



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## Sometimes you just gotta eat the cheesecake - Choices for 4 days on the road

Monday, November 17, 2014

This was a combination trip for us.

We drove to the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina to:

Check on my 94 year old MIL in her assisted living facility

At MIL's request, visit the old family vacation/retirement cabin a few hours drive further on

Attend a meeting of Carpatho-Rusyn Society – a heritage group very helpful to me as I sought my East European roots during the last decade.

Visit the Biltmore Estate in Ashville, one landmark we had never seen before.

MIL is doing as well as can be expected. However, her weight is making it difficult to walk more than a few steps and she spends most of her time in a wheelchair. I remember a physical therapist telling me that it was easier to get my 110 lb mother back on her feet than a 220 lb woman (my MILs weight).

We found a nice hotel central to all our plans in the town of Dillsboro, NC. It was about a 2 hour drive to the cabin over curvy mountain roads. We hadn't seen the place in nearly 30 years and it's in need of a lot of work. There's more building going on in the area now, but still quite remote – no cell phone service.

It was a good time to visit Biltmore, all decorated for Christmas but not yet very crowded. Supposedly tourism increases after Thanksgiving.

I had mixed feelings about the place. It was very nicely decorated and efficiently organized for visitors, but I thought it was overpriced. You only got a booklet with brief explanations included in your entrance fee. An audio guide or tour guide was extra. As you walked around, you could hear the tour guide's explanations anyway without even trying.

It was interesting to see how "American royalty" lived in 1895 in their "castle." The tour included a nice variety of the nearly 300 rooms. The booklet mentioned that there were 43 bathrooms at a time when "MANY" Americans didn't even have one. I would amend that to say to MOST American homes didn't have one at the end of the 19th century.

I know I'm in the minority, but I found the place unnecessarily and conspicuously ostentatious. I felt that Vanderbilt should have BiltLESS not BiltMORE. A 7 story high banquet hall? 43 bathrooms?

The conservatory was very interesting as was the winery.

This is still a family owned estate operated for profit, so they charge what the market will bear

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My heritage society meeting provided quite a contrast as we watched a video of the lives of my immigrant ancestors in the USA at the time of the opening of Biltmore.

I shared my recent trip to Slovakia connecting my children and grandchildren with their roots and the relatives whose ancestors stayed in the old country, not taking a chance on an uncertain future in America.

From a Spark perspective I did pretty well. There was a lot of walking although at a touring pace, not high intensity at all. One good run with the temperature at 19 degrees made me feel very righteous.

I had healthy snacks in the car and a supply of water. Restaurant meals were the best choices available.

I did eat the homemade ethnic pastries provided during my meeting – one of each type.

Then there was the NY style cheesecake. My MIL ordered it ahead of time to be delivered to her at the facility because “she knew we liked it” and “this bakery makes it just like we used to have back in NY.”

There was no Spark excuse I would make in that situation, valid though it may have been.

Sometimes a situation arises when you just gotta eat the cheesecake. A healthy lifestyle is able to accommodate something like this.

I am 1.6 pounds heavier than the morning I left. Most likely the salty restaurant food.

No problem. I'm home now. It's back to real life.

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**ONEKIDSMOM**

I would have eaten the cheesecake under those circumstances, too... at least a small piece!  
And now you're home, back to real life!  
2397 days ago



**MARYJEANSL**

I love the sound of the remote mountain cabin. That is my idea of a wonderful vacation, away from it all in the beautiful mountains. It sounds like it was a good trip, and that you got a lot of things accomplished. And I would have eaten the cheesecake, too, in that situation. Hearing about your mil's being wheelchair bound, and her mobility made harder because of her weight, gives me an added boost of motivation to keep working on keeping my weight down. Thanks! ;-)  
2398 days ago



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2398 days ago



**WATERMELLEN**

Sounds like a most interesting trip -- and I agree, sometimes there is no avoiding the cheesecake. Didn't do much damage anyhow -- just a temporary blip!!!  
2398 days ago



**1STBUCKETITEM**

It sounds as if you really had a nice journey. So, it shouldn't be a problem that you may have



had to  a little. At least you made MIL  happy and you are now in control.

Sometimes situations are unavoidable.  You know your priorities you had the good sense to

know when to  
2398 days ago



. You'll be back to normal in no time.



Have a great week!



#### JOYNEW

Agreed. Sometimes you need a little indulgence. Not every day. That's why it's special.  
2398 days ago



#### WALLAHALLA

And if you're gonna eat the cheesecake, you may as well savor every little bite. Life is too short to deny yourself small indulgences now and then.  
2398 days ago



#### MJZHERE

There is a beautiful poem about "if I had my life to live over again...I would relax...I would eat more ice cream...I would travel lighter than I have.." at <http://mrsmindfulness.com/if-i-had-my-life-to-live-over-again/>

Your blog brought it to mind so I searched this morning for it...thank you for the reminder cuz sometimes we get to eat the cheesecake.

I am with you - a bitless - quite a bit less of stuff and more of life - it truly is "more blessed to give than to receive."

2398 days ago



#### TERI-RIFIC

I agree, sometimes you have to. I've been to the Biltmore. I agree with your assessment. It reminds me of the joke about the guy who gets to heaven and Saint Peter tells him he can have anything he wants and he says that he wants a huge pile of pure gold. Peter grants his wish, and turns to an angel and says, can you believe it-anything he wanted and he chose paving material?  
2398 days ago



#### DR1939

Food choices when traveling can be quite difficult. Australians have streets lined with bakeries and they are very, very good. Luckily they come in small sizes. What surprised me about Australia was the size of their restaurant meals. Portions were as large or larger than US.  
2398 days ago



#### FEISTYLIZARD

I don't think I am capable of turning down cheesecake. Quite the opposite- if my grandma has cheesecake for dessert, I'm a bloodhound for it. I have to avoid it at all costs, except on my birthday when I seek it out, and on the holidays, usually only at Christmas. Since I'm not doing anything on Christmas, I should be in the clear. Haha!

You made some pretty good choices on your trip! I too would have tried all of the cultural desserts- after all, how often does an opportunity like that come up? And getting in a run on a road trip? That's inspiring- I use travelling as an excuse to indulge in the rich foods not available in my city, and to visit the landmark restaurants. I seriously don't know how I zip my jeans when I'm in Toronto. I'm curious to see what travelling will be like when I'm Sparking though.

Anyways, hope you're well!  
2398 days ago



#### FORZACHANDMATT

I would never have been able to turn down the cheesecake but good for you for keeping up the healthy habits  
2398 days ago



#### IFDEEVARUNS2

Good choice! Just grin and eat it.  
2398 days ago



#### MILLEDGE2

Yes, there are times when we need to just eat the cheesecake and to sample the variety of dishes at a once-in-awhile gathering of a group we enjoy. Being healthy other times evens it out and still means we'll be able to avoid the wheelchair awhile longer.

People seem to have either black-or-white reactions to Biltmore House. I, too, don't get a real thrill out of "homes" that look more like big hotel lobbies and demonstrate what is possible if you just spend enough money. Interestingly, they only barely mention that George Vanderbilt overspent even his own fortune. Then he died! His widow was a bit smarter and in getting her finances in control, she created some homes and jobs for the less affluent people whose labor supported the estate.

If you think my reaction to Biltmore is a bit negative, you should hear me at Versailles!

Enjoy being home!  
2398 days ago



**MISCHAKEO**

There are times when you need to eat cheesecake. I would have had a bite also as your MIL was so sweet to order it for you. You are reminding me of Jrs in New York that had the optimum cheesecake.

You are staying positive and known those up pounds will come off.  
2398 days ago

**CD4114015**

Sounds like a FABULOUS trip. Nice to see MIL and all the places you went sound so interesting.

But, I agree, we always have to come back to real life!!!



2398 days ago

**50YEARSWIFE**

Great blog. Thanks for sharing.  
2398 days ago

**SWEETNEEY**

Sounds like an awesome trip. I love visiting historical landmarks.  
2398 days ago

**PHEBESS**

LOL - I have cheesecake at the Carnegie Deli whenever we're in New York. Because yes, sometimes you DO just have to have the cheesecake.  
2398 days ago

**GINIEMIE**

Love the blog, you are so right if your MIL says eat cheesecake-it better get eaten. At least a few bites, til I say-my stomach doesn't handle these rich foods the way it used to. Erik would gladly eat mine and his, his once emaciated body October 2010 is no longer. He acts like he doesn't understand calories when my eldest son and I mention them....

Glad it was only a little over a pound, you'll get it off quickly.



Your humor shines through my dear friend.



2398 days ago

**KRISZTA11**

Great blog - I loved the title!  
: ))  
2398 days ago



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