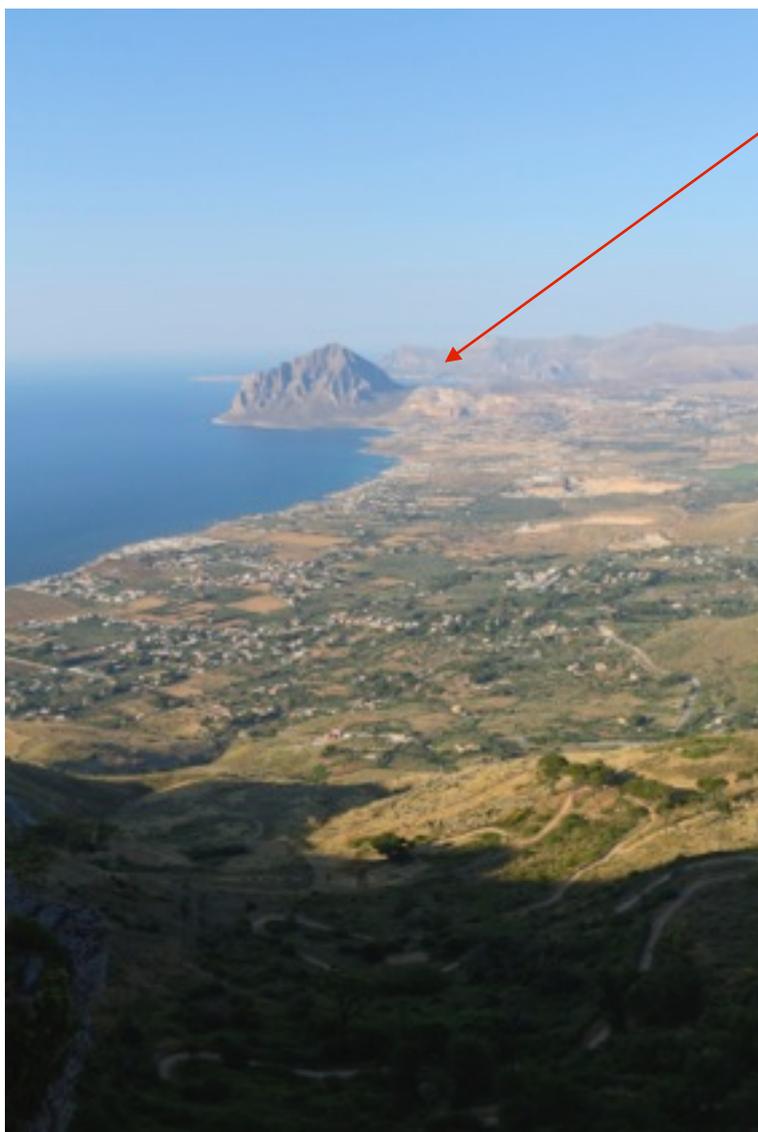


# SIZZLING SICILY

Craig | Joanne | Peanut



We were here tucked behind the bumpy bit & now we are here in the mountains.

It is now getting extremely hot and sticky in Sicily. Peanut has ditched his fluffy bed and opted for a big, soaking wet yellow cloth. A month ago he would not go anywhere near the sea but now he makes a mad dash for it, me included. Craig on the other hand thinks its mildly warm - I always said he wasn't right.

The sunshine is fine but the humidity is the killer, it saps all your energy and makes you look like a drowned rat all the time.

Sicily still continues to be a marvellous place and each day we encounter a new unforgettable memory.



### Monday 16th June: Erice to San Vito Lo Capo

Craig has itchy feet and I have itchy arms, so we are leaving Erice and I am gutted. I really like it up here in the clouds, it is nice and cool but peaceful. I could walk around these little streets and browse the half a dozen shops all day. Find me a step to sit on and leave me there to watch the world go by.



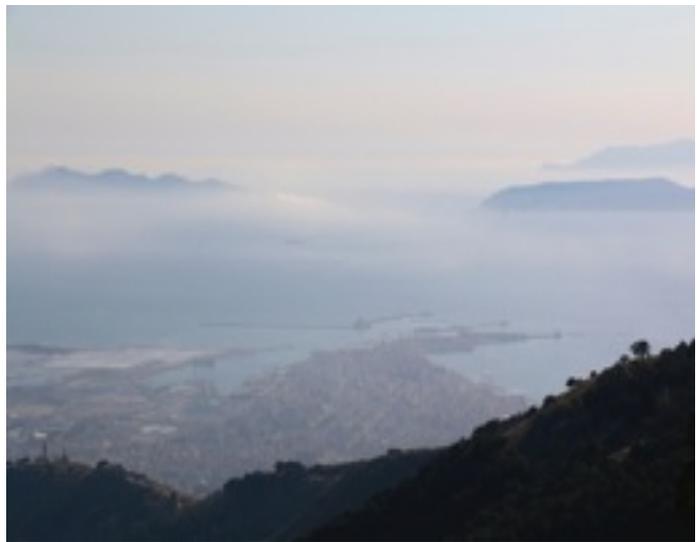
*The road  
down  
from  
Erice -  
hang on  
Homer  
we're  
going for  
a ride.*

As we wound our way down from Erice you could feel the temperature increase. I will miss Erice, it is one of those places that I will remember and certainly recommend as a place worth visiting. As the temperature increased Craig smiled, I frowned, well they do say opposites attract!. At least I have Peanut on my side, so when the heat gets tough we can both flake out together, giving Craig a hint it is too hot. For some reason, Craig does not feel the heat, it can be 40 degrees and he doesn't even break out in a sweat.

We headed to San Vito Lo Capo, which is only half an hour away. After driving through the town we wasn't quite sure about staying here. The beach looked good but the town itself felt a bit too fabricated for us. We did a bit of a u-turn and drove back a few kilometres around the headland. La Bahira doesn't



*Egadi Islands just off Sicily  
taken from the top of Erice*



have the stretch of sandy been like San Vito but it is quieter and part of a nature reserve.

The area attracts a lot of climbers with sheer cliffs and vertical rocks. Very dramatic landscape and one that you can gaze at for hours. Imagine a huge bay with vertical cliff face that stretch half a mile up. Most the of time the peaks are in cloud, so it adds to the drama. We pulled on to the campsite and got a good discount with our ASCI card €16 per night. The site has lots of facilities, so should be a good place to have a holiday - beach front, 2 swimming pools, restaurant, showers, laundry, mini golf, climbing services, diving facilities, beach bar... So for the price, its not bad. It is extremely quiet and so there is ample space to chose from and that causes problems because you constantly drive around looking for the best. Then you go to park up and decide it aint level enough...grrr too much choice is not good. After putting up our stall the heavens opened (no surprise there then), so we watch Ghandi.

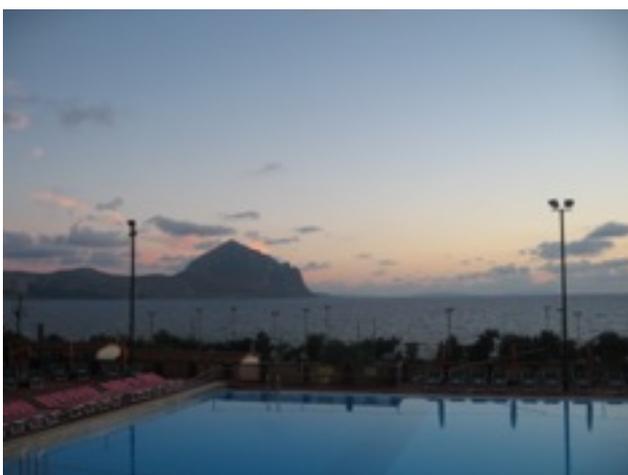
### *Tuesday 17th June: San Vito Lo Capo*

The campsite is OK but its a bit dull and dismal where we are, so we've decided to move. The site is split in two - top and bottom. The top seems to be mainly long stay caravans and the bottom is more short stay with a mixture of motorhomes and statics for rent. When we arrived yesterday they asked us to park anywhere in the top half, which is good if you like living in darkness. Its great for shade but its dark and



cramped, so no breeze which makes it very hot and sticky. We moved to the bottom half and much better. Still trees for shade but less crowded, so much brighter. Its also a lot closer to the sea, so nice breeze every so often.

The internet is still down and as it is overcast, so you can see people getting restless, not knowing what to do. Its not just our internet it something to do with the whole area as even the campsite has no access. The poor receptionist is panicking about her backlog of emails and the fact no one can phone in or out. There is a technical issue in the area but no one understands exactly what the technical issue is or when everything is expected to be back to normal.



The site has two lovely pools but they have closed them, it seems like things only operate in Italy when the sunshines. It is still 32 degrees even though it is overcast and a dunk in the pool would be nice. We went for a small bike ride along the coastal road. Peanut was glad for the breeze flapping through his ears and didn't even see the ferrets running across the road.

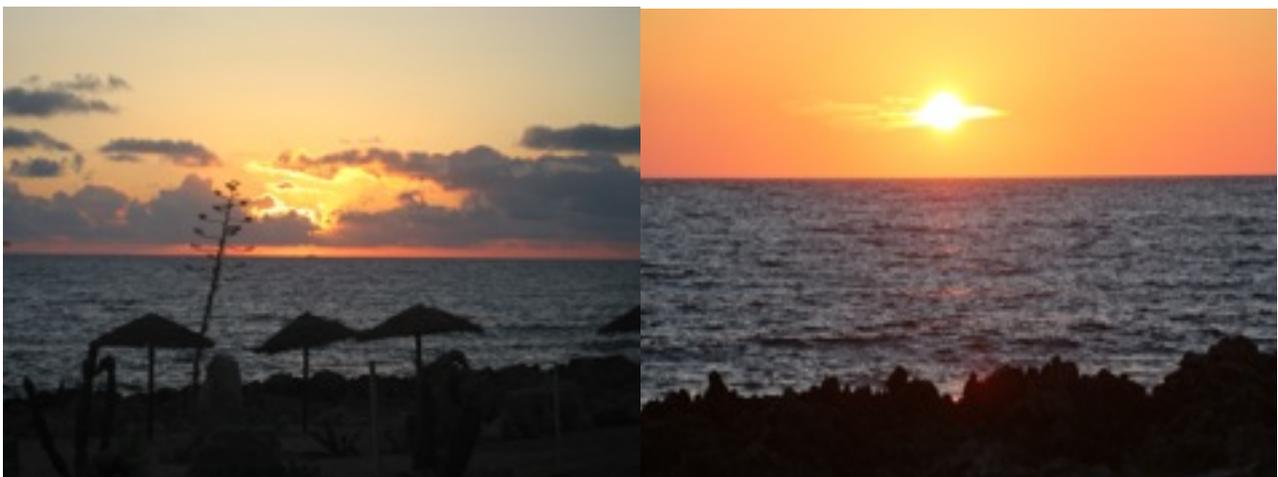
Later that day I started to itch. I don't believe it, grrr. I have only been eating for the last two days, so we looked at all the foods I'd had. Pizza, sandwich, toast...it was semolina. Craig makes all

his own bread, pasta and pizza's and in the last few weeks he's changed to using semolina. It must be it because everything else is fine.

## Wednesday 18th June: San Vito Lo Capo

I could get used to waking up to a nice breakfast and freshly brewed coffee served on Homer's patio. It was lovely except for Craig's farts. I think he ate half a dozen mosquitos last night because the sound coming out of his arse just sounds like a mosquito buzz. Maybe I am not allergic to semolina just suffocating my skin with his odour. In fairness, they don't smell just sound weird. Why do

men get a buzz out of their farts? It seems to constantly amuse them no matter their age! Anyway, the sun is shining and so today we took advantage of the swimming pool. I stayed in the shade most of the time but it was good to watch family time at the poolside. It was really strange to see everyone swimming in caps. In order to use the pool you must put on a swimming cap, it looks like a holiday



camp from the 70's. It is so old fashioned and not sure of the purpose especially when half a dozen Italian gorillas jump in the pool. It also funny to watch the Italian stallions try and look cool in tight trunks and a yellow cap with white go fast strip.

The internet and mobile connection is still down and you can see people getting more frustrated by the hour. Ahhh I wish it would work then I could FaceTime my family and friends.

## Thursday 19th June: San Vito Lo Capo

I couldn't sleep for chimping all night. This bloody itching is driving me mad and if it carries on I am going end up tearing my skin. I watched the sunrise and for the 1st time, I thought oh no, its going be hot and I am going to end up itching all day. The rest of the day I spent in the shower stopping every so

often to top up the water and do a bit of admin. Poor Craig stopped out of my way and tinkered in the



garage fixing anything and everything in his path. Shame he does have a tool to fix me! At one point I even heard him say *I could t-cut the bog seat*. I am not sure anyone else would even think of t-cutting the bog, Barrie your son is not right in the head. The only way to get rid of the irruption is to fast.- that's



it water and apples until the irritation clears up.

Our neighbour Gerrude asked if I was OK, I explained I'd reacted to badly to semolina causing my glands to block and swell, as well as bring me out in a rash. That combined with the heat was making me jump around like a daffoon. She smiled and backed off, guess she didn't like the looks of my rash.

In the evening our electricity went all funny. Craig had a look and tried to explain too many things using the

voltage but enough amps. He chunnered on and on about electricity but it went way over my head. I do find it interesting and would like understand but not right now when I feel like punching the living day-lights out of some if this itching doesn't stop. Maybe one day I will understand why electricity doesn't leak out the socket and spill on to the floor.

Facing us are two German campers with middle aged couples. The men are rather on the large size and seem to do things in sync despite not knowing each other or being able to see either other. One puts on lotion and so does the other. One gets BBQ out and so does the other. It is almost like they came on holiday pre programmed. I wonder if they have any beach towels hahaha. As both of them stand their in their shorts prodding their wild boar steaks and smiling at their sizzling sausage, I had a thought. These two could do a mean sumo wrestle and the winner could get ketchup for their sausage.

Craig had a few beers from the market and then we watched a film, the new one with Liam Neilson before bed with the hope of getting some sleep.



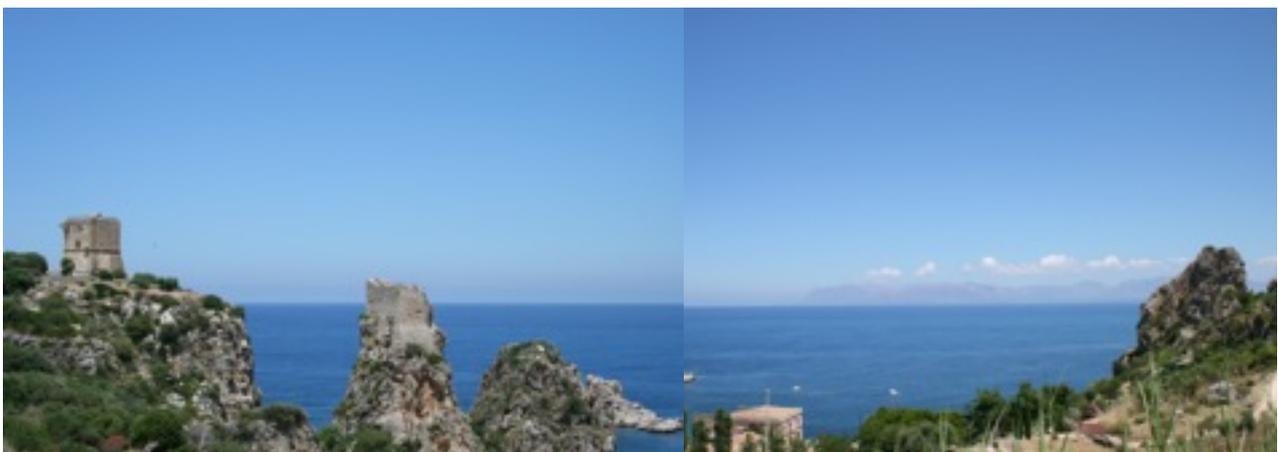


### *Friday 20th June: San Vito Lo Capo to Serra Della Pizzura*

Craig woke up bright and breezy, he couldn't wait to get moving. I had a reasonable nights sleep and only woke a few times to do my chimp impression. Fasting seems to be working and help flush the toxins out my body but its not totally out, so I am going have another day of just water and apples. During the quick pack up we started cleaning and before we knew it we were cleaning the windows, scribbling the floors etc. The quick pack up ended around 11 but at least Homer was all nice and clean. Just before we set off a helicopter came to the rescue of a climber but we didn't hang around to find out the details. We paid our dues to La Bahira and set off around the headland.

We stopped at a little supermarket and picked up some basics like...apples and water. With a town name like Pergatoro we didn't fancy stopping too long. We could really do with a decent shop but we need a decent supermarket. Now I know why Julie and Jason praised Lidl so much, its beltin!

As we carried on you could see a massive quarry and it must be over a mile long, it is huge. We headed to a little place called Scapello and it was absolutely lovely but we couldn't find anywhere to park. Most





*Terracotta pots + cable  
ties = guttering*

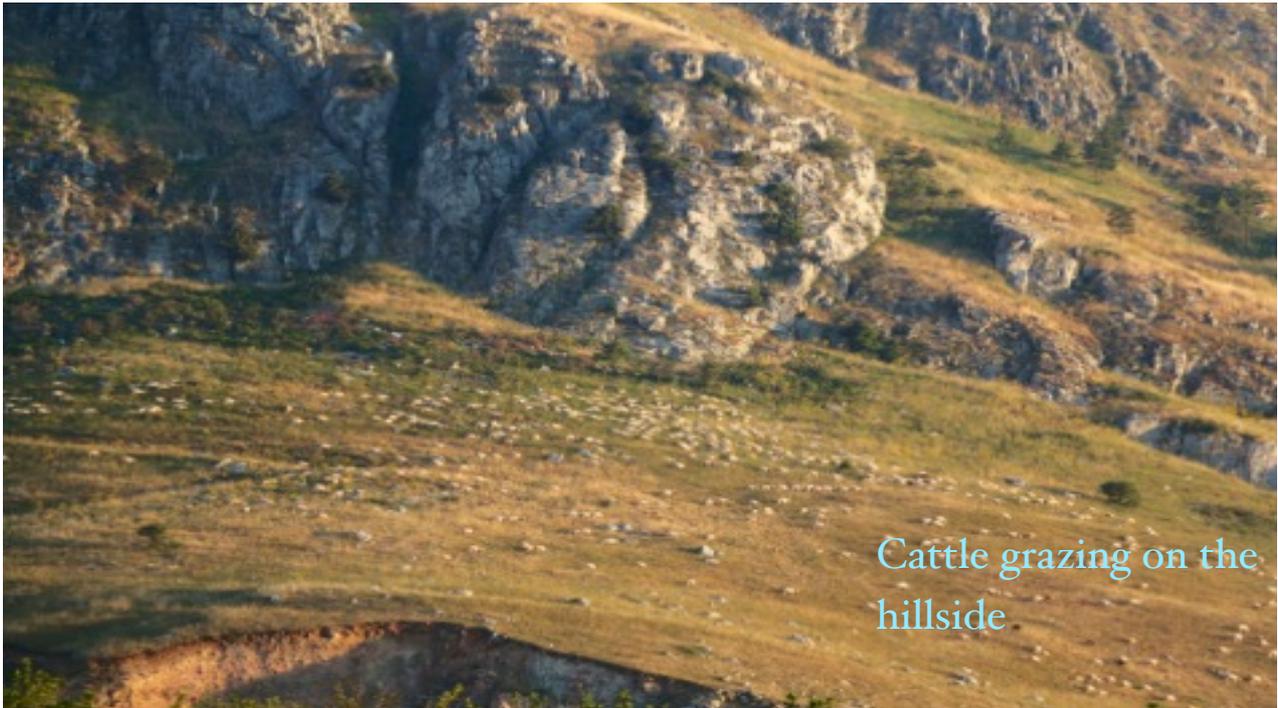
of the small streets are blocked off for private residence and the unpaved road is a little narrow to park Homer. After a brief look and a big sigh we slowly worked away along the coast. Hey Ho maybe we'll find another quaint place soon. We pulled in to Castellamare Del Golfo and had lunch overlooking the golden sandy bay. Craig had cheese and onion barmcakes and they looked yummy but full of semolina, so best give them a miss. As I ate my apple, he tucked in to his butty licking his lips. Tormenting little sod....but revenge is sweet. After a few bites it became obvious the bread was very chewy. By the end he had jaw ache, so much so it needed a health warning. Well at least I should get some peace for the rest of the day.

We wound down to the beach but nothing. Again, another place full of private lanes and resident parking only. We passed a few camper sites but they were closed or look uninviting. We pulled over to have a look at the map and see what options were in store. We hadn't planned on travelling so far today but looks like we have no option. After a quick gander at the map and chat over places we decided to head in land. As the coastal road got closer to Palermo the parking spots got less and it was getting busy with

holiday makers. At weekend every Italian goes to the beach (I don't blame them) so it gets very crowded and noisy, so best to avoid at weekends. There is also a lot of rubbish here and I mean a lot. Lay-bys are just completely covered in rubbish bags and rotting food, tons of it. It doesn't look great and certainly smells foul. I guess the locals around here don't pay their mafia fees and therefore no rubbish bins or dumping grounds.

Christ Craig have you seen that road? As we headed in land the rocky terrain was breath taking but the roads were scary. Back to suspension bridges but the Sicilian's have gone one better...single track bridge around a headland. As we looked up it was clear the guy who designed this loved Mouse Trap as a child. The wiggly road/bridge was just suspended in air, I have never seen anything like it. It was like a helter skelter pinned to the side of the mountain. I wanted to take a picture but I was too busy clinging on





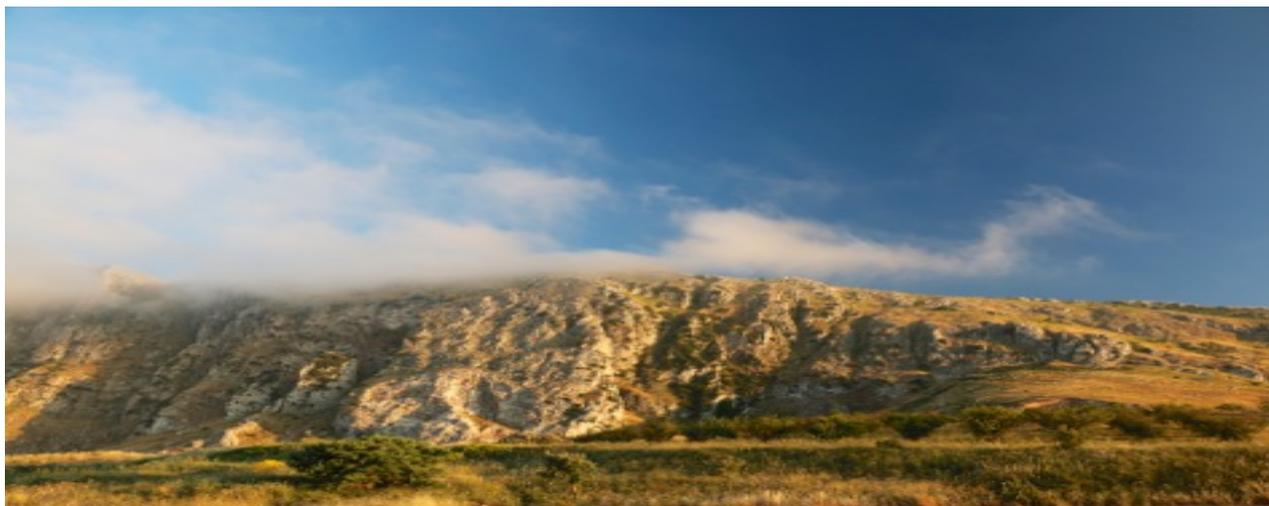
Cattle grazing on the hillside

to Craigs T-shirt because my stomach was doing somersaults. After about half an hour we spotted a perfect spot. We are about 1km up and have a tremendous view in every direction. We are at Serra Della Pizzura right in middle of national park. Not a soul in sight just cow bells chinking in the hills. You can see a dot that I think could be shepherd with his herd meandering up a very steep hillside. I guess he is leading them to a new pasture as I can't see any buildings? To the right we can see a few wild horses.

At the bottom of the cracky hill there are some rocks that look like stone hendge. I took a walk over and straight away you could see they were grave stones. As I turned around to walk back I noticed a little religious statue and some flowers. All the graves in Italy are in secure cemeteries and so quite rare to some just in the middle of a field. I was deep in thought when all of a sudden a bloody snake shot across my



path. That was it, I was like a rabbit on its tip toes, hopping all the way back to Homer. I did manage to stop and take a picture of one...its the one that lost to the python that crossed my path.



*View to the right*

*View to the left*



As I type this we are watching the sunset. It is so intense, in fact it looks like my skin - bright red. I am sat outside on my deck chair, feet up,

looking down the valley, listening to cow bell tunes and typing my update. Feels good. We are pretty

high up and sat at perfect height - cloud level. The clouds in the distance are like a band of red cotton wool balls and around us are whispers of pale orange clouds. Weird but cool. The area has lots of hills and bumps, so the colours are amazing and just love it when a cloud plays pic-a-boo round one of the peaks. After sunset, the stars came out to twinkle and boy did they twinkle. Glad we brought the telescope! Saturn is pretty bright this evening.





### Saturday 21st June: Serra Della Pizzura to Calavatturo

Reasonable nights sleep and I am buzzing as the itching has virtually gone. I feel like a new person. Not sure how high up we are but it must be a reasonable height because the temperature dropped right down last night (12 degrees) and we had to grab extra covers. Craig got too cold and so decided to get up at 5 am and watch the sunrise. Even Peanut had tucked himself in, he'd dragged his bed to the door mat and then placed his bed on top of him. He was so snug he'd even tucked his paws in. To get warm Craig put on the heating but *Houston there's a problem*, it kept going off. Well you can imagine the chaos! Everything out until problem solved. I put my head under the covers, grunted and went back to sleep, the temperature was perfect, I didn't itch. I woke around 8 and Craig had sussed the problem just didn't know how to fix it. It is linked to the voltage. We have maximum amps but when the voltage drops to 12.3 it trips out the heating. The manual states it should trip at 10.8 so there is a mismatch somewhere. Wonder if it's linked to the electricity issue the other night? We're gonna keep an eye on it and ring the UK office to see if they can help. If we then need to take Homer to a service centre there is one in Madina.

The view here is just amazing and I could just sit



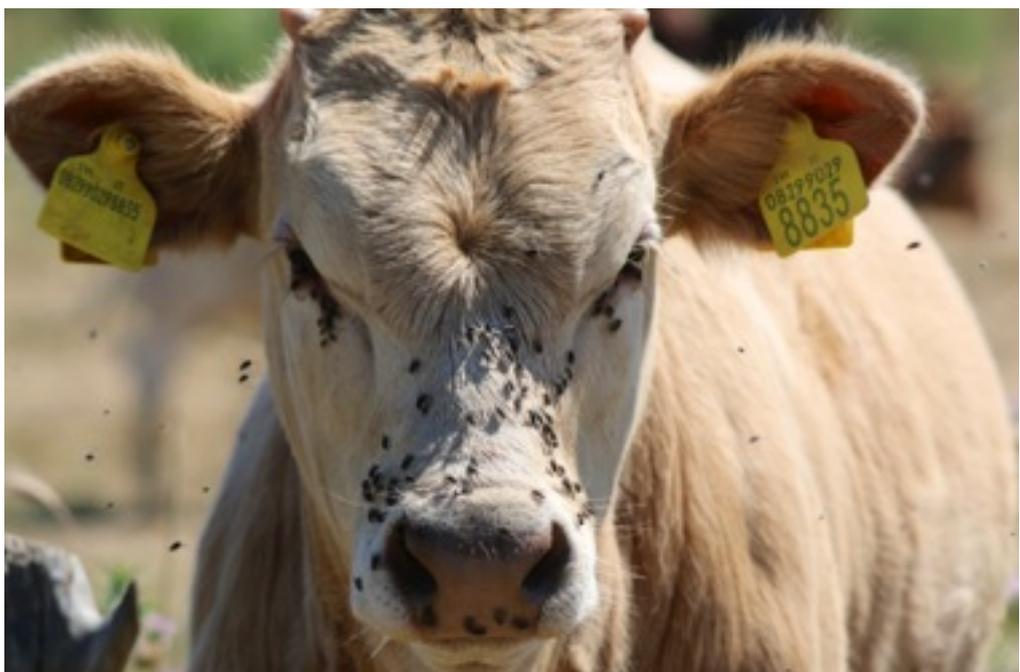
all day and admire but Craig wants to move, so we trundled off down the road. Over the hill was a beautiful lake and as we drove around you could see some nice property on the lakeside. We went up and up right in to the mountains and the colours were magical. In places the wheat fields looked like golden crushed velvet all gently swaying in the wind. We meandered all through the hills and I



didn't take many photo's because for once, I just soaked up the surrounding, it was truly captivating. We passed through Corleone and kept an eye out for any Mafia gangs before heading on to Roccapulmba for lunch. The roads around here are not great and you struggle to get above 20mph for all the pots holes and subsidence. In some places it is a case of stop and gently drive down the damage road. We passed quite a few tractors pulling bales of hay and shepherds guiding the goats and buffalo to new pasture. In one field we stopped and watched the buffalo. Pretty big herd right at the side of the road with lots of calves. The bells around their neck were interesting, looks like they get one for life and their neck grows round it. The bell looks like a tin tube



and Craig wondered if originally it wasn't a bell but a milk pot. He could be right? Searched high & low but couldn't see any mozzarella balls! Eventually we pulled in to a little village that hugged the side of a steep hill. We only found out its



name when we were leaving - Calavatturo. As we entered the village we could see fresh running water and as usual, all the locals were pulling up in their cars and filling bottles full of the cold fresh water. We ditched what water we had and filled Homer up with the fresh water. The taste of fresh cold water, you cant beat it. We then drove round the corner and pulled up at the side of a school. Nice and flat and good place to kip of the night. We had a little walk around the village before cooking dinner. I had plain boiled rice followed by an apple, still fasting until this itch completely goes. Craig had rice with reggie chicken. Peanut had his Lidl meat balls (dog food) and as a treat, fresh bone. We watched the locals ride up and down the street on their Fratello horses before retiring for the evening.



***Fresh water spring even the goats  
& sheep drop by for a slurp***



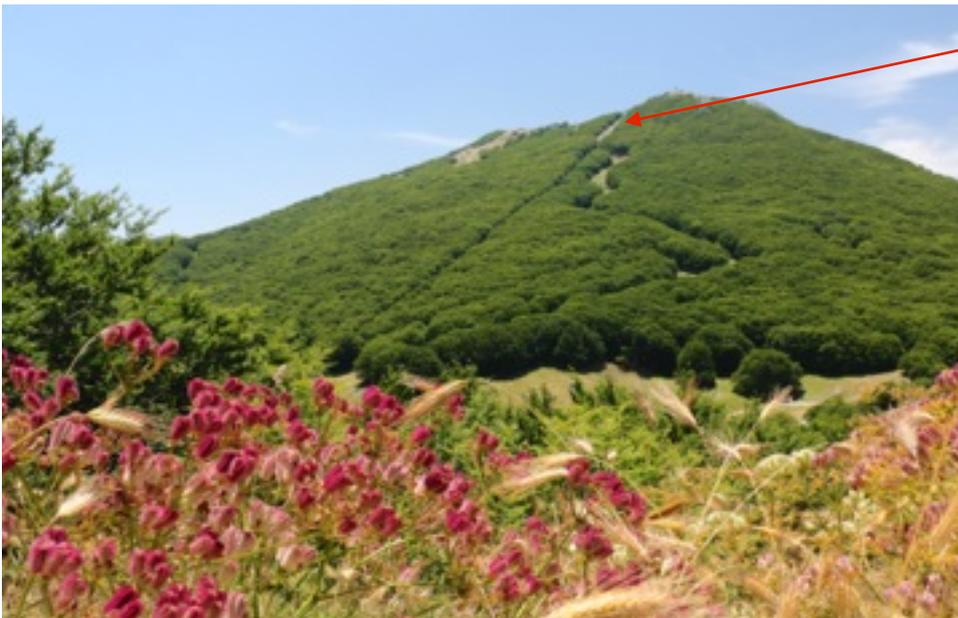
***What the hell is that racket? I don't know  
but it sounds like a bunch of kids.*** We got up and looked out the window and right at

the side of Homer were 3 cars. The doors wide open with music blasting. Clearly the Italian summer hit which sounds like a Eurovision version of Gangnam style. The dozen or so teenagers were dancing their socks off in the middle of road. They were jumping up and down like some bloody pogo stick and singing away. Then another car arrived by doing one all mighty hand break turn. Jeez not sure we can put up with this for long. Homer quite like watching the young ladies shake their bootie in their skin tight jeans. Peanut on the other hand was not too impressed, he yawned , farted and then stuck his head back under his bed.. We opened the blinds, started up Homer and moved further down the road to hopefully a quiet lane. You could hear the cars screeching through the village and stopping every so often to get out and dance to the same record. Bazaar but guess that's the in thing here in the middle of Sicily. Wide awake we had a hot drink before trying to go back to sleep.

## Sunday 22nd June: Calavatturo to Piano Battaglia

BANG BANG BANG. Bloody Hell. We both jumped bolt upright in bed. BANG BANG BANG. Homer was shaking with the boom. BANG BANG BANG. *By Christ Craig what the hell is that? I dunno but it sure is loud.* Craig stepped out of Homer and looked around. We couldn't see anything but we could hear a sizzle then an almighty BANG with a massive boom. I can't tell you how loud they were and each time the bang made me cringe. I guess there were around 20 or 30 blasts. They were blowing up the rock behind us with dynamite and boy was it loud. Good job we stopped where we did otherwise we could have been cream cracked. It was 7:45 and not too sure if I lived in the village, I would be too happy being woken up to that racket on a Sunday. No wonder the kids played their music so loud, blinking blasts like this would blow your ear drums out.

We moved from the street and wandered through the village before stopping for breakfast. Well I say wandered, I mean stuck. We followed Marg the Tom Tom rather than common sense and she ended up taking us down a street that just got narrow and narrower until Homer was nearly squashed. There were plenty opportunity to turn off the street but not sure I would even try walking down them never mind driving, they were suicide streets they were that steep. No wonder they had shrine on every corner.



*In winter this place is a ski resort- ski lift is hidden behind the trees*

Today we were heading in to Parco Della Madonie. The mountains are the 2nd oldest and highest in Sicily after Etna. We slowly avoided the pot holes and

meandered through the valleys and mountains. Another beautiful and breathtaking scenic drive. We wound up the mountain to Piano Battaglia, plateau at 5200ft. On the way up we saw an owl. I haven't seen an owl in ages and it was just perched on a wire above the valley. It was so quiet and not a soul in sight. In winter its a ski resort and in summer popular with walkers. We parked up Homer and put on our walking shoes. I went outside to look at the view whilst Craig





went on the loo. I was looking at the ski lift when all of a sudden I went all wobbly. I looked down and the ground was shaking. It was a little tremor. It didn't last long but I'd be very grateful if tectonic plates don't rub each other up today, thank you. I'd had enough of shaking this morning! We set off and walked along the hills and it was just lovely. the sun was shining and it was like walking through a huge



rockery, with wild colourful plants everywhere. I even spotted a massive honeysuckle but didn't tempt to sniff in case I ended up snorting a Sicilian bee. Craig saw a humming bird or we think it was a humming bird, it was tiny and fast enough to be one. We're gonna stop in the park tonight then we can get up early and have another walk along a different track. But soon we'll need a shop cause the fridge is empty. I am OK on apples (still fasting) but poor Craig is now surviving on



s o m e  
s m a r t  
p r i c e d  
m e a t b a l l s  
i n t o m a t o  
s a u c e.





Just as the sunset Craig heard a tussle. He looked outside and just at the side of Homer there was a fox. We think it was a male but not sure. We watched him for over an hour sniffing and rummaging around in the leaves and branches. At one point he disappeared into the bushes and next minute, a big magpie was going bonkers. Squawking and flapping around. Sounds like Mr Fox tried to pinch someones eggs but magpie was having none of it. With his bushy tail between his legs

he decided a rummage near Homer was a better and safer option. We could hear all sorts of wild life noises. So, last night we had a teenager street party and tonight its Wildlife Rave with Mr Fox and the Owl'ites.

