

# France and I (1)

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I went to France in August–October 1998 for the first time. I was invited by INRIA (Institut National de Recherche en Informatique et en Automatique) Rhône-Alpes in Grenoble.

I arrived in Paris in August 1998 with my family (my wife, son, and daughter). We stayed there for a week and did a lot of sightseeing there; we visited many places including the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre Museum, the Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Eiffel Tower, Sacré Cœur, and Montmartre. Everything was fantastic and magnificent. We had a very good time there.

Then, we moved to Grenoble by TGV. Grenoble is a very beautiful town. It is surrounded by mountains and is known as the place that hosted the 1968 Winter Olympics and as the birthplace of Henri Beyle Stendhal. From the city center, we can see distant mountains in all directions. Near the city center, there is a steep hill on which perches an old fortress called the Bastille, the famous novelist. We can get there by a ropeway. From the top, we have a very nice view of the town, especially at night. We also enjoyed the beautiful countryside in the neighborhood.

In the city center, I found an interesting thing. All cars, of course, keep to the right. But trams there run on the left side! They say that paradoxically that is for preventing collisions between cars and streetcars. Driving on the tram tracks is prohibited, and if you drove on the tracks, you would see a tram coming from the front! This is dangerous, and while driving, you can find a tram in front much easily than one at your back. So, no one dare to enter the tram track. This seems a good idea. I think this should also be done in Japan.

During my stay in Grenoble, I also visited a professor, whom I had known before, at INRIA Sophia-Antipolis near Antibes. I stayed in a hotel in Antibes and strolled along the Mediterranean Sea of Côte d'Azur. It was very beautiful. I also enjoyed seafood in the restaurant.



View of Grenoble from the fortress Bastille



INRIA Rhône-Alpes