

Post



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# Meows and minarets - September 5, 2023

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## ***SUMMARY***

After enjoying a vast breakfast spread we walked back into the old quarter of Mostar and along the slippery stone streets and across the Old Bridge. Grocery shopped, made sandwiches for later and headed out to Kravice Waterfalls. They were spectacular! We crossed back into Croatia and to the seaside town of Trogir. Great dinner at Franka made even better with some additional good news about my sister, Tricia's, health outlook! - Karen

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## ***DETAIL***

As so often is the case, we have a full day planned. We get going early to get it all done. We're at breakfast at 8 where the buffet is spread across multiple tables: breads, cheese, omelets, fruit, a few tapenade and red pepper spreads, and most importantly lots of coffee and warm milk! We are not the only people here. We hear French and there's the motorcycle riding lady from Germany to whom we spoke yesterday. We ask and are told today there are Italians, a Serbian, some Croatian guests, and a few other nationalities. Our host is originally from Germany.

After packing we do one more long, leisurely walk through Mostar. We see more of the city and then shop for groceries. There are lots of locals out and many tourists, many of the women in burkas. Small zodiac-style inflatable boats bob on the water, taking small groups out for a tour on to the swiftly flowing river. Many awaiting the river tours are ladies in full islamic attire. Observing them, from the bridge, getting from the shore into the bobbing inflatable boats is a sight. There's a tall diving platform and we watch one young man take quite a while to consider his very high dive. He finally does, feet first, very anti-climatic.

At the grocery store we shop for our picnic lunch. We buy a jar of that yummy red pepper spread, turkey, cheese, and chips. We find a nice whole loaf of good looking brown bread and ask the lady behind the counter if she can slice it for us. She does so in such a rushed and uneven manner as to say "this is my least favorite part of my job and I hate tourists". There's a huge assortment of what we think is canned chicken spread, or maybe it's cat food. We get one. One euro.

On our walk up the hill back to our hotel/museum, we see more buildings with unpatched bullet holes and mortar shell damage. On the street cars are parked on one side with two way traffic on the other. The cars are arranged so no can move. Someone has to move before anyone else can, but no one is sure who should go first, so they just sit there patiently fuming. It's a mess. There is an ambulance wishing to get through, thankfully without siren. It seems this is not an uncommon situation. We squeezed past a van, hoping it won't start driving mid-squeeze. It's crazy.

Back at our hotel we let ourselves back into the courtyard through the big wooden gates and a group of non-English tourists tag along. They sign says they're supposed to have made an appointment or talked to the owner, but none of that had happened. Madame stops and explains this, without a word they turn around and head back out.

Car retrieved from the secure parking area we're on our way. The traffic is lighter than yesterday and thankfully we're not forced to drive through the gridlocked middle of town. The GPS helps us retrace our route and soon we're on the faster flowing two lane route.

Our eventual target is Trogir, back in Croatia and back on the Adriatic. First though: waterfalls. After an hour's drive we find their big parking area and pay the entrance fee. It's a 10 minute walk down to the falls and we periodically get tantalizing glimpses of the falls to come. In full view they're pretty spectacular, like something out of a travel magazine. Not that tall, but a long line of many falls, some big and rushing, some with less volume, ricocheting down, bouncing off big moss-covered boulders on the way down.

In the big pool at the base, people wade and swim aimlessly. Tons of pictures are being taken, including many by us, and there's a lot of sitting, eating and drinking going on. There are chairs and official concession stands for drinks and food. The soft drinks are a bit more expensive than the beer. I love Europe. At the few rustic restaurants there are chairs and shade. We sit and eat our hacked bread sandwiches the girls made earlier, with chips and locally purchased beverages. We marvel at the falls and do a lot of people watching.

Back on the road the GPS leads us back towards Croatia. At the border the single car in front of us is turned around and sent back to Bosnia and Herzegovina. We're not sure what they did wrong but we're happy when it's our turn. In almost no English it's communicated that this border crossing is only for locals. We need to turn around "and go that way". He has a uniform and gun so we don't argue. We figure out there's another crossing five or so kilometers back, so not too bad, and it's headed towards the entrance to a major tollroad, so we're OK with this detour.

Finally at a usable border crossing the official inspects our passports, quickly hands them back, and waves us on. Not so fast. Some in the car want passport stamps, please. If looks could kill. Yes we get stamps but we also a fair amount of bad border guard karma.

On the tollroad we're flying. The EU ensures its member's major roads are kept in great shape. There are mountains around us and they're tall and oh so impressive. Enormous majestic monoliths. Some of the closer 'mountains' require long tunnels. Shorter 'overpasses' turn out to be for local fauna. They're quite wide with lots of dirt, grass, trees, and bushes. The local big mammals, (apparently quite a few of them) use these to cross over the tollroad/freeway without getting killed or demolishing any of the small European vehicles flying past. Each overpass has a sign explaining the purpose and noting a couple of the animals they serve: Bears, Wolves, Wild boar, Coyotes, Deer, oh my!

Approaching Trogir it's rush hour and the surroundings quickly get industrial. The traffic is a bit congested but we're to our apartment in good time. Our accommodations are very nice, with two bedrooms but only one bath. There's a washer which we start to use immediately. We're told in only 128 minutes we can move the clothes to the drying rack. The back yard sitting area is concrete, but very nice with comfortable seating, a cover, and a lovely cool breeze. Life is good.

Eventually we walk the few blocks to town and find Franka, our restaurant for dinner. We didn't have a reservation but it was only seven o'clock, which was fortuitous, because they were able to give us a table if we could be done by nine. It's the number one restaurant in town though not too pricy. Our table is outside in a large courtyard with people wandering by constantly, exploring the city. There are lots of tables, all filled, with people eating, drinking and gabbing. Dinner is divine and we make another reservation for tomorrow. Eventually we give up our table, head back 'home', and crash. It's been a long, fun day. We look forward to exploring more of Trogir tomorrow and to having a bit of a down day.

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## Photos



Amazing breakfast spread with Persian carpets on the floors and walls



Not ripe yet but loads of kiwi fruit hanging from the vine covered trellis in front of the reception



No shoes inside. Only brought one pair of shoes. Always hope they're still there in the morning.



Everywhere slick walking surfaces and reminders of the war



Thick slate (?) roofs along the way and dramatic hillsides off in the distance. Beautiful to look at and probably great for launching mortar attacks back in the dark days.



The big bridge is visible from so many parts of town. Minarets and the river, too.



Ron and Karen on the main bridge, holding on for dear life against the polished stone walk



There's also a 'mini-me' version of the big bridge



In the wind next to French youths doing tons of sit-ups on the wooden platform, the river flowing swiftly by in the background



From the bridge we can see the inflatable motor boats loading up the muslim women in their full regalia for a tour. Not easy.



More remembrance of the bad old days and dramatic geology in the distance



More unpatched mortar damage and bullet holes



Modern day progress. Lots of cars immobilized by gridlock. No one's going to be the one to make the first move.



A country of beautiful waterfalls. It's a magnet for family with small kids and couples looking to cool off.



The falls are not only pretty but they make a beautiful noise and a soft, cool breeze on a warm day



The houses belie the size of one of the huge mountains we drive by on the toll road

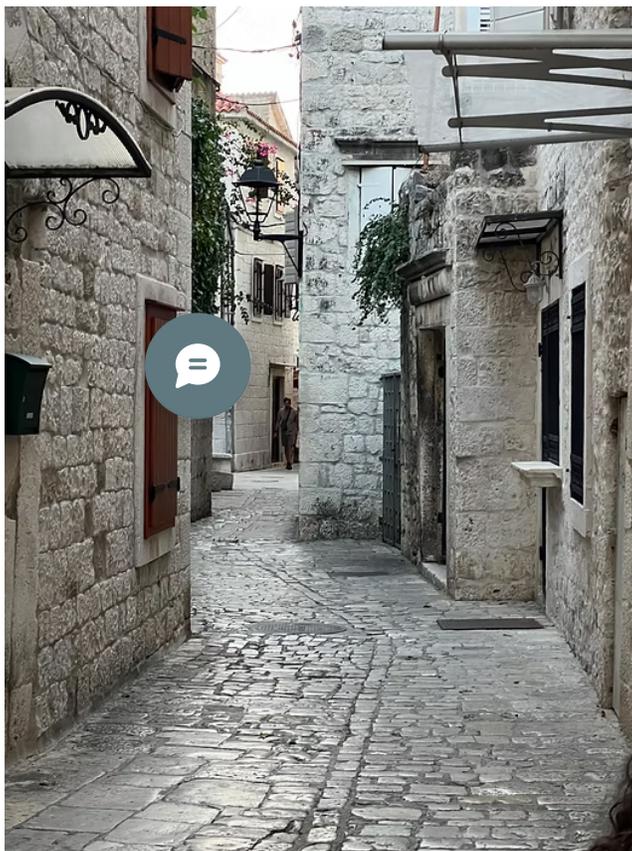


Our car on the right and a cat in HER spot on the left. Truth be told, she's OK with any of the spots as long as she can curl

FARNSNIENTE 



Dinner at Franka. Delicious food and very tasty Croatian wine. Their latitude and soil is similar to Italy's and there are some high end winery. Price performing beverage.



As we dine there's a pretty ally in our view of which the girls want a picture. It was hard to wait until it was totally without nosy tourists. We never were 100% successful.



After dark the local landmarks are lit up and look pretty against the black sky

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