

Internship at Nouvelle Maison

My name is Hubert de La Rocque. I am 18 years old and I have just started a bachelor's degree in Economics and Management with a speciality in art and creativity at the Catholic university of Lille. I had the opportunity this summer to work at Nouvelle Maison. A brand-new French store in the heart of Winchester which sells and promotes French products such as wine, cheese and pastries. For three weeks, I worked alongside Céline, Philippe and Jean-Philippe, observing and learning by their side. It was my first internship as a highschooler and it was genuinely captivating because I was able to take on a variety of tasks and discover different aspects of running a store.

I worked on communication, especially through social media like instagram or facebook. I also reorganized the storage area for the following two new months. For a significant part of my time, I worked as a cashier, which involved welcoming customers, assisting them with their purchases, and sharing aspects of French culture with American families.

Obviously, being french made that part of the job so easy ! Recommending the biscuit brand "Prince" which was my own breakfast for years to parents for their children was a real pleasure and my arguments seemed to be convincing. As a matter of fact, we simply ran out of Prince biscuit stocks by the end of my three weeks! The children were fans of it like I used to be ! I guess I am pretty good at marketing. It is only an example because I was very familiar with most of the products that I was selling like Brets chips, Carambar candy or Oasis drink.

Another particularly enjoyable part of the job was working as a barista ! Doing the coffees or teas was a fascinating activity because I learnt how to use the typical espresso machine that you can see in a French café. I can assure you that it was challenging because it is not an easy machine to use. It requires at least a quick formation just to understand how it works and a few hours of work to become comfortable and efficient with it. It truly was the most rewarding stuff I learnt to use during my job experience.

Beyond the professional skills I acquired, I will always remember the many conversations I had with the citizens of Winchester while working at the store. These exchanges highlighted the similarities and differences between our cultures. However, most of my incredible memories of this trip were made possible by my host family. Ted and Kristen Fitzgerald were a welcoming couple who made sure I was feeling included in their daily life and family. I had the opportunity to experience typical American activities such as going to a baseball game (the red socks were awesome!), ordering Macdonald's at 11 pm or enjoying a boat drive on Boston harbor.

This trip became even more memorable when my host family took me to prestigious events for someone my age. I had the chance to attend a Broadway adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* at Boston opéra house and spend a weekend at the lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. Alongside these rather unusual experiences, I also discovered many aspects of American culture through its food, music, and cinema.

Sometimes, it was completely new to me like Tatte or Chipotle, two delicious and almost healthy fast foods. I also discovered The Backseat Lovers, a fresh and distinctive band that changes from what I've heard before. Ted, in particular, insisted that I watch some of the great classics of American cinema, especially Italian-American mafia films such as *Goodfellas* and *The Godfather*. I will always be grateful that he convinced me to watch them, as I would probably never have discovered these masterpieces on my own. I would never have discovered all these great things without such a welcoming family. I also thank their daughters who were extremely funny. This family simply made my summer so enjoyable and I can't wait to host them in return.

I am grateful that the jumelage exists because I would never again experience something like this in my life. I could not have asked for a better host family or a more rewarding first job. I hope this friendship between France and the USA will remain strong in the future so that other teenagers will enjoy something as enjoyable as what I lived with for three weeks.

In the picture on the left, I was selling a brand new product at Nouvelle Maison to the customers !



In the picture on the right, we were celebrating Audrey's birthday with my host family!