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Le Carnaval de Nice

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Natalie Wise

Spring 2024

France

March 5, 2024

Le Carnaval de Nice

Nice, France is well known for its annual parade at the end of winter. The Nice Carnival was the first international carnival in France and has been a much beloved event for the past 151 years (since 1873)! This year I went with a few friends to experience the opening day of the parade. It was definitely an experience to remember!

My friends and I took a two-hour bus from Aix to Nice the morning before the opening ceremony. We got an idea of Nice as we walked through downtown to the parade which took place right on the waterfront! On our way, we stopped by Burger King because we were all missing American food a little bit. In the Burger King, there was a birthday party taking place! Talking with my host family later that weekend, I came to find out that birthday parties in American fast-food restaurants are frequent occurrences here (and keep in mind these don't have playgrounds like some do in the US)!

Anyway, we made our way through the crowded streets to the parade. The theme of this year's carnival was the King of Pop Culture and they definitely stayed true to it! We saw float upon float of Disney princesses, superheroes, and cartoon characters! Kids were dressed up as their favorite characters with jewels and face paint. The actors on the floats were throwing these beautiful yellow flowers called Mimosas into the crowd. Mimosas grow all around Côte d'Azur

and have been blooming over the past couple of weeks, adding some vibrant color to the landscape.



Mimosa Flowers

Following the parade, we headed over to Village du Carnaval where they had games, food, and souvenirs. We all bought some carnival masks to match our outfits. Shortly after, we had a confusing encounter with a woman who was asking us to take a picture. We had thought she was asking for us to take a picture of her, but it turned out that she thought we were part of the show and asked for pictures of us under the Carnival banner.

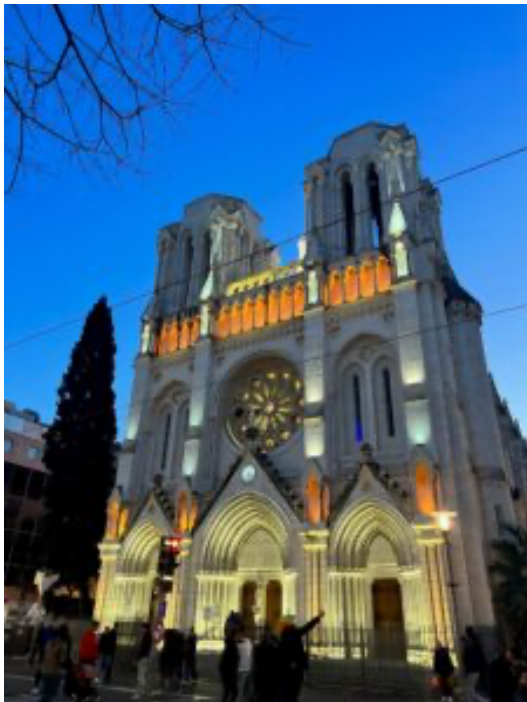


Carnival Masks



Harry Potter Trash Can

We had a few hours between the opening parade and the parade of lights in the evening. We walked Nice a little more and saw their Notre Dame, a gorgeous cathedral in the center of town.



Notre Dame of Nice at dusk



Architecture of Nice

We happened upon an Italian restaurant where we stopped for dinner. It was absolutely amazing!

I could have filled up on their bread and olive oil alone.



Spaghetti



Rigatoni

After the sun set, we walked the waterfront down to the Carnival once again, this time for the parade of lights. Still with the pop culture theme, this parade had floats of movies, TV shows, music icons, and social media. They all seemed to be social commentaries as well. It was a very bizarre but amazing experience.



Video game float.



Matrix themed float with Elon

*Musk hooked up to machines with
the ChatGPT symbol on his chest,
holding a red and blue pill.*



TV show float



Willy Wonka float

Until next time,

Natalie