

Post



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# Back in Paris at last - May 14, 2025

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## ***SUMMARY***

Woke up in time for a very nice eggs Benedict breakfast and our almost on time arrival in sunny Paris. Quick trip into the city and nice walk to our hotel. After leaving our bags we headed out to see the first of several planned "most beautiful streets of Paris". Namely Rue Crémieux in the twelfth arrondissement, a short but quite pretty street lined with Easter egg colored houses. Made our way to our lunch spot, Café Marly, at the Louvre. We had just finished our lovely lunch when the entire restaurant and the hordes of people around the pyramid were evacuated due to an abandoned item they were possibly going to have to blow up. Back to the hotel to check-in,

rest and await the arrival of our travel companions, Ron and Nancy. Happy hour at our hotel then good dinner at Pizza Chic. - Karen

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### ***DETAIL***

I don't remember much of the night, which seems like a good thing. When I do rouse I can see the sun, mid-rise, coming up over the horizon. At 30,000 feet there's nothing but sunshine. We're still 90 minutes from landing so no announcements yet, but there is the prospect of breakfast in our near future. I nudge Karen awake from her deep slumbers and she's happy to be awake and to have breakfast.

Our meal, eggs Benedict, croissant, and fruit, is fine. No alcohol (e.g. champagne) is offered which is fine by us. As we get closer we can see that it's mostly clear and sunny on the ground. We have to make one single loop in a holding pattern due to traffic, then we're on the ground. Our pre-loaded e-sims work as expected and we're back connected to that oh-so-important internet, check mail and the contentious political news from the states. Weather in Paris today should be in the low 70's with which we're fine.

No 'forms' are passed out (for customs and/or immigration) which is also fine by us. We're told that our boarding passes allow us to go to the front of the "we're French" immigration line and they do. An airport employee is holding a cordon, checks our boarding passes and waves us through. \$2,400 business class round trip to Paris isn't bad, though flying out of Newark is a pain. It does have its perks, though.

We catch the Orly-val to Antony and there catch the RER B into Paris. We pass through stations that serve big universities and a stop named "Maison des Examinations", which we're sure students dread. The train cars get more and more crowded as we get closer to Paris.

At Place Saint Michel we emerge from the train station only to find the pretty statue covered in scaffolding. More work going on. It's a 17 minute walk to our hotel and we're fine to do that, trying to wake up and adjust our body clocks. The occasional cobblestone sidewalks are a bit of a pain but the sightseeing along the way is always fun.

At the hotel our prayers that our room might be ready at this early 9 am hour aren't answered, so we give up our bags and sit for a bit, collecting ourselves. Eventually we venture out into the sun for a hike/metro ride over past the Bastille. Karen read about one of the most beautiful streets in Paris, Rue Crémieux and we're headed there.

Off the métro we hike in front of the new opera house and then down along the Viaduct des Arts which used to be a viaduct, way up in the air. That's now a cool long planted walking path up high, and underneath, where the open arches were, are now businesses, arts like wood working, stained glass, fabric weaving, musical instrument making, and the like. It's fascinating.

The Rue Crémieux isn't far off the Viaduct des Artes and it's very interesting. Everyone knows the old 'Paris look' for the buildings. They're all the same height (six stories) and similar construction. What's on this street are houses as they appeared before Haussmann tore (almost) everything down. On this street you feel like you're somewhere other than Paris. It's bizarre. The street is celebrated and so the home owners decorate with flowers and plantings.

We have a reservation for lunch at Café Marly at the Louvre. Our GPS says we can walk there in time for our reservation. Much of the walk was on a road that used to be only for cars, as a quick way to get from one place in the city to another. It's all along the Seine, with no cross traffic (since you're on the river). When we lived here they started having it closed to cars and open to pedestrians on certain Sundays, and then on all Sundays, then all weekends. Finally they said "screw the cars, this beautiful land beside the Seine should be enjoyed by all (without cars). Now it's much beloved.

Back at street level we cross and try to enter the Louvre. It's closed for construction. At the next entrance (where cars and people go in and out) it's closed to cars and almost to people. Weird, it was all open earlier today. We barely get in before they close the gate. Much of the area in front of the Louvre has been closed to people. We snake through where we can go and get to the restaurant. We have lunch and just as we're finishing the police close the restaurant. They've cleared most of people from the area around the pyramid of the Louvre. We pay and leave. Others who hadn't ordered or eaten yet are moved inside. Cause? Abandoned luggage. Has to be blown up.

At five we're at our hotel when friends Ron and Nancy show up. They live in Austin but have been kicking around London for a few days. They just came over (under?) on the Eurostar through the chunnel today. We'll be traveling together for the next few weeks. First joint adventure is cocktails in the hotel lobby (very good) and then off for dinner at Pizza Chic. It's their 46th anniversary of their first date. That was pizza so they've been redoing pizza annually to celebrate and today's no different.

Before we crash for the night we check our smart phones. We walked nine miles today. Not bad. By now the room is nice and cool and dark. In no time we're fast asleep.

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## Photos



We wake on the plane and have breakfast. Checking our progress we see we're still an hour from Paris. We also note that our flight number is prefaced by the initials for the US's current president. Not sure how that happened (the airline is La Compagnie, not a lot of D's, Js, or T's there).



After we drop our bags at our hotel we head out to explore. We're headed to the M1 metro station on the far side of the Louvre, on the rue de Rivoli. It's wild how they have cars driving through the arches of the Louvre.



Of the metro at the Bastille we hike along the Viaduct des Arts and peek in to see all the artisans performing their various crafts. Over their heads, on the roof, are plants and a lovely walking path, unbothered by cars or other cross traffic.



Our first time seeing Rue Crémieux, an old street that amazingly didn't get transformed by Haussmann (as the rest of Paris did). The proud neighbors spruce up the place with shrubs and flowers, despite there being zero access to actual dirt underfoot.



Heading back to have lunch at the Louvre we're intrigued by this UPS truck. The shape and color look correct but the size is off. Also it's pedal-powered, not gas or electric.



A lot of our walk back to the Louvre was along the Seine, on a pedestrian walk that for years was just for cars. Take THAT automobiles. The Napoleon bridge is in the foreground and the Pont Neuf (the new bridge) can be seen further down river. On the left is where Jean-Paul Marat died in that bath tub.



At Café Marly, at the Louvre we say we have a reservation (we do) and they show us to our table. We overlooking the I. M. Pei's famous glass pyramid and the ever-present throngs of people.



Lunch was all delicious: gaspacho, caprese salad, croque monsieur, and a small green salad. Good wheat beer to offset the heat of the sun.



After a while the police clear the esplanade of all tourists, we're all that's left. Later we're ushered out next. You see what happens when you abandon a piece of luggage at the Louvre? They have to (safely) cart it away and blow it up.



Walking along outside the Louvre we can see inside, empty of people and vehicles, save for one lonely bomb disposal unit. A poor security guard is undoubtedly getting hoarse repeatedly explaining to tourists why they can't get into the Louvre.



The lack of people in the Louvre does provide some unpopulated views (from outside the building's perimeter).



A message from Austin friends Ron and Nancy let us know they're left London on the Eurostar train, about to go through the chunnel. They were amused by the Harry Potter references where they were visiting, the Platform number 9 and 3/4, and the loaded luggage cart magically going through the brick wall.



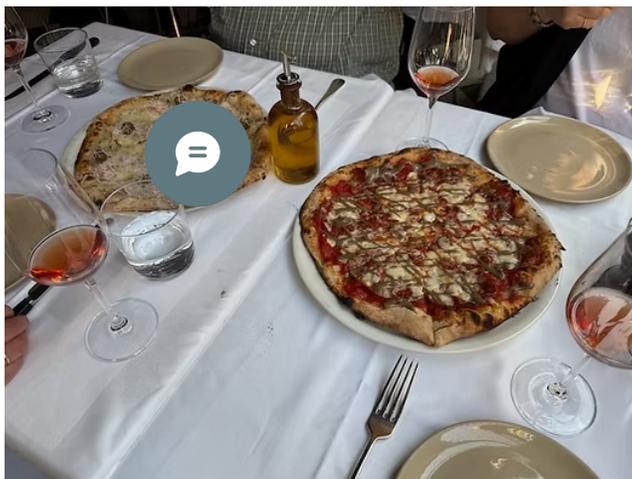
Walking back home we enjoyed the view of the Seine and the always majestic Orsay museum.



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We reach out to Ron and Nancy. They should be getting close to Paris. Is it looking Parisian yet?? They send this picture as an answer. Still pastoral and industrial for now.



At dinner we enjoy the Italian staple at Pizza Chic, celebrating the 46th anniversary of Ron and Nancy's first date (which was also pizza).

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