



RDA tour group on the top floor of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye.

RDA Hometown Tour: Paris 2006

Last October, John Casbarian, associate dean and director of the Rice University School of Architecture, and Kent Fitzsimmons, resident director of the Rice University School of Architecture, Paris, designed an extraordinary tour of the City of Light and surrounding sites for the Rice Design Alliance. It was quite a challenge to compress a city of heroic architectural proportions into something that could be seen in five days, but in the end they found the perfect balance of old and new architecture.

To put the city into historic context, the walking tours were interspersed with a sampling of Paris' great monuments—Sainte-Chapelle, Charles Garnier's Opera House, and Henri Labrouste's Bibliothèque Nationale, to name only a few.

A day trip outside Paris began with an in-depth tour of Chartres Cathedral and its crypt in the morning, followed by an afternoon tour of Domaine de Marie-Antoinette and Petit Trianon in Versailles. The tour was perfectly timed, as the Petit Trianon was closed a month later for extensive renovations that are expected to take two years.

Rice Architecture alumnae Mary and Roberto Roca hosted a lovely four-course dinner in their home, which is located just outside the northeast wall of Versailles and the Potager du Roi. Their house was

originally part of Jean-Baptiste Colbert's palace, built in the 17th century.

The focus then shifted to the early 20th-century architecture of Le Corbusier. With the assistance of Tim Benton, the leading historian on Le Corbusier, the group was able to visit all the floors of both Villa Jeanneret and Villa La Roche before taking an afternoon visit to Villa Savoye.

During another walking tour, Alain Salomon, an architect who teaches at the Columbia University School of Architecture's Paris program and has had projects published in numerous French and international magazines, pointed out examples of the rich historic urban fabric in Paris, including Place des Vosges, Hotel Sully, Rue des Rosiers, and the Maries.

Afterwards, the RDA tour group adjourned to Restaurant Georges atop the Pompidou Center, where architect Brendon MacFarlane joined them for lunch to discuss his latest projects. The grand finale included a look at the recently completed Musée du Quai Branly by Jean Nouvel.

How do you follow up such a great trip? Why, with a visit Buenos Aires, "the Paris of the western hemisphere," bien sur! For more information about the upcoming RDA adventure, please visit www.rda.rice.edu.

Executive Editor hired for *Cite*

At the end of January, Julie Sinclair Eakin joined RDA to take over a newly established position at *Cite*, that of executive editor. Eakin arrives from New York City, where she was a senior editor at *Architecture*.

Eakin has a masters of architecture degree from the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), and a masters in the history of architecture from

the University of California at Berkeley. Her freelance writing has appeared in the *New York Times* and *I.D.* She anticipates that *Cite* will offer her the opportunity and challenge of integrating two of her interests—storytelling and the design of cities—in a meaningful way, and looks forward to assisting in its ongoing evolution. Eakin welcomes your comments, and may be reached at Julie.Eakin@rice.edu.



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