**JET Jaunt 2024: St Malo to Monaco**

**It’s been a journey…**

Locating an Arago medallion in Paris turned out to be the biggest challenge on the inaugural JET Jaunt, which saw people race from St Malo to Monaco over a weekend in September. The JET Jaunt, sponsored by CSC, has raised more than £22,000 for the Jersey Employment Trust, a charity that supports Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition secure and sustain employment.

So what was it like? Here are some of the Jaunters’ journeys…

**Overall winners Lucy Gomes and her friend Sarah Parker finished, with all challenges complete, in a time of 1 day 7 hours 3 minutes.**
‘We've both watched Race Across The World, so thought this was too good an opportunity to miss. It was so much fun. We really enjoyed the challenges and loved seeing each city along the way.

‘We didn’t book the next form of transport until we arrived at each checkpoint, which meant that on one occasion we missed a train due to the last two tickets selling out (it was one of the other teams). The only tickets for the next train were first class which we treated ourselves to, after getting soaked right through in Paris.

‘We also had one train delay to Dijon, which caused us to race around the city at midnight to secure each challenge before jumping on our overnight bus to Milan at 1 am. Milan was an unexpected stopover, which we made the most of by having pizza for breakfast.

‘In Paris, the checkpoints were 20 minutes away from each other, so we had to think of other forms of transport to avoid missing our train, so we hired ebikes and escooters to get through the city quicker. The most challenging thing was to find an Arago Medallion. This had us circling the Louvre in Paris for almost an hour, only to realise that it was considerably smaller than expected.

‘Sarah is more of a relaxed traveller, and I prefer to organise our trips with a spreadsheet well in advance, so the time restrictions and the unknown put us both out of our comfort zones, which certainly kept the adrenaline going through the race.’

**Adam Gavey and old school friend Oli Davidson won the Judges’ Award for ‘spirit of the Jaunt’**

‘The Jaunt was great fun, tiring, stressful at times, but definitely worthwhile. We had quite an adventure with a whole lot going wrong in Paris but we managed to come back from it.

‘It was chucking it down and our phone got waterlogged, making it unusable. We had to team up with a group of French teenagers to help us around and to complete this checkpoint. We couldn’t find accommodation in Paris, which was a struggle. We were kicked out of the train station at 1 am. At one point we were given a plastic cup of red wine by a drunk American woman. That’s when we felt truly homeless. Later, at the train station we saw other Jaunters running past and wondered how on earth they were doing that bad.

‘Our adventure in Paris is definitely one to remember!’

**Most Frugal Journey**

Two teams from Valla tied for this award, with their travel spend of £129.86 per person. Mark Baker, Curtis Chilvers, Sophie Oliveira and Millie Moscardini decided to stick together for their journey. You can read their blog here:

https://tinyurl.com/VallaJaunt

**JET trustee Lorna Pestana travelled with her husband Jamie**

‘It was fantastic. We loved it! We didn’t really know what to expect and after watching Race Across The World we were relieved we had our phones and not such a strict budget. Our biggest challenge was when Jamie booked a hotel in Turin for the wrong night but they managed to accommodate us. We are first in line to sign up for next year.’

**Lily-Mae Lowe, with her cousin Rebecca Le Huray, won the Most Sustainable Journey award**

‘It was a great experience with ups and downs, constantly changing our plans and deciding our priorities for finishing (taking our time in each place, meeting each checkpoint, getting to the finish before the deadline).

‘We never planned on coming first as we wanted to enjoy the adventure and experience different areas of France. We also spoke to strangers. Even with the language differences they were all so helpful including locals, and staff at train stations. One railway worker advised our ticket wasn't enough (we also needed a seat reservation). When we eventually got the correct ticket and went to a different platform, it was the same worker, he remembered us and congratulated us for making it.

‘The challenge was harder than we expected as we believed we could just book the next train, assuming they would be frequent from cities, but soon realised most required seat reservations and were often fully booked. They were also not as frequent as we expected them to be, with hours in between.’

**Vicky Pemberton, travelling with her son, Kit**

‘It was a really fun adventure, and I would recommend the Jaunt to anyone. Such a different way to travel and I liked the spontaneity of it and travelling by train was amazing (apart from when cancelled or full!) and relaxing when on the train, which was a good offset from the adrenaline. We had one low point during our three-hour wait at Gare de Lyon, crowded with people, no sockets with power and 1% on my phone, and Kit disappeared to find food. Otherwise, we got on really well and it was a real treat to spend time together.’

**Joanne Vandermerwe-Mahon travelled with her daughter Eleanor (12), the youngest Jaunter**

‘We took part because we thought it was a great cause and we are fans of the TV show Race Across The World. The race was exhilarating and challenging. It really made us think and plan ahead and at a few points we had to be very sneaky and strategic.

‘On our leg from Turin to Monaco we had a very tight turnaround from one train to another. The train that we were on was going very slowly and the board was showing that the train we were meant to catch was going to leave before we got to Genoa. This made us panic, but when we asked the train guard if she could help us she said she would speak to the guard on the other train to slow the other train down for us. She then sped up our train too! We made our connection.

‘Then when we got to Ventimiglia it looked deserted. No one was there, just the police. Our train wasn’t showing on the board either! We explained to the policeman, using body language and the worst attempt at Italian, that the phone had run out of charge and that we needed to get the train to Monaco. They charged the phone but didn’t know about the train. Eventually we found our train as it was leaving and shouted to the train guard to stop the train and once again the train guard came to the rescue. We got on and made it to Monaco.

‘The race was all that we had hoped for and more!’

**Charles Richardson, travelling with CSC colleague Cleavon Tenorio, won the Top Fundraiser award with a total of £6,260**

‘I have been leading a project to upgrade the CSC Jersey office to Windows 11. This included replacing old laptops, which were cleaned and inspected. We sold them for a minimum donation of £50 per laptop.

‘I was a JET client between July 2015 (after leaving Highlands College) and June 2017 (upon attaining permanent employment). JET’s support aided in building my confidence for job interviews, CV and cover letter writing. Additionally, it provided me with a structured environment to dedicate time to job searching and helped me to gain valuable experience in both the public and private sector.

‘I am very grateful for the support JET provided during a difficult period of transition to full-time employment. I have always felt the need to give back to the charity in return to the support they have offered. The Jaunt has finally given me the opportunity to pay back the debt of gratitude for getting me to where I am today.’

**COULD YOU HAVE FOUND THEM?**

*This was the wording in the race briefing:*

You may be familiar with the Greenwich Meridian line spanning north and south from London, marking the basis for all global time zones. In the true spirit of French and British rivalry, Paris also has its own, less popular, meridian. In honour of one of the astronomers who mapped out the line, François Arago, there are 135 bronze markers along this line as it runs across the city. Each Arago Medallion displays his name as well as the letters N and S. You must find and take a team photograph with any one of the Medallions.

**WINNERS**

**Overall winners**: Lucy Gomes and Sarah Parker, who finished, with all challenges complete, in a time of 1 day 7 hours 3 minutes.

**Top fundraisers:** Charles Richardson and Cleavon Tenorio who raised £3,680. With a contribution from employers CSC, their total was £6,260.

**Most frugal journey:** Mark Baker, Curtis Chilvers, Sophie Oliveira and Millie Moscardini.

**Judges Award**: Adam Gavey and Oli Davidson, who had wonderful stories of disaster in Paris.

**Most Sustainable Journey:** Lily-Mae Lowe and Rebecca Le Huray.

**Youngest Jaunter:** Eleanor Vandermerwe-Mahon aged 12. Travelling with her mum Joanne, they finished, with all challenges complete, in second place, in 1 day 12 hours 25 minutes.