

Post



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# Elephant rock and a landslide - June 9, 2025

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## ***SUMMARY***

Drove towards Palau where we were to spend the night. Stopped on the way in Castelsardo, a very picturesque old hill town with narrow, winding streets. Got re-routed due to a closed highway and had a long drive through the mountains on narrow, winding roads. Beautiful scenery with amazing, jagged peaks all around. Happy hour at our B&B outside of town then beat the crowds for an al fresco dinner accompanied by frequent ringing from the church bells just above us. - Karen

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## ***DETAIL***

We've made it to another relocation day. Tonight we're to be spending one night in Palau, in the very north, slightly east corner of Sardinia. Packing is in order but breakfast first, coffee with sheep's milk, sheep yogurt with honey, prosciutto, and lots of cakes and cookies. We won't miss this breakfast.

As we finish eating we see two yellow space creature looking people walking around. It's two off our farm workers dressed to handle bees. Very strange. Are we out of honey? No. The farm does programs for local school-aged children three times a week. Half the bees will be transferred into sealed hives with glass (plexiglass?) tops so the kids can watch the worker bees work. Very cool.

To capture what they see, the little six year olds will be painting, with watercolor. There's lots of small glass jars, paint brushes, very white bed sheets, and powdered watercolor paint. Add water and you're good to go, sitting on the grass! Add more water, and wash the sheets and you're set to do it all again some other day for a different local school. How smart.

The young son of one of our hosts (Anna Lisa) is here and ready to join in. Till then, he's walking around, doing as he pleases, taking a wooden rolling pin from the kitchen, jiggling the mouse of the computer that holds the farm's business records.

Using the computer more appropriately, Anna Lisa figures out what we owe and we pay. Cindy gives her a little wooden Christmas ornament, hand painted and showing where our Austin city is located.

Driving off we wave to the sheep, who are oblivious, and cover the short distance to the little rental car lot at the nearby airport. For 90€ the LocAuto people are happy to add me as a driver. The nice lady there confirms that just as the French use the word Location for 'rental' (as in rental car), the Italians use locatione (low-ca-see-own-nay), with the appropriate hand gestures.

Our drive to Palau is intentionally along the coast, for the beautiful views, and we go out of our way, slightly for some notable sights, such as a ???? (Ancient burial mound structure) and Elephant Rock.

We also reroute when we get to a “go no further, danger ahead sign”. Actually it was the second or third such sign we’d seen. We didn’t bother to consult Google Translate on the complete text of the warning sign but assumed the words “washed out” or “landslide” were in there somewhere. To us the danger was neither clear nor present and Tom, the current driver, suggested we’d probably be OK to continue. It is just a rental car, after all. In unison Karen and I shout “No!”

Tom and Cindy laugh and he turns the car around. Later they’d confide to Karen that had we not been there they’d have continued on. (This from the couple that told their teenage kids “Make good choices!” as they headed out on a Friday night date.)

In Castelsardo we stop to see the castle and to have lunch. Our first parking spot lets us view the hillside town from a massive seawall that buffers to city coast from Mediterranean storms. Our second parking spot is at the foot of the town/castle and is reached through a zig zag tour through the town, around double-parked delivery trucks and down very narrow one way streets (at least we hope they one way).

It's a zillion stairs back up into town, to our restaurant for lunch, where we eat on a rooftop patio in the shade. The breeze feels lovely. Our bald, jovial waiter looks a bit like Stanley Tucci. He speaks Italian and some English. He's more comfortable in his native tongue or French, so we go with that. Good shared pasta lunch and no beer or wine.

Before we leave the restaurant Cindy takes advantage of the restroom. The uncensored review includes details of a bum gun (a 1960 kitchen sink dish sprayer) there to augment, or more likely replace, the toilet paper. We're told the water pressure is more forceful than is either advisable or comfortable.

Paid up we continue on to the castle where 5€ each gets us in. We weren't overly in love with either the modern art exhibit (based on ancient statues) or the history of fishing (and other) baskets). What we did love were the views from the ramparts, of both the city and the Mediterranean. Atop were cell phone towers and a seagull's nest.

Back out of the castle we see what the locals are selling. Baskets, not surprisingly, pasta, seafood and gelato. The latter we don't see actually for sale, thankfully, but do see other touristas enjoying it.

We drive on as we still have over an hour to our destination. Where possible we hug the coast for the views. There are more roundabout interruptions but less traffic. Closer to Palau we go up and over some dramatic hills(mountains?) and see lots of trees sadly ravaged by drought and/or pests.

At the B&B we encounter a gate about which we'd been warned. There's a keypad, which looks comforting, but the real trick is the small remote, stuffed into the rocks, in a location Cindy's been told. The remote, as a security feature perhaps, has four buttons. Cindy tries to use it to open the gate but with no luck. One of us Y-chromosome types tries it and the gate slides aside, of course.

Our accommodations are new, clean and perfectly adequate. We are occupying two of the five units and drying clothes suggest the other unit are full as well. We chill for a while (five minutes) before hauling our wine and other beverages down to the breakfast hut for happy hour. As we sip, without ice, we use the local WiFi to pick a place for dinner. Perhaps... Italian?

Before we head out the young German couple in the apartment next to ours shows up. They're returning from a day of "wing sailing". Wind sailing, we ask? No, WING sailing. This is where there's a vertical bar extending down from the main platform with an aerodynamic horizontal wing down below. After you get going you're gliding above the water with just that small wing offering any drag. The reduced drag means you can have fun with less wind and/or go faster. My questions about this suggests I also partake, a notion of which I quickly disabuse them. I'm American and old. Ah yes.

We park in town for dinner and hike in what we hope is the right direction. We walk under a rail line under rehabilitation. We see the rails and the ties and the soil below, way overhead. Soon the soil is done and it's just rails and ties, floating in the air. Interesting concept.

As we sit for dinner there's lots of talk reservations, which is strange as we don't have one. We eventually figure out they're saying that we can have the table for only two hours, as this table is reserved for a party of six later in the evening. Dinner of caprese salad, pizza, and grilled seafood is good. Beverage is two half-liter carafes of wine (one each of red and white).

At one point during the meal a young blonde lady sitting nearby smiles and waves at me. I'm not from this city (or island, country, or continent) and thus am incredulous that she's smiling/waving at me. Surely there's someone behind me. Nope, my back's to a wall. AH, it's our wing-surfing next-door neighbors. We apparently picked the same place for dinner.

Back home it's dark and quiet and slipping into sleep is easy.

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## Photos



After another farm breakfast we leave the dining room to find we've been attached by aliens, or at least farmers in beekeeper suits.



The farm, among other things, does school circulums. Here's their kit for letting the kids color, on the washable sheets with water colors. The bees maybe are their inspiration?



Anna Lisa and her cute son.



The beekeepers moved half of the hive into sealed hives with plexiglass windows. Pretty cool. Here one of the beekeepers (Anna Lisa's sister) is greeting the school children.



Half way to Palau we stop in Castelsardo. We walked out onto a jettie to take a picture of the castle atop the city.



Atop a building is the restaurant where we ate. Good food, but all pasta. Maybe we didn't choose so well. Our waiter, an older local gentleman, was good at Italian and French. He preferred that over English.



The castle has a pretty impressive exhibit of baskets over the ages.



The view from the top of the castle, the ramparts, was impressive.



The church, the other big draw of the city.



Elephant rock, near by. Looks a lot like one of those. Apparently all the rest of the rock fell away and this is what was left. From the other side it looks less like an elephant.



This is our second "do not drive here, unsafe!!" set of signs. Maybe a rock slide? Anyway Tom finally agreed not to continue. He and Cindy confided later that they would have risked it, had Karen and I not been such wusses.



Our room in Palau. New and solid. Comfortable. In the country.



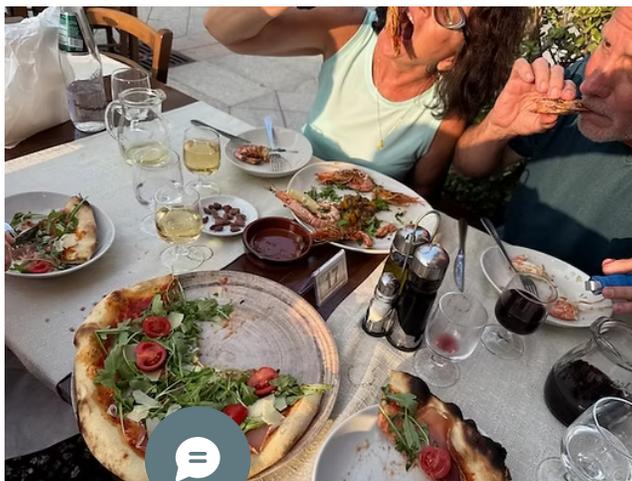
In our view from our room we see dramatic mountains and where we'll have breakfast tomorrow.



FARNSNIENTE



being redone. The way the tracks just end gives us pause.



Good pizza and seafood for dinner. Tom and Cindy, shown here eating prawns.



At the end of the meal they bring us a complementary four mugs (OK, small mugs) of very frozen, myrtle dessert liquor. Yum!

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