



Thanks to the planned mobilities of the Erasmus+ KA2 project, *Ipso Facto* ((*Innovative Pedagogical Scenario On Food And Consumption Trends and Opportunities*)), I arrived at Niort, on September 7th, 2018. The family, who would have hosted me until 7 October, was waiting for me. I knew it would not be easy because I had to be away from home for two months, but I preferred to challenge myself and broaden my horizons.

For me the school year started on 10th September: my first day was at the French Lycée de la Venise Verte. A new world for me as it was the first time that I have left Italy. The French school is totally different from the Italian one: every 6-7 weeks of lessons they have 2 weeks of from school, there are three terms and only two summer months to enjoy the summer. In Italy, it's different because students are on holiday from about 3 months in summer and during the school year they have holidays at Christmas and at Easter. Then, in Italy, lessons start at 8.00 and finish at 1.00 pm; some schools have lessons until 2:00 pm, but in the afternoon students are free and they have to do their homework. Only elementary and middle schools have lessons until 4.00 or 4.30 and so day don't have lessons on Saturdays. In France, on the other hand, lessons start at 8.00 am and finish at 5.00 pm or at 6.00 pm. but students have about 2-3 free hours and they can study during this time without having to study anything when they come back home. Another difference is that in Italy, after getting the high school diploma, you can choose a university to complete the course of study undertaken, In addition, the high school lasts 3 years and not 5 years as in Italy, their last year is called TERMINAL. French students study the French history and the French grammar only for the first two years of high school and then they devote more hours to their course of study. As foreign languages they can choose to study Spanish, German or Italian; in Italy English is compulsory in all schools, you can study other foreign languages only in specific courses. The French students can also choose between two sports: badminton or dance to do for two consecutive hours a week. Inside the high school there is a library that they call 'CENTRE CULTUREL' and there is the infirmary. In my opinion, the French educational institution is better than the Italian on even though the latter offers a lot of learning opportunities. In Italy controls and supervision are rather absent: in France, there are many controllers inside the school who controls that students respect the rules, in particular in the school canteen, where students can't use technological devices, as this place is considered a meeting place which helps and improves relations and communication among students.





The French have a very hectic life, always on the move: they practice sports, go to work and attend school and courses. They know how to welcome you and soon you really feel like a family member. Thanks to their good hospitality you start to absorb their traditions, their culture and appreciate their cuisine. Their food is very healthy, meat and fish are always served at the table. Their meals consist of many courses and little portions, but in the end you're full. After lunch or dinner, they usually eat a yogurt, while in Italy it is an afternoon snack. In addition, the French eat some snacks after 4 hours having lunch. French cuisine is very based on taste and it is appreciated and popular as much as Italian cuisine. Both Italian and French people use similar procedures for the preparation of dishes, even if there are evident differences: for example, their carbonara is prepared with pancetta and sour cream (CREME FRECHE), while in Italy it is prepared with bacon and eggs and some spices or their pizza, has a different taste from the Italian one, because they use different ingredients that we certainly avoid!!

I can't understand how the French manage to balance all their activities: sport, work, school. In France a very common sport is TWIRLING.





It is a sport of balance, of being constant and is very esteemed. I had the chance to see two different twirling shows: believe me, it's something indescribable for those who love dance, like me.



The French landscape is spectacular. Their campaigns are beautiful; large fields and houses look like small villas: welcoming, warm, allowing you to feel at ease. I visited some ancien castles, between Niort and La Rochelle.



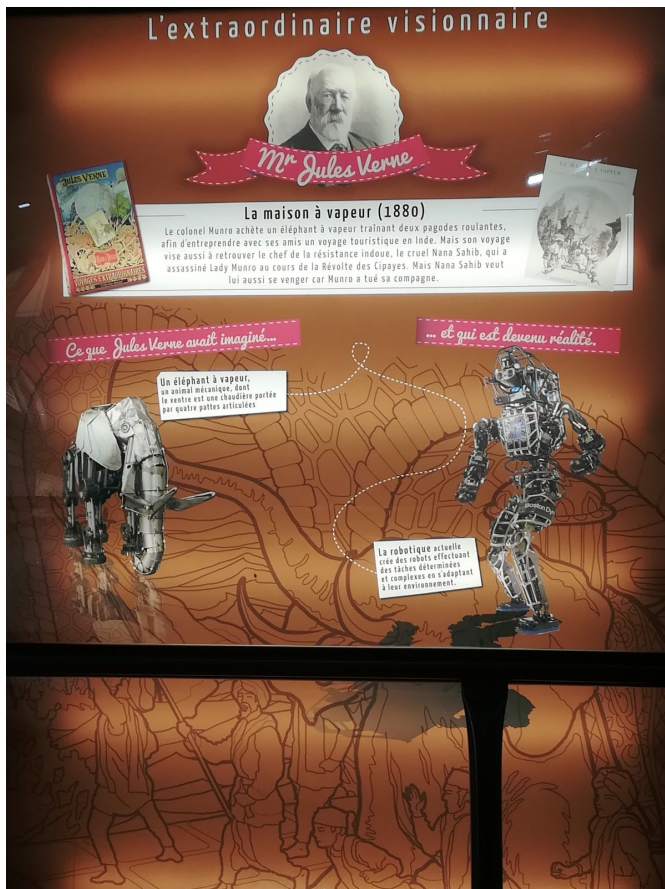




But an incredible experience was when I visited the FUTUROSCOPE, in Poitiers.









I am very happy to have left for France and took part to this project. These are opportunities that happen once in a lifetime, teach a lot and make you grow up on a personal level.

Traveling teaches you to be leave the comfort zone and learn to adapt yourself to other cultures, to other ways of living and of thinking. It teaches you to accept and respect the others and their traditions and helps your maturity process.

Living and studying abroad allowed me to improve a foreign language but at the same time to meet new people, to have fun and discover different cultures. This experience gave me the opportunity to get to know myself better, testing myself and facing my limits which are opportunities for inner growth.





À bientôt France

