

## Amiens, May 2012

One day in May 2012, I went on a Brighton and Hove Buses' coach trip to Amiens. We went by ferry, sailing out on P&O's Pride of Canterbury from Dover to Calais, the smoothest Channel crossing I've ever had.



The coach dropped us off at the Musée de Picardie but as I had only four hours to explore the town, I strolled towards the town centre. There were a number of cafés and brasseries around the Amiens town square and fountain, as I'd hoped. I chose Le Queens where I had a very sweet hot chocolate and delicious local speciality, "ficelle picarde" (pancake with ham & mushroom, under cheesy sauce) with a healthy side salad.

The Cathedral de Notre Dame in Amiens does indeed look very tall; it has a rather jaunty appearance with one tower shorter than the other by half a head and a rather fragile-looking black, wooden spire above the crossing whose purpose seems to be to make the cathedral the tallest building in the town and the tallest cathedral in France. Above the entrance to the West Door, numerous figures crowd above you and I found them somewhat intimidating.



Just north of the cathedral by a canal I found a cafe called Al'Patat'rie serving potatoes with various extras, including potatoes with "gésiers au confit" or "preserved gizzards".

I crossed the Somme and walked back through the pretty, municipal Parc Saint-Pierre. There were wild[life] areas, games areas and allotments visible from the footbridge.



I thought the park lamp posts a bit strange, having a mirror above and behind them (see below).

I turned north along the canal to see the area called St Leu.

I lost my bearings after leaving the canal but found a small (foreign?) family shop selling sirop, which was about the only thing I wanted to bring back.



I went south and found Queen's again in time for a caramel ice-cream sundae.

Four hours was long enough to get the feel of the place, but not enough to check the detail - no time to go the inside of the cathedral, look around the Museum of Picardie, or Jules Verne's house, or take a boat trip in Les Hortillonnages. Maybe next time ...