

MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | MONDAY, 15 APRIL 2013

Underground

We had just driven out of the driveway of the caravan park and were turning on to the main road when our GPS suddenly stopped working AGAIN No matter what Heather tried to do the screen just continued to be blank. Just like last time!

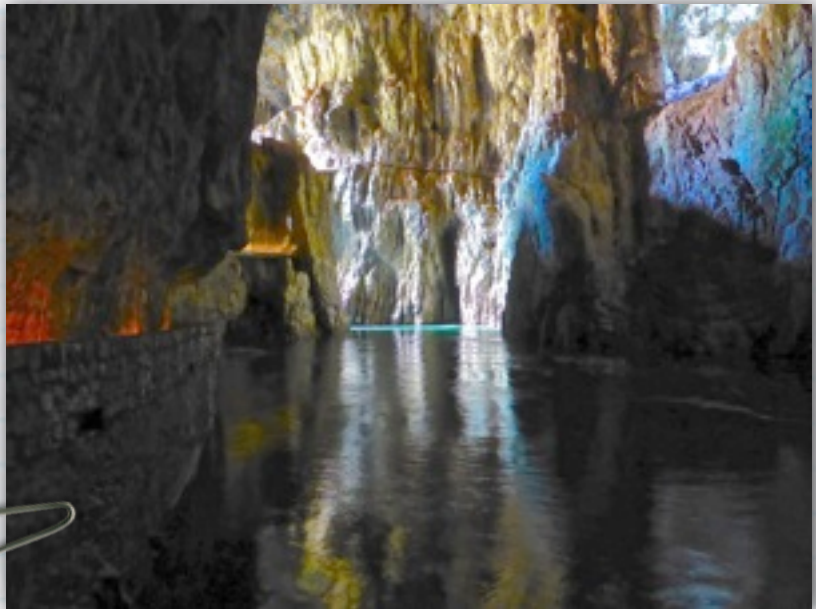
I started to sweat and Heather started to swear but our analytical minds quickly dropped down a gear and simultaneously we both worked out what had caused the problem. We had exactly the same issue with our first GPS when I upgraded the GPS maps the night before. We turned around and drove the 100m back to the caravan park office and turned on our computer. Luckily we still had a couple of hours of our internet access available.

I used Skype to rang Garmin UK. The technical person we spoke to suggested we reset our GPS with some fancy finger moves. Wallaa, like magic, it powered up again. Evidently there are software upgrade issues (we will not touch our GPS again until we get home.) So now we have a spare GPS just in case we lose one!! Grrrrrr.....

Next it was time to solve our one remaining issue - to pick up a replacement DROAM internet modem. It should have been waiting for us at the FEDEX office



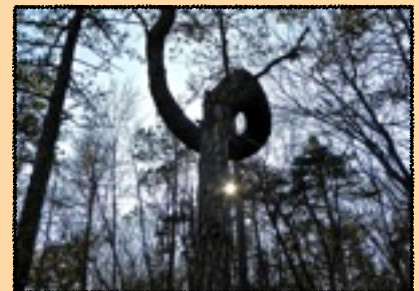
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JUMPING PLATFORM The river must be very deep beneath this bridge because there is a diving platform erected for all the macho young Skofje men to show off their bravado.



FARM STAY This is the first farm stay we have stayed in on this trip. Its a real treat to be greeted by the farmer's wife and then stroll around this little village and farm and enjoy the activities going on around us.



TWISTED TRUNK It is not often you see a pine tree with such a pronounced twist in its trunk. I did a double take when I saw it. Not sure why it grew this way?

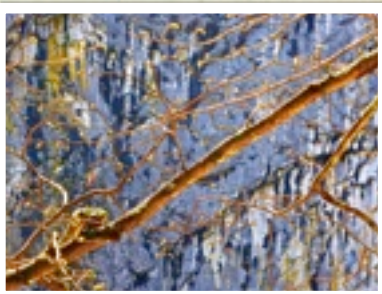
SNAPS



UNDERGROUND RIVER



ALPINE FLOWER



SPRING BLOSSOMS



SCARY PATHS



SCARY BRIDGES

We would rather be doing something active than sitting around and waiting.

but as is our luck, it wasn't. We pondered what to do next?

We didn't want to spoil the day sitting around waiting so we decided to come back for it tomorrow afternoon and instead, go do some sightseeing. There are two cave complexes within a short distance of each other to the south of Ljubljana - one being very touristy (a bus takes you around the caves), the other being more natural, where you have to do some exercise - namely a lot of walking and climbing. Being gluttons for punishment we opted to do some exercise.

So while the sun was shining brightly and warming the ground above we spent the afternoon walking underground for 3.5 hours in the cold.

THIS AREA IS CALLED THE KARST - MEANING POROUS LIMESTONE GROUND

Not surprisingly it turned out to be one remarkable experience.

The UNESCO Heritage listed caves at Skocjan are truly immense. The river enters porous limestone ground and

then runs under the earth for many kilometers.

We were guided through a maze of dimly lit underground paths with the river rushing far below us. At one point a little bridge crossed over the river at a height of 178m. Heather was not prepared to look down into this precipice. The guides we had on the two separate walks we took, were very knowledgeable and most importantly they spoke good English.

I marveled at, not just at the wonder of nature, but also at the man-made walkways and bridges that have been built, and imagined the effort undertaken to cart all that concrete such long distances underground. It must have taken many months of very laborious hard work to lay the paths and crossings in the cold and dark.

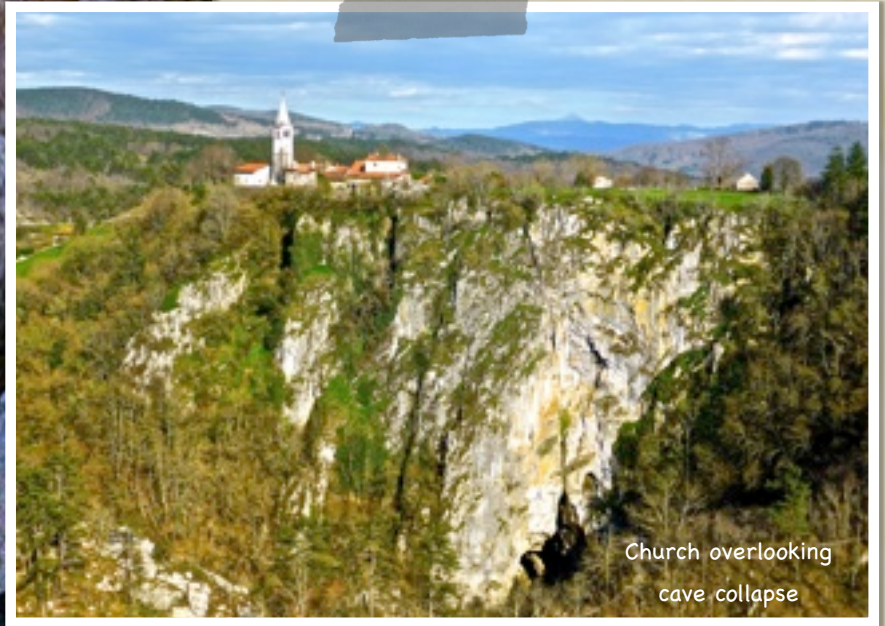
The guides were excellent. They had a real sympathy for the area with all its fragilities. We learned about the topography of this region, the many plants and huge variety of animals that exist in the caves and the history of its people and early cave explorers. A fascinating and educational day. Pretty tiring too.

Tomorrow the Lippizaner horses.





PHOTOS



Church overlooking
cave collapse

