

B12 WE MADE IT TO LEMANS
PROJECT: EUROPE 2011
SUBJECT: B12 WE MADE IT TO LEMANS SCRIPT
DATE: 11 JUNE 2011



Sorry for the lapses in the blog but we have been on the run. Briefly, we left Paris by train on Thursday, destination Le Havre and were met at the station by our most efficient and courteous shipping agent, Jeroen Walda. The ship had just arrived so the car wouldn't be available until sometime Friday.



Rented a car & stayed at Le Thumiere, a lovely B&B in the Normandy area. More about that later.



Picked up the MG on Friday. Some quasi-serious damage to the driver's door and a crack in the windshield. Jeroen said, "No problem. It's covered by insurance." Wait till they find out the paint costs \$700 a gallon. Left Le Havre for Le Mans at 5:00 PM using our GPS (now named Mille. Recalculaire) for an incident-

free trip to the Le Tertre B&B. We had some differences with the GPS (not all her fault and more on that later) but found our destination long after the sun went over the yardarm.



Today's news is that we are at Le Mans for the 24 hour endurance race. We arrived at 10 AM and checked in as guests of Aston Martin who are running two brand new cars today. We were last here in 1959 when Aston Martin won Le Mans for its first and only time so we have been treated royally. We've been wined and dined, toured and showered with gifts...and that's before the race. After a quick photo op on the track we watched the beginning of the race on TV in the Aston Martin pit garage with the members of the pit crew and our charming hostess, Sara Durose. Everyone was sure that our return to the 24 hour race would be a good luck talisman for their new cars.



We were still in the pit garage when car 007 spun out into the gravel and car 009 had some sort of failure after only two laps...both within minutes of each other. 007 was able to creep to the garage while the driver of 009 walked home. Everyone has come by and apologized saying, "It's not your fault. They were new cars and not expected to finish." I'm sure they expected more than two laps though.



We were in the garage when 007 arrived. They immediately pulled it in and the pit crew feverishly took the car apart piece by piece and laid them at our feet. I couldn't help thinking how it looked like a plucked chicken...just like our MG months ago only worth about 10,000 times as much. The knowledge and ability of the pit crew is amazing. Each man had a responsibility and rushed to the task. It reminded me of surgery with 20 surgeons working on their own part of the body. They hope 007 rejoins the race but it is certainly out of the money except for the experience gained. I took still pictures galore and enough video to bore you for a month.



Our legs gave out from standing and Sarah Durose summoned a golf cart to ferry us back to the Aston Martin guest lounge where they quickly fetched a beer for me and tea for Louise. It was just in time.

Aston Martin certainly cares for its customers. Hearty greetings, buffet food of all types, enough drink to parch any throat and a racing atmosphere that can't be beat. Is this heaven or what? I am sitting in the impressive Aston Martin lounge with a glass of wine within easy reach, typing away, while 50 race cars scream by my



elbow at 150+ miles per hour. Makes it hard to concentrate but we wanted to share the experience with you while we have wi-fi access. It is somewhat problematic in some B&B's. More on that later.

We are thrilled and exhausted at the same time...similar to feelings that we had during our previous experiences with Le Mans. At this point Louise doesn't want to come home even though she realizes that the tent will come down after the race and there will be no one to wait on her. We still have



tomorrow though. The race ends at 3 in the afternoon. Enough time to take in the race activity and some excellent food. We are livin' high at the moment.



P.S. The MG performed like a champ on the autoroutes and handled the country roads with aplomb. During the heavily-trafficked drive in to the track we were photographed enough times to cover our trip if we had been paid. We weren't. Maybe tomorrow?

If you'd like to see a video of how much fun we had, click here:

<http://youtu.be/5nglhavq0Eg>