

My holiday 2009

Sunday, 13 September 2009

I had a fabulous Grand Tour again this year - well over 5000 miles driving, as usual; back to many favourite cities and countries; only missed out Munich and Germany this time.

The dreaded heat rash came flaming back once but was quashed by my brilliant doctor's prescription of steroids - and I have a MUCH deeper voice and gorgeous breasts as a side effect.

Of course, Mother Nature has a way of balancing it up so no heat rash was replaced by mosquito bites - specifically in Italy but some in the South of France, and some agonising scratching and sleepless nights from the bloody insects.

And the tragic deaths of Michael Summerton in London and Nino Mulas in Rome meant I had sadness as well as interruptions - I had to fly back several times at different points and am developing a hatred of airports and flights; delays, strikes, security, rudeness... recirculated farts and burps in my lungs... ugh.

Huge successes - Uzes in France, a beautiful little town (with a great Thai restaurant) near the magnificent Pont du Gard - check out the photos. The Beau Rivage hotel in Lausanne, Switzerland, sheer luxury (hugely expensive but a great internet deal - it really is the way to book); Florence - and, again, gorgeous hotels though the queue to see David was far too long - when I saw it 40 years ago the line was 10 minutes, now it is 5 hours if you're lucky. I gave up; Valence - a new discovery in France, only discovered by French tourists...

Morocco was as terrific as ever though the progress forward of Ramadan means it will damage tourism in the summer for several years.

The car ran perfectly with no problems at all. And, best of all, the entire holiday cost me nothing; the credit crunch crisis meant my shares that dropped 25% of value in April picked up throughout the summer and ended in September at exactly the same value they had been before - so my holiday was paid for by bankers.