



PARIS

Ooh la la!

**Laguna Students
Find Joie de Vivre
in the City of Light**

This past March, 68 adventurous students and nine dedicated faculty and staff members headed to the City of Light as part of Laguna’s fourth annual Global Urban Studies Initiative. The program—grounded heavily in experiential learning—takes Upper School students out of the classroom and places them into the center of the complicated and fascinating cultures of major metropolitan cities around the world, including New York, London, and New Orleans.

The 2018 trip to Paris, once again led by English Instructor and Experiential Learning Coordinator Ashley Tidey, was an action-packed, weeklong immersion into French culture, combined with teachings from students’ English, history, French, current events, and art history courses.

Months of preparation went into this research-based learning adventure, which culminated into a relaxed and informative evening for students and their parents. The event included a physical gallery of creative projects along with more than a dozen student presentations that ranged from the French Resistance in World War II to French rap, street art, and modern fashion.

“What I love most about the trips—and the curriculum driven by them—is the endless opportunity to learn alongside the students,” says Tidey. “And for the students to learn alongside each other.”



A stop at famous bookstore Shakespeare and Company



TRIP HIGHLIGHTS:

- Cheering on France with 80,000 fans in their football match against Colombia
- Discovering the Seine by boat
- Admiring Louis XIV’s Palace of Versailles and its gardens
- Lighting candles in Notre Dame
- Paying homage to an artistic master at Musée Picasso
- Shopping and strolling the Champs Elysees
- Walking the famous D-Day beaches
- Marveling at *The Thinker* at the Rodin Museum
- Exploring the Musée D’Orsay

“My favorite part of the trip was when we went to the market and bought cheese and baguettes and then skipped about on the cobblestone streets eating meringues while figuring out what the newspaper said. In those moments, I felt like I was at the very center of French life itself.”

—SOPHIA WEBSTER '21



A FEW EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

For the 31 traveling ninth graders who completed Dr. Tidey's literary analysis unit in the fall and urban analysis unit in the spring, the destination was a playground of Modernist ex-pat literature and culture. A tour of "Writers of Montparnasse" took students to the favorite Parisian haunts of Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and James Baldwin. A stop at Shakespeare and Company, the famous bookstore that Walt Whitman's grandson founded, provided a peek into ex-pat literary life in the 1920s.

For past, present, and future tenth graders who have or will learn of WWI battles and European History with Instructor Kevin Shertzer, there was an opportunity to stand on the shores of Normandy, visit the battlefield of Verdun, pay tribute to the fallen at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery and Memorial (the largest U.S. cemetery in Europe), and more.

Upper School French Instructor Valerie Yoshimura's students had "live learning" opportunities throughout the trip. In true Parisian fashion, these French-speaking students led the way through a few of the city's most famous markets—Marché Mouffetard and Marché Monge—in search of French delicacies for a picnic lunch in Jardin du Luxembourg. The trip gave the opportunity for countless interactions with French speakers, which reinforced their classroom studies in a way that only travel can.

Students in French 3 learned about French Impressionism before the trip in order to better appreciate the Musée d'Orsay.

Of course, one cannot see Paris without seeing the Eiffel Tower. A fitting farewell dinner on the last evening of the incredible trip was held on the first floor of the famed French landmark.

"I literally watched kids grow up over the course of such an experience," says Head of Upper School Lolli Lucas. "While the students are most fortunate, I'm also proud to say they are most grateful to all for such a trip...and that makes it all so worth it. No doubt they had 'le temps de ta vie!'"



“The ruins of trenches, bunkers, and fortifications we see are a somber reminder of a conflict which is so far removed that we normally do not feel much emotion surrounding the struggle. When people think about wars or tragedies that are outside of living memory, we consider them with much less feeling and emotion for the millions who died. Going to the battlefields however, gives us a much closer link to the soldiers who died during the struggle, and one could really feel the history of the battles.”

– Jacob Self '20



ASHLEY TIDEY: ON THE PROCESS

“It’s incredible to see how each ninth grade class approaches the individual and whole-class art projects differently—drawing on and developing the previous class’s glory. The number of things to figure out are staggering—what to do, where to go, who to meet, how to make meaningful ties, how best to teach research practices in a way that makes sense to a 21st century kid, how to pace and finesse all of it. I love figuring all of this out with the kids. The student becomes the teacher, the teacher the student. The more the young draw on the beauty of what the previous classes have done before, the stronger their projects are, and the more ninth grade-focused the culminating evening event becomes.”

“TO KNOW PARIS IS TO KNOW A GREAT DEAL.” *-Henry Miller*

