

"At home in the world"

The globalisation of business and culture, increased mobility in Europe and intense migration movements necessitate ever better language skills.

Teaching language skills is a **core competence** of Eurojumelages and leads to the attainment of one of the principal aims: European international understanding.

Monday, 26 June

The 2023 Eurojumelages French course took place from 25 June to 2 July in the beautiful city of



Nantes. We were thirteen participants, hailing from Poland, Germany and the UK.

In the morning we took the tram to our French course in the former tobacco factory.

Our teachers Blandine and Daniel introduced a difficult profession to the participants with different levels.

After a substantial and delicious lunch at the Taverne Royale, we set off on our first afternoon to discover the cultural treasures of the city accompanied by the friendly twinnings from Nantes.



In the blazing sun, we set off to explore the old **Graslin** district. In the Place Royale is the huge fountain **Le Triomphe de la Loire**, surrounded by sculptures representing the rivers that flow into the Loire.



We entered the church of St Nicolas, built by Violet le Duc in the nineteenth century.

Some of the group went into the Boutique Debotté, a place that looks like a small hall in Versailles, with mirrors, crystal chandeliers and delicious chocolates.

Our hosts Barbara and Yann PRAUD presented us with a gift of Berlingots Nantais - the little sweets taste of mint and other different flavours.



We crossed the **Passage Pomeraye** - a very nice shopping mall built in 1840. There were lots of fancy things to see in the shop windows on both sides.

At the end of a slope was a wide square dominated by the white façade of the **Graslin Theatre** from 1787 with its beautiful Greek columns, but our destination was the famous restaurant opposite: **La Cigale**.



This tea room is a fabulously decorated fin de siècle building, famous for the romantic rendezvous of sailors from the port's boats.

However, we were there not only to see the paintings and mosaics, but also to taste the famous Nantes cake and have a cup of tea. **It was delicious!**



After such a refreshing break, we followed our guide Jacqueline to a pretty garden with some statues, **La Cours Cambronne**. The most beautiful was a contemporary sculpture of a young girl climbing her pedestal with difficulty. It was very charming!

Near the garden, we saw the first hydraulic lift installed in Nantes.

Thanks to our friendly guides and jumeleur, we spent our first afternoon in Nantes, which was varied, interesting and, of course, satisfying!

Isobel and Armando Tellez-Velasco, GB

Tuesday, 27 June

After French lessons and an excellent lunch, we visited the Japanese garden, located in the middle of an artificial island. It consists of rock gardens and waterfalls, between which are three buildings inspired by traditional Japanese architecture.



One of the buildings serves the function of a thesis pavilion. The surroundings are beautiful and tranquil. The trees, plants and flowers make the walk a pleasant experience.

The storehouse of the century was impressive. Behind this transparent wall, designed by architect Patrick Bouchain, 11 855 objects belonging to 20th century contemporaries are stored in metal boxes and barrels.



They were collected from 1 October to 31 December 1999, recorded in handwritten registers with the name of the donor and a few lines of intention, and then deposited here for a century. On 31 December 1999, the wall was closed at midnight and at the same time the Place unique opened its doors. The City of Nantes passed a resolution at the City Council meeting of 14 and 15 December 2000 to



reopen the centenary store at midnight on 31 December 2100. Each donor receives a receipt to pass on to children. They can then get to know the deposited object and the message that goes with it. However, all these testimonies of the past century remain the property of the city of Nantes.

An absolute highlight was the ride on the "Bateaux de l'Erdre". The Bateaux nantais offer beautiful scenic rides. The Erdre is one of the most important tributaries of the Loire.



The Erdre is one of the most important tributaries of the Loire. There are 365 castles on the banks of the river. You can enjoy the peace and quiet on a boat trip. Nature lovers can admire rare species of birds and plants.

Kasia Dydziuk, Gosia Wrona, Hanna Godynska, PL

Wednesday, 28 June

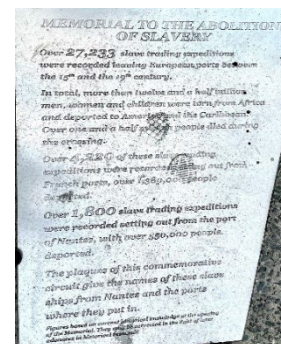
We visited the Esclavage Memorial.

The Esclavage Memorial is a tribute to the victims and to all those who fight against all forms of slavery, up to the present time.

Between the 15th and 19th centuries, more than 27233 slave shipments were recorded from European ports.



In total, more than 12.5 million men, women and children were abducted from Africa and transported to the Americas and the West Indies.



After visiting the slavery memorial, we went to a small island where "Les Machines de L'Île" were located. This island offered a fascinating and contrasting experience to our previous visit.



In a former shipyard, a team of engineers, theatre people and artists had set up a workshop where mechanical sculptures, mainly made of wood and metal, were built according to natural movement structures.



Unfortunately, the huge mechanical elephant, the most famous animal of the place, was under repair. Normally, it moves around the island with the help of hydraulic and mechanical systems with almost 50 people on its back.



But there were also other mechanical creatures, such as: a giant spider robot rose up and we could admire its moving legs and joints. We also saw a giant octopus moving through the air, circling its tentacles. We could also watch a hummingbird dipping its beak



into a Caribbean flower. A chameleon could roll its eyes, catch a fly with its coiled tongue and "eat" it.

The exhibition "Les Machines de L'Île", where visitors become active themselves, immersed us in a mechanical fantasy world, but unfortunately time did not allow us to take part in a workshop there.

Afterwards, we went to a crêperie in the old town of Nantes, where we samples various traditional crêpes.



Margita Lentz, DE & Grażyna Brzóska, PL

Thursday, 29 June

Today, due to the heat, we postponed our lessons until the afternoon in order to explore the city centre of Nantes with its historic **Bouffay** district, in a pleasant temperature.

Under the excellent guidance of the Nantes jumeleurs, we immersed ourselves in the Middle Ages, walking along cobbled streets with magnificent half-timbered houses, some of which date back to the 15th century.



For sightseeing and contemplation, we spent a short time in the church of **Sainte Croix** with its distinctive clock and the angels of the bell tower.



Incidentally, **Jules Verne** was baptised here on 8 February 1828.

During our walk along the "**Rue du Château**", we then reached the castle of the Dukes of Brittany, located in the heart of Nantes.



We crossed a drawbridge to reach the monumental entrance, framed by the twin towers, and from there into the courtyard.

The glorious castle, with its 600-year history, houses a residential

palace with opulent Renaissance-style façades and loggias.



While promenading along the 500-metre-long battlements, which are characterised by their 7 towers and the ramparts built in between, we were rewarded with a beautiful view of the inner courtyard but also of the city with the tower of the former "**Lieu Unique**" (LU) biscuit factory.

After this beautiful and informative sightseeing programme, we headed straight for the table at the LU biscuit factory to fortify ourselves and digest the impressions we had gained.

Eva Niebler/Peter Backes, DE

Friday, 30 June

After the last day of classes, the afternoon was free for the participants to use individually. Nantes offers many shopping opportunities and the city's cultural programme is also varied.



In the evening, we met up with the Jumeleurs from Nantes in the "**Lieu unique**" for dinner and the presentation of the diplomas. We had a typical menu nantais with "**foie gras**" as a starter, "**sandre au beurre blanc**" as a main course and "**café gourmand**" as a dessert, rounded off with white wine, red wine and rosé from the region.

Yann Praud thanked the teachers Blandine and Daniel, as well as the participants for the wonderful week we were able to spend together in Nantes. As a token of appreciation, he presented the two teachers with a small certificate signed by the course participants.

Peter Backes, President of Eurojumelage, thanked Yann, Barbara (Yann's wife) and the team of jumeleurs from Nantes for the great organisation during the week and presented a gift on behalf of all participants. Peter thanked the teachers Blandine and Daniel for their willingness to take over the lessons and for their commitment and patience during the lessons. Of course, Blandine and Daniel were also each presented with a gift by Peter and the course participants.

Afterwards, Blandine and Daniel personally presented each course participant with a certificate.

Brigitte & Gerhard Klose, DE

Saturday, 1 th July

We were picked by two minibuses, up in front of our hotel on Saturday morning by Yann and the Jumeleurs from Nantes for an excursion to the Atlantic.

The first destination was the picturesque village of "**Kerhinet**" (Breton) in the west of the



marshes of Brière in the Loire-Atlantique department. The special feature of the village are the beautiful houses with thatched roofs. This thatch comes from the reeds of the nearby marshes. The abandoned village has been completely restored by the members of the regional nature park to preserve

the outstanding local heritage.

Our next destination was the medieval town of "**Guérande**" (Breton: Gwenrann), a commune belonging to historic Brittany in the Loire-Atlantique department. It is known for its beautiful historic centre and the largely preserved town wall from the Middle Ages. The "**Fleur de Sel**", also known as "**white gold**" in the region, is extracted in the Guérande salt flats. Worth seeing in the centre is the collegiate church "Saint Aubin", which originally dates from the 12th century.



After the eventful morning, we were able to fortify ourselves for the onward journey with lunch in the restaurant "**Da Etto**".

The next destination was the harbour town "**Le Croisic**" on the Côte d'amour on the Atlantic. Here we had time to stroll around and enjoy the special flair of the small harbour.

In the afternoon we visited "Terre de Sel à Pradel", a large salt extraction plant on the

Atlantic. Salt extraction from the sea is an important industry in the region. During a guided tour, we were familiarised with the method of natural salt extraction by our tour guide. The most important requirements are: Sea water, sun and wind.



In a large basin, the seawater stays for a long time and is freed from residues. This happens naturally without the addition of chemicals, supported by algae. Afterwards, the purified seawater flows into smaller, constructed basins to extract the salt. Up to 50 kg of salt can be extracted daily.

On our way to the mouth of the Loire into the Atlantic, we were able to get a small impression of "La Baule-Escoublac", a town dominated by tourism with an approx. 9 km long sandy beach.

We were thrilled by the **mouth of the Loire** at "**Saint Nazaire**". After more than 1000 km from its source in the Massif Central, the river flows into the Atlantic Ocean. An impressive bridge structure crosses the estuary delta.



The famous artwork "**Serpent d'Océan**", a 130 m long steel snake skeleton at the end of the Loire was created by the Chinese artist Huang Yong Ping and symbolically represents the borderline between the river (Loire) and the ocean (Atlantic).



At the end of the day, we were treated to a tasty 3-course meal at the restaurant "**L'Abri Côtier**" in Mindin.

For us, an eventful week in Nantes came to an end. Yann and Barbara Praud and numerous Nantes jumeleurs showed us many of the special features of Nantes and the region in their endearing way.

A heartfelt thank you to all the organisers and jumeleurs from Nantes.
Furthermore, the participation of the cheerful Polish jumeleurs enriched our overall experience.

À bientôt.

Brigitte und Gerhard Klose, DE

An instructive and impressive week comes to an end

**Merci et
au revoir**



...et d'ici 2024 à Orléans