

Denmark & Sweden

We are really looking forward to the trip – Dave has an IAAF meeting in Copenhagen, in conjunction with the World Half Marathon Championships which is why we are here. But the real excitement is seeing the homeland of Dave's grandfather, who was Danish.

Saturday – Day 1

We arrive in Copenhagen 6:00am Sat morning and have a leisurely coffee while waiting for the rental car agency to open. We are informed by Europcar that we have an upgraded car..... a Hyundai wagon, I30. We are happy with this and are informed it is brand new and we are the very first hirers. True to their word the car has 20km on the clock.

We're on our way without too much bother and stumble at the first hurdle when our instructions say "head west" on leaving the airport. It's just light, with some cloud cover and we have no idea where west is but, as luck would have it, we take the correct turn and away we go.

We are headed to **Vaerlose** to call in on our friends whom we work with at the Great Wall Marathon. Their son also stayed with us a couple of years ago when he was 'Komby'ing' his way up the east coast with his mate. We make it to their house at 8:30am, having only missed one turn along the way.

It's lovely to see them and they treat us to an amazing brekkie. Their son arrives - he has only flown in from Laos yesterday and he looks as tired as we feel. Their house backs onto a small lake which is privately owned by their next door neighbour and two other homes on the other side of the lake. We are talking extremely small here, about 40m diameter and they explain there are lots of lakes around due to 'glacial holes.' The slow moving glaciers carved deep holes in the earth a gazillion years ago and there are many lakes as a result.



We drive to a much larger lake, about 3km away, and go for a lovely walk through the woods and along the lakeside. There are so many people out – running, walking their dogs, mountain biking and orienteering. We have brought Kibble (a very cute lab) along and she swims in spite of the cold weather and ice cold water.



Back home we say our goodbyes and hit the road. We're hoping to see them again on Friday when we meet up for lunch in Copenhagen.

Next stop **Roskilde**, which is only about 30km down the road. We're holding up reasonably well so far and we check into our hotel, the **Prinsden**, around 1pm. We have a lovely room, at the back of the hotel (nice and quiet). We dump our bags and go for a drive around the **Roskilde Fjord** which is full of picturesque towns and lovely scenery.

By the time we get back, around 4pm, we are fading fast. Dave goes out on reconnaissance and comes back to say there's a café/restaurant down the road which looks nice AND it is open now (5:30pm). We shower and are out to dinner by 6pm.



The **Vivaldi Café** is only a few hundred metres down the main street, a pedestrian only mall. There's a lively feel to the place and we settle in and enjoy a light meal of goat's cheese salad (me) and pasta with prawns (for Dave). This is our first taste of restaurant life in Denmark and one thing is clear, it is expensive. My salad is \$20 and the pasta is \$30. They are good size meals but exxy. We did a bit of a check of what's available in the area and the menus are on the steep side.... which is why we settled for something light as we don't need a lot more due to the fact we're so tired and we had a substantial breakfast.

It's been 48hrs+ since we got up to fly to Denmark. We're back in our room by 7:30pm and in bed by 7:31pm.

Sunday – Day 2

It's light by 6am so we pull on the runners and head out. It's 2 degrees, clear sky and still..... perfect running conditions. We do a lap around the cathedral, which is only a block or so from our hotel, run down through the park and along the fjord. It's a lovely run in on a quiet morning and we enjoy the conditions.

We enjoy a rather fabulous brekkie in the hotel restaurant – the Europeans do the best bread and the Danish are certainly top of the tree. We go for a walk down the mall – still nobody in sight – and around to the cathedral. There are quite a few people going in so we figure we're in time for the 10am service.

A guy in a suit meets us as we enter and tells us “no tourists today, this is a closed service” – must have been the camera dangling around my neck that did it. I ask if we are permitted to attend the service and he says “of course.”

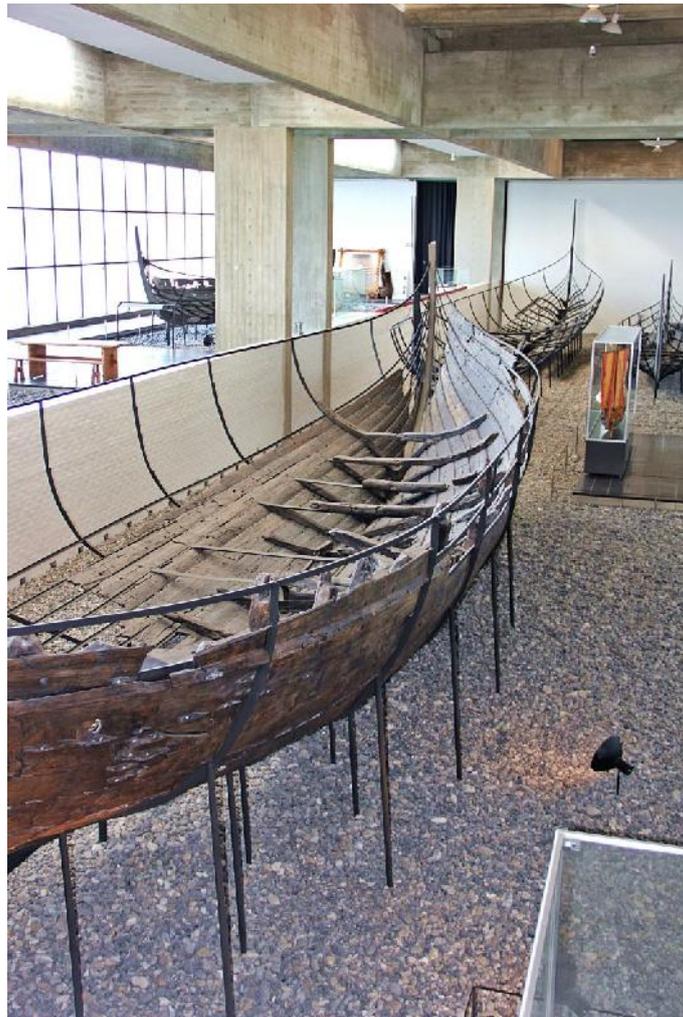
We take a seat up the back and realise, fairly soon, that the closed service is a baptism. A family walks up the aisle, led by the bubba who is held out front in all his/her baptismal finery, with the rest of the smiling family following. Drawing up the rear is the local padre who looks like he might moonlight in a ZZ Top covers band, with his bald head and long red beard. We depart quietly soon after.



We are having lunch with Henrik Brandt aka 'Mr Great Wall' for the fact he has run every one of them. Henrik lives here in Roskilde and has kindly invited us to his place for a “Danish lunch.” We check out of the hotel and notice lots of people in the foyer, there for Sunday brunch. As we drive off we discuss the fact that maybe lunch is something people do on Sunday. We then wonder if our own lunch could turn epic, in which case we really don't want to be driving 100+km to our next destination later today. We are going to visit the **Viking Museum**.

Then and there we decide we should stay another night, so we go back to the hotel and check back into our same room.

The Viking Museum is excellent and houses six Viking boats which were scuttled over a thousand years ago – the locals undertook a painstaking recovery a number of years ago and restored the boats as best they could with the wood they salvaged. They have done an amazing job and the recreated boats are now in the museum. The Viking history is interesting and the museum well worth the visit.



We get to Henrik's at 1pm and they have laid out a lovely spread for us. I've never had pickled herring before and it is excellent! We also have prawns, small chicken schnitzels, cold meats, cheese and more of that amazing bread. Second course comes out – Danish meatballs, salad, cheese. All accompanied by beer and schnapps. Excellent decision to check back into the hotel! Henrik has just written a book about his life as a marathon runner, primarily driven by the fact he's done every GWM (14 so far) and he has devoted a few pages to "Dave and Fran." He is going to drop a copy to our hotel in Copenhagen on Wednesday as the first run is due hot off the press by then. We look forward to it.

It's 5pm when we leave after a lovely afternoon with Henrik and Karin.

We settled back into our room for a quiet night in. No more food required.



Monday – Day 3

Big fog! We can't see the steeple on the cathedral and it's only a block or so away. We linger over breakfast before packing and moving on out. We're off to Odense, on the neighbouring island of Funen, home of HC Andersen. Odense is about 100km away... everything is close in Denmark.

There is a bridge connecting the two islands and we are somewhat (hugely) surprised when we get a few kroners change out of AUD\$50. It's a very nice bridge and around 15km long but wow, that's a hell of a toll.

We are finding out that Denmark is expensive and that many things are closed this time of year. Boat ride on the fjord – closed. Nicest castle in Denmark – closed. Accommodation options – closed. Restaurants – closed. Many things open around mid-April so we're a bit early.

On the upside it is fantastic to see that everyone rides a bike. Well, not quite everyone but nearly everyone. There are bike lanes everywhere and not just piddly parts of the road where you're matching it with irate drivers but proper bike paths, separated from the vehicular traffic. It also appears that cyclists are treated with respect, cars give way to them and everyone gets along fine. We figure that even the people in the cars are bike riders at some stage.

And of course, the other thing we love is FREE internet access. Once again highlighting how far behind the times we are in Oz.

We get to **Odense** and do a loop of the city centre. We park and go for a bit of a walk around. The day isn't great, overcast and threatening, there are no leaves on the trees and things just look a bit drab. Back in the car we go for a further drive to find HC Andersen's family home. We find it and become a little more underwhelmed.... we were expecting maybe an 'open house' but all we find is a wee cottage with a name tag on the front in ridiculously small letters.



We decide to continue travelling (instead of staying the night) in the hope of better times and better towns. The city has the feel of an 'upmarket eastern European' city, mainly due to all the blocks of flats. Odense is a university city so we assume the flats might be student accommodation but they really lower the tone of the place. As does all the graffiti.

Onto **Svendborg** – a picturesque seaside village in the south of the island. Even in the rain it is appealing. We do a bit of a drive around and decide we'll try the Best Western. Very 'not us' but it is located right in the centre of town, close to the harbour and rates well. We've done something we don't usually do and not booked any accommodation. Denmark isn't big on accommodation and I'm left with the distinct feeling that there's not a huge amount of tourism in the country. Might be wrong.

We decide to eat in tonight and the receptionist at the hotel directs us to a cheese shop only a few hundred metres down the road. Closed Mondays. We have a local map and head to the supermarket, which turns out to be a good km or so down the road. It's a blend of Target, Bunnings and a supermarket all under the same roof.... huge.

We find some great cheese, excellent bread, some Italian wine and fresh raspberries. Gourmet.

Tuesday – Day 4

Just after 6am we head out for a run. We are seriously underdressed. It is freezing and we have a long sleeve technical shirt with a short sleeve shirt over the top, ie two very thin shirts. We have half-length tights. Runners coming the other direction have long tights, zip up tops, ear warmers, etc. We have cotton gloves but no head gear.

We notice that the puddles from yesterday's rain are frozen. Yep, it is freezing! As we run along the harbour we notice a sign on the side of a building..... confirmation that it is minus 3 degrees. We continue running along the harbour and round a corner to see the most magnificent sunrise. There is a mist rising off the water. A magnificent day with clear blue skies and no wind.

We enjoy another fabulous Danish breakfast before heading to the harbour to catch the ferry to the island of **Aero**, a 75 minute trip.

There's a bit of cloud building up but the sunshine wins out as we walk around the town of **Aeroskobing**. The island has a reputation as being the most beautiful of all the 460 Danish islands, mainly due to the colourful houses. They are also self-sufficient and use renewable energy sources – there are six wind turbines that provide electricity for the whole island (population 6,600) plus leftovers; a huge solar heating plant supplies the majority of the heating requirements with the remainder from a chip boiler.



Unfortunately, there are more things closed than open but the houses alone are worth the trip, as is the quaint village atmosphere. We make our way to the bike hire shop and it is locked. My Danish is coming along quite well and I work out quickly that the sign in the window says, "Closed today, open tomorrow."

There is a free bus service on the island, which is 30km long and 3km wide at its widest point. We jump the bus and travel to **Marsten**, which also looks very closed down, so we stay on the bus and to **Scoby**, at the other end of the island. Same closed down feel so we stay on the bus and go back to base. There's not a lot else to see so we board the ferry and head home.

As we reach the harbour the weather is starting to close in. We have a bit of a walk through town to see if there is something that might attract us for dinner. We ponder a while and decide that (1) in two hours' time this weather could be anything (there is an icy wind and the black clouds are coming in quickly; (2) it will be hit and miss to see if anything is open of a night time and: (3) we're happy to stay in again! We top up the cheese supply from the now

open cheese shop and tootle back to the hotel via the fresh fruit shop where we pick up some strawberries. The shop owner advises that snow is forecast for Thursday!

We have a chat to the delightful Irene at reception and she tells us there is sleet forecast for tonight. Good move on the decision to eat in.



Wednesday 26 March

It's a wet and miserable day as we leave Svendborg.... we've really enjoyed the town and the accommodation was excellent, especially the cosy beds and soft pillows, which is what makes the difference at the end of the day.

We continue our circular trip and cross onto the island of **Langeland**. The day is showing signs of brightening up with sun breaking through as we sit and wait for the car ferry to get to **Lolland**, another island. The car ferry costs a bomb but we're now immune to the high prices. We drive through Lolland without feeling the need to stop anywhere.

The tourist info at Svendborg suggested the island of **Mon** was worth having a look at, as is **Mons Klint**, which looks very much like the white cliffs of Dover. For a small island, it takes forever to get to Mons Klint, a pleasant drive through more quiet villages. We get there and find we need to do a bit of hiking to get the views of the cliffs! We take the shortest route and as we walk up the boardwalk we are hit with a glacial wind. Freezing. And we didn't particularly rug up when we got out of the car.

We walk a few hundred metres, find we can't see a whole lot and give it up. It's getting late in the day and we really need to find some accommodation for tonight.



Off we speed and hit the freeway north. We've identified **Koge** as a possibility and, once there, we come across the **Comwell Hotel**, which looks ok. We ask if we can see a room and she shows us one that smells.... which we don't really care about as we'll open the door.... but can't as we're on the ground floor so anyone can walk in if the door is open (it leads to a small balcony; they don't have windows that open). We move to another room, up a level and it's fine. Except for the traffic noise during the night... of which we were assured there would be none.

It's now 6:30pm so we head straight out to dinner. The hotel has recommended **Christians Minde** and it reads quite well. The Chinese owner greets us and we settle into a cosy restaurant with a few other diners. The menu is authentic Danish food..... and the second part of the menu is Chinese food. Too funny.

We order Beef Stroganoff and a French Merlot... that would be neither Danish nor Chinese. The wine is excellent and so is the strog. When we exit the restaurant there's no one around.

Thursday – Day 5

We enjoy an early morning run through the town, a 'just adequate' breakfast and hit the road to **Copenhagen**. It's only 40+ km up the road and we're there by 11am. The **Marriott** will be our home for the next three days (maybe longer, who knows) and it is the IAAF Family hotel for this weekend's world champs.

Our room is available and we settle into a lovely, large room with all mod cons. Including a king bed.... we're getting fairly sick of single beds shoved together and single doonas. We have some meet and greets, grab our accreditation and walk off towards the city.

Copenhagen has the longest pedestrian mall in the world and it is about 10mins walk from the hotel. It is overcast and quite cold. We walk for a while and decide we'll have a hot chocolate.... excellent decision as it is amazingly good! Then we find a chocolate shop.... I didn't like the sample at all (dark chocolate which I don't like at all) but Dave enjoyed it. Best find was the Castello cheese 'pop up' shop.

The lady invites us in and tells us we can sample the cheese and the chutneys available. If we'd like some wine with that they have some up the back! The pop up shop is here for 2mths then it goes to New York. I may follow.

We indulge in cheese sampling and are already familiar with some of their cheeses as we've had them in the previous few days. We buy a lump of very bitey cheddar to take with us. I'm sure we'll put it to good use in the coming weeks while we're away.

We walk a bit longer before going back to the hotel. Once more, we catch up with a few people before going back to the room for a soak in a hot bath. Bliss.

No photos. Too grey and blah.

The concierge has recommended a few restaurants for us to choose from tonight. We do a bit of research and decide we'll take the brisk 10min walk to **Puk**, which serves authentic Danish food.

As soon as we enter we know we've made the right choice. The restaurant is in a basement and is full to the brim. Mine host comes to us immediately and asks if we have a booking.... nope (we never think that far ahead) and tells us she has one table left, just inside the entrance. Perfect! There is a lovely ambiance to the place, with soft lighting and a very rustic feel.

The menu is full of tantalising options – I settle for Pork Casserole with Mushrooms, Onions and Mash while Dave goes for the Liver with Mushrooms and Gravy. We both feel like a beer and our host recommends Puk beer, specially brewed for the restaurant on the island of Bornholm.

The beer is excellent and the food extraordinary! My mash is in a separate container and is light, fluffy and mixed through with parsley. Dave contends his liver is the best he has had.

We leave very contented and relieved we have a walk home to end the evening.

Friday – Day 6

It is a stunning clear day, with not a cloud in the sky.

Off to the race expo for a quick look around. It's not large but it's busy with several displays from shoe, garment and drink providers.

We arrive back at the hotel just in time for our 12:30pm appointment with our friends, who have kindly offered to take us to lunch today. We head north, out of Copenhagen to some of the most spectacular coastline anywhere in the world. Not for its dramatic landscape but for the beautiful houses that line the wide road leading north, dotted along with marinas, restaurants and beaches. Simply gorgeous.

We pull into a marina and take a table at Nautilus, with views over the water. Dave and I both enjoy "Four Styles of Fish" which is light and appropriate when we have an official dinner to attend this evening. We look on with amusement as a number of people come out

onto a nearby jetty, strip off and go into the water. They don't stay in for long but this is apparently a tradition in Denmark, particularly the nudie part of the equation.



We take a quick walk before driving further north to **Karen Blixon's** house, which is now a lovely café. We sit outside in the sunshine, as it's now reached 10 degrees and, with no wind, it is glorious. The hot chocolate is divine and we then take a walk through the gardens and woods behind the house. Karen's resting place is underneath a magnificent tree at the back of the property.



Dinner tonight is at **Moltkes Palae** an exquisite venue of fine European architecture. The very formal dining room is all a titter (or is it just me?) with the air of anticipation as we await the arrival of Crown Prince Frederick. How exciting. And how very normal he is. Quite youthful, extremely friendly and really easy going. Fred is happy talking to anyone who'd like to have a chat with him.

Our dinner is exquisite and one of the best meals we've had at a venue where there is a 'mass serving.' We start with smoked salmon, enjoy a roasted fillet of veal then overindulge with profiteroles and hot chocolate sauce. Yummo!

On our return to the hotel we adjourn to the bar where all the deals are done the night gets late very quickly.

Saturday – Day 7

Race day! Albeit not until lunch time. Perfect day, blue sky, not a cloud in sight.

We linger over breakfast, do a few things in the room, then take the 11am bus to the race start/finish area. True to form, Fred turns up and makes conversation with anyone who'd like to approach him. He really is quite an affable chap. No sign of Mary though.

The elite women start first. The men start 30 minutes later, with the mass field starting just behind them on the same gun. 30,000 runners in the mass race and they take 51 minutes to cross the start line.

The Kenyan women clean up, taking the first five places.... unprecedented in World Half Champs history. Gladys Cherono led a Kenyan dominated World Half Marathon Championships to claim line honours in a season's best time of 1:07:28 ahead of Mary Ngugi, who clocked a PB of 1:07:43 to take silver. Selly Kaptich, also ran a PB of 1:07:51 in finishing third.



Race favourite Lucy Kabuu came fourth in 1:08:36 five seconds ahead of Mercy Kibarus, to complete Kenya's clean sweep of the top five positions, a first at the World Half Marathon Championships. The race was run in near perfect conditions with a temperature around 10-12 degrees, no wind to speak of and a flat course.

In the men's event Geoffrey Kamworor convincingly took out the men's title in 59:07, putting a spoiler on Zersenay Tadese's attempt to take a sixth world title. Tadese has won five gold and one silver in the past six events but was kept off the podium in finishing fourth in 59:37, faster than his winning times in 2008 and 2012.

Second in the men's event went to Tadese's teammate from Eritrea, Samuel Tsegay in 59:20, with bronze medallist Guye Adola, crossing the line also in a time of 59:20.

We walk back to the hotel, in time for Dave's 3:00pm meeting with the IAAF.

This evening we go to the **Fredericksburg Town Hall** for the farewell dinner/party. The dinner is again excellent..... the Danish have nailed it when it comes to serving lots of people a quality meal.

We are just served dessert when the place lights up with the noise of a brass band..... around 30-40 of them enter the hall, to the strains of 'Let Me Entertain You.' And entertain they did. The Copenhagen show band turned it on with impressive dance moves and fabulous music.

Sunday – Day 8

Another glorious day and we're now in daylight saving so our 7:30am sleep in is now 8:30am. Despite the time, we go out for a run around the lake, which is about 600m from our hotel. We see quite a few of yesterday's runners while out, as their hotel is directly opposite the lake.

Breakfast takes place around 10:00am, after which we hire a couple of bikes from the hotel concierge and commence our ride around Copenhagen. The city is quiet and we enjoy seeing the sights with few others around. We've muddled around so much this morning that, by the time we get to **Nyhavn** (New Harbour) the 12 o'clock change of the guard is clomping their way down the road. We follow them to **Amalienborg Palace**, which is completely open to the public to wander around. There are a few guards on duty out front but you can virtually walk to the front door to take photos and admire the buildings.



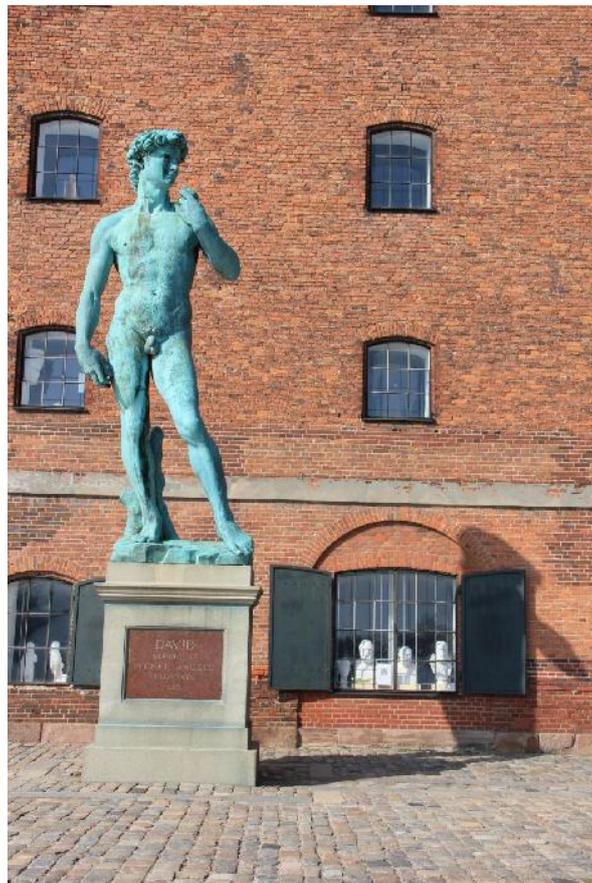
We cycle onwards to view the **Little Mermaid** along with a few hundred others. Copenhagen is a city of statues. We continue our cycle to the end of the waterway and find a café where, apparently, the local bikers (not bikies) assemble on Sunday. There is a fine display of motorcycles parked at the café.



On our return journey we stop for a hot chocolate at a waterside café... the café is across the road and there is just a sprinkling of tables adjacent the water. The sun is beaming down, it's around 12 degrees, there is no wind and the water is sparkling. This is just magic.



Back on the treddlies we make our way through the parks of the city and walk through the botanical gardens. We cycle up and down waterways, with thousands of others who are on bikes, pushing prams, walking their dogs and running.



I love that the Danish mothers have real prams.... big, old fashioned prams with large wheels where their bubs are all tucked up in their winter wraps. And when bub sits up, they do so in

their pram, not in the sling style prams we have. Likely explanation is it's simply too damn cold to have open strollers but I just love prams. I had a Swedish Emmaljunga pram for the children and they are still quite around in Copenhagen, 30 years later!



We work our way back to Nyhavn where the sun is beaming down on the colourful buildings and the cafes and restaurants are bulging with Sunday diners. We park the bikes and stroll along the harbour, before taking a table in the sun where we sit and enjoy life in Copenhagen.



Eventually we leave and return to the hotel. It's quiet as most people have now departed. We extended our stay to enjoy the delights of Copenhagen and it hasn't let us down.

We return to **Restaurant Puk** for dinner – Dave can't go past the liver again and I have a local dish of oven baked salmon with mashed potato, cooked on a slate tile. Unbelievably good! The restaurant is situated in one of the oldest buildings in Copenhagen where it has been used as a restaurant since 1750.



Monday – Day 9

Yet another brilliant day! We take the opportunity to use our bikes again and ride into the city to visit the Lego store before we depart.



We pack and leave the hotel, not exactly ecstatic about leaving Copenhagen. It is truly one of the world's most beautiful cities and we've absolutely loved every minute of our stay.

We retrace our drive from Friday, heading north to **Helsingor**. We find a lovely café on a small harbour and have brunch, around 1pm. It's 13 degrees, no wind and just gorgeous as we have Chevre Bruschetta (me) and Mozarella Bruschetta (Dave).

As we drive north we can see quite a thick sea fog enveloping Sweden, just across the water. We get to Helsingor as the ferry departs for **Helsingborg** (Sweden) and figure they must go every hour, on the quarter past the hour. We park in town and go for a walk, deciding we'll catch the ferry as there doesn't seem a lot to do here. Within about 15mins the sea fog descends on the town and it is freezing. We go back to the car and make a bolt for the ferry, boarding about 5mins before departure time.



The trip is only 20 minutes and the shore disappears quickly into the fog as we pull away from the harbour.



Helsingborg, while a beautiful town, is still fog bound and miserable. We go to **Maria Hotel**, have a look at their rooms and check in. It's a small, boutique hotel in a quiet part of town which will serve us well for our stay.

The town itself is very pleasant with a pedestrian mall lined with lovely shops. We've still got a stash of cheese and we buy a loaf of bread at the most amazing Boulangerie, where we manage to resist the delectable display of cakes and pastries.

We settle in for a quiet evening, with our cheese bread and red wine.

Tuesday – Day 10

The day dawns brightly.... no fog in sight and we enjoy a scrumptious brekkie in the sun drenched dining room.



We take a walk around the local area and up to **Karnan** (The Keep) a mediaeval fort above town. We ascend via the park and when we get to the steps to return to the city there is a memorial sight.... a spontaneous affair set up because of riots last Saturday night.

When we checked into the Hotel Maria, the lass told us (in the context of us requesting a quiet room) that the weekend was very noisy but now the hooligans have gone home. There was a local football match, between Helsingborg and Stockholm, and then the fans rampaged through the city – there are many smashed windows, upturned chairs in outdoor cafes and ruined gardens about the place. During their rioting, a local lad was killed and the fans have laid out scarves, candles, flowers and messages in support. There are many youngsters taking photos and a few older people crouching close by, lost in their thoughts.



We grab the car and drive along the coast – it's cold, only 5 degrees, but the sunshine is winning out. Along the way we do a stop to test the water.... it's freezing! Glad we didn't decide to do the nudie swim last week after lunch!



We go through **Hoganas** and stop at the fishing village of **Molle**, a beautiful spot with a Grand Hotel taking foremost place on the landscape. We visit the Grand to see if the café is open – it's not. There is truly little sign of life anywhere.... same, same as Denmark really.



Kullaberg is our next stop and it is stunning nature park at the end of the peninsula. There is a golf course in the park and Dave recalls reading that this area of Sweden (Skane) has the second highest density of golf courses in the world, after Florida. We park the car and walk to the point of the promontory, where there is a visitor's centre. The area is alive with flora, fauna and sea creatures. We walk right to the edge of the headland to see the rocks which, according to all the photos, are quite famous. They throw a beautiful pink colour and I can imagine them in the fading light of day.





Dave comments we must be in the quietest place on earth. There is nothing.... absolute silence.... apart from the gentle lapping of the water on the rocks in the shallows far below.

We hug the other side of the coast, driving through the quaint village of **Jonstorp** and we enjoy the scenic farms along the way.



Back in Helsingborg we take a walk through town, first stop the exceptional cafe just a few blocks from our hotel. They have a majorly impressive selection of pastries and cakes but we settle for a hot chocolate which is, by far, the best we've enjoyed on this trip.



The sun is shining and the afternoon reasonably pleasant. We walk along the waterfront where there are numerous restaurants – while we can envisage a lively area in the summer today the restaurants are closed and the people non-existent.



We go out for dinner.....a whole three steps (nearly) from our room. The Hotel Maria is home to Helsingborg's first tapas restaurant, **Maria's Tapas Bar** (who would have guessed?). There is a lovely fire going in the restaurant and I stand close by.... the waiter is concerned I am cold and the room is too cold but I have to explain that I'm cold as we've been in our room with the window wide open!

The restaurant isn't huge but it is full and we wait for people to leave before we are able to be seated. We enjoy a fab meal of patatas bravas, shrimp, calamari, mussels, hummus with tortilla bread, goat's cheese with walnuts, pork fillet and chorizo. All small serves and all extremely yummy. Why bother going out when you can get quality like this at the hotel!

Wednesday – Day 11

The day is a bit overcast when we head out for a run. There is a track running from the park up the hill so we climb the steps up and find a great, gravel running track. We encounter a few blocks of running on the road but, for the most part, it's great underfoot as we wind our way through the backblocks of the city, with parks, ponds, woods and too many stairs along the way. It is really cold as we turn to run back along the waterfront but we really enjoy our 60 minute run.

The weather starts to close in a bit as we head to **Malmö** and by the time we check into the **Duxiana Hotel** the afternoon has turned reasonably ugly with a cold wind blowing through the streets. We decide that as it's such a cold afternoon we'll go for lunch..... seems like nearly every top restaurant in Malmö is less than 300m away. We choose **Sture**, which reads well and is only two blocks away. It's a late lunch (after 1:30pm) but we settle in for what we hope will be a leisurely and long lunch.

As soon as we are seated the waitress brings bread, two small glass cups and pours Parsnip Soup into them! It is divine. 30 seconds later she's back and tells us today's special is the pork loin with baked cauliflower and potato puree.... would we like it? I ask if there is another option or a menu? Oh yes, she provides it and translates the available options, somewhat lackadaisically. Clearly we are being steered to the daily special, which sounds fine to us so we confirm we'll have it. Wine seems to be limited to the red she brings us. It's all a bit strange really.

Wouldn't be five minutes after we've ordered that lunch appears. Too quick? I'm immediately disappointed as obviously the meal hasn't been freshly cooked and mine is not hot... warm enough but far from hot. The pork is lovely though, as are the vegies and the accompanying jus.

As with many restaurants, once you've ordered and the meal has been served, it's the last you see of anyone. So while we were counting on a long lunch it's all done and dusted in way less than 30 minutes, which we find quite amusing as well as a bit of a letdown.

We decide we'll find a cosy coffee shop and walk through the pedestrian mall that's close by. We find a lovely coffee shop in the first block but keep on walking to have a look around. After a while, the wind is so bitter that we give up and return to the coffee shop, where we snuggle up with a hot chocolate and a slice each. As we leave light rain starts to fall and by the time we reach the hotel the rain becomes heavier but doesn't last long.

We bunker down in the room for the rest of the afternoon/evening, re-packing and preparing for our flight to the UK tomorrow.

We have absolutely adored Denmark and Sweden and wish we had a whole lot more time to drive a lot further through Scandinavia. We will save this for another time though, when the weather is warmer and there are more things on offer.

