

Jumping ahead a day to Paris... (more on Rome in a later post)



Paris under a bit of fog in the winter is still quite beautiful. It's not quite Woody Allen's Paris; I don't see as much attraction to getting all bundled up for the cold and rain, but Paris in the winter is still quite a wonderful place to be.

Today was going to be a museum-crawl, with many more on the list than we actually got to. Why? Well, you can thank the Louvre for that. You can always thank the Louvre for that... I've said before there are only two reasonable plans for the Louvre. You either set an absolute limit for how much time you'll spend there, or you just leave it to fate and clear the rest of the day 'cuz you might not ever come out.

Becky and I started the day out with breakfast at Paul and then a combination of long walk and metro ride to the Musee de Arts et Metiers, a fascinating place that's like a combination of the Palace of Fine Arts and San Jose's Discovery Museum, on steroids. In a nutshell it's the history of modern science, going back to about 1500 or so. The amazing clocks alone are worth the trip. Seeing the mechanisms of early navigating devices laid bare... let's just say the current generation isn't the first to be pretty darned smart. And of course, the transportation section included bikes. What's not to like?



For the most part, Greek and Roman statues celebrate the beauty of the individual, making this one quite distinctive. From there it was a lot more walking, thinking we were headed in the direction of the Pompidou (museum of modern art) but instead got derailed by a Sunday food market and subsequent recognition that we were closing in on the Louvre so... off to the Louvre we go. What can you say about the Louvre? Whatever art you're partial to, it's there. Me, I'm into sculpture, and they've got a lot of it. Egyptian, Greek, Roman; you'll find more of it at the Louvre than you'll see in Egypt, Greece or Italy.

We got off our feet for a short while for lunch (at one of the Louvre's two over-price "cafes"), then dived back in. By the time we emerged, the place was closing down. My felt felt kinda the same way. And yet there was still much more walking to do. Through the underground shopping center adjacent to the Louvre, then finally onto a metro to take us a few stops to find a Bouygues Telecom store to figure out why the Simcard they sold me yesterday wasn't working. Note to all- unless you're fluent, really fluent at French, do not buy a Bouygues Telecom simcard!!! Adding the data package to your card requires calling a number and following directions in French. Not just directions in French, but directions as if spoken by a Jack In The Box drive-through. Fortunately the guy at the

store was able to take care of it very quickly, calling a special number and going through a fairly-complex menu tree to input the relevant numbers. Kids, don't try this at home!!

After that it was time for some more wandering, finding our way across the Seine and stopping for dinner at Le Petit Chatelet, a very small but very nice restaurant that rated #325 out of 13,955 places on Trip Advisor. It was indeed a very nice place, and glad they could take us without reservations. One of the advantages of visiting Paris in December!

All in all a very nice day in Paris.



Some art leaves you scratching your head, others you appreciate much more quickly



Venus di Milo



The usual Mona Lisa crowd



This and the following image have commercial appeal



Clearly, this guy could use a better way to attach his shoes. Like the Bontrager BOA system!



Reminds me of the Chicago O'Hare airport tunnel between terminals



Notre Dame at night