

The last time I saw Paris...

by Bill Boggs



....was this year, 2013, at the end of May. The French Open was in progress and the city had that added buzz that accompanies any international sporting event with world-wide attention. The focal point of this trip was to explore a most charming area of the city, the 6th Arrondissement, known as Saint-Germain-des-Pres. It's a neighborhood of narrow, picturesque "rues" off the Left Bank of the Seine, full of cafes, shops, galleries, and markets. At any turn, you could find yourself in a little courtyard with a bench and some local birds to keep you company.

In the past, I've stayed at the historic Hotel D'Aubusson on Rue Dauphine. It was fully booked this time, but I wanted the same convenient area and found the more modest but still charming HOTEL DAUPHINE SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRES just a few steps away at 36, Rue Dauphine. It turned out to be a good choice. They offer a breakfast buffet including egg dishes of your choice in a nicely decorated room off the lobby with windows



The Hotel Dauphine Saint- Germain-des-Pres on Rue Dauphine.



The cozy two-seat bar in Hotel Dauphine.



facing the street....always a parade of people to capture your attention and imagination. The staff was helpful and the location ideal for exploring the Ile St.-Louis, Notre Dame, and St. Sulpice. It seems nothing in Paris is too far. It's truly a stroller's city. Our (do you think I would go to Paris in the springtime alone?) room faced an interior courtyard, so unfortunately, no view of Parisian roof tops but cozy, quiet and perfect for an afternoon nap after several hours of walking. For an interesting diversion, do try "The Original Paris Walks"..... they offer two-hour walks and talks in various neighborhoods with themes full of facts and fun. Their brochures can be found in most hotel lobbies.

I'm going to let several of the photographs I took help tell the story of the allure of this specific area in the city. My objective was complete relaxation and indulgence, the latter of which comes pretty easily in Paris! I planned to immerse myself in the cafe life and dine outdoors with good wine at both lunch and dinner, plus explore the many art galleries and antique shops along the winding streets. We stumbled upon the Lover's Lock Bridge crossing the Seine where couples affix a lock with their initials scrawled on it, make a wish, and toss the key into the river. (Writer's note: I was traveling with my beloved girlfriend, Jane Rothchild, real estate broker in New York City and owner of The Hotel Helper which supplies products to hotels and restaurants. We had our own romantic objectives for our first trip together to the City of Lights.)

Within a few blocks of our hotel, we found three outstanding places to dine, full of history and waiters with great elan. None of them was as expensive as we were used to near where we live in Manhattan. Les Deux Magots on Bl. St.-Germain-des-Pres is famous for the intellectuals and artists that have dined and conversed there over the years. We even had the good fortune to see Karl Lagerfeld perusing through magazines at a news kiosk right outside. On Rue du Buci, we ate at two restaurants opposite

(photo at left) The Lover's Lock Bridge crossing the Seine where couples affix a lock with their initials scrawled on it, make a wish, and toss the key into the river Seine.



One way to look at Rue Dauphine.

each other, Cafe de Paris and Brasserie L'Atlas. Street performers were outside for entertainment as if the food and atmosphere weren't enough to occupy our attention.

While most tourists in Paris make a beeline to the museums, I enjoyed gazing at the art displayed in dozens of galleries in the neighborhood. Posters in various windows offer a glimpse of attractions, as you can see. Jane, of course, loved all the boutiques. There's something unique about the French when it comes to style, and she picked up a few items to remind her of this special time for us in Paris.

If you want a romantic or contemplative escape for any length of time, a visit to the 6th Arrondissement is ideal. The Bl. St.-Germain-des-Pres, which runs the length of this area, is a street not to miss. You'll get the true feel of Paris with its movie houses, cafes, stores, and Metro stations with their Art Nouveau detail. HOTEL DAUPHINE SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRES turned out to be the perfect spot to enjoy all these treasures. Make sure you leave room in your suitcase as you'll want to shop while there. Tell yourself "oui" and *Bon Voyage!*



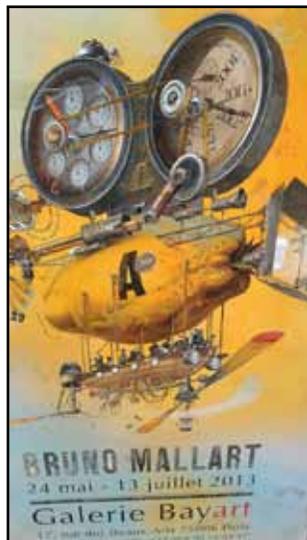
A Goat Cheese Tart at Les Deux Magots.



(Above) Ready for lunch at the Cafe de Paris. (Below left) Shopping on Bl St. Germain-des-Pres. (Below, right) Art gallery poster.



A rainbow appears above a glowing facade—a fortuitous sign capping our memorable return to Paris.



Bill & Jane apres dinner at Les Deux Magots.