



Paris Solo Trip Notes **December 1-13, 2015**

Highlights

- Solo trip by suggestion of Tom -- since my last three trips had been on other people's agendas. I think he liked the idea of my walking at my own speed too.
- It felt sacrilegious to be in Paris without Tom.
- Terrorist activity had just occurred a few days prior (while I was in Rome.)
- CAP21 ongoing for same days I was in Paris -- just a coincidence.
- Ten nights in a tiny studio apartment that worked out just fine. (Added one night at the airport.)
- Museums and more museums.
- Restaurants and more restaurants and enough to gain a full four pounds.

This trip was pretty unique for me; not that I don't travel alone, but to be in Paris where I knew my way around from dozens if not a hundred trips, and to just be footloose-and-fancy free, was a treat. There being no push to see sights and to just wander (flaneur) as I wanted at the moment was a new experience. I've done that in New York City, but rarely for more than a day let alone nearly two weeks. I am considering doing it again and maybe in the same little bitty studio apartment too.

Daily notes sent home

Day 1 - to Paris

It isn't fair. Despite Tom encouraging me to make this solo trip, Paris is after all HIS first. I'd never have grown to love it without his encouragement, his French language skill, his ability to get around, on and on. Yet the last three trips to Paris have been on someone else's agenda and/or aborted so at his suggestion, it didn't take me long to book my flight and now I'm on my way SOLO.

I have rented a tiny little studio apartment in St Germain des Pres. I'm about to have a two-week footloose and fancy free, and supposedly spontaneous trip and here I am with such a long list I surely can't get it all done. So much for spontaneous; I am a planner. I am a list maker. I am an explorer. I have lots to do. We shall see if two weeks is enough -- or too much.

After my return from Rome and suffering through economy seating on Air Canada, I have vowed to do everything I could to not travel that way any longer. I'm old, set in my ways, and can hopefully find a way. I was granted a big gift of 1st - 1st class on the way to Rome but that I am not needing. Business class yes.

From one of my newsletters: "After the tragic events in Paris last month, our hearts and minds are with the victims of the terrorist attacks this festive season. While the world's thoughts and prayers are with Paris, it's important to remember that even in the darkest times, Paris is a city that celebrates life and its people are more determined to live and love more than ever - especially with the holiday season coming up. Since security has clamped down in the city, its streets are safer than before, and there is no season more beautiful in Paris than December."

Do I worry about security? I was in Rome when this event happened (and Rome was on the short hit list) but remember that I was in the New York City area when 9-11 happened. Part of the point being

that it can happen anywhere and some of our recent problems in the US have been perpetuated by home grown terrorists."

The holidays in Paris have a special fond memory for me. We lived within a couple hours at Paris for five years. One of our early trips after moving back to the U.S. was in November with rain and wind but with all the holiday decorations out. We were in the Madeline area; at the end of our few days Tom announced that it was the best trip we'd ever had. No ritzy hotel, no sunshine, no big extravagant spending, but the holidays in Paris ARE magical.

Remembering a few years back we took Marie to Vienna at the holidays for their Christmas markets. They were just closing up. Here is a write up on those of Paris: "Nothing says Christmas like Paris' Christmas markets, so if you want a dose of festive cheer, just get into the spirit of the season at these markets. You can pick up Christmas decorations, festive objects as well as arts and crafts.

The Champs-Élysées Christmas Village. - Put some Christmas lights up around Paris' most prestigious boulevard and you've got a picture perfect location for some Christmas shopping. This is the largest Christmas market in Paris and one with an unbeatable atmosphere. While it might not be the best place for shopping and perhaps even overpriced at times, you can't ask for more when it comes to the wow factor."

I've been there. I'm going again. Mulled hot cider. Lights. Crowds. Music. Put the wallet inside your clothes but GO.

Or: **Christmas Market and Ice Rink at the Trocadero** "There is no place more iconic than the Eiffel Tower, and doing a spot of Christmas shopping with this Parisian landmark in the backdrop is a magical experience. You'll find 100 stands here where you can buy gifts, as well as ice skating and snow villages. Doesn't get more festive than that!" Like places, there are so many choices, so little time.

I've booked a music concert and dinner at Sainte Chapelle under their most famous stained glass in the world. I'll go shop under the dome and holiday decorations of Galleries Lafayette. A picture perfect location most have seen either in a movie or poster. Last Christmas we were in Barcelona. This Christmas holiday season first in Paris then December 20 to Lisbon. Where to next?

Now I board the plane to start my adventure.





Day 1 into Day 2 - cont'd on way to and into Paris

I heard that the Ernest Hemingway book "A Moveable Feast" was selling out in Paris almost as a show of support as in I LOVE PARIS and I didn't remember having read it so off to the store I went. It's my first book of the trip, then Paris Letters or maybe my Napoleon history book. I have a series of tour books I've gone through and brought. (There's always something new.)

Not new and a favorite is beef short ribs on the airline menu. With red wine sauce, aji Amarillo sauced mashed potatoes, fine green beans and carrots. That after seafood with remoulade sauce and salad and always followed by a cheese course and gelato with toppings, all of which I decline and hope to be sleeping. IF I can sleep, we are awoken far too quickly with breakfast.

I always look forward to the newest editions of United's Hemisphere magazine as well as their Rhapsody premium magazine but alas the November issue remains on board. Darn - it's December 1. Yet it's ok as I'll have three more flights this month to get the December issues. They often give me travel ideas. (Are you laughing at the thought that I need ideas?).

Before we took off, but a half hour after we were due to take off, a very typical announcement came on: "we are working on a small maintenance issue and will advise you soon". Forty five minutes later and no update. One should never book an event for their first day. Fortunately I did not.

No stress for me, (plied with wines help), and we finally took off one hour late. I was glad to have decided on a taxi despite the traffic and accident on the way into town as that's stress free. I was a rightly told that taxis were well-controlled, reasonable, and simple to take. A limo driver could have charged me for the delay. Besides I wanted to hunt down an ATM first. My apartment contact had noted my delay and showed up at the same moment I did to the apartment.

The taxi ride in was lovely because we got off the periphery ring road at place Wagram and onto boulevard Malesherbes where I saw plenty of familiar places, leading into the Madeleine area where we stayed in a hotel many holiday seasons ago, down rue Royal full of designer shops and holiday decor, and crossing Concorde where the Ferris wheel is up and the Christmas market is alive and well, looking down the champs d'elysee, then crossing the river into MY neighborhood.

I should have taken a picture before I gunked up the apartment. It is a very tiny little place (thus easy to get messy) but quite quaint with an old wooden beams and everything I might need just all in miniature. It is smaller than almost any hotel rooms that I stay yet it has a washer and dryer combo, microwave, two burner stove, half size refrigerator, a nice little mirrored closet with shelves, and a big walk-in shower. The table is almost big enough for two people but must share with the iPad. It cost less than a third of a typical hotel room. Less yet compared to Tom's hotel rooms. Best of all, for my couple of weeks I can feel less like a tourist.

Shopping? Picture a big bag with a couple little wheelies on the bottom and that's what you see in grocery stores. Getting a sack or bag with your groceries is not the norm anywhere in Europe. I filled up with coffee, breads, yogurt, muscili, eggs, French cheeses, pates both of country and fois gras and of course alcohol. Can you tell I was hungry? The apartment supplies papers, coffee, croissants and wine.

Checking email I was reassured of my safety having signed up with the embassy and recorded my address and dated thus now getting alerts.

U.S. Embassy Paris, France- Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Demonstration in Paris-December 2, 2015: The U.S. Embassy in Paris informs U.S. citizens that an activist group, Zone A Defendre (ZAD), is planning to demonstrate against COP-21 today at the Avron Metro Station (33 Rue des Vignoles, 75020) in Paris at 7:00pm. This is an unauthorized demonstration and we advise U.S. citizens to avoid the area at that time.



Done for now. Until we meet again. Or you press delete.

Day 2 - end of my partial day in Paris

It still doesn't seem fair that Tom is not here as Paris is his city. It certainly is also the city of light that being holiday lights. I saw that glitzy holiday lights on rue Royal as I came into the Madoline area and all the big brand shops then into Concorde where the Ferris wheel was later lit up and already all of the Christmas market lights were both sides of the champs d'Elysee.

After doing my marketing and settling in I would retrace those steps through all of the St germain des Pres street and over the bridge into Place de l'Concorde. By the Place Vendome where they are still working but where allegedly the Ritz Hotel has been renovated. I was tempted to go in as that was one of the Hemingway haunts (when someone else would pay the bill.) Tuileries garden and rue de Rivoli was calling and suddenly I surprised myself by a need to go through the Palais Royale and to our favorite little restaurant. The rue Rivoli alongside the Louvre has become much more touristy and many news shops have opened to include a Mc Café. There were many people sitting outside for a smoke and their free Internet connection.

I stopped by the theatre that I have walked by so often and never been all the way into. The Comedy Française. I thought surely with my 10 days here and only needing one theater ticket that there would be something but I was wrong. So much for worry that the terrorist action had slowed down Paris. Not.

I wandered some in the Palais Royale gardens and remembered that being my favorite location for an apartment - also because I loved the apartment and the gardens.

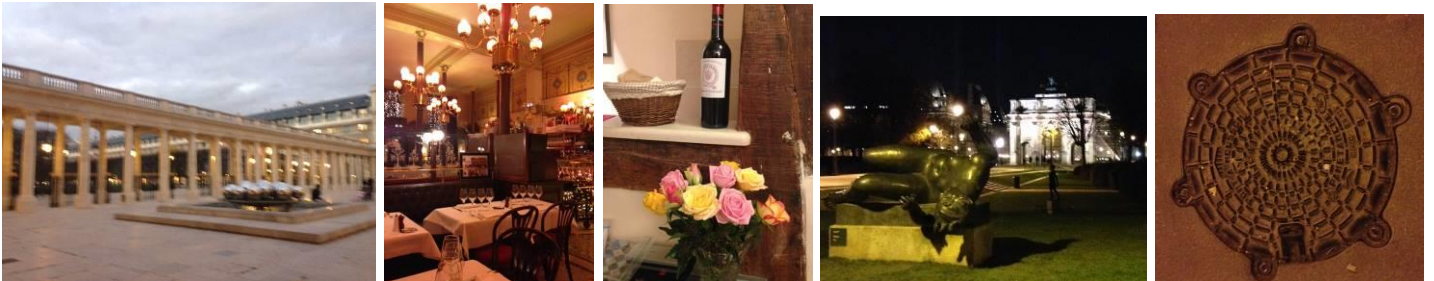
Once Tom and I found a book called the historical brasseries of Paris and followed the history and menu of many of them. Our most frequent return has been to the Brasserie Colbert just on the edge of rue Saint Honore and not far from the Palais Royale. It was here that I rested my tired little tootsies and filled my tummy as well as my head with lovely memories. The wine didn't hurt.

I walked home through the Louvre museum area and still wonder why the big red lightning looking lights inside the I.M. Pei pyramid. The rue Royale bridge route had taken me past the museum D'Orsay which by then was well lit. Since the sun goes down shortly after 4 PM there's plenty of time for lighting.

I followed rue de Bac most of the way home remembering many of the same areas where Tom and I have lived before. I finally settled in, turning my light out after 10 PM. Such a long day made it easy to sleep and the sun doesn't come up until almost 8:30 AM so I need not worry about my window covering keeping the sun out.

I like my little studio apartment very much. I meant to send a picture and still might but I'd need to tidy up. The whole apartment would all fit in one screen. The whole apartment is smaller than the bathroom in our presidential suite of Bilbao. No joke.

Mr. Burton - I would say "wish you were here" but you WERE here twice thru FaceTime plus you were probably glad you weren't needing to keep up with my miles. Smile.



The pictures include a scene from the gardens of the Palais Royale, the interior of brasserie Colbert, looking toward the Louvre and Tuilleries gardens, the flowers and wine gifts that come with my apartment, and finally an interesting manhole cover for Beverly's collection.

Day 3 - my first full day in Paris - Part 1

Let's see how lazy one can be: sleeping straight thru from 10pm to 8am. It helped that the sun doesn't rise pre 8:30am.

Today is my Sainte Chapelle concert and dinner day. But not before practicing the Parisian skill of being a "flaneur" -- that being a happy wanderer. It doesn't come all that easy as I keep catching myself looking at street signs, checking where I am on the map, and seeing if there's any tourist site in the area. I try NOT.

After coffee using the dirty French coffee pot called "pression" (fill a container with coffee grounds, add hot water, press with an alleged strainer, and get out only part of the grounds), three cups of that thick stuff got me going.

I set off going in the opposite direction of yesterday on rue Raspail seeing plenty familiar from previous stays in the area. I found a little Park Babylon and then THE Bon Marche. Wow but there's nothing to make one feel so ritzy as walking thru Fendi, Louis Vuitton, Chanel and the big dollar designers. I tried for another Hanro Swiss lingerie but nothing topped those two I already own which never wear out so I left empty handed. The Bon Marche is noted for their take-out food but I needed nothing, as I have dinner included tonight and a food tour tomorrow. And a full tiny refrigerator.

From there I found rue du Four, a shopping paradise with very French looking shops, finally leading into rue Buci where we resided in November 2014 and where friend Kim stayed at the hotel Buci. It's a top eating street and a much better location than our last remote hotel L'Abbeye. It was hard not to buy food at one of the stalls or stop at one of the many restaurants.

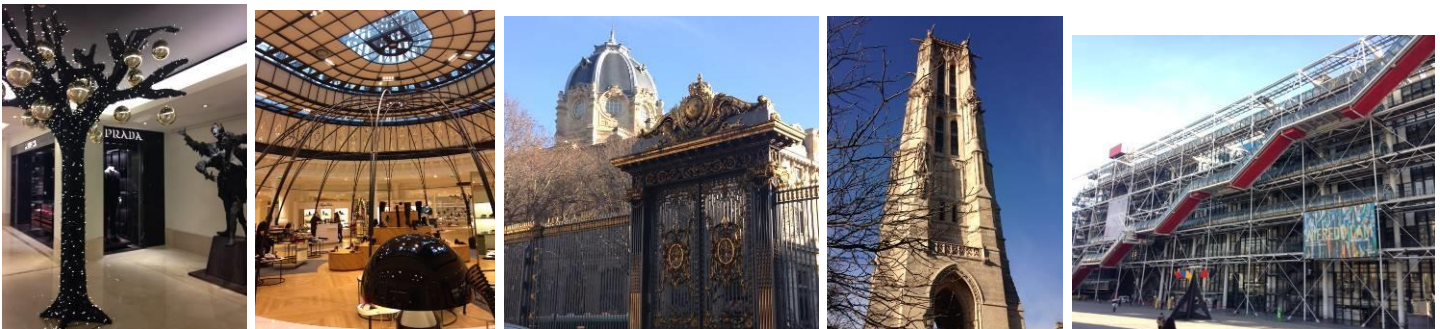
Rue de la Ancient des Arts took me into the deep part of the Latin Quarter and the busy place St Michele where I have fond memories of another grande brasserie. Do I sound hungry? I wasn't but France does that to you.

Crossing the river into Ile de la Cite I could see Sainte Chapelle, the Palais de Justice, the Concierge where Marie Antoinette was held pre decapitation, all topped by Notre Dame. My ticket for the evening shouldn't have but it got me into Sainte Chapelle. I was only trying to get my evening ticket pre long lines. There was a block long line but I went in at the Museum Pass line and no one stopped me. Security is tight, as it is everywhere, even at the Bon Marche. (Lots of new employment.).

Though I want to return to the Ile de la Cite Bird Market on Sunday, I wandered through the everyday flower market and reluctantly skipped buying hyacinths or cyclamens but vowed to do so for the apartment later.

Crossing the river still again (I was on an island after all) it was irresistible not to follow rue St Martin to the Pompidou Center. I hear it grows on you. It never has grown on Tom so I hadn't seen it for years. I sit inside now over a wine and tarte au framboise having again felt dumbfounded that such a building exists in Paris. It sure made a name for Pompidou. Haussmann would turn over in his grave were he to see it. There are however many exhibits inside and I half enjoyed a Cuban historical photo show and I did consider a pair of earrings in their gift shop though the 3-figure price contained me.

Prior I'd stopped at the Tour St Jacques that had been in restoration and covered up for years. It's still locked up though finally uncovered. The park offers free WiFi as do many parks here but it's filled with homeless and couples who need a home and shouldn't be "performing" in front of the children's playground.



Pictures added include some from the Bon Marche where there are rows of these black trees, even hanging, one from inside Sainte Chapelle square, then Tour St Jacques and the infamous Pompidou center.

I have so many Paris pics and photo shows that I've not yet used my regular camera. Who hasn't seen Notre Dame at least in pictures. (Well, once grandson was invited and said NO because his grandma wore him out, so HE hasn't.)

Day 3 - part 2

When in Paris I guess a trip into Notre Dame is inevitable.

After passing and walking around the Hotel de Ville, which translates to Town Hall, I was just too close to Ile St Louie not to walk across Tom's favorite bridge and past the cute and ancient Ile St Louie Brasserie. It was this bridge where we first encountered the many times we would hear Under the Skies Of Paris played on the accordion. We would be haunted by it. In the Metro. On the streets. We kept thinking it was the same accordion player. Then it would pop up on Tom's car Sirus when he was taking me to the airport. Eerily. The same music just came up again on the car service

website for transport out of CDG. It's on my many times emailed website of 360 degrees of Paris rooftops at night.

But the music wasn't in Notre Dame but darned if some modern art wasn't. It is seeming more common now. Inside the Vatican Museum. Inside the Borghese Villa. All trying to intermix with the old and doing reasonably well at it too.

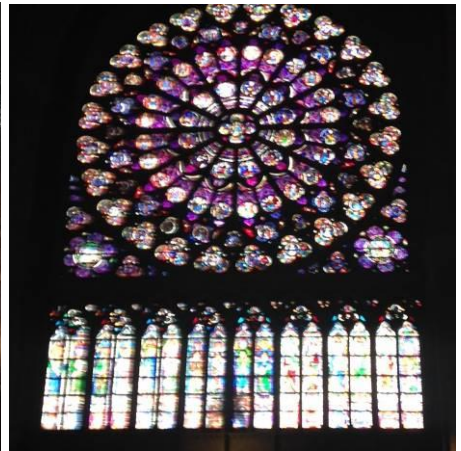
Walking through the flower market again revealed an orchid shop with some very unique plants. I'd be tempted Next door is the old historical Hotel Dieu, still a hospital and maybe one of the first known in the world.

Nearby was one of the original fill-your-own water-bottle fountain. The French all apologize for starting the water craze and creating copies of this water fountain, but in red, all over Paris. I'll add that pic later since I've run out of room.

Dinner was a set menu with a couple choices and I suppose for the tourists they offered French Onion Soup. I chose vegetable. Then a lovely pasta dish with white creamy sauce, big chunks of tender salmon and topped with smoked salmon went well with my Provence Rose. Passed on dessert. Can French ruin food? NOT. Or I can't remembering it happening yet.

I knew to ask for a seat and a drink before admitting I was on a pre-set so I got a good ringside seat.

Obviously part 3 is due since I've not yet gotten to the concert.



Day 3 - part 3: Oops. I ran out of room on part 2.

I sent a photo of Notre Dame you might not see often. It's Tom's favorite from the backside. Then crossing the bridge gave not only a side view but a view of the bridge locks. No matter what the authorities try, kids buy and stick locks anyway. I hope it works for them. They did, after all, throw away the key into the river causing a pollution problem . . .

Now. Here is the promised French bottle filler picture. The first few which are quite ancient were a donation to the city. They are all green. Red seems to be the copied. The line up behind it is for Sainte Chapelle entry.

Note that one would not go to a Sainte Chapelle concert at night to see the stained glass windows lit up. Despite the website picture. Nor should they go without an extra few layers of clothing. It was good. It was bone chilling.

I added one picture from Wikipedia obviously taken in strong daylight and by a professional. .

I bought the program because all of Beverly, Marie and Tom would ask what they played. All string instruments and one weird piano that sounded tinny. Les Solistes Francais led by Paul Rouger sound to have a calling and they were selling 8 different CDs. Their bios and awards looked impressive but what do I know? I was able to sit thru



all of Vivaldi's Four Seasons though so that's a good sign. Paul did all the violin solos. He looks like a young skinny Einstein.

Maybe I'll send the short video I surreptitiously made. I was in a front row so it was possible.



Oh, the concert started with Pachelbel's Canon then Albinoni's Adagio. That's copied from the program as its all Greek to me. The wild bio of Vivaldi is more to my understanding: a priest who couldn't lead mass because it made his chest hurt. A priest who traveled with allegedly pious women to keep him company for his health. Sounds like he had a good time and thus died young.

That alter and the chapel to hold it was made at a cost of (today's) \$150 million to house the alleged \$300 million crown of thorns worn by Jesus at the last. That was money spent by Louis IX in 1240 paid to Constantinople - now Turkey. Those Turks are still pretty smart. The crown is now in the Treasury available to be seen for a small - smile - entry price.

The end. Until a food extravaganza tomorrow.



Day 4 - like I need more food so off I go on a food tour!

Food tours have proven to be an excellent way to learn an area. A little history, the meeting of locals, learning new foods and filling the pantry - to say nothing of filling the tummy. We've had simpler tasting tours such as www.paris-walks.com and extravagant tastings and learned of new foods that some were hard to believe (civet cat digested coffee beans) in Florence, full meal and humorous long day foodie in Rome, market driven in Santiago, picnics in Patagonia, five ethnic boroughs with www.bigonion.com for their multi ethnic eating tour in NYC and surely more.

Now I'm in an all new Latin Quarter area. I've investigated areas on either side and close enough they are only one metro stop in either direction. Cardinal Lemoine for Hemingway old home and haunts. Arab Institute for its weird technological modernity, and the Jardin des Plantes. Just a bit farther is the familiar Gare d'Austerlitz. I suspect we will enter into the Pantheon and Sorbonne area, all familiar and not far from Luxembourg Gardens.

I arrived easily and via my first metro trip since arriving. I prefer to stay upside I.e., on the streets, to fully take in the sights whenever I can.

Speaking of new areas - my rue Grenelle apartment isn't but a metro stop away from other areas we've rented but last night by taking a different route home I found some new sights. Local designers have opened and one was having a wine open house. I'd gotten momentarily lost in the back streets and glad I did. All of which reminds me how we often negotiate with ourselves between returning to a well known and loved neighborhood or trying a new one. I'm an explorer so generally opt for NEW. Having admitted and declared that, I confess it's hard to not return to Palais Royal.

Culinary tours of Paris - Latin Quarter - the places we visited:

Dans Les Landes...Mais à Paris, [119 Bis Rue Monge](#) - Basque charcuterie from Eric Ospital- Saucisse sèche du Pays Basque, Jambon Cuit à l'Os, Chorizo, and Chichons de Canard. (Did you see that? Basque where we were in October!)

Salade de légumes tiède

Wine- Irouléguay from Domaine Abotia (Tannat, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon)

Never heard of this contrôlée area or grape.

Les Pijos, [2 Rue de L'École Polytechnique](#) - Wine- Brouilly from Georges Descombes(Gamay) and eating from our choice off the menu.

Carl Marletti, [51 Rue Censier](#) - Pastries: Éclair au caramel beurre salé, Tarte au citron, Mont Blanc

Four hours of eating from one place to another with tourist stuff in between gave me these pictures. Assuming pictures speak a thousand words, get your saliva glands ready.

There were main course choices and quenelles would have been more French but I knew them, love them, understand the caloric count of the sauce, so I chose salmon and vegetables. I'm in too many restaurants to not TRY to be careful. Every day is like Halloween.

The first course as appetizers revealed a shocking suggestion of new research indicating duck fat might be as healthy as olive oil. Look it up! There are multiple sources and some logic.

The dessert shop won in all of Paris based on their 6 euro lemon tart.

I'd had a glass of wine or two at each stop so you might guess that this next story hardly phased me. I saw boys playing football on the street but suddenly WHAM in the back of my head a ball but fortunately only knocked OUT my hair clip.

Did I like the tour? Maybe my least liked but ok. Likely my doing as I battle myself and dislike UP-TALK. You know that term? It's a question mark and upwards sound at the end of a sentence. That's not good for a tour guide who is supposed to be the expert - not asking. It's all too common so I shouldn't be so critical but it annoyed me.

I have more but as it's late and I have many miles on my feet and too many calories in my tummy, it's to be continued.

PS thanks to Mr. Burton for introducing me to and helping me learn and love Paris. Every step. Every moment. I'm grateful and happy and blessed.



Day 5 - my residence in Paris

Remembering that I always said I didn't need a house but only a tiny apartment, this is surely a test of those words. So far it seems that I am correct and that I'm doing well in this apartment that is smaller than most any of our hotel rooms.

Here is the owner www.parisvacationapartments.com description:

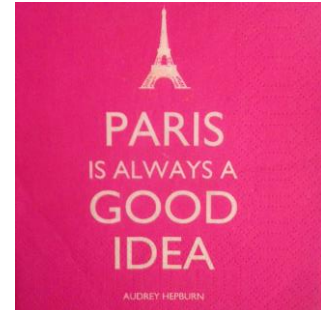
Exceptional location! This quiet and bright luxurious studio apartment (22 square meters - 237 square feet), is situated in the famous St Germain des Prés close to the Musée Maillol, in the heart of Paris fashion, galleries, antique shops, traditional market streets and restaurants. It is also just a few minutes from the famous "Cafe Flore" and "Les Deux Magots", the Musée Rodin and the Musée d'Orsay. This beautiful completely renovated and fully equipped studio, with its elegant ancient marble floors and high light wooden beam ceiling, is the perfect flat for a couple (or a couple with a child) wanting to experience the true Parisian life style in a chic, elegant and authentic neighborhood.

I do take exception to the thought that three people could easily live here.

Then on a different subject, I have added a picture found along the river Seine and all those little kiosks that sell old books and pictures. He lives within a couple miles of us in NJ - in quite a different neighborhood. Smile.

While on the food tour we entered a noted church in the Sorbonne area and it is one that retains its divider between the clergy and the audience. During the revolution most all of these dividers were torn down and it is unknown why this one remains.

I will add with a picture of a cocktail napkin with a sweet quote from Audrey Hepburn.



Day 5 - part 2 just like a true tourist.

I'm indulging in a big lunch in a noted brasserie within perfect view of the Eiffel Tower. Doing the tourist circuit.

Having walked all of my Street rue Grenelle then thru the now touristy foodie rue Cler, and into the back side of Eiffel Tower via Ecole Militaire and Champs de Mar, I feel like a tourist. (Yet it needed done as how could I go back to NJ without having seen the basics to include the Etoile, avenue champs des élysées and the grand Palais?).

We've lived on a section of this rue Cler before it got touristy yet when it was THE market and gastronomy of Paris. It's still interesting and I'd loved to purchase dinner to take home but it wasn't much past noon.

We'd lived in the Champs de Mars area too. I was sure that memory would serve me and I'd remember a favorite restaurant. Alas, if I relied on memory I'd starve. By the time I got under and thru the tourists at Eiffel Tower, road kill would have looked good. I had granola bars but I'm in France and road kill and granola bars share too much.

Nice memories too of looking straight up from under the Eiffel Tower from a bike ride and more recently standing on the place in the snow with Marie when it was a rare closure due to the snow. Despite the cold and it being off season The lines were amazingly long to include the line for those with pre-purchased ticket reservations. It was likely due to security checks as there were numerous policemen and soldiers with Oozies all over the area.

Hunger! I was sure if I got to the far side of the museums of man after the Eiffel Tower that I'd find a choice of three known brasseries. Then I encountered a demonstration that the State Department didn't warn me about and despite my stated rule that I'd stay away, I trudged thru for my two course dinner, wine, then Calvados at brasserie Trocadero. Though I asked for and got a quiet seat in the back, the window gave a perfect view. Waiters are trained to leave you alone until you ask for a check. Or wait long enough for a second meal. I'm close. I deserved it. I walked for three hours. I have about that much more to get home.

I was slow leaving my apartment because I was lazy and overslept. It's a good thing I have extra days here because after I turned off my alarm, it was two hours until I woke up again. Was the headache from the WHAM-bam of the football? Probably only a bit of jet lag.

Three hours of walking? It was via Invalides and Napoleon's Tomb and the war museum. Costumed performers and music. Even horses.

Gads but how many Napoleons were there? Only one who claimed himself King Of Rome but two who claimed to be Emperor. Pictures follow.

I thought the first was his tomb but then thought I'd remembered it being larger. No kidding. That was his brothers. The outer ring was filled full of huge tombs. Napoleon's tomb practically out did the Pope's we saw on my last trip. Remember the story of Napoleon having the pope visit so he could be crowned king of Rome? Then Napoleon decided that no one was good enough to do it but himself and he took the crown and crowned himself. And his wife as queen.

Yep, these are all part of the tomb and there is even more. Later.





Day 5 - cont'd part 3 and surely the end of my true tourist day

The walk after sitting at a restaurant ringside to the Eiffel tower was interesting but a little bit worrisome. Who says that tourists are staying away from Paris. I can't imagine that all of them were not on the Champs des Elysee this evening. As both two sets of police types (I think they have three branches in France) plus soldiers were all over I should not have worried but it was crowded and got dark so I didn't do the entire length of the Avenue but rather turned off at the grand Palais.

Most of all stores and shops now have a security guard. So I figured it should be pretty safe if I stayed near to the doorways. I remember the year that Tom and I suddenly decided that the main Avenue was no longer what it used to be. It got very dark. Now there are a lot of people who are very dark who are riding these little hover skateboards. And miniature Segways. But the Avenue still contained lots of families, strollers, and some of everything, but probably not locals who used to come out for a stroll, looking good, and taking in the nice shops and restaurants. Now even the shops are very mixed.

At the Eiffel Tower, I forgot about the real scene. There was a DeLorean car and a few other ritzy convertible types that they were offering for a short drive for a big price. I had another picture that I thought was cute because it was a yellow pedi cab parked next to the yellow DeLorean. Farther down on the Avenue I would see more of these cars offered for a test drive.

The Avenue has always had some big-time car makers showing off their concept cars and what they have for sale. Here's a picture of Renault offering their holiday decked out Smart-car type with Santa Claus for pictures. There was a line. Oh, there was a huge line to get into Abercrombie too. Odd?

I would peel off the big Avenue well after all the Christmas market booths and pretty much general carnival atmosphere, and go over the bridge at the Grand Palais where I took the picture of the fully lit Eiffel Tower. Later I saw it in its twinkling stage which picture really only worked with the video but here's an effort to show it in a picture. They do the special twinkling lighting every hour. The first time I ever saw this we were in an apartment on the far side of the Eiffel Tower in the Champs des mars area and we had a huge skylight. Suddenly there it was and it was probably as exciting as a kid seeing a first Christmas tree.

The Big building lit up at night is the front of the Invalids complex with the dome of Napoleon's tomb in the background.

With that, I think I am done.



Day 6 - Sunday and Paris families go out en mass

I didn't decide until this morning what direction to go but I suspect now that any direction would have had hordes of people on the street. It's Family Sunday.

The Marais neighborhood and particularly the old and famous Place de Vosges is said to be one of the most beautiful squares. It was built for a king in the 1600s which made the Marais into an exclusive neighborhood but the king never live there. Victor Hugo did and his house is open to the public but not all that exciting. The square, the arcades around the Place, the restaurants, and all the art shops certainly are.

It was far enough away that there was a logic to take the metro but I persist in my desire to stay above ground and put the miles on. I went by the Cite to see the Sunday bird market and also take the 'temperature' of the line for Saint Chapelle. I thought if the sun were shining and the line was not horrid that I might indulge. It was not to be.

Funny - while there were a lot of birds despite the cold, there were also little hens and big chickens and this teeny little cute shivering dog. See the picture.

On the way I passed the bridge of love locks now damaged and in repair. Sad. Lovers are still finding ways to damage fences, signs, and other bridges. It will never be the same.



But across the street is the Institute of French language which is nice to think that because of it the French language will always be the same. I'll add a picture.

My feet did take me on through the Ile St Louie and all the lovely little touristy shops in what is a village atmosphere. From there I crossed the river and went into another quaint village called St. Paul where there are parks and courtyards and a quiet atmosphere. The area also includes another village that has maintained its quaint Jewish traditions but I didn't go there today. Tom and I have taken a walking tour of the area in the past. Rue Rivoli runs into Saint Antoine and it was into there that I wandered the little streets where we stayed in a hotel on one of our earlier trips.



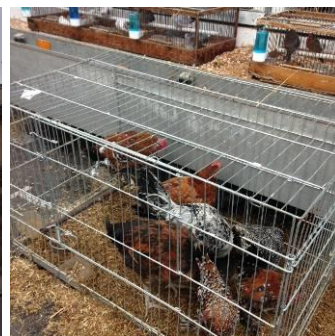
The Swiss Institute is like a design school and where we have often stopped for coffee au lait and where I also got a sandwich today. They always have weird showings and today was no exception with the focus of both their buildings being rag rugs. It has always been a stop on my list because they have good toilets. Smile. They do not however have WiFi and their sign tells why they are proud of it.

It is a rare trip that we don't go to the Paris museum called Carnavalet. It is in a 16 century mansion, free admission, and contains some of our favorite artwork and also some complete historical rooms as well as a pharmacy and a jewelry store.

The lines for security checks are everywhere. Stores, museums and even some cafés. I took myself a little farther into the Marais than I

have ever been, or remembered being, to go to the Picasso museum. But I have a thing about standing in line to pay money and this would have required two lines, security and ticket, so I gave it up. That was a fairly easy decision because I'm not a big fan of Picasso anyway. It is said to be the largest collection of his work but I thought that was what we saw in Barcelona.

To be continued since my photo space allocation is used up.



Day 6 - part 2

Still in the Marais and in particular the lovely place des Vosges.

There were wedding photos being taken. And the rare sunshine on the buildings for a few minutes.

I added one of my favorite art pieces. You could see more in Tom's photo shows. This is a open weave screen with shadowplay of a woman's body.

Eventually I tore myself away from all the little shops and the lovely architecture and all the parks and went off toward Bastille. The prison is long gone and there was a carnival in its place. The rides looked terror-stricken with one of them being like a bungee drop. Maybe my picture will give the idea. That is not a crane. It's a big drop upside down ride next to the two poles that hold a small cage with a bungee bouncing ball in between.

I was off to walk the top of some buildings where they have a long garden of plants. Tom and I had been there before when it was new. But I saw that there were new plantings, arbors and gardens along the canal as well as many houseboats so I wandered as far as I could until the locks came into view and the boat show stopped. There were many Bocce courts and serious players.

Maybe more. Maybe to be continued.....





Day 6 - part 3

One of the most beautiful old style brasseries in all of Paris is called Bofinger. Its glass and mirrors and Tiffany style dome are worthy of the trip. It's at the Bastille.

The first picture is from my seat and the second is off the web. I guess it was my mood today because when I didn't get served in what I thought was a reasonable time I got up and left. If I don't stand in line to pay money I certainly don't sit around and wait to be treated decently. My loss? I am not withering away or getting skinny I can assure you. The seating was coincidentally within one table of where Tom and I ate the last time we were there.

Bastille is not only the place where the old prison and riots were during the revolution but the place of the new absolutely terribly ugly opera house resides. I can tell you that it has no redeeming qualities inside either except that I read that the sound system is good. The sun was going down and the reflection of the carnival on the new opera house was interesting.

I walked "home" a new route using avenue Henry IV. There was a huge bibliotheca in an armory building worth exploring. Later I crossed the river at the very bottom of Ile Saint Louis just as the sun was going down. This was worthy of some extra time staying on the bridge. That is the back side of Notre Dame in the background of the second sunset picture.

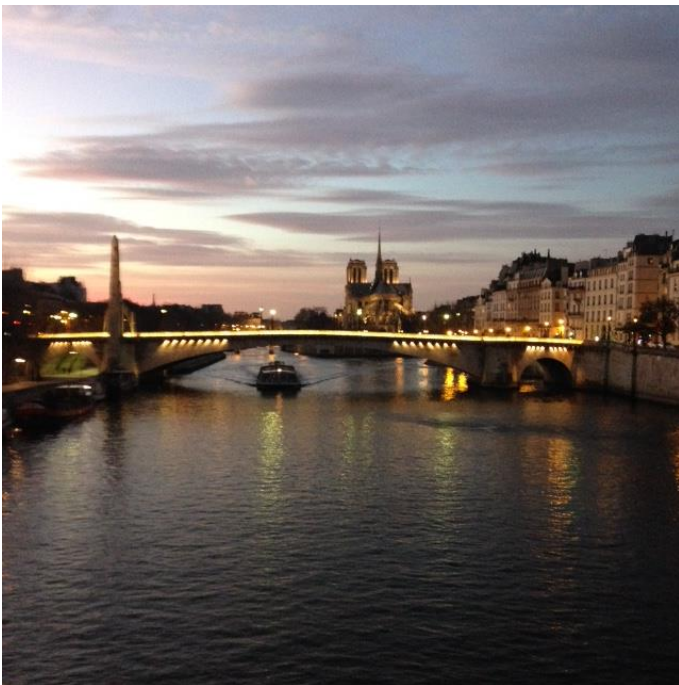
Tom and I have looked at apartments on Ile St. Louis but have never been successful in finding one that was quite right and or that we thought would be quiet.

At the end of the bridge is where Boulevard Saint Germain begins and I live at the opposite end. It was a pleasant but rather long walk full of people, shops, amusements and always glorious architecture.

And to that, and after three parts to my day's adventures, I will confess that it was a lot of miles for me. I have no idea how many miles only that I was on my feet for about 5 to 6 hours.



This cute little very rare car caught my attention not just because I might've needed a ride but also because it will be fun for Tom to guess what it is.



Day 7 - Monday in Paris. Shopping.

I got a lot of attention over the sign displayed in the café at the Swiss Institute. It said "no Wi-Fi – please talk to each other or pretend it's 1993." Nice. To counter that however the other nice thing is how well wired I find Paris. Most of the public parks have free Wi-Fi. I recently saw a list suggesting that the United States is down at number 17 in the world for technology. My apartment has excellent Wi-Fi, and includes a telephone that will call most anywhere in the world for free.

The car was a Facel Vega as guessed by Tom the consummate car lover who adds: "this was a French car with I think, an American V-8. I've always admired the styling and yes, 60s. And this one appears to have been well cared for or restored."

About French drivers: They don't need stop signs as they abide by yielding rules of the road. You know yield rules? Like round-a-bouts. There is exactly ONE stop sign in all of Paris. Surprise?

This was shopping day. Though I'm known for purchasing zilch, the decorations and architecture fascinate me. I found still another new route to cross the river yet couldn't resist going thru the arcades of the Palais Royal after having wandered through Tuilleries and around the Pyramid again.

Le Grande Colbert Brasserie called to me again but after looking in I resisted knowing the logic was to wear my legs out before a sit-down meal.

There are a series of Passages by the Bourse and Tom and I had followed a guide of the best. I found about four more today with Passage Vivienne being the most elegant, Panorama the largest and most diversified and some others somewhat downtrodden. At one I started to reverse course for what appeared to be homeless hanging out but it turned out to be art students sketching from their seat on the floor. Maybe 7 passages were found in all. These were the forerunners to our Malls. I've sent you one interior and one sample of art - maybe titled "the apple of my eye".

I was heading to the Opera and Madeleine area and especially to the huge and beautifully decorated Galleries Lafayette but I was coming from the back side near rue Provence and rue Montmartre, my sense of direction is awful and thus I got turned around and ended up over at the giant Trinity church. I passed restaurants where I could have eaten for a few days instead of where I was headed.

I had avoided my area's trio of famous brasseries: Cafe Lipp, Les Deux Maggots, and Le Fleur - all haunts of Hemingway days and I'd just finished reading his "A Moveable Feast" and found two of his home neighborhoods. But when he got money they'd go to Cafe de la Paix, outside the Opera and now owned by Intercontinental the hotel chain. Why not indulge? I should be embarrassed to admit my bill for a Croute Madame with salad, fries and a single simple rose wine. Near \$34! But it sure was a pretty sandwich.... And I had a ringside seat.

It is unique to us Americans how in France you OWN your restaurant table as long as you want. It would be rude to be hurried off and a bill never arrives until you ask. But equally they don't hesitate to seat people close enough together for it to be uncomfortable to an American. But not to French. Or Italian. Etc. If I see there are other tables, I simply ask for something more private and it's granted.

There's a picture showing you what is a Croque Madame, which is a Croque Monsieur with an egg, usually on top, and I've given you an interior picture and also of their bar. They were lining up the bottles of champagne for a party.

I proceeded to get more lost but eventually found my way back to the beautiful Galeries Lafayette. They have two blocks worth of moving window displays like New York City and Saks Fifth Avenue. They were not as interesting as I expected. You will see a picture of one showing that they were primarily silver or metal robotics.

I'll find some pictures of the interior of Galeries Lafayette to send later. This year the outside lights were either not his dramatic as I remembered or didn't show up well on the pictures.

Again I got myself lost, and going the absolute opposite direction, but reminded myself that I had wanted to be a flaneur and just walk. Eventually I found my way to the Madoline and wandered in that area around the shops and finally toward home going down rue Royale in the night time with all the lights flickering. I saw that same route when I came in by taxi from the airport.

I'll save those pictures for another report. I was tired then and I am tired now and that is a good thing.



Window shopping in one of the Galleries, this one Vivienne; the windows of Galleries Lafayette with moveable robotic three wise men; a place of art – the apple of his eye?



P.S. re suitcase packing. I have found a way to pack even lighter. (And I am known to be able to take a three week trips with just a hand-carry.) Travel alone. No one knows that you're wearing the same thing every day. Rick Steves says you can pack just a pair of jeans and wear them for a month, and then he made it sound like he was joking, but I'm not so sure and think it's a reasonable idea.

Day 7 - Monday shopping in Paris - cont'd

Galleries Lafayette is known for their outside building decorations, again sort of like Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City is. For some reason this year was nearly nonexistent outdoors. I've given you a picture of last year outside and also a picture of this year inside.

I can't imagine what the security will mean to their business but most all doors are sealed off and there is only one entry per building. (There are multiple buildings connected from underground.) This is for security checks which was not only looking in bags, asking you to open your coat, but also the use of a wand. (Should we now have the word wand'ed?).

As you might imagine, at first all the security feels comforting. But pretty soon it gets old and one just chooses to not go in some buildings because you just don't want in bad enough to go through the line and undress.

I went to the Fragonard perfume museum twice and never got the full tour. First I had to wait for security and then wait for an English guide, and then it was too close to closing time. Description:

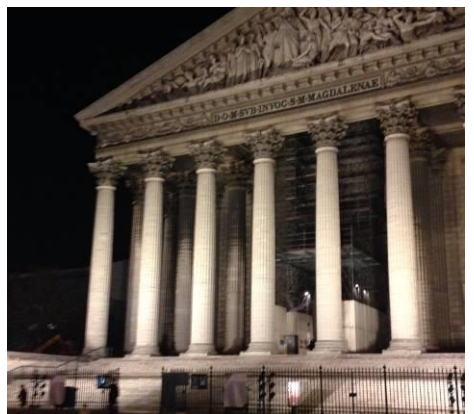
"private mansion from the 19th century, displaying one of the richest collections of perfumery objects in the world, retracing 3000 years of history and skills. Unusually-shaped perfume bottles, pomanders, perfume vaporizers, perfume fountains demonstrating the skills of the artisans of this trade today, glass-blowers, glass-designers and craftsmen will remind you that the bottles are an essential component in creating perfume. At the end of your visit, Fragonard perfumer sells perfume products dating back to 1926 at Grasse, the 'perfume village'."

I remembered the story of Coco Chanel developing her first perfumes in the south of France. Here is a picture of one of their posters. I saw the original artwork in the Frick Museum in New York City. This is just a select piece from a full room of wall Art.

Our guide for the food tour told an amusing story of one of his clients requesting six bottles of this perfume. After about six months of effort in getting it shipped to Canada and finally in very special packaging for what the Canadians call risky chemical materials, he finally got rid of it.

The pictures include the Madeleine, a Cristophe table settings window display, some holiday street lighting with the Concorde Ferris wheel glowing in the background and the Champs des Elysee holiday lights with the Etoile at the end. I gave up the Christmas market festival again for being too risky due to the crowds.

To end, (don't look if you embarrass easily), I will add a picture in Tom's tradition. He always has one of these pictures (and one of a kitty cat) in his photo shows. The French do it with such style!





Day 8 - Tuesday in the rain

I woke early to the sound of bombs and feeling the building shaking. My first thought was wondering if I had enough food in the apartment to stay holed up for a while. (My mother would be proud of me: think of food first). My second thought was that maybe I should put some clothes on. That lasted 10-15 minutes or longer than it should have, probably because I hadn't had any coffee yet.

I finally figured out that nobody was concerned (someone was noisily emptying their bottles into the garbage container in the courtyard), and that maybe it was nearby construction. I checked the state.gov website and there were no alerts and no alarms and thus I promptly went back to sleep.

I would like to stay calmer about these things because it appears that it's not only France that is going to be dealing with terrorism. There is too much good in the world to allow myself to get uptight over what I can't control. The French are out in droves, the cafes are full and the smokers are filling the outside seating.

So instead of whining, I'll tell you a wine story. In our early days of living in France we found the region of Cahors, famous for the black wine of Cahors. It either didn't produce enough or the story was true that it did not travel well, but we could only find it in Cahors, and sometimes in Paris. How things have changed. I found it for the price of €3.85. Was it good? I have rarely found a wine to be bad and this was totally drinkable. And by the way, I have very fond memories of at least two trips to the little hilltop village of Cahors.

It was raining, my body was in no hurry to get going, so I watched distressing news of our political reality and see that many Americans need education. Might our politicians be more dangerous to us than terrorists? Smile. We become more embarrassing every day to the rest of the world with our politics looking like reality TV. The Europeans are dismayed yet they have their own Le Pen and they've had even worse in their recent past. There was a panel of international reporters speaking of their complicity in allowing the rise of cultism; their not calling out the extremist who stretches the truth.

Yet as Tom would say, I'm not going to totally let that spoil my day so I walked in the rain to cool off. Smile. My friend Jim reminds me that our government has a series of checks and balances so all is not lost. Yet we criticized the Europeans for not standing up to Hitler before it was too late....

In Rome it's the Jubilee and I like the Pope's message: "You cannot conceive of a true Christian who is not merciful, just as you cannot conceive of God without his mercy. Mercy is the key-word of the Gospel...we should not be afraid: we should allow ourselves to be embraced by the mercy of God, who waits for us and forgives everything."

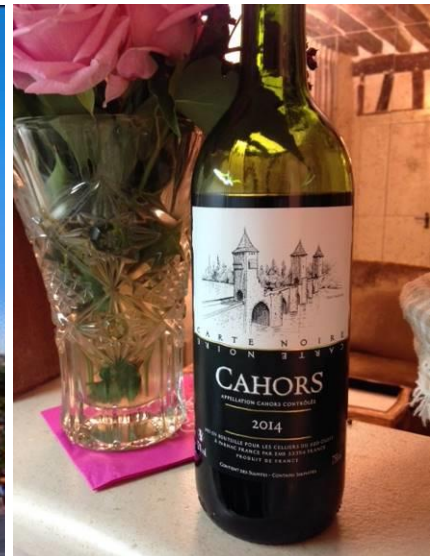
Me too. I've not been a Catholic. I've not been a Democrat. I'm trying to think kindly.

So. Paris is BIG! I found still another route to the river on my way to Shakespeare and Company bookstore. There are many more bookstores in Paris than I've ever seen in the U.S. but I needed to go to the one Sylvia Beach made famous when she helped support starving writers of the Hemingway days. We got "Ulysses" printed due to her support and how else would we ever know of a single sentence that could run on for many pages....

I was wet despite my raincoat and umbrella so when I passed Le Depart St Michele brasserie I stopped. It was good in the past and it was a Hemingway haunt. It was available. It was dry. I had a vegetable salad with Smoked Salmon on top then an Osso Bucco and a Cote d' Rhone. Only the wine was good (and you heard how discriminating I can be) but the food was at least edible plus it got me out of the rain. It's an attractive building on the river on the edge of the Latin Quarter.

PS. I forgot to say that "NO that wasn't ME modeling the lingerie." I wish!

To be continued after I dry off.



Day 8 - part 2 now that I'm dried off

I might have gone to the Louvre today as my memory was serving me that they were now open seven days a week. Wrong, they are closed today, Tuesday. Thus I was hesitant that the line might be long at the museum d'Orsay so I skipped that too. Either or both would have been a good idea since it rained all day despite weather.com saying it was fair outside.

So having hunted down Hemingway haunts and his homes I decided that I needed to go to Shakespeare and Company bookstore. I knew that the current location was not where Sylvia Beach helped find the lost generation. The first was opened by [Sylvia Beach](#) in 1919, at 8 rue Dupuytren, before moving to larger premises on [rue de l'Odéon](#) in 1922. During the 1920s, Beach's shop was a gathering place for many then-aspiring young writers such as [Ezra Pound](#), [Ernest Hemingway](#), [James Joyce](#) and [Ford Madox Ford](#). It closed in 1940 during the [German occupation of Paris](#) and never re-opened. The second is situated on [rue de la Bûcherie](#) almost on the river and at the edge of The Latin Quarter. It Opened in 1951 and was eventually named "Shakespeare and Company" in 1964 in tribute to Sylvia Beach's store. Today, it serves both as a regular bookstore, a second-hand books store, and as a reading library, specializing in English-language literature. The shop has become a

popular tourist attraction and was featured in the [Richard Linklater](#) film *Before Sunset*, and in [Woody Allen's](#) *Midnight in Paris*. (Pieces from Wiki).

Sylvia had an inheritance and used it wisely to help out a number of starving writers. She was from New Jersey.

Coincidentally, the book I found there is called "Sylvia beach and the lost generation – a history of literary Paris in the 20s and 30s". Since I so enjoyed Hemingway's "a movable feast" and David McCullough's "A Greater Journey: Americans in Paris" (from the same time-frame) this big tome looks like a good follow on.

I have given you a picture of the storefront, inside where pictures allegedly aren't allowed, as well as one of the four blackboards.

The reviews on this bookstore are basically correct that it is jammed full and not very many places to feel private, or to read, or to stay out of other people's away. Yet I felt like it was tradition that I had to take part in.

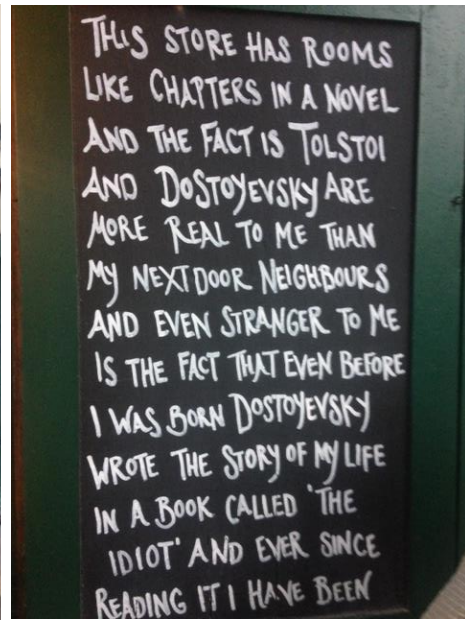
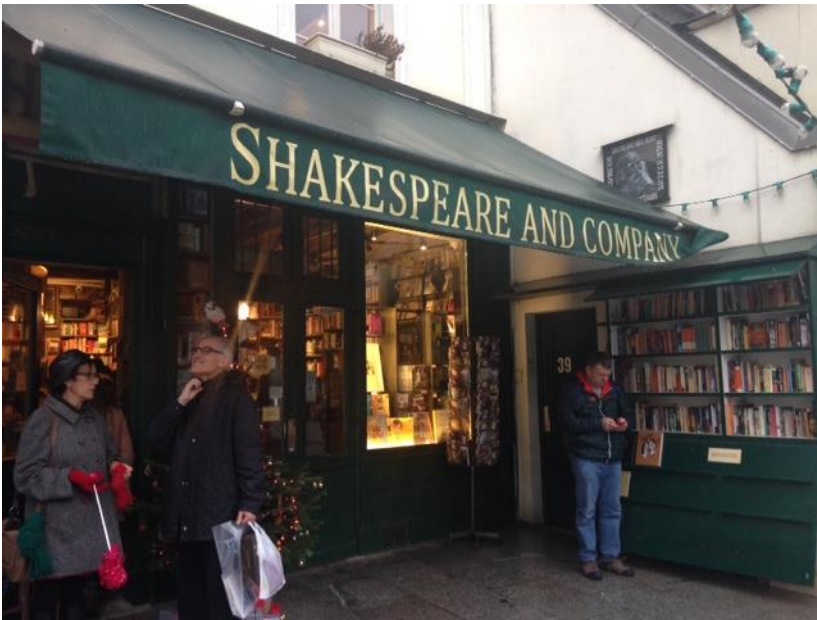
It was still raining and raining really hard. I took myself back through the old Latin Quarter area where there are little food stalls everywhere including gyros which despite having eaten a full meal still looked good.

Do you know why it's called the Latin Quarter? In those days France did not have a common language and Latin was the most common and used around the university. Picture from the web. Narrow streets. Hawkers. Tourist shops. Tiny cafes. Cheap food.



I didn't get very far until water was running down my neck and my jean legs were soaked and my shoes were slushy so there was nothing I could do except stop at a lovely little Brasserie and have a calvados (like an apple brandy.)

I was home early but well after dark and cooking in and into my book about Napoleon Bonaparte, soon to become Napoleon I then Emperor. Ruthless guy.



Day 9 - Wednesday to Luxembourg Gardens and Fragonard special exhibit.

A story about my building first. One enters through a long hallway where there are two sets of doors with pushbutton security codes. I have a hangup about numbers, so I will probably never remember those code numbers in the entire 10 days I'm living here. Yesterday in the rain my little cheat sheet got wet and blurry. Panic. But fortunately I had put my code numbers into my iPhone. I had visions of being locked out.

Then once inside there is a courtyard. Upstairs and over a sort of bridge and into my foyer. It is from this bridge that the picture of the courtyard is taken. I'm one floor up which the French referred to as the first floor. Elevators are uncommon as buildings are not over 4-5 floors. If there are elevators, two people is about all they will hold.

The wonderment has been down on the bottom floor as I'm starting up the stairs. Is it someone cooking sauerkraut? The next day I wondered if it was a



sewer smell? Finally, the logical answer, especially since the smell dissipated by the time I was one floor up: the cheese shop downstairs create some of their own cheese and it's back door opens to the courtyard. And as you probably know, the French love smelly ripe cheese.



I've gotten lazy. You'd think I was on holiday or something. Or like the French who seem to sit at cafes for ages. I was late getting out and early getting in, yet I had enough of an adventurous day with some old, some new, a nice meal, and still grateful for being in Paris.

Remember the lovely cherub looking picture at the Fragonard perfume museum? Over at Luxembourg Gardens, in a museum I've never been in, was a special on Fragonard In Love - Suitor and Libertine. Lovely, innocent, then suddenly sexy and too much so for pictures!

Jean-Honoré

Fragonard https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Honor%C3%A9_Fragonard

When I visited the Frick mansion in New York City I found an entire room that had been created just to hold a room from France of all Fragonard painted walls. It told a sweet story of love. It was enchanting and hard to leave. Here is a picture of it.

This link would give you a 360° tour of the room. http://www.frick.org/visit/virtual_tour/fragonard_room



The picture with the little puppy in it I saw in the Metropolitan Museum of art. I hadn't noticed a sign today that said "no photos allowed" and was told to delete this photo. Of course.

It is probably just as well that the X-rated one is a little bit blurry. Next to it was one that I didn't feel like I should take a picture of it. I blushed.

The gardens are extensive and the people are sitting all around the little lake and enjoying a walk in the park.

Maybe I will add my second half of the day into part 2.



Day 9 - part 2 and lost again

So I walked around the gardens and some new streets after getting totally turned around again. But that's ok. It's what I came to do.

Even after getting myself back into St Germain des Pres area I went the wrong direction and I should have known better as I knew where I was heading. Good thing my legs work well but my stomach was suffering and Le Procope Restaurant was calling.

I think that was our table under the mirror when last at Procope with Marie. Or were we there again with Kim? Maybe at the same table. It was booked today.

From Forbes: Paris has far fancier and more famous restaurants, but none as historic. Upon walking into Le Procope, Napoleon's hat is proudly displayed in a glass case and legend has it this was once left as collateral by Bonaparte, then a young officer, when he could not settle his bar tab. This is the oldest gastronomic venue in the city, operated on and off since 1686, and according to the New York Times, is one of just two restaurants in Paris whose intact decor predates the French Revolution. Napoleon was just one famous visitor, since Voltaire and Rousseau's regular patronage gave Procope a reputation as a cafe for the literary set, while then Ambassador to France Benjamin Franklin worked on the U.S. Constitution at a table here. A cross between a cafe and a bistro, Procope exudes history while remaining a typical neighborhood place, with a homey atmosphere"

Their special is coq au vin and Tom and Marie would eat that and in fact I saw the copper pots at adjoining tables having just that.

A lentil salad with bacon chunks followed by a braised beef and a small carafe of red wine and I was very happy.

I wandered home via a restaurant noted for roasted chicken but they should have been noted for this whole side of their outside wall painted with two chickens or roosters on bicycles.

Did I really get lost again? Maybe not because I quickly realized I was in the Saint Sulpice area where we lived when we were with Marie. Saint Sulpice overlooks a square and the house of the beautiful actress Catherine Deneuve overlooks Saint Sulpice. The shopping around the church square contains a number of big dollar designers.

I have another funny picture but as I am out of space I will



sign off for the day.



Day 10 - Thursday so it must be Louvre day.

It was really cold. It was 37° and windy when I first started out so my plan to be inside the museum was logical. Though the rainy day would've been logical too.

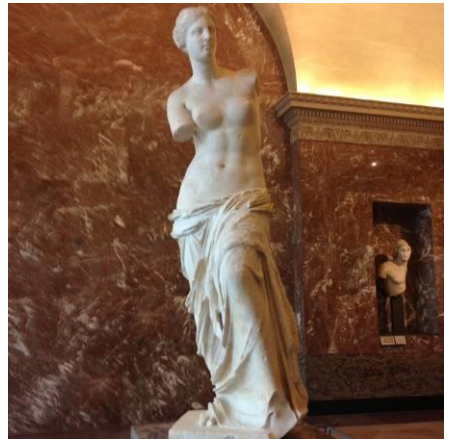
Going to the Louvre wasn't tops on my list because I have been many times. But I had read about Michelangelo statuary that I had somehow missed. They are called his Captives or also known as "the dying slaves".

I wonder if anybody short of some employees really can find their way around. It is so huge and so many wings and so many stairways and so many floors. I tried to remember Ellen's adage that "I've had my best adventures when I was lost" and you can sure get lost in the Louvre but what better place to get lost in.

I didn't care to see the winged victory again nor the Mona Lisa. Those are areas where the crowds are dense. I did want to go through the Napoleon III apartments once again and always find them extremely decadent. They are well-kept and they too go on and on.

Push comes to shove and I certainly found the café easily enough. I had a full meal of salmon with a nice sauce, a big bowl of vegetables, and a vegetable salad, and of course a small bottle of wine.

Let's see how many pictures I have room for and then I'm off to read Sylvia Beach, having finished Napoleon.



Lovely gal? She is otherwise well endowed. One almost forgets to admire the soft folds of the cushion and bedding made of marble when realizing her dual sex. So many sculpture halls. So little time. Venus de Milo.

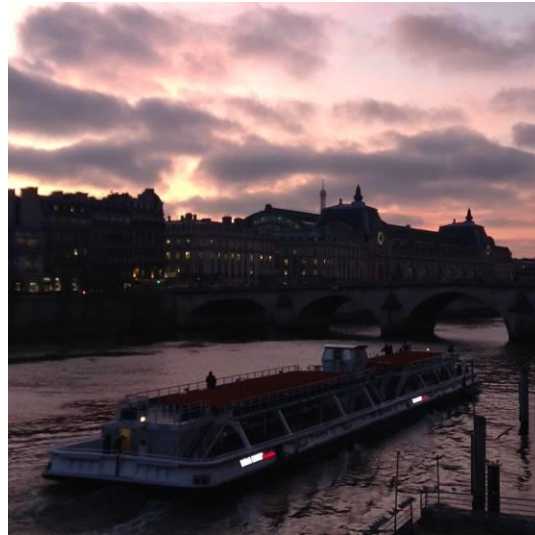
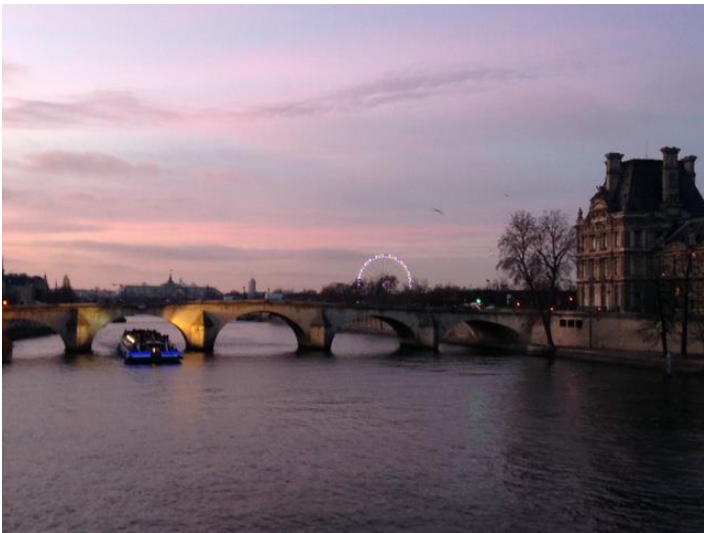


Canova's famous! Wow! A dying slave. Still held captive to the marble. There are two Captives. Drats. I MUST have a part 2 for pics.





I. M. Pei's masterpiece right in the middle of the Louvre. You can just see the red lightning rod in the middle. See the Ferris Wheel through the middle of the archway? The horses on top had been stolen from Venice's Doge Palace.



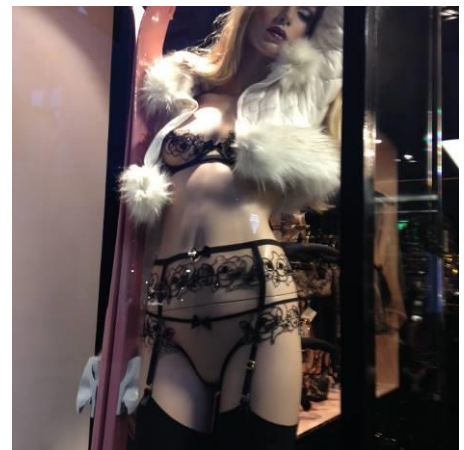
Day 11 - Friday the last full day.

In part because of the Congress going on and the potential for demonstrations, I am going to an airport hotel for Saturday night. Sunday morning I'm on my way back to NJ.

Should I be shopping for you? I had so much attention over a certain picture that I have found another one that is somewhat ski clothing oriented. Well, it might be a little drafty except for the ski boots and the fur shawl. No I didn't buy it. No I didn't model it. But if you would like me to bring you one please send me your size and order now as I only have a couple days shopping time left.

My focus of the day is the Musee D'Orsay, the converted train station to house the more modernists. So yesterday at the Louvre was the past and today is today if you call 1800s modern.

From the web: The history of the museum, of its building is quite unusual. In the centre of Paris on the banks of the Seine, opposite the Tuileries Gardens, the museum was installed in the former Orsay railway station, built for the Universal Exhibition of 1900. So the building itself could be seen as the first "work of art" in the Musee d'Orsay, which displays collections of art from the period 1848 to 1914.



I have been many times and yet dreaded the line. There was NONE! Not a single person. Nor for getting into their glorious restaurant which reminds me that when you see some menu of the day that's unfamiliar, take it. (I learned that first in Epernay, the champagne region, early 1970s when offered pigs feet at a Michelin starred restaurant. Delicious.).

Only the wine was familiar. The salad with aged hams, artichoke, sundried tomatoes, stringy bitter lettuce, different olives and lots of big capers still on stem, topped with a thick balsamic was memorable. The fish was untranslatable, but of salmon or trout texture, and on top a creamy pea-bean mixture new to me, and topped with a new kind of bacon. There were chunks of bacon in the pea mixture. I'd order it again if only I knew what it was. Tom would love it. (It was hard to leave any of the bread.)

Other choices included a popular looking fish stew. A pasta vegetarian dish. (Why bother - you're in France!) And a thick multi-layered cheesecake.

Both my neighbors had a giant macaroon practically plate size topped with a chocolate inscribed with the museum's new temporary exhibition. The menu with three courses and coffee was a bargain but I rarely take desserts. I take my calories in wine. Smile.

Unusual glass chairs in multi colors. Sort of in keeping with the decor.....

In the Louvre one can enter and dine sans admission fee. Here at D'Orsay one must pay admission. 11 euros. 15 euros at Louvre. Both a bargain. Two courses were 22 euros in case you're curious and that's generally felt to be 'all-in' tho I might leave a few euros it's not expected from locals. (Exchange rate has been close to par or up to 1.09.) I added wine, a coffee, and a calvados. It's Christmas - for me and them. (When the nice security folks get a couple euros and a thank you, they look stunned. Hopefully not insulted.)

I'll devote museum pics to another report. There's no end but Tom's photo show would be more complete.

PS. Such patience is required of wait staff: Why would they want to have a conversation with diners except to be kind to lonely travelers or couples who have nothing to say to each other.



Day 11 - part 2 in the Musee d'Orsay.

If the restaurant and food looked like the priority, it nearly was. I find it a bit difficult to not push to get all the touring in that I can, yet it's getting easier and easier. I probably could have seen all I did in half the number of days and yet it is a vacation and I am foot-loose-and-fancy-free -- so "calm it down Diana" is the new motto.



It is a treat to be somewhere to just enjoy and not need to push to see the basic sights. The advantage of going to a place for the second, third, fourth and even fifth time. In the case of Rome it was the sixth time and in the case of Paris we can't even count but it is certainly much more than 50 times. It is also a conflict in my psyche that wants to explore and experience new sights too.

Live easy. Live well. The French gals next to me in the restaurant had been half way thru their meal when I arrived, chatting up a storm though softly like French do, and they were still there when I left. As were others. And I thought I had a long relaxing meal. The French DO know how to live after all. The Parisians especially.

The photo shows at Tom's Website www.TomsKoi.com would give you a lot more pictures but here's some of my favorites of the day.

There was a special exhibition going on entitled: Splendor and Misery. Pictures of Prostitution, 1850-1910. Pictures weren't allowed but I didn't realize that at first. In part, I couldn't have let myself take pics of some of the show anyway though I confess that I learned some things. (Ménage a trois really graphic in photos.).

From the web: *"The first major show on the subject of prostitution, the exhibition attempts to retrace the way French and foreign artists, fascinated by the people and places involved in prostitution, have constantly sought to find new pictorial resources for depicting the realities and fantasies it implied. From Manet's Olympia to Degas's Absinthe, from Toulouse-Lautrec and Munch's forays into brothels to the bold figures of Vlaminck, Van Dongen or Picasso, the exhibition focuses on showing the central place held by this shady world in the development of modern painting. The topic is also covered with regard to its social and cultural dimensions through Salon painting, sculpture, decorative arts décoratifs and photography. A wealth of documentary material recalls the ambivalent status of prostitutes, from the splendour of the demi-mondaine to the misery of the pierreuse (street walker). Noted: some of the pieces presented in the exhibition may be shocking to some visitors."* That last statement was an understatement.

Giovani Boldini noted for his swirl art. I wanted to see some of his pictures of the beautiful women but this was the only one currently being shown. Lots of Toulouse Lautrec both in the prostitution exhibit and also in a separate room.

There was an entire wing of Van Gogh with some new items that I have missed in my past visits here.



As usual, I got carried away and have run out of room.

Day 11 - part 3 the Louvre red lightning bolt and other misc stuff

Yep - there is a red light which comes from the ground and goes to the top of the pyramid. It is a work from Claude Lévêque which will stay for one and a half year. And it supposedly symbolizes a lightning. This artist will continue his work again for the Louvre.

Frankly, I thought the whole pyramid was beautiful enough to need no additional decoration.

The pyramid is, and continues to be, full of deep controversy. The most amusing is the symbolism of a possible 666 panes of glass which coincidentally is the number of the devil. It is also the number that I used all through my 60th year for marathoning. I had lots of 666s. 6 in '06 for my 60th year was just the start of a lot of coincidences.

Thank you Judy for the following link: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louvre_Pyramid

I often times wonder how much would be left in the Louvre if in fact all spoils of war had to be returned to the originating country. . . .

On a nicer note: One of my trips to Paris was in order to do the marathon. The Paris folks copied the New York City Marathon when they created gloves that showed the five boroughs on the five fingers. It was only coincidental that I came to Paris with the five fingered gloves of Paris. These gloves happen to be in my permanent travel suitcase.

Tom and I talk every day at least once and anywhere from half an hour to an hour using FaceTime. Though this apartment has a free telephone to the US, it is so nice to be on video camera. We just spent some time



talking about a return trip to Paris. Are we crazy? No date set yet but I suggested that he better hurry and find a date or I would be booking my own trip.

And finally, here's a picture of the cheese shop that is downstairs and whose back door causes a smelly courtyard.

Next-door to that is a building being gutted which caused the sound of bombs and gunshots.



Day 12 - Saturday

I had most of the day in Paris proper but later evening took the metro and then train to Charles de Gaulle airport. The embassy sent an alert about possible demonstrations and the climate conference is just finishing up in that area so I didn't want to risk ground transportation. Public transportation can be a crapshoot because I have never figured out how to get an express train versus the milk run. This evening I lucked out and made the entire trip in about 40 minutes and dirt cheap. In fact, it was basically free because I never could find a place to buy a 9.75 euro ticket and then at the end when you have to put your ticket in the turnstile in order to get out I was in big trouble. I finally found a way by sneaking out the in-turnstile. You didn't expect that of me, did you? There were some young 20s somethings who were crawling over but I was sure I could never make up and over without breaking something.

(Comment from a friend: Just think, we COULD have gotten one of those infamous HELP messages from you in a French gaol for jumping the turnstile!!)

Today took me to the Orangerie in the Tuilleries garden. They hold the impressionist and the more modern. Its big claim to fame are the two giant rooms with 360° of Claude Monet's water lilies. I more so enjoyed the Utrillo, Ruben's, and a couple of new artists to me. There were quite a few Pablo Picasso's that were not so far out and more classic artwork. There was a long hallway filled full of Rubens that took a lot of my attention. All include some of my favorites.

The entire building was hugely different than I remember having undergone a major remodeling and modernization with a lot of sunlight.



Day 12 - Saturday part 2

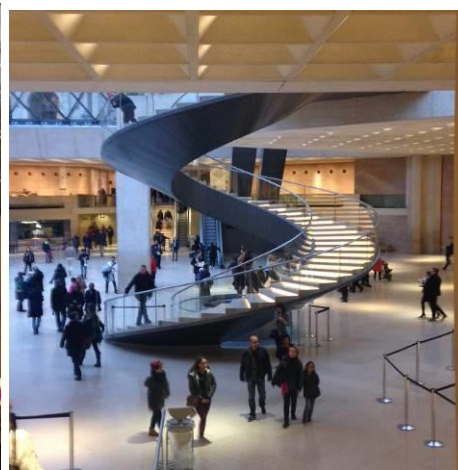
The second picture was a little bit different in that they are featuring entire living rooms of famous people. Should the artwork have been part of the Orsay's special exhibit on prostitution?

You might like the outdoor sculpture seen in the Tuilleries gardens. There's a lot of traditional bronzes but also these moderns.

Those spiral stairs are found in the middle of the big pyramid and in the center of the spiral stairs operates a huge round elevator.

The entire pyramid theme is now played out in other areas and the next glass inverted pyramid is in the carousel shopping area. With an Apple store. In the same area are the holiday lights.

And with that I think I'll say good night and turn in at my very nice airport hotel for my very early Sunday morning flight. I've been gone too long.



Day 13 - Sunday home again

Can you imagine that I went to the Sheraton at the Charles de Gaulle airport Saturday night so that I could sleep. Two things happened. At 3:30 in the morning I literally fell out of the bed. Crash. (I'm fine and just bruises). And I might not have heard it if I hadn't woken up falling out of bed but there was a Pam-Pom (their emergency siren) on going until 5:30 AM when I was supposed to get up anyway. I had to check the web to see if there was any big deal happening and I never learned why the sirens were going off so long. After coming home I was obsessed with staying more towards the middle of the bed but of course Tom didn't complain.

I was asked if I gain weight with so much travel? Generally any restaurant food will do that to me and I usually come home with a couple extra pounds and then push the vegetables and my rice-quinoa-grain mixture and get rid of it before I go on another trip. This time I must've enjoyed my wine and food much too much because I had at least four extra pounds. I can't think how I'll get rid of them before the next trip but I'm trying. I only have this week at home and I have booked four training sessions with Jeff. Exercise won't get rid of the weight but the weigh-in on their scales certainly makes me lose appetite.

End Note – from Parle Paris:

Immediately following the terrorist attacks of November 13th, some would-be visitors of Paris cancelled their trips, mostly in fear of perceived violence. Residents on the other hand had a very different reaction, mostly exhibiting fearlessness and determination not to let a handful of radicals destroy our city and our way of life. "Je suis en terrasse!"

Today I received an email from such an individual who has plans to come to Paris this coming year: *"So I've been corresponding with your office about an extended stay in Paris next fall, up to two months. The day of the massacre I had been prepared to make a decision about my choice of*

apartments. Needless to say I suspended any activity on this front. So, I'd appreciate getting a sense of the mood of the city. I'm not necessarily concerned about safety; I'm more concerned that the Paris I previously visited and loved will not have the same qualities of livability and joie de vivre that drew me to it in the first place. Any comments you can make, even if it's just in one of your "belles-lettres" would be appreciated. Merci et Joyeux Noel, G."

"Dear G.,

Paris is Paris and will always be Paris except that it's now even more Paris! The sentiment in the city is strong and positive and you will not feel one iota of difference except for added security measures everywhere. Do not hesitate to visit for one second and you will see for yourself the wonderful camaraderie that has resulted from the attacks...and you will be moved by the memorials as well as the strength of the people who are "en terrasse" even more now than ever!" Adrian

[The Local](#) is running articles under the theme "Paris attacks aftermath..." citing the city's new media campaign to combat the loss of tourism in the hopes of "putting the gloss back on the City of Light's global image," with "[#ParisWeLoveYou](#)." This is not only a promotional campaign, but is part of the solidarity the residents wish to express. Lisa Anselmo contributed to their roster of articles with "[Paris one month on: Let's hope fraternity is lasting impact](#)" and concludes, "There is a sense of communion among Parisians that only a shared tragedy can bring, something positive in the wake of pain. This unity and brotherhood is one effect of the attacks worth hanging on to as Paris moves forward."

Paris is not a city at war. Life is back to normal and this campaign is designed to show that. You will see posters all over the city in the coming weeks in cafes, restaurants and cinemas. For now, you can visit the site (parisweloveyou.fr/) and add your photo to the mosaic of fans. You could have your photo on an art installation put on display in January.

We, the residents of the city of Paris, urge all of you, the devoted visitors of the city of Paris, to unite with us and show the world that Paris, We Love You. Show how NOTHING is going to deter us from battling the hatred with our devotion and love. Make your plans now to visit the city this coming year. Take your drinks and meals "en terrasse." Post your photos of your smiling faces on our bridges, in front of our monuments and in our streets. Show the world that your devotion will not be daunted.

What better way to fight terrorism than with the one emotion they don't understand: love?

Itinerary

Tue Dec 1

6:30pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#57

Wed Dec 2

7:35am Arrive Paris Charles de Gaulle CDG

Taxi suggested as reliable. Find ATM first.

Apartment 51 rue de Grenelle, 75007 Paris, France Tele in apt: 01 45 48 73 10

<http://www.parisvacationapartments.com/our-apartments/studio/saint-germain-beautiful-studio-2/>

Clara cell phone- 06-63-60-67-14 Karina cell phone- 06-42-00-82-07 Alex cell phone- 06-12-44-64-78

Thu Dec 3

5:15pm Admission opens at entrance or box office to Sainte Chapelle

6:00pm Concert in main hall with VIP rows 3-10

Dinner at Les Deux Palais, 3 Boulevard du Palais, 75004.

Fri Dec 4

Food tour with John-Paul Fortney info@culinarytoursofparis.com – Cell: +336 59 90 15 00

Sun Dec 6

Ile de la Cite Bird and Flower Market – and a day to see St Chapelle in daylight?

Sat Dec 12

5-6:00pm Check out of apartment - Metro and train to Charles de Gaulle Airport

Hotel Sheraton Paris Airport Hotel and Conference Center – 1 night – form in file
BP 35051 Tremblay en France, Roissy, 95716 France Tele 33 1 49197070

Sun Dec 13

9:25am Depart Paris Charles de Gaulle CDG via UA#56 – on upgrade wait list

12:00noon Arrive Newark EWR

Tourist Ideas:

Vaux le Viscount day trip
Napoleons tomb / muse des invalids
Paris-walks.com x 3 plus chocolate tasting walk
Louvre museum and orangery
Muse d'orsay including lunch
Planter walk and canal area at new opera with lunch at Bofinger
Saint Chapelle and a concert
Opera performance
Marais and muse carnavalet and muse history of France
Notre Dame museum and climb to the top
New library
Newly renovated Rodin Museum
New Louis Vuitton Museum by Frank Gehry
Rue des Martyrs "The Only Street in Paris" – see article
Catacombs? Probably no

Restaurants ideas:

Brasserie Grand Colbert near Palais Royal
Brasserie Bofinger near Marais/Bastille and plantar walkway if weather ok
Café in the Louvre
Procopé

Paris by night: <http://framboise78.free.fr/Paris.htm>

Reading for Paris trip:

Paris tourist books: DK EyeWitness, The Little Black Book of Paris, Rick Steves Pocket; AAA Spiral.
A series of magazine articles I'd saved plus "People Watching in Paris" by National Geographic's Traveler.

Smithsonian's new magazine called "Journeys: Seeing the World in a New Light" and the first issue was all on Paris.

Just received:

Paris Letters by Janice MacLeod
A Moveable Feast by Ernest Hemingway

Recently read:

The Fires of Autumn by Irene Nemirovsky (author of Suite Francaise)
One Evening in Paris (about an old theatre) by Nicholas Barreau
The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris by David McCullough
A Paris Apartment by Michelle Gable

The Paris Architect by Charles Belfoure – book and NOOK form and finally will read it in book form
Favorites:

The Paris Wife (about Hemmingway) by Paula McLain
The House I Loved by Tatiana de Rosnay

In recent past:

Paris, Paris: Journey into the City of Light by David Downie
The Sweet Life in Paris: Delicious Adventures in the world's most glorious – and perplexing city by David Lebovitz

Paris to the Moon by Adam Gopnik

Paris Confidential (a tour book with stories) by Elizabeth Reichert

French Toast: An American in Paris Celebrates the Maddening Mysteries of the French by Harriet Welty Rochefort

The Flaneur: A Stroll through the Paradoxes of Paris by Edmund White (sent to Ellen)

Talk to the Snail by Stephen Clarke (The Paul West series by Clarke on living in Paris were super – maybe 3-4 books)

Michelangelo's slaves at the Louvre: Well, I hadn't intended to go to the Louvre again because I had been many times and it is a big event, but I don't believe I've ever seen these and they are a calling card. I had intended to go to the Louvre for one of their cafés I enjoy. So these "slaves" will just cost me an entry fee. Note that it is possible to avoid the ticket line at the I. M. Pei Pyramid by entering from the metro underground. Tom is rightfully laughing at how I wanted to go to Paris with no itinerary and be a flaneur and now I have most days filled. Just bought dinner and concert for sainte chapelle.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/renaissance-reformation/high-ren-florence-rome/michelangelo/v/michelangelo-the-dying-slave-and-the-rebellious-slave-1513-15>