

Our week with Anett

Category: Our travel blog in English
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Before and after picking grapes in the east of Slovenia we were driving around and discovering beautiful sites of this country. We started with a small town called Bled. This magical place consists of a lake with clear blue water, a little island with a church in the middle of the lake and a castle uphill nearby. We spent some hours walking around the lake and up to the castle for a nice view. Bled is always worth a visit. There are many natural caves and little canyons around but most of them require an entry fee. As you will see later on the photos below, there are some local food specialties worth a bite as well. After Bled we continued to Ljubljana to meet up with Katja. Ragle got to know her at one of her many conferences she went to. Katja is working and living in Ljubljana and gave us a lovely tour through the little old town, all the bridges that are crossing the river Ljubljanica and the castle in the middle of the city. In the evening she took us to have dinner with her friends. We had a fun evening and got many useful tips about Slovenia and what to visit. Since it was so cool to spend time with them, we already made a plan to meet them again the week after for a cinema. The next day we headed towards the little piece of coastline that Slovenia owns to visit Koper and Piran. After some nights on the coastline we drove back to Ljubljana, rented a little apartment and had a fun evening going to the movies. We are very thankful to Katja and all her friends for the great hospitality. We left the next day and drove towards our next stop: Branik. We have to up until now is our hidden gem. The people are so nice, the older generation speaks some German, the younger ones perfect English, everything is affordable and the food is delicious. Many beautiful places are still untouched and haven't been overrun by tourism (yet). Of course we are traveling off season so that maybe one reason for our awesome experience.



The lake in Bled...



...with clear blue water



An island in the middle of the lake





Local cream cake



Night out with Katja and her friends



One of the evenings in the nature



Harbour town Piran



Amazing view and good weather



Lots of corners and small streets



The promenade



Slovenian specialty Struklji



This reminds us of Amsterdam

Finally it was time to visit our first host. For a long time we have been searching for one via . The basic principle is the trade of workforce for accommodation, meals and sometimes money as well. But it is so much more than that! You will have a home for whatever time you discussed, you can slow down a bit, don't have to look for a new place to stay every day, the car can rest and you will have company (by humans or animals). Language and cultural exchange, funny conversations, life stories and experiences. There is so much to learn for both sides. In the end both the host and the volunteers are going to have a great time together. Always a win-win situation. Most of the hosts have traveled a lot themselves. At some point however, most of us have a lot of responsibility, either for children, other people or animals. All that makes traveling complicated. One way to still somehow „travel“ is to host other travelers in your home and that is what motivates many people to become a host (plus of course you get a lot of help around the house/farm). We found a nice little farm with goats, sheep and a little dairy. In the little village of Pedrovo, which is located uphill from Branik towards the Karst plateau, we stayed for a week with Tom & Borut. Both moved into a 150 years old limestone house in the abandoned village and renovated it. They have special endangered species of goats and sheep and they give them the best care to save the breeds. From their terrace you could see the coastline as well as the Alps – it was amazing! Every morning at 7 am we started the day with a coffee and shortly after we were heading to the pastures at the top of the plateau. As you will see in the embedded video below we started with leading the goats and sheep from their pasture to the mobile milking station. This can be tricky though, the longer you keep them at the same pasture the longer it takes to get them to the milking station and back. Goats are very picky about food. Usually they will start with eating the fresh green leaves from the little trees and bushes, when there are no more they continue with bigger, not so young leaves and when these are not reachable anymore the goats will start jumping over the fences to reach other bushes nearby. They even do that when the fence is under electricity – risk it for the biscuit moto. Sheep however are fine with grass all the time. The longer you keep all of them in the same pasture the more attractive all the fresh leaves become on the way to the milking and you might end up pushing every single one of them into the right direction. Goats in their general behavior are very much like dogs. Many of them like to cuddle a lot and follow you around all the time. Some even will answer if you call their name, especially Anett. She had a strong bond to humans and was

just adorable. Sheep didn't follow that behavior. They usually group together in a circle and stick their heads together. Nevertheless, everyone of them would fall for one thing: corn. Everytime they see a white bucket they go crazy and follow you everywhere. Every time I struggled to stand on my ground while pouring out the corn. Without the corn getting them to the milking station and back to the pasture is impossible. After every single one was back in the pasture we went back with all the milk to put it into the cooler and had breakfast. After our second coffee of the day Ragle usually was working for her other job and I took care of the chickens, cats, the orchard and a sheep who was hurt and therefore held in the barn. We also help a bit with cheese making but since it was the end of milking season there was not so much to do. We turned and washed the existing cheeses in the cheese cellar. Other days we changed pastures, renewed empty batteries and brought water for the animals to drink. On the separate pasture they also had baby goat and sheep. At least once a day we stopped by to check them, filled up the water and gave them some corn for a treat. After lunch we were usually finished with work and enjoyed our free time. Borut was a park ranger in a nearby National Park and Tom was with us all the time to keep the farm and the dairy running. Both were awesome cooks and had a exclusive taste for cheese, wine and coffee. In fact, we discovered our new favorite coffee brand there. We tasted some local recipes and are thankful for every meal we had together. It was one of the most interesting week we had sofar during our travel and at some point we are going to visit them again. See you soon ☺



The view from Pedrovo



In the mornings they are always waiting to go for milking



On the way to milking



Everyone wants to be milked ☺



The small ones are not yet milked



Everyone wants to be the first



There is food to keep them distracted while milking



The machine makes it a lot easier...



...but the last remaining still has to be done by hand.



Some of the goats want to be near you and get cuddels.



It looks like they are modeling to show the different colors ☺



We also saw many fire salamanders



Fresh drinking water



My everyday follower – Bianca



Ragle just came from dairy factory



Selfy with Bianca.



Cuddle pause



Babys



Sheep and goats love the corn



Borut and I making dinner



Cheese tasting



These pyramides from goat milk were our favourites!



Its a shame that you can't put taste on the photos.