



BROOKLYN_BORN

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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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WATERMELLEN

What a terrific adventure! You will have a great time and come back with mind broadened and





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



CD8467616

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.

Eastern Europe is fascinating, still cheaper than Western Europe, and settling in for a time in one place is the best scenario. You will have a great time!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
2999 days ago



MISCHAKEO

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



TENACIOUSTRISH

AWESOME
2999 days ago



WINDSURFNERD

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

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

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

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 Slovaks there. Mostly we ate their pastries which were very good.
3000 days ago



JAHINTZY

That's so exciting! Have fun! My brother and his wife traveled to Slovenia a couple years ago to do much the same thing. I went to Germany years ago (and met my now fiance) and met with distant cousins while there. Those kind of trips seem to be the best possible kind :)



sidenote: I lost weight during my 3 weeks in germany while eating pasta and gelatto galore... but we walked everywhere and climbed a few foothills. I think there was a better balance there.
3000 days ago



LOLATURTLE

That's very exciting and cool! Have a wonderful time!



I got to travel to the country my ancestors came from (Norway!) this year, but I didn't get to visit the little town my great-grandfather came from. It's kind of remote from places that have touristy things to do. I hope to go back someday and see that little town, and maybe meet some distant cousins!
3000 days ago



CD13136117

How awesome for you - sounds like so much fun! Not only learning more about the cultures and language - but also about your heritage and spending time with family. Best wishes in your planning and travels - and kudos for putting together the plan and making it happen!! Yeah for you!!

3000 days ago



CD13167855

have a wonderful time.

3000 days ago



SUZYMOBILE

How exciting! Are the people in Slovakia really slim, or are you joking? If they are, perhaps it's lack of junk food!

3000 days ago



SOPHIEDO13

Nice blog I enjoyed your family history. Have a wonderful time !!

3000 days ago



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