

ORIENTATION ANGERS, FRANCE

*"Plus mon petit Liré que le mont Palatin,
Et plus que l'air marin, la douceur angevine."*

*Joachim Du Bellay
16th-century poet*

Your Cross-Cultural Experience

From the very beginning you will notice that life is different in France, the looks and styles of streets, clothing, food, the sounds of voices. Be prepared for a wonderful adventure that will bring you towards a better understanding of France and its people, and a new enriched understanding of yourself and your American heritage and culture.

You and the French Language

Perhaps the most gratifying part of living in France will be the thrill of communicating in another language. You will find that the French that you have learned and will learn in the classroom will be understood. You ask for "un café-crème" and you get coffee with milk. It works! The ability to understand ordinary speech and to reply or ask questions is your immediate goal. Your language courses will deepen your understanding of French. You have chosen the best way to practice and learn French.

Bonne chance!

The French People

It is easier to meet French people if you make an effort to speak their language. Many French people (of the younger generations) have studied English for a few years in school. That does not mean that they speak it well or even remember it. You are in France. There is only one official language there and that is French. French people are a bit more reserved than Americans. This should not be interpreted as unfriendliness. It is suggested that Americans not go out together in large English-speaking groups. Instead go out in smaller groups and speak French. Upon hearing you speak French, they will realize that you understand them and that they can speak to you. They will also recognize that you are open to learning more about them, their language, and their culture.

Things to know before you go...

WHAT TO BRING??

Passport (required for travel and for money exchange)

International Student I.D.

CIRRUS card (ATM Banking Card)

**Verify with your bank before departure that your PIN (Personal Identification Number) will be valid in France. For specific foreign CIRRUS locations, call 1-800-4-CIRRUS.

Visa or Mastercard

Traveler's checks in euros or dollars

clothesline (I recommend a sort of bungee cord with clips found at Target or Walgreen's)

hangers (hangers are not always to be found in dorm rooms)

converter/adaptor plugs **

**The electrical current in France is 220 volts. The US runs on 110 volt current. Unlike wall outlets in the US which accept plugs with two flat prongs, outlets in France take plugs with two round prongs.

hairdryer (Dual voltage is handy. Depending on your location, your hair dryer may only run on low speed without blowing a fuse in the building.)

flipflops for shower and dorm

robe/cover-up to wear to shower

camera and film (Inexpensive camera is best since it is less likely to be stolen.)

comfortable shoes (no new shoes/ Tennis shoes are highly recommended)

shorts/pants/jeans

tee-shirts and sweatshirt

low maintenance clothes / mix and match clothes

Woolite for in-sink washing

one nice outfit

short and long sleeve shirts

rain parka or compact umbrella

sweater or a jacket (nights can be quite chilly and windy)

towel (sheets are furnished but towels are not)

camping utensils (cup, fork, knife, spoon, bottle opener for snacks in room)

bathing suit (for sunning or swimming at the lake)

Prescription drugs needed in original, labelled containers

alarm clock/radio (battery operated or wind-up only)

Purse that zips or a waist pack or money belt.

sun glasses

extra glasses or contacts

Travel Diary** (required journal of your experience)

Your college French book (for grammar explanations in English)

A small French/English dictionary (Harraps pocket mini is good)

France Guide books that have a really good section on Paris

DON'T BRING:

valuables, breakables, or white clothes

anything that can't be replaced

Normal July weather is warm and dry. But, if it rains, and it usually does during several days in July, it will be much cooler. Expect and prepare for any conditions (except snow)!

HINTS WHILE TRAVELING

Women should be as cautious as they would be at home. Beware of any stranger whether or not he seems harmless. If you do not wish to be bothered, use discretion in choosing your dress (short shorts, for example, or very tight-fitting clothing might be left at home).

Knowing where you are and where you are going will make your travel more meaningful and simpler. Read about your destination before you arrive. Consult maps and information provided.

If you travel by train or by bus in France, remember to "composter votre billet." Place your ticket in the orange machine located right outside the entrance to the train platforms or just inside the bus door. This places a time and date on your ticket so that it appears used. Not doing this causes you to run the risk of fines or ejection from the train or bus. On the train a "contrôleur" will come by to verify that you did "composter" your ticket.

If you should need medical attention, you will be expected to pay for it in cash. This also applies for prescriptions or tests. You will have to pay in France and submit the receipt of payment to your insurance company upon your return. You will be given a form to submit to your insurance company which may or may not pay your claim according to your policy. There is an infirmary on campus staffed by a nurse. For a doctor's care, an appointment is made with a doctor in town. Be warned that neither the nurse nor the doctor is likely to speak English. Take someone with you to translate. Women may want

another woman to accompany them to the doctor because in France nurses are *not* present during examinations.

Hints on Packing

Travel as lightly as possible. Baggage carts are sometimes scarce in airports. Buy inexpensive, light, and durable luggage. You might use a backpack or duffle as your carry-on. You'll want to leave room for stuff you buy in France. In short, **ONLY TAKE WHAT YOU CAN YOURSELF CARRY AROUND THE BLOCK!**

Mix and match your clothing. Pick basic colors which look good on you and match all of your wardrobe.

Take comfortable shoes. It is difficult to feel chic with aching, blistered feet. Your feet are your transportation. Remember that.

Stay away from high maintenance clothes. Laundromats and dry cleaners are expensive and inconvenient.

French people wear clothes over and over again. You will see your teachers wear the same outfit more than once a week. Keep this in mind. Don't bring too much.

****Pack all of your luggage. Try to carry it around the block. If you can't, start sorting again.** You might consider bringing one garment bag and one carry-on.

Laundry facilities may be available in your dormitory. Check with the concierge for procedure on using them. You will probably need to buy a token (jeton) from your concierge to use in the washing machine. You will probably need to sign up for a time to use the machines, since there will most likely only be one washing machine in your dorm.

**** Label any eyeglasses or medical devices as a gift with a value of less than \$100 to avoid possible duty charges.**

To Call Home:

You will need to buy a **télécarte** in order to use the phone in France. These are purchased at a **bureau de tabac** or a **post office**. They come in two forms une télécarte de 120 unités or 50 unités. These are smart cards which contain a microchip. Place the card in the phone. The screen will say Patiencez, s'il vous plaît (Wait, please). Then, the screen will say Numérotez (Dial your number). To make a direct call to the U.S. dial 19 +1 + (area code) + number. To go through an operator, dial 19 33 11. Téléphoner en PCV means that you want to call collect. **If you have calling cards, verify before you leave that they will work overseas and know how to use it.**

Because of your living situation in France, it will be easier for you to call home than for someone to call you. You might call them and give them the number of the public phone where you are and have them call you back.

International Student I.D.

Before you leave, you will be asked to acquire an International Student I.D. card. These can be obtained in Belmont's Office of International Education. Kathy Skinner is Belmont's Director of International Education. **This card is required of all Belmont students studying abroad.** It carries with it a life insurance and repatriation policy.

Waiver

Before leaving, you will be given a waiver form to be signed and dated. This is required of all Belmont students studying abroad.

Food

A word concerning dining in France . . . Meals are eaten in courses. These courses are in a slightly different order than in the U.S. There is usually an *entrée* which might be *paté* or a vegetable salad. Then comes the *plat principal* or main course. After the *plat principal* there is salad (usually lettuce only with a vinaigrette dressing), then cheese, and then dessert. Bread is part of every meal and is rarely eaten with butter except at breakfast.

Silverware is managed a bit differently in Europe also. The fork is used prongs down and pointed towards you and held in your left hand. Your right hand cuts with the knife. The left hand is then used to bring the food to your mouth. In other words, Europeans do not move the fork between hands as Americans do. You will also notice that Europeans place their hands on the table at meals. This is not considered impolite. In fact, the reverse is true.

In France a 15% gratuity is added (by law) to every food and drink order in a public establishment. Tipping is done for exceptional service only.

Housing

Dormitory rooms are single-occupancy. You will have a sink in your room. Showers and toilets will be located on every hall. Dorms are sometimes co-ed in France. Dormitories will have a concierge on duty at all times. The concierge can be asked about mail and laundry room reservations. Keys should be picked up and dropped off with the concierge. When you check into your dorm, you may be given an inventory checklist to return and you will be given a list of dorm regulations. **Read the dorm regulations and obey them.**

Times and place for sheet exchange (dirty for clean) will be posted. This usually takes place every two weeks or so.

Toilet paper may or may not be left in the dormitory bathrooms. If it is not the dorm's policy to leave toilet paper in the bathroom, you should have some in your room when you check in. You may ask the maid or concierge for more. Or, of course, you may buy your own.

In French dormitories and in residential areas, in general, in France, the **loi de silence** is enforced. In other words, all loud noise that would disrupt sleep is to cease after 10 p.m. The concierge will enforce this policy in the dormitories. Be considerate and take your socializing after 10 p.m. away from the dormitory!

Depending on your dorm's regulations, you may be asked not to turn on any water during certain hours (10 p.m. to 7 a.m. for example) so sleep will not be disturbed. Again, **please be respectful** of these regulations.

Angers: A little history

"In 1152 **Henri Plantagenêt** married **Eleanor of Aquitaine** whom Louis VII had recently divorced. He already held Anjou, Maine, Touraine and Normandy; by his marriage he acquired Poitou, Périgord, Limousin, Angoumois, Saintonge, Gascony and suzerainty of the Auvergne and Toulouse. In 1153 he forced Stephen of Blois to recognize him as his heir and the following year he succeeded him on the throne of England. He was now more powerful than his Capet rival. Henry II of England (Henri Plantagenêt) spent most of his time in France, usually in Angers For the next fifty years there was war between the Plantagenêts and the Capets. In the end it was the latter who were victorious." (Michelin Green Guide, Châteaux of the Loire, p. 48)

You will find a statue of "**le bon roi René**" on the boulevard Roi René in front of the château. Who was he?

"He was the last of the dukes of Anjou and titular king of Sicily. He knew Latin, Greek, Italian, Hebrew and Catalan, painted and wrote poetry, played and composed music and was knowledgeable in mathematics, geology, and law--one of the most cultivated minds of his day. He had the common touch and liked to talk to his subjects;

he organized popular festivities and revived the old games of the age of chivalry. He loved flower gardens and introduced the carnation and the Provins rose. At twelve he married Isabelle de Lorraine and was devoted to her for thirty-three years until her death at 47 when he married Jeanne de Laval who was 21. Despite the odds, it was also a happy marriage. Towards the end of his life René accepted philosophically the annexation of Anjou by Louis XI. As he was also Count of Provence he left Angers which he had greatly enriched, and ended his days in Aix at the age of 72 (1480)."
(Michelin Green Guide, Châteaux of the Loire, p. 48)

Angers: What to do?

Visit the museums, the churches, the château! Go to the Bureau de Tourisme and pick up maps and brochures. There are walking tour brochures available there. If you ask, there are maps free to visitors of Angers. There is also a tourist train (train touristique) that departs from the Bureau de Tourisme several times daily.

The Bureau de Tourisme in Angers (located across from the Château) offers tours of the "cité" and "la Doutre." There are usually guided tours in English offered at certain times during the week. The Bureau de Tourisme also sells tickets for concerts to be held at the Cathedral (Saint-Maurice).

Visit the flea, flower, and food market that is held every Saturday morning on the Place Imbach. Just walk down the Boulevard Foch until you reach the Jardin du Mail. Cross the street and you're there!

Visit the salons de thé, the cafés, the cinémas, the magasins, the centre nautique at the Lac de Maine (there's a beach there), and learn to use the bus system. Tickets are sold at the main bus station at Place Lorraine (Boulevard Foch). Cotra is the name of Angers' bus company. It is cheaper to buy a booklet (carnet) of 10 tickets, if you or your friends will use them. You will need to ride the bus to go the lake.

Château d'Angers:

". . . a massive shale-and-limestone castle-fortress dating from the 13th century, glowers over the town from behind its turreted moats. The moats are now laid out as gardens, overrun with deer and blooming flowers. As you explore the grounds, note the startling contrast between the thick, defensive walls and the formal garden, with its delicate, white tufastone chapel, erected in the 16th century. For a sweeping view of the city and surrounding countryside, climb one of the castle towers." (Affordable France, p. 129)

Within the château grounds, there is a new gallery which houses the great Tapestry of the Apocalypse ("Tapisserie de l'Apocalypse," completed in 1390, was commissioned by Louis Ier, duc d'Anjou. It is 16 feet high and 120 yards long and shows

70 scenes from the Book of Revelation. Guided tours are available in French and English.

Cathédrale St.-Maurice:

A 12th and 13th century cathedral noted for its Romanesque façade, early Gothic vaulting, and original stained-glass windows. Guided tours are available. There are occasionally organ concerts there. Check at the cathedral or the Bureau de Tourisme for dates and times.

Musée des Beaux-Arts (Logis Barrault):

Located in a house that once sheltered Cesare Borgia and Mary, Queen of Scots. The museum houses an impressive collection of 17th and 18th century paintings and includes work by Raphael, Watteau, Fragonard, and Boucher.

Musée David d'Angers:

Houses a collection of dramatic sculptures by Jean-Pierre David (1788-1859) of Angers.

Musée Lurçat:

The impressive series of tapestries entitled "Le Chant du Monde" of Jean Lurçat is housed there. This post world war II perspective on the Apocalypse is well worth a trek across the river. See it after you see the 14th-century tapestry.

PLACES TO INVESTIGATE in Angers

Boulevard Foch: There you will find banks, the Eurodif (French K-Mart), movie theaters, cafés, pâtisseries, boulangeries and the bus station (Cotra--place Lorraine by the Jardin du Mail).

Place Ralliement: There you will find the Galeries Lafayette (supermarket in the basement), and a bank teller for the Crédit Agricole which accepts CIRRUS cards. The rues piétonnes surround this plaza.

Rues piétonnes: This is the downtown shopping district. Some streets to investigate are the Rue d'Alsace, Rue Saint-Julien, Rue Saint Aubin, Rue Lenepveu, and the rue Toussaint.

Rue d'Alsace- Pimkie (women's clothing)

Rue Saint-Julien-- Majuscule (book store, paper products)

Rue Lenepveu-- FNAC (record store), Contact (bookstore)

Rue Toussaint-- antique shops, musée David d'Angers

Restaurants in Angers:

Le Cornemuse - Rue Paul Bet (crêperie) very near the CIDEF

Le Connétable- 13, rue des Deux-Hais (galettes)

Le Refuge de la Soulane-- 31 bis, rue Saint Martin (fondue)

Le Grandgousier-- 7, rue St. Laud

Le Soufflé-- 8, place du Pilon (incredible soufflés)

Pub St. Aubin- 71, rue Saint-Aubin Try a salad for lunch or the "assiette du jour."

La Ferme-- Place Freppel (next to the cathedral) For a nice lunch or dinner.

La Trattoria-- 10, rue Hoche Wonderful pizza place

La Pierrade-- (near main post office) Cook your food yourself on a hot stone.

Le Vinci-- boulevard Foch Another good pizza place

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What is Angers like?

Angers is an average-size French city. It is a city proud of its history, its ties with the Plantagenêts, its medieval château, its churches, its tapestries, and, above all, its "douceur de vivre." It is marked by the limestone and slate composition of its buildings and roofs. It is a city with few tourists (except for the area around the château where you will find tourist buses).

Affordable France (p. 129) describes Angers in this way: "The former capital of the Anjou region, Angers lies on the banks of the river Maine, just north of the Loire In addition to a towering medieval fortress filled with extraordinary tapestries, the town has a fine Gothic cathedral, a choice of art galleries, and a network of pleasant, traffic-free shopping streets."

Q: What's the weather like in Angers?

Variable. Typical July weather is warm and dry (75-80 degrees). During the summer of '97, there was one week of cool and rainy 60 degree days and even cooler nights followed by three weeks of sunny to partly sunny 70-80 degree days and cool

nights. So prepare for temperatures between 50-85 degrees. Bring a rain jacket and clothing for cooler, wetter weather, if necessary.

Q: What are French people like?

Don't believe all you hear. The French are not mean people who hate Americans. You will find French people who are nice, wonderful people. They are, perhaps, a little more reserved than Americans. Do not interpret reserve as unfriendliness. Try to speak their language. Be respectful of their differences and their lifestyle. Do not travel in packs of loud English-speaking tourists. You should then find the French nicer.

Q: Should I bring a gift from the U.S.?

You might want to bring some small gift or souvenir from the U.S. or from your home town or Nashville or from Belmont University. Students sometimes exchange these with the friends they make from other countries.

Q: How much money should I bring?

This is a very often asked question and it is difficult to answer. I would advise bring bringing some euros plus a credit card and CIRRUS card. You will be in France one month. What you spend will depend on how much you frequent cafés, pâtisseries, and the shopping district. Paris is considerably more expensive than Angers. Plan accordingly. There is a CIRRUS automatic teller in the lobby of your classroom building. So, you should be able to easily access your home checking account. I would, however, bring some traveler's checks, just in case the system temporarily goes down. Be advised, however, that you may only exchange traveler's checks at the Bureau de tourisme, in Angers. There is a fee charged for cashing traveler's checks.

Q: What is not covered in the cost of the Belmont program?

You have a list of things covered by the Belmont program in the Study in France brochure. Here are some of the things that are **not** covered:

1. Any food or drink outside of the dining hall in Angers.
2. Any food or drink other than that served for breakfast in the hotel in Paris.
3. Anything you do on your own (shopping, entertainment, dining, etc.)
4. Transportation other than that listed in brochure
5. Any medical expenses incurred.
6. Textbooks
7. Miscellaneous and personal items (envelopes, stamps, etc.)

Q: What is the "Soirée Internationale"?

The last evening in Angers before departing for Paris, there will be a "Soirée Internationale" organized by the CIDEF students and *moniteurs*. Each country represented will present a 3-5 minute skit or song that depicts their country. You might begin to think about this. Since there are so many Americans, there is usually some confusion and lack of organization *parmi les Américains*.

As you enter the first general meeting at the CIDEF the morning after you arrive in Angers, **you will receive a pamphlet called *Le Cidefien*. Keep it!! It contains essential information, dates, addresses that you will need while at the CIDEF.**

There will be no class on July 14. It is Bastille Day, a national holiday in France which commemorates the storming of the Bastille and the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789.

You will be in class 21-25 hours per week. **You will be given a class schedule by your teacher. Don't lose it!** Classes begin at 8:30 or 9:30 with a long break for lunch and then reconvene until dinner. You will have some afternoons free. You will have tests, dictées, oral presentations, lab, and conversation activities to study and prepare. ***Absences are not permitted except in the case of serious illness.***

Be advised that many Northern Europeans speak English. In fact, most of them have been studying English far longer than French. They are often, therefore, more willing to speak English to you. **Make the most of your time in France. Speak French!**

Excursions

There are five excursions offered at the CIDEF: Puy du Fou, Mont Saint Michel, Châteaux de la Loire, Golfe de Morbihan, and une visite troglodytique + dîner. **Two** excursions are included in the cost of the trip. Students may purchase tickets for the other excursions. Some tickets are usually available. Cost of excursions is approximately 50 euros per excursion. Students wishing to do this should make their wishes known early. Transportation will be by bus (ventilated, not air-conditioned).

You will not be reimbursed for missed trips. The tickets are not refundable. The goal of these excursions is to give you a chance to see other areas of France and to enjoy the various cultural and historic sites they have to offer.

1)Le Puy du Fou: This is best described as a huge outdoor sound and light spectacle with a cast of hundreds. You will see French history unfold as told by one peasant, Jacques Maupillier, from the region of La Vendée (where the spectacle is held). You will see knights on horseback and incredible holographs, fireworks and lasers. It is not to be missed. Dress warmly and bring rain gear. The show starts at nightfall.

2)Le Mont Saint-Michel and Saint Malo: Students travel by bus through the towns of Laval, Fougères, and Pontorson en route to the abbey of Mont Saint-Michel situated on the border between Normandy and Brittany. This architectural marvel, known throughout the world, is one of the most visited sites in France. There will be a picnic in the fields across from Mont Saint-Michel after the visit. After lunch, students travel to Saint Malo, a seaport city on the English Channel. It is a city surrounded by ramparts (on which you may walk). Many buildings are built of granite. The city was burned in 1944 and reconstructed stone by stone. This is the birthplace of the explorer, Jacques Cartier, and the Romantic novelist, René de Chateaubriand.

3)Les Châteaux de la Loire: Students will travel along the Loire river to Saumur (château viewed from bus). The buses then travel to Chinon where there will be a short stop for photos across the river from the château de Chinon (where Joan of Arc came in 1429 to locate the king of France). From Chinon, students will travel to Azay le Rideau. There, students will tour the château accompanied by a guide (tour in French). Next, the buses will take students to Chenonceaux. There will be a picnic on the grounds followed by a non-guided tour of the château and the gardens. Finally, students will be driven to Chambord where there will be time for a non-guided tour and picture taking. Students return home along a route dotted by châteaux (Blois, Amboise, Tours, Langeais).

4)Le Golfe du Morbihan, les Mégalithes de Carnac and Vannes:

Students cross the département of Loire-Atlantique before entering Brittany. Le Morbihan is the only département in Brittany to bear a breton name (Mor-bihan = petite mer). In Vannes, students will board small boats to travel into the gulf of Morbihan. Afterwards, there will be a picnic lunch before travelling to the fields of Carnac to view the megalithic stones (dolmens, menhirs, cromlechs, tumulus, etc.).

5) Visite troglodytique + dîner:

A visit to the troglodytique dwellings carved into the limestone cliffs near Saumur followed by a multicourse dinner in a nearby underground restaurant.

PARIS . . .

Paris: What to Do?

There is everything in Paris! Let me suggest a boat ride for your first evening in Paris. Wait until after dark and take the one-hour cruise up and down the Seine that departs from the Pont Neuf. You'll get to see Paris' major monuments illuminated and get a feel for the lay-out of places you'll want to visit.

Places to visit?

Champs-Élysées (métro: Concorde, Champs-Élysées-Clemenceau, Franklin D. Roosevelt, George V, Charles de Gaulle Etoile) France's and some would say the world's most famous street. In French history, this has been the place to promenade.

Arc de Triomphe (métro: Charles de Gaulle Etoile) Take the elevator or stairs to the top. Commissioned by Napoléon Ier to commemorate his victories. Beneath it lies the French Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Tour Eiffel (métro: Bir-Hakeim, Champ de Mars) Take the elevator to the top. French engineer, Gustave Eiffel's controversial contribution to the 1889 World's Fair.

Jardin du Luxembourg (métro: Notre-Dame des Champs, St.-Sulpice) 60-acre park replete with fountains, flower beds, sculptures, pony rides, a marionette theater, and an open-air café.

Bertillon ice cream shop (Ile Saint-Louis) Eat your ice-cream at sunset near the Seine.

Mass at Notre-Dame on Sunday (Ile de la Cité)

Tour of Notre-Dame's towers: Climb lots of narrow, winding steps for a gargoyle's eye view of Paris!

Sainte-Chapelle (concerts there) (Ile de la Cité) The walls consist almost entirely of stained glass.

Galleries Lafayette (a 10-story department store that is classified as an historic monument!) (métro: Chaussée d'Antin, Opéra) 40 Blvd Haussmann

Les Invalides: Napoléon I is buried there in a huge red marble tomb. The Musée de l'Armée is housed there also.

Sacré-Coeur (métro: Abbesses, Anvers) Begun in 1876, this church built in the Byzantine style stands in the heart of Montmartre.

Centre Pompidou (métro: Châtelet les Halles) rue Rambuteau, angle rue Saint Méri.
Closed Tuesday

Musée de Cluny: place Paul-Painlevé. Closed Tuesday. A museum of French medieval art. Housed in the magnificent mansion built by the abbots of Cluny in 1330 and rebuilt in 1510. It straddles the ruins of second-century Roman baths and contains one of the world's finest collections of French medieval art including the *Dame à la licorne* tapestries.

Louvre: (métro stop: Palais Royal Musée du Louvre) rue de Rivoli. Closed Tuesday. Largest art museum in the world. Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* (called by the French *La Joconde*) is there. Check out the French painting sections (Poussin, David, Delacroix, Géricault).

Orsay: (métro stop: Solferino) rue de Bellechasse. Closed Monday.

Versailles: Tours may be arranged through private companies. Brochures are usually available in the hotel. Closed Monday.

Bateaux Vedettes (Pont-Neuf) One hour cruise at night. Boats leave every 30 minutes.

Restaurants in Paris:

Rue Mouffetard (not far from the Hôtel Jardin de Cluny) offers many ethnic dining experiences (Greek, Vietnamese, Hungarian). "Leading out of the **Place de la Contrescarpe** is the 13th-century Rue Mouffetard. As you descend the narrow street, let your imagination take you back to the time when it was the main Roman road to the southeast, Lyon, and Italy." (Access Paris, p. 45.)

Les Fous de l'île (on the Ile Saint Louis) Wonderful!! Three stars and only one \$ sign in the Access Paris guide. An artsy and hip restaurant/café. 33 Rue des Deux-Ponts (between Rue St.-Louis-en-l'Île and Quai de Bourbon)

Bertillon Ice Cream (on the Ile Saint-Louis) More than 50 flavors of ice-cream with no artificial ingredients! Exotic fruit flavors in season! 31 Rue St.-Louis-en-l'Île (between Rues des Deux-Ponts and Poulletier)

Culture Shock

The phenomenon of Culture Shock has been experienced to various degrees by almost every traveler who spends an extended period outside his/her own country, including the student studying abroad. Immunity to culture shock doesn't come from being open-minded and full of good will. These characteristics do help and may aid in recovery, but they don't provide immunity from the "illness". Individuals differ greatly in the degree to which culture shock affects them, and a few people will be unable to make the necessary adjustments. Other people get by with only a light touch of the affliction. However, most of us go through a series of stages which represent a good, stiff attack of culture shock. But, the good news is, recovery is possible.

During the first stage, the victim usually feels euphoric. At this point, the group is visiting museums, pyramids, and other places of interest. The sights are intriguing; the local people are courteous and helpful; and it is clear that a wonderful experience lies ahead. The students are full of enthusiasm.

Then, suddenly there are language troubles, classroom troubles, shopping troubles, perhaps housing, or roommate troubles. All the things about everyday living that were taken for granted at home now become insurmountable problems. The student is probably also annoyed because the attention he/she expects from the local people is strangely lacking. This attitude is interpreted as indifference, or perhaps as an indication that these people aren't as friendly after all.

At this stage the students band together as fellow sufferers to exchange symptoms and to criticize the host country and its citizens. Their complaints are based on simple stereotypes which offer an easy rationalization for one's troubles: "these people have no manners", "they're rude here", "they ought to be taught how to get things done in a hurry," and so on. The gripe session becomes a convenient crutch, an easy and uninhibiting atmosphere in which to get a load off the chest. But, it also serves to alienate the students even more from the local people and an understanding of the culture they are there to experience.

This second stage represents the crisis period in the "illness"; if it is successfully weathered, the "patient" will be restored to health, and move into the third stage: recovery. During recovery the student now begins to understand enough of the language so that his/her isolation is less severe. Little by little the problems of living are worked out, and it becomes apparent that the situation, although difficult, is not absolutely hopeless. He/she begins to look for the reasons behind the behavior he/she sees as different. By doing this the student has a better understanding of why these people act this way and a better understanding of the culture itself. When the patient can begin to joke about his/her plight, he/she is well on the road to recovery. By now, the student almost imagines himself/herself to be an authority on the host country, and can bolster his/her ego by explaining aspects of the culture in a knowing fashion.

The fourth stage represents full, or near full, recovery. By now, if ever, the student will have made a relatively good adjustment to the situation in which he/she finds himself/herself. He/she comes to accept the customs of the country for what they are. From time to time the student experiences strain in his/her relationships with the locals, but the basic anxiety of not being able to live is gone. The student realizes that he/she is actually enjoying a new experience and that there can be a real exhilaration in an experience in a foreign country. But however perceptive, no one realizes fully the nature of their illness until they return home to the United States. It is almost embarrassing to realize how many shortcomings the good old USA seems to have and how frustrating and annoying some of our habits can be. Culture shock in reverse is much less serious though, but it is surprising how many students upon returning home wish that they were back in the host country.

The difficulties that lead to culture shock are very real. Some of these may include the following: the climate change; the food, which is always different from that which we're used to; the business methods (the corner shopkeeper might be closed for lunch); and the different concept of time. Isolation due to language barriers is also a real problem. But eventually, the student adapts to the environment and has a changed attitude, which helps him/her accept and enjoy the experience.

What can be most frightening about the study abroad experience is that the student's self-esteem and security are threatened. But, with time, most students do adjust and see the experience as the great opportunity it is. It is important that the student realize that the feelings he/she is experiencing are normal, and will eventually subside. In doing this, the student will be better able to adjust and come away from this experience with a greater understanding of the culture in which he/she is immersed and, more importantly, of himself/herself. (adapted from the University of Texas' brochure on study in Mexico)

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