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### Spring Break Trip Provides Student With Perspective And Experience

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# Spring Break trip provides student with perspective and experience



Photo courtesy of Ryan Kaye

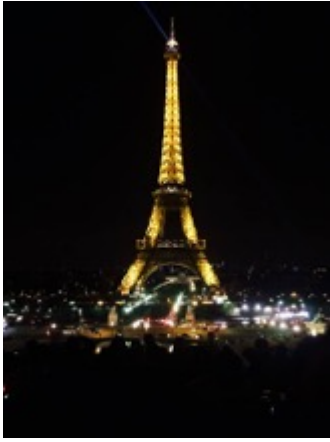
**By: guest writer, Aaron Hilton**

Here I am, finally back stateside after an amazing Spring Break trip in Paris, France. That's right, Paris, France – not Paris, Texas. This opportunity became available to me as part of an Honors travel course and was the first time I had ever been out of the country. I can say with little hesitation that it was one of the best experiences I have had through Gardner-Webb University.

It was a busy week. There is so much to do and see in Paris that it would really require closer to a month's time for someone to experience it all. The Louvre alone is big enough for someone to spend several days touring it and still not see everything there is to see.

Some of the highlights of that particular museum's collection include the statue of Venus, the Rosetta Stone and, probably most famous of all, the Mona Lisa. The amount of art kept in just one of the Louvre's wings is mind boggling. Of course, there is much more to see in Paris than museums.

A trip to Paris would not be complete without a visit to the Eiffel Tower. All I can say is that it is so much more magnificent in person than any picture could truly convey. Heck, it even has an ice skating rink on one of its lower



**Photo by: Benjamin Flournoy**

levels. Who knew? It is at the Eiffel Tower that one is afforded what is probably the most breathtaking view of the city.

When standing atop the tower, the entirety of the city stretches out for miles in each direction. Such a moment gives one a brief glimpse at just how big the city is and serves to remind that the world in general is much more expansive than we may think on an everyday basis.

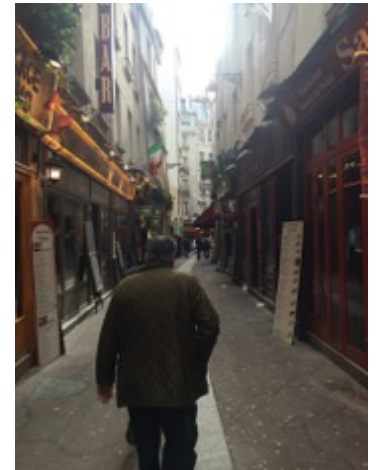
There were so many more sights on the trip: Notre Dame, the Catacombs, and the Palace at Versailles. However, tourists – like an army – march on their stomachs and so it would be criminal if I neglected to mention the cuisine.

If there is one food that epitomizes Paris – the bread. It is actually impossible to go more than three blocks

in Paris without stumbling upon a boulangerie (a bakery). At any one of these bakeries, it is possible to buy anything from chocolate filled croissants, apple turnovers and the always popular baguettes.

Bread in Paris does not contain the additives and preservatives it does here in the States, so you have to buy fresh bread every day. It may sound inconvenient, but it's inexpensive and, quite simply, delicious.

Bread aside, I was surprised at the amount of cuisine that one can find in the city. Of course, you can find traditional French dishes (you may be surprised, but escargot – snails – is delicious). Just like in America, there are also many other foreign food choices available. Anything and everything was delicious, be it French, Mediterranean, or even Chinese. In short, the French can cook.



**Photo by: Benjamin Flournoy**

Traveling abroad has really been one of the most educational experiences that I have had through Gardner-Webb. There is nothing like traveling abroad to give life experience and broaden one's horizons. All I can say is this: If you are offered a chance to travel while in school, take it!