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Mrs. Rutan

Creative Writing

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Expedition Paris

“Bienvenue à bord Air France notre vol sera environ dix heures. Nous sommes d'éteindre les lumières pour aider à la transition que vous le fuseau horaire, vous serez en. Avoir un grand vol,” the stewardess tonelessly exclaimed.

Okay, I was nine, maybe ten, they were speaking French. I didn't understand it whatsoever, I mean maybe I should have learned some but I didn't.

It was about five o'clock, in Michigan. Loading onto the bus at KCC for the arrival to the McNamara terminal at DTW. Once we reached our first destination --the airport-- the chaos began. The plane was set to take off at eight o'clock; we wandered around for quite a while, getting food from a sit down restaurant, getting snacks for the dreaded ten hour flight ahead of us and picking up gifts from family and friends waiting for us at home.

At about twenty minutes to eight, we started boarding the giant Air France fleet plane. Little did we know it would be by last name, in alphabetical order; meaning I would be in the very last row of the plane. Yes, by the bathrooms. They turned the lights out as soon as everyone was on the plane to get us to go to sleep. They didn't want a bunch of jet lagged pre-teen/teenageers. Can you blame them? When we all were woke up at about two o'clock in the morning, Michigan time, it was breakfast time in France. We were fed an odd french breakfast that was made of toast and eggs with some type of reddish sauce on top. (No, it was not ketchup.)

After my experience with breakfast, I discovered what the black screens on the back of the seats were, mini tv type things! They had music, a satellite to show you where we were, how long until landing, and our path to get there, movies/tv programs and video games. I was a very happy 10 year old at the time. We landed around twelve o'clock in Paris, we were then bussed to a gorgeous city called Caen. We arrived there about three o'clock and had until four to get around to go see a magnificent castle and then dinner--we didn't have much of choice on where to go, since as we arrived on a Sunday and almost nothing is open in France on Sundays.

After our hour of settling in, we were told to meet outside of our rented hotel. We took millions of pictures together; then began our long walk to a castle built on the ruins of William the Conqueror's fortress-- known as Chateau de Caen. Inside of what was left of the fortress is a gorgeous castle with tons of historic figures and famous art. After time well spent here, we were dug back down the street to a restaurant called Le Bistrot Basque where I ate tapas for the first time--which are amazing-- followed by a French dessert that I completely forgot the name of.

After a day or so in Caen, the tour began. We sang in gorgeous cathedrals that were built in the eleventh century. One of my personal favorites was Chartes, it was amazingly gorgeous for a cathedral built in 1145, known for its gorgeous stained glass windows, tons of more awkward things happened there, such as a random guy tried to take a picture of me and a few of my friends I was with at the time, he was eventually scared off by my soon to be "boyfriend" at the time who asked me out on the top of the Eiffel Tower!

After about five days of straight touring and historical sights such as D-day grave sights, Omaha Beach, we checked out of our personal hotel and packed up to go to the most amazing city every; Paris.

The first night wasn't as glamorous as anyone would have hoped. The boys bus broke down, it took them almost three and a half hours to get to our hotel, the restaurant thought they should wait to feed us until they got there... With in those few, but tremendously long hours, we managed to completely annoying our waiter. Because heaven forbid we want water, ketchup, or our food! About half way through our actual meal, after we asked for more water for the third time, he screeched "you stupid americans!" threw our plates on the ground, and stormed off.

We stayed in a palace looking hotel only 5 blocks from the actually tower. On the second day in Paris, we went to see it up close. It's enormous. You know how when you're in a plane and you look down and the houses and cars and things all look like mini and the people look like ants? I felt like an ant; until we were invited to go to the very top of the intimidating tower--a whopping 905.5 feet-- If you want to talk about feeling like the Queen of the world? I did.

On our last night of the trip, we were told to go get formal outfits from Galeries Lafayette Mall and meet on the bus at six o'clock. So we all went and did as told, we were taken to an extremely classy french restaurant called 114 Faubourg and then at about nine, we were put back on the bus and arrived at a river. We were set to go on a river boat tour of this alluring city; about half way through the tour we passed the tower for the final time. This time at night, it was lit up in lavish golds and silvers that sparkled off the black water. I would say that's the perfect way to end an already marvelous trip.

The next day we packed up our things and were exported to the airport, where we were to hang out for three to four hours, the same thing went on as before, shopping eating buying presidents and this time, playing video games.

Once we boarded the plane, we soon found out the lady sitting in the seat across from us was a terrible mom and sleeping was not about to happen, so we watched movies and slowly fell asleep. The landing was abrupt and they didn't even try to switch us back over to our time-zone so I fell asleep at four o'clock in the afternoon and woke up around three in the morning.

As my mom said the next day, "My body was in Michigan, my sleeping patterns were in Paris."

To this day I still wish I was on that boat in the mucky water, floating past the tower, in the alluring city, of Paris.

