

18.05.17 - 18.06.11

Europe

By. _____ stevenocchipinti 외 1 명

DAY 1

18.05.17. May 17, 2018 12:00:00 AM GMT



Melbourne



비행기를 타고



Hong Kong



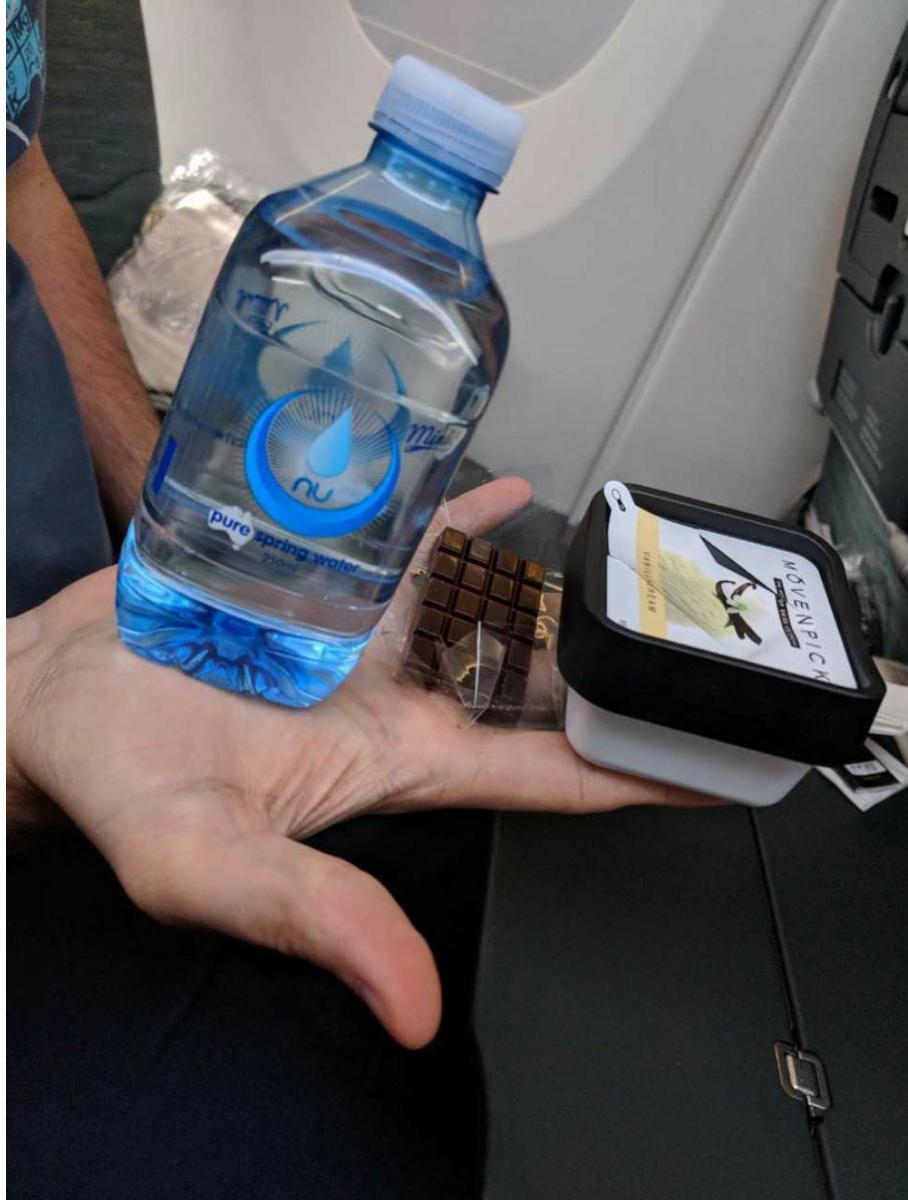
비행기를 타고



Paris



Ready for the big trip!



Including some small goods from the plane and lounge in
Melbourne!



Hotel ibis budget Paris La Villette 19ème

★★ Île-de-France

DAY 2

18.05.18.May 18, 2018 12:00:00 AM GMT

Made it to our hotel jetlagged and all. So decided to have a nap then head to a Boulangerie for some carby goodness!



Steve's first crouque monsieur.. although a little mustardy then he would have liked ☑

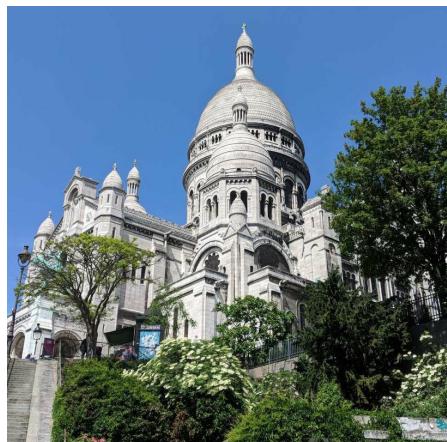
Hotel ibis budget Paris La Villette 15



걸어서



Sacré-Cœur





Train strikes were on so we decided to walk and explore Montemarte as well as burn off those pastries along the

way 😊



There was a little market happening just outside the church so we went for a walk through. There were mostly small food stalls, we ended up buying a little cup of fresh strawberries, they were really nice!



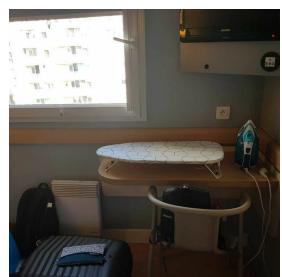
This part of Paris is quite nice, the buildings have a particular look to them with shutters around the windows and flower pots hanging from the balconies. We continued walking around for a bit before heading home and getting some water and snacks for the hotel.

Finally made it home and unfortunately jetlag has set in so while Steve is fast asleep I'm trying to stay up as long as I can to sleep through the night!

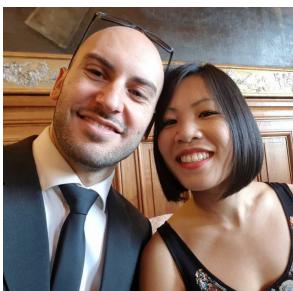
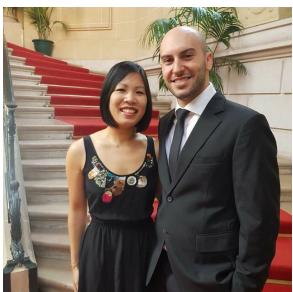
DAY 3

18.05.19. May 19, 2018 12:00:00 AM GMT

Today is wedding day! Bec's friends Mel and Edu are getting married here in Paris and we were lucky enough to join in the celebration.



After getting a very early night (crashed at 5pm with jetlag) we got up early and found a boulangerie for breakfast and then headed back to the hotel to prepare for the wedding. Luckily the hotel had an iron we could borrow and I could get the major creases out my shirt from the suitcase.



The first stop on the wedding itinerary was the town hall for the civil ceremony. The artwork inside was very intricate and there was a French celebrant who officially married them.



The next stop was Pavillon du Lac in Buttes Chaumont Park. The bride's brother Adrian was MC for the ceremony and acted as a sort of celebrant and organised speeches and ring exchange. There were people from all over the

world and the ceremony involved English, Spanish and French languages. There were even translation sheets for the speeches.

One thing I haven't seen at a wedding before was a mozzarella bar. There was a chef serving four different types of mozzarella and a bunch of other Mediterranean foods, he would even take the time to present them nicely on everyone's plate with fresh herbs and olive oil.



As an ice breaker we were all handed a mission on a piece of paper when we arrived. Bec's was to take a photo doing a "youyou" with someone from North Africa and mine was to take a photo with a musician as if we were playing together.

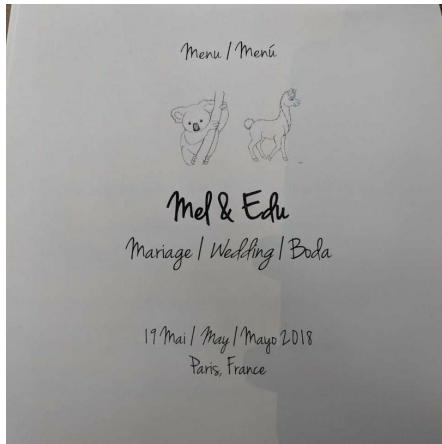
Other people had missions like "take a photo with 2 Australians pretending to be koalas", "take a kawaii photo with an Australian who can speak Japanese" and "take a photo surfing with 2 Australians". This was a fun way to get to know people. I attempted to draw in a surf board but it turned out more like a banana 😊





We took a bunch of photos with the group and then had a couple of hours to relax before the dinner and dancing part of the event so walked around the park and then headed back to the hotel to relax for a bit





After a little rest in the hotel we headed back to Pavillon de luc for the reception. Some of Mel's friend's and family had set up the tables beautifully while we had rest. I loved the little Mel and Edu holding flag's that were napkin
holders 😊



What is a wedding without games! Mel and Edu were tested with the shoe game where we needed French, Spanish and English translations throughout the game. We then moved outside for more dessert! By this time Steve and I could not fit anymore inside us! We then all participated in a Peruvian game where everyone had to reach for a ribbon from the bucket. If your ribbon had no pendant at the end you received a lucky peruvian man that brought you lots of luck. Unfortunately we were not the lucky ones 😊



Finally what a way to end a wedding into the wee hours of the morning by dancing. We left about 1am but true French style quite a few stayed on until early morning! Steve had some pretty cool moves 😎

DAY 4

18.05.20.May 20, 2018 12:00:00 AM GMT

Today Mel and Edu were hosting a post-wedding picnic and it was the perfect day for it, the best weather we've seen and it's apparently quite unusual for such great weather at this time of the year.



Everyone was bringing something to the picnic so we thought we'd get the typical French baguette and cheese

from the grocery store out the front of our accommodation but it was closed on Sundays along with most of the bakeries!

We walked down the street and eventually found one that was open (they are on every corner here so it didn't take too long, although most of them were closed) and bought our baguette, a croissant for the road and a couple of sweet pastries but didn't have any cheese to go with it.

Luckily we came across a market on the way that was just finishing up and we got a nice big slab of brie just in time.

This photo of us rushing down the street with bakery goods looking for cheese sums up our morning pretty well,
haha

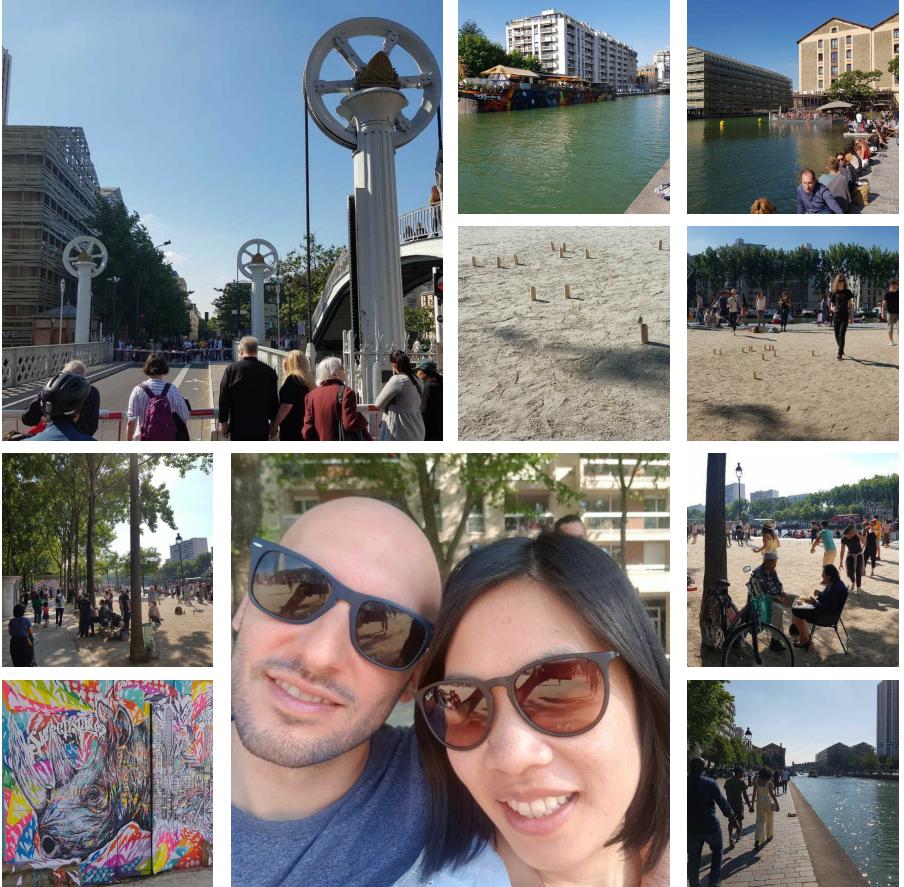




The picnic was in Parc de la Villette, a really nice park along the canal. Everyone brought deliciously fresh food, there were lots of different breads, cheeses, meats and fruits, yet another feast!

The tomatoes taste like real tomatoes, the strawberries were perfectly soft and full of flavour and the bread was crusty on the outside and fluffy on the inside. The quality of the food here is spectacular!

The group are all incredibly friendly, I've never met any of them and we were all like one big, happy, multi-cultural family gathering from all over the world.



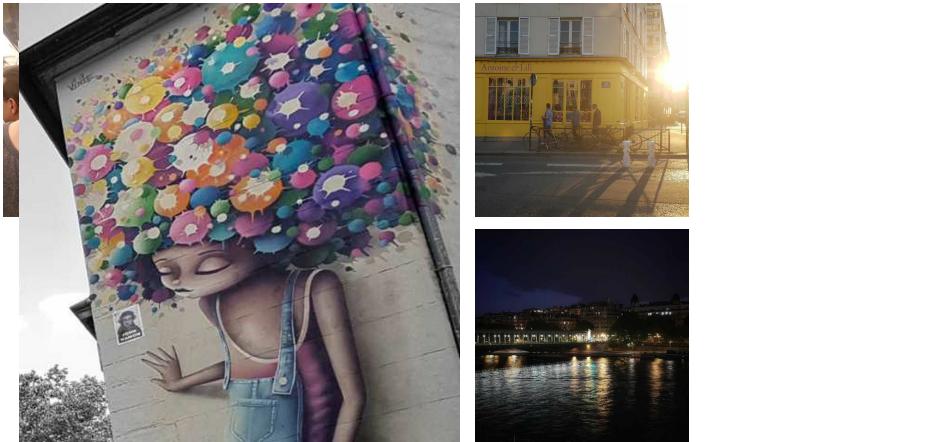
After the picnic, on Edu's advice, we continued to walk down the canal along the way to our hotel, it's a really nice area and the weather was perfect.

The canal is home to a bunch of very popular restaurants, some of which were recommended to us but we were so full from lunch that we just walked along the water

enjoying the scenery.

There is a big mechanical bridge that rises up to let boats through which looked pretty cool and a sandy area along the canal where people play games so we just sat along there and watched for a bit before heading back home to drop off some stuff and have a quick nap then head out to explore the canal a bit more.





After a nap it was a little hard to get going again but it was still nice weather outside and the sun doesn't set until 9:30pm here so we were fine once we started walking around.

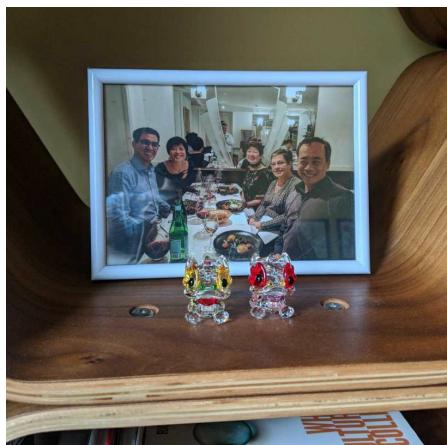
We walked in the other direction along the canal and admired some of the street art, nice old buildings and the little bridges over the water. We eventually got to the station and worked out how to buy tickets to get to the Eiffel Tower.

We arrived at the perfect time for photos, the sun had just started to set and the sky was a nice blue colour. This also meant we got to see the tower during the day and lit up at night.

Security is a bit higher now than last time Bec was here but after lining up and having a security guard search our bags we entered the main area to get our photos. We decided not to go up to the viewing area mainly because we were pretty tired by this stage and the queue was quite long! But it was nice just walking around and taking on the views.

DAY 5

18.05.21.May 21, 2018 12:00:00 AM GMT



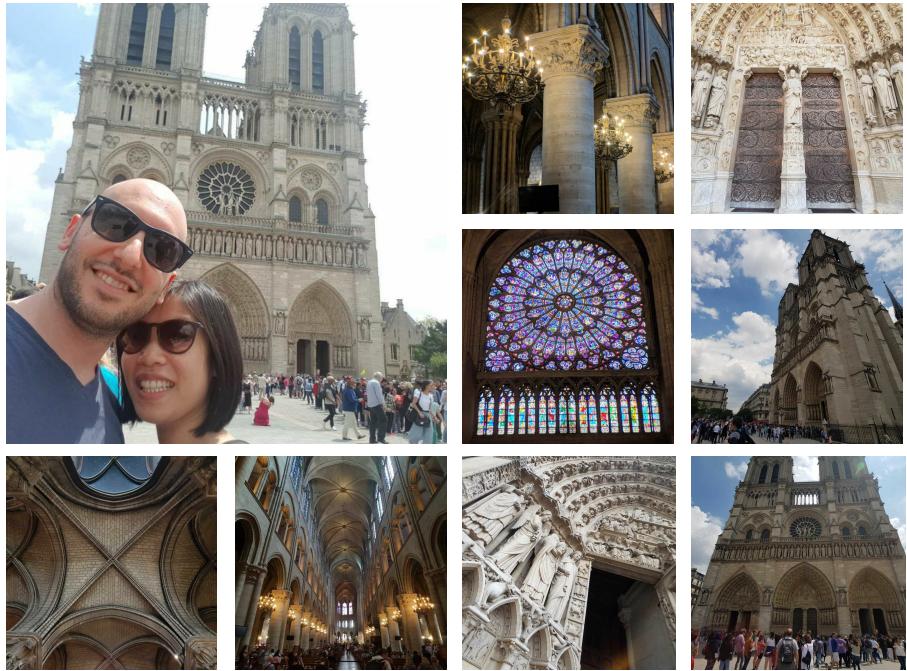
We started our day with a lovely breakfast at Mel and

Edu's apartment indulging on the lovely bread and croissants. It was about a 15 min walk from our hotel so we got there early and then June, Geoff and Vanessa joined later. It was lovely to see Mel and Edu's recently renovated place and also to just catch up a little more. After a few hours and full of baguette we headed off on our way to Notre Dame.

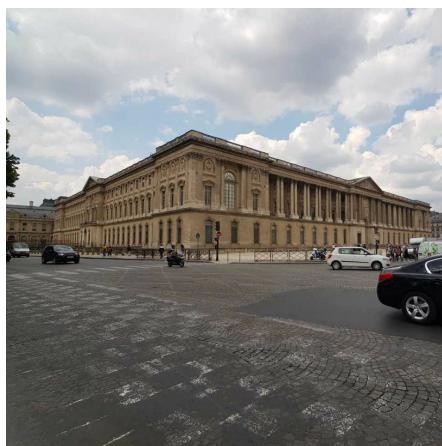


On our way to Notre Dame we happened to stumble by a

crepe place called Quasimodo! Nutella crepes was one of the things Steve wanted to eat in Paris so we had to get one en route to Notre Dame!



We made it to Notre Dame and the line moved pretty quick to get inside. It was a great opportunity to play around with the lenses Steve bought and admire the amazing architecture of the church. We would have liked to checkout Quasimodo's hood but unfortunately there didnt seem to be any tours to go to the bell tower.



Next stop the Lourve where we had to take the mandatory tourist pic holding the Lourve! But before we arrived at the Lourve we decided we needed a stop to people watch and of course have a charcuterie and cheese board ☑



To end the day we decided to rest in the beautiful Jardin de Tuileries. It had been a pretty long day so finding a bench and laying in shade was a perfect end to the day 😊

DAY 6

18.05.22.May 22, 2018 12:00:00 AM GMT



Paris



비행기를 타고



Sicily



Today marks the end of the first chapter of our holiday. We packed most of our stuff last night and finished up this morning, checked out of the hotel and headed to the metro to go to the airport.

We had bought just enough metro tickets for our stay in Paris and the last leg to the airport uses different tickets which worked out perfectly. Apart from nearly not fitting in to the packed, peak hour train, we had a good run in and made it there with time to spare so we got through security and ordered our last french meal, a croissant and two rolls.



Our flight was about 2.5 hours and apart from a little turbulence along the way it was a pretty easy flight. Once we arrived and picked up our bags we were greeted by Salvatore and Alessia who were patiently waiting for us - this is the first time we've officially met in person, so far we've only texted each other! Both of them were very welcoming and really friendly.

We loaded up the car and started our journey to Ragusa, which is about an hour and a half drive. After talking about how we had seen Cafe Sicilia on Chefs Table on Netflix, Salvatore took a detour via Noto and gave us a quick tour of the area, complete with historic information about the buildings and earthquakes and treated us to the traditional almond granita with brioche from Cafe Sicilia.

We parked just outside the town centre and there were little market stalls selling fresh produce and gifts. We stopped at a cheese stall and found that they were branded with "Occhipinti", we barely ever hear this name in Australia but it's quite common in Sicily!

The south part of Sicily was hit with big earthquakes in 1693 which destroyed a lot of the townships in the area and Noto was rebuilt in a new area, where we visited. Most of the buildings here are from the 18th century.



We went in to quite a few churches but one of them in particular was quite interesting, it had collapsed in 1996 and was rebuilt over a period of about 10 years. Some of the original material was used while the rest was created to match the original style. Most of the buildings that look like this are quite old but it's great that modern building techniques could still recreate the same look. In the

photos of walls above, one of them is original and the other is a recreation.
