



# Terry's Travels

TT38-1 Singapore Sensational 5th May 2011

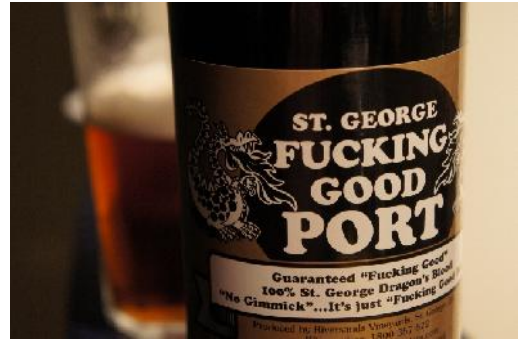
The final event before leaving Nelson was a party for Henry & Terry since we share the same birthday, 27 came and partied, with the guys outside until 9pm—very nice. Our first stop in Brisbane was to meet Jonette & Troy, Di enjoyed their pool—more fun. The birthday was still going as we reached Singapore to stay in the eye opening Marina Bay Sands Casino/Hotel shopping complex. Completed last year it is the world's most expensive single building project with Bruce Willis soon opening his Avalon night club alongside the Louis Vuitton shop in the bay right outside this amazing complex.

We were on the 49th floor courtesy of a very fast elevator in a suite! - the infinity pool is on the 57th floor along with bar and restaurant. This Sky Deck is like a cruise liner sat on the top of three pillars, the whole effect is HUGE and very upmarket. The downstairs shopping area has all the exotic brand names with even more exotic prices, there was no chance of my wallet coming out. We did the Club room deal including the suite with buffet breakfast brunch and the most stylish and tasty canapés at around sunset at 6pm with whatever you wanted to drink—way to go. When Di researched where to stay there was much criticism of service and poor staff. We can only speak very highly of the whole experience of Singapore right from landing to being in the room—even the curtains open automatically as you enter the room. Our 48 hours of unbridled luxury made it a dream stopover.

There is little evidence of a credit crunch here and the Asians are up for a good time and travelling. The gambling floors are MASSIVE and were about 75% occupied, very few Europeans were around but seemed to be British and German when we saw them. There has been lots of very favourable comment on the Royal Wedding and newsagents and supermarkets in NZ and Australia are packed with colour magazines showing it in all its splendor and the Queen is expected to have a trip to Australia in the near future.

I hope the rest of our journey goes smoothly following the killing of Osama Bin Laden. All the newspapers seem to be expecting some sort of retribution for this dramatic event. Dubai is our final stopover but is usually a peaceful place.....

P.s Hush Puppies at 50% off plus special 5% got me!



*Classy Aussie grog*



*Singapore 57th floor*



*Birthday treat goes on...*



*Marina Bay Sands Casino Hotel  
Di inspects the shipping*

*to UK in May 2011 collect Mercie in Spain late May, trip to Catalunya MotoGP then Mugello MGP Italy in June (meet Des Molloy) Sachsenring Moto GP ,back for summer in UK - Mercie serviced taxed etc. Maybe a trip to Greece/Turkey Sept/Oct.....back to NZ ?via Philippines for 2012*



# Terry's Travels

TT38-2 Briefly in Bingley 1st June 2011

Arriving in Manchester on a lovely sunny day followed by the bus trip over the Pennines was splendid. Our grandsons surprised us as we stepped out of the lift in Bradford's Interchange—we were back. The house was soon shipshape, Di to London to see her relations and me walking with my daughter and the dogs. The new toys (GPS/Tablet computer/Smartphone) all arrived. Socialising -especially a night out with Chris, Lindy and friends and a curry at 12:30am! in lively downtown Bingley. I learned that the uglier women are MMMs - no Mate, no Mother, no Mirror! - in fairness there were some lovely ones too. Finally my new bike was re-arranged for August 1st delivery and we were on a flight to Alicante, Spain—PHEW.....



*Carole & Di near Velez Rubio*

Ken collected us and soon we were on the mountain-top not far from the Lorca earthquake. Mercie was dusty but after a night on charge fired up and I soon had the water system and the appliances working OK. Mice had spent winter indoors but with little damage. My hands handled riding the Yamaha motorcycle (started 1st time) in the mountains and river bed just fine. More socializing in the local area with a special Thai night at Casa Joya with the chef from the Savoy cooking—very nice. Farewell to our effusive hosts Ken & Carol and we were headed to Ciudad Quesada to see how our friend Pam was, she has had a nightmare time fighting cancer.



*Ken enjoys Casa Joya*

We hadn't caught her on the phone but she met us with a smile and punched the air as she said she was clear following the chemo. She hopes to get a hip replacement done now! - what an iron lady, it was a joy to take her to lunch and stay up to see her birthday in. We managed to see Barcelona beat Man U and were deafened by the celebration fireworks as we left the local club—they deserved to win. There was time for a birthday breakfast too before leaving.



*Shows screen on new phone*

Our next overnight was Javea where there is a great sports bar to watch the F1 (shame that Vettel was so lucky) and onwards to Peniscola where we are staying 3 nights before driving to Barcelona to collect our tickets for the Catalunyan MotoGP which is this weekend. This means we have travelled about 900km so far. We like Peniscola with terrific esplanade, excellent Camping Eden campsite and pool, good local shops and a bar with free wifi so I can fiddle with the new technology, it is a challenge for the aging brain.



*Peniscola—taken by new HTC Sensation phone*

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## Terry's Travels

TT38-3 Spain to South of France 15th June 2011

We stayed at the Tres Estellas campsite and took the bus into Barcelona to meet Gordon of Pole Position to collect our tickets for the Catalunyan GP, he bought us a drink in the foyer of Eurostar Grand Marina Hotel. It was a shame that we had to catch our bus back as Blusens were having a reception with their 125cc riders there, we saw Maverick Vinales the 16 year old racer who has been this seasons find, Paris Hilton was coming but we couldn't wait!

We got a convenient but expensive campsite just half a mile from the circuit and enjoyed the weekend. Back on the road early we saw a great sunrise as we drove the N11 alongside the sea, the Costa Maresne then C35/C31 which was a lovely route to Empuria Brava the place with rows and rows of villas/apartments with hundreds of boats in the man made canals.

International Amberes is alongside the sea and a canal was just over the wall on our site. Stormy changeable weather caused us to stay a week, this campsite has great facilities, beach location and wifi to keep us happy before we cross the border at the coast into the S of France.

Walking a canal we got a view of a spaceship like house, it has cost millions and is all about ecology but has prompted LOTS of planning argument. The owner got fed up with it all and put this unsightly fence all around—oh the fun of having pots of money.

The D81 took us North up the coast where we twisted and turned as we approached Portbou, it was hard driving but spectacular—then we were into France. It's surprising how quickly things change and it was very busy everywhere. Our first campsite choice at Argeles de Mer was full—apparently the first time in 10 years due to it being holiday time in Spain/France/Germany. It did us a favour as we are at Le Florida at Elne which we highly recommend. We had passed through heavy showers but late afternoon it was sunny and 28C and were able to have dinner and breakfast outdoors. Boules/Tennis/Swimming and even an outdoor stage for sizeable concerts plus free wifi which worked superbly. We can get internet radio playing through the hifi so BBC Radio 4 has kept us up to date on the latest Christchurch quake.



*Empuria Brava, Spain*



*Boats and canals everywhere*



*Is that a spaceship?*



*Rental boats are available  
- very pleasant way to be nosy!*

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## Terry's Travels

TT38-4 France to Alps 21st June 2011

We arrived in France and headed for the Camargue, a coastal national park which is flat and marshy, famous for the local horses, bicycling and quiet small roads—lovely. I have really enjoyed riding the bike here, especially having tackled the city of Arles with a HUGE market around the old walls, there must have been a kilometre of stalls, it was manic. Saintes Marie is the name of the coastal village which is beautiful and is the capital of the Camargue. We were lucky to catch the arrival of horses and bulls to the bull ring by the sea, the horses looked simply fantastic. The downside to the area is lots of mossies. The campsite Le Crin Blanc was not so good with what seemed to be a large group of noisy gypsies having it as their holiday choice! The Clos du Rhone on the sea was really lovely and not far from the front with excellent promenade.

Relying on Sadie (the new GPS) I punched in the Lat/Long co-ordinates, refused toll roads and she took us along towards Avignon and D900/D28 and into the low Alps to the free Aire at Dauphin. We had this fantastically located Aire to ourselves and walked up and up into the historic old village taking all the panoramic vistas in before getting a beer at the bar. Locals were already well into it and friendly but some eyes were as clouded as the pastis that they were drinking.

We left the Aire early and let the GPS decide again to head NE into Haute Provence. It was an even better days touring and we decided to stay in Digne les Bains which is a largish town with lots of pavement cafes. We will stay a few days since we got a good deal and have a lovely sunny grass terrace with distant views to higher mountains with just small remnants of snow quickly disappearing on the Northern Hemisphere's longest day. Di has been busy washing and the drying is very quick with the lively breezes.

We have hit the Fete de La Musique so we will see what that is all about. The internet has been down for a few days in the town following a storm but as you see is working again. Nowhere is completely perfect and we are plagued by flies but that is a minor thing in fact it's sport with a fly swat.....



*Border Spain/France—Portbou*



*Bulls arrive Saintes Marie*



*Stylish transport*



*Lots of horses and Mossies in the Camargue*

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## Terry's Travels

TT38-5 Digne les Bains 28th June 2011

We arrived early for the evening of Fete de la Musique and were amazed by the number of music sites that were being set up for this event. Many were doing sound checks as the proliferation of pavement cafes were setting up their tables, happily the weather was perfect and still 29C. There was a feeling of great buzz and anticipation. Irish music was our first choice but became a little repetitious. A very percussive threesome was next and good. A RnR band were just so so. It was obvious that many of the cafes had lots of reservations so we decided to dine early. Di had decided which one and we were seated at a wobbly table. The daily two course deal with coffee had two choices. I translated the first as toenails in boxes! - it turned out to be Pigs Trotters no thank you. Entrecote, frites et salade was a good choice and asking for bon cuit meant it was not too red inside. A group of locals sat alongside and the wrinkled old crone lit a ciggy, it is allowed for them to smoke even at a restaurant when it is outside and many of the old ladies especially light up. Still it had the advantage of keeping some of the flies away. The Tarte de Pommes was really world class apple pie. Another French couple came alongside and we had a stuttering conversation of William and Kate followed by the Loch Ness Monster.....

Listening to more music afterwards the highlight for us was a magnificent marching drumming band. The locals fell in behind them and we did the same. There is a bit of video and more still pictures on my Flickr site. Digne reminds us of the upmarket town of Harrogate near where we live when in the UK and it's similar in size too. We really enjoyed our week there and highly recommend Camping du Bourg.

A trip to Intermarche worked well so we and Mercie were fuelled for Italy. The D900 was fantastic driving and changed to the S21 at the border, literally hundreds of motorcycles were out but it did get a bit busy after Sunday lunch when they were back on the road. Just across the border were the very different Italian voices but when we arrived at our chosen campsite Il Melo a little South and past Cuneo. It was another good choice and we saw ACSI people vetting the site's standards. You should have had a bathing cap and close fitting trunks—I can only surmise that the powerful pool chemicals would shed my body hair! - but what about my beard?



*Barrel organ with young dancers*



*Digne les Bains*



*Wonderful and compelling*



*Italian border getting near*

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## Terry's Travels

TT38-6 ITALY, Tuscany, Garda & Dolomites 11th July 2011

Since the last TT we have travelled across Italy through Tuscany to enjoy the Mugello GP stayed at Lake Garda in sweltering heat and through the tight tunnels alongside the West of Lake Garda to the Dolomites and onwards N into Austria via the South Tyrol buying a vignette at 7.90 Euros to allow Mercie on the roads. Again it's so stimulating the change in language, culture and scenery. You will see from the photos that this ranks with the best in the world.

The days driving was so amazing, it was very demanding but ultimately so satisfying. We were so lucky to have superb weather to scale the high passes, it was the weekend so there was a buzz from many people having a great day. We passed a lot of classic cars on a rally—did I spot a Citroen SM convertible? Countless bikers were out in their leathers but it was hot even at these altitudes (around 6,000 feet). Right on the mountain top the army were out in force with helicopters and we hoped it was a training exercise and not a big scale rescue.

Amongst the cars and motorcycles many cyclists were enjoying themselves, you have to be especially careful as their speed varies such a lot up and down mountains. During all this travel we came upon a Stelplatz (the equivalent of a French Aire, this is a place to overnight often at no cost). It was a car park for a cable car which was running and a good coffee machine. Sleep was disturbed by gun shots—hunters?

Our next planned campsite was at Amlach village near Lienz and Sadie took us right to the entrance, youngsters were pouring in since there was a pop concert. They were hippy style, liked reggae, Bob Marley—oh and kanja....some of the nearly deads (sorry!) on the campsite grumbled about their noise but I liked it. The campsite was wonderful with a lovely pool like an oasis and the quality showers were in the hotel.

Our friends Robin & Norrie had travelled to Bad Waldsee in Germany to have Hymer do some work on their van—text messages are wonderful and we will meet up in a few days as we all head for the next Moto GP at the Sachsenring .



*Mercie into tight dark tunnel*



*Very impressive Dolomites*



*Lucky to see car rally*



*Nearing Austrian border  
Cortina*

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## Terry's Travels

TT38-7 Awesome Austria 11th July 2011

I had picked the driving roads and the area to stay in Austria near Bad Ischl and I selected the campsite. It all has worked out brilliantly, we got a direct lakeside pitch at Camping Berau (hang the expense) even though the campsite was almost full. We have arrived at a special weekend, it's the Scalaria Air Challenge based on the lake at nearby St Wolfgang. This is a really classy place—no noisy motorcycles between 9pm and 6am! And private estates on the lakes edge. It is renowned as a spa town and becomes a summer centre for many events, we are just missing an outdoor performance of Phantom of the Opera. Even though I often dislike elitist places I think it's all wonderful, the houses and flowers are all immaculately kept. If you get time there will be many more photos on my Flickr site.

The lake became the airfield as the event uses float planes and modern flying boats. We saw them taking off and landing, the engines sounded fantastic and so powerful the take offs were easy. There were aerobatics and ground based jets joining in. I liked it best as evening fell with flares attached and smoke devices, the exciting event ended with fireworks and a BOOM that echoed round the hills and mountains. You can see from the last photo that it is as good as motor homing gets and with the Serow to get around on I was able to see so much very easily. The lake is crystal making the swimming fantastic—warm too and the place is a spa town. We haven't used the beauty, health and massage treatments that are all available at the on site 3\* hotel but did enjoy lunch overlooking the lake followed by evenings just sitting enjoying the peace—yes remarkably quiet even with a busy site and children, even the dogs seem calm and quiet.

The S49 brought us into Austria and our plan is to use scenic 158/151/143 maybe a bit of A8 which will take us into Germany near Passau which is also close to the Czech border. This will mean that we will have had good value from the vignette for Austrian roads the charge of 7.90 Euros covers vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes which just covers Mercie. Diesel was a bit cheaper than Italy at about 1.35 per litre. Mercie has been fuel efficient even coming over the many mountain passes but we do plan not to drive more than necessary to see what we want to see—



*1st Austrian campsite, Amlach*



*Bikers & cyclists as barriers open*



*Lake at St Wolfgang*



*Sunset taken from our Pitch at Camping Berau*

*Next Sachsenring Moto GP, back for summer in UK - Mercie serviced taxed etc. Ride new Tiger 800! Maybe a trip to Greece/Turkey Sept/Oct.....back to NZ for 2011/12 via Kerala in SW India where we hope to ride a mountain railway and rent a motorcycle.*



## Terry's Travels

TT38-8 Bavarian Summer 19th July 2011

There was no formal border crossing and we just drove the rolling green countryside from Austria into Bavaria near Passau. The traffic immediately quadrupled. Sadie took us on the motorway which we didn't want even though there are no tolls to pay, so we did our own navigation by road number to get the scenic route 85. The campsite was very pleasant and with wifi, bar, restaurant and large indoor swimming pool we decided on two nights. We met a family, he was Dutch and she had met him in Las Vegas and now they had three bilingual children, we enjoyed our outdoor meal talking with them. The town of Viechtach is located in one of Germany's Natur Parks and Bavaria has the most so my motorcycle outing was superb. Solar seems to be more evident than anywhere I have been and the powerful sun was certainly working it.

This camping Knaus site was impressive, just look at what was in the gents toilets, now I confess to not knowing about Sex Gags—do you tell them—or are they for wearing? The far column has tangas, slippers and more.... Di with pursed lips said “no there weren't any in the ladies”. But then she added that in an Austrian supermarket they had “things like that” where in England we would have sweets and chewing gum!

We had a walk around the affluent centre of the town and sat in a pavement cafe with iced coffees. It was all so orderly and very civilised in the same way that we found Austria to be, there was a great feeling that people were happy with their lives. The excellent local butcher had sauerkraut, Bavarian Blue cheese and freshly pickled veggies in aspic. Our iced coffees had filled us so that became dinner for us, we liked all the tastes.

Our next lovely campsite was at Issigau and we met R&N again prior to going to the Sachsenring together for the MotoGP race. We had a lovely meal together in the fine old building.

After the exciting race it was then an early start and driving the E40 motorway, we had our first stay in a TopPlatz which is a Stellplatz, simple sites costing below 10Euros with minimal facilities. This one was Bad Marienberg and at extra cost we got a swim. AVOID eating there—it was dire....



*Solar panels are changing*



*The scenery on houses & farms*



*Camping KNAUS—many facilities*



*Viechtach's outdoor pool was Crowded on this hot day*

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