



National Day and crazy students in Stockholm

by Amaru & Suzanne, June 9th 2006

After spending a few days in Sweden at my sister's and her fiancé's (Zilia and Pär) apartment relaxing, sleeping, and eating Havre Fras (it's a cereal....and Suz's new favourite Swedish word to say!!!) we decided it was time to visit Stockholm, and what better time to go than on Sweden's National Day.

We made breakfast and brought it with us on the train ride to Stockholm (the train is only 40min but we saved some time this way and it meant an extra half hour in bed!!!). Once in the city we walked into "Gamla Stan" (Old Town) making sure to stay on the sunny side all the time since it was really cold.

The first thing we intended to do was to find a nice café, to sit down with a hot drink and a nice pastry. On the way there, a Swedish coffee maker was having a PR campaign and handing out cups of coffee for free.....free is always good, so of course I had to sample it!!

Finding a café with some available seats wasn't easy to find. First of all, it's the national day which means lots and lots of people out on the streets. Second (and more important) was that it was freezing outside (around 16 degrees C)...Swedish summer indeed!!



The Palace
A very square and boring building...



Excalibur....
....Suz is mixing the stories up.

While we were looking for some available seats we saw a guy handing out free Swedish flags.....everyone in Stockholm seemed to have one and were waving them around....so I grabbed one and gave it to Suz (the only non-Swedish of us all..... and by the way she was waving that flag.... probably the most patriotic of us all too....she kept it all day and even brought it home with her that afternoon).

Eventually we found a nice place where we could sit and warm ourselves up. We ordered hot chocolates, some coffees, a very nice blueberry and raspberry cake and some danish pastries which are called Wienerbröd in Swedish.....this obviously led to some fun comments such as "don't touch my wienerbread" and "would you like some of my wienerbread".....childish, but lots of fun for all of us =))

After a while we made our way to the "Katarina Hissen" which is an elevator going up to a viewing platform over the city. We had to pay 10 Swedish Crowns each to ride the elevator (around 2 AUD) which we found to be quite pricy, specially once we found out that you can access the platform from the other end for free. Either way, the views over the city were quite nice but we didn't stay for too long since we got cold very quickly.

The rest of the day we spent walking some more in the Old Town, seeing the Royal Palace - which was actually open to the public, walking past lots of people who forgot that we don't live in medieval times anymore, before deciding to head home. It was a nice sunny day, lots of people celebrating, and there was plenty more that we could have seen on this day.....but the cold got to us eventually.

A few days later we were back in Stockholm, this time we were going to meet up with a friend I used to work with in Thailand, Lars who came with his girlfriend Erika. And this day, believe it or not, was actually very sunny and quite warm in the sun....not the freezing conditions that we experienced last time (as you can see on the photos).



"Gamla Stan"
...or "Old Town" as it would be in english

We met up with them and sat for a while having lunch and catching up....it was even warm enough for us all to get some delicious icecream after lunch, eating it whilst slowly walking through the streets of the old town.



"Stortorget"
Where 94 people were executed 1520

We also knew that on this day, the high school students graduated....and in Sweden this is celebrated in a big way (don't really know why) so we made our way to "Sergels Torg", the main square in Stockholm to watch the spectacle. There were truck load after truck loads of trucks filled with crazy students singing and jumping up and down, and all of them with something to drink in their hands (of course).

Some of them also got so excited that they jumped around in the fountain, good thing for them that it was quite warm this day. There were signs all over the trucks proudly displaying that it was goodbye to school...hello Unemployment!!!

After a while we said goodbye to Lars and Erika and made our way over to City Hall where we were picked up by Nisse in his boat. He took us for a nice and relaxed cruise in the waters around Stockholm and the archipelago. It was a great way for us to see another side of Stockholm, from the water.

Eventually we made it over to "Drottningholm", the palace where the Swedish Royal Family lives. We weren't allowed to cruise too close to the palace, there were some bouys in the form of a circle that told you how close you were allowed to go, other than that we couldn't really see that much security protecting them (who would want to attack the Swedish Royal Family anyway?!?).

We cruised back to where Nisse parks his boat, and sat there in the docs just chatting for a few hours. Eventually we made it back in the city, and caught a train back to Uppsala.....all in all a very nice day out.



The National Flag Day
And Suz is the most patriotic one of us!

It was great seeing Lars, Erika and Nisse again. Thanks for making the effort to catch up with us during our stay here in Sweden.... and thanks again for the great boat ride.

The Uppsala edition of this blog will be coming shortly.....stay tuned.



Suz and I on the 6th of June
And we are dressed up for winter!!



Pär enjoying the coffee and Zilia is enjoying
her new boobs courtesy of her pregnancy!





The flag is everywhere...
the only day you will see the Swedish flag



On the train...
...leaving a cold day in Stockholm!



Back in Stockholm...
to meet up with Lars and Erika.



"Sergels Torg"
THE main square in Stockholm



Looking down "The Queens Street"
"Drottningsgatan" as it's known in Swedish!



The Parliament Building
A building with old and new architecture....



Same café as last time...
...but different company and warm weather!



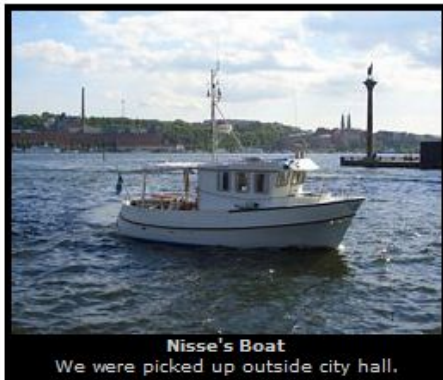
Celebrations!
High School students and their graduation!



More students celebrating
lots of these trucks with students.



Time for a bath?!?
Some went for a swim in the fountain.



Nisse's Boat
We were picked up outside city hall.



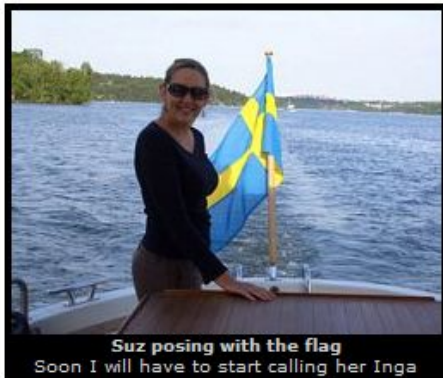
City Hall
Right after boarding Nisse's Boat.



Nisse and his pride and joy!
Showing us the functions of his boat



Suz and I
Enjoying the tour of Stockholm's waters.



Suz posing with the flag
Soon I will have to start calling her Inga



"Drottningholms Slott"
The Kings Residence



Suz on board...
...relaxing on a tour of Stockholm's waters.



Following the GPS...
...to lead us back to the harbour.



Cheers!!
"99 bottle of Rum on the wall"



The boat yard
...photo taken from the train

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