



1867

Join Alice and Tom in their adventure to Côte d'Azur in the south of France in 1867.



Join Lena and Ben in their adventure to Côte d'Azur in the south of France in 2024.



Packing Panic! Alice and Tom are ready to start their adventure from Glasgow to France, but their room is filled with clothes and travel essentials. While Alice searches through the chest for the perfect outfit, Tom realizes they might have overpacked! Can they find what they need and make it to the train on time?



Lena and Ben are about to head to the airport! Lena's suitcase is bursting at the seams, so she sneaks a few dresses into Ben's bag. Now they're all set for their sunny holiday in the south of France, with plenty of room for memories and adventures!



As the ferry heads toward France, Alice leans on Tom's shoulder, her expression showing a touch of seasickness. The gentle rocking of the boat seems to have upset her stomach. Tom, looking concerned, keeps a steady arm around her for comfort. Despite the choppy ride, they're still excited to reach France and continue their journey.



High above the clouds, Lena and Ben fasten their seatbelts as they fly from Glasgow to Marseille. With dreams of sun-soaked adventures ahead, they share excited whispers and plan their French holiday.



As the ferry docks in France, pandemonium breaks out! Passengers rush down the ramp, juggling their bags, trunks, and other belongings. Tom, loaded with too many suitcases, wobbles precariously as Alice and others scramble to keep their balance. The crowded scene is full of shouting, shoving, and dropped luggage, but amidst the chaos, everyone is eager to start their French adventure!



Lena and Ben step off the plane, feeling the warm Marseille breeze on their faces. Their holiday in the south of France has officially begun, and they can't wait to explore the bustling streets, sandy beaches, and charming cafes.



On the train to Paris, Alice and Tom couldn't help but stare at the man with the most extraordinary mustache they'd ever seen. His thick, perfectly groomed facial hair curled dramatically on each side, stretching outward with a flourish. It was the talk of the train, and everyone wondered about the story behind this peculiar gentleman's unique style.



As their Uber cruises into the heart of Marseille, Lena and Ben gaze out the windows at the vibrant cityscape. The holiday excitement builds as they weave through the bustling streets, eager to start their French adventure.



Alice and Tom spent a few nights in Paris, enjoying the lively city atmosphere. But their journey wasn't over yet—they took a train to Lyon and fell in love with the breathtaking view of the city. The vibrant streets, the scenic river, and the bustling boats made for a picture-perfect setting as they continued their adventure across France.



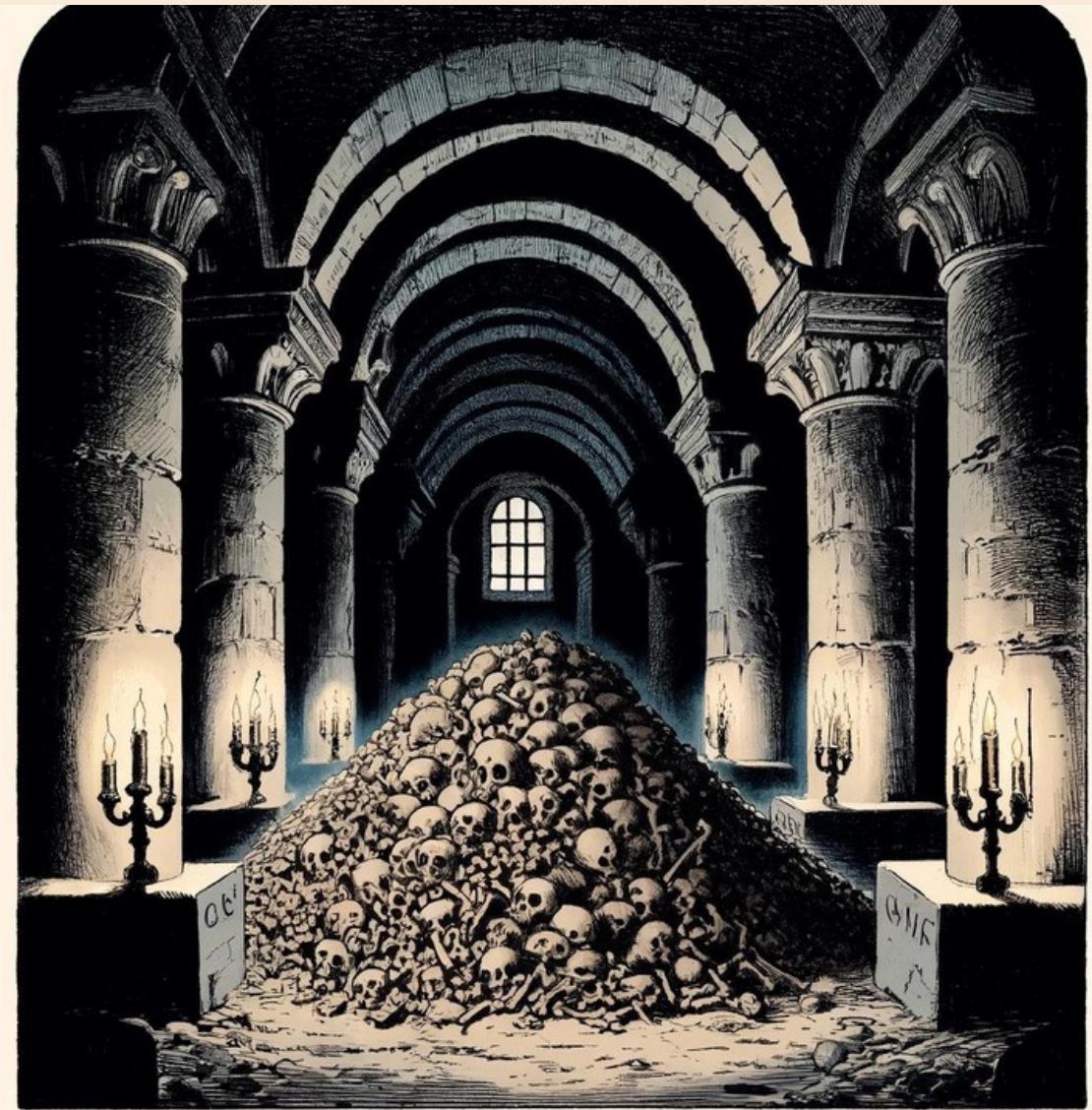
Lena and Ben arrived at their Airbnb, a quaint apartment tucked away in a charming Marseille neighborhood. The building's façade was adorned with vibrant flowers, and the winding staircase creaked with history. Inside, they found a cozy living space with a mix of vintage and modern touches, from the retro patterned rug to the sleek kitchenette.



Alice and Tom ventured to the iconic Fourvière Cathedral in Lyon, captivated by its stunning architecture and intricate details. As they walked through the grand halls and admired the ornate stained-glass windows, they felt a sense of awe and wonder. The cathedral's majestic beauty and serene atmosphere provided the perfect backdrop for their travels through France.



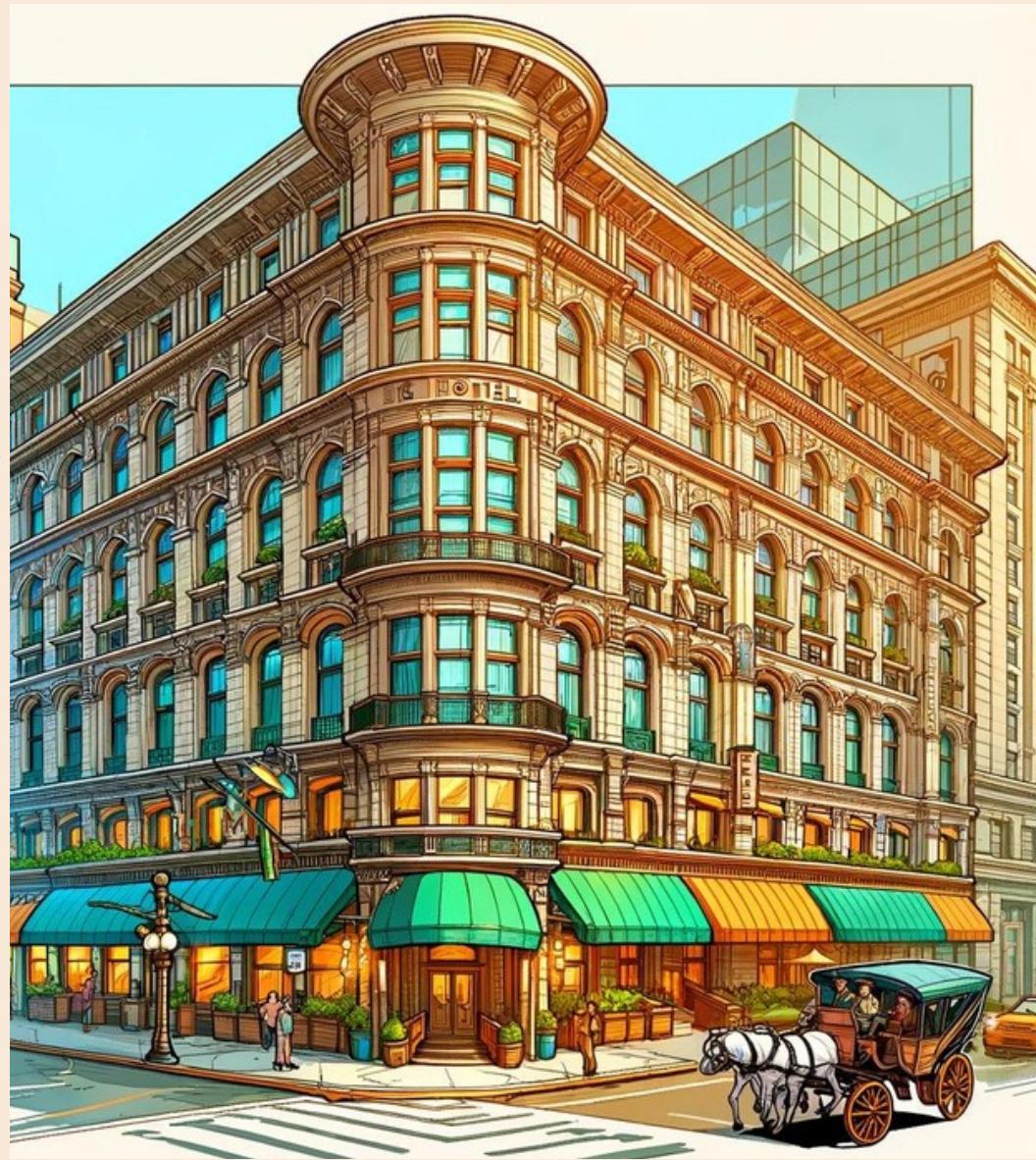
Lena and Ben strolled along the docks of Marseille, their footsteps quiet against the cobblestone streets. The city was aglow with warm lights, casting a golden hue across the buildings and the boats gently bobbing in the harbor. High on the hill, the grand Basilica of Notre-Dame de la Garde watched over the city, its outline faintly illuminated against the night sky.



At the Church of Fourvière in Lyon, Alice and Tom descended into the vaults and came across a vast heap of bones—grim reminders of the Revolutionary murders. Exploring further, they visited the ancient Church of Fourvière, where the history ran even deeper. Perched on the hilltops, they saw the remains of a Roman temple dedicated to Augustus, along with other remnants of Roman architecture, providing a fascinating glimpse into the past.



The next morning, Lena and Ben stepped into a bustling café with a hipster vibe. Exposed brick walls and hanging plants added to the charm, while soft indie music played in the background. The barista, with a neat beard and a flannel shirt, expertly crafted their lattes, adding swirls of foam on top. Lena admired the vintage décor, and Ben couldn't help but notice the aroma of fresh-baked croissants. They settled into a cozy corner, eager to plan their day.



Alice and Tom boarded a train from Lyon to Marseille, excited for the next leg of their journey. The scenic ride through the French countryside was a pleasant transition, and once they arrived in Marseille, they were delighted to find themselves comfortably settled at the Hotel de Louvre et de la Paix. It was the perfect place to relax and recharge as they prepared to explore this vibrant port city.



Lena and Ben made their way up the steep incline to the Basilica of Notre-Dame de la Garde. As they climbed, they passed through narrow streets with pastel-colored houses and caught glimpses of Marseille's sprawling cityscape below.



Alice and Tom embarked on a delightful two-hour drive along the Corniche and the Prado, the city's famous public promenade. The day was perfect, with a cloudless sky and warm temperatures that felt like midsummer. As they drove past the race course and through beautifully designed gardens, they admired the vibrant greenery and rich autumnal hues of lime trees.



Lena and Ben ventured to the Parc National des Calanques, eager to explore the rugged beauty of this natural wonder. As they walked along the rocky trails, they were surrounded by steep limestone cliffs that dropped dramatically into the turquoise waters below.



Despite hearing from their friend Mr. Gilchrist that Marseille was dirty and not worth visiting, Alice and Tom found the city to be a delightful surprise. As they wandered through the streets, they were struck by how clean and well-maintained everything was. The principal avenues were lined with fine, towering trees, creating a charming and inviting atmosphere.



Lena and Ben had heard from Reddit and TikTok that Marseille could be a gritty and unsafe city, with poverty visible in some areas. However, as they strolled through its lively streets, they found it no more daunting than their hometown of Glasgow. The street art added a splash of color to the cityscape, with playful cat murals bringing smiles to their faces. Marseille's edgy vibe felt authentic, and they discovered a city full of life and energy, dispelling the rumors they'd read online.



The next day, Alice and Tom took the train to Nice. During a brief stop at Toulon, they had ten minutes to grab some food. They secured a portion of roast fowl, turning it into an impromptu yet excellent luncheon. With their hunger satisfied, they settled back on the train, ready to continue their adventure along the French Riviera.



The next day, Lena and Ben checked out of their Airbnb and made their way to the train station, bound for Nice. They'd picked up a freshly baked baguette from a local bakery, along with a selection of hummus and olives, for the journey. As the train rolled through the scenic landscape of the French Riviera, they broke off pieces of the baguette to dip into the creamy hummus, occasionally adding a couple of olives for a burst of flavor.



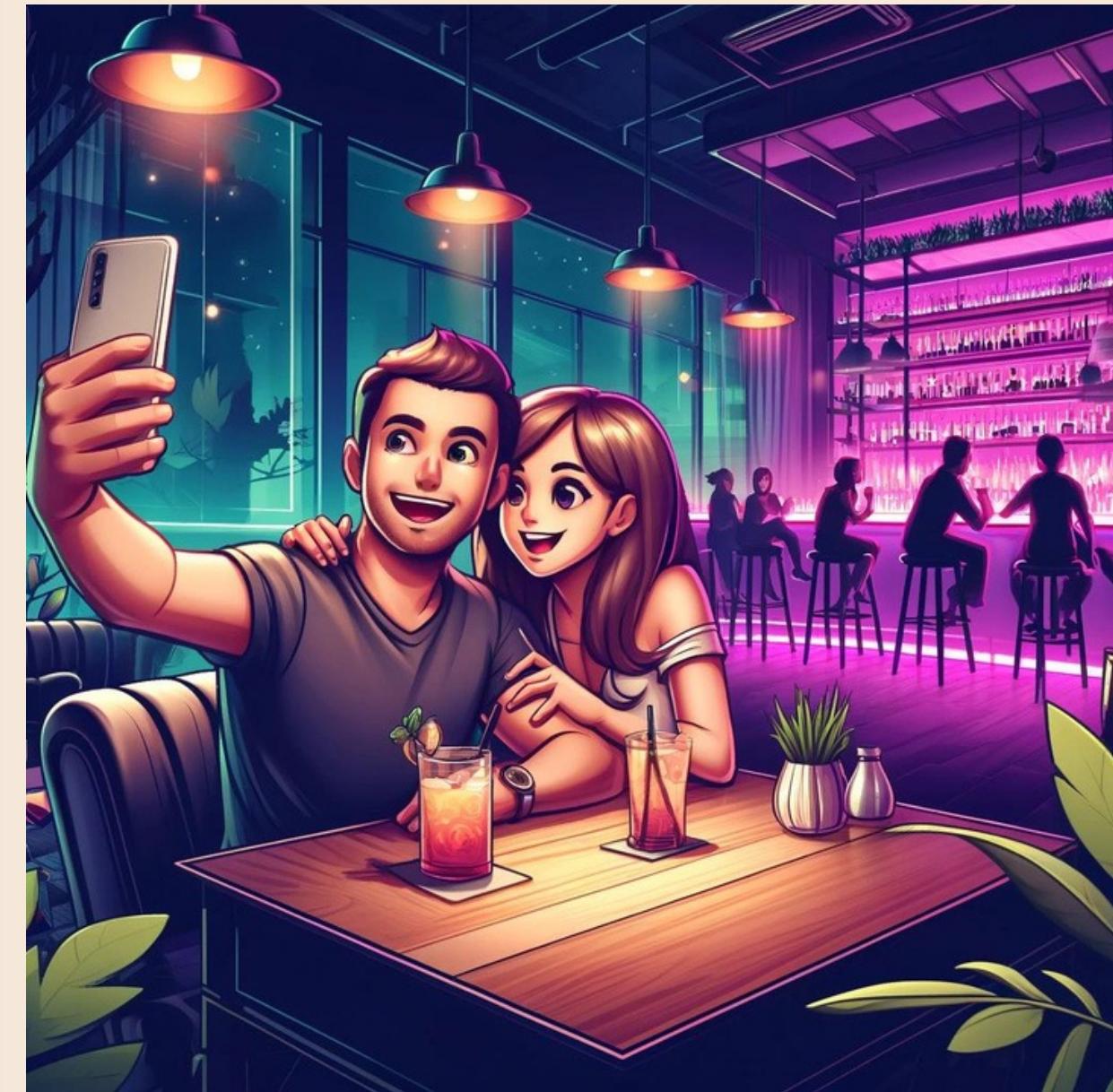
As the sun set and the moon rose, Nice welcomed its newest visitors. After exploring several hotels, which were all full, they settled at the 'grand' Hotel de Nice, hoping for a comfortable stay. But alas, the corridors held a surprise – unpleasant smells! Determined to enjoy their adventure, they embraced the challenge with smiles and curiosity.



Upon arriving in Nice, Lena and Ben checked into their new Airbnb, a charming apartment with a spacious balcony. As they stepped outside, they were greeted by a stunning view of the beach and the picturesque old town. The turquoise waves of the Mediterranean stretched out before them, with palm trees lining the shore and the iconic red-tiled roofs of the old town adding a splash of color to the horizon.



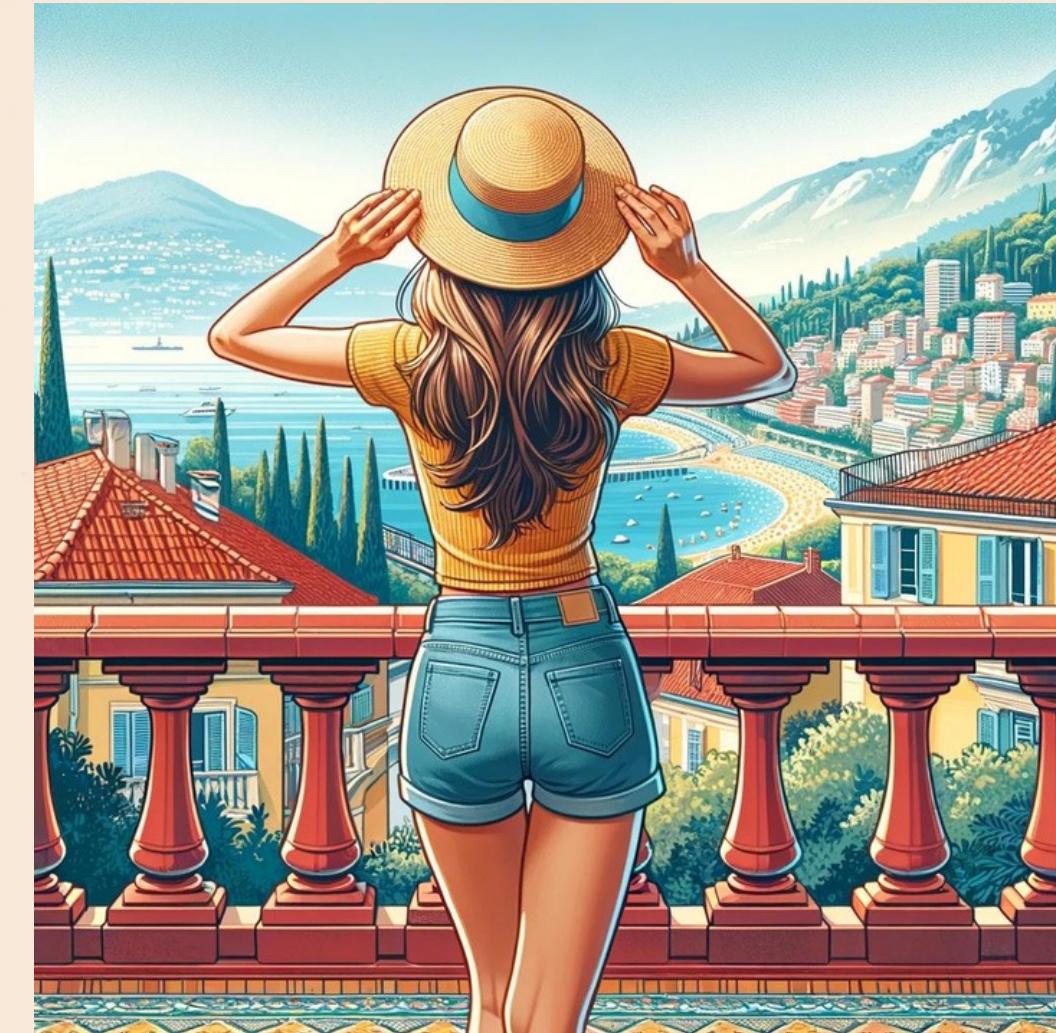
As night fell, Alice and Tom faced their first encounter with the relentless mosquitoes. Despite their best efforts, the pesky insects proved to be unyielding foes, disrupting their sleep with their relentless buzzing and biting. Grappling with annoyance, they realized the importance of precautions against these ferocious creatures. With mosquito nets or curtains in place, they prepared to wage war against the night's tiny tormentors.



"That night, Lena and Ben made their way to Waka Bar, known as the hottest spot in Nice for lively nights and vibrant crowds. The moment they walked in, they could feel the energy in the air—music pulsing, laughter echoing, and glasses clinking as people toasted to good times.



The next morning, the driver arrived with her carriage driver at ten o'clock sharp. Alice and Tom hopped in eagerly as they set off for 'the chateau,' a modern building standing on ancient Roman ruins. Excitedly, they wondered what secrets those ancient remains held. Located on the east side of Nice, the chateau promised a breathtaking view of the bay, the town, and the lush countryside beyond. Adventure awaited around every corner!



Lena and Ben spent a day exploring Colline du Château. From the top, they could see the sweeping coastline, with the turquoise Mediterranean meeting the sandy beaches, and the vibrant rooftops of Nice stretching out into the distance. The park's ancient ruins and quaint stone structures added a touch of history to their journey. Lena snapped photos of the cascading waterfall, a hidden gem within the park, while Ben marveled at the breathtaking views.



Poor Tom caught a cold and felt terribly unwell during the night. For the next two days, he had to stay in bed, missing out on the lively meals at the table d'hôte. Even on the third day, he still wasn't feeling his best and had to stick to a bland diet of rice. It was a challenging time for him, but Alice stayed close, hoping he'd recover quickly so they could continue their adventures together



After a few busy days exploring Marseille and Nice, Ben felt a scratchy throat and a bit of a sniffle—sure signs of a mild cold from the stress of traveling. As Lena prepared for their day of sightseeing, Ben mentioned he was feeling under the weather. They decided to take it easy and headed to a nearby pharmacy to pick up some cold and flu tablets.



The next day, Alice and Tom set off on a carriage ride from Nice to Mentone. The morning began cloudy and cold, but the skies soon cleared, bringing sunshine and warmth. As they climbed the winding road to 2,100 feet, the view was spectacular. To their left, they saw the snowy peaks of the Maritime Alps, and to their right, the Mediterranean shimmered in the distance.

The road meandered through deep gorges filled with olive trees and vineyards, leading them to picturesque villages like Eza, perched high on the cliffside. It was an unforgettable journey!



Lena and Ben decided to take a day trip to Menton and Monaco, hopping on a bus that wound along the picturesque coastline. The journey offered stunning views of the Mediterranean, with the road weaving through charming villages and dramatic cliffs.



Once they reached Menton, Alice and Tom went for a walk along the bay. The path took them to a spot where they could see the old town rising steeply from the beach, its ancient stone buildings contrasting against the backdrop of the stormy sky. The view from the west bay was breathtaking, with Menton offering a more intimate charm than Nice, its picturesque scenery inviting exploration.



When Lena and Ben arrived in Menton, they were captivated by the town's vibrant charm. The streets were lined with colorful buildings, their facades painted in shades of orange, pink, and yellow, creating a cheerful, sunlit atmosphere. As they wandered through the narrow alleys, the quaint shutters and blooming balconies added to the town's lively appeal.



After Menton, Alice and Tom headed to Monaco. They arrived around half past ten or eleven and visited the house where gambling takes place. They were too early to see the actual game—roulette doesn't start until two in the afternoon—but an attendant uncovered the roulette table to demonstrate how it works.



Lena and Ben ventured through the glamourous streets of Monaco, where everything sparkled with luxury. From the high-end boutiques to the opulent Monte Carlo Casino, it was clear this was a playground for the rich and famous. However, when they saw the price tags—even a bottle of water cost a small fortune—they decided to just soak in the sights without opening their wallets.



They were driven to the Villa Garlands at the western edge of Nice. It's a beautiful place—or at least it will be, once the renovations are complete. The grounds, once renowned for their stunning beauty, have been heavily altered due to extensive construction work by the owner. The former charm has been stripped away, leaving behind a work in progress. It will take some time before the villa and its gardens are restored to their former glory.



On their second-to-last day in Nice, Lena and Ben focused on exploring the charming old town, Vieux Nice. The narrow cobblestone streets were lined with pastel-colored buildings, each with its unique shutters and balconies. They wandered through the bustling Cours Saleya market, admiring the vibrant flowers, fresh produce, and artisanal goods. Lena found a small shop with handmade soaps and bought a few as souvenirs.



A few days later they attended a grand reception and ball hosted by the Americans in Nice, honouring Admiral Farragut. It was a spectacular event held in the grand new casino, with stunning rooms, magnificent dresses, and dazzling diamonds worn by Russian ladies. The old King of Bavaria and other notable figures in Nice were there. Tickets were in such high demand that some were willing to pay £50 for one!



Lena and Ben spent their final night in Nice dining at Le Plongeoir, a restaurant they'd seen all over social media for its unique architecture perched on a rock formation over the Mediterranean. Having booked months in advance, they were thrilled to finally experience the stunning views and exquisite cuisine. As they sat on the terrace, the sound of waves crashing below and the twinkling city lights created an unforgettable atmosphere.



The people of Nice claim they've never experienced such cold weather at this time of year—but they always say that. They fiercely protect their climate's reputation, treating every cold day as a rare and exceptional occurrence. Snow, they insist, is almost unheard of, and if it does fall, it melts as soon as it touches the ground. Yet, today, we had no sun at all. We'll see how 'rare' this cold weather truly is.



On their last day in Nice, Lena and Ben got up early to make the most of their morning at one of the beach clubs along the Promenade des Anglais. The air was cool and the beach was just beginning to wake up as they found a spot with lounge chairs and umbrellas. As the beach club came to life, waitstaff offered refreshments, and food. It was the perfect, relaxing start to their final day in the south of France.



As their journey drew to a close, Tom and Alice packed their belongings, ready for the trip home. They carefully folded their clothes, tucked away their souvenirs, and reminisced about the incredible places they'd seen. With their bags packed and their hearts full of memories, the journey home was the final step in their wonderful adventure.



By afternoon, Lena and Ben returned to their Airbnb to pack and check out, ready to catch their evening flight back home. The morning at the beach had been the perfect farewell to the French Riviera, but now it was time to leave the sunshine and head back to reality.

*Fin*

*The End*