Coffee Break **Travel Diaries**

Season 1, Lesson 1

Transcript and Notes

The Travel Diaries give you an opportunity to travel while it is not possible - some "virtual travelling" through French-speaking parts of the world. This series focuses on France and Lara and her boyfriend, Noah, as they travel by train around France.

j'ai hâte de découvrir

I am impatient to discover / I can't wait

Study text

Je m'appelle Lara et je suis parisienne. Voilà déjà cinq ans que je suis avec mon compagnon Noah et quatre ans que nous vivons ensemble dans un appartement dans le quartier est de Paris. Noah est américain et tient une librairie spécialisée en littérature américaine. Il travaille beaucoup la semaine et jusqu'à présent nous avons simplement fait des petites excursions aux alentours de Paris les dimanches.

parisien(ne)

Parisian

In the text, this is shown in the feminine form, as it is Lara, who is female, who is describing herself. If it were a man who were speaking, he would say **parisien**.

voilà

there you go

This word is often used when handing something over to someone, eg: a waiter handing a customer their coffee, **voilà**. It is explained that **voilà** is also used to explain how long something has been happening for as is seen in the text: **Voilà déjà cinq ans que je suis avec mon compagnon Noah** …

Ça fait … can also be used to mean "that makes … (5 years that we have been together)". Both expressions use the present tense in French, whereas in English we would use the perfect tense to say how long "something *has been* going on".

Another expression is then mentioned that can be used to say how long something has been going on, **depuis**. **Depuis cinq ans je suis avec mon compagnon, Noah,** "I have been with my boyfriend, Noah since five years ago". Again, in French, this uses the present tense, where we'd use a past tense in English.

le quartier est de Paris

the eastern area of Paris

In the part of the sentence **et quatre ans que nous vivons ensemble dans un appartement dans le quartier est de Paris**, it is noted that the verb, **vivons**, is in the present tense too, as it it is still dependent on the **voilà** in the first part of the sentence.

tenir

to hold / look after / run

librairie (f)

bookshop

It is mentioned that the adjective following **librairie** is in the feminine form, **spécialisée** as **librairie** is a feminine word.

bibliothèque (f)

library

There is a description of how much Noah works and it is mentioned that there is no word for "during" used in how this is said in French: **Il travaille beaucoup la semaine**, "he works a lot during the week" as is needed in English.

jusqu'à présent

until now

alentours (pl)

surroundings

les dimanches

on Sundays

> Cet été, un ami va garder le magasin à la place de Noah pendant quelques jours. Je vais enfin pouvoir lui montrer ma France chérie ! Nous n'avons pas de voiture et nous détestons les embouteillages, alors nous avons décidé de faire un petit tour de la France en Thalys (un train à grande vitesse), avec des trains plus petits entre certaines villes.

cet été

this summer

garder

to look after

à la place de Noah

in place of Noah / for Noah

When talking about how long a friend is going to look after the bookshop for Noah, the phrase **pendant quelques jours**, is used. We are told that the **pendant** could be omitted, or that **pour**, meaning "for", as we would say in English, could be used instead. It has to be remembered that **pour** can only be used for time phrases when referring to the future. **Pendant** can be used for either the past of the future.

enfin

finally

montrer

to show

Lui is the indirect object pronoun used in this sentence, meaning "to him", **Je vais enfin pouvoir lui montrer ma France chérie !** because you show something *to* someone.

ma France chérie

my beloved France

embouteillage (m)

traffic jam

To say that "we don't have a car" in French you use the expression **Nous n'avons pas de voiture** as can be seen in the text. In French you don't specify that that you don't have "a" car. Following the negative **pas**, the word **de** is used, then you add the noun immediately after that, **voiture** in this case.

alors

so / in that case

Thalys

brand of high speed train in France

un train à grand vitesse

a high speed train

décider de faire quelque chose

to decide to do something

entre

between

> Les valises sont faites, avec le strict minimum. Noah a pris son carnet de dessin et moi ma caméra. Nous partons vers 13h pour prendre le Thalys de 13h30 à Paris Montparnasse. En 2 heures tout au plus nous arriverons déjà à Bordeaux, ce qui prendrait 6 heures en voiture ! C'est parti.

valise (f)

suitcase

In French, to say that your suitcases are "packed" you say **les valises sont faites**, using the verb **faire**, meaning literally, "made" or "done".

un carnet de dessin

sketchbook

caméra (f)

video camera

appareil photo (m)

camera

partir

to depart

vers

around

The 24 hour clock is commonly used in France, especially in relation to travelling by public transport. Therefore, 1pm is written as **13h.**

prendre le train/Thalys

to take the train

tout au plus

at the most

There is an example of the future tense used in the text when Lara describes how "we will already arrive in Bordeaux", **nous arriverons déjà à Bordeaux**. Later in the same sentence she changes to the conditional when saying if they had gone "by car it would take 6 hours", **ce qui prendrait 6 heures en voiture !** The **ce qui** at the beginning of this phrase refers to the journey that was mentioned before, the 2 hours by train.

c'est parti

let's go

Coffee Break French™ http://coffeebreakfrench.com

Coffee Break French audio, video and lesson notes

©Copyright Radio Lingua Ltd 2020

All Rights Reserved