

Post



Scott Farnsworth

Jun 9, 2025 · 7 min read

Drive to next stop with (almost) everything - June 10, 2025

Updated: Jun 16, 2025

SUMMARY

In Palau we explored the outside of the Fortezza di Monte Altura where the rock formations are mind boggling, very other-worldly. Drove out to Capo Testa, the northernmost point in Sardinia for lunch with an amazing view. Back to Palau for a 4-hour boat ride through La Maddalena National Park and the island of Spargi, Budelli, Razzoli and Santa Maria. The water was gorgeous, the most amazing shades of blue and turquoise and crystal clear. Then a two hour drive to Cala Gonone via a wild mountain road with many hairpin turns and steep drop offs. -

Karen

[Photos](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

DETAIL

It's a quiet, restful night out in the country. We have breakfast in the open out building, down the hill from where we're staying. It's a tasty breakfast with lots of perfectly ripe fruit. There are two young ladies attending all of us out here. All of us is us four plus one older couple. The girls gossip and press the button on the Nespresso machine when we say we need another coffee. Cushy job. There's a cat sleeping near by, keeping an eye on us.

Per our plan we check out and leave our luggage. Both of our rooms will be used but we can leave our luggage in another room and have a key to that room. We don't have a fob for the front gate but there's a key inside to let us out and a hidden fob outside.

We drive off, unencumbered by our luggage, and drive up to the Fortezza. The fort is fine (we don't go in, we're cheap and boring) but the rocks around it are amazing, as is the view of the bay. The rocks are like teeth, they rot out from the underside. They're complete on the top but hallowed out underneath. The shape looks perfect for halloween. The bay is huge and we can see forever. We see the wing-sailers zooming across the water.

We drive on to the north-west corner of the northern-most part of Sardinia. We are Capo Testa. A medical person might say this peninsula looks like a polyp, but I wouldn't be crude. We pass by the oh-so-posh Sea Lounge Club Cala Spinosa in favor of the "more casual" Groove on the Rocks. They have hamburgers, breaded chicken cutlets, and component thereof. Karen and I get the "two cutlets" and Tom and Cindy get the "two hamburger patties", both with fries. You can envision what our plates look like, but they taste good. And cold beer.

After lunch we walk on and check out the crazy rocks beyond. There's an old, decrepit lighthouse, protected by a big fence, most of which has rusted away. There's walkways made of hollow bricks, much of which has been worn away, showing the inside of hollow bricks. Quite a sight.

We buried the lede today. Our big activity, which required us to not have our luggage, is a boat ride. A private three hour boat ride, with Captain Kevin. We look at our watches and swear and head back to the car for the long drive back to Palau. We get there in plenty of time, meet Captain Kevin and change in to our swim wear.

As we're leaving the harbor there's a big sailboat nearby, motoring backwards. They're not making good progress, backwards. There's a guy on the front of the boat trying to communicate that the motor needs to be pulsed into and out of the water to gain purchase. The guy controlling the whirring boat motor can't hear him and continues his pointless whirring of the motor. Shortly thereafter the motor is on the bottom of the marina and the boat is floating, out of control. This can't be good. Not our monkey, not our problem. On our way out of the marina Kevin tells someone about the debacle.

Our ride is planned for three hours and Kevin is generous and gives us four. Our first stop is for swimming and we're happy to get out of the water. It feels divine. The water is crystal clear though there's not much to see. We see a few fish and way down we see spiny urchins. I'm careful not to step on any of the urchins. Later Kevin pops up, holding one in his hand. He explains that these urchins aren't the painful type. Really, I ask, as I pluck the urchin out of his hand. I plop it into my hand and it's fine. How cool is that.

We go ashore and later back to the boat. We're quite a ways from the beach but Captain Kevin swims the entire distance under water. Ah, young people. We motor to different parts of this archipelago and hear how in July and August this area is boat to boat. We're lucky, it's fairly empty here. There are two pelicans, floating in the water next to our boat, hoping for scraps that are never coming. What does come is a bottle of local white wine. It's probably 6 euros a bottle, but we each take our portion.

For the ride back we necessarily traverse a big stretch of open water. This means vigorous slap, slap, slapping against the hard water. I'm tucked into the bow of the boat, out of the spray. Tom and Cindy are sitting on the bench right in front of the ? wheelhouse (where Kevin's steering wheel/throttle and information panels are located). As such they periodically get slapped with a harsh spray of seawater. They laugh and pull their windbreakers tighter, but that's about all they can do. Karen's between us and realizes she's exposed. She needs to wriggle her way up to me, to hang on for dear life. With the slap, slap, slap against the water she needs to time her wriggles carefully. Eventually she makes her way up to where I'm in my protected hallow of the boat. She clings to me and to the sun block Cindy gave her. As such she doesn't know where here hand ends up (wink, wink, nudge, nudge). I certainly do.

Back at Kevin's office we pay and collect our belongings and change into dry clothes. We mention to Kevin that we're driving to Cala Ganone and his eye's get really big, as in "Are you nuts? Now?" It's be well over two hours and it's a twisty, turny, windy drive down there. Not easy and sunset's in an hour.

We say goodbye, pee, and look around one last time for stuff and skedaddle out of there, as quickly as we can. We got to get our luggage. There's a gate key fob hidden here, just as there was before, right? (right!?) No, we can't find it. "Tom, why don't you hop over this tall stone fence and go turn that key, on that box over there?"

Luggage back in the car we head towards Cala Ganone. The road is, indeed, turny and twisty. The speed limit is 90 KPH, except when it isn't, which is most of the time. If there's a turn, or a bridge, or an exit, it drops to 50 and then back to 90. Every time we go over the speed limit the car beeps at us, as if to say "BAD DRIVER!".

We do get a fairly long, fast super highway part. It's 110 miles per hour. We see signs saying "Beware of cows!" We're alarmed. Here? On the freeway? Cows?

There are lots of tunnels and construction and then that happens, you guessed it, speed goes down and the car yells at us.

Cindy spends the ride telling our host (via WhatsApp) exactly when we're arriving. When we get there she (and one of her cats) are there to greet us. It's well past 10 pm and we haven't eaten. Our hostess has cookies, cakes, wine, champagne, fruit and more for us. We're starved and appreciative. We unpack and eat. As I unpack I look for my main cell phone. It's not found. I check the Apple 'FindMy' app which says my cell phone is still back in Palau! It was last seen 23 minutes ago. Argh! That's a two (plus) miserable hour drive away (and another two+ back). Argh what to do. Worry about that tomorrow. Sigh. Snore.

Photos



Up early and headed down towards breakfast. Looking back at the little duplex in which Karen and I spent the night. Tom and Cindy's place is off camera to the right.



Good breakfast. Lots of fruit. Lots of coffee. Cute cat.



Drive on to a fort that we don't go in (top). The rocks, which seemingly melt from the underside are very numerous and very weird.



A look out to the water. This is why many (including our young German neighbors where we're staying) are here. Good wing sailing location.



Karen feeling on top of the world (or at least on top of this rock)



Where we thought about having lunch
(see umbrellas in the right, almost top)



Where we did have lunch. Easier, faster. In
10 minutes this place will be packed.



Chicken, fries, and typical local salad:
tomatoes, mozzarella, tuna, lettuce,
olives.



Old, dangerous, unused lighthouse,
protected by old, rusting, dangerous
metal fence.



Wall where the plaster has come off and
the hollow bricks have started to melt. So
much for "lowest bidder" workmanship.



So much water and so many rocks.



Sometimes the rocks melt in strange ways. We're aliens involved in the shaping of this rock? We will never tell.



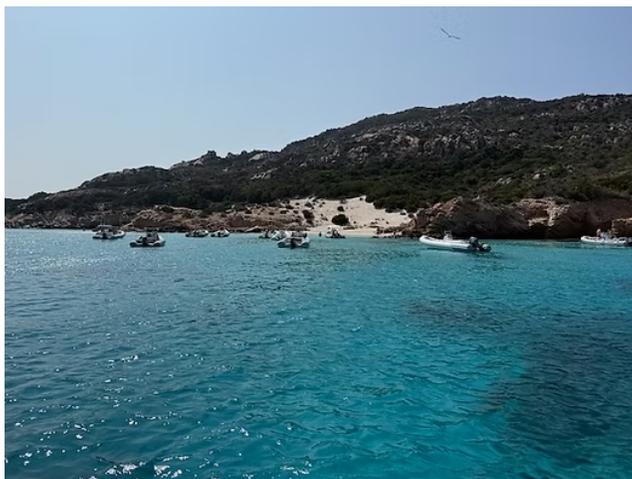
Another archipeligo. We're finding we're big fans of these. We pretty much just visited the four islands from the center up.



Captain Kevin answering a question of Karen's.



We heard about how this area, wild until the 1940s?, was developed. At first only Hollywood's beautiful people of the day (Grace Kelley, Leslie Caron) were invited. Now we're here.



Where we swam. Apparently not a very well kept secret. Our boat looks very similar to many of these.

FARNSNIENTE



Tom explaining to Kevin how he broke his finger and how he's not normally accident prone. We're too far away to contradict him.





Did somebody say wine? I didn't even have to say "Say Cheese!".



A wing sail-er. Up, off the water and going very fast.



It wasn't fast going for us to get down to our next stop, Cala ('beach') Ganone, but we were very happy that our hostess, Francesca, had so many edible welcome gifts for us.

[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

Subscribe Form

Email Address

Submit



©2023 by FarnsNiente. Proudly created with Wix.com