70 Rue St-**  
**Dominique**

The entrance and keypad to get into our building



Our kitchen and dining room. The climate control system (i.e. fan) and next to it the ice maker. The apartment does have a full oven which is a little unusual.



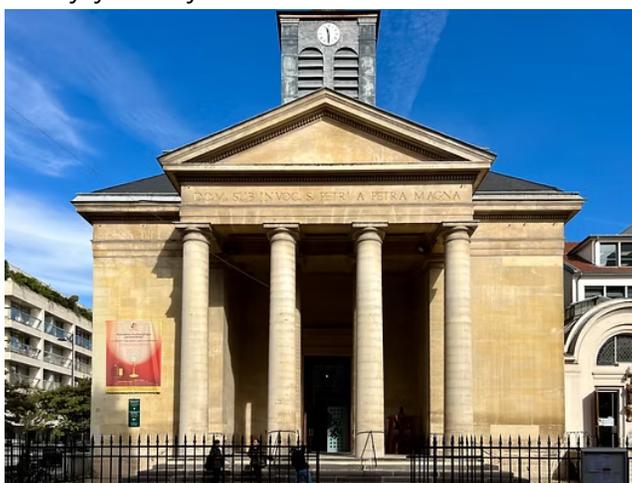
Our living room and again, the dining room.



The bed room



Where I bought my late breakfast. So many yummy choices!



The church a few doors down. Those are some serious columns.



Karen and Liz at the cooking class. They whipped those eggs into shape!



Scott's gourmet lunch: Beer and fries. But notice the color coordination!



Where we're meeting, on the Eiffel Tower side of the fountain. You can't miss it.

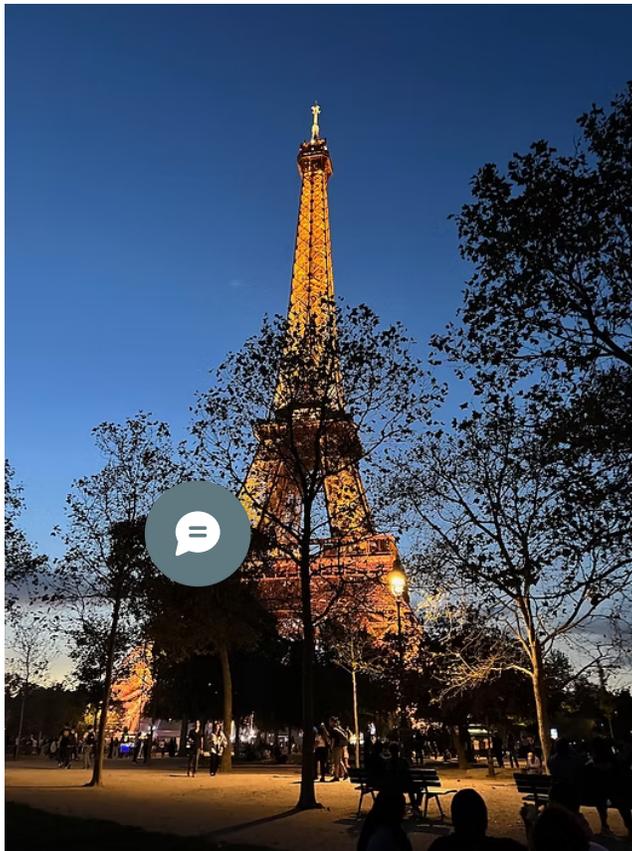


Our picnic next to the Eiffel Tower





Not all of us bend like we did when we were young. The seating arrangements were a bit awkward for me, I know.



The view of the tower from our picnic site. The weather did cooperate.



The big fashion show venue constructed on top of the fountain, behind the chain link fence, overlooking the Eiffel Tower.

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

## Subscribe Form

Email Address

Submit



©2023 by FarnsNiente. Proudly created with Wix.com