

EUROPE 2023



4 months | 6 countries | 8 house swaps | 10 journey legs | 2 grand-boys + 1



“There is no botanical distinction that makes a pumpkin a pumpkin.”



“The best wine is the wine you drink with friends.”

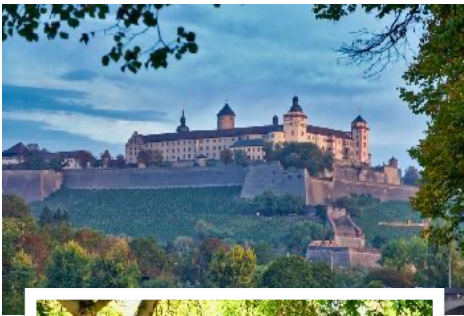


Villages on Main

We are getting great use of our bikes here. This morning we took the riverside route into Würzburg again. It was early - just past seven o'clock - but we were accompanied by lots of other cyclists. There were many kids on bikes and young adults with kids on the back. School must start fairly early here. A small amount of mist was lifting through the cool air. The river scene was certainly less crowded this morning but two different river boats replaced the huge specimens from yesterday. Masses of people must come off these. Passengers were obviously all still sleeping when we arrived at the bridge because its only occupants were more cyclists and people obviously on errands or commuting (probably to work or study). This is a university town. No other tourists (except us). After a few minutes browsing and snapping photos we headed back home for breakfast.

The plan today was just to head south down the Main River and experience what we came upon. It was a lovely early 20c temperature when we set off. Initially the valley of the Main was quite steep sided with grape lines extending high up to the ridges above us. We stopped at one point and had a ride for a few kilometres following the banks of the river. Its a great release to get on and pedal listening to the birds and admiring the calm water alongside newly sown crops and maturing sunflowers. Other cyclists seeking pleasure in their bikes were tootling along also. I believe the path we took is part of a very long bikeway along the Main. On our other stops we saw many riders coming in off the bikeway for a break before continuing their ride.

In each of the villages we wandered around, the old outer walls were still visible. These villages were peaceful and beautiful with hardly anyone around. Many of the buildings were pastel coloured and/or were half timbered. Timber framing is a traditional method of building in Germany



whereby heavy timbers are pegged together to create a frame, and the remaining gaps are filled with some kind of filling material. The frame is then often left exposed on the exterior, giving it the name “half-timbering”. This type of building with its distinctive “bones” creates really interesting shapes that stand out against their rendered cousins.

The original cobblestones laid down centuries ago continue to provide the footing for the many streets and lanes around the villages, especially on steep slopes. All the churches here are of a similar design with very tall spires, usually ending in a golden small orb. The area is known for grape growing with visible evidence of the industry in the form of the rows upon rows of grape vines, old tractors and other machinery going about their business. A little bit of useless information - this area is apparently “famous” for flat sided wine bottles.

Tomorrow we go to see the grand daddy of these villages - Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Its a village that enthralled us many many years ago. Let's see if it will do that again.

