ROMANIA

Timisoara

Back to dreary weather. But a bright spot, our hosts at our backyard park last night somewhere mid way up the western edge of Romania, were so agreeable. He is a bikie and had a few of his Austrian mates over camping beside us. We sat talking to them for a while to the sound of bikes being revved and prepared for the ride today. Very homely.

Our northerly pointing road that leads to Hungary, was just packed with trucks. It was the heaviest we have experienced on any road so far. We were musing about why and thought that this very good road may be a major thoroughfare to the most southern European countries.

Our one and three-quarter hour trip (for about 120km) took us to Timisoara. Note that it takes us a little less than twice as long to get anywhere here. We are getting used to it now.

Timisoara is the third largest town in Romania. Its main claim to fame is that, in 1989, it was the beginning of the move to out Ceausescu, the tyrant, from

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FEATHERED AUDIENCE As soon as the pigeons heard the sound of sandwiches being unwrapped they flocked over for any tidbits. They overwhelmed the providers.

MODERN KITCHEN The white stone wavy kitchen "furniture" with inbuilt wood oven is made from brick and tile that acts like a heater.

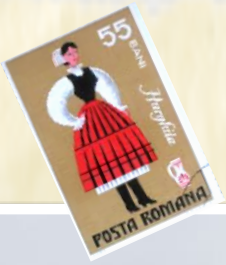
ACADEMIC LOOK These girls must have just graduated - so proud of their mortar boards they forget to take them off.

Romania keeps surprising us …….

leadership. We found a park by using our lovely little app "Park4Night", near the zoo (and as it turned out, also near an outdoor museum) and rode the 4km into town. These 4km turned into something a little longer when we went the wrong way a few times. Nevertheless these detours let us see a little of the city and the central market. It was a rather large undercover structure housing stalls much like Victoria Market in Melbourne. We eventually found the central square (one of three) and were really impressed with the place. A lot of work has obviously been undertaken to restore these really lovely buildings. Many people were sitting around in the cafes and on the park benches enjoying the ambiance. We rode a little further around the back streets. Lots more work needs to be done there but it is great to see that they have at least started the process - renovations everywhere. We cycled back to the van and bought some pastries - as has become our habit. Remember, we don't read Romanian so each time we buy them we are not sure if they are sweet or savoury - but they are aways enjoyable. The last two times we have had lovely versions filled with cheese. Very yummy.

Because we happened to park near the Banat Village Museum, we decided to take a look. This open air museum was created in 1917 and has, of recent years, been financed by the European Union. It is very well done - particularly the inside of the homes that are filled with era-specific clothes and furniture. We ambled past and through 30 traditional peasant houses from the 19th century.

We are back in the van now, in the zoo car park, and have animal calls for our nights entertainment. Tomorrow we drive into Hungary for a day or two along the southern area. How much time we spend here depends on the weather. It is currently not looking promising so we may go north a little quicker than we intended. We have 30 days to hand the van back. It is 1st June tomorrow and the Champions League final. Sig would just love to watch it so let's hope we can find a Hungarian hotel or restaurant with TV.



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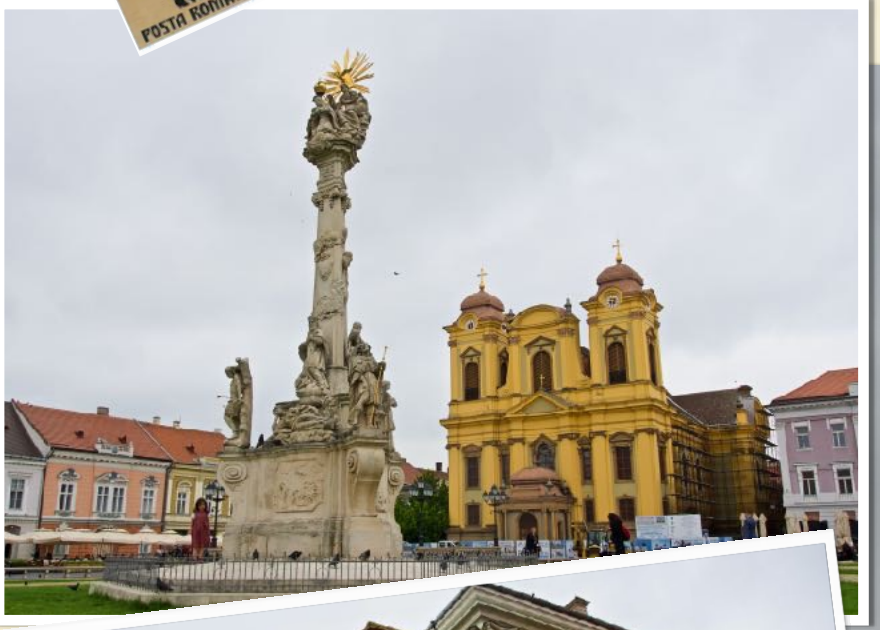

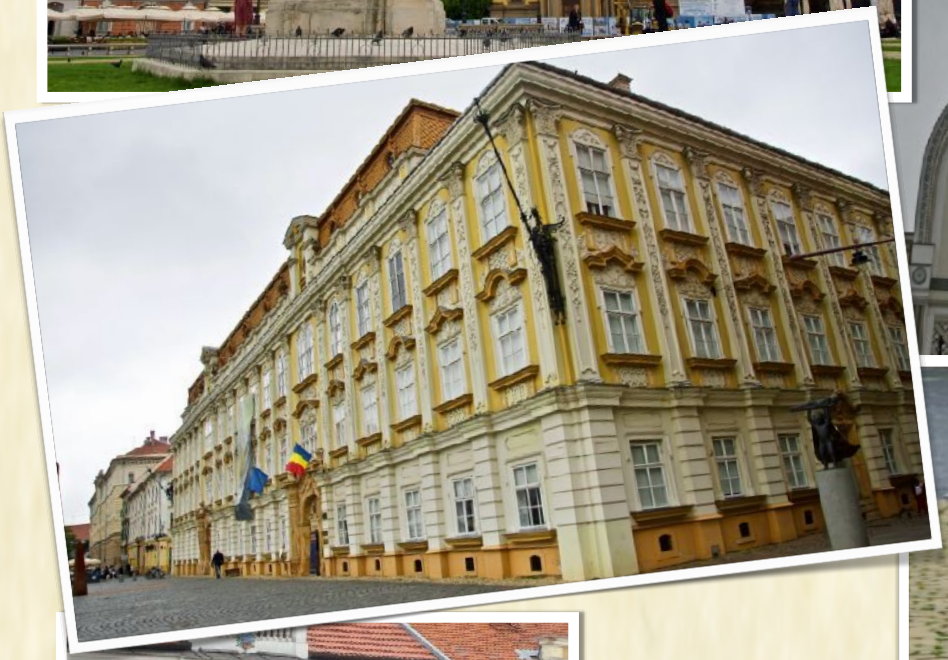

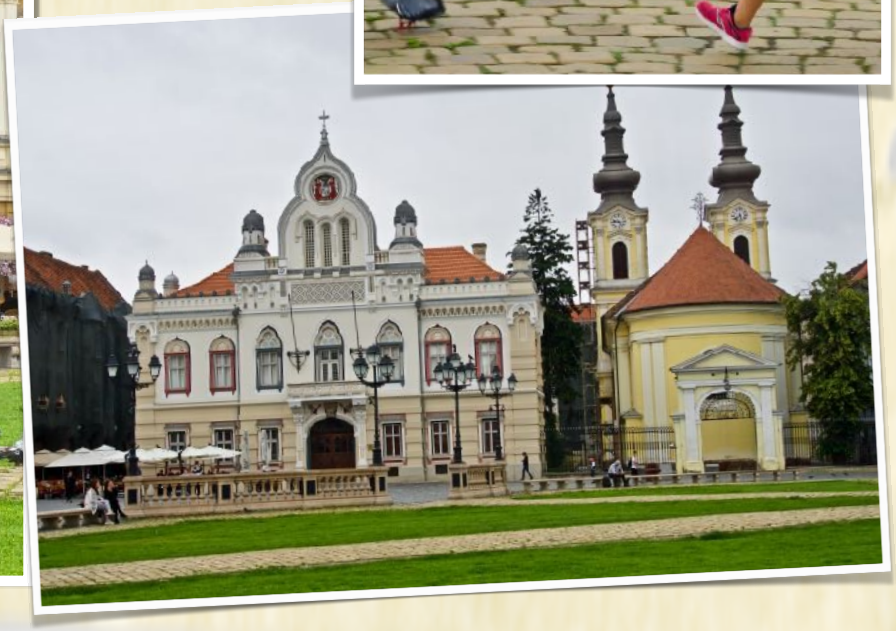

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