

Title:

Don't Forget Your French Dictionary!

Word Count:

441

Summary:

The summer after I graduated from college I had the unique opportunity to travel to France with my roommates and friends. A group of six of us left for France on the cheapest flight we could find the morning after graduation. We had plans to stay for the entire summer and just see what unfolded. None of us had jobs lined up or anything to rush back to, so we just took things in stride and determined to have the adventure of a lifetime. We learned quickly, however, that forget...

Keywords:

french dictionary

Article Body:

The summer after I graduated from college I had the unique opportunity to travel to France with my roommates and friends. A group of six of us left for France on the cheapest flight we could find the morning after graduation. We had plans to stay for the entire summer and just see what unfolded. None of us had jobs lined up or anything to rush back to, so we just took things in stride and determined to have the adventure of a lifetime. We learned quickly, however, that forgetting a French dictionary was not the best way to start a great summer.

We talked briefly about what we should bring on our journey to France, and I even remember hearing one of the guys mention that we would do well to remember a French dictionary since none of us spoke a word of French. I thought that advice was wise, but I never thought to bring a French dictionary myself. I was convinced that one of the more organized and responsible guys would surely remember to bring such a valuable tool for our survival.

I was wrong. Not one guy out of the six of us thought to bring a French dictionary with us on our journey. We realized this on the eight hour flight to Paris from our hometown of Chicago. We laughed about our mistake at first with sighs that we would just figure our way around and that we would be fine.

Landing in Paris we quickly learned that it would have been wise to include a French dictionary in our packing. We learned that while many French people speak and understand English, far fewer of them are willing to help lazy Americans who

haven't taken the time to learn any of their language. So we were stuck in a country that mostly spoke English but that wasn't willing to help us get around their land.

We made it through what turned into a four month journey through most of France. We talked about leaving the country to explore nearby Italy or Spain, but we decided to remain in France and focus all of our time and energy on exploring this country in a more detailed way. We picked up small bits of French as we went along, but most of our weeks were spent struggling to make it from town to town on nothing but our English. A French dictionary sure would have been nice.

The moral of my story: bring a French dictionary the next time you visit France. Or better yet, bring a dictionary to any country you visit that doesn't speak your language.