

Day 14 – Lyon, Capital of Flavors, Threads, and Stories

Tuesday, 18 November 2025 – Weather: a perfect day, crisp air and warm sun

Lyon gifted us another flawless morning—cool and fresh at first light, warming just enough to make our final full day in the city a delight. After breakfast at our comfortable hotel, we set off across the awakening streets toward Quai Saint-Antoine, the city’s celebrated food market.

It was a typical early November Tuesday. The market was alive, yet calm—stalls carefully arranged with pyramids of gleaming fruit, fresh greens, wheels of local cheese, and sausages from the Monts du Lyonnais.

We met our spirited guide, Mégane, for a day devoted to Lyon’s culinary and cultural soul.

Our first stop was Le Café des Fédérations, the quintessential bouchon lyonnais, where the city’s history is as rich as the dishes it serves. Here we learned about the canuts, the silk workers who shaped Lyon’s identity through both their craft and their revolts, and about the mères lyonnaises, the self-taught women who turned home cooking into an art form and paved the way for chefs like Paul Bocuse. Over a glass of peppery Côtes du Rhône, we sampled a cold salade de lentilles and a delicate quenelle de brochet bathed in its silky Nantua sauce.

Crossing the Saône, we entered Vieux Lyon, where cobblestones and Renaissance façades set the scene for our next encounter: Fred at La Vie en Rose. His épicerie was a temple of Lyonnais flavors, and we were treated to slices of rosette, saucisson de Lyon, and the creamy, melt-in-your-mouth Saint-Félicien. Before leaving, we had to stop by the boutique’s quirky disco toilet, which turned a simple bathroom break into a moment of contagious laughter and selfies.

Our sweet finale before heading uphill was a freshly baked Praluline from Maison Pralus, which we enjoyed near the imposing Palais de Justice des 24 Colonnes. The buttery brioche studded with caramelized pink almonds felt like a final love letter from Lyon to our taste buds.

We then made our way to the Cour des Miraculés de la Maison du Crible, pausing in its quiet courtyard before the iconic pink tower. Here we learned the story of this preserved Renaissance house and its miraculous survival through centuries of urban change.

From there, we made our way to Soierie Saint-Georges, where Virgil welcomed us into his silk workshop. The rhythmic clack of 19th-century looms filled the air as he demonstrated how Jacquard mechanisms create velvet and brocade. We imagined the generations of weavers who once filled these streets, and even learned about Laurent Mourguet, the silk worker-turned-puppeteer who created Guignol, the beloved puppet hero of Lyon.

The day’s finale was a ride on the historic Fourvière funicular, climbing to the gleaming Basilica of Fourvière. Inside, gold mosaics shimmered and sculpted angels watched over us. From the esplanade, we admired Lyon’s rooftops and the ribbonlike rivers that divide the city, before continuing to the Roman theatres, still in use after 2,000 years.

We descended Fourvière’s slopes by foot, winding through quiet, shaded streets until we reached the Presqu’île again. Evening set in softly, the city bathed in golden light. Some gathered for early drinks and a final bouchon dinner, while others took one last walk through their favorite corners of the city, letting Lyon’s rhythms imprint themselves on memory.

As our stay in Lyon came to a close, we felt we had touched all its layers: market mornings, bouchon lunches, Renaissance courtyards, silk workshops, sweeping panoramas, and ancient theatres. Lyon had shown us her heart—and now we were ready for the next chapter: Paris, the City of Light.