

France

Part 2

Arles to Aix-en-Provence

June 29, 2015



June 29, 2015 - After breakfast we boarded the bus, and Francois drove us past more fields of sunflowers to the city of Arles.





Our tour director, Cindy, introduced us to a local guide who led us on a walking tour.

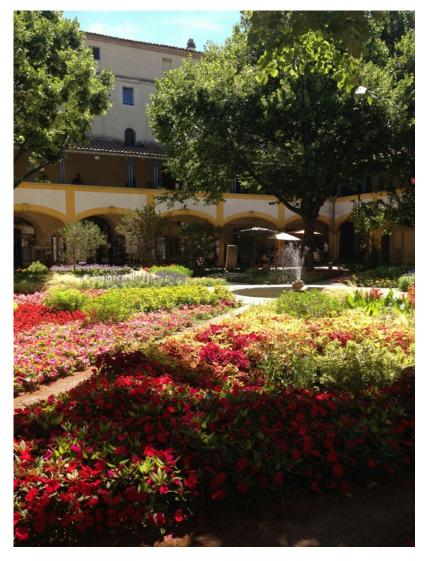
We began the tour at this building on the left, which was the hospital where the artist Vincent Van Gogh went to after he cut off his ear.





We walked through the garden that Van Gogh actually painted. They have a sign with a print of Van Gogh's painting of the hospital in the background and the garden. You can see the resemblance to the photos I took.





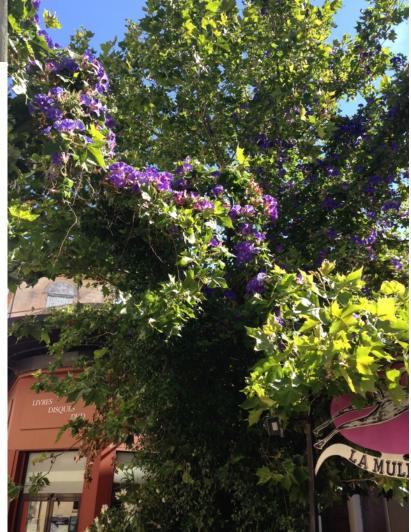








We left the garden area and continued our walking tour back on the cobblestone streets of Arles.







We entered this square with the obelisk. There's an old church and a building used as city hall.





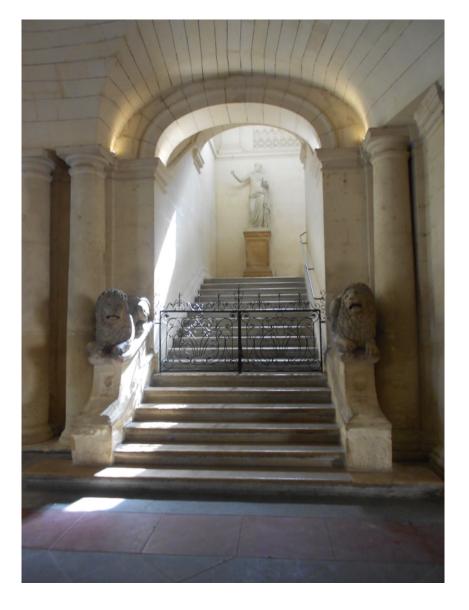
We saw a lot of street musicians on this trip through Europe.





An old church.





Inside of the city hall building with statues of lions and a very unique looking tiled ceiling.





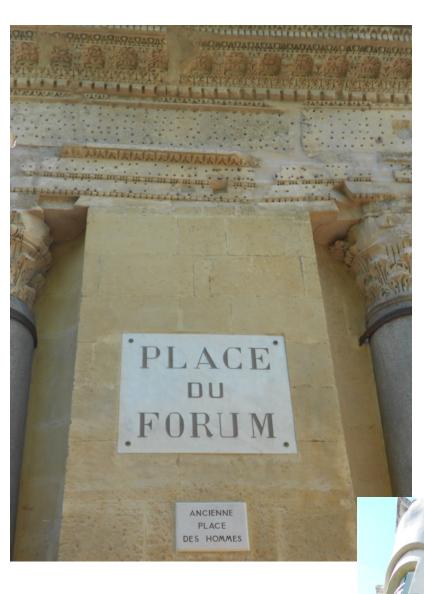
Close-up of a lion statue and below the lion door knocker on the double wooden doors of the city hall building.





Exterior of the city hall building looking like a castle, and below interesting shutters on the building across the street.





We walked down the street to another square, and these old columns and parts of an ancient forum were left here and they built a more modern building around it, which is a hotel.





Right near the old forum columns is this cafe that Van Gogh also painted. It was named after him.





This building looked so charming. I took a lot of pictures of it from different angles.

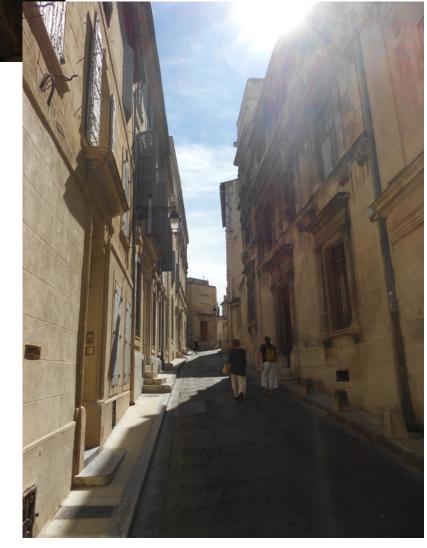








Our walking tour continued up the narrow streets.



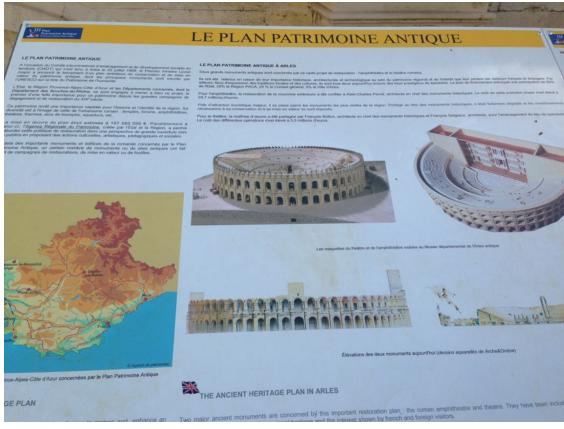


Past windows with old wooden shutters and lace curtains.





And unique wooden double doors to the ruins of an old amphitheater.







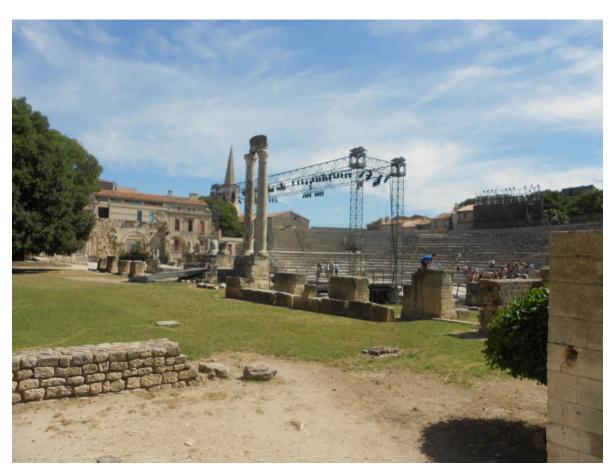






And more ruins that was a theater.







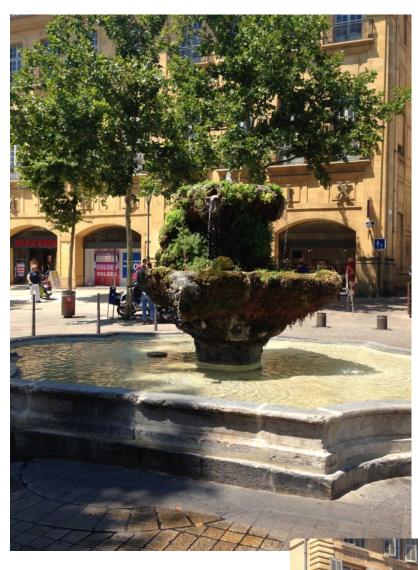


The entrance side of the ruins
that was a theater and a
fountain below. This finished our
walking tour with the local
guide, and we were given free
time to walk around and get
some lunch or shop.





We met up back at the bus, and Francois drove us to the next town of Aix-en-Provence. Cindy gave us a map of some things to see, and we had free time to explore before meeting back at the bus.



There are about three of these fountains along the center of the main street that have moss growing all over them.





It was a very hot day, and I didn't think there was much to see here.





We walked to this cathedral, but it was closed, so we couldn't see the inside.

On the right is a cafe that the artist Paul Cezanne and writer Emile Zola used to frequent. It has the same original furnishings inside.





Back on the bus,
Francois drove us to the
hotel where we checked
into our rooms and
rested a short while
before meeting in the
lobby to be driven out
to dinner.





This evening was what
Trafalgar Tours calls a
"Be My Guest Dinner".
We were driven into the
countryside to an old
family owned farm that is
turned into a restaurant.

They served us drinks and wonderful flaky crust pastry type appetizers on a large veranda area outside what was once animal stables that they remodeled into a dining area.





A few of us poked our heads into the beautiful rustic dining area to take some photos.





We were served a number of courses, and for dessert some homemade lavender ice cream.





On our way back to the bus we stopped to say hello to the two donkeys and sheep in the corral on the family farm. They posed nicely for all the photos we were taking.





OK, guys, one group photo and we'll leave you to eat your hay, while we head back to our hotel to get some sleep after this wonderful dinner treat in the French countryside.



