

MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | TUESDAY, 9 APRIL 2013

The Tirol

After yesterday's realization of how difficult and cold the Swiss route could be, we decided to reconsider our direction of travel. We pondered over what maps we had and Heather, as always, was first to offer her opinion. She wanted to take the secondary roads that ran parallel (sort of), to the main road to Innsbruck - they passed through the valleys of the Tirol.

They were the mountains we had photographed this morning. The arrival of the sun revealed them to us. Weren't we glad we came back to the Bodensee? They towered over the landscape. We admired them from our camping site as we took an early morning walk. We were even able to walk around without our heavy coats. What a lovely "nature park". We walked right up to the lake and admired the waving reeds and beautiful subdued hues.

After starting on our next part of the journey Heather looked at the map more closely and noticed that, where we had planned to join the main road, we had to climb to almost 1800 METRES high ... Not a good move in this vehicle with summer tyres. We made a quick revamp and headed instead, with the masses, along the main transport route with lots of tunnels. It turned out to be the best decision.



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Australians?

On the whole we have found people in the countries we have driven through are very helpful and courteous, especially when we ask for directions or need to know how to follow instructions and can't understand the language. You should see the reaction when we tell them we are from Australia. Suddenly nothing is too much trouble. If we have come from so far away to visit their land and we need help then it is important to give us every assistance. This

friendliness has made our trip so much more pleasant.

Hopefully the notice on our windscreen the other day was not telling us that my parking was fine. I have never had a parking ticket with the words "mit freundlichen Grussen" at the end. I think it means with "all the best to you". We shall see.

(Postscript - the owner of the van later received a bill of 10 Euro. I guess my parking was not "FINE".)



CATERING FOR MOTORHOMES It amazes us how many times we come across "caravan parks" advertised in brochures and maps which have barely passable roads leading to them.

HOT WATER

Caravan parks have many different ways to stop people using hot water. Some simply charge you for the time, while others make the water only luke warm. But the silliest one we have come across is where you need to hold the button down in the shower to get water. All you have to do is keep leaning against the button - how does that stop you using hot water? It stops when you get tired fingers? Crazy logic.



CARAVAN PARK FEES Its amazing how the fees for staying at caravan parks vary so much. Those parks that charge the most, don't necessarily have the best facilities!

SNAPS



OUR VIEW FROM CAMP



NEXT TO OUR CAMP



TIROL MOUNTAINS



HAPPY SNAPPER



HIGH & DRY SUMMER HOUSE

It was a rare sunny day today - great day for driving in tunnels for hours.

I have always known about the tunnels in Switzerland. We even travelled through some very long tunnels 30 years ago. But no-one told us about the tunnels in Austria! Amazing. We passed through lots of them on our journey to Innsbruck, our intended destination.

Woosh - the landscape we passed was breathtaking. The Tirol Mountains are very impressive. The highway sloped imperceptibly up and up and as we rose the snow capped peaks became ever more pronounced. Overlooking many towns and little villages were richly coloured church spires. They looked fabulous against the mountainous backdrop. We decided to continue on and not check out any of the villages. They did look great though.

Our target for the night was Seefeld, near Innsbruck. We had found a caravan park on a map but there was a warning not to take a particular dangerously narrow route. We stopped at Ziri and Heather double checked at an information centre. Lucky she did because we would have taken the very road that we were warned about.

We backtracked and drove a winding, steep road up the mountain. Snow lined the side of the road, but the road itself was clear of snow and quiet good.

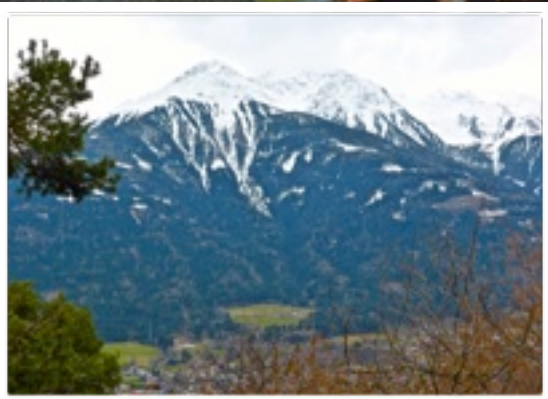
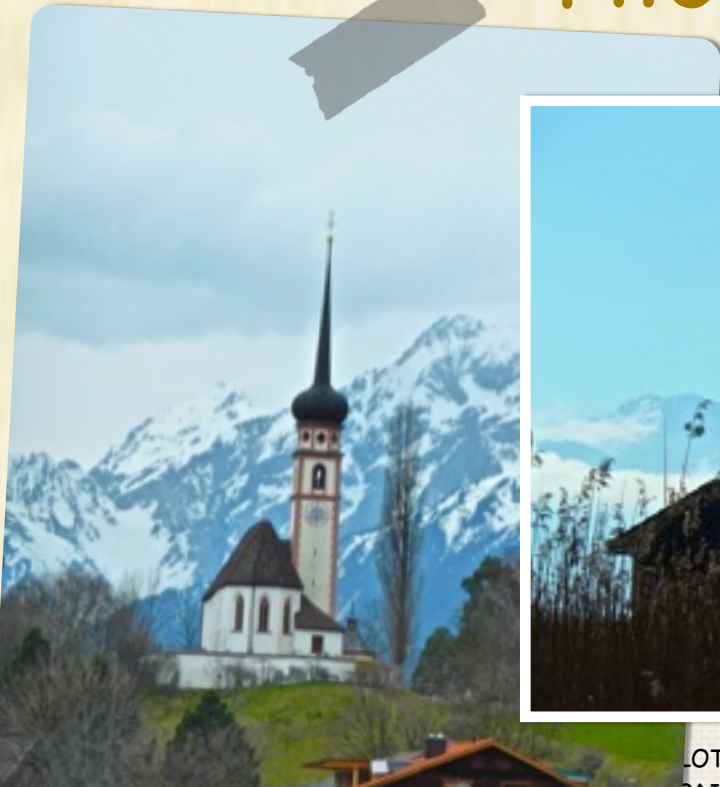
Wow. The view according to Heather was stupendous - I could not look as I was concentrating too much. Finally we got to the top and found a ski village with a very modern looking caravan park. The snow drifts were up to 2 metres thick in places. The view of the Tirol Mountains, our backdrop, was to die for. Here we were in the thick of it - the cold snap so late in the season meant that the snow was still skiable.

With the sun out Heather almost thought about building a snow man and throwing snow balls at her husband. We went for a walk and tested the snow like kids. A hot shower soon beckoned. We are not sure what the price will be tomorrow but whatever it is, it will be worth it. This park would rate as the best we have been in to date. If only because we could use as much hot water as we wanted.

Yippeee.



PHOTOS



LOTS OF DREARY DAYS IN A ROW CAN BE A REAL PAIN. IT MAKES US HESITATE TO GO FOR A BIKE RIDE OR A LONG WALK. WHEN THE SUN FINALLY CAME OUT TODAY IT MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE TO OUR SPIRITS. ALTHOUGH IT RAINED LAST NIGHT AND THERE WAS A CHILL IN THE AIR THIS MORNING, THE BRIGHT SUNSHINE CONTRASTING WITH THE SNOW COVERED MOUNTAINS REALLY MADE OUR DAY. MORE PLEASE.

