

Trip to Paris - December 2019

In anticipation of the Christmas celebrations the **French Group** decided on a visit to Paris to discover how Parisians prepare for the Fêtes de Noël. This trip featured more tentation au Chocolat than even Joanne Harris's novel. Heather again did a sterling job in organising the trip, and the hotel and excursions were splendid. Such was the impeccable timing, we even managed to avoid the gilets jaunes. As veterans of the Eurostar we enjoyed a smooth and uneventful journey apart from when Linda, in search of the toilettes, attempted to climb into the huge fridge in the dining car. Thankfully she was rescued by the attendant, there being no harm done.

Our visit to the Musée d'Orsay was a favourite, as was also the history tour of the Marais district, where our hotel was situated. Being a fit bunch, we covered a lot of ground walking through the back streets, and along the Seine, and hopping on and off the Metro.

Our first encounter with chocolate was in a tiny café in Montmartre where it soon became apparent that the hot chocolate was made with a special ingredient called Love.



Heather and Lesley's drinks were met with much laughter and merriment as the rather gorgeous waiter had gone to great length to win their hearts. (see picture)

At the restaurant Chez Janou for our first evening meal, although only three of us ordered chocolate mousse, the waiter brought to the table a massive bowlful of the most sublime, enticing, fragrant, melt-in-the-mouth chocolate heaven that

seduced all six of us, all night! There would have been enough for the whole Woodside U3A membership. Meanwhile Joyce's beautifully modulated English voice could be heard "Shall we order another bottle?" and then she did so, just like a Parisienne.

Our last morning was spent shopping for presents in the Galeries Lafayette. We marvelled at the ornate architecture, the splendid giant Christmas tree and the beautiful chic



Christmas displays in all the windows.

It was here that we had to use our French the most, having lost one of our group, Anne H. She was in an entirely different building, but we all managed to meet up with her in time to purchase the delectable (but very expensive) macarons that had been recommended by our tour guide the day before.

The last Metro journey was to the Gare du Nord and then it was the Eurostar to St Pancras and then a taxi home organised by Joyce.

We shall soon be planning our next French adventure.

Anne