

Lots of catching up to do, at the shop, on the hills...

A bit behind in posts again. Our flight from France (actually the final of three, Paris/Chicago/Denver/San Jose) got in at 10pm, waited just 10 minutes for our bags and... well, 4 of 5 arrived. Both bikes, good thing, but one didn't make it. To United's credit, someone from their baggage department quickly noticed us waiting there, everyone else gone, and asked if we were missing something. Did not seem like something that would happen at SFO. She got all the information, tracked it as best she could (it did make it to Denver...), and said it would most-likely come in on the 9:30am flight. Meantime I got every-4-hour text updates through the middle of the night (and beyond) letting me know that at least their computer hadn't forgotten about me. It was a little disconcerting that there was no news after that 9:30am flight hit, but at 2pm I got a phone call at work saying the bags were here, and asked where I'd like them delivered. Around 5pm, the bag was home.

Got to say this was one of, if not the best, trip to France with my son. Perhaps even up there with my 2003 trip, the one where I [got the cool photo of the young kid and old racer guy at the celebration of 100 years of the Tour de France](#). We got in some great rides, including a wrong turn or two that took us to some fantastic roads, made new friends, had very few issues with our bikes (one flat, one damaged tire), saw two stage finishes, great flights (yes, really)... lots of wonderful memories. Every year I'm thinking, this might be the last, I should do something else, but things just clicked so well, it's tough not to want to do it again. Even the mortality issue seems set aside; I had none of the "over the hill" experiences like two years ago, where I completely fell apart on the Tourmalet and wondered if I'd ever want to do a really challenging climb again.

Our accommodations were incredibly variable; from the ultra-utilitarian apartment/hotel in Lourdes to the funky built-around-1600 leaning & twisted 3-story B&B in Bergerac that could be best considered "quaint" to the faux-Ritzy Montparnasse Pullman in Paris. No question the Bergerac accommodations were most-memorable, and for the person looking for that different, only-in-France experience, that would be the place sought after.

--More shortly--