

Post



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A Paris Foodie Tour - July 6, 2024

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SUMMARY

Wonderful (private, by happenstance) foodie walking tour in the Saint-Germain neighborhood. Armagnac and Porto at 10:30? No problem! Great food from some of Paris' best addresses. In the afternoon we took a long walk through the 6th, 1st, 8th and 17th Arrondissements, ending at Square des Batignolles. Took the bus back to our quartier in time for our dinner res at Le Récamier, our favorite. Had a great meal on the terrace and chatted with a mother and daughter at the next table for most of the evening. - Karen

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DETAIL

Received this morning from the US embassy in Paris:

“Activists and political associations have called for rallies and demonstrations nationwide on July 7, in response to the second round of French parliamentary elections. Although demonstrations occur regularly across France and are mostly peaceful, on rare occasions...”

We’re a little nervous.

We enjoy an early breakfast as we have to meet for a (what else?) foodie tour at 9:30 am. We have an address and business name (Bar de la Croix Rouge) for our rendezvous. Why does that sound familiar. Oh, yes, we’ve been there for a drink before. We worry we might be lusher.

We show up 15 minutes early, to check in, as requested. We meet Isobel (ah, like the queen and Ferdinand, who green lighted Columbus’ trek to the new world). French is what we guess for her nationality, but she explains that she’s from Portland. How many people will be on the tour today? Just us two? How delightful! Have we ever been to Paris? Girl friend, let us tell you!

On the way to stop #1 the skies open up and we get some of that rain that absolutely was not predicted. At the nearby Poilâne bakery we get out of the rain to try a tarte aux pommes (apple tart). We marvel at the chandelier in the break room, made of bread and done with Salvador Dalí! We know the story of the famous owner being killed in a helicopter crash and his daughter having to take the reins of the company well before the anticipated. Isabel is going to have to go deep catalog on the facts for this tour!

Walking (now not in the rain) to our next stop, another bakery, we pass the spectacular Lutecia Hotel (written as Lvtetia on the building proper). We learn it was built by the owner of Bon Marché department store. Apparently the Bon Marché was so amazing that patrons would be exhausted after shopping there and have to spend a night in a hotel room before they could continue home. When the German's invaded they used the Lutecia as their HQ. Afterwards recovering prisoners from the concentration camps were put up here to recuperate.

Next was the cheese shop (Nicole Barthélemy Fromager) which was way over the top, so many cheeses. We ogle and sniff so many, and Isobel buys a few for later. At Kaviari Delikatesen we have (what else) Caviar. So good, and smoked salmon, lox, and and and. And of course delicious wine, a chablis. It's 10:30 in the morning, who cares!

Before we leave we get fresh plates and break out the cheese and bread, purchased earlier. Incredible. For dessert? More cheese, well, really, just unsweetened whipped cream aged a tiny bit that absolutely melts in your mouth. We're told this was served to President Biden on his visit. Can he now only have soft foods? Please don't tell us that!

At a totally over the top wine store (the first wine cellar/seller in Paris) we stand next to a 5,500€ bottle of Petrus and sample some great armagnac and then port. So smooth and flavorful. They have armagnac from all years, including the years of our births (for 750€ euros, plus, for a 1/2 bottle). Maybe next time.

Next delicious pork belly and Cahors (red wine). Stupendous. And for the piece de resistance: chocolate mousse from a store that only sells chocolate mousse. Single source chocolates. I think each cocoa bean gets its own business class seat for the flight here. (I may have misheard that part.) The mousse was so light and airy I think it could have almost flown on its own.

We thanks Isobel, tip her and promise to write (a review). She promises to email tour notes (and future marketing messages from her company, we're sure). We say our good-byes with a kiss on each cheek and roll ourselves back to our hotel (thankfully just a couple of blocks away).

Back at the room we relax and digest. Later we head back out and walk the Siene, crossing at the Pont des Arts. We see many country Olympic cycling teams out for a leisurely ride. At the Official Olympic merch store (sponsored by Visa) we buy caps. They only take (you guessed it) Visa cards.

We walk to the Parc Monceau and on to the Batignolles neighborhood and its parc. A bus whisks us back south with Paris on display out the windows.

We enjoy a leisurely soufflé dinner at Le Recamier. A French lady and her old mum sit at the next table and we talk. The mum came to the US after WW II at 17 to spend a year spreading good will. A family in Topeka invited her because the family is catholic and surely someone from France will be catholic. Nope, she's Protestant. Whoops! They did gun running to Mexico and all kinds of things. Wild stories. Mom insists on giving us her address, phone, and email. Yikes.

Eventually we escape and run "home" to bed.

Photos



Le Centaure (The Centaur) bronze statue across where we met for our foodie tour. It's an homage to Picasso and done by french artist César. I see a half man, half horse with golf clubs and a garden hoe up it's butt. Our guide points out there's a small statue of liberty hanging around it's neck. (How did I miss that??)



Isobel explaining the history of the Poilâne Bakery (in the rain)



The chandelier made of bread, a collaboration of Poilâne and Salvador Dalí. The bed they made together, out of bread, we didn't see.



More cheese in one store than either of us has ever seen (or smelled)



A giant chocolate eclair, about the length of a football.



Salmon three ways and then caviar. Yum!



Some classic French cheeses to try.



Lutecia, recently cleaned up and retouched. So beautiful, so cher.



The first wine seller/cellar in Paris. Still going strong.



The only place in Paris to get proper chocolate mouse (daily, preferably).



Some countries olympic cycling team out for a (promotional?) ride.



FARNSNIENTE



At Le Recamier, awaiting our soufflés.
Picture taken by the daughter of the catholic, er, no, protestant lady who (after WW II) came to the US at 17 to spread goodwill.





What we were waiting for. This is my Soufflé de champignon (mushroom soufflé)

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