

## Exchange Program E-Paper 2

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During my first month in Paris, I need to adapt with a lot of things. The semester started on the beginning of January. While all my classmates, both in Taiwan or in other partner school countries were still on holiday, I need to get ready for school and classes. I could only enjoy a short holiday. I even did not have time to think and plan my life in Paris in detail.

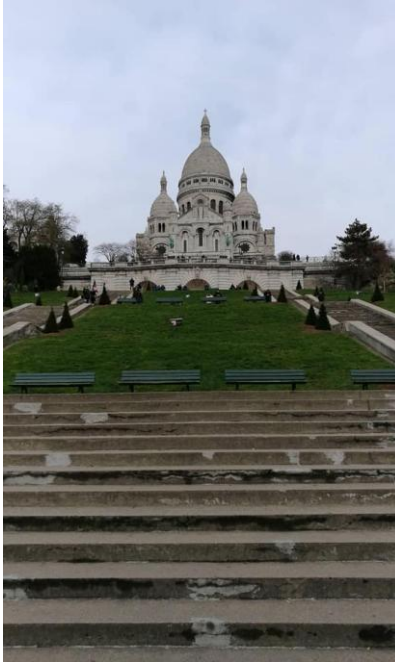
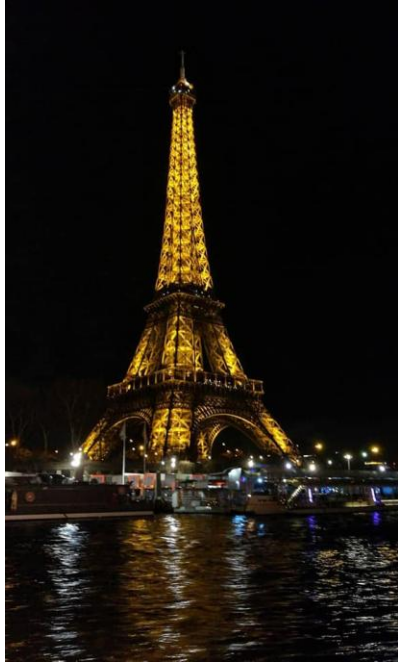
I arrived in Charles De Gaulle Paris International Airport in early morning, around 6.00 a.m. Some stores in the airport were still closed. With very limited information, I went around the airport looking for the tourist information desk to ask them how to go to the place I will stay. I got my accommodation place from an Indonesian student association social media group. The renting procedure in Paris is a bit complicated. Especially for foreigner like me who just stay for short term (< 1 year). I managed to rent and stay together with one Indonesian student who already lived in France for more than 7 years.

I had a few days to adapt and enjoy Paris in winter before the school started. I tried to enjoy Paris and forgot all the doubt inside my head. I forced myself to go out and strolling around my home's neighborhood and the city. Without any conversation, I managed to do grocery shopping on my second day in Paris.

I was so surprised with a lot of things in Paris. The beautiful city of Paris I saw in pictures or films suddenly turn upside down. Paris now, is not as beautiful as before. Paris does not offer what we call 'convenience'. Most stores in Paris will closed after office hour. Majority supermarkets will close at 21.00 and the latest is at 22.00. Majority metro stations have no elevator. The metro are not as clean and modern as MRT in Taiwan. Often, the metro suddenly stop or got other problems. There are a lot of refugees and immigrants almost everywhere. There are many pickpockets. The people also were not as friendly as people in Taiwan who will willingly help others even when they do not know each other.

After a few weeks there, I start to be able to adapt well. I realized that it is unfair to judge a city just because it was different from the places I used to live before. I started to learn that Paris today is created and affected by many things like: history, culture, politic, geographical position, weather, and so on. I tried to understand and explore deeper about all of that.

Despite all the inconvenience side of life in Paris, Paris is still a beautiful city of light. I enjoyed strolling around the city and explore many beautiful buildings and monuments. I enjoyed visiting many museums, exploring, and learning from all of that. Paris, with all the positive and negative side, gives me an unforgettable experience and many valuable lessons.



Some places I visited: Eiffel Tower at Night, Sacre cœur, Musée d'Orsay.

- **Eiffel tower** is a must visit monument when you visit Paris. It was build by an engineer named Gustave Eiffel. It has 3 levels. There are restaurants in the first and sceond floor and on the third floor is the observation deck. The picture was taking at the night when I was taking a boat trip around Seine river together with the other exchange students.
- **Sacre cœur** is a Roman Catholic Church. It is located in Montmarte area and at the highest point in the city. Visitor can enter the church for free but sometimes it is very crowded and visitors need to line up. Visitor can also go up to the dome with small fee. From this church, people can see Paris view.
- **Musée d'Orsay** is one of many museums in Paris. It is located on the left bank of river Seine, nearby Pyramid du Louvre. The building originally was a big train station. Inside this museum, there are many French art; like: paintings, sculptures, photographs, architectures, and other art works, from many famous artist.