

Charles de Gaulle called Lyon “the capital of the Resistance”—a title earned through courage, sacrifice, and solidarity during the darkest years of WWII.

We retraced the footsteps of ordinary men and women who defied tyranny. Lyon was a critical center for the Free France movement, with underground printing presses, secret mailboxes, and the use of the *traboules*—those hidden Renaissance passageways—to evade Nazi surveillance.

We learned of Jean Moulin, the brave civil servant and coordinator of the Resistance who was arrested by the Gestapo under the infamous Klaus Barbie, the so-called “Butcher of Lyon.” Barbie led brutal interrogations and torture from the Gestapo headquarters on Rue Sainte-Catherine. He was eventually captured in Bolivia and tried in Lyon in 1987 for crimes against humanity—a landmark trial broadcast live on French television.

We paused on Rue Sainte-Catherine, where Robert Badinter, future Minister of Justice and abolitionist of the death penalty in France, narrowly escaped arrest as a teenager. In this street of ordinary buildings lie extraordinary memories.

We reflected on the rounding up of Jewish families in Lyon—many of them hidden, but many caught. The weight of those stories hung in the air with quiet reverence.

Films & Series:

- L'Armée des Ombres (Melville) – [Watch trailer](#)
- Résistance (filmed in Vieux-Lyon) – [Watch here](#)
- A French Village – [Watch here](#)
- Lacombe Lucien (Louis Malle)
- Lucie Aubrac (Claude Berri)
- The Wave (Dennis Gansel) – [Watch here](#)

Books:

- The White Mouse, by Nancy Wake
- A Woman of No Importance, by Sonia Purnell
- Code Name Hélène, by Ariel Lawhon
- Flight to Arras, by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
- The Ancestor Syndrome, by Anne Schützenberger