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Our 3 Generation European Vacation - Budapest, Hungary - Country 4 of 6

Wednesday, July 22, 2015

DH & I have visited Budapest several times but always as part of a river cruise tour. We do not speak ANY Hungarian and the language is unlike any other in Europe.

The Danube divides the city into 2 parts: Buda (hilly side) and Pest (flat side). We had booked a hotel on the Buda side so we could walk to most of the main sites and enjoy the amazing panorama of the city.

However as we drove into the city, we realized that something was amiss. Roads and bridges were blocked and we were unable to reach our hotel. Police helicopters flew overhead and small planes buzzed loudly very close to the river. I feared some kind of emergency, but a call to the hotel revealed that we had arrived in the middle of the final training run of the "Red Bull International Air Race."

Even with all of our pre-trip research and planning, somehow we missed that fact. So we headed back over to the Pest side of the city.

This is Heroes Square with sculptures of Hungary's ancient history.



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Then a short walk to a park with structures built in the style of castles that exist throughout the country.



We even joined some happy people at the Hare Krishna festival.



Eventually the roads were reopened and we were able to get to our hotel.

The next morning we walked to Trinity Square, the site of St Mathias Cathedral where emperors were once crowned.



The Fishermen's Bastion was built on the site of ramparts from which fishermen once defended the city.



While each part of this site is remarkable, the view is also amazing. This building is the Parliament.



It was worth a return trip at night.



Of course we visit the main sites of any city we visit, but we also explore places not often on the list of tourists.

Like the military museum where DH shared his expertise with another generation.



Here the battles at the Komarno Fortress that we had visited on the Slovakia border were documented.



Then there were these half million year old caves that eventually were hollowed out and joined together. In the past they have served many purposes: a wine vault, a prison which once held Dracula himself, a torture chamber, a tourist attraction in the 1930s and a bomb shelter during WWII.

Today it is again open for tourists and called "The Labyrinth"



This seemingly endless array of dark tunnels is dotted with tableaux of history and legends.



Here our grandson participates in one scene.



Even familiar locations provide new and interesting experiences when traveling with family. This was one place DH & I were unlikely to ever visit on our own.



Next stop was the Buda Castle with different views of the city

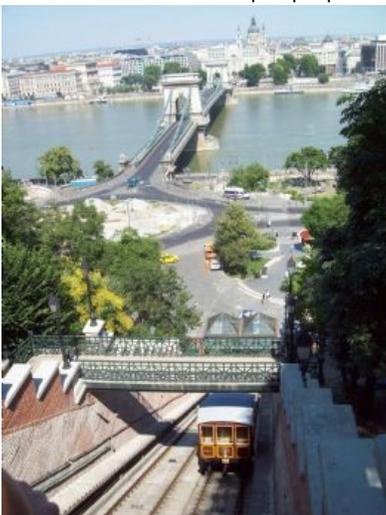


That's the famous Chain Bridge, our route to the Pest side of the city. Unfortunately it was still closed.

Remember that air race? Today was the finals. Look carefully to see a yellow plane which flew UNDER the bridge!



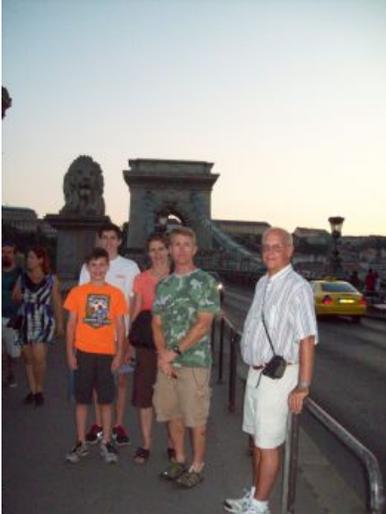
There is a funicular to transport people to the river level



But we preferred to walk down



Finally, the Chain Bridge was reopened to traffic



This unusual sculpture is the world's largest "Chia Pet." The head is being watered so eventually this guy will have "hair."



However, we had a more serious destination - the Jewish Synagogue, the largest in Europe and 2nd largest in the world.

Many victims of the holocaust are buried in a mass grave on the grounds. This sculpture is the "Tree of Life." The "leaves" are inscribed with the names of those who were killed.



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NUMD97

Thank you for sharing this blog. It has a personal interest for me, as my family is 100% Hungarian. One thing I'd like to share with you: Hungarian comes from the Finno Ugric language group, and has common roots, as I understand it, to Finnish and Estonian:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finno-Ugric_languages

My mother used to tell me that as well. I have no idea, historically, how that possibly evolved. It is unusual that those countries should share a common language thread.

Thanks again for the post.
2147 days ago



CD4114015

Another GREAT blog....thanks for sharing these...I fell like I was there with you! You are

AWESOME
at blogging!
2148 days ago



WILSONWR

I love the way you visit historical sites. To me, that is one of the best things about travelling in Europe. It doesn't hurt when the places are absolutely spectacular! I'm ready to go to Europe again, thanks to your great pictures.

2148 days ago



WUMPASTAR

WOW - that Parliament at night - AMAZING! And your last pictures gave me shivers. Awesome! Thanks again for sharing!





2149 days ago



MISCHAKEO

I have always wanted to go to Budapest. What a fascinating city filled with history. Great pictures.

2149 days ago



TERI-RIFIC



love the pics. Fantastic trip!!!

2150 days ago



DOVESEYES

Aweswome

2150 days ago



1STBUCKETITEM

What a stupendous trip! Beautiful sights, wonderful history, and such a fantastic opportunity to

spend it with your lovely family. Thank you so much for sharing your great pics!!



Enjoy!

2150 days ago



WALLAHALLA

I love museums of any kind. More great pics.

2150 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM

Yet another awesome collection of scenes from your trip. Love it! along as you reinforce the family memories!



again for taking us

2150 days ago



WATERMELLEN

What a wonderful travelogue -- that Tree of Life sculpture is so evocative.

2150 days ago



KRISZTA11

I'm glad you enjoyed your visit in our (mostly) fair city!

Nice pictures!



2150 days ago



PHEBESS

Beautiful city! And that memorial sculpture is gorgeous but so sad.

Enjoy the rest of your travels!

2150 days ago



PHOENIX1949



2150 days ago



PRNCSCUP1-2FULL

Thank you for sharing your amazing trip! I want to do a river cruise in that part of the world.

That is my dream. Hopefully it will one day come true! It is nice to go with others and try sites you may not have otherwise visited! Once again, thanks!

2150 days ago



ALIHIKES

Thank you for sharing! Beautiful photos, and so nice that you were sharing the trip with 3





generations. I have also had the experience of not knowing about a huge event that closes access to major roads, it makes the journey interesting to find alternatives!
2150 days ago



SWEETNEEY
This is so lovely.
2150 days ago



LIVEDAILY
Thank you for bringing Budapest to me! The photographs are wonderful, especially the night view of Parliament! Stunning!! The sculpture Tree of Life is an incredible tribute.
2150 days ago



GINIEMIE
The tree of life is a fantastic tribute. Love the bridge and the stairway going down to the river level. Not sure what to make of the Chia pet-looks curious. All in all I'd say that there was some added interest to the Buda Pest visit. Scary though the plane flying under the bridge. Some beautiful old buildings, gorgeous cathedral, and the night view of the Parliament is stunning. My dad and brother would have enjoyed the museum. The Labyrinth sounds interesting, but once



again-under ground-not so much for this lady.



2150 days ago



HOLLYM48
Oh my word. I felt like I was walking along with you. Thanks so much for sharing this spectacular beauty with all of us here. Wonderful pics and stories to go along with them. It looks like a trip of a lifetime with you and family. Great. I think I loved the Tree of Life the most. What a beautiful way to honor all of those who lost their lives so tragically. I can't wait to see more of your trip!
2150 days ago



JACKIEWALKS4FUN
Just loving all the beautiful pictures and your stories about your travels. The cathedral was just gorgeous. The tree of life was beautiful and was a wonderful tribute. I never knew about these things and happy to be learning about them from your travels.



Thank you very much for sharing.
2150 days ago



Comment edited on: 7/22/2015 11:05:01 AM



RATHPAT
Thanks for sharing. One of the cities on my list of places to visit. Your pictures are great!
2150 days ago



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