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BONJOUR PARIS

MY TRAVEL JOURNAL: STUDYING IN PARIS

ESPCI - ENGINEERING DIPLOMA

MY ACADEMIC MOBILITY



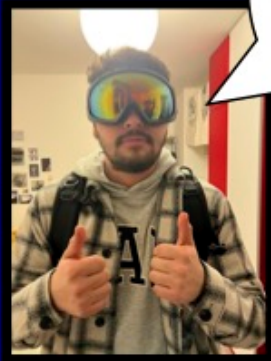
I TRAVELED TO FRANCE ON AUGUST 19, 2024. A TRIP THAT, IN THEORY, WILL LAST AT LEAST TWO YEARS, BUT I KNOW THAT MOST LIKELY I WILL NEVER LIVE IN MY COUNTRY AGAIN.



ARRIVAL

AND AS IF FORESHADOWING THE FUTURE, THE FIRST PERSON WHO GREETED ME WAS ANOTHER COLOMBIAN, A FORMER ESPCI STUDENT, WHO WOULD ACCOMPANY ME THROUGHOUT THAT DAY TO GET THE ESSENTIALS: ESIM, THE MARKET, AND THE ENTRANCE TO MY RESIDENCE.

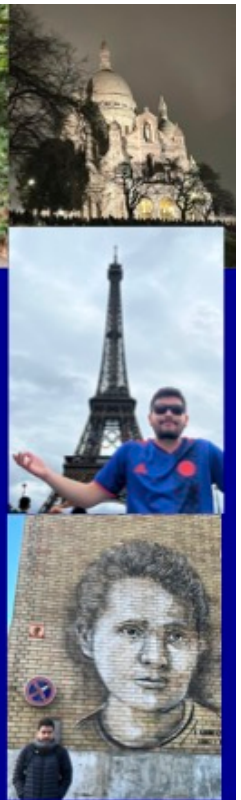
OUI OUI
BAGUETTE



Despite having studied at a French-Swiss school my whole life and being constantly surrounded by them, I realized that I was very shy when speaking initially



I found a beautiful city, better than any description in any film or book I could have read. A blend of classic and modern; green and marble; sun and rain

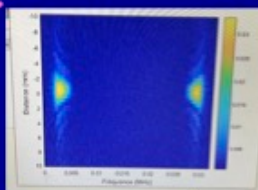


CITY
ATMOSPHERE

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

AT FIRST EVERYTHING FELT EXCITING BUT ALSO CONFUSING BECAUSE I HAD TO ADAPT QUICKLY TO A NEW LANGUAGE AND NEW HABITS.

UNIVERSITY

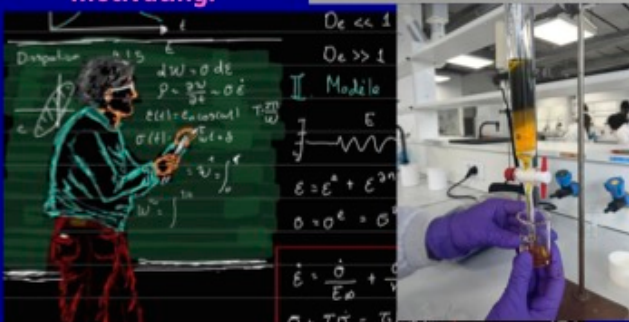


I found the academic level very demanding and intense. However, the assignments and professors made learning very motivating.



PEOPLE

I found that several French people were open to talking and listening to me. However, I was only initially able to develop somewhat close relationships with the most patient ones.



Within the Latino community, being far from home makes us seek out people in similar situations to feel at home.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

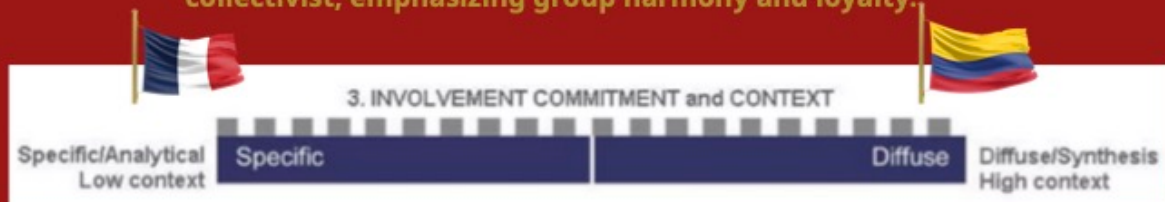
Analysis based on the theory of Trompenaars and Turner: The Theory of the Seven Dimensions of Culture



France is more universalist, focusing on rules, codes, and laws. Colombia is more particularist, placing greater weight on relationships and specific circumstances.



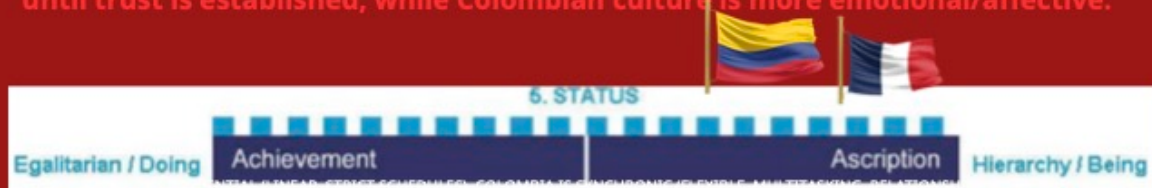
France leans toward individualism (personal achievement). Colombia is more communitarian/collectivist, emphasizing group harmony and loyalty.



France is more specific, separating work and personal life. Colombia is more diffuse, where personal relationships deeply influence business interactions



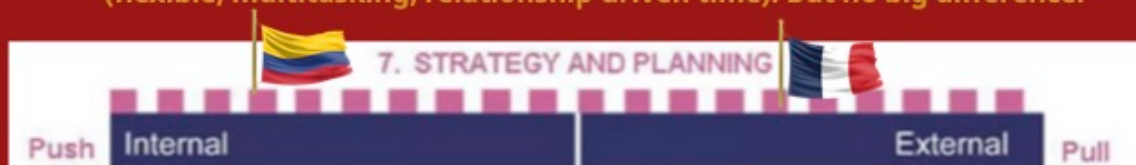
Both cultures can be expressive, but French culture often holds a more neutral exterior in business until trust is established, while Colombian culture is more emotional/affective.



France often favors ascription (status based on school, title). Colombia also favors ascription (status based on family, age, connections).



France is a little more sequential (linear, strict schedules) than Colombia culture that is synchronic (flexible, multitasking, relationship-driven time). But no big difference.



Colombia often shows internal direction (controlling the environment), while France can lean toward external direction (adapting to the environment/fate).

CRITICAL MOMENT #1

SITUATION

During a group project meeting, my colleagues openly criticized ideas directly, regardless of who the person was.



CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

I understood that in French academic culture, critical discussion is normal, valued, and does not reflect a personal opinion.



MY REACTION

At first I felt uncomfortable because in my culture making such direct comments is considered a sign of personal contempt.



WHAT I LEARNED

It helped me feel more comfortable and open to discussion



CRITICAL MOMENT #2

SITUATION

Arrival time at my internship during my internship. My bosses and colleagues arrived around 9:30 am or later.



CULTURAL INTERPRETATION
Leisure and personal time are crucial in French culture



MY REACTION

In my previous jobs in Colombia, the arrival time was around 7 am. So, at the beginning, I always felt rushed to be the first one at the company.



WHAT I LEARNED

It is necessary to work to live, not live to work.



CHALLENGES I FACED

LANGUAGE



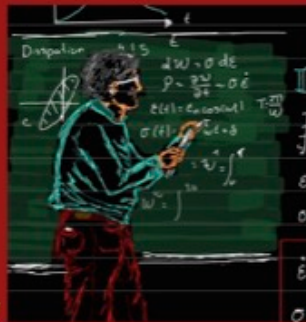
¿Avoir le cafard ?

Transfer from an academic French I previously learned to colloquial French, along with complex accents or high speeds

ACADEMIC SYSTEM



On PC the system is very intense and fast. Taking all the exams in the same week is almost traumatic.



I became a DJ to play Latin music at parties



Food culture in France emphasizes long social meals, which reflects the importance of conversation and social connection.

FRENCH FOOD

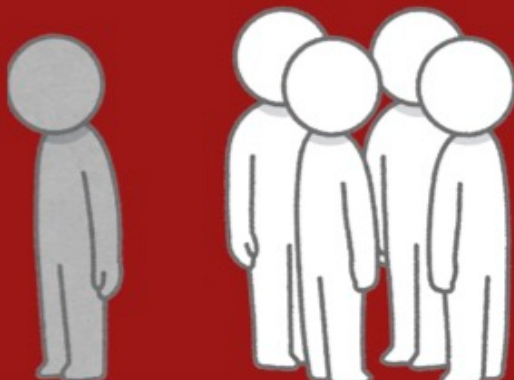


COLOMBIAN FOOD



LONELINESS AT THE BEGINNING

The biggest culture shock wasn't with the French people, but with the Colombians at school. I thought kindness and empathy were general Colombian qualities, but when I arrived I realized that wasn't the case.



OVERCOMING

Over time I learned to cope with everything, to find a friendly environment; social groups where kindness is the key factor; to learn to taste new flavors and embrace everything as a new experience



NO RATRAPAGES



WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT INTERCULTURALITY

Living in another culture made me realize that behaviors that seem strange at first often have deeper cultural meanings.



UNDERSTANDING OTHER CULTURES

BE MORE FLEXIBLE



RAPID ADAPTATION

FRENCH MEMES



Yo después de una sesión de francés en Duolingo



PERSONAL GROWTH

This experience helped me become more adaptable and open-minded.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION



CONFIDENCE

SELF-RELIANCE



CONCLUSIONS

Studying in Paris was an experience that greatly broadened my perspective on the world. Living in such a culturally diverse city allowed me to meet people from many countries and learn to adapt to different ways of thinking and working. Furthermore, studying in a demanding academic environment helped me develop greater independence, discipline, and critical thinking skills.

CREATIVE ELEMENT



Notre Spécialité "Maison"

La Bouillabaisse de Michel par personne : 80 €

"Court bouillon de Poissons" de couleur orange, lié au Safran, à la tomate et à la Soupe de Poissons. La Bouillabaisse est servie : La Bouillabaisse d'une part avec de petits Croûtons et, à côté, en même temps, les poissons préparés et découpés en filets, les pommes de terre sautées en tranches, le tout accompagné des sauces traditionnelles "La Ryolle et l'Aloli" au milieu de la table.



Vins (à boire avec nos spécialités marseillaises)

	75 cl	50 cl
A.O.C. Cassis Blanc et Rosé	40 €	30 €
Château de Fontblanche (Bordeaux)	40 €	
Château de Fontvieille		

