

Montenegro – June 2010

Julie and Douglas have asked us if we would like to go to Kamanari in Montenegro to furnish an apartment they have just bought. They only completed the sale in March after putting the deposit down in 2007. They have had so much hassle that they now just want to get rid of it asap. We got quite excited and thought if we borrowed their motorhome we could turn it into an exciting road trip. Rick spent hours on the internet working out the route and campsites, we favoured journeying through France, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hercegovina and finally into Montenegro. On the return journey we could take a ferry to Italy and work our way up the coast and back through Austria, Germany and France. Unfortunately, Douglas had problems getting insurance for the motorhome in Eastern Europe and we decided to fly instead taking Julie with us. Rick found a very reasonable flight with Wizz from Luton £255.94 for the three of us and 5 cases, Julie had filled a couple with bits for the apartment from Asda and we squeezed some pillows into ours. We were the first flight by Wizz to Dubrovnik.

Tuesday 22 June 2010 – cold about the same as home



At Dubrovnik Airport we picked up a rental car from Economy Car Rentals for £258. It was a straightforward drive along the coastal road to the apartment. On the way we passed through the Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina borders into Montenegro. There also seemed to be a bit of “no man's land”. It was all geared up with empty shops for future traffic.

Stopped at Supermarket on the way. Depressing furniture shops on route, everything was very old fashioned. We are staying in Sasha's apartment until we can furnish Julie's apartment which was currently empty and full of mould where there hadn't been enough fresh air circulating. After lunch we went into Tivit and had a coffee, the tourist information office told us about a department store called Kips where we may be able to buy some modern furniture. Went there. In the evening we went to restaurant down the hill towards the sea where we had a mixed grill, squid and a roll of meat with cheese. Scary night - lots of wind and creaking gates.

Wednesday 23 June showery, windy not hot



Tivot



Beni's house at bottom of very steep drive to Julie's apartment

Met Beni and his mother who cleaned the apartment. Managed to find almost everything we needed in Kips. However, there was a real saga with the lounge furniture as it came with a large chair that we thought was too big to fit in. We said that if we didn't need it the chap who was serving us could have it. Watched England v Slovenia in Kotor,

Thursday 24 June -

Headed towards Herceg Novi looking at furniture shops. Sat by the pool and Beni and his mother came over. Rick told them about his bad back. As we don't know any Serbian he had to explain bad back with lots of actions. This caused great hilarity as Rick was bent over and seemed to be blowing off. I think "na" means "no" and every time they said it they always said "na, na, na" which again sent us into fits of laughter and made us start singing. Saw Beni's two week old baby. Went across the water on ferry but there were no restaurants within walking distance. Went to supermarket and bought pork steaks.

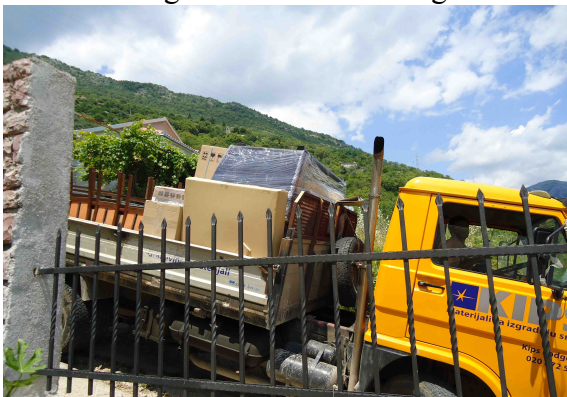
Friday 25 June

Rick and Julie went to get food for my birthday meal. Waited in for afternoon furniture delivery but the lorry broke down and they said they would be delivering first thing Saturday morning. Walked up the hill and had special meal.

Saturday 26 June



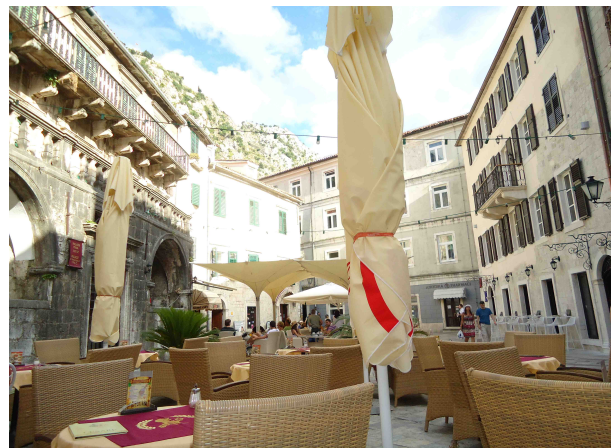
Beni organised the emptying of the septic tank 100 euros. His mother invited us over for drinks and we met the policeman's wife and saw the baby. Furniture eventually arrived about 1.30. The lorry driver would only go as far as mid way up the very, very, steep drive. I was terrified of that drive. Initially I would close my eyes as they attempted to drive up it but after a few attempts I couldn't stand the strain any more and got out of the car and walked up. We had arranged for Beni and his friend to unload the lorry and take furniture up to the apartment which is on the second floor. As I was carrying in a chair one of my straps from my dress slipped and exposed a breast. I indicated to Julie that I think I got away with it. However, every time the boys looked at me they pulled a pretend strap up. Then the heavens opened and we all got absolutely soaked. In-between the heavy showers it was baking hot so all our clothes were steaming. The boys actually rang their teeshirts out. Serbian girl in restaurant bought us a bottle of wine.



Sunday 27 June



It seems to start off nice and then cloud over. Cleaned out Sacha's apartment. Rick re-wired the water heater, and put up the orange lights. Went on the ferry and took the bus to Kotor to watch England get thrashed by 4 goals to one. Bus leaves about 10 past the hour, 1 euro 30 each way and it leaves Kotor on the hour. We were led to a dark, air conditioned Irish bar by an Australian supporting England and a dual nationality New Zealander/German. It was most disconcerting as there was an 8 minute time lapse between bars, We would hear all the shouting and have to wait 8 seconds to see if it was in our favour. Two lots of Macedonians arrived at apartment block. Slept in Julie's apartment for the first time.



Monday 28 June – Warmer day



Spent most of the day looking for a replacement front door lock. One eyed assistant from Kips was desperate for the chair but we had changed our mind as we managed to fit it in the lounge. \He said he was promised it and was quite persistent. Rick says he has a real attitude problem. Went into to Tivit to find shop and Town Hall. Had a lovely lunch. Spent ages looking for shop selling door locks then back to Kips for one last try. It seems they buy the door already with the locks, we got the name of the company and drove into Kotor to the internet cafe while Julie went into the bank to see about setting up standing orders for the utilities etc. Their system is not that advanced and it was suggested that she leave some money with a trustworthy neighbour. We all had a laugh about that as everyone is on the make! Had the best ice cream I have every had. Back at the apartment Rick and Julie did a bit of maintenance, sticking the door handle, oiling doors, windows and shutters.



I can't believe what we have achieved in a few days. The apartment has wonderful views and although it is early days Montenegro is all prepared to join the EU, they are using the euro already. I am sure we will see lots of changes if we come back in a few years time.

