**Journey to England & Wales: feelings of French students!**

England is a breathtaking country which has amazing landscapes and inhabitants who are well known for their courtesy. During a week, we observed how English people live and we found out some surprising habits, a lot different from what French people are used to.

First of all, let's talk about something that really surprised us: in England everything is earlier (at least in Bath) than in France: we noticed that the shops close at 4pm or 5pm and dinner is served at 6pm. Of course not every family does the same, and even sometimes everybody in the same house eats at different hours!

Therefore, dinner seems to be less a moment of sharing, exchanges and togetherness than in France. Dealing with dinner makes me remind of another surprising habit: English people don't put curtains to their windows. It's quite disturbing since it makes possible to anybody to see what's going on in the house. It's even worse at night, when the light is on, it's like you are with them, in the kitchen, preparing dinner for example!

What is more: what do they eat? France is known for its gastronomy thus French students are easily surprised by the English food which is not as elaborated as ours. If you are looking for a country where the gastronomy is absolutely wonderful and undeniable, England is not the place you have to go to!

Moreover, in Cardiff, in Wales, what strikes us was that the garbage was in front of every house but it wasn't in trash cans, it was just in the middle of the street. It seemed there wasn't anybody to clean the roads and most surprising, nobody seems bothered by this disgusting way of life.

And with a view to going on with the surprising ways of life, needless to say that the right hand drive still stunned French young students.

 Then, now, let's talk about some things that we enjoyed and let's start with the impressive street art at Bristol, Banksy's town. We saw amazing paintings from different artists, the best known being Banksy. He is a famous artist, considered as a legend in this city where he was born. English people are accepting all this art, in spite of the fact that it's illegal, and our guide even told us that the bishop of the city wanted to have paints on the walls of its church! Street art is a way to express yourself totally included in their lives and even if it could be dangerous, artists take their courage in both hands, they fight for freedom, risking to be arrested, in order to denounce, and criticize the society. It's a way to share his or her point of view and those artists pave the way to another form of biased and committed art. We can thank them for that, for their bravery and for their commitment.

Nevertheless, street art does not only consist in drawing on the walls, it's also artists who are practicing in the street, in front of anybody who is enough smart to take his or her time to listen to or to look at this real performance. Musicians, comedians, singers, painters, they all are in the street to make you see what they are able to do, to show you their talent, asking for your help. So, even if you don't want to help them giving them money, please, just take some time to appreciate what they are offering you, their time and their talent.

However, what we can really appreciate is when you walk along the streets in England and, unfortunately you are lost, English people don't hesitate over helping you and they take their time to answer your questions even though they're in a hurry. That is very appreciable for us! English people are really helpful and as opposed to French people, they seem more cheerful, they smile more and they are more willing to say hello to each other than French people who always seem in a rush, in a fury and unhappy.

Although, in England, and particularly in Bath, we noticed that lot of walls and houses are black because of coal. As a matter of fact, that comes from the period when people, living in houses, were heated with coal; they were using this energy a lot, but a characteristic of coal is that it darkens the walls, and so plenty houses of Bath are still black because of a former use of coke. Last but not least, in England all the museums are free! It's very appreciated for the tourists, who don't have taken enough money to go into the museums, and for English families, that's nice too because they could do two or three museums in one day.

To sum up, England is a wonderful country with its habits, its ways of life, its surprises, its well-educated inhabitants and its splendid landscapes. We had the opportunity to see and live with all of these particularities, and we are very grateful to have done that!

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