

# WEEK 13 LUCK CONTINUES

Craig | Joanne | Peanut



Bricks made from river bed..fossil included

## Overview

Half way through week 13 and it feels like an eternity. Our high was Matera and it was truly amazing but the lows are low at the moment. Homer got really sick both under the bonnet, in the garage and in the home bit. My itching got worse and spread to my legs and face, so if I get two hours sleep a night, I am lucky. Craig's tooth came loose. Then the man above decided to crack up the heat to constantly over 100 and no breeze, which tested every aspect of our marriage and our sanity. The heat got the better of Peanut and at one point even he showed signs of flaking. We have gone from being a glass half full to a glass half empty.

## Tuesday 8th July: Cosenza to Matera

Yummy croissants, fresh juice and coffee for breakfast before hitting the road. Last night we had a chat about the route to Germany. Obviously the motorway is the quickest but that means we miss the fun of travelling and big chunks of Italy, so we've decided to travel up the east coast, as planned. We won't have the luxury of stopping as and when we want but at least we then get to see some of the key things we want to see and if we really like them...we'll come back another time. We need to be in Germany by 20th July, which leaves us 12 days for the east coast, so better get our skates on and make the most of our time.

We travelled across the arch of Italy's foot along the coastline to the village of Matera. The beaches were unspoilt and would make a great base for a few days. The sea was a beautiful turquoise but upon closure inspection it was quite mucky, so not sure if they are dumping stuff somewhere around here? Shame cause it is a lovely stretch and in time to come, I am sure the tourists will flock here. No matter what road or town we passed through, it was deserted. With the exception of the main towns and cities, most of Italy has been deserted, which may be the norm but not something we expected.

I was shattered so I reclined the passenger chair, put my feet on the dash and snored to Craig in a very romantic sort of way all the way to Matera. I think I may have even dribbled a bit but shush, I don't think he saw that bit. Well makes a change from the same old iPod tunes.

Once in Matera we parked up 500 times before Craig felt comfortable. Sometimes no matter where you park it just doesn't feel right and you are constantly moving until you find the right spot. There are loads of fir trees around here and they drive us nuts. The needles and the sap gets everywhere both inside and out and so hard to get rid off, so we avoid firs as much as possible. We eventually settled for a car park at the side of 3 other motorhomes.

After tea we had a walk in to town and one word...wow.

Every time you see something amazing you think you can't top it and then something turns up just like this. We were both stunned by the town and ended up walking through the streets until around 11pm, it was brilliant.

The town dates back to middle ages when the Benedictine monks built churches and monasteries in the rock, which



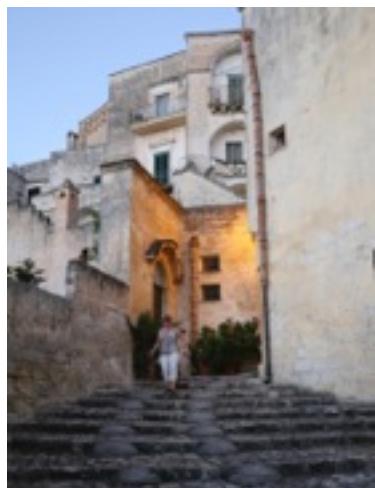
in turn attracted people to the cave dwellings often referred to as Sassi. Best way to describe - at the top is the new town and as you walk to the edge of the town you look down and immediately see the river below. Then you notice the steep slope has 100's of holes dotted all the way down to the river and as you look closer you start to make out the terraced caves. The troglodyte settlement became home to some 20,000 people. With the richer living on top and poorer at the bottom and as the saying goes...shit runs down hill and it sure did. The conditions got so bad everyone became riddled with disease and in 1950 they moved all the inhabitants to new housing in the new town.

Walk round the town was amazing but it was like a rabbit warren and we did struggle to get back to the top. There are a few occupied houses but on the main they are abandoned and so very little street lighting. But we had a full moon and the light just

made the cave dwellings even more fascinating and beautiful.

On our way back to Homer a chap stopped us and gave us a huge box of fruit. They were yummy, like a cross between

peach and plum.



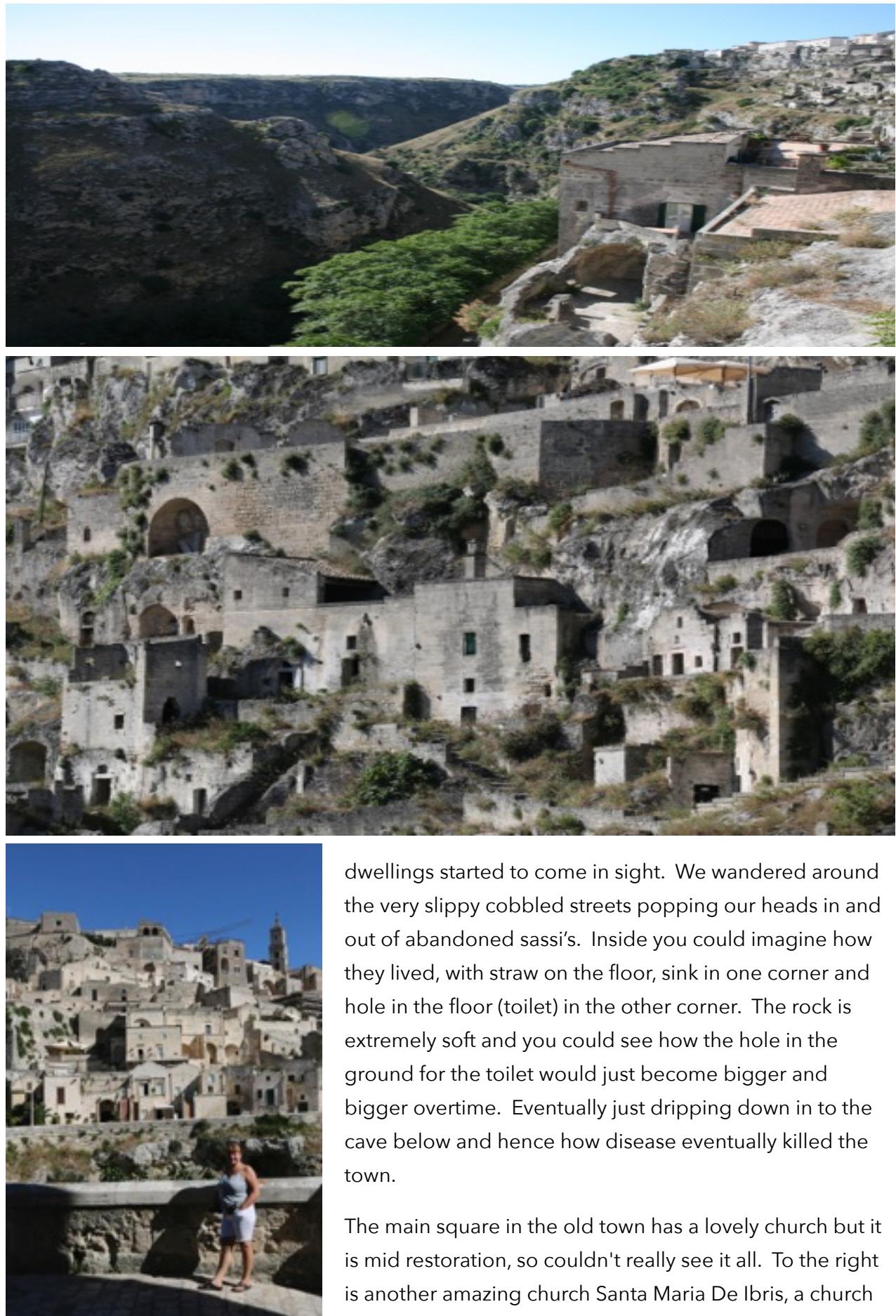


### *Wednesday 9th July: Matera to Termoli*

By 8:15 am we were cycling through the little streets of Matera. We'd hope to be up and out for sunrise but we were out for the count. The old town is very quaint and pretty in an ancient kind of way. More than half the houses and buildings are unoccupied but you can see quite a few properties mid restoration and its nice to see an abandoned town slowly but surely come back to life. We wound down the town

towards the old church  
and piazza, which sits  
on a ledge overlooking  
the gorge and river  
below. We took a few  
photo's then as  
we turned right  
the 'sassi' cave





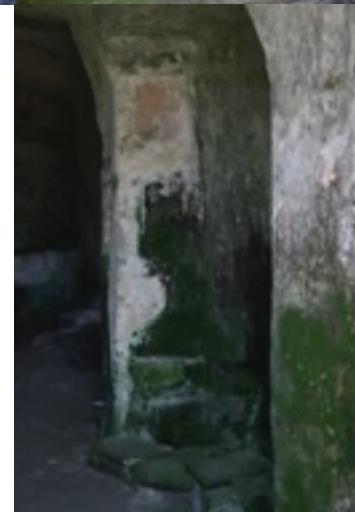
dwellings started to come in sight. We wandered around the very slippy cobbled streets popping our heads in and out of abandoned sassi's. Inside you could imagine how they lived, with straw on the floor, sink in one corner and hole in the floor (toilet) in the other corner. The rock is extremely soft and you could see how the hole in the ground for the toilet would just become bigger and bigger overtime. Eventually just dripping down in to the cave below and hence how disease eventually killed the town.

The main square in the old town has a lovely church but it is mid restoration, so couldn't really see it all. To the right is another amazing church Santa Maria De Ibris, a church



perched right on top of Monte Errone, which sits right in the middle of the 'sassi dwellings.'

Up on top the town is buzzing with trendy shops and cafe bars and plenty



ice cream parlours ...today we tried the panacota and strawberry. I didn't realise that the film 'Passion of Christ' was filmed here, which





brought attention and fame to the town and in turn investment.

The top of the town has some really lovely things too, if you walk off the main street. There was one little church and it was so primitive, it was overwhelming. I stood there for ages just looking at all the detail with tears rolling down my face. So beautiful and yet so sad, it genuinely did move me to tears. I lit a candle for our Russell and said a few preys for everyone back home xxx



I can honestly say that Matera is the most medieval looking town I have ever visited. You really do





wonder around and feel like you have stepped back in time, it truly is an astonishing place. If you ever get the chance to visit, I guarantee you will not be disappointed and there are plenty little boutique B&B's to stay a couple of nights.

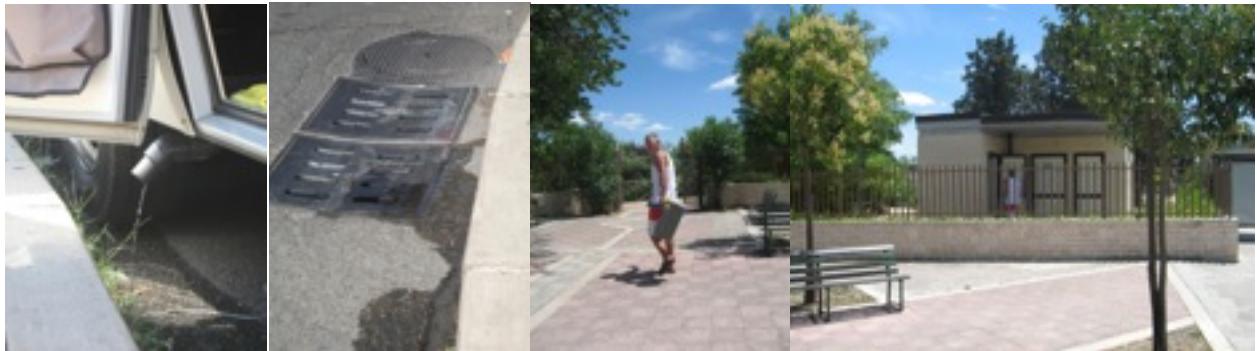


Back in Homer we filled up Homer. Quite a few people have asked about how we fill up, so here are the steps...

Filling up Homer with Fresh water. 1st homer then  
the water containers.



Emptying the grey & black water



Good road to Termoli with fields upon fields of hay which just glistened in the sunlight. Apart from the odd trucker, again not a soul in sight. As we approached Termoli the fields turned to 1000's of sunflowers, all pointing the same way. A bit like nodding dogs





waiting to have their head cut off. hard to think we this beautiful flower will one day end up squeezed to death in some

o n e s  
c h i p  
pan!



We pulled up on to a beach road in Termoli just in time for the sunset. Craig was a little chilly and you guessed it, the bloody blue fleece came out. I am telling you, one day I will burn this fleece. How can anyone put on a fleece in when its 36 degrees? Please feel free to send Craig and email and tell him he is not right in the head!

After a stroll down the beach - pretty beach but terrible looking hotels, we had dinner. Unfortunately we had to move as the quiet beach street became a bit like central station with every man and his grandma pulling up to go bougie on down in the social club.



### *Thursday 10th July: Termoli to Remini*

We set off at a nice pace and bumbled along the coast line. It was very different to what we expected, much more developed and very much the beach resort type of places to expect in the Mediterranean. Before we came to Italy we only ever thought of visiting the West coast. We heard the east coast was underdeveloped etc. Well it is far from underdeveloped and on the face of it, looks like it would be a cracking holiday spot if you are in to beach holidays.

The roads felt slow and strange and at first we couldn't put our finger on it. Then it dawned on us, traffic lights. We hadn't seen a traffic light for months, I think the last time we saw one was probably Rome. After that the roads are that quiet you don't need or see them. The roads were also slow and busy and whilst the coastal view was nice, Craig was once loosing patience having to queue in traffic. We pulled in to a lidl for some water and the day just got worse. As we stepped out of Homer the habitation door wouldn't open. It wouldn't be so bad but the drivers door is temperamental, sometimes it opens and sometimes it doesn't, so we need to have at least one door to work correctly then we can get out safely. After several hours and a lot of cursing Craig managed to bodge the lock. He did his usual (like his father) and reengineered the whole locking mechanism whilst at the same time ranting about how crap the designers are. So lucky Craig is good with practical repairs otherwise we'd be screwed just a shame he can't take a chill pill before he starts...grumpy old fart. If the lock wasn't enough then sure as hell the grill packed up half way through preparing lunch. So not only did he try and fix the grill, which he couldn't fix but we had a cold lunch. Well you can guess the mood in our household.

As we set off the roads were a little quieter and a good job really else Craig would have rammed them off the road. This combined with a nice windy road. Oh boy, it was all laughs in our house hold even Peanut kept his head low. I remember Craig saying at one point "what is it with these roads, does someone stand at the top, have a piss and then say there you go lads build a road round that". I didn't reply because no matter what, my reply would provoke a snap or a glare. However, I did think...it would have to be a morning wee to be long enough to reach the bottom. With Craig in a storming mood, I quietly hummed Ava Maria to remind me how lucky I am and keep me calm. Then all of a sudden I saw a man walking like a frog, what on earth was he doing. *Craig look at that chap, what is he doing? Ugg* That means I am not listening and don't care, so I up'd the octave to PieSu and slowly went back in to my little world. The speed camera's were interesting especially to the Italians...they see to think that waving to them is funny. Craig found it infuriating because it slowed him down by half a second. Now I found the waving at camera's very amusing but daren't laugh otherwise I would be waving goodbye too.

As we approach San Marino the mood got very cool nah more frozen. We exchanged our views and decided to call it quits, go home. We stayed on a car park and not sure if Remini or San Marino. It looked quite a nice place but unfortunately didn't get the chance to enjoy it.

### *Friday 11th July: Remini to Bologna*

Homeward bound we set to have the repairs done. It not fair when you pay so much money for a relatively new motorhome and you have so many problems. Apart form the major things we have a list of minor issues that have just added to the frustration. We both are fed up with Homer but our approach to fixing it is very different. Craig wants everything perfect, whilst I would rather fix everything when we get to a suitable point. As long as we're both safe then it doesn't really matter. But I do take his point, it is not right when you've forked out so much money.

The drive to Bologna was sad and tense. I didn't want to go home. Craig frustration is in his anger whilst mine is in tears. Well I sobbed and he shouted (not at each other). This feels weird we never argue, why is this happening to us? All these years and never a shouting match and now this.

Then Homer decided to start hopping. chug, chug, pop, chug, chug, pop. Could this get any worse. [What's that? I don't know \(sigh and tut\)](#). We drove Homer around a few lanes and he intermittently popped and farted. Something wasn't right, poor thing needed to see the doctor. I guess he has a summer cold or it could be he is choking on the tense air. Either way it needed sorting but when I don't know and don't care right now. I just wanted some sleep, I haven't slept properly in 8 weeks with these itchy arms and now it is on my face and legs. If there is a god please give us a break.

We tried to park in Bologna but it was not a nice place, full of prostitutes and drug dealers. It was quite late and so best to head out of the town. A very quiet diner and even quieter night.

Well look on the bright side, I got some cheap green crocs from Lidl : Anyway it is now the end of week 13, so things must start to improve..surely?

