

# MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | TUESDAY, 7 MAY 2013

## Ephesus

Except for the parts that are standing (or have been resurrected) the ancient city of Ephesus now appears to be a jumbled mess of stone pieces. In some areas it looks like a spare parts yard for building rubble. You just have to use your imagination to visualize how this city would have looked in the past.

Despite that, Ephesus is regarded as one of the best preserved classical cities on the Eastern Mediterranean. In its heyday it rivaled Alexandria as a mighty commercial centre. But much as changed since then.



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## &#;\$!@\*% ..... Ferries .....

You would think it should be easy to get from Turkey to Greece by ferry. Ferry transport is a very common method of travel in this part of the world. But .....

It has taken us many hours to confirm that there is a ferry service, that it is running when we want it to, and that it is actually large enough to be able to carry our vehicle. Height, for some reason, remains an issue. Not sure why? Our motorhome is not any higher than a small truck or a mini bus.

The most disconcerting thing for us is discovering that there are no ferries that travel from Turkey to the Greek mainland direct. This is apparently so because of past hostilities (and maybe continuation of present animosity) between the two countries.

We found that the only solution available is to travel from Turkey to a Greek Island and then on to Athens. However, the Turks like to play hardball and charge us almost \$500 for a less than 30 minutes trip.

Our previous 50 kms ferry crossing from Istanbul was only \$35!

Sailing from the Greek islands on to Athens is relatively cheap. However we cannot book the ferry till we get to the island and even then we can't rely on it actually sailing on schedule.

So, the answer we have decided upon, is to stuff the ferry companies and simply drive back. It is not what we intended but we will just get to see a bit more of Greece and not give the ferry company our cash.



## SNAPS



# Reconstructions well done bring old buildings into perspective.

Ephesus's earliest history goes back to the Hittite period (1400 BC). In 334 BC it fell to Alexander The Great and later to his successors before eventually passing into Roman hands in 133 AD. During that time Ephesus became the capital of the province of Asia Minor and the population reached a quarter of a million people. In the 6th century, due to the persistent silting up of the harbour and repeated raids by Arabs, the city slowly declined.

The key sights of this ruined metropolis are a number of buildings that have been reconstructed from their original materials.

### WHY SO MANY PUBLIC TOILETS? TO CATER FOR 25,000 AMPHITHEATRE PATRONS, ALL IN A HURRY.

The site that we found the most fascinating was the terrace houses which are currently being excavated and reconstructed. It was fascinating to walk up and over them via a glass bottomed stair case. The area has been covered to protect it from the elements.

We saw the evidence of people at work sorting through the "rubble". One area of 67 square meters, for example, had 120,000 pieces which needed to fit together to make a whole - an archaeologist's nightmare. It would be seventh heaven for someone like Amanda who loves jigsaw puzzles.

The largest buildings in the ruins were the Celsus Library with its imposing two storey front and The Theatre with a capacity of 25,000 spectators. This amphitheatre is simply gigantic.

We saw evidence of a number of temples, a large two story brothel, the public latrines and many other buildings that were built along the central marble road.

We met up with Patricia and Jan again. What a great surprise. They are obviously following the same itinerary as ourselves.

We are camped together tonight beside some eucalyptus trees. The big mossies complete the picture.

Tomorrow we start the drive back to Greece. It will be a long long drive.





# PHOTOS

