

# MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | MONDAY, 6 MAY 2013

## Pergamon

Its not often that one gets woken by eight army tanks rumbling by your camp site. I wondered whether WWII had started and we were ignorant of it. Heather had been woken earlier by the chanting from the nearby mosque. This is Turkey.

After a discussion with Patricia and Jan, our fellow Dutch campers, we decided to join forces and tackle the Bergama bus system and view the attractions on offer. We had an interesting ride in the mini bus with the locals through the centre of town and then on through the alley ways to our stop at "the basilica". The old basilica ruins were nowhere as interesting as the market we came across on the way to the ruins. For sale were an array of vegetable seedlings and all manner of fowl/chickens/ducks/quail. I definitely do not want to be reincarnated as a feathered friend in Turkey. That is for sure.

After a ride on a cable car, which swung wildly in the wind as we ascended (and later as we descended), we entered the world of Pergamon.

Building commenced here 500 years before Christ. During the period between Alexander the Great and the Roman conquests it was one of the world's richest and most powerful kingdoms.



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## Fellow Travelers

We have met numerous motorhomers on this trip but none like Jan and Patricia. They are seasoned motorhomers who have willingly offered us lots of advice. They even completed some research for us about areas we might be interested in going to, and listed lots of places for us where there is free camping.

They have been an inspiration for us and we have had a ball in their company.

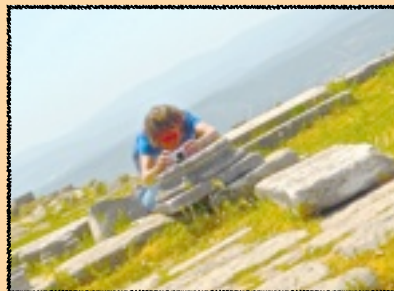
Today, for example, we would have tackled Pergamon differently - probably too quickly. Jan and Pat coaxed us to act like a local. Catching the bus was quite an experience - something that we would have been loath to do.

Visiting the local market was a real eye opener and Jan and Pat made us take our time and relax when we were out of our comfort zone.

Our day was certainly enhanced by having their company.



**FOWLS ANYONE ?** - Maybe Bergama is now famous for fowls. There were about 6 stalls like this one selling various varieties of birds. Filthy conditions - poor birds. Good business?



**CRACK SHOT ?** Caught Patricia lying down low and could not work out what she was doing - getting the best angle? No, she was simply propping the camera on a rock for a staged and delayed shot of her and Jan.



**PHARMACY !** Jan needed a pharmacy where he could buy band aids for his cut knee. In desperation we almost went in to this place. What do you think? Do animals wear band aids? Jan did not go in.

## SNAPS



# We cannot imagine it but 150,000 people lived in this place.

The area we visited at the top of the mountain is called the Acropolis. Apart from a number of huge columns from the temple that are still standing, Pergamon's main claim to fame is its amphitheater. It literally cascades down the side of the steep sided mountain. In its heyday this theatre could hold 10,000 spectators. I can attest to the fact that it is one of the steepest amphitheatres ever built because I walked all 147 steps down to the stage at the bottom and then back up again. I can also attest to its amazing acoustics. After my rendition of *Waltzing Matilda* from the stage at the bottom, Jan and Patricia sang the Dutch national anthem from the top. We could hear every word very clearly at either end. The Japanese visitors were very intrigued and amused.

### THE AMPITHEATRE SEATED 10,000 SPECTATORS AND IS THE STEEPEST OF ITS TYPE

The ruins of Pergamon, particularly the white marble columns, were certainly very impressive against the deep blue sky. Modern day Bergama town acts as an eerie modern day backdrop.

There were times today when we simply sat down on a block of history and took in the view and the tranquility. Sharing it with our fellow campers was a highlight of the day.

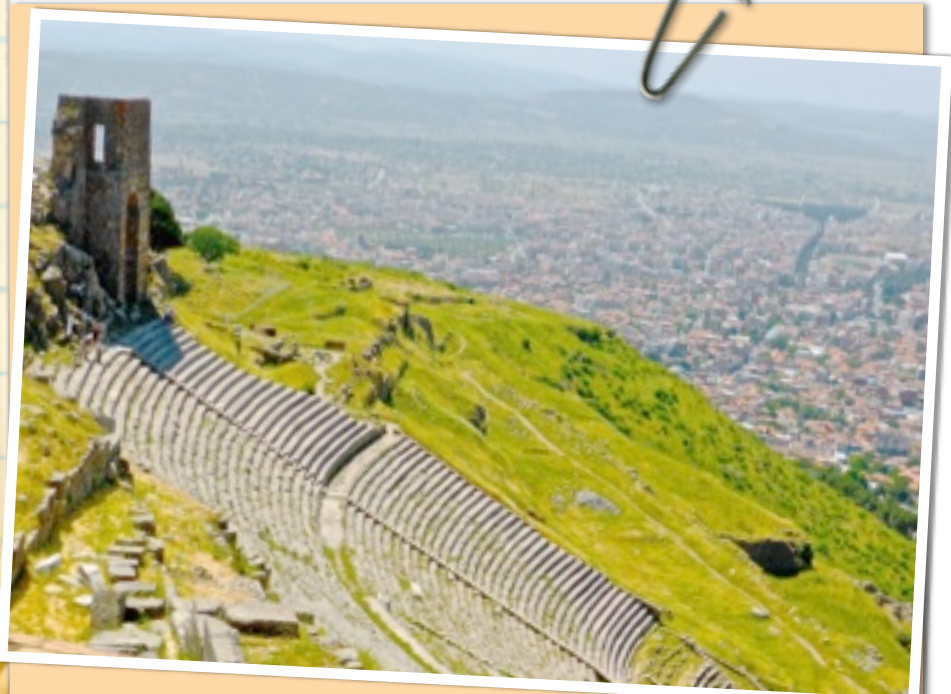
The photos do not do the place justice because it is hard to give perspective in a photograph.

What really impressed us was that, in its heyday, this place supported a 150,000 population. We could imagine this because, on the sides of the mountain, we could still see the remains of ruins where people resided.

After a quick shop for fresh vegetables for tea we hailed a taxi and got a ride home. It was not as hairy as we had expected but the cobbled streets did make a constant noise and vibrated the tiny taxi quite badly. It would have been difficult going by bike.

Once home we spent some time investigating where to next, and more importantly, continued our investigation into whether it is possible to take a ferry from Turkey to Greece.

This whole issue is another protracted story that can wait till the next newsletter.





# PHOTOS





Siggy singing Walzing Matida

The angle of the walkers shows how steep the incline was.

