Palhanya -

Balatonfüred

2012.08.03~~0~~
2012.08.12.

Two options for lunch: fried sausages in lots of oil with bread and mustard - or gaulas soup.

The latter is served in the pub of Kishorsány; or, most precisely in the backyard, prepared by two local gentlemen. Cooked on open fire, it is a fairly traditional Hungarian lunch.

We ask for some bread - as a pretty nice gesture, it is free of charge. Nicoline puts a roll on a plastic plate.

- Is this the only roll you have? - asks Nicoline.

- Well, it is actually ours - says the gentleman - but since we are the two of us, ~~one~~ there is no real way for us to divide it. So please have it!

After some polite argument, the roll is Nicoline's. It is fresh with the strong taste of cumin. The goulash is hot as hell.

At the next table, a poet is composing on a four-liner about a giraffe.

Gas stations on the highways are like stations on the railway. They possess a very concentrated infrastructure: a lots of services are available in a very small ~~spot~~ space.

We usually stop ~~here~~ to have coffe: both Vivaldi and me are ~~very~~ very suspectible to naps in the car - so we prefer to entertain each other and usually none of us sleeps. Surprisingly ~~enough~~ enough, these place you can buy excellent coffe, in a fairly large available varieties - we prefer capuccino.

hidden in the carved end of my grandmother's garden. I had my small stash of gold coins hidden there (caps of mineral water bottles, pummelled flat by a huge hammer), which was even raided once by my ~~so-ca~~ local, so-called friends. In this hunter, friendship is taken much more seriously. They seem to find carving their names on objects - trees or a huge pumkin very important, ~~and~~ it clearly has some symbolic significance.

These children are our hosts this afternoon - they show us their village from their own point of view. (They are accompanied and ~~prepared~~ were prepared by two volunteers who arrived here a week ago.) They are warming up slowly, but they are always kind and try

I also love the atmosphere here. It is a streamlined feeling of modern travelling - but without the clammy, stressful flavor of airports. Here you can stretch your leg, or can eat your own food in ~~st~~ relative comfort - in the open air.

The secret ha bunker (hiding place) is actually a tiny glade of four of five acacia trees - hidden by bushes from the road. It is my eye that catches it first - it is also me who finds the ~~hidden~~ map hidden under a heap of straw.

My bunker was a small indentation in a very steep slope,

hidden in the unused end of my grandmother's garden. I had my small stash of gold coins hidden there (caps of mineral water bottles, pummelled flat by a huge hammer), which was even valued once by my ~~so-ca~~ local, so-called friends. In this hunter, friendship is taken much more seriously. They seem to find carving their names on objects - trees or a huge pumkin very important; ~~and~~ it clearly has some symbolic significance.

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to be easy-going and haunt with us. The two volunteers make us play games at every stop which encourage us to approach them actively.

Marci wants to be a coach - he is eleven and tries to make himself useful in the kitchen whenever possible. We exchange pancake-filling recipes.

This festival was really special to me - a mainly because of it's symbolic significance. When we got known to each other, roughly two years ago, she attended the very same festival with her girlfriends. From her short messages, I guessed that it must

be something entirely different that I experienced before. The photos she shared with me - or so I imagined - allowed me a small peek into our future.

Now that I was here myself I saw that it was really something very diffent.

It was different partly because it was not organized in Budapest or in any other major city. It was hosted by three small villages - which alone would have been enough to make it special for me. The venues

had to be accomodated to the local possibilities - old derelict houses, football fields and municipal buildings were all given a new purpose. This, of course, meant a very decentralized structure, too - again something that I am not really accustomed to.

This festival was definitely not about the mainstream. Tiny ex (photo and other) exhibitions, small folk bands, civil initiatives were all present. One could listen to the live performance of slam poets; you one could watch classic cartoons in an unused car-pen.

What I definitely could do without were the amateurish gestures of the organisers. They obviously ~~faible~~ failed to realise that this is not ~~a~~ the small event they started with. Something should be done to deal with the increased demand for theatrical performances, improving the infrastructure is also something that cannot be avoided for long in the years to come.

I will also come more prepared next time.

This beautiful temple was at Pallurja, at the village where we stayed

It is my first really successful
Leica photo of a cat as a
Lomographer. In the Diana book,
the photo of a cat was among
the most inspiring ones

The tower of
the temple at
Pullaya.

This is a very different face of the town.

I have been to Balatonfüred many times before; however, I always stuck to the old town, near to the port and to the famous ~~Tagore~~ Tagore boulevard. Now I felt myself compelled to do some more exploration, so I got up early, left the first asleep Nicoline in bed, and turned my bicycle ~~to~~

up to the hill. This is the part of the town where people locals actually live.

What's most astonishing is how very versatile is the texture of the ~~town~~ town. Very odd, beautiful (although sometimes not very well kept) villas stand next to large houses built from concrete blocks in the '70s. The whole town is littered with large, newly built buildings - some are more or less acceptably

looking apartment houses, some are shockingly ugly and very expensive ~~[illegible]~~ summer homes. They all seem very out of place here. The smaller, older and not so pretty houses (often with a vineyard or a cellar) at least seem to be

settled here. ~~However, it is would still~~

It is very hard to grasp the intention behind the new developments in the town - it fails to give a real impression. Most probably it still searches it's real identity.

It is a bit hard to find this the ruins of the Papsaka temple, especially if you use Google Maps. However, you just have to go a bit further, and it will be there, on the top of a small It was built on the foundations of a Roman villa; it was re-built and expanded several times when it was (most probably) burnt down during the Turkish invasion; the locals used up the remaining stones for their houses.

Suddenly I remembered how ~~good~~ ~~was it~~ much I liked to climb stone walls when I was a ~~little~~ child. I thought it was time to test the old reflexes again - and I was at the top in no time.

I had a beautiful view of the lake and of Balatonfüred - I almost afraid that I am afraid of heights.

Truth to be told, it was much harder to climb down.

I am really fond of railway stations. Perhaps it is because I spent my childhood next to one - perhaps because it reminds me of the short journeys to Strod, where my father worked, and where we ~~occas~~ occasionally accompanied him. ~~Whenever~~ Wherever I go, I try to observe the athmosphere of every station; each one is unique in ~~itself~~ itself.

The ~~bus~~ bus station is right next to the railway station - built in the same style and now in the same condition

The old clock of the station fascinated me the at the first glance

I was most probably thirteen when I was here first. We came to say goodbye to Karsi, a guy who helped to look after us in the sailing camp. He was quite a character, the favourite of everyone - we were really sorry to see him go.

As far as I remember, the station looked just the same - maybe it is a bit more shabby than it was nineteen years ago.

It is a typical example of the socialist architecture: Must have been intended to be extremely modern and glouriously ~~funcional~~ functional - and definitely not built to last.

Now it is in the distinct state of dissepair: the upper waiting room is not in use any more; everything is dirty, rusty or broken.

The trains can still stop here - that is obviously sufficient at this point.

~~When we left~~ We did not have a really good time & weather to spend a lot of time on the beach. ~~Best~~ If you visit Lake Balaton, it is more or less compulsory to ~~go~~ lie in the sun, eat junk food and play around in the water of at least one afternoon.

The beach at Balatonfüred is among the better ones; it is well-kept, the bottom of the lake is covered with

round instead of half-liquid stilt.

We did have a lot of fun - although we did not use the whole set of toys Nicoline packed the car with. It was refreshing to do nothing for a few hours - I had the opportunity to read my usual Cosmopolitan.

I eat fried fish. Curiously enough, codfish is the cheapest all around the Lake.

~~We make a photo shoot in the water.~~

We made a photo shoot in the water. I was always keen to explain the excellent reflective qualities of the water: it ~~was~~ can be used as an excellent fill light.

Of course, it was quite an experience wading in the water with an SLR camera on my neck, a light meter clenched in my hand. It took much longer to get back and forth to Nicoline, who really did her best.

Photographing in natural light is always a challenge: clouds pass by, light always changes and sunlight is extremely bright.

It was hard to decide what to believe: my own metering, or the internal meter of the camera.

The wine festival was our primary reason to go to Balatonfüred. Nicoline is really into wines - and the ~~wines~~ ones around the Balaton are among her favorites.

The avenue at the bank was dedicated to the festival - unfortunately it was not the most fortunate solution. It was very convenient, but only for the sale point of view of the festival - there was no space left for anything else.

A pity, since there was a huge park behind, ~~where~~ which could have been a much spacious venue.

I still enjoy the good wines (I keep end up with very light white wines), and the excuse to eat bread with lard.

I also ~~had~~ used the occasion to get a bit more familiar with my Ringflash. It also attracted pretty much attention. ~~[illegible]~~

It has been the most complex journey I have ever taken. From Budapest we went to Balkonya with our bikes and a grill set in the trunk. There, we after three days we had to pack up again, and went to Balatonfüred - a long and tiring journey, leading through many villages. To make sure we did not get lost we even acquired a paper map.

the batteries of our phones, which we used as a GPS kept running down.)

Getting home was the easiest part, since we could ~~used it~~ use the highway, which start only 30 kms of Balatonfüred. While there was a considerable traffic, we could still reach ~~Nicolin~~ the match Nicoline was really anxious to see. To make the homeward journey more interesting, I read an excellent essay on ancient Italian wines aloud. We are going to Tuscany during the fall, so it could also be considered as some preliminary studies.

What made me really proud was that I became a ~~real~~ real master of packing the trunk.

After some practice, with some planning, I could put away the two lists for travelling really efficiently, in very little time. Nicaline only had to ~~sit~~ sit in and drive.

I can see that she makes real good use of the practice she gets. She ~~has~~ is more and more confident and is better and better.

Although whenever I came to Balatonfüred, I spent most of my time in the old town, when Nicoline suggested to take ~~to~~ a guided tour, I came to realise I actually knew very little about it. This was an opportunity I am glad we didn't miss.

The town was organised by

the local museum. The young lady who accompanied us also lived here - so she could also share some personal pieces of experience with us. Of course, she mainly talked about the reform age, when this part of the town came to life.

The land was originally owned by the Pilany abbey - after the monastic orders were dishanded,

The ~~stone~~ spring
Kossuth spring is among my first memories of the ~~city~~ town. I came here with my parents before they left me at the camp.

it was divided and sold in three phases.

The ~~atmosphe~~ atmosphere of the town was very different back then. It was much less densley built, much fewer trees obstructed the view to the lake. Streets were not cobbled; buildings only had their first ~~story~~ storey. floor.

It was a very quiet place - the beneficial effect of the water of

the springs were well known, so it was a very popular place among the rich. Getting here from the capital was a one-day journey. And of course, the social elite who could afford such a travel was much narrower. What's more interesting, even the most modern thinkers believed in these inequalities.

The famous Anna ball (now an annual tradition at Balatonfüred)

was even more the symbol of this social separation than today.

After the tour, we visit the Jókai Museum. I was a huge fan of his when I was a teenager. Facing with his world is much less appealing to me now.

For me, the Balaton was always a synonym to freedom. I spent the most of my time here at the sailing camp. Sailing is a very free thing in itself; and in the camp, we were ~~treated~~ led to live very freely for our age.

Ever since I came back and I feel the fragrance of the lake, I ~~can't~~ start feeling real easy.

And the Balaton is a beautiful lake, with a marvellous scenery around. The towns and villages around could show some more respect - but it doesn't stop me for coming back again ~~and~~ and again.

These are among my favourite photos of this holiday - an interestingly enough, these were shot very close to each other: the iron bars behind Nicoline cover the old well which is on the lower photo.

The first is a classic Diana portrait with the lovely blues and the distinct vignetting.

Nicoline also looks particularly pretty in her newly-bought hiking shirt.

Taking the bikes with us was a really good idea - although being carried around the country in a trunk did not suited them really well. We could get around really fast, and even could do some shopping. While I could go to hairdresser while Zsófi had a massage - I am not sure we would have done it if we had to walk 40 minutes.

The well ~~really~~ instantly caught my attention, and while Nicoline went to the Pharmacy, I managed to make

a perfect wide-angle shot with „B" shutter speed.

While I waited, I tried to imagine the times when there were no tap water in the village, and they had to visit the well every day with large buckets. My grandmother had that experience – the well was also a place to meet and to have a chat while you waited for your turn.

VASZARY V
BALATONF