

Made it to France!

Getting to France involves one of those endless travel "Days" that I used to dread but now recognize that they allow me to more-quickly recalibrate to the time change. It may actually be a good thing that I find it nearly-impossible to sleep on a plane because by the time I finally hit a bed, it doesn't matter that it's 2pm back home. I'm out.

Not much drama this time; United was on-time for the flight out of SFO and the connecting flight from Chicago. And CDG? My last few times through have been a breeze, with our bags coming through quickly, no lines at passport control even.



This is, literally, how we roll (through airports and on trains anyway)

Did have one issue with United though their in-flight magazine made wonderful promises about new food offerings in economy. Below you'll see their ad and the reality. Yikes. Nobody at United has heard about under-promising and over-performing.

But getting to "France" is only half the battle. From the airport we take a TGV high-speed train to Lyon and then a super-short 14 minute transfer to a "local" train 14 minutes that became just six because our TGV was running a bit behind schedule (a rare thing in France). Somehow we made it, hauling our two suitcases (each) plus camera gear, navigating the super-busy Lyon station without incident.

Once on the "local" train (about 90 minutes) the effects of too many hours without sleep began to kick in. Almost got off the train a stop early after passing out (Most would say "falling asleep" but for me "losing consciousness" would be more appropriate), and waking up just in time to see a "Grenoble" sign at a train station! Yikes! Except that it was a sign saying trains on that platform were heading in the direction of Grenoble.

Next stop was Grenoble though, and two blocks from the train station is the address of the place we're staying, but... It's a non-descript facade with no way to get in. No buzzer, no front desk. I find the phone number and paperwork and see that it asks that I call a day ahead with my arrival time so somebody can meet us and let us in. Thank goodness for Skype on my phone! We call and speak with the unit's owner (this is an apartment) who arrives 30 minutes later, giving Kevin and I time to get something to eat in the

meantime. It all worked out nicely; this is the best place we've stayed in France. Lots of room, full kitchen, even a clothes washer!

More shortly; everything above is from the Thursday that lasted into Friday. Today (Saturday) we got in our first bike ride. More on that soon! --Mike



This is what showed in United's in-flight magazine- click for the details



And this is what showed up on my food tray



And the "Light Continental Breakfast" mentioned? You're looking at it.