

1 INTRODUCTION

1

ELISABETH

1 Hello everyone, today we're back with Mathieu for a new French conversation video. Today, we're going to talk about the United States. We're going to talk about what we visited, and the differences between the United States and France. We chose this format because you really liked the one-hour conversation video. Many of you have told us that what you really miss is hearing and listening to real, natural conversations in French. On the screen, we'll display the most important vocabulary words from the video, and as usual, you'll have French or English subtitles to help you. To help you test your understanding of this video, I've included a link to a quiz in the description. We're going to draw lots for three people who have answered this quiz. The three people drawn will have the chance to win a digital version of my French notebook. Mon carnet de français is 90 days of exercises to help you make simple progress in French, based on your everyday life.

2 DO WE KNOW THE UNITED STATES?

2

ELISABETH

2 If you follow me on Instagram, you probably know that Mathieu and I went to the United States in September. We took our honeymoon there. Very often, when we get married afterwards, in the weeks or months that follow, we do what's called a honeymoon or honeymoon. We decided to do it in the United States. Mathieu had already traveled extensively in the United States. For how long?

MATHIEU

3 Three months.

ELISABETH

4 So for three months Mathieu had traveled to the United States a few years ago, before we met. And I've only been to the United States once. It was in 2014 or 2015, with my family, my parents and my brothers. We went to Washington and New York for two weeks.

3 OUR JOURNEY

3

ELISABETH

5 We're going to start this video by talking more specifically about the trip we took this summer. Mathieu, can you explain a little about the journey we took? It's true that Mathieu was the one who organized everything, as he knew the United States a little better than I did. He was the one who planned the route and chose the different stages.

MATHIEU

6 So we left from San Francisco where we rented a car, so we first stayed in San Francisco for a few days. We didn't have a car at the time. We picked up the car two or three days later. Then, from San Francisco, we drove to... Yosemite National Park. We stayed there for about two or three days. At each stage, we stayed about two or three days. Then from Yosemite, we went to Las Vegas. From Las Vegas, we went on to Bryce Canyon. Then we made the long trip from Bryce Canyon to San Diego. So by then, we'd had, I think, a 9-hour drive.

ELISABETH

7 It was a full day's drive.

MATHIEU

8 It was a long day, plus it was raining at the end, so it was pretty complicated. So after San Diego, we went to Los Angeles and then returned the car in San Francisco. And then from San Francisco, we took a plane to Chicago, because I had... On my first trip, I had done quite a bit of driving in the United States. I'd loved Chicago, so I really wanted to show Elizabeth around. So we stayed in Chicago for three or four days, and then we flew back to Paris.

ELISABETH

9 Yes, it's true that between San Francisco and Chicago, it was a 4-hour plane ride. So we didn't really realize it because it's the same country. So we thought it wouldn't be that far. But in the end, it was still 4 hours by plane, which is really a lot. From Paris, you can fly to just about anywhere in Europe in 2 hours.

MATHIEU

10 Yeah, yeah. Well yes, it's true that it was... It's true that it's a lot.

(MORE)

MATHIEU (cont'd)

We, as French people, and Elisabeth even more so as Belgian. We live in small countries, so distances are completely different for us than for Americans, Australians, Chinese or Russians. As soon as you have a much larger country. It's true that for us, it's a bit strange.

ELISABETH

11 As Mathieu says, I can really feel the difference between Belgium and France. I have the impression that in Belgium everything is 1 hour away. In France, it's more like 3 hours. So in France, 3 hours equals 1 hour in Belgium. For example, it was weird for me when I arrived in Paris. People take the metro for 1 hour to work in the morning, or 45 minutes, and it seems normal to them. But when I was a student, I studied in a town 1 hour from where my parents lived, and that was the case for a lot of people. And we all had flat-shares because it seemed unthinkable to travel 1 hour in the morning to go to school. Whereas in France, it's a bit more common.

MATHIEU

12 Yes, that's more common in France.

ELISABETH

13 On the different things we visited. So we did several states. We did California, Utah.

MATHIEU

14 Utah, Nevada.

ELISABETH

15 Nevada and Illinois.

MATHIEU

16 Yes, Illinois, Chicago. Yep.

ELISABETH

17 You didn't mention it either, but we made a few stops along the way. For example, on our way from Los Angeles, we stopped in Santa Barbara, which is a bit of a surfing town, you might say. In France, there's a town called Hossegor and it's a bit reminiscent of that. Maybe you've never been to Hossegor?

MATHIEU

18 No, I haven't.

ELISABETH

19 But that's kind of the spirit. And also, we went to a village, it wasn't a town, quite fun. The Danish village. It was called. Solvang.

MATHIEU

20 Solvang, yeah Solvang.

ELISABETH

21 I don't know if you know this village, if you're American, but it was a lot of fun. In fact, all the architecture is Danish. There are Danish bakeries, Danish hotels, Danish restaurants, and we read that some Danes actually settled there and decided it was home and that it would be a little piece of Denmark in the United States.

MATHIEU

22 It's between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Elisabeth came up with the idea because we still had a long way to go, so we thought we'd stop off in between so we didn't have to stay too long on the road. And so we stopped in this village halfway through the stage, and it was a real change of scenery, because we really felt like we were in Denmark.

ELISABETH

23 And even the climate was weird, maybe it's psychological, but I had the impression it was colder. There was a bit of mist, but I don't think so. Or maybe it was a bit higher up than Los Angeles. And in fact, I'd found it on the Internet. I had typed in most beautiful village between Los Angeles and San Francisco and it was in the list.

4 OUR FAVORITE PLACES.

4

ELISABETH

24 What was your favorite city? Or which excursion did you prefer?

MATHIEU

25 Well, it's true that it may seem weird every time, but I really liked Las Vegas, so obviously it's weird. But for me, it was much more... I've been to New Zealand and Australia before, and it's true that I love natural landscapes. But I really liked Las Vegas because I hadn't been there in a long time and I don't know... I think it was a relaxing moment where you didn't have to walk too much.

(MORE)

MATHIEU (cont'd)

It was a time when I also needed to rest and everything is really available in Las Vegas, so I really liked that. Then I got to play poker, and it's true that I like playing poker a lot, so that was great fun. Then, of course, I really liked San Diego. I've never been there. I'd never been to San Diego and I thought it was great. We saw a baseball game in San Diego, it was crazy. The atmosphere there. All the fans talk to each other. I know, I'm basically from Marseilles, in the south-east of France. And when it comes to soccer matches, the atmosphere is completely different. I mean, Paris fans and Marseilles fans, let's say there's a match. They're not going to make jokes, they're not going to talk to each other. But here, there were Los Angeles fans and San Diego fans joking around and talking to each other. It was a great atmosphere, very family-oriented. So yeah, I really liked it. So I'd say Las Vegas and San Diego, although of course I also loved Chicago and Yosemite Park. Overall, it was a great trip, but those two places really stand out.

ELISABETH

26 To pick up on what you were saying, it's true that in France, when there are matches between historically rival teams, the atmosphere is not at all good between the fans. There are very often fights when there are matches between Paris and Marseilles, and it's true that the fans go a bit crazy. The chants are a lot of insults.

MATHIEU

27 Yeah, they do.

ELISABETH

28 It's true that there's a lot of excitement about... At least for some soccer teams in France.

MATHIEU

29 Yes, no, it's true that the atmosphere is completely different. And personally, I really enjoyed it because I'm a pretty cool person, pretty peace and love. And what was your favorite part?

ELISABETH

30 I really liked San Diego too. I thought that culturally, it was a very rich city. I think it's also due to its proximity to Mexico.

(MORE)

ELISABETH (cont'd)

There were a lot of little Mexican restaurants and cultural activities that had something to do with Mexico. And even from an architectural point of view, I really loved Balboa Park. I think I could have easily spent 3 hours in this park, because it was so beautiful and so comfortable. And while it's true that I loved one particular area of the park. It's a space in fact, with lots of houses. I think it's a UN village. I don't remember exactly what it was, but in any case, there were lots of little houses from different countries. So there was the house of France, the house of Norway, the house of Mexico, the house of South Korea. And in fact, each little house organized activities related to its country. It was very convivial. You could visit the different little houses, for example. I can't remember. I think it was in the Norwegian house, where you could do knitting activities. In the Italian house, we could taste Italian dishes. It was really... I really loved this atmosphere of sharing different cultures. So it's true that I loved San Diego. Yosemite Park was magnificent, especially as we got there very, very early, so we could see the sunrise and that was really magnificent scenery. On the other hand, we got there very early, but that wasn't necessarily on purpose. In fact, we'd forgotten to make a reservation to enter the park. We didn't know we needed a reservation because Mathieu had already been there. And it wasn't necessary at the time. And now I think it's actually to preserve nature. So we didn't know about it, so we thought we wouldn't be able to go. We arrived at our campsite the night before and thought we weren't going to be able to visit. Fortunately, there was an alternative: we could arrive before 6 a.m., in which case we didn't need a reservation. So we got up around 4.30am I think.

MATHIEU

31 Yeah, we did.

ELISABETH

32 To make sure we got there well in advance if there was ever a queue to get into the park. And so it was a chance to see the sunrise. It was truly magical scenery. I'd never seen such beautiful scenery in my life.

MATHIEU

33 And in fact, this mistake is thanks to Elisabeth.

(MORE)

MATHIEU (cont'd)

If Elisabeth hadn't seen my phone, well, we'd have gone to Yosemite, I don't know, maybe at 8 in the morning, and we wouldn't have been able to get in. In fact, before we got to the campsite. Well, I don't know, I was a bit lost. I didn't really know where to go and then I'd received an email from the campsite giving me directions. So I gave the phone to Elisabeth and said "look at my e-mails and tell me where I should go". And in fact, when she looked at the e-mail, she said "ah but there's something where it says like hyper important" or whatever.

ELISABETH

34 In huge capital letters.

MATHIEU

35 Yeah, and it's true that when you make reservations like that, you get so many emails and things that I end up not reading them. Except that in this case, I'd have done better to read it, because Elisabeth said to me, "Look, did you remember to make the reservation? Oh well, no! We were able to get there really early in the morning and see the sunrise, which was a good thing, because it would have been a shame to drive all the way to Yosemite just to sleep there and not be able to visit. So Elisabeth had the right eye for it.

ELISABETH

36 I also loved visiting Alcatraz. I thought it was a really original visit. It's true that you don't often get the chance to visit prisons, at least for me it was the first time. It was really impressive to get there by boat. I was really interested in the history of Alcatraz.

MATHIEU

37 Yes, it was really good. It's true that I'd been there once before, and I don't know, I didn't have the same memory at all. This time I thought it was much better. Probably because I was with Elisabeth.

ELISABETH

38 I think because you didn't take the audio guide the first time.

MATHIEU

39 Yes, maybe so.

ELISABETH

40 You didn't have all the information.

MATHIEU

41 Yes, that's because I hadn't taken the audio guide. It's true that with the audio guide, you had all the anecdotes, all the stuff. So yeah, it was really cool.

ELISABETH

42 And then, except for San Diego, it's true that I really loved Chicago. I thought it had a very special atmosphere. I really felt at home in that city. In particular, I loved the waterfront. There were little bars and restaurants set up outside with little lamps, a bit like a *ginguette* (*an open-air café*), and I love that atmosphere, so I thought it was really nice. We played games in one of these *ginguettes*. What were the games like?

MATHIEU

43 We actually sent... We had a kind of little bag.

ELISABETH

44 With sand.

MATHIEU

45 With sand. We were quite a distance from a hole, and we had to hit it with a board. And then, the bag, it did this and it slipped and you had to drop it into the hole. I think I won, by the way.

ELISABETH

46 Yes, I think so too. Chicago I loved the atmosphere with the pontoon where you could walk around and the pizzas. I loved the pizzas in Chicago. Well, I don't know if we can... In Europe, we'd never call it a pizza. It's more like a *quiche*, I think.

MATHIEU

47 But it was really good.

ELISABETH

48 It was really good.

MATHIEU

49 Yeah, but that's funny, because I had bad memories of those pizzas. I don't know why, because when I was in Chicago, the first time I tasted it, I didn't like it at all. And maybe, I don't know, I'd been to a pretty bad place. And then when Elisabeth ordered one to taste, I said ah, I'll try it again! And I thought it was really good.

ELISABETH

50 On the other hand, I burned myself with a pizza, but not with the dish which is very hot, really with the tomato sauce on the pizza because I wanted to take a photo for Instagram and in fact there was a luminous sign with pizza written on it, so I was holding the pizza this way and in the other hand I had my camera and in fact I wasn't paying attention. But the pizza was tilted and some hot tomato sauce dripped onto my finger. And at first Mathieu said ah it's okay, you can't really burn yourself with tomato sauce, but I think I've still got a scar. Because I really kept the burn for weeks.

MATHIEU

51 Yes, it's true that I underestimated a bit. I regretted it afterwards because I underestimated the injury. It was a real wound, very painful.

ELISABETH

52 So, just to finish on the visiting and traveling part. Mathieu, you had already traveled a lot in the United States for three months, what was your favorite place?

MATHIEU

53 Well, in the United States... It's funny because a customs officer asked me that question. I was on my way to Canada, and he asked me what was your favorite place in the United States? And I said Austin, Texas. And he was quite surprised, so I really liked Austin. Well, we haven't been there, but it'll give us a chance to go back to the States. But Austin, Texas, I found completely crazy. It was great. It was a lot of things. There's a big lake where I used to kayak. There are lots of places to run. It was a really nice place. So yeah, I really liked Austin.

ELISABETH

54 Yes, it's true that it's not at all... I mean, it's not really a city you think of first. When you think you're going to visit the United States.

MATHIEU

55 Yes, that's true. Yeah, well, I also really liked the Keys in Florida. And then, of course, New York, Chicago, all that, those are obviously cities that we love, but I really, I really had a crush on Austin.

5 WHICH HOMES DID WE CHOOSE?

5

ELISABETH

56 In terms of accommodation, we did lots of different types. We did classic hotels, we did a motel. So for us, motels are pretty... It's really what you see in American movies and TV shows. So I think if you're American, it's a bit downmarket, a bit lame I think. For us, it's a bit of a film side, so it's true that it's fun to do a roadside motel once. We went camping, but not in a tent. We were in a little cabin. We did classic Airbnb but also, and this was, this was one of my favorites, this was in San Diego. It was an Airbnb in fact, in the back of a garden, it was a winnie (*Winnebago*).

MATHIEU

57 Some kind of trailer.

ELISABETH

58 Exactly. And it had everything in it. There was even a PlayStation. There was the shower, there was the bed, there was a kitchen, there was a garden with Rocking Chairs. It was really... It was very charming.

MATHIEU

59 Yes, it was really nice.

ELISABETH

60 And we also went to youth hostels, because in reality, hotels are very, very expensive for us Europeans. So even hostels are almost the price of luxury hotels here. In Chicago, I think it was \$200.

MATHIEU

61 Yes, it was \$200 a night. After we were in hostels, we weren't in dormitories because it was our honeymoon. So we couldn't go overboard either. We tried, well, we took single rooms of course. And in fact, the advantage of the hostel in Chicago was that it was very well positioned in the city, right in the center. It was right in the center of town, with the museums right next door. And it's true that when I booked, I thought I'd give it a try, and it was very, very expensive indeed, but it was the cheapest there was. And, of course, there were some minor disappointments, notably the noise.

62 ELISABETH
But it was \$200 with the shared bathroom,
wasn't it?

63 MATHIEU
Yes, it was.

64 ELISABETH
So it's true that here, if you pay \$200 a
night, you really have something very, very,
very qualitative. Even in the center of
Paris.

65 MATHIEU
Yes, yes, you've got something good in the
center of Paris.

66 ELISABETH
It was a youth hostel with a shared
bathroom. And on top of that, well, we had a
bit of a bad time, but it's true that...
Besides, we're not, we're not fussy, we
don't complain a lot, but there, the
cleaning hadn't been done since. Maybe when
the inn was created.

67 MATHIEU
Yes, it's true that it was.

68 ELISABETH
There was so much dust on the bedside
tables. I didn't even dare put my cell phone
down, so it wasn't a very good experience.
But then, as Mathieu says, the hostel was so
well located, it was right next to the
Museum of Modern Art. And next door to a
little restaurant-café we loved called
Cafecito. I think we ate there. At least
maybe 7 times in four days.

69 MATHIEU
Yeah, it was really good, really good. I
mean, we went to a lot of restaurants, we
did a lot of things, but overall it was one
of the best places we went to.

70 ELISABETH
It was the best value for money.

6 WHAT SURPRISED US (DIFFERENCES WITH FRANCE)

6

71 ELISABETH
We can now move on to what surprised us in
the United States, either positively or
negatively. And of course, we're going to
talk about the differences between France
and the United States.

(MORE)

ELISABETH (cont'd)

So we're not going to talk about the big social issues, but we will talk a little about the small cultural differences in the cost of living or food, for example, that have made an impression on us.

7 - THE COST OF LIVING

7

ELISABETH

72 We were a bit shocked by the cost of living in the United States, even in remote villages. So it's true that we expected it to be expensive in the cities, but in more remote areas I didn't expect it to be so high. We live in Paris, which is an expensive city. Often, when people come to visit Paris, they say that it's an expensive city to live in and to eat out in. So it's true that I wasn't expecting that, and especially compared to when I went there a few years ago, it seemed a lot more expensive. So if you're American and you're watching this video, maybe you can tell us whether the cost of living has actually gone up a lot in recent years. Did it strike you too?

MATHIEU

73 Yes, it struck me. After that, we were unlucky in two respects. The first was that the euro-dollar exchange rate, so I think that's when it happened and then it didn't happen again, was totally against the euro. In other words, I think \$1 was equivalent to 0.9 euros. As a result, things were a lot more expensive, and of course they're back up again now. So we left at the worst time for that. Then there's petrol. I don't think we were lucky with petrol, because there was an increase at the time, and now it's gone. For the record, we were paying an average of \$4.99 a gallon for gas, and I think it's gone down, but I'm not sure. So if you're American and you have this information, even though prices apparently vary from state to state, I think it's gone down quite a bit now. So yes, it's true that it was... Even apart from that, even apart from the euro and apart from petrol, it's true that it was much more expensive than when I went there, I went there a long time ago. That was in 2015 too, it was in 2015 and it's true that it was a lot cheaper.

ELISABETH

74 For example, at a restaurant in Chicago, we had two Caesar salads, two Cokes and you had a chocolate mousse for dessert, and I think we got \$80 with tax and tip. So it's true that it's very expensive. Here, I think it must cost 30 or 40 euros maximum.

MATHIEU

75 Yeah, I'd say so. About twenty euros per person around 40 Euro.

ELISABETH

76 Yeah, 40 Euro.

MATHIEU

77 Yeah, that's about right. Actually, it's a bit treacherous because you can actually see the price.

ELISABETH

78 First of all, excuse me, the price is a little higher when you see it, but just a little.

MATHIEU

79 And then on top of that come the taxes, and then the tip. And it's true that, in general, the convention is to tip between 15 and 25%. So we were always at around 20%, and it's true that 20% on a \$45-\$50 bill quickly adds up to \$10. So in the end, it really adds up. Even in supermarkets, everything was very expensive, even if there's no tip.

ELISABETH

80 Yes, because we used to make our own sandwiches. We'd buy sliced bread, sliced cheese and sliced chicken. And it's true that here a packet of chicken slices, I think it must cost maybe 3.50 Euros and over there it was quickly \$7 minimum. So maybe there are some discount stores, but we haven't seen them.

MATHIEU

81 Yeah, maybe we were unlucky. It's true that we may have gone really... In France, there are chains that are much more expensive. If you go to a Monoprix or a LIDL, the prices aren't the same at all. And maybe we went to all the Monoprix stores in the United States without wanting to.

ELISABETH

82 But even when you compare it with a Monoprix, it's more than 3.50 euros for the equivalent in cheese or chicken. So it's true that it was very expensive, hotels again very expensive. Museum visits were also very expensive. All the activities.

MATHIEU

83 Yes, but I think the museums were a bit like ours.

ELISABETH

84 Well, here I think you'll probably pay 15 Euros. Here, it was more like \$25. I think the Museum of Modern Art we went to was \$25. Here 25 Euro you visit Versailles, eh. No, but it's true. I'll check prices later, but... But yes, it's still more expensive. After that, what was cheaper was Starbucks. Starbucks in France is extremely expensive.

MATHIEU

85 Yes, in fact, what was cheaper was Starbucks and a bit of In&Out... Sorry, fast food, fast food. It was really, really cheap. And then, compared to the quantity of drinks we had and everything, it's true that it wasn't expensive at all. Because the drinks, you could take giant portions. Where in France, it's a bit more limited.

8 - PORTION SIZE

8

ELISABETH

86 By the way, there's something about the food that struck me. It's true that I had this image in my head that in the United States, whether in fast-food outlets or restaurants, the dishes were huge. It was gigantic. It was complicated to finish these dishes, and yet it didn't seem like that at all. At In&Out, the portions seemed pretty normal, except for the drinks, which were gigantic. In fact, at the baseball game we played in San Diego, I took a photo with the lemonade. I think it was a liter of lemonade. Here, it's impossible to have drinks that big. The lemonade was all over my head. But apart from the drinks, the coffees, really the food. When we bought sandwiches from small takeaways, it wasn't that big. I could still eat dessert afterwards, for example.

MATHIEU

87 Yes, it's true, in terms of quantities, it wasn't that much.

ELISABETH

88 It's a cliché, in France at least, to say that everything is in gigantic quantities in the United States. Then again, maybe in the supermarket, it's true that the things you could buy. Take tea, for example. Iced tea came in giant cans. You could buy big five-liter cans of water. That's less common here.

MATHIEU

89 Yeah, well, it's the measurement. Given that the United States measures differently than France in terms of liters, gallons and so on, it's just as standard there, in my opinion. In the United States, it's standard to have that. And besides, there was this brand of tea that we thought was really good, with no sugar at all.

ELISABETH

90 But that's surprising, because it's another cliché we have about the United States, that there's sugar in everything, that everything is really fatty, extremely sweet. And then we bought this 100% sugar-free iced tea. And I don't know of any brand of sugar-free tea in France. If there's going to be sugar-free tea, but where there's aspartame, stevia, something to give the sweet taste, but the drink won't have any calories. But in this case, it was really without any added sugar and it's true that it's a rather nice drink, without eating, full of calories, without ingesting full of calories.

MATHIEU

91 Yeah, well, that's a great plan.

ELISABETH

92 Yes, in supermarkets, the packets were maybe a little bigger than here, but they weren't gigantic. But in restaurants and fast-food outlets, the menus were pretty much equivalent to what you'd find in France.

9 - THE TIP

9

ELISABETH

93 Just about the restaurant too. What we haven't talked about is the tip. We talked about it briefly, but in the United States, if we've understood correctly, it's compulsory. That's how servers are paid. In France, the tip is quite rare. It's really if you loved the restaurant, if you thought the service was exceptional.

(MORE)

ELISABETH (cont'd)

Then we'll leave a little something. But...
And again, we'll leave 1 or 2 Euros.

MATHIEU

94 Yes, yes, that's true. Whatever the, whatever the bill. Yes, and it's true that this tip. So insofar as it's actually justified because there's table service, so yes, there's a tip, but now there's this thing with tablets, where even when you order takeaway or even when you go to a place where there's no table service, but in fact they turn the tablet over when it's time to pay and it says do you want to put a tip or not? And apparently this makes people feel guilty, because if they don't put in a tip, they'll be judged. So we sometimes find ourselves saying, well, I'm going to put a tip on, even though it's not necessarily justified in this case, but then again, if I'm wrong, don't hesitate to say so. And so we sometimes find ourselves putting a tip where it perhaps shouldn't be. Even though, of course, it's always a pleasure.

ELISABETH

95 There have been times when we've bought sandwiches to take away and the person has asked what tip we wanted to leave, but it was really take-away, like at the supermarket.

MATHIEU

96 Yeah, it didn't really make sense. Yes, it's true that it's a bit...

ELISABETH

97 In any case, as Europeans, well French and Belgian, it's true that we're not used to it. But I do know that there are countries in Europe where tips are part of the culture. That's the case in Romania, where it's the waiter's salary.

MATHIEU

98 Okay, I don't know.

ELISABETH

99 But that's not the case in France. So that was a big difference.

10 - SHOP OPENING HOURS

10

ELISABETH

100 I had this image in my head that everything in the United States was open day and night, whether it was banks, clothing stores or restaurants. But we were really surprised. There were several times at 8pm when we were really stressed out and couldn't find a place to eat because so many restaurants were closing at 8pm or 9pm. So you really get the impression that when it comes to dinnertime, there's a big difference with France. Here, it's very rare to eat before 8pm when you go to a restaurant.

MATHIEU

101 Ah yes, it's true that it's... And even in the big cities. I remember after the game in San Diego. In San Diego, we saw people starting to eat at 5pm, 6am. It's true that in France, we usually eat around 7.30 or 8 o'clock. And at 7.30/8am, it was already starting to feel like the last service.

ELISABETH

102 Yes, it's true that several times I was stressed that we wouldn't be able to eat. So that's true. I think the supermarkets were open a bit later, but the clothes stores weren't at all. They weren't open until midnight. Anyway, maybe that's the case in New York, but when we were in Los Angeles, in Santa Monica, it closed at 8 p.m. like in France, I think.

MATHIEU

103 Yes, when we left Santa Monica, we had a bit of a walkabout.

ELISABETH

104 Everything was closing down.

MATHIEU

105 There was a shopping mall, shoe stores and all kinds of stuff, and it was really empty. There was nothing there and it was weird because it was actually 8 o'clock at night.

11 - DRIVING

11

MATHIEU

106 Yeah, after the differences, let's say, apart from the food, one thing that stood out for me was that people stop at crosswalks.

(MORE)

MATHIEU (cont'd)

They let pedestrians pass and that's in France, but it's day and night, in other words, people really don't stop at crosswalks.

ELISABETH

107 It's also in the Highway Code. Normally, when a car crosses a crosswalk, it has to stop and give way to pedestrians, but nobody does.

MATHIEU

108 Yes, but I get the impression that it's not even a difference between the United States and France. It's a difference between France and almost every country in the world. Because every time I arrive in another country, you see in Belgium, Switzerland, maybe not in Italy, I don't know in Naples or what, maybe it didn't stop, but in any case the French don't stop at crosswalks. And in the United States, it was crazy, because sometimes we'd be two meters from the crossing, walking along, and the driver would see us coming, anticipate that we wanted to cross, stop and let us pass. And yet these were big cities. San Francisco was where they did it.

ELISABETH

109 Yes, sometimes we didn't even want to cross, but the cars would stop in case we wanted to.

MATHIEU

110 Yes, and that didn't just happen once. It wasn't a fluke, it was all the time, all the time like that.

12 - COURTESY OF AMERICANS

12

ELISABETH

111 But in general, I found Americans to be much more courteous than the French, much more polite, at least in their interactions with strangers, for example in the street with each other. In France, that's much less the case.

MATHIEU

112 Yes, yes, it's true that it was... You've had people, there are people who've come across Elisabeth and spontaneously complimented her on her outfit, on her hair, and they were women, so they weren't guys trying to hit on her too hard.

(MORE)

MATHIEU (cont'd)

And in France, I don't think that happens very often.

ELISABETH

113 Yes, it's not even courtesy anymore, it's really being nice to each other, in a... Well, free of charge, totally disinterested. It's true that... Yes, in the street, if someone thinks you're well dressed, well they'll come and tell you so, I think, because it's cultural, it's nicer, it's more sharing, it's friendlier than in France. In France, if someone comes up to me in the street, I think they're going to ask me something. I never think they'll come up to me and say I've got a nice hairdo or that they like my dress. It's really very rare.

MATHIEU

114 Yes, then maybe we were lucky. If you're ever an American and you have an opinion on this and you think something about it, don't hesitate to tell us if we're wrong or if we're right, because it's true that it's made an impression on us, we thought ah yeah.

ELISABETH

115 But that happened especially in California. It's true that the people were really nice and it's true that... It's silly, but when someone comes up to you in the morning and says "ah, that's a nice outfit" afterwards, it puts you in a good mood for the whole day. In Paris and... At least in Paris, I can speak for the rest of France, but people there are often in a bad mood.

MATHIEU

116 Yes, it's not the same atmosphere.

ELISABETH

117 They don't pay too much attention to other people. Even in the metro, people sometimes stand up for the elderly, for pregnant women, but it's not systematic. People are a bit in their own bubble. They've got their own problems and they don't really look at what's going on around them. Now, I don't want to paint a negative picture either, but it's true that I didn't really realize it. But after this three-week trip, obviously there are faults in the United States too, and it's true that on that point, I really said to myself that people are much nicer.

MATHIEU

118 And then on the road too, generally speaking, I found that drivers were more courteous, that there was less pressure. I know that when you're driving in Paris or other big cities, there are often cars that stick to you, that honk pretty fast, that put a lot of pressure on you. But in San Francisco, Los Angeles or other places, well, that was much less the case. So that was also something that... After that, the U.S. is also more... The lanes are wider, so there's more comfort. So maybe that's why people are a little less stressed. But yeah, it was fun to see the difference between France and the United States.

ELISABETH

119 But people drove a lot better. I thought so. Here, I'm scared because when you're in a car, well, people do anything. They cross three lanes like that, without even looking at what's going on around them. Then again, it's just an impression, it's not real. But that's how I felt. On the other hand, there's a difference in the Highway Code, and it's true that we didn't know that at first. And we wondered why people did that. We thought people were always running red lights, but then we did a bit of research, looked it up on the internet and realized that there was a difference in the way people drive in France and in the United States. In France, when you're at a traffic light, if it's red, it's red, there's no situation in which you can start. In the United States, if you're in the right-hand lane, you turn right. If the light is red, it's more like a stop sign. If there's no car coming up on the left, you can go ahead. It's even advisable to go ahead, because sometimes we didn't, and we'd get honked at.

MATHIEU

120 Yeah, we could get honked at. After that, you have to be careful. Sometimes there are signs that say, "Be careful, you can't turn here", but by default, you can turn. And it's true that... Well, it surprised us, because at first I thought, "It's impossible, they're burning all the reds! But then, as the thing went on, it was ... But it's something you have to take, because at one point I wanted to do it too, and it's true that I was really scared, because it's not a reflex we have in France.

(MORE)

MATHIEU (cont'd)

So I was really looking all over the place. At one point I passed by and I shouldn't have because there were cars starting to come. So yeah, it was pretty amazing.

ELISABETH

121 But it's true that it was stressful for us when... In fact, if it was red and there was no one behind us, we'd stop, just like in France, but if we saw that someone was coming up behind us, we were hyper-stressed, thinking we absolutely had to turn. It's true that that was... It's a question of habit.

MATHIEU

122 It was funny, actually, there was that difference.

ELISABETH

123 And I was also saying that I had the impression that the people we were talking to were a little better, there may be something at work here, I have the impression that in the United States almost all cars are automatic. Whereas in France, most people still drive manual cars. So maybe the fact that they don't have to concentrate so much on shifting gears means that their minds are a little more available to take a better look at what's going on around them. After that, it's just a hypothesis. I don't know if that's the case, but...

MATHIEU

124 But it's true that I know the basics, so I got my driver's license in 2004 I think, and I don't know, basically I preferred driving cars with manual transmissions. I don't know, I thought I'd have more control, it's better. But in fact, once I really got to grips with an automatic car, it's true that it's a lot more comfortable. On the freeway, all you have to do is accelerate and brake. So there's no stress when it comes to hill starts. In fact, in San Francisco, it was very comfortable not to have to do those hill starts, and maybe little by little it calms people down, they're less stressed.

ELISABETH

125 But it's funny because it's true, I don't think that many people have automatic cars.

MATHIEU

126 In France, I have the impression that more and more people, especially in the big cities, have automatic cars.

ELISABETH

127 Car rental companies have more and more automatic cars. But it's true that, historically, cars have tended to be manual. But not long ago, I was in Belgium and it's true that since I'm not used to people having automatic cars spontaneously, I was with a friend who had an automatic car, but I hadn't been paying attention. And in fact, when we got to our destination, I realized that her left shoe was gone. And so I was surprised and I said to her, "Did you drive barefoot? And in fact she had just taken off her left shoe because in automatic cars, you don't need your left foot to change gears. So, as her shoe was in the way, she took it off and I got scared. I said to myself that driving barefoot is really dangerous. No, actually, it was just that one foot that she wasn't using. But it's true that we're not used to it.

14 - STYLE OF DRESS

14

ELISABETH

128 Another difference that stood out for me was the dress code. We saw a lot more people dressed casually in leggings and hoodies, whereas here they were just dressed like that, either to go to work or for a walk. Here, it's more like sportswear. To go to the gym, to play sports. The way of dressing was more casual. And another thing was that I really got the impression that people could dress as they liked. I don't know. For example, in Paris, I don't dare dress exactly as I'd like. For example, here, if you're going to wear a top that's a bit low-cut, or a skirt or shorts. It's true that people are going to look at us a bit badly.

MATHIEU

129 Yes, have you ever had remarks... Well, it's happened once in any case where someone has made a remark, well, a remark... You mean your clothing...

ELISABETH

130 Well, yes, I was wearing opaque tights, but I wasn't dressed in a vulgar way either. That and even the looks are hyper insistent depending on how you're dressed. Afterwards.

(MORE)

ELISABETH (cont'd)

But there's a difference. In fact, when I'm in Paris or in the South of France, for example. In Marseilles, as they're a bit more used to people wearing bathing suits, shorts, maybe shorter clothes, I don't feel it. But in Paris, I really feel it. I really feel the pressure. People look at how you're dressed, so for several years now I haven't been dressing exactly how I'd like to. So in the United States, not only did I find that people could dress more casually, but they could also dress however they wanted, extravagantly, with color. Yes, it's not just about the length of the clothes or the necklines, it's really even about dressing differently, extravagantly. In Paris, we see it just during Fashion Week, when people dress a little differently. And again, in my opinion, it's a lot of foreigners.

MATHIEU

131 Yes, that's true.

ELISABETH

132 Because when you see Emily in Paris, if you dress like that in France, everyone, in Paris at least, looks at you. People wonder what's wrong with you. The dress code is jeans with a black tee-shirt or slim-fit jeans with a white tee-shirt. It's all pretty standard. There's not much room for anything a little extravagant. I find that girls in Paris dress a lot in black. In winter, they wear long black coats or long beige coats. There's not much room for original outfits, or people will really look at you. At least that's the impression I get. Whereas in the U.S., I really had the impression that people could dress however they wanted, it was much freer. If you want to wear... You could wear a fairy costume, no one's going to look at you. No, but it's true, we saw people roller-skating in Santa Monica, dressed very colorfully, a little extravagantly. Nobody looks or even when we were at the baseball game. There were three girls and I think it was the mother and the two daughters who were bleached blondes who had on a very, very tight white strapless top. You could see their breasts and nobody was looking. There were no inappropriate glances at them, or it seemed a little more normal to be able to dress exactly as you wanted. I mean, any way you wanted. I don't know if you had the same feeling.

MATHIEU

133 I did. After all, as a guy... Plus I dress... I'm in blue, I'm not used to dressing extravagantly or strangely. Well, not weird, but different from what you usually wear. So I don't notice people looking at me or anything. In any case, I haven't been affected by it, but it's true that I also have the impression that in the United States you can be dressed... It depends on the place. Maybe in Texas, in places that are a bit more conservative, it's a bit different. But in any case, where we've been. It's true that we've done a lot of counties... I think we've done a lot of Democratic states. I don't know if it's different elsewhere. Well, it's true that in what we saw, in any case, there was a real difference.

ELISABETH

134 And that was really nice. I felt, I felt better. But then again, maybe it's also a question of climate. Because, as I was saying, in the South of France, I feel less pressure. It's true that... In Paris, as soon as you put on a skirt and heels, people look at you a bit strangely; you're quickly considered too sexy.

15 - MEDICATIONS

15

ELISABETH

135 We were talking earlier about supermarkets and package sizes, but also prices. But what we haven't talked about are the over-the-counter medicines you can buy at the supermarket. In France, this doesn't exist at all. If you want to buy paracetamol, Dafalgan or throat lozenges, you have to go to a pharmacy. You have to go to a pharmacy, it's not aisles and aisles where you can buy medicines like you buy sweets.

MATHIEU

136 Yeah, that's a real difference between France and the United States. In fact, I think that... Amazon in the United States is now offering drug delivery for 5 euros a month. In France, that's not at all... Maybe Amazon will bring that to France, but maybe in France I think we've got a pretty powerful pharmacy lobby too. Maybe that's not the case in the United States, but there's a difference when it comes to selling drugs.

ELISABETH

137 It's even true that... What we have in France is para-pharmacies in supermarkets, but in fact it's mainly going to be skin creams, maybe sun cream, mosquito repellent. What can you buy? Pregnancy tests for example, a thermometer and things like that. But that's about it. And also, even for anything that requires a prescription, you really have to go to real pharmacies in France, whereas in the Superstore series there's a pharmacy inside the supermarket. That never happens in France. Sometimes, there are shopping malls where there are pharmacies in the mall complex, but it's never in the supermarket.

MATHIEU

138 Yes, that's true. Yes, yes, it's true that in shopping centers where there's a supermarket, a clothing store, a video game store, a jewelry store, a pharmacy, but if you go to a Franprix, a Monoprix, a Carrefour in France, I've never seen a pharmacy.

ELISABETH

139 Among the other differences between the United States and France that we didn't necessarily notice on our trip, but that do exist. There's alcohol. In France, I think you can buy beer, cider and maybe even wine at 16. After that, other strong spirits in bars are 18. And even then, it's not very common to be asked for an identity card. In the United States, it's 21. And I was asked for my ID to buy a beer, even though I was 30 when we left. Now, maybe I look young, but I think it's more systematic to ask for it. I have the impression that fines may be higher, or that shopkeepers will have more problems if alcohol is sold to minors.

MATHIEU

140 Yes, I think so. I also think that regulations in the United States are much stricter than in France.

ELISABETH

141 First of all, that's a 3-year difference. At 21, I'd almost finished my studies. And the same goes for driver's licenses. In the United States, I think it's 16, whereas in France, it's 18. So before that, when young people want to get around, I tend to use scooters. Which I think is much more dangerous in reality.

- 142 MATHIEU
Yeah, scooters, or they do accompanied driving with their parents.
- 143 ELISABETH
Yes, but they can't get a license. They can't drive on their own. They learn to drive.
- 144 MATHIEU
Yes, yes, on their own they can't.
- 145 ELISABETH
You can start learning to drive earlier. But to get your license, you really have to be 18.
- 146 MATHIEU
Passing the driving test, yes, it's 18.
- 147 ELISABETH
So it's true that more young people are riding scooters, and I think it's much more dangerous.
- 148 MATHIEU
Yes, scooters are extremely dangerous.
- 149 ELISABETH
Because it's true that as soon as you live in a small village like yours, if you want to get around to really go into town or really go to...I don't know, the cinema or the restaurant, you're obliged to have a scooter to get around, practically.
- 150 MATHIEU
Yes, it's compulsory. Or else you take a bus. But it's always pretty complicated.
- 151 ELISABETH
Yes, after 9pm, there aren't any more. It's more complicated. Then, of course, there are a lot of other differences on more societal issues, such as weapons, social security or access to studies and universities, which are really different. But that's not really the point of this video. Because we don't have the knowledge, because we don't have enough knowledge. So what we really wanted to do was tell you about our vacation, make conversation around the differences we noticed on a visit to the U.S. over a short period of time, and let you learn more everyday vocabulary through these conversation topics.

16 END

16

ELISABETH

152 In the description, you can click on the quiz link to test your understanding of this video, in which, as you may have noticed, we spoke in fairly colloquial language, just as we talk to each other in our everyday lives. If you liked the video, put a "j'aime" and if you haven't yet subscribed to the channel, subscribe right away and activate the bell so you don't miss any of our videos. See you soon for another French lesson!

MATHIEU

153 See you soon!