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Travel is "broadening" – I hope only in mind, not in body.

Thursday, March 28, 2013

I spent the morning writing a long email to the University of Bratislava in SLOVAK. DH & I have decided to spend a month in Slovakia this summer taking an intensive course in language and culture.

Over 100 years ago my grandfather, a widower, came to America and married my widowed grandmother. His grown sons stayed behind. After retirement I began seriously to research family history and find my cousins.

I haven't heard Slovak spoken since my grandmother died in 1976. She never learned to speak English well even though she lived in the US from age 17-93. Like many immigrants today, working long hours and family responsibilities left little time for classes. Her children grew up bilingual and her grandchildren hardly remember anything of the old language.

I bought a Slovak textbook and CD and began to study on my own since no one knows the language around here. The nearest course is in Pittsburgh.

I am my grandfather's 15th grandchild and in 2008 I found and introduced myself to the other 14, their children and grandchildren. Fortunately the grandchildren speak English very well or our conversation would have been limited. My Slovak was good enough to travel around the country on our own and be understood, but my grammar is bad and vocabulary limited.

We visited again in 2012 at Easter. I enjoyed experiencing the old traditions of my heritage.

So at the advanced age of 68 and 66, DH & I have decided to take a "learning vacation."

Maybe in addition to language and culture I'll learn how the people in Slovakia stay so slim.

Edit: Yes, they really are slim, especially the younger people. During our visits we wondered how they maintain that considering how the traditional food is so high in carbs. Lots of great bread, potatoes and noodle dishes.

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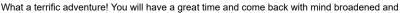
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deepened, and as slilm as ever. Looking forward to the blogs! 2998 days ago



CD8467616

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Last year I was in Europe for 3 weeks and came back at exactly the same weight I was when I left. Reasons: jet lag, lots of walking, smaller portions. I've traveled a lot in my life and never gained weight, usually lost some. In the U.S., people eat so much more! And more junk.



MISCHAKEO

V

That is so exciting. I think that will be a wonderful experience. My Hawaiian ancestors were not thin! LOL. 2999 days ago



TENACIOUSTRISH





2999 days ago



WINDSURFNERD

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Travel is always worth the time, money, inconvenience and yes, calories!! Just like a race, the trip itself is the "victory lap"...don't forget to enjoy the "training" (all the research, planning and preparation for your trip) as that's part of the fun! Naomi

3000 days ago



COCK-ROBIN



I'm proud of you! 3000 days ago



WILSONWR

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Sounds like a great trip! You're never too old to learn new things. Let me know how they stay so slim on such a diet!

3000 days ago



HELEN_BRU

V

My parents and sister were born in what's now known as the Slovak Republic. All are now gone, but I did go back to Slovakia in 1971 while it was still under the Russians. My parents had moved back. It was quite an experience. Didn't realize until years later that I had a KGB guy following me around.

Most of my life I was embarrassed by my parents because they spoke with an accent and had European habits. What a fool I was! I'd give anything to have them back again.

Good for you in your new endeavour!! 3000 days ago



CELIAMINER



What a wonderful idea! I love vacations that involve learning or trying new things. Good luck with learning the language!

3000 days ago



GINIEMIE

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If they are like my cousins in Belgium, they do a lot of walking and usually don't consistently overeat. I am so glad for you that you and DH are spreading your wings and meeting more family, learning/living a different culture and language. My Steve was of Hugarian/Bohemian/Itallian decent and went to Belgium with me once, he never expressed a desire to go there. He did go to Germany & Italy on a business trip back in the early-mid 80s.

I know you will have a gazillion new experiences to share. I pray you will have safe travels and great visits.







3000 days ago



DR1939



We lived in suburbs outside of Cleveland, OH, for over 20 years. There was a large contingent of Slovakians there. Mostly we ate their pastries which were very good.

