

Fall in Paris 2010

September 16, 2010 Thursday

Breakfast at home - 6-grain bread, butter from Brittany, jam, orange juice and coffee.

Then we were off to rue Berthollet for some appointments. We stopped again at the hardware store and bought glue for repairs and a small rubber spatula.

We explored rue Broca all the way to Blvd Arago and saw where bus 58 goes. We were able to stop at the outdoor market on Port Royal and picked up several things to make meals for the next few days. We shopped at the creamery that sells milk products from Normandy and picked up butter and several pots of yogurt. We bought much more than I planned and we had our hands full walking back on Blvd. Montparnasse. (Port Royal ends and turns into Blvd Montparnasse.

We had lunch of the raviolis we bought yesterday and a roasted bell pepper. I made a sauce of butter and parsley for the raviolis. We drank mineral water, no wine. Ernie ate one of the baklavas we bought at the Lebanese stall. (This time I bought 200 grams instead of only 100 of a Tzajiki).

I bought a piece of fillet de Perche, which we have enjoyed so much in Switzerland and came home to look for recipes on the Internet. We found one, which uses aluminum foil. I have most of the ingredients already so we chose that one.

After lunch I made coffee (to go with Ernie's baklava) and lay down to rest my tootsies and read another chapter of Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*. I am enchanted with the book but I think I may re-read it in the future because it is quite dense and the characters use different names – sort of like a Russian novel – as they move from one country to another. The two main characters move around a lot. One character really travels! He starts in Florence then to Genoa then sails to Istanbul, to Hindustan then back to Istanbul through several battles in, I don't know where, and finally back to Florence, his home town.

Then I took out the ironing board and the iron and discovered that it has no steam so I had to sprinkle the items to iron. Yesterday I washed two loads and had a bunch of stuff that was too wrinkled to wear. I was gratified that the spot remover we bought worked on the tablecloth and on my white polo shirt.

I worked up my nerve and called the cello teacher! Left a message and now will wait for her return call. I was so surprised at myself. Before I called her, I needed to refresh my lipstick. What was that about?

I was a little bit reassured when in our wanderings I saw a wee girl; about the age I was when I first started playing the cello, with a full sized cello strapped on her back. If she could do it, I suppose I can too. There is still the problem of where in the apartment I will store it?

The agency has been promising to send technicians to a) fix the telephone and b) make a few minor repairs in the apartment. Ernie called several times and had to leave message on voicemail, sent emails then re-sent the emails, without a call back Very frustrating. There was one such comment on their web site. We might have to also write a bad comment if they don't respond soon.

A workman called on our intercom and Ernie gladly let him in, only to find out he is a private workman not associated with ParisAddress and was checking on our chimney to see if we wanted it cleaned. It is

a gas fireplace. We don't intend to use it and it's not clear that it is even functioning. I was on the portable phone with Barbara and went into the bedroom so I could hear over their voices and didn't get the gist of the conversation. After he left, Ernie became upset and worried that the guy had been casing our apartment. He reads a lot of police novels in French and felt he had read that story many times. I wasn't worried because when we leave (now that our keys work properly) we lock the door with 4 different locks. They would have to tear the door down in order to get in after we engaged all the locks. Besides, what is there here to steal (except our laptops.)

EM Note added. I learned later that this is routinely done every fall – go to each apartment and offer to clean and check out the fireplace.

I ran off to the Franprix to buy aluminum foil for the new recipe and decaf coffee while I was at it. Ernie asked me to stop at the ATM and get cash. Here is the ATM directly across the street from our apartment door. The bank is the BNP whose signs are green with white birds in flight. It is on the corner across from the red façade. The gray doorway is where Elements, the Pilates studio is.



There wasn't any mouthwash at Franprix so I turned the corner and went to the Pharmacie to get some. In France, and Switzerland, too, the specialty stores (pharmacy, butcher, fish monger) sell particular items and the smaller supermarkets don't carry those items. Mouthwash is one of those items.

On the way out, I stopped to take a photo of the trees that I see from our apartment window because I think they are beginning to change color.



As I crossed the street to return home, about 5 p.m., I took a photo of the seafood display before the Bar à Huîtres. It is stocked and ready for the evening's dinner hour. During the height of the dinner hour there are as many as 5 men standing there, opening oysters, clams and arranging them in platters. It is quite a show.



Shortly after my return Ernie called the agency again. He had managed to fix the apartment land line on his own and left a message to that effect. We pay for the minutes on the cell phone but the apartment phone is included in our rent. It was pretty annoying that we have been here 6 days and they haven't fixed the phone. What if we had rented the apartment for one-week?

At long last the agent returned Ernie's calls. He apologized saying he thought the technician had already come. He said he would try to get someone out this evening. He later called and said the technician will be here Saturday afternoon. We shall see. However, the items left are not as serious as being without a phone or keys that don't work well. We can't get the toaster to work, there is a light out in the bathroom, we would like the towel rack put back and one of the window shades needs a spring in it so it won't slam down to the floor every time we let down the shade. All of those things fall into the category of annoying rather than serious.

Now I can try the recipe for fillet de Perch en Papillote. We bought the aluminum foil and here are the ingredients:



and the finished product. It has chopped onions, diced tomato and supposed to have crème fraiche but I substituted a soft sweet cheese I had and it worked.

I have a real oven in this apartment. The one in the last apartment was only a microwave with convection and grilling capacity and it was placed low where I couldn't see what I was doing and there was no room in that kitchen to maneuver. It is thrilling to be working with a real oven. It does all kinds of things and has timers and beeps when it is at the right temperature. The top where I have placed the ingredients is a flat electric stovetop. It is very handy as counter space when it is cool. For tonight's dinner I won't use the stovetop to cook so it is in use as a work space.



we started with roasted and marinated peppers and the rest of the deli meats from our apéro a few nights ago.



Here is Ernie's baklava.

