

Travels with Anzie – Crazy Politics in Senegal

February 2019

Sunday February 24 is the presidential election. We have been advised not to travel to downtown Dakar, because these elections can become violent. The former President, Abdoulaye Wade has asked people to attack the polls. He is angry because his son, Kalim Wade, and the former mayor of Dakar have both been declared ineligible to run for president because they have been found guilty of corruption. In all there are five candidates, two of which appear to be viable: Macky Sall, the current President, and Idrissa Seck, former Prime Minister.

Two days ago, Feb. 21, Anzie and I took the ferry over to Goree Island to spend the night. Unlike the rest of Dakar, Goree hasn't changed a bit since we lived here 13 years ago. Still infamous as the point of embarkation for slave ships going to the Americas in the 1700-1800's, Goree is absolutely charming and peaceful after the throngs of tourists leave at the end of the day. We love to wander the hibiscus-framed paths around the island. We dine at any one of several good, reasonably priced restaurants. We came across a house with a plaque on the wall, "Residence of George Soros".

But I digress.

As we boarded the ferry to Goree, we noticed many ladies garbed in long dresses made of the same brown and cream material. Upon closer examination we could see the design included the face of Macky Sall, the current president, who is up for re-election. Included in the design is the head of a horse. Because many of the voters are illiterate, candidates are represented on the ballot with an animal next to their name. We then noted several men wearing shirts of the same material, as well as baseball caps decorated with Macky's face. They were all headed for a huge rally on the island. Some of the ladies were blowing plastic horns; many were shouting slogans.



On the ferry we met Eric, owner of our residence for the night, **Chez Eric**. He guided us to his place and settled us in. We felt like we were in our old 167 Water B&B, with a shared bath. It was

comfortable and charming. We then returned to the port and **Chez Thio**, a fine restaurant serving African cuisine overlooking the ferry dock. Not very far from Chez Eric we came upon loud recorded Senegalese music and voices over loudspeakers exhorting rally-goers to vote for Macky. This went on until about 8 PM.

We had dinner at **Anna Sabran**, located near the old Fort Estree. Excellent shrimp/avocado salad, good ½ liter of red wine. They seemed to be out of several menu items for a Thursday evening. We viewed the last ferry departing with Macky celebrants.



Goree market around the heart - February

On Valentines Day we went to our other favorite island, Ngor, to stay at our favorite place, **Chez Carla**, aka **Maison d'Italie**. They have their own boat to make the ten minute trip. Top floor room overlooking Ngor Bay, Almadies and the ocean. Cuisine can't be beat! Charles (we call each other "brother") makes us feel like we're welcomed into the family. The former President, Abdoulaye Wade, has a mansion just down the island from here.



Our last journal from Senegal. On to France!

Chuck & Anzie