

Malta and Prague

October 9-21, 2019

Wednesday, October 9 - The first segment of the trip, from PWM to DTW, started well. While waiting for the flight from Detroit to Amsterdam, Delta announced that the flight would be boarding soon; however, shortly after that announcement, they told us that there would be a two hour delay because the plane was being inspected. Our plane had come from Amsterdam and was struck by lightning shortly after take-off. I went to the Delta Club lounge to wait. When the time came to report back to the gate, I was boarded and settled into my Delta One seat. Suddenly, the captain announced that we were to deplane because the inspection had discovered a problem in the wing of the plane that could not be easily repaired so they had to replace ours with a different plane. Finally, after another two hour wait, we departed for AMS.

Thursday, October 10 - Arrived in Malta from Amsterdam and was greeted by Tom. We went to Scott's Market on the way to his flat. I bought some great veal chops to grill for dinner and some other supplies. We then proceeded to Tom's flat in Naxxar, which is on the fourth floor (top) of the building with a great view from the terrace where I witnessed the first sunset in Malta. We ate the grilled veal chops with some sautéed peppers and onions while sitting on the terrace. A great start to the trip.



Friday, October 11 - Tom surprised me with his 2006 Cadillac that he bought for a song as a second, more comfortable, car to his old Honda. He let me drive to lunch at [Amami](#) in Millieha. Shortly after we started out, the left (passenger side) tire blew out, literally. We struggled on the side of the road changing the tire and finally mounted the spare. Shortly after pulling out, the spare went flat. We found a place to park the Caddy off the road and proceeded to hitchhike. We were

quickly picked up, unknowingly, by a passing cab driver. He took us back to the flat where we began our journey, in Tom's Honda this time. First, we went to Tom's tire guy to let him know about what happened to the tire on the Caddy and make arrangements to get it repaired when we returned from lunch. We finally made it to Mellieha and had a great lunch at Amami.



Saturday, October 12 - Tom had purchased a mini-PC to replace his old desktop PC, which died due to corrupted Boot Control Data (BCD). However, the mini-PC did not have ports for Tom's monitors. Fortunately, I had experience with the mini-PC since Dave Perron had one at Habitat (another story). I knew that we would need to acquire adapters in order to accommodate all the peripherals. More on that later. Anyway, we went to a computer store called Scan to get the adapters for the monitors. Afterwards, we headed for Sliema for lunch, with a stop at [Italiano](#) to get fresh pasta, some sauces and wine. We had lunch at [La Vida, Bar de Tapas](#). When we arrived, Tom met a friend named Rod Morley. We had a great lunch chatting with Rod and drinking wine.



Later, Tom made arrangements with his taxi guy, Brian, to take us into Valletta for dinner at one of his favorite restaurants, [Trabuxu](#). After dinner, we walked around Valletta, which has changed tremendously since the last time I was in Malta. Then we made our way to the main gate to meet Brian where I saw the full moon over the fountain at the entrance.

Sunday, October 13 - Drove to Valletta where we had lunch at [CapoCrudo](#), a beautiful restaurant overlooking the Grand Harbor. After some starters of tuna tartare and prawn tartare, we had a special salt-encrusted sea bass.

After lunch, we drove through Sliema again where I took this picture of Valletta (the restaurant is located just under the dome). Then we went back to prepare for our trip to Prague.



Monday, October 14 - Brian picked us up and took us to MLA. We checked in and discovered that we were in Air Malta Business Class which entitled us access to the [La Vallette](#) lounge. Our flight into MUN arrived late and my bag didn't make it to the plane for PRG. It wasn't a problem though and they delivered my bag to the apartment that evening. We took [Blacklane](#) to the [apartment at Rybná 9](#). Shortly after we arrived, both Olivia and Genevieve called Tom asking about tuition money from the Wight Family Trust (for which I am the trustee) so I had to get involved in the process. We had to explain that wiring the funds required information about the two schools so they both had to send it via email. This became a project that took several hours of my time.

Bill Westgate arrived around 18:00 as did Alexander (who is attending Charles University here). After we got settled in, we took Uber to some Vietnamese restaurant (whose name I understandably can't remember).

Tuesday, October 15 - Around lunch time, we walked to the Old Town Square and arrived just in time to see the [Astronomical Clock](#) chime the hour. It was surrounded by tourists taking pictures and was very chaotic. We muscled our way through the crowd in search of a restaurant for lunch and found [Oliva Nera](#). While we ate lunch, some Finnish guy sat at a nearby table and ordered a drink. He started trying to engage us in a conversation about the United States and Trump and became insistent on trying to join us. Since we tried to avoid him, he became very belligerent. Bill finally told him to shut up and the waiter finally went over and asked the guy to leave. Anyway, we



sat there for a while and I went to the restroom. While I was away, the guys all ordered beers, including one for me. I didn't really want it but I drank it anyway (it was a large glass). After I finished my beer, I reminded Tom that we should get back to the apartment because I needed to call Merrill Lynch to start working on a wire transfer for the tuitions. But the others were having so much fun that they



only wanted to go to another place for more beer. I finally had to leave by myself and got lost trying to get back to the apartment. I found my way eventually and was able to contact Merrill

Lynch but now had no idea what Tom, Bill and Alexander were doing. I called Tom and he said they were at [Pepeñero](#) having dinner. I took an Uber to the restaurant. We had a delicious dinner and walked back to Rybná 9. It was a lovely evening and we had a great time.



Wednesday, October 16 - Our plan was to visit the Prague Castle today. We began walking to the Charles Bridge to cross into the Little Quarter (Malá Strana) on the way to the castle. When we crossed to the other side of the bridge, we decided to have lunch at [Hergotova Cihelna](#), a riverside restaurant below the Franz Kafka museum. It was a beautiful day and



we were enjoying a delicious lunch and a bottle of white wine while watching the boats parade up and down the river. When we finished lunch, we contemplated proceeding to the castle but decided it would be better to relax and have another bottle of wine. It was a perfect way to spend an afternoon.

We left the restaurant and began to walk around the Malá Strana. As we walked up the hill toward the Kafka Museum, we saw this David Černý statue depicting two men pissing into a pool that's in the shape of the Czech Republic. It stands outside the Kafka Museum (in the background). We began strolling around and eventually came upon the embassy of Malta. The garden behind the embassy has a wall called the John Lennon Wall filled with John Lennon-inspired graffiti, pieces of



lyrics from Beatles' songs, and other designs relating to local and global causes. Unfortunately, it was under reconstruction (whatever that means) and would not reopen until November.

As we continued walking, we came upon a bridge across a small canal (see below).



We had intended to have dinner at a steakhouse called [George Prime Steak](#) so we walked to the restaurant to book a table for tonight but they were fully booked. We continued searching for a steakhouse (Tom wanted to buy Alexander a steak for his birthday). We eventually found [Pohostinec Monarch](#) and were able to book a table. Dinner there was excellent and we didn't regret not being able to get into George Prime, thus ending my favorite day in Prague.

Thursday, October 17 - Today is Bill's last day in Prague and he left early to have lunch with his nephew. Tom and I walked to the river and found [Marina](#) for lunch. While finishing our meal, Tom got a call from Bill. His nephew left their lunch date early because he had a meeting that was an hour earlier than he thought. So, he met us at Marina for a short visit. As we walked back to the apartment, Bill called for an Uber to take him to the airport and we said our final goodbyes.

When we got back to the apartment, I called Merrill Lynch to finalize the process of wiring tuition funds for Genevieve and Olivia.

Tom and I had tried to book a table at the nearby [Pot-au-Feu](#) restaurant (only two doors away) but they were booked. We found

[Ungelt](#) and booked a table for dinner. What a nice surprise! We started with their escargots and they were so good that we had a second order. Then I had bouillabaisse and Tom had their rabbit dish.

During our meal, we made friends with the owner Tomás and his mother (Katrina, who was also our waitress) and Vladimir (waiter). They brought us an

after dinner cordial that I couldn't identify but it had a flavor somewhat like cinnamon. Then, as we were about to leave, Tomás told us he had another surprise for us. I replied that we really didn't want another drink, he said "No, follow me". He took us downstairs to show us their event room:



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Yes, that's an old well. We were very impressed. If you are ever in Prague, I recommend Ungelt, right in the Old Town.

Friday, October 18 - Our plan for the day was to buy a computer for Alexander (he needs it for school). We decided to have lunch at Hergetova Cihelna (again). After lunch, we hailed Uber to take us to [Alza](#) to shop for a computer and a monitor. It took a while to get someone to help but Alexander finally found the computer and monitor he wanted. However, they had to be sent to the store from a warehouse. Alexander agreed to pay for it today and pick it up tomorrow.

We tried to get an Uber back to the apartment but, after a long wait, told us they were unable to find a driver. Alexander decided to walk back to his apartment and Tom and I tried to flag down a taxi. After a long walk, we finally got a ride back to the apartment.

Meanwhile, Tom got sick (he hadn't been feeling well all day) and wasn't able to go to dinner with Alexander and me. We went next door to an Indian restaurant called Namaste. It was supposed to be the second best Indian restaurant in Prague but we were not impressed. I had a nice visit with Alexander though. I may not see him again for a long time.

Saturday, October 19 - Got up early and took Blacklane to the airport for the flight to Munich. We had a long layover so I bought us into the airport lounge. Our flights from Prague to Munich to Malta went well but it was a long day. Tom cooked the pasta and pesto he bought at Italiano for dinner and I went to bed relatively early.



Sunday, October 20 - I decided to find my way to [Maypole](#), a small grocery store nearby, to get pain au chocolat for breakfast. I used Google Maps to find my way there (I got lost twice the second day I was in Malta). I was proud to find my way back without using Google Maps.

I wanted to have lunch at a seaside restaurant for my last day in Malta. Since it was Sunday, Tom wasn't able to book a table at the ones he knew of. We decided to go to the [Pallazzo Parisio & Gardens](#) in Naxxar, just a stone's throw from the apartment.

Tom had the sesame-crusted tuna and I had the veal Milanese. It was very relaxing and we were glad that we hadn't gone to a seaside restaurant because they were probably very hectic.

After lunch, we went shopping for something to grill for dinner. We



weren't able to find veal chops so we got two aged filet mignon and some peppers and onion to sauté.

We enjoyed dinner on the terrace but I had to go to bed early since I was getting up at 2:30 tomorrow morning to get ready and take a taxi to the airport.

Monday, October 21 - The taxi Tom had arranged for me arrived flight on time and Keith got me to the airport in no time. I checked in and went to the La Vallette lounge to await my flight to CDG.

The only glitch occurred when I arrived at JFK where I didn't pick up my bag at Customs so it had to be delivered tomorrow. Also, since my boarding pass was issued in Malta, I wasn't approved for TSA Pre✓. Terrible! Finally made it home.