



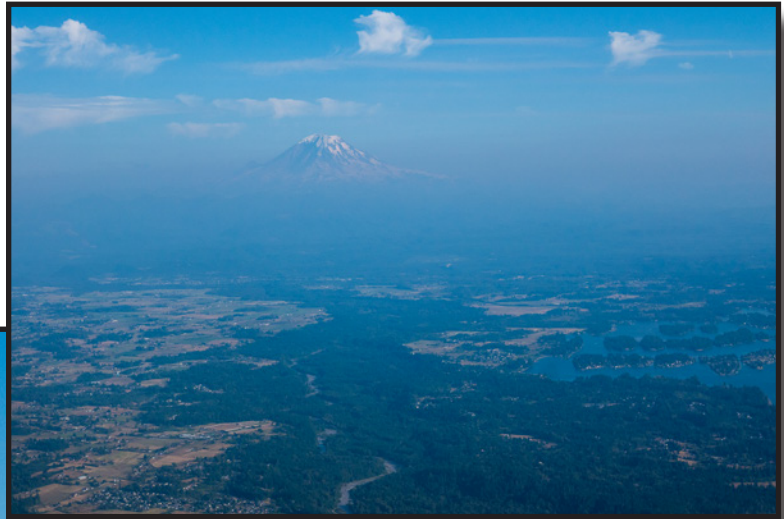
SEATTLE TO BUCURESTI - AUGUST, 2018

This adventure was a prelude to our Black Sea to North Sea by river boat adventure, which started in Bucuresti (Bucharest in English). Having never been to Bucuresti, it seemed a shame to travel that far and stay one night before hooking up with the river boat and the rest of the tour... So... We scheduled it so we could spend a few days in Bucuresti on our own before hand.

We had a direct flight from Seattle to Amsterdam, but had to switch planes in Amsterdam to continue on to Bucuresti. Being an educated and knowledgeable optimist, (or a pessimist if you prefer), we also booked an extra day in Amsterdam to give any lost checked luggage the opportunity to find us if necessary.

This summer Seattle and the Puget Sound area had been inundated by smoke from forest fires to the north, (both Washington and Canada). Although the wind had shifted so that the smoke was less an issue than normal, it was still pretty hazy.

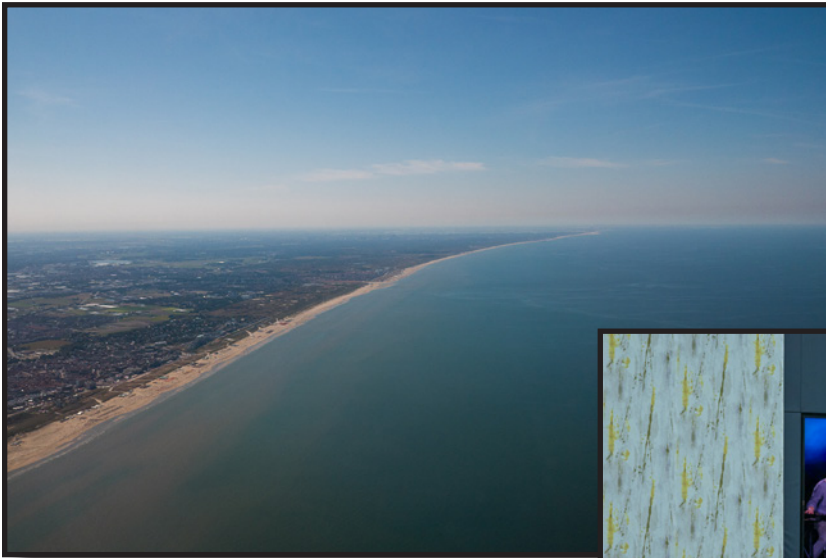
As we flew over the North Cascades and the Canadian border we began to see the sources of all the smoke.





AMSTERDAM...

We arrived in Amsterdam to clearer skies than what we had left.



We stayed at a hotel in the Amsterdam airport for convenience and to optimize efforts any lost luggage would have to take to find us.

The lounge in the hotel had music videos rather than a live band showing on a series of wall displays. I made a short video of this which you can see by clicking on the image or this text. ***Access by WiFi is recommended due to the large file size of the video and you will have to back-page to get back to here.***



Our luggage was ejected onto the airport carousel in a timely manner and without any further travels on it's own. That left a whole day to spend in some other manner than on wayward luggage issues, so we chose to take the train into Amsterdam and visit the second floor of the Rijksmuseum, primarily the Gallery of Honour and Night Watch Gallery. There was also a special exhibition for model ships which couldn't be ignored.



Since we are considering building yet another home and it would require some sort of library, we checked out the Rijksmuseum's Cuyper Library for inspiration.



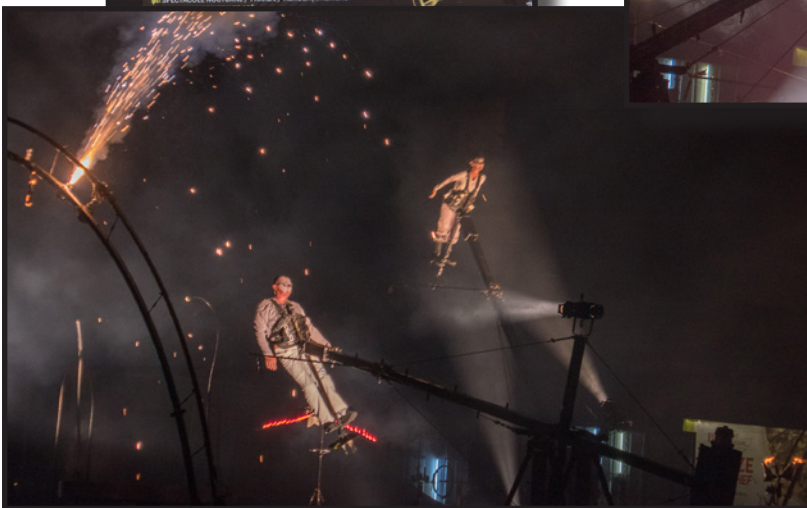
The next morning it was an easy walk from the Amsterdam airport hotel into the airport. After we checked in, we watched this clock in the Amsterdam airport from the obligatory Starbucks cafe. It was entertaining and certainly helped the time pass, albeit not really any faster. I did a short video of it which you can see by clicking the clock image or this text. **Access by WiFi is recommended due to the large file size of the video and you will have to back-page to get back to here.**

BUCURESTI...

After a short flight, relative to the Seattle to Amsterdam leg, we checked into our hotel and explored Bucuresti for the next few days, damaged toe and all...

Our first night there, we were treated to some street theater and fireworks that I scheduled, just across the street from our hotel.

I frequently try to start off our adventures by a surprise fireworks display for Wendy, (or at least by taking credit for any serendipitous fireworks events we do encounter).





Bucuresti monuments on Revolution Square. Recent unrest has taken it's toll on the monuments in Revolution Square



Statue of Iuliu Maniu
(January 8, 1873 – February 5, 1953. Maniu served as Prime Minister of Romania for three terms during 1928–1933, and, with Ion Mihalache, co-founded the National Peasants' Party

Below: just another interesting sculpture.



The monument to the right, roughly translated, "*The Cart With Harlequin*", stands in front of The National Theatre Bucharest. It seemed to me to be a very fitting sculpture.



Memorial of Rebirth: This memorial to the victims of the Romanian Revolution of 1989 is often compared to a potato on a skewer. The red just under the "potato" was actually part of the original sculpture, not recent graffiti.





Over the few days we were in Bucuresti we dropped a substantial amount of Hungarian forints (Hungarian currency) at the French Revolution eclair shop just across the street from our hotel. Yet another business I would happily fund for a Poulsbo location. You can see more here: <https://www.frenchrevolution.ro/>

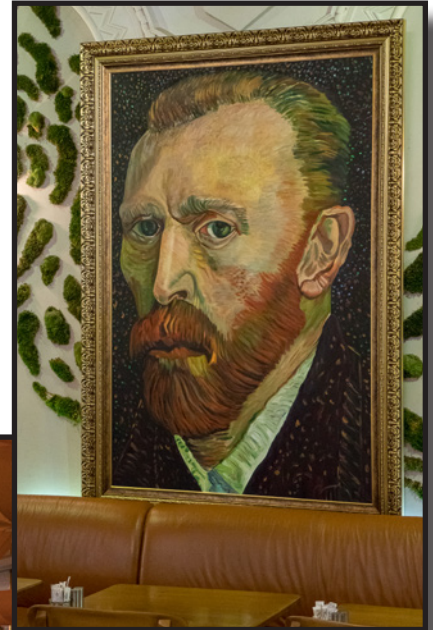


One can even have the eclairs delivered to you, which will eventually lead to a visit to the left.



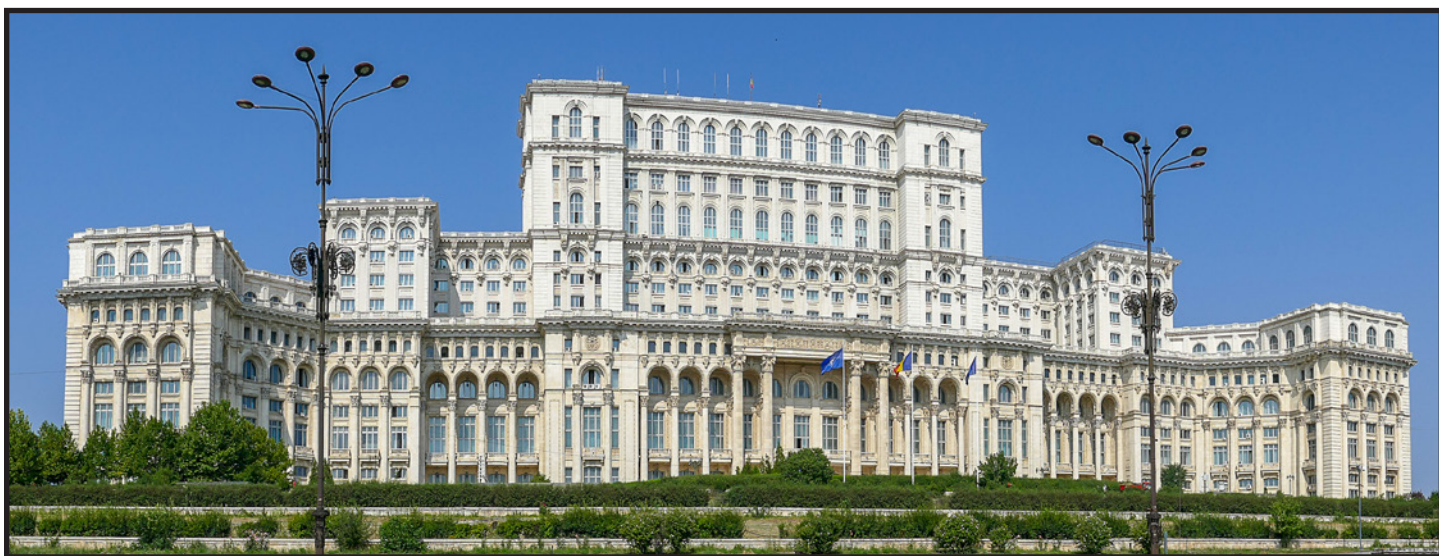


We enjoyed a glass of wine here one evening. Lots of art and people watching. We were there in early evening, so all the activity and customers were outside enjoying the very warm weather.





The iconic Palace of the Parliament is the seat of the Parliament of Romania. Having 3,930,000 sq ft, it is the second largest administrative building in the world and is the heaviest building in the world. The Palace was ordered by Nicolae Ceaușescu (1918–1989), the dictator of Communist Romania and the second of two longtime autocrats in power in the country since World War II. After the Romanian Revolution in December 1989 it became widely known as The People's House. About 70% of the building remains empty. In 1990 Rupert Murdoch tried to buy the building for US \$1 billion, but his bid was rejected. The cost of heating and electric use and lighting alone exceeds \$6 million per year. I think of it as Ceaușescu's Romanian Albatross.



The image below was my view from a Ceaușescu's Romanian Albatross balcony.





The images below are samples of the few Ceaușescu's Romanian Albatross big open spaces we were allowed to see AND photograph.
More information here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace_of_the_Parliament





We visited the National Village Museum “Dimitrie Gusti”. Founded by royal decree in 1936, this outdoor museum, the largest in Europe, covers some 30 acres. It features a collection of 50 buildings representing the history and design of Romania’s rural architecture. Steep-roofed peasant homes, thatched barns, log cabins, churches and watermills from all regions of the country were taken apart, shipped to the museum and rebuilt in order to recreate a village setting.

More information here: <http://muzeul-satului.ro/en/>





Right: We went by this interesting building, a new structure built from inside of an old one, a few times before finding out it's background. It is currently called the ASMC Office building. It was just across the street from the Revolution Square and where some of the revolutionaries had held up and fought in the 1989 revolution. Now the old facade, with all the bullet holes and battle scars, is preserved as part of this new office building.

Below: The old and new juxta positioned, a classic theme I never get tired of.



Below: Under construction, the Catedrala Mântuirii neamului. The sheer size of the building drew criticism from various sources, including the French newspaper Le Figaro, which named it 'a pharaonic project' and 'worthy of the megalomania of Nicolae Ceaușescu'. Alexandru Paleologu called for the cathedral project to be stopped. He compared it to the Soviet-inspired Casa Scânteii and the House of the People. Cristian Tudor Popescu, a journalist called the cathedral a 'God mall'. He said it was not churches, either big nor small, that Romania was lacking. The Romanian Orthodox Church's answer to such criticism was that the new cathedral would not imitate the gigantic buildings of the communist era, but would 'correct them, through a decent and harmonious volumetry'.

But the Muslim religion was not to be out sized, as there was a proposed Turkey-funded mega-mosque in Bucuresti that sparked a lot of resistance also. It was initially meant to be 'the largest in a European capital'. I have read that in 2018 that project was abandoned due the lack of funds. It appears, not so much for Catedrala Mântuirii neamului.



Below: Something a bit less controversial, an umbrella shaded street was nice on a hot day! I vote for more of these!





Below: We happened upon the filming of some sort of music video.



Below: Our Situation Room most mornings, just around the corner from our hotel.



We then hooked up with the tour boat people, left Bucuresti with fond memories and started our Black Sea to North Sea by boat adventure. That will be the subject of the next Flying Pig Adventures (or two as it was a long adventure).

Regards,

Wally & Wendy

.END



Above: We saw his fellow at Revolution Square. He drew a lot of attention from locals and tourists alike, but no one chatted him up, they just watched him. Curiosity did not get the better of me this time, and we walked the other way.

