

August 2013

SATURDAY, 17 AUGUST 2013 15:19



Day 7. Today was our first relaxed day. After a late breakfast we walked into the centrum (centre) of Salzburg where the alstadt (old town) is located. Here we visited Mozart's house and museum, as well as his statue in Mozartplatz. We then visited St. Peter's church catacombs where it is tradition generally for every families' grandmother to look after the graves of their loved ones. We then took the funicular railway to visit the Archbishop's fortress, Hohensalzburg. This has spectacular 360 degree views of Salzburg and a good history of the place with incredible interiors. After the visits, we did the classic tourist thing and went souvenir shop browsing, eventually taking the trolley bus back to our B&B. In the evening we took a drive into the mountains in the direction of Hintersee where there was an incredible lake and many Pensions (B&Bs) made in the style of log cabins. We then dined at a nice hotel restaurant where I had ragout of venison with a huge dumpling and red cabbage. Delicious!

SALZBURG, SALZBURG, AUSTRIA • 29° MOSTLY SUNNY

SUNDAY, 18 AUGUST 2013 19:41



Day 8. Today we drove to the other side of Austria to Wien (Vienna). We stayed in a nice hotel on the top floor in the centre called Hotel Ekazent. After lunch we drove around some of the sites we wanted to see such as the cemetery in the zentrum (centre) where famous musicians have a memorial site (Beethoven, Mozart and Strauss for example). We then went over to the WestLicht Photography Centre where I indulged my passion of cameras and photography, a nice gallery with a massive range of old cameras from spy cams to cams used in space. After that we drove to the Big Wheel (Riesenrad) which is an old wheel dating back to 1897. It provided a good view of Vienna.

VIENNA, VIENNA, AUSTRIA • 27° CLEAR

MONDAY, 19 AUGUST 2013 13:47



Day 9. Today was another relaxed and hot day. We went to see the Schloss (castle) Schonbrunn. We looked around the palace interiors as well as the grounds. Some very impressive architecture was seen as well as intricate decoration and design on the inside. We ended the day with a spectacular concert by the Schonbrunn Palace orchestra, playing music by Mozart and Strauss. It was an electrifying experience in an amazing surrounding. I don't like this type of music, but a live performance, like many, are totally inspiring. A recommended thing to do! Our VIP seats were also not a let down, they were on the top balcony, bang in the middle of the auditorium and the orchestra for a great acoustic experience.

VIENNA, VIENNA, AUSTRIA • 29° MOSTLY CLOUDY

TUESDAY, 20 AUGUST 2013 14:54



Day 10. Today we left Austria and drove to Budapest, Hungary for our next stop. We checked into Villa Hotel Krystal in Buda and went for a walk through the local park and onto Erzsebet bridge to Pest where we walked along the Danube river and ate a local dish called Langos, deep fried bread with garlic paste, sour cream and grated cheese. Delicious, filling and rich. As we were walking I was shocked at what I saw, suddenly the quality of most buildings and even open spaces felt very third world compared to the other places in Europe. Buildings which were not maintained and general lack of any elegance to the old architecture was what I had not expected. This will be something to research at a later date. Even though it is warm, we are currently bathed in a nice cool

breeze in the hotel with views of the Buda side of Budapest. Come the evening we decided to eat out and went to a recommended restaurant at nearby Hotel Charles who had local Hungarian food as well as other choices. We then caught the fireworks following the national holiday for St. Stephen near the Danube.

BUDAPEST XI. KERÜLET, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY • 27° SUNNY

WEDNESDAY, 21 AUGUST 2013 19:43



Day 11. Today we did a city tour of Budapest on a hop on hop off bus. It was really worth it as we were shown all the main sites on both sides of the Danube with good audio commentary. This took a couple of hours to do the circuit but we were given opportunities to get down. Eventually we completed the circuit and got off at the end to visit the Hungarian House of Photography (located in Mai Mano House) which was well worth a visit. The entry ticket came to about 75p equivalent and the exhibitors were all Hungarian photography students part of the 'Present Continuous' project which aims to get Hungarian artists noticed around the world. The quality of the work exhibited was excellent, reminds me of the work I see at uni in England. The building itself dated back to the late 19th century and is very grand both inside and out. The Parisian detailing of the architecture makes it an ideal place to hold art exhibitions.

After the gallery, we walked to one of the piers to catch our boat

ride along the Danube to see the buildings from a different view via Margaret Island, a 2.5km island in the middle of the river. The boat ride was pretty good, to me it felt very cramped and I think the tiredness is catching up with me!

In the evening we went to the oldest Hungarian restaurant in Pest called Százéves Étterem. It had very tasty local food, I had veal cooked in sour cream with cheese in a thick pancake. It was tender, and really delicious (they seem to love their cheese and sour cream here!)

BUDAPEST XI. KERÜLET, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY • 21° CLEAR

THURSDAY, 22 AUGUST 2013 17:11



Day 12. Today we drove to the southern part of Hungary to a city called Pecs (pronounced Page). We drove via Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Central Europe. It was a really lovely area, we visited the centre of a small town called Siofok which had a really great vibe around it with a great selection of little stalls, shops and restaurants. And of course a great view of the lake.

We then continued our journey to Pecs via a small road which was great fun, surrounded by very dry land but a great driving road. We are now staying in an apartment of my mother's friend from work.

PÉCS, BARANYA, HUNGARY • 26° SUNNY

FRIDAY, 23 AUGUST 2013 14:54



Day 13. After a relaxed start, my mother's friend drove us around the small rural villages in the mountains around Pecs. It made a nice change to exploring big and bustling cities. We went to see the ruin of the archbishops castle which was previously where dervishes lived. We also visited the Pecs TV Tower where we took a vertical lift 75 meters up to enjoy the views of the surrounding woods and centre of the city. We then drove to Orfu lake which was beautiful, perfect for summer swimming. After that we went to a cave in the hills of the countryside where we took a short guided walk through the space, it was nice and cool. Also known as a medical marvel for people with chest infections and asthma to clear out and rejuvenate the lungs.

PÉCS, BARANYA, HUNGARY • 27° SUNNY

SATURDAY, 24 AUGUST 2013 20:20



Day 14. Today was a really nice day and a great end to our visit in Hungary. We were taken by Magdi and her daughter Dora to the city centre of Pecs where we were taken around to the local sites such as the cathedral and the Jakovali Hassan mosque. We then went to the main square (Szechenyi ter) where we were blown away by the detailing of the architecture both inside and out for all the buildings in Pecs. We then moved on to the Zsolnay museum and factory where they make beautiful ceramics, from grand vases to

necklaces. The attention to detail was really fabulous, a pleasure to visit.

In the evening we drove about 30km from Pecs to a little village called Villany where many vineyards are situated. We were shown the small cellar sheds and were kindly taken around two wine cellars, one of Magdi's son and the other of his friend. We tasted a range of local wines and were treated like royalty with a lovely dinner cooked by the family.

All in all we preferred Pecs to Budapest, mainly because of the lack of tourists in Pecs! We were shown points of interest which continually impressed us, without any feeling of tiredness or boredom and because we did things which tourists wouldn't normally see or do.

VILLÁNY, BARANYA, HUNGARY • 17° MOSTLY CLOUDY

Created in Day One