

NORMANDY AND BRITTANY – MAY 2019

I have wanted to drive along the coast of Normandy and Brittany for many years, but it has never been prioritized high enough. Now it was finally going to be a reality. We started on Sunday the 5th of May.



First we drove to [Clarion Hotel](#), where we put off our luggage and Anne Berit waited there while I drove to [Dalen Parkering](#), where I parked the car. It is only a few hundred meters from the hotel.



Our room looked like this.

After checking in, we ate in the hotel restaurant.



I had grated mussels for appetizer.



Anne Berit had ham, cheese and flat bread.



We both had halibut for the main course.



This was the wine.



Text on the window of the restaurant.

Early the next morning, May 6, we took the shuttle bus to the airport, [Oslo Airport Gardermoen](#). We were to travel with [Norwegian](#) at 08.40 to Paris Charles de Gaulle and be there at noon. 5.11. This route plan was pretty good.

[Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport](#) has three terminals. We arrived at terminal 1, which is the oldest terminal. It was completed in 1974.

We had planned to take the train to Dunkerque. It goes from terminal 2. To get there we took a shuttle train which is free. It's called [CDGVAL](#) ([Wikipedia](#)). When we arrived at terminal 2 we bought train tickets at a ticket machine. We chose a connection with the fewest train changes. Then there was only one choice: a train that went at 15.18 with a train change in Lille. [SNCF](#) operates most of the trains in France. The train we chose was a [TGV](#) train.



These are our train tickets. After finding the way here and arranging transport further, we had to have some fluid intake.

We went to the nearest place called [PAUL](#). Here I stand in line to make purchases, a cappuccino and a beer.



When we had been sitting for a while at PAUL, they were going to shut down and we had to go. We went up to the next floor and found this place called [EXXI](#).



The small dishes we had looked like this.



When it was indicated on the board which track the train was going from, we took the elevator down to the platform. Here I check that the train number and track number are correct.



There are always lots of people traveling.



This was also on the platform.



Then we were arriving in Dunkerque.



Outside the station building we saw this construction which will be bicycle parking.

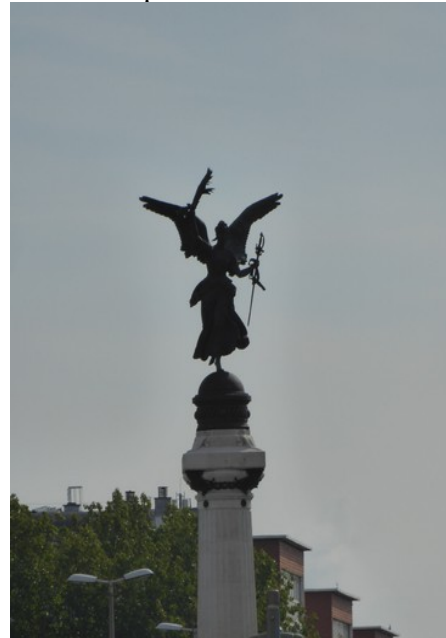


We took a taxi to the hotel which we had booked in advance. It's called [Ibis Dunkerque Centre Hotel](#). ([Booking.com](#))

On May 7 we were to pick up the rental car, which we had ordered. We took a taxi to the car rental company. While we were waiting for the taxi we took these two pictures.



This is the Leughenaer Tower, built around 1450, and is thus the oldest monument in the city. It has been used as an observation tower for the harbor and as a lighthouse.



At the other end of the street, we see the victory statue dedicated on September 9, 1893 for the celebration of a hundred years since the siege of the English troops of the Duke of York was broken in the [Battle of Hondschoote](#) in 1793.



The rental car company is called [Enterprise](#). We got an Opel Insignia. It looked something like this.



On our way to the next stop we drove past the hotel where we had stayed.

[Dunkerque](#) is first mentioned in documents from the 600's. The inhabitants were fishing in the North Sea and around Iceland. In the 19th century, it was France's third largest port. The city is best known for the evacuation of 300,000 allied soldiers from the city and the nearby beaches at the start of the Second World War. The evacuation was called [Operation Dynamo](#).



Here we are outside of [Museum Dunkerque 1940 Operation Dynamo](#).



In 1940, this was the headquarters of the French and Allied soldiers during the [Battle of Dunkerque](#) and Operation Dynamo. They were doing maintenance when we were there, so we didn't come in.



This is one of the canals passing through Dunkerque.

Here we drive past Saint-Martin Catholic Church.



This is a memorial graveyard, [Dunkirk Memorial](#). It commemorates those of the British Expeditionary Force who died or were captured there and have no known grave. There is an avenue of pylons on which the names are engraved. The facility was opened by Queen Elizabeth in 1957.



The great engraved window is depicting the evacuation.



These are the tombstones for the English soldiers with their own grave.



The next town, which we drove through was [Gravelines](#). It was built in the 12th century at the outer end of a canal that that went to Saint-Omer. At that time it was lying at the westernmost parts of the Spanish territories in the Netherlands and the city were therefore heavily fortified. Some of this still exists.



This is one of the outer dikes.



Old gate towers, porte aux boules gravelines.



In the summer, boats are rented on the canal.



There are walls around the city.



Here we see more of the walls.



There is an ox statue here.



We drove through the city on the road further along the coast.



The landscape looks like this.



Sales poster.

We made a short stop in [Calais](#). It is the city in France closest to England. There are several canal ferries from here and the tunnel under the English Channel ends right south of the city.



We saw more of such crosses.



The lighthouse in Calais is on the outskirts of the city. It was commissioned in 1848. It is classified as a historical monument and it is still in use.



This tower is called [Tour du Gouet](#). It was built in 1214. It was used as a lighthouse until 1848 and then became a watchtower.



Charles and Yvonnede Gaulle are standing on Place d'Armes, in the heart of Calais.



We found such marks cast in the street at Place d'Armes. They mark the [Via Francigena](#), which is the pilgrim route from Rome and north towards France and England.



The route was used by Bishop [Sigeric the Serious](#), who in the year 990 walked from [Canterbury](#), England to Rome. He wrote down the route on the return trip.



An image of the tower on [Notre-Dame](#) in Calais.



This monument of [Hubert Latham](#) stands a bit southwest of Calais. He was the first to try to fly over the English Channel in 1909.



Just down there is a bunker from the last war.



Special bell tower on the church [Saint-Pierre d'Audinghen](#).



We drove past this house, [Maison du Site des Deux-Caps](#).

It turns out that this is a visitor center with exhibitions and rental of bicycles etc. For trips in the area. It is a popular tourist area.

The two caps are [Cap Gris-Nez](#) and Cap Blanc-Nez.

This is part of the so-called [Côte d'Opale](#) which extends from the Belgian border to Berck.



Next stop is at [Batterie Todt](#). It was a coastal battery built by the Germans during the Second World War as part of the [Atlantic Wall](#). There were four such gun positions here.



A glimpse of the cannon Leopold.
It is a [Krupp K5](#).



Another cannon position.



We had a coffee break in [Audresselles](#).

Then we arrived in [Bologne-sur-Mer](#). It is an old town founded by the Celts. The Romans used the city as a base when they invaded England in the year 43. ([Link with many pictures](#)) ([Link](#))



The old town is surrounded by ancient fortress walls, which we see a bit of here. ([Link](#))

To the left we see the main tower of the cathedral, [Notre-Dame](#).



This is the entrance through Porte Nueve. There are three more, similar gates through the walls.



Nice fountain.



Restaurant



An old pharmacy, founded in 1847.



The cathedral seen from the old town.



A selection of berets.



The city hall.



Nice park outside the city hall.



The stree on the way back to the car.



Then the hotel. It is called [Le Regina Hotel](#) and is situated in [Neufchâtel-Hardelot](#).



After checking in, I wanted a beer out on the patio.



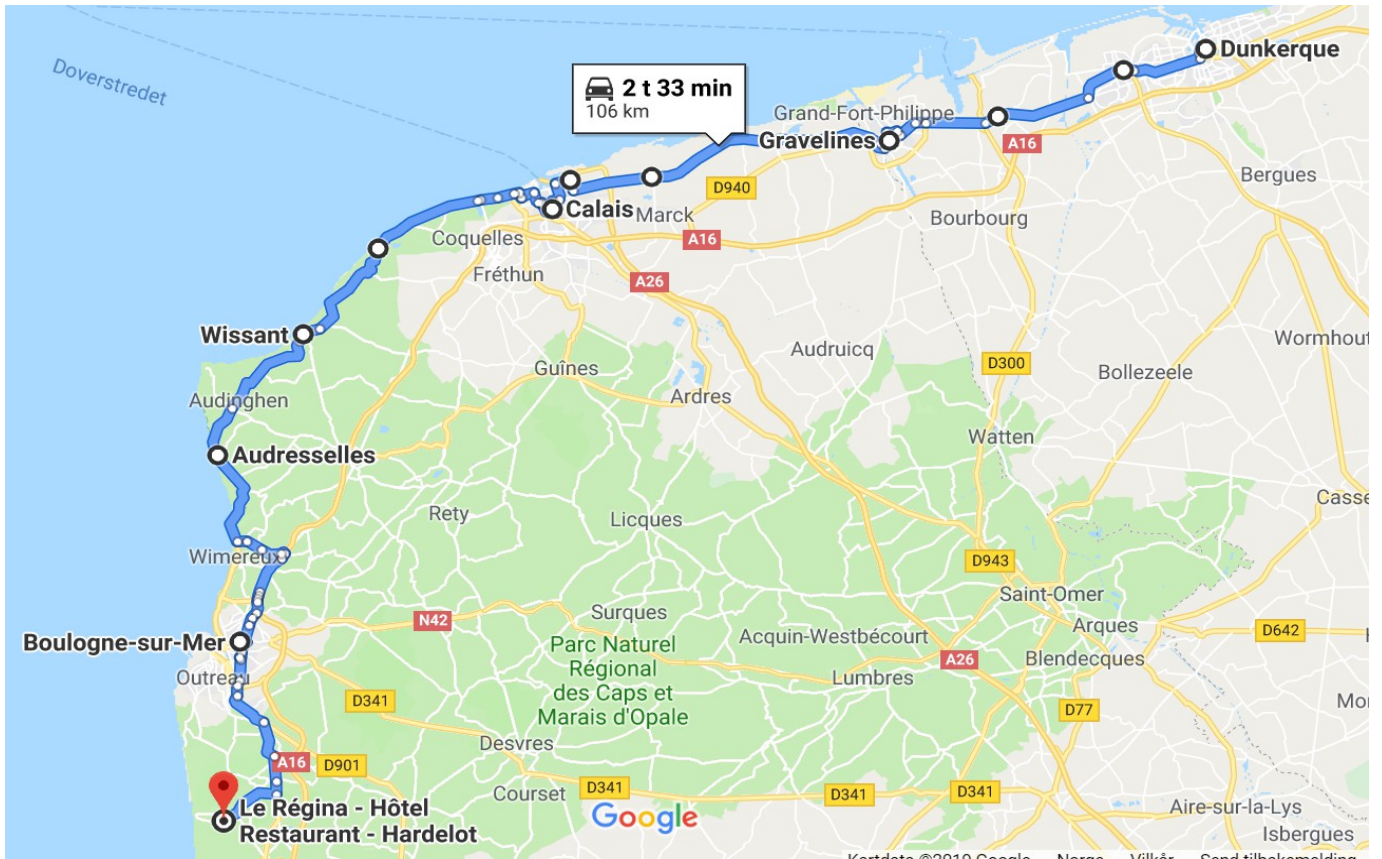
Then it's time for dinner. First comes the wine on the table.



After dinner there was dessert. Anne Berit had ice cream.



I had crème brûlée with three flavors.



This was the driving route the 7th of May.