

I remember when I was young, asking my Kookoo when she was going to take me to Paris. She told me, "When you're taller than me." And after what felt like a million years worth of waiting and growing, I was taller than her. Naturally, she stayed true to her promise to take me to France and so we, mostly my Kookoo and Shoom, began planning for our European vacation. On March 25th, 2018 we went to the airport, flew to Toronto and eventually after what felt like another million years of waiting, we made it to Zurich, Switzerland.

It was beautiful and amazing and we went on so many wonderful adventures but the day came for us to go to Paris. The day I had been waiting for, for years. My excitement was... indescribable. I was hyper and felt like I could explode from the anticipation of seeing the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame and the city itself. It was an adventure all on its own just getting from Switzerland to Paris.

We went to the airport on April 7th to pick up our rental car so we could start the drive and to my surprise, it was a brand new Mercedes Benz that we would arrive in. We left the airport in our car and after a few hours of driving, we started to get lost. I remember stopping at a gas station at one point, where I then bought my favourite mug and we picked up a very useful map that I still have saved to this day. It began to get late and we were tired so we stopped at a motel in the middle of nowhere, rented a room and decided we were hungry. Conveniently, there was a pizza vending machine outside the motel- so of course, we had pizza from the vending machine. It was a fun experience and after we slept the night, we were back on the road to Paris.

I remember when we entered France and *Paris* started to appear on the road signs, each time I saw it my heart would skip a beat with excitement because I knew that that was the day I would be in Paris. Then, after a slightly agonizing amount of time driving, we were there.

I remember we drove under a bridge covered in beautiful artwork and as we came out from under it, there it was, Paris. The buildings were a beautiful mixture of modern and historic, it was so busy and I didn't know where to look. I couldn't take everything in fast enough.

I remember seeing the Eiffel Tower for the first time with my own eyes. It was magical, it was *real* and it was there and it wasn't just something in a picture anymore and even though I wanted to go right away, we had to find our hotel.

We got lost and without wifi we needed somewhere to stop and so, it being one of the only familiar stores around, we went to IKEA. Parked the car in the massive underground parking lot and went to sit down and use the wifi to get our hotel location. It worked out well until we had to find our car again. This is when we couldn't find our car in the garage in a foreign city- fun! But really, it was so much fun and it's funny to look back on now.

Fast forward, past the part where we were on a touring bus and went by the Notre Dame Cathedral, we got off the bus and decided to walk to the Eiffel Tower. I remember the day was beautiful, the sky was so blue with fluffy clouds and a nice breeze. We stopped in a shop that

sold trinkets and I bought many little nick nacks there, we stopped for lunch at a lovely cafe and then *finally* went to the Eiffel Tower.

I went to the top with my Shoom and every second of it I was bursting with happiness and excitement. I think I nearly cried at one point.

I'm so thankful for the memories I made on that vacation and the time I spent with my grandparents. I have everything saved from that trip so I won't ever forget it.