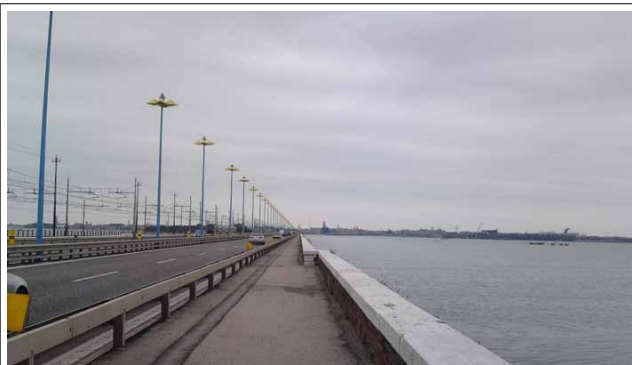


Date: 23/09/2010 Place: Trieste Kms walked: 1127 Kms Left ????

Just a couple of things I meant to put in the last Postcard

1. I did get my anti-tic jab OK. After rescuing the little kitten, I continued to Adria where I returned to Stia by night train, picked up the vaccine (which by the way cost an arm and a leg!), then returned to the doctor who did remember me and he gave me the injection. I then went back to Adria, again by night train. (2 nights not sleeping in railway stations, at least I didn't need to worry about accommodation those nights!)
2. Bizarre meetings continue. When I was still at the coast at a campsite, my neighbour turned out to be English, though now living in Spain for very many years. We chatted, Sabine was her name, and she shared some lovely watermelon with me. She was on a motorbike and continuing to Croatia for a few days then returning to Venice to pick up a friend. We said our goodbyes the following morning. Then, several days later, as I made my way towards the Piazza Duomo in Padua who should I meet but Sabine! By this time she had been to Croatia and back and had picked up her friend. Neither of us could believe the co-incidence.

So I have now been to Venice and I did manage to walk there all the way. It was touch and go at one point 'cause the only approach is on a big multi-laned road with very fast traffic. I was just about to give up and wait for a bus when I found out that the long bridge connecting Venice with the mainland had a cycletrack so I could walk across it. So that's what I did.



Walking across the landbridge to Venice



...to arrive at St Mark's Basilica for a stamp for my credential

I really liked Venice, it has a real buzz about it. And there was so much art. Also I was really lucky with accommodation. On the day before I arrived, I had hoped to camp wild but it was too built up. I saw signs for a campsite. It was getting late so I thought I would stay there 2 nights to make full use of it. The guy at reception was a bit dour. I picked my spot, put down the rucksack and then went to the camp shop.

On my way back, met the dour guy and he started talking about me having a bungalow for just 1€ more than camping, and it was going to rain tomorrow, and it would be better for me. I was confused! He showed me to this little mobile home type thing, with 2 beds, a large cupboard, electricity and nothing else. It was an ideal alternative to the tent, plenty big enough for me. And I had a real bed, and I was protected from the elements, and I had a light, and I had somewhere to sit to eat my food and type my diary. It was brilliant. And to cap it all, the site had a kitchen equipped with a microwave, gas cooker and pots and pans. I could have a hot meal. Yippee!

He was right, it did rain but that night not the next day. I walked on into Venice next day 1 day earlier than planned and having satisfied myself the campsite was a good deal, booked to stay there another 3 nights. I felt I should spend some time in Venice, visiting museums etc, being a tourist for once!



My little home for 5 nights – inside



... and outside

Despite having 3 days to explore Venice, it just wasn't enough. It is such a unique city. I will have to go back. I bought a 2 day travelcard so I could go to some of the islands. Murano was very picturesque and on it was the beautiful Basilica dei Santi Maria e Donato. It originated in 7th C but was reconstructed in the 12th. It had a marvelous mosaic floor dating from that period. The island is now the centre for Venetian glass making and was dotted with sculptures of glass.

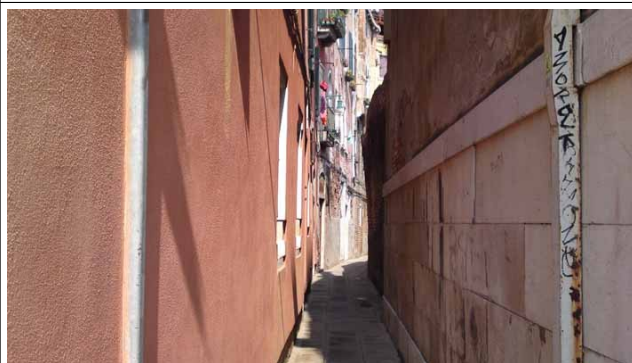
Below is a selection of images of Venice and its surroundings



Venetian masks.



Venetian glass



Some incredibly narrow streets



.... and of course the canals



Venice from the waterbus



And ditto



Glass sculpture on Murano



Pause for prayer at a beautiful mosaic shrine on Murano

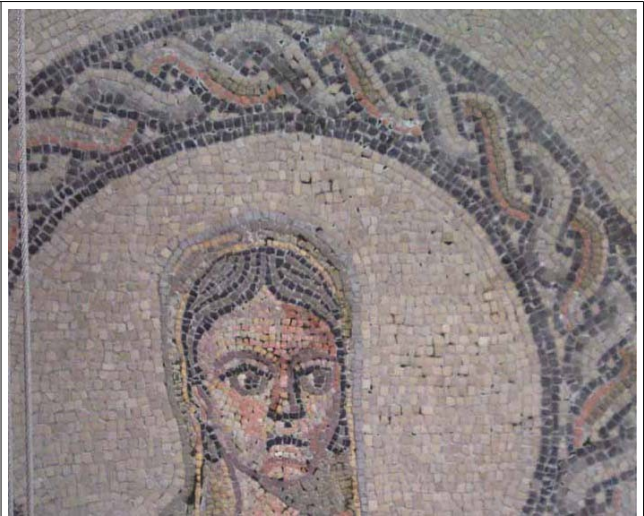
Sadly it came time to leave Venice and continue my journey. I returned to the city but instead of retracing my steps back across the land bridge, I took the ferry to Punta Sabbioni which was the mainland continuation of the coast. It was not unlike the section after Ravenna, with miles and miles of sandy beaches, and a plethora of campsites. My progress slowed as I enjoyed the weather and opportunity for cheap accommodation. It was now the end of the season and prices were at their lowest. At Caorle another gap in the coastline and a frustrating lack of bridges or ferries forced me to go nearly 20kms inland before I could carry on eastwards to Trieste.

Just a few days before Trieste I was told about a place that had had a great significance for pilgrims and which I really should visit. Rather inconveniently it was 6kms off my route but I decided there was a reason I was being told to go there so I went! Very glad I did. The place was Aquileia and is now a World Heritage site. The town had been one of the most important and richest towns in the Roman empire and the site has the ruins of a Roman temple as well as the remains of the old 1st C BC port.

In addition there is a very ancient Basilica dating from 4th C, one of the first to be built after the Edict of Milan in 313AD (which allowed Christians to legally build public places of worship) and which played a major part in the spread of Christianity in central Europe. According to legend, St Peter sent St Mark to preach in Aquileia. The floor of the Basilica is the most wonderful coloured 4thC mosaic, the largest of its kind in the western world. Much to my surprise one was allowed to take photos as long as flash was not used so I have included a couple below.



Mosaic floor at Aquileia



... another detail from the floor

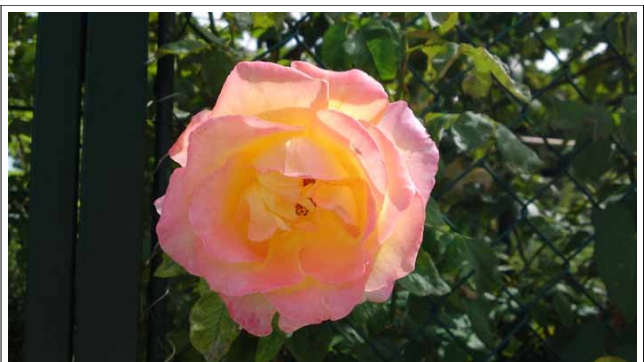
Walking through the seaside towns (sorry, I'm jumping about a bit now!) it was hard not to be affected by a sense of frivolity, and then, on my way through one of them I had one of those "I want one" moments! There was a shop selling a huge variety of bunches of brightly coloured flowers - artificial of course - for just 1€ each. I had to have one. After spending an age choosing I eventually selected a lovely combination of blue and yellow flowers. I was very pleased with myself. When I went in to pay, I don't quite know how it happened but I ended up in conversation with the woman serving in the shop and another customer and telling them I was walking to Jerusalem and why. When she heard this, the woman serving said "You are close to my God. Will you pray for me please, I have cancer"..... I understood then why I had had the "I want one" moment.

So that's it from me for now. Next time I write I will have crossed 2 borders – the first from Italy into Slovenia and the second from Slovenia to Croatia.

Below is a picture of my rucksack resplendent with its new decoration!



Cheerful artificial flowers



... and the beautifully scented real thing!

Take care and God Bless

Ann