

Paris Journal 2010

Saturday, February 5 – Saturday Port Royal Open Air Market



This time we planned it and came prepared with 3 bags to buy enough for 3 days. We made sure to eat some breakfast before going but it was still hard not to buy more than we could carry.

But first we went to the Post Office to find out the procedure for finding a lost piece of mail. The lady was very helpful and followed the steps that were taken by the French postman to deliver our package. It turned out that since it was a special delivery requiring a signature, it was handled by a different arm of the Post Office than our usual mailman. The letter carrier for rue Berthollet, has the entry codes for each of the buildings and then delivers the mail into the mailbox in the foyer that Ernie so carefully posted with both our names and our apartment floor and number. However, the special delivery person did not have the code to enter the building and so was not sure that we were in that building. He made two attempts by ringing the bell. However, since our building has no day-time concierge, there was no one to answer the bell.

But the postal worker arranged for the package to be delivered on Tuesday. She couldn't tell us the time of day but gave us a web site where we can track the package by its number and perhaps learn what time to expect the delivery. We gave her the entry code for the building to relay to the letter carrier and one of us will remain at home on Tuesday to be able to accept delivery. Yay! One more situation resolved.

Then, back to Port Royal and one more detour. We passed the market and turned on the street to the Val de Grace church to check out the posters for their weekend concerts. There is one Saturday night, which we decided to skip. It is a chorus singing Negro spirituals from America, among other things.

However, tomorrow night, Sunday, there will be an organ concert on their grand old organ of Bach and other works. Both concerts are free. It will be at 5:30.

Now to put away the groceries and cook lentils to go with the racks of ribs. Last night I figured out how to use the grill function of the oven so I'll be able to warm up the ribs.



As we turned to go back to the market, I saw between buildings, the strange red brick building that I have seen from the 91 bus as we traveled back on Blvd Monparnasse. We walked past a park that is named Parc de Explorateurs in honor of Marco Polo and De Salle who explored around the Chicago area.

It turns out to be part of the university system. It is the school of Arts and Architecture. You can see why I was curious about it. The architecture is quite different from most of the other buildings made of stone with quite a different shape.



Then back to the market where we salivated at the prepared food, the terrines, the cheeses, the fresh fish. The Greek and Asiatique prepared foods, the fruits, vegetables, eggs, milk products. I bought a chunk of butter from Bretagne that I'm dying to try. We bought some prepared Paella and rotisserie ribs, smoked salmon, yellow tulips. Ernie chose 2 terrines and something that was wrapped in pastry and bacon that they sliced. I bought eggs.

I have to comment that since I arrived in France I have been hungry for eggs. That is really unusual, because eggs are not a favorite food of mine. Last week I scrambled two eggs with the some left over potato, then boiled an egg and put it in my tuna salad and made myself a boiled egg sandwich, using up the half dozen eggs. Usually that quantity of eggs sits in my refrigerator for weeks before getting used up.

These eggs say they are from a farm where the chickens run around the farm and scratch and peck and eat things grown in the ground. They don't sit a long time here.

On the way back with our three bags of bounty (not as expensive as we expected), we stopped on rue Berthollet at a wine store 4 doors from us (it's at 26 Berthollet, we are at 14), called the Cave a vin. We have been buying really cheap red wine called Bourgogne Vin Grand Ordinaire for under \$5 at the Franprix, our supermarket on rue Mouffetard.

I have passed this Cave in the late afternoons and have seen people sitting on high stools in the corner eating and drinking wine.

The nice fellow who was there didn't have anything as cheap as the Grand Ordinaire but showed us another wine, a Minervois 2007,Domaine de Barroubio. Still not expensive, about what we would pay for "daily red" at SPD. Ernie explained to the young man that we will be receiving visitors and are exploring looking for a place where we could buy nicer wines for entertaining.

He explained that they can serve a board (called a "planche") with either cold cuts of meat or of cheese to go with wine that customers can consume there. He gave us the menu and hours of business. Ernie liked the idea of doing that with some of our visitors.