



**Paris Solo – Canceled
April 5-18, 2020**

Summary

- Another trip canceled due to Coronavirus aka COVID-19
- I would have gone, selfishly, except the flight doesn't exist any longer, nor does any, and the government has imposed draconian restrictions on movement. In or out or around.
- France has gone far beyond just closing restaurants, museums, public areas, etc. You can't leave your house without a form, can't walk more than 1 kilometer away, must have a stated and serious need, etc.
- The U.S. Embassy has limited hours and is trying to help those American stuck, and those that have overstayed the automatic 90-day visa.
- I am trying for a refund of my pricey air ticket but that's tough since airlines don't have any money.
- The apartment rental folks have given me a one-year voucher. Will I even have time to use it?

Itinerary that didn't happen

Sun Apr 5

3:00pm? Depart home
6:35pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#57

Mon Apr 6

7:45am Arrive Paris Charles de Gaulle CDG

Taxi to apartment

Apartment 4 rue Honoré Chevalier, Saint Germain des Pres, 75006 Paris
Tele in apartment: 01 81 29 10 45 – Access code in file
Tele of ParisVacationApartments: Fanny +336 24 41 22 84
Daria +337 60 69 16 52 Clara +336 63 60 67 14 (more #s in file)

Note: reconfirm entry code and if entry possible before 3pm.

Description from www.ParisVacationApartments.com - Please note that all our apartments have a Paris official registration license number.

CALM AND LUXURY NEAR THE LUXEMBOURG GARDENS (110 m² – 1184 sq ft) - An incredible location in the heart of the Saint Germain neighborhood known as the “soul of Paris” just steps away from the Luxembourg Gardens and Saint Sulpice. The rue honoré chevalier is part of the Saint Germain neighborhood between Saint Sulpice Church and famous Luxembourg gardens which are literally a few steps away. It is a tiny street. The Luxembourg garden inspired many writers (Victor Hugo's Les Miserables, Henry James in The Ambassadors, William Faulkner's Sanctuary....). Saint Germain will forever be the “soul of Paris” and home of the Arts. An ideal location to wander through

this neighborhood's tiny crooked streets and passage-ways and travel back in time and have a café at Café de Flore and Deux Magots in the footsteps of the Lost Generation and New Wave artists, such as Hemingway, Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Truffaut, Godard...

This exceptional apartment is located in a classic late 1900s building. An elevator takes you up to this bright and spacious two bedroom apartment with splittable king size beds and two bathrooms, one of which is en suite, a spacious and bright living room and a very spacious kitchen including a dining table. This apartment has been entirely and elegantly renovated to create the perfect space for families or larger groups to make your stay idyllic.

A bit of history: The building this apartment is in was built in 1885. The rue honoré chevalier is part of the Saint Germain neighborhood between Saint Sulpice Church and famous Luxembourg gardens. It is a tiny street. The Luxembourg garden inspired many writers (Victor Hugo's Les Misérables, Henry James in The Ambassadors, William Faulkner's Sanctuary, Somerset Maugham The Magician.....

Sat Apr 18

6:30am Taxi to airport – PVA to arrange
9:45am Depart Paris Charles de Gaulle CDG via UA#56
11:50am Arrive Newark EWR

Uber home

Emergencies

Point of Contact - Carl Greeson, central point of contact if emergency: 573 999 2119

Emergency Assistance Plus Program – 24/7 – card in Diana's wallet
United Mileage Plus family membership #0186014 – ID#04-7500132793
Tele: 866 816 2073 or 603 328 1752 collect or questions 877 815 5567

Sue Ann Martinez	732 236 7651	Could take Pandora
Randy Fritts	732 671 5510	Neighbor to the west – has key
Adam Basile	732 673 2582	Helper – knows house and pond
Kathy/Gary Kestler	732 671 5311	Neighbor to the east – has key

More numbers on kitchen counter.

U.S. Embassy Paris
2 avenue Gabriel, 75008 Paris Tele: +33 1 43 12 22 22

Signed up at travel.state.gov

Download new Google Map and Translate

What to do?

Marmottan Monet Museum
Brasserie Alsace on Champs Elysee
Galeries Lafayette rooftop and food court
La Defense visit?
La Chapelle if sunshine
See Richelle a couple days
Food tours? Check out www.SecretFoodTours.com
Musée d'Orsay for museum and restaurant
Eiffel Tower and new areas built up.
Walk the Covered Passages from the Palais Royal. Window Shopping.

Visit and eat near Rue Cler and Constant restaurant on rue Dominique.

Blois de Bologne?

Luxembourg gardens and museum.

Walk or food tour on Rue Mouffetard

Walk from the Marais to Bastille and maybe eat at Bofinger.

Visit Bon Marche, both designer and food sections, and in area go to Letucia Hotel.

Walk the new changes in Les halles

Day trip to Vaux le Vicomte, either by tour bus or does Richelle want to go via public transport.

Walk up rue martyrs to Montmartre.

See what's showing at the Grand Palais and definitely visit the Petite Palais

Special door at 29 Avenue Rapp, 1901 year door, near Eiffel Tower and Rue St Dominique

Links

From Parler Paris – Viva La Difference!

After spending 10 days in California and going through a reverse culture shock having to acclimate to life in the U.S. (even if for only 10 days), now that I'm back and into the swing of life in France, I have reflected on the differences of the two lifestyles. There are plusses and minuses to both, naturally, but the question is: which is preferable?

First and foremost, there is the obvious difference of riding in a car vs using one's own feet or public transportation. In a perfect world, the public transportation would be exemplary as would the ability to travel by car freely, easily, inexpensively, making any of the choices good ones, but that's not the reality.

Los Angeles would be a very different place to live if the public transportation was better and the traffic lighter. Even so, with the city so sprawling, having a car (or motorbike) is the only logical form of transportation. With everyone's need to have a car, more cars are on the roads than the roads can handle, making driving a nightmare (except I discovered during holiday time). On top of that, what bothers me most about living in a car culture, is having to drive, park, pay to park, return to the car, drive, park, pay to park, return to the car, and so on and so forth until the day is said and done and your last trip is to home. This renders you in a kind of bubble, with no opportunity to "commune" with the public...you go from your house to your car, to your destination, back to your car and back to your house, perhaps never needing to rub elbows with anyone except sales people or waiters. And worst of all, you can't go from Point A to Point B to Point C, etc., without going back to Point A to retrieve the car. It's like a ball and chain disguised as "freedom."

Life in Paris (or Nice and most cities in France) is a whole lot different thanks to great public transportation and rarely needing a car. (Except during transportation strikes like this one rendering us all a bit helpless. Even having a car wouldn't be much help since the traffic is unbearable. This is why the transportation strikes are so effective!) Not owning and operating a car is not only freedom from the responsibility and the danger of driving on the roads, but it frees up an average of about \$8,500 a year in costs. "AAA has been tracking vehicle ownership costs for decades, and motorists are often surprised when they learn the full scope of the costs involved. In 2016, owning and operating an average sedan costs \$8,558 per year, which is equal to \$713 per month or 57 cents per mile." (aaa.com/)

What I like most about being carless is the ability to go from Point A to Point B to Point C, etc., without going back to Point A to retrieve the car. And one major change is that without that car, I am no longer living in that bubble. When you're on the street or in public transportation, you are surrounded physically by other human beings of all kinds and capable of interaction. That's a whole lot more interesting than spending hours on Facebook or cursing other drivers from the inside of your car because they've done something to annoy your or slow down your trip.

Customer service is perhaps the biggest difference between the lifestyles/cultures which apply countrywide. In fact, this might be the number one challenge to overcome when coming from La La Land (or anywhere in the U.S.) where every service person is so happy, friendly, accommodating, etc. No one ever says "no" to anything...they just behave as if they're having a blast doing their jobs, love their customers to bits and feel rewarded when they can make you, the customer, happy.

It can be a very different experience here in France, but that is not to say you can't achieve the same level of service...you just have to understand that you are 50 percent of the equation, so you get back what you give out. Let me explain...

In the U.S., customers get treated pretty much equally — with courteousness and respect, since the customer is the one holding the money. The relationship is in place even if you've never encountered that salesperson before. There's no effort to it and it doesn't matter how you behave — they are trained to treat you well, regardless of how you treat them. It can really spoil you by expecting to be treated this way wherever you go. It was a shock for me in L.A. when they just couldn't be nice enough. It was almost effusive. One waiter apologized so many times for something very unimportant that I finally had to say, "Okay you can stop now!" That would never happen in France, at least not from a waitperson who has no real relationship with you other than as a server. The truth is you're more likely to get blamed for having caused the problem to begin with!

In France, money isn't what it's about — it's about mutual respect, appreciation and the relationship you build with the establishment, its proprietors and staff. If you start with the attitude that you are walking into someone else's domain as the stranger, and behave humbly with respect, you will be treated with mutual respect, if not with a friendly attitude. Be demanding thinking that you, the customer, "is king" and I can assure you, you will be treated with disdain. This is not the way to win friends, but to make enemies.

One trick I always use is that I never, never, never take a seat in a café without first saying "Bonjour" and then asking politely if I can take the seat I want. You would not believe how that improves my status immediately in their eyes, even when they hear my obvious American accent and smile jokingly to themselves. Take this a step further and become a loyal patron. That will gain you queen or king status that will carry you a long, long way. (One of my friends here calls it getting the "badge of honor" to be accepted as one of them.) As many know, my habit is to lunch at Café Charlot almost daily. One reason, besides the fact that the food is pretty much unbeatable, and besides the fact that there is a "plat du jour" every day that makes every meal a different experience, is how they treat me...like royalty. The waitstaff secretly call me "Madame Plat du Jour" (my daughter discovered this), try to reserve the same table for me everyday and allow me to substitute things to suit my crazy diet without question. The chef knows I love his food (because I often send my "compliments to the chef" via a waitperson) so in turn he often sends over an additional something special for me, like what we call in New Orleans, "lagniappe" — "a small gift given to a customer by a merchant at the time of a purchase (such as a 13th doughnut on purchase of a dozen), or more broadly, something given or obtained gratuitously or by way of good measure." (Wikipedia.org) (The word is from the Louisiana French brought in to New Orleans by the Spanish Creoles.)

This past week, I ordered up the "onglet aux échalotes" plat du jour without substituting the "pommes de terres sautés" and what arrived was all that plus a big honker plate of "salade des haricots verts" (that he knows I love). This special treatment is a sign of how customer service in France can go beyond the norm once you've established the relationship. (BTW, I'm going to get fat if I keep having lunch there and they keep treating me so well!!)

I have also become quite loyal to an optical shop which has kept me in great-looking specs for 15 years: Optique des Vosges. From the first moment I stepped into the shop in 2005 and the owner, Sabine, asked "Are you just looking or are you serious?" and I answered, "Well, I suppose I am serious," I have been treated beyond the norm. Just before Christmas, Eric, Sabine's brother, called me up and said, "Adrian, nous avons a petit cadeau pour toi." (Adrian, we have a small gift for you.) Hmmm...I had ordered up two new pairs of eyeglasses this past summer, so what could it be?

He and Sabine both got on the phone and explained that the lens manufacturer had made a mistake and made two pairs of my lenses (value: €850!). Normally they would have tossed them, but in this case, they made a point to call to give me the good news. Eric went on to say, "You don't have to get the frames here. This is not for me to make a sale. Go find some really wild frames...like at L.A. Eyeworks or wherever you like and we'll make them for you free because we love you." And now you see why I am loyal to them, too. Did I go to L.A. Eyeworks? No! I went to Optique des Vosges and I chose new frames. Of course I did. This mutual respect and loyalty has paid off time and again...and it feels very different from the way we do business in the U.S. where every customer is treated equally. Now, I know you're going to argue that these relationships can be built in the U.S., too. And you would be right. If I were to behave the same way in the U.S., by taking the attitude that I am the intruder in their domain, showing respect for their authority, and loyalty, I'd get back what I was giving. But, I contend that because we get treated so well from the outset without having to earn it, we as customers don't make the same kind of effort as we make in France. We all have stories to tell and we all have our little moments with French merchants and suppliers that fuel our affection for this culture, as tough as it might seem from the beginning. The point is, not to simply believe that customer service in France is bad and that it's good in the U.S., but to fully understand that you can't expect to be treated well if you aren't giving the level of respect you expect to receive. It's actually easy in France to achieve once you develop a relationship! It's all about the relationship you build with these people, not about how much money you spend. And I'm not convinced you can do that as well in the U.S. as you can here in France. Viva la difference

2/06/2020 so very professional -- from Macron of France to the Brits: President Emmanuel Macron, who must see that it's good for France to inherit the fall-out from the U.K. doesn't want to see them go. He published a letter (in English) to the British people this past week:

Dear British friends,

Your country has just left the European Union, after 47 years of life together.

It is the result of the sovereign decision the British people expressed in the referendum of June 2016, a democratic choice France has always respected.

Yet I must also tell you, as an ally and, even more, as a friend and true European, how deeply sad I am at this departure. And I am thinking, today, of the millions of Britons – from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – who still feel deeply attached to the European Union. I am thinking of the hundreds of thousands of French citizens in the UK and British citizens in France who are wondering about their rights and their future: I assure them that we will protect them.

I must tell you, too, that this departure is a shock for Europeans. It is the first time a country has left the European community. The UK was not there when it took its first steps in 1950, but we owe it so much – Winston Churchill's historic foresight, for a start. And since 1973, while our European relationships may at times have been turbulent, the UK has been a central player in the European project – particularly in building the single market, a more influential player than the British have often themselves imagined.

This departure has to be a shock, because there is nothing trivial about it. We must understand the reasons for it and learn lessons from it. The rejection of a Europe which political leaders, in the UK and elsewhere, have too often blamed for all evils, to avoid having to deal with their own failures – that's one reason. Another is, let's acknowledge this, the consequence of a Europe seen as not effective enough, not protective enough, distant from the realities of daily life.

I am convinced therefore that Europe needs new momentum, in a world where the need for control, security and protection is stronger than ever. Perhaps you'll tell me it is no longer your problem? I do not believe that for a minute, because the UK has no interest in a weak European Union. I fight every day, and will continue to do so, for this united, sovereign and democratic Europe, whose strength will make our continent strong.

In this respect, I know the feeling – however you voted in 2016 – that France was "tough" from the start of the Brexit negotiation. I wanted to defend the existential principles of the way the European Union functions: compliance with our rules within the single market, European unity, and stability in Ireland. These are not bureaucratic inflexibilities but the very foundations of the European edifice. But never has France or the French people – or, I think it is fair to say, any European people – been driven by a desire for revenge or punishment.

It is in this spirit of mutual respect and commitment to the European Union and with such powerful ties between our two countries that we must look to the future and build our new relationship.

The British government wishes to move swiftly forward; we are ready for this. It is in our common interest to define as close and deep a partnership as possible in defence and security, and in police, judicial, environmental, scientific and cultural cooperation. At the same time let me be honest, as I have always been: ease of access to the European market will depend on the degree to which the European Union's rules are accepted, because we cannot allow any harmful competition to develop between us.

More directly, I would like to begin a new chapter between our two countries, based on the strength of our unrivalled ties. This year we will celebrate the 80th anniversary of General de Gaulle's 18 June Appeal: the French know what they owe the British, who allowed

our Republic to live. I am coming to London in June to award the city the Légion d'Honneur, in tribute to the immense courage of a whole country and people. Ten years on from the Lancaster House Agreement, we must deepen our defence, security and intelligence cooperation. I would also like Prime Minister Boris Johnson and I to draw on history to boldly build new, ambitious projects, as when the Channel Tunnel finally – physically – connected our two countries.

Dear British friends, you are leaving the European Union but you are not leaving Europe. Nor are you becoming detached from France or the friendship of its people. The Channel has never managed to separate our destinies; Brexit will not do so, either.

At 11.00 p.m. last night we did not say "goodbye", but an early "good morning."

25 Places to Visit in Paris You Really Shouldn't Miss -
<https://www.jetsetter.com/magazine/best-places-to-visit-in-paris-now/>

Why It's Illegal to Take Photos of the Eiffel Tower at Night -
<https://www.travelandleisure.com/photography/illegal-to-take-eiffel-tower-photos-at-night>

In Paris, the rebuilding of Notre Dame is being shaped by history, myth and Emmanuel Macron
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/entertainment/notre-dame-history/>

New Eiffel Tower Park - Paris Announces Plans for a Major New Park at the Eiffel Tower - The park, which is set to open in 2024, will be the largest public green space in the city.
<https://apple.news/AQtBiW4UbRoSaT9UXp549mQ>

11 Secrets Hidden in Famous Works of Art - <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/art-world-secrets-paintings>

Sent on March 7, Subject: Saint Germain apartment near Saint Sulpice for April 5-19 - FYI. A pre-trip report.

With the April 1 Venice to Athens cruise looking impossible with northern Italy near lockdown, we deferred and have now booked it for next year. (There was no place in the calendar before then). Rather optimistic for a 75 and 85 year old, wouldn't you say?

I was getting into withdrawal wondering what I would do for the month of April so I have just booked Paris Solo for two weeks. The solo trip is just a different kind of Paris experience than the lovely one we had last month with Tom - eating and luxuriating. I plan on putting on many miles. Following my nose. Tom kindly encouraged me, and probably was grateful to think I'd get it out of my system.

So when our apartment company offered me a deal, I was quickly on. Sadly they had been fully booked but are getting cancellations. My logic is I am probably safer from COVID in Paris: their workers can stay home and get paid when they are ill; they have been testing all along; they have good medical. Not to mention how well I'll eat and the fresh air. Nice justification, yes?

This is the same apartment we stayed in before with Marie. I had been wanting to stay in the St. Germain area again but my little favorite studio was booked. I have a list of things I'd like to do that would take up a month. You will not be surprised to know that the airfare is a bargain right now.

<https://www.parisvacationapartments.com/en/home/shop/all/our-apartments/two-bedroom/saint-germain-luxury-two-bedroom/>

A note about cancelled trips: I am in the throes of canceling the cruise and the add on days and I'm not so sure but what that takes as much effort as the initial plans. It becomes more of a challenge when they limit the amount of time you can change to. I already had a full calendar.

How to Tour Paris on Foot - <https://www.departures.com/travel/best-walking-tour-paris>

Sister, I don't think you will be coming.... The news is not positive from friends in Italy. Paris is 10 days behind Italy. This is worth a read: <https://www.newsweek.com/young-unafraid-coronavirus-pandemic-good-you-now-stop-killing-people-opinion-1491797> Richelle

Why You Should Visit the Eiffel Tower at Exactly 1 A.M. - <https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-tips/best-time-to-see-eiffel-tower>

What Is a Flaneur? Me! In Paris - <https://www.departures.com/travel/what-is-flaneur>

Stairway to Heaven: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/stairway-to-heaven>

Print for pocket

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Closest to Concorde Metro Stop