

Title:

Nearly Broke in Nice, France

Word Count:

446

Summary:

I had been backpacking for three months around Europe and had reached my final destination of Nice. Too bad I had 10 days till my flight home and I was nearly broke!

Keywords:

nice, france, nice travelogue, france travelogue, nice stories, france stories, travel journal

Article Body:

I had been backpacking for three months around Europe and had reached my final destination of Nice. Too bad I had 10 days till my flight home and I was nearly broke!

As I sat in the Gar de Nice, the train station, I started giving serious thought to how I was going to survive for 10 days on \$150.00. I had just arrived from two weeks in Barcelona, a Spanish girlfriend and, well, it had seemed worth it at the time.

Lodging seemed like a good place to start. Hmmm...the Ritz? Probably a bit pricey. Eventually, I found a bed in a communal room in a hotel with a lot of character. By communal, I mean eight beds for both boys and girls in one room. By character, I mean the place was old when Napoleon was in power. The snoring alone was enough to raise the ancient roof.

Still, it only set me back \$8 a night, so I had \$70 to live off for ten days. \$70 doesn't go particularly far in Nice and some involuntary dieting was coming front and center in my mind. Even McDonalds was expensive, but the clean bathrooms made a daily trip worth it.

Fortunately, one of my roommates was Thomas from England. He was broke as well, but intentionally so. He had come down from London to relax on the beach. Every night, he went out and played guitar in front of cafes for spare change. He made the equivalent of \$10 to \$15 a night and felt he was playing well. I pointed out the money was being paid to make him go away. He just smiled.

Thomas soon figured out I was dead broke and empathized with my situation. For the next 10 days, I would follow him on his musical rounds and keep an eye out for the police. Apparently, the local authorities frowned upon freelance guitar sessions. This was particularly true when he played the extended version of "Hey, Jude" in front of diners that weren't tipping.

Afterwards, we would buy wine and grab a bus to Villefranche Sur Mer, a beach area just to the east of Nice proper. There we would visit various friends Thomas had made over the years, drink wine and eat until the wee hours of the morning.

I have to admit it was a very good time and I was melancholy when the day of my flight finally came. Okay, the snoring in the room was obnoxious, but you could avoid it by staying up all night!

If you get stuck in Nice and are low on funds, Thomas still goes every summer. He's the tall guy singing Beatles tunes off key.