

## Culture Shocks in France | American Living in the South of France

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtNwwd06Htc>

Transcript: <https://dontveter.com/ec/france1.pdf>

Hi guys, welcome back to my channel!

Today I thought I'd do something a little different.

I've been here now for two months and I thought I'd go over some culture shocks with you that I've experienced here.

You know we all have those French stereotypes.

I thought I would let you know what I found [to be] true, so let's get into the video, oh, and by the way if you're new here my name's Sam. (Sam is short for Samantha)

I'm from California and I moved here with my French husband and I thought I'd take you along for the journey so if you want to see more videos like this, uh, don't forget to hit that like button [and] subscribe down below.

It really helps me out, thanks!

All right, so for the first big culture shock that I experienced here was definitely personal space.

The French have no concept of it.

You know while you're in line there's somebody directly behind you [and it] feels like they're breathing down your neck.

It's a little too much but it's definitely something I have to get used to because I experience it everywhere I go.

You know, back in Los Angeles, you have a personal bubble and no one steps in it. Everyone respects that.

Here it's so so different.

Also, um, I kind of understand where it comes from because, you know, back in LA it's either a handshake or a hug.

Here they do the, the kissing on the side of the the cheeks.

Men will even do that, and back in LA it's just unheard of, to have that, um, so it's a little awkward but I'm getting used to it also.

Another thing, they're very like touchy here so they'll put, like, their hand on your shoulder just like friends.

Like, buddies will just have their hands over the guys, which for me I didn't see that a lot of that in LA.

Here you definitely see it, so it's definitely something I'm getting used to but, um, with covid going on it's just, you would think they would respect that personal space a little more and that is not happening at all.

Shock number two. Dog poop, yes, dog poop.

Never walk with your head in the clouds in France, always look down, attention, like the French would say.

We are in the top 25 biggest cities in France and I would get it if we were in the countryside [but] no, we're not.

So people need to start learning how to pick up their dog's poop, I have no idea why they don't.

I have still yet to see one person pick up their dog's poop.

You know, we walk Kingston around the area.

I would say around the block, but that never happens because the blocks are too long here, um, but there is dog poop all along.

I have to watch where I'm going all the time.

That was even in Paris.

There was dog poop everywhere!

So, definitely something that I will never get used to.

I guess the one thing you could say that's good that comes out of it is less plastic waste.

Maybe that's why they don't pick up their dog poop, they're environmentalists, who knows?

Next one I have for you guys is businesses [are] closed on Sundays, everything is closed on Sundays.

If something is open, that's usually like markets.

We have one market that we go to and they are open on Sunday till noon, but everything [else] is closed you know, it is dedicated to families and friends and I love that.

I love being one with nature. You'll see a lot of people riding their bikes, going on hikes, picnics, it's, it's, really refreshing to see.

You know, back in LA, my Sundays were spent going to malls and, uh, working, actually working most of the time, so it's nice to see, you know, the French taking care of their people.

And I really really love that we spend a lot of quality time with Paul's family, we go for dinners or we'll go on a hike.

We just went to Saint Victoire, that was really, really nice.

So that's one thing I love.

Apparently there's a law that was put into place, I believe it was in 1906, to give, you know, the French workers a day of rest and it's been in place ever since.

Those of you who know me, know I have a huge fear of being in cars.

Little did I know, moving to France, my anxiety would go through the roof.

It's even worse here, um, the roads are so narrow, the cars, I feel like they're driving, like, right beside you.

All the cars are a lot smaller here though and the reason why is because their roads are so damn narrow.

It is like windy roads, there's roundabouts, it's just, ah, it's scary.

Like when I first landed in Paris, Paul picked me up, we were driving out of the parking lot and I was already like, oh, shaking, I was so scared.

Then you, like, try and like move over (she means change lanes) no one puts their blinkers (she means turn signals) on here.

That's another thing, it's just crazy, I just I don't understand it.

Um, and then there's all these motorcycles here and they're not just like the cool, sexy motorcycles.

They're like these big, like, I don't even know what you would call them, like scooters.

Um, and they just weave in and out of traffic.

It's just, it's a lot being here two months now, though I have adjusted a little better especially to the roundabouts.

At first um I didn't really understand, I was like, how do you even get into the roundabout?

Because the cars are just going around and around and you just have to force your way into it.

Um, you know, being a defensive driver, I think the drivers here are pretty crazy, but it's something I need to get used to.

So I'm gonna go refill this, just talking about it got my anxiety up so ...

I don't know, shock number five? Dinners [are] get-togethers. It is amazing.

I have been missing out on this because the first thing that you do when you go to a get-together is they have like an apero, uh, usually held in, like, maybe the living room.

They'll have, like, olives, crackers, chips, charcuterie.

Charcuterie **noun**

1. Sausages, ham, pâtés, and other cooked or processed meat foods.
2. A delicatessen specializing in such foods.
3. The occupation of a pork-butcher; the curing and dressing of pork in its various salable forms—hams, bacon, cutlets, sausages, etc

They just have a whole bunch of light snacks and you just go ahead and mingle with friends and family and then of course you have your drink of choice, mine being wine.

After that, then you will have [an] appetizer, then comes the main course, then comes the cheese.

The cheese! Fromage. My god, do the French love their cheese! But that's a whole other video, like, that's a lot.

But anyways, after that, dessert and then comes the coffee and then even after that sometimes they will have liqueur.

I don't know what they call it, something like a digestive, and then that's the end of the night.

But, I'm telling you, like, these dinners last hours.

You know in America if you do have a dinner, sometimes they'll be potlucks [where] people will bring their own food.

Other times, if it's a dinner, it's take out or you're like standing while you're eating, it's never at a dinner table.

Here everyone sits at the dinner table. It's nicely set, um, and you just converse with people and spend quality time, and I love that.

That's one thing that I feel like America can definitely pick up on, spending quality time with your loved ones, because that's something definitely that I think that we're missing out on, so that's one of my favorite French culture shocks, definitely dinners and get-togethers, I love it.

Public urination, it is disgusting, uh, [but] don't be surprised [by it].

You're walking down the street, you see a man peeing, you're driving on the freeway, you see a man peeing, walking down the beautiful streets of Paris you see a man peeing, it happens everywhere and it's disgusting.

It's funny, because I was just watching Emily in Paris, that Netflix show that just came out, and she's, like, facetiming on the phone and then there's a man just peeing right behind her, just the definition of public urination here.

Ah, the fruits and vegetables here!

France is filled with these beautiful little farmer's markets everywhere.

You'll see fruit and veggie stands and ~~it~~ [the fruit and vegetables are] is absolutely delicious!

I was so shocked when I first came here and I just bit into, I think the first thing I had here was a pear.

It was so juicy I could not believe that it was that juicy.

Back in LA when I would buy a pear they would always be hard when I would bite into them and they weren't very sweet.

Here it's just, it's sugar, so delicious and I can't believe I've been missing out on it all these years.

The tomatoes, the tomatoes, you know, are all these awkward shapes and they're red and orange and just so delicious.

If you haven't been to France that's definitely going to be one of your favorite things is the produce here.

The only ~~downfall~~ [downside] of the produce here is it goes bad quickly.

You have to eat your fruits and veggies pretty fast [or] you'll just have to throw it in the trash.

Back in LA, your produce would last you a lot longer, but that's just, that's not a good thing because that means it's filled with preservatives and all that yucky stuff.

So France is definitely ahead of the game and America needs to catch up.

Smoking. It is not smoking weed, it is smoking cigarettes here.

They love their cigarettes, not the weed.

Back in LA, you know, everyone smokes weed.

Here, it's [the country is] filled with people smoking cigarettes and for me that's disgusting.

It's just, it's everywhere here.

It's really shocking though, because you'll see even teenagers and kids smoking cigarettes.

I just, I don't understand, I guess here it's considered, like, chic and you know they take their lunch breaks and they smoke their cigarettes.

That's definitely something you see on TV, so maybe it shouldn't have been a culture shock for me but because you don't see a lot of smoking in LA it was definitely something that surprised me here, especially like young kids smoking.

I guess the French consider this as one of life's many pleasures and they're not willing to give it up even though they know it's really bad for them.

Shock number nine, bathrooms, it's so strange.

So our toilets are in a room of their own and then in a separate room you usually will have the sink and the shower.

I do not understand why. Why? I do not understand this.

You would think, you know, after you use the restroom you want to wash your hands right after.

[But] you can't do that. You have to exit, and then go to the other restroom and then wash your hands there. It's so weird to me.

Paul explained to me, well, when you're in public restrooms in LA you do the same thing.

You get out of the door and then you go wash your hands which I understand.

I just [wonder] why ~~not~~ [they don't] have everything together.

It boggles my mind, I will never understand that.

10 we're at our last culture shock and it's hitchhiking.

I was so surprised to see how many people hitchhike here.

You have everyone from young girls to old men at the side of the road.

I think that's crazy!

Don't they watch, like, these killer shows and people getting kidnapped?

I just don't understand it.

I don't know, maybe in France people are more friendly, which is true, that's another thing, [there] is [the] French stereotype of them being mean or rude.

I have not experienced that here at all, but, yeah, everyone must trust each other here because you'll see so many people hitchhiking.

In America I would have never ever done that.

You know, if someone pulls their car over to the side of road for you, you usually will ignore them because you're afraid they're going to kidnap you.

Here, people are asking for rides with complete strangers, it is absolutely insane.

So those are my 10 culture shocks.

I hope you guys enjoyed this video, there there's definitely a lot more that I have, so if you liked this video don't forget to give it a thumbs up, or comment down below.

If you have been to France please share with me your culture shocks, and yeah, see you next time.