

MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 2013

Lipica Stud

We are parked for the second night in a row beside an old house in the village of Skoje. It is a farm stay.

Typical of other villages we had passed through, this one appeared to be just as ramshackle - a "work in progress" so to speak. The late winter has meant that the owners are still into their preparations for "visitors" like us. They are building an extension to the farm house and their horses are still in the paddock that is supposed to be the "caravan park". We are parked up here next to the tractor.

The lady we have dealt with has been extremely friendly and can speak English well. She and her husband had to go out last night, just as we arrived, so they opened the house for us to use the shower and toilet. It's all fairly lay back. Nothing is put on.

This morning we dropped into the corner store only 20m away and purchased some lovely fresh bread. The shop sells everything you could want in a small village including hardware - even a box of matches.

We wasted the afternoon having to go back to Ljubljana for our replacement modem that was sent by Fedex, but the morning was a great thrill for Heather.



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TOO MUCH INFORMATION

For the first time on this trip we came across TWO toilet bowls in the bathroom. Realised what it was and even considered using it for just a moment before surmising that the water would have been too cold for my fragile little bottom. Heather's bottom was also far too fragile she told me. Obviously the farmer and his wife are used to cold "showers".

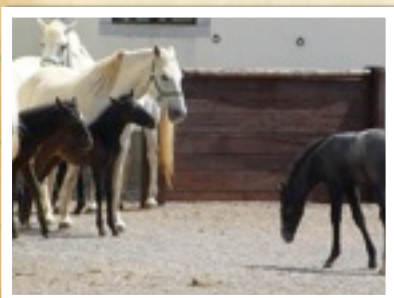


RIP CORD? We have just noticed a piece of string coming out of a hole just near where Heather's head is in our bunk bed over the cabin in the van. Not sure what the words mean but DON'T PULL IT HEATHER !!!!!!!

OPEN OR NOT?

The longer than normal winter has caught everyone by surprise. We knew many caravan parks don't normally open till the beginning of May down this way but it is really irksome when you drive a long way to one that is advertised to be open yet find it closed. Surely a sign at the beginning of the long narrow drive in is not that difficult. Such poor service drives visitors mad.

LIPPIZANERS



The Spanish Riding School in Vienna, The Irish National Stud Kildare and now Lipica.

We visited the home of the world famous Lippizaner horses. These are the ones that are used by the Spanish Riding School in Vienna.

The green paddocks and the white fences of the stud welcomed us as we drove up the impressive entrance road.

We arranged to see a practice session and then have a tour of the farm itself.

Because we were the only people who could only speak English, one guide took us to the practice session and the other guide took about 40 German speaking people on the general tour. Sometimes it pays to be "ignorant", because having the guide all to ourselves was fantastic.

The guide told us all about the stud (it started in 1580 and has survived innumerable wars), explained the breeding program and then answered all the questions we could think to ask.

I snapped away happily on my camera whilst Heather talked to the guide and watched the young stallions being trained. At one point I was asked not to video that part of the session because the trainer was protective of his training techniques. I wondered

what it was about my appearance that made me look like a foreign dressage spy.

On the general tour we saw the mares and foals, some of the current breeding stallions and the lovely grounds. Even the museum was interesting. I got so excited that I even mounted up and Heather eagerly snapped me confidently astride a plastic replica. It's a friggen long way up there I can tell you.

WE HAVE SEEN FAMOUS STUDS IN AUSTRIA, IRELAND AND NOW IN SLOVENIA. HEATHER IS IN SEVENTH HEAVEN

We viewed the carriages that these horses are also trained to pull. We then sat for a few minutes watching the newly born foals enjoying the day by prancing and running around with their mother's who were neighing gently to ensure that their babies were OK. It is interesting to note that the foals are born black but the majority end up white.

Tomorrow, Croatia.





PHOTOS

