



OUR DISNEY CRUISE

Day 1- Travel Day

June 6, 2011

- Flew from Toronto to JFK New York
- Two hour delay for the Barcelona Delta flight 094
- Elias was a very good boy during the wait, all things considered
- JFK is a dump by the way...not what you'd call the nicest airport around



At Pearson waiting for the tram to Terminal 3



Elias at the gate...had a tiny plane to JFK



Flight 094 from JFK to Barcelona

Day 2 - In Barcelona

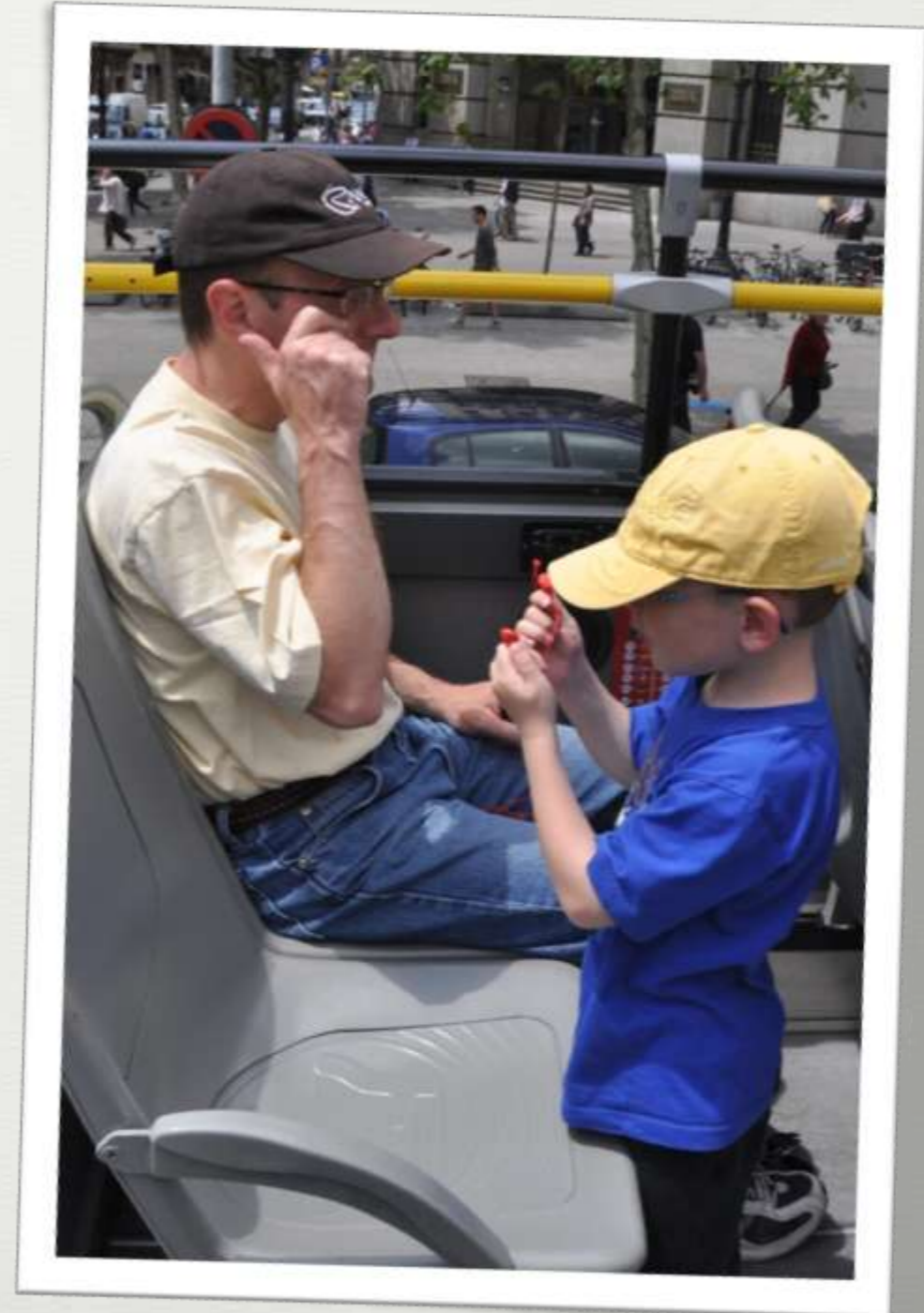
June 7, 2011

- Arrived at around 10:15am
- Nice airport - very modern
- Took a taxi to our hotel: The Petit Palace Museum just 5 min walk from the Placa de Catalunya
- Booked a double-decker bus tour of the city



Day 2 - In Barcelona

- Tour highlights
 - The beach
 - Sagrada Familia
 - Gaudi apartments
 - Amazing architecture
 - Narrow streets





Sat on the upper level of the bus to catch all the highlights. We were lucky it didn't rain in the afternoon. As soon as we returned to the hotel a thunderstorm started!



The marina



One of the many beach areas



An example of some of the amazing architecture.



Loved all the wrought iron balconies



Cool building - apparently is lit up at night and is spectacular to see



The Sagrada Família - I've wanted to see this for a long while. Still in construction for nearly a century now.

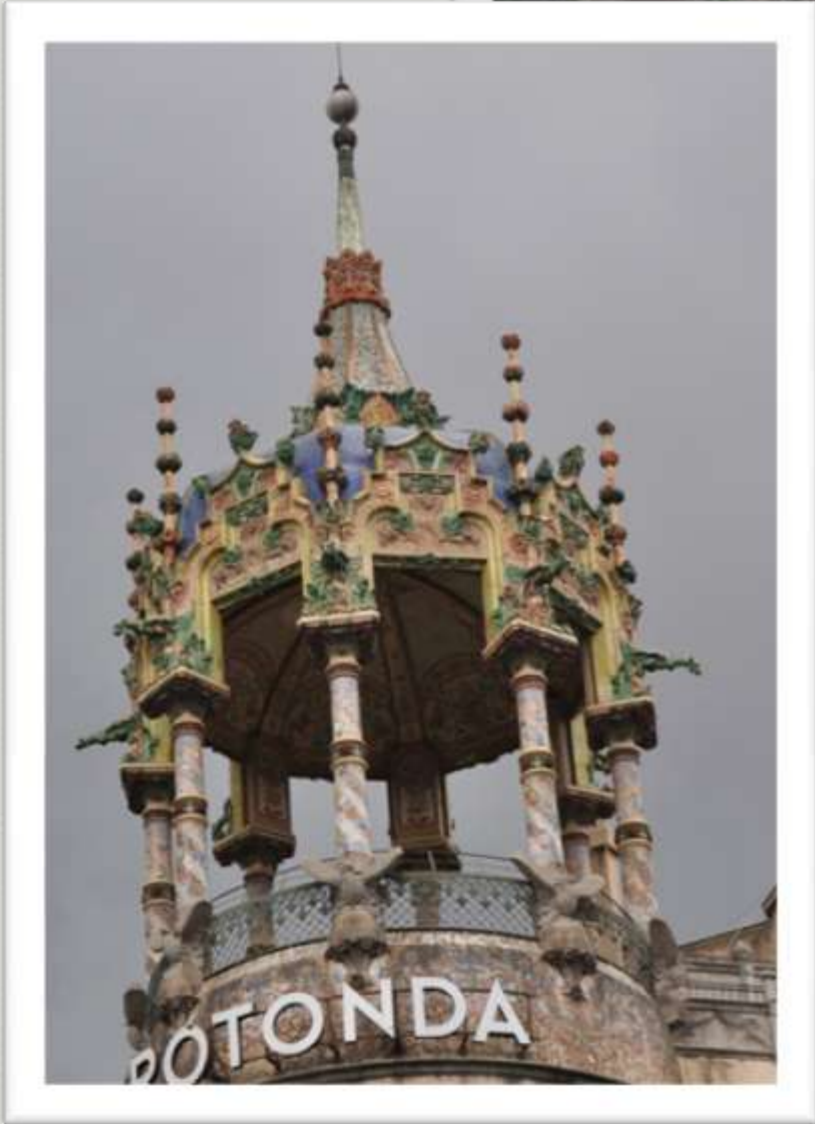


Stunning stonework





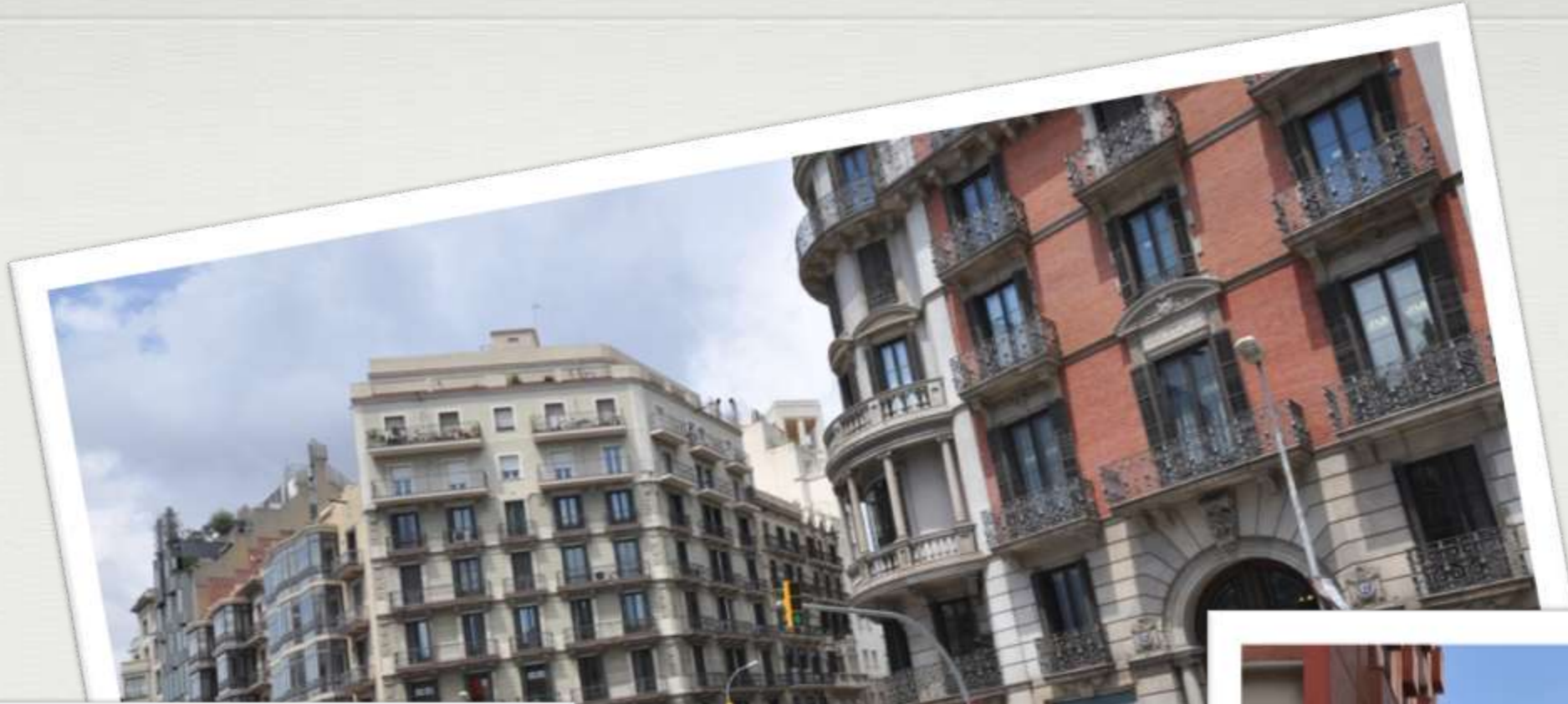
Elias played in a playground across the street from the church



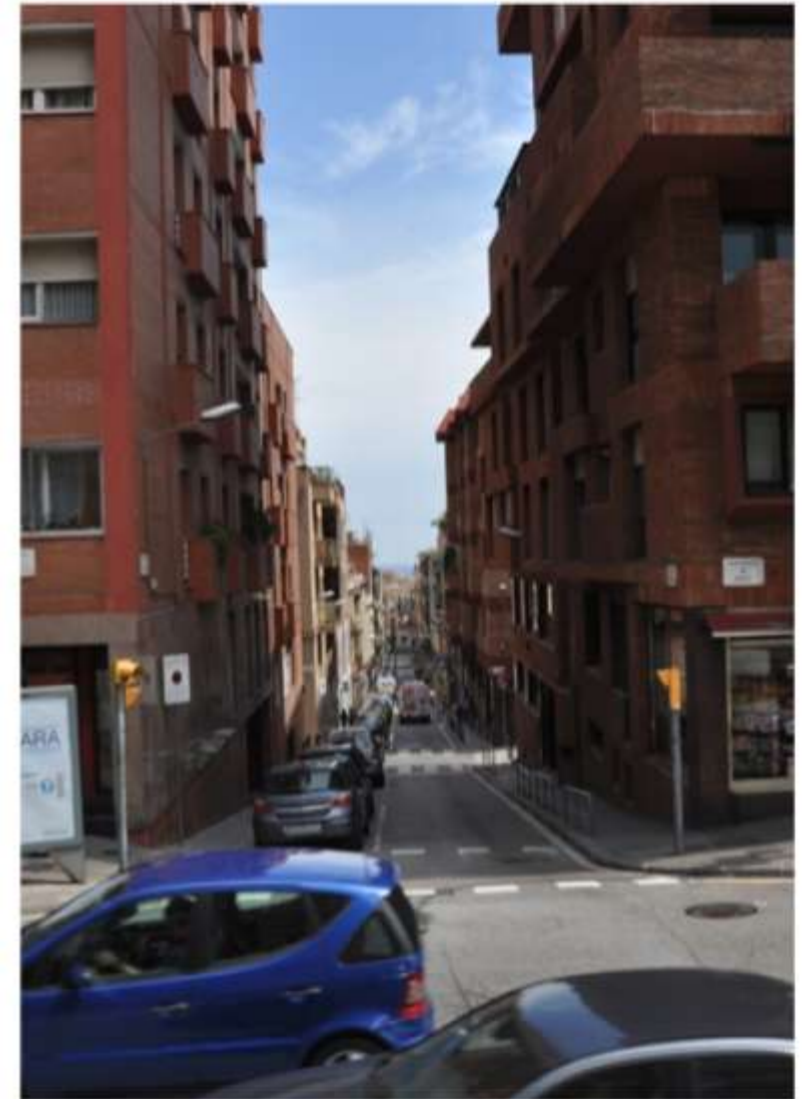
More sights along the route through the city...hard to capture it all!

Another Gaudi building - La Pedera





*Narrow streets...everywhere
you can find laundry hanging
from balconies*





Elias on the double decker bus

Interesting architectural detail

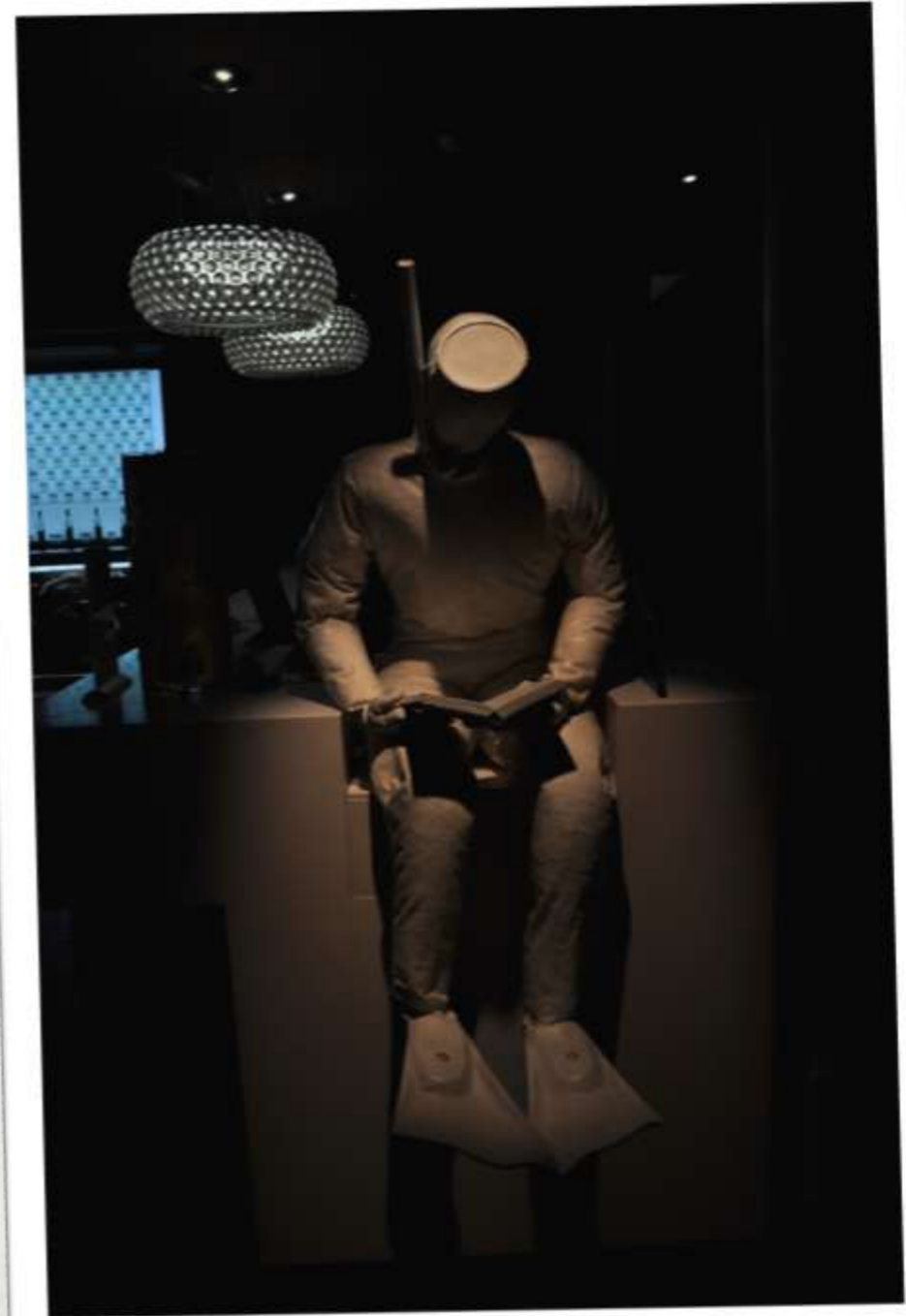


Apparently they took over Catalunya Square weeks ago protesting... everything



Day 2 - In Barcelona

- Wore out quick after the tour
- Headed back to the hotel for a nap
- Went out for dinner at the Happy Bar and Grill on Catelunya
- Back at the hotel Elias watched cartoons in Spanish...he still laughed



Day 3 - Barcelona & Boarding

June 8, 2011

- Spent the morning on La Rambla - very cool pedestrian mall
- Went to the market and checked out all the stands
- Fish stands were fascinating
- Bought some fresh fruit, smoothies, nougat chocolates, and pastry
- Went back to hotel for our breakfast and then checked out





Went on a walk along La Rambla, basically a pedestrian mall

Visited the open market...very cool



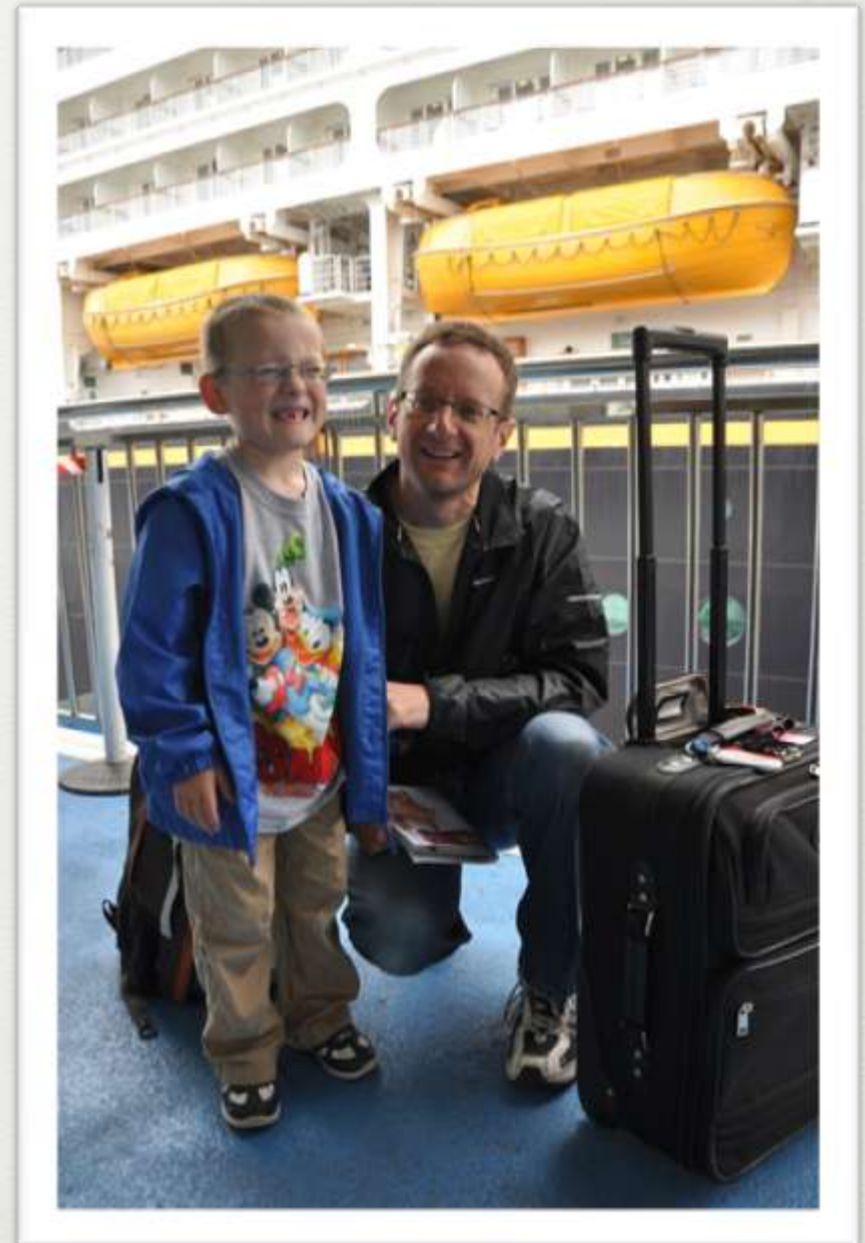


Scenes from the market



Day 3 - Barcelona & Boarding

- Took the taxi to the port
- Mistakenly took another family's taxi...oops
- Fun ride...Elias had a hand signal conversation with another taxi driver on the way
- Taxis in Barcelona all have a listing of cruises for each day...our driver knew we were on the Magic because it was the only ship sailing June 8
- He also said on busy days they get nearly 55,000 people going through the city at once



Day 3 - On the Disney Magic June 8, 2011

- Boarded the ship quite quickly all things considered
- Got welcomed by the crew who announced the McWatt family
- Settled in our stateroom 6139 and then went for a munchie
- Wandered about the boat and then had to prep for the emergency drill at 4 pm
- After the drill went to the welcome aboard party midship at Goofy's pool
- Then back to the stateroom to prep for dinner
- Great dinner with a family from the UK in Lumiere's dining room
- Dropped Elias off at the Oceaneer's Club to play
- Watched a bit of the show in the Walt Disney Theatre
- Back to the stateroom to go to bed (watching Alpha and Omega)





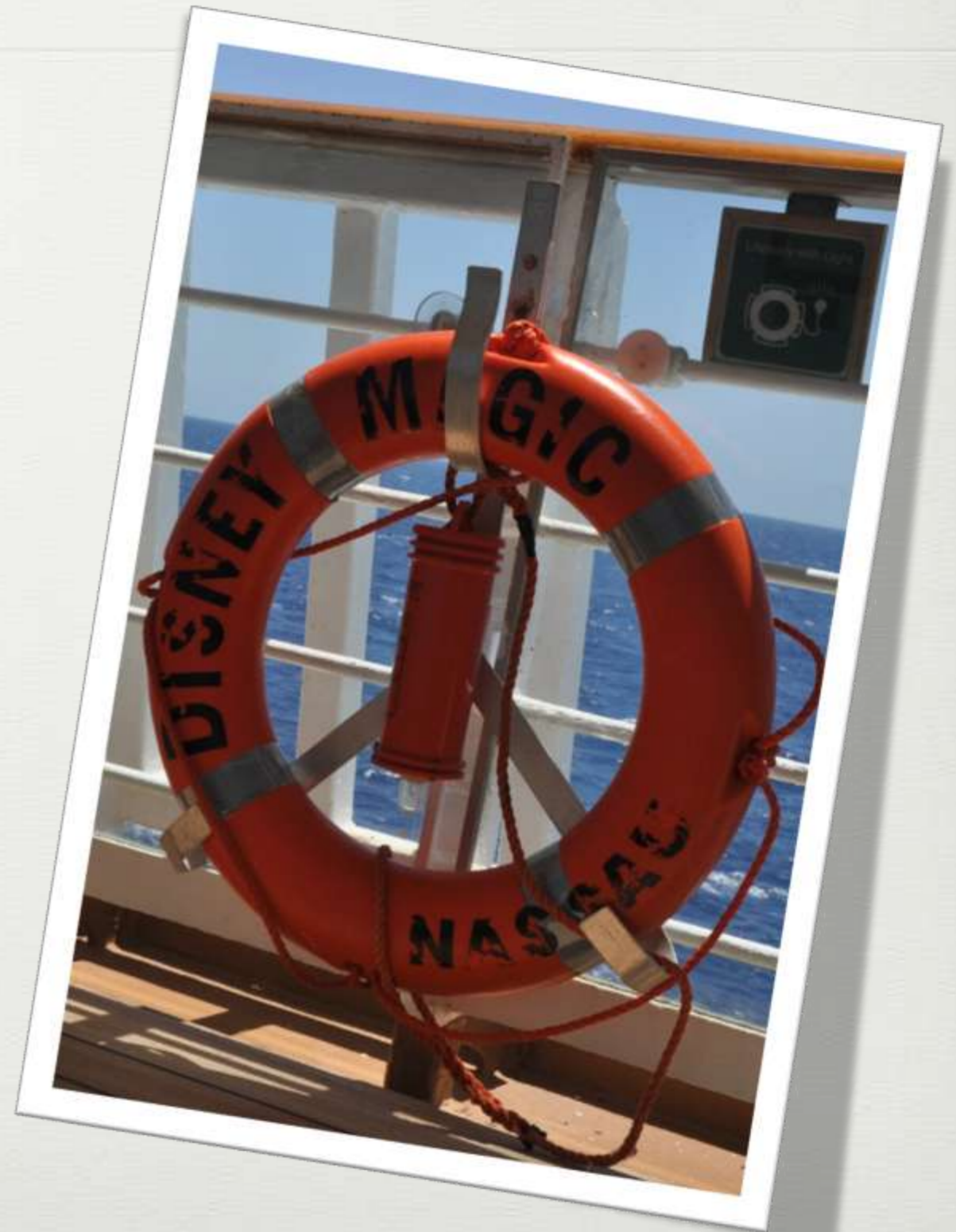
Some scenes from the ship



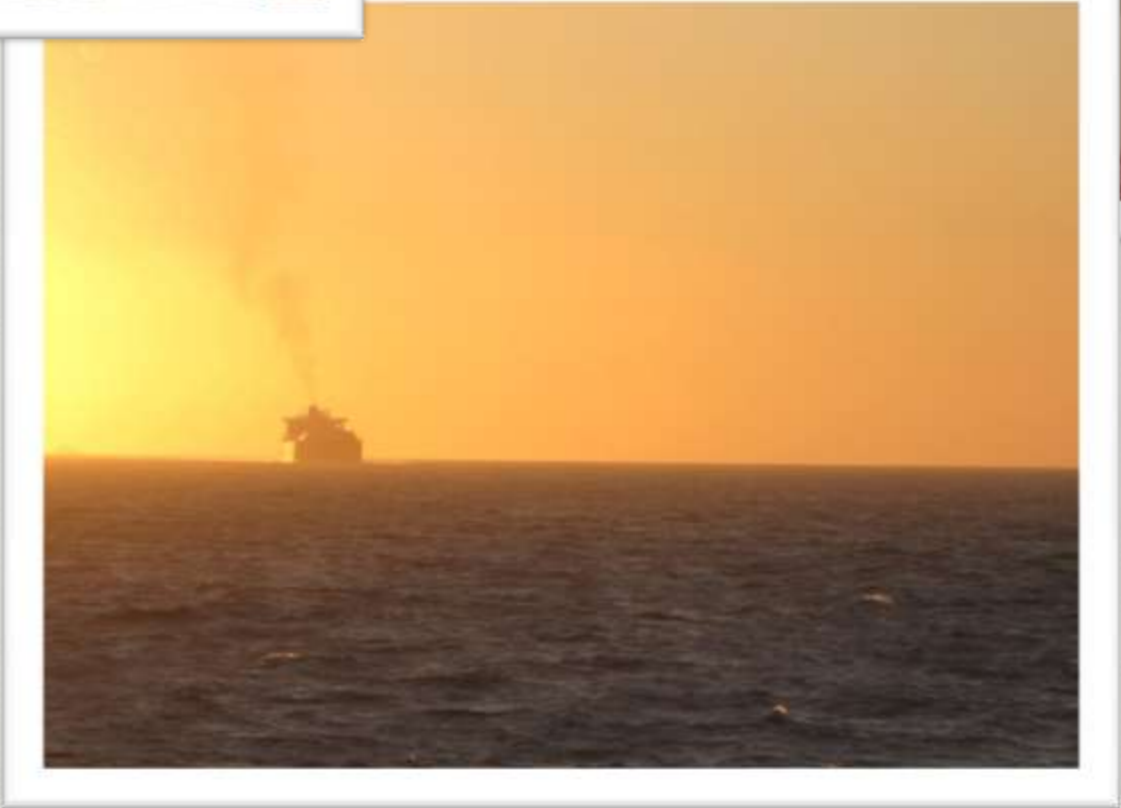
Day 4 - At Sea

June 9, 2011

- Explored the ship today while traveling to Malta
- Slept in very late...Elias especially still suffering from jet lag
- Elias really liked Beat Street which has carpet that looks like a street / railway
- Found all the places to eat including great pizza at Pinocchio's Pizzeria and awesome chicken fingers and burgers at Pluto's Doghouse
- Formal dinner night in the Animator's Palate...unfortunately the scenes didn't change colors that night



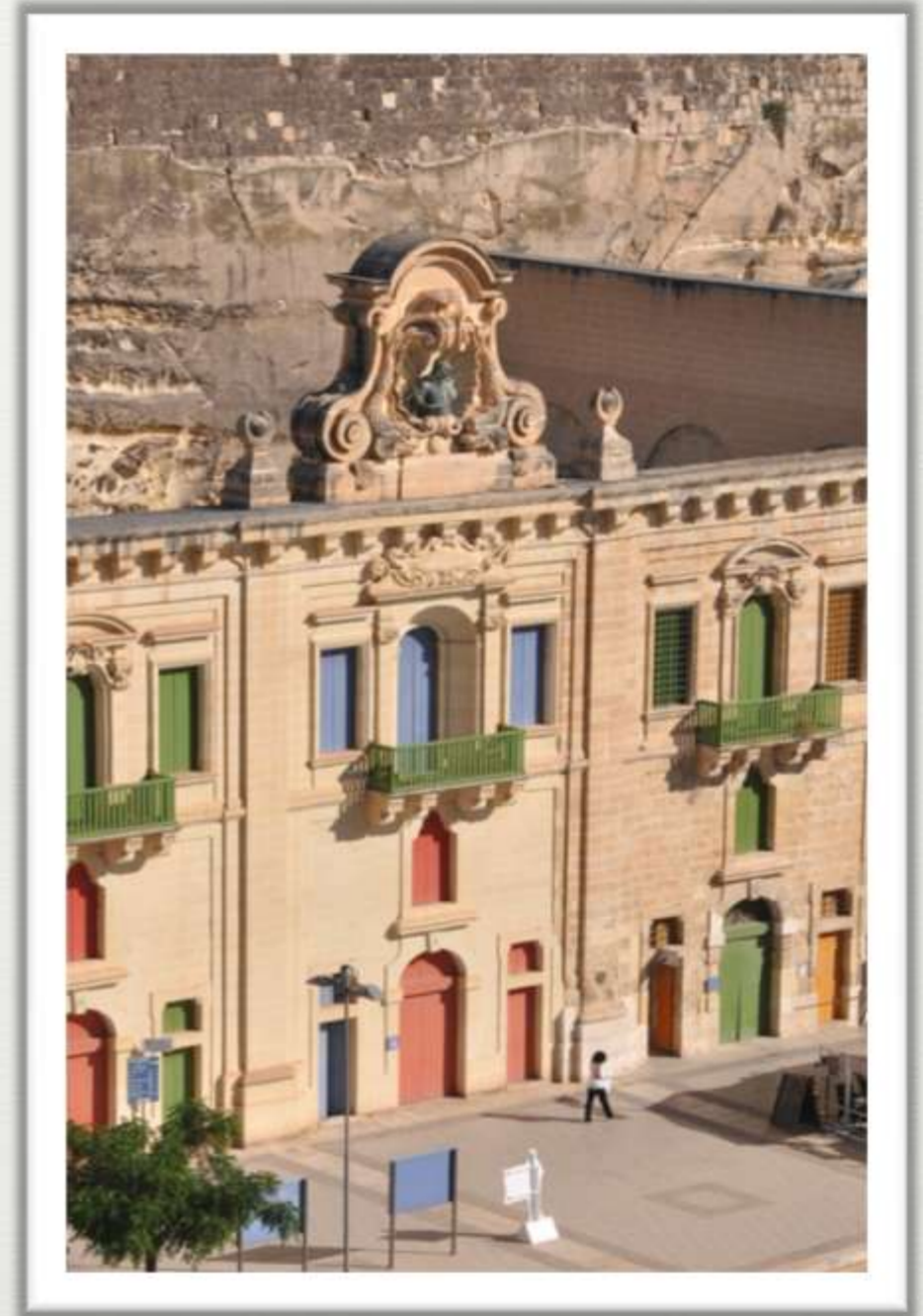
More ship scenes



Day 5 - Valetta, Malta

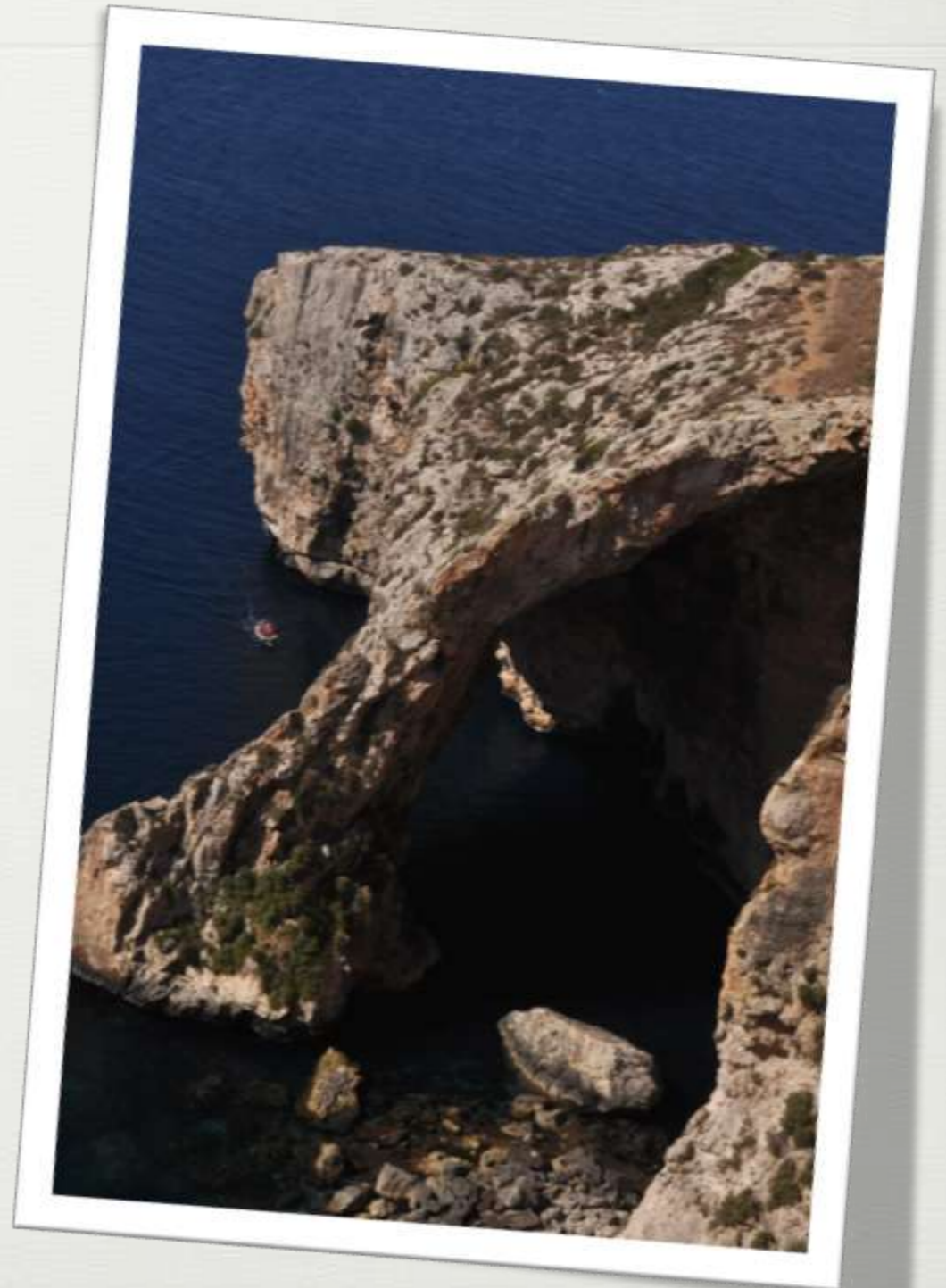
June 10, 2011

- Got up in time to watch the boat dock at the port of Valetta
- Had breakfast at the buffet and headed for our shore excursion - a boat ride around the Blue Grotto
- Drove through this fascinating city and surrounding suburbs
- Tiny island only 200 sq km, and over 450k people
- Buildings all made of stone blocks, some centuries old



Day 5 - Valetta, Malta

- Arrived at the stop for the boat tour
 - Took a quick stop to view the Blue Grotto from the cliff tops - amazing
- Groups of 6-10 people got on small boats to view the sea caves
- Water bluer and clearer than we've ever seen, up to 7 meters, deep in some of the caves, but you could see to the bottom
- The caves have been formed by relentless waves crashing into the rock over centuries
- The Grotto itself was enormous with huge stalactites hanging down

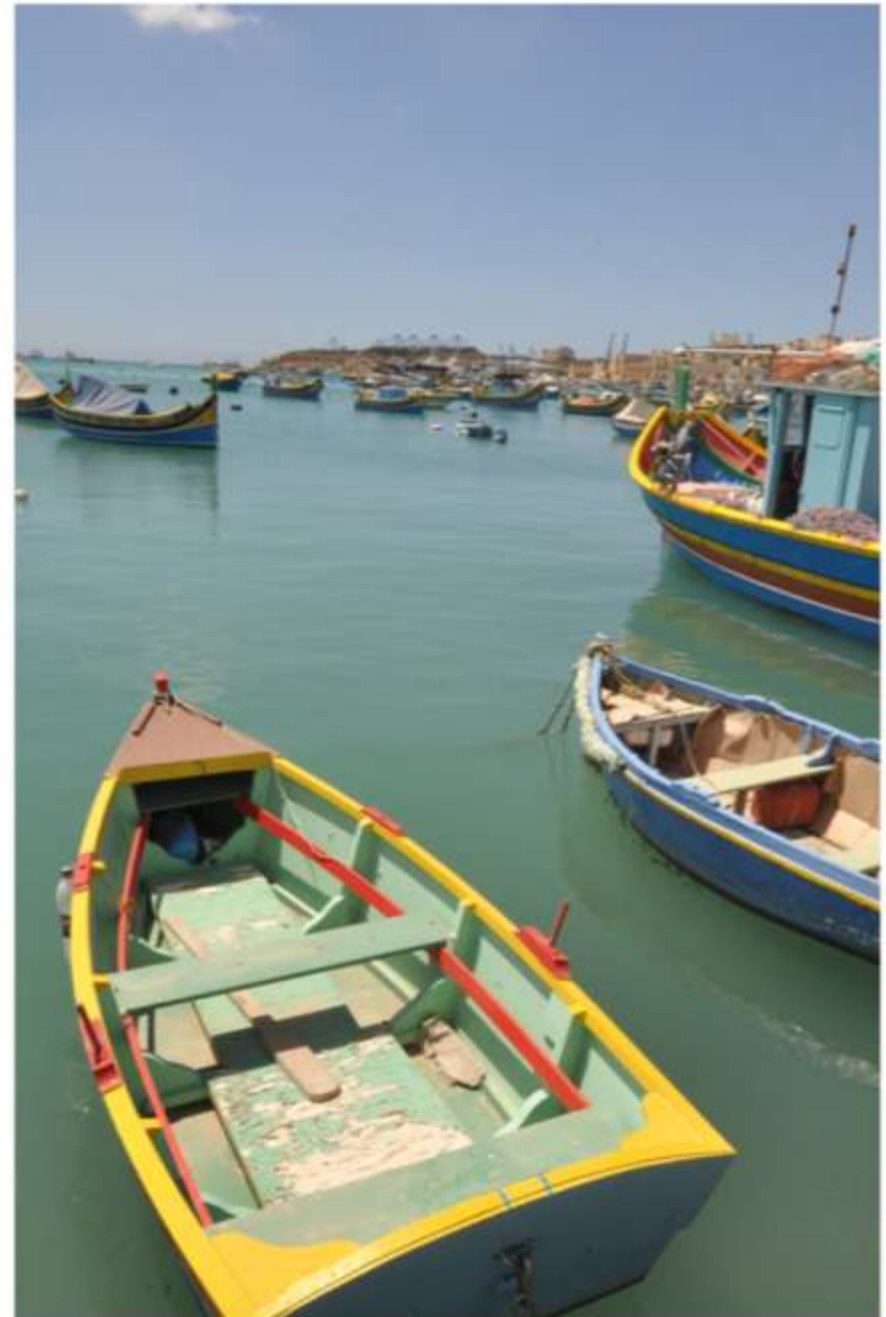


Images of the sea caves, the largest is the Blue Grotto



Day 5 - Valetta, Malta

- Back on shore had a quick break at the Kingfisher Restaurant where Rob said the food was awful
- Back on the bus to drive to a small fishing village on the south coast
- At the village wandered through the tourist market and took photos of the brightly colored boats
- Had a beer at the open air cantina
- Elias made a friend, Logan, whose dad is in the U.S. Military stationed in Greece. Logan and his mom were cruising alone. They hit it off almost immediately as they were both 5 yrs old





The fishing village of Marsaxlokk...loved the bright colored boats

Day 5 - Valetta, Malta

- Back to the ship through Valetta
- Great tour - and now exhausted from the blazing sun
- Had lunch and then Elias went to play in the Oceaneer's Club with Logan
- Sat out on Deck 4 for a while just looking at the scenery
- Picked up Elias for dinner at Parrot's Cay
- Watched the stragglers wander back from town very very late (how rude is that)
- Great dinner once again...the pastry chef really knows how to wow the crowd
- Rob went to the show (magician) while me and Elias watched a movie in our stateroom - of course he wouldn't fall asleep



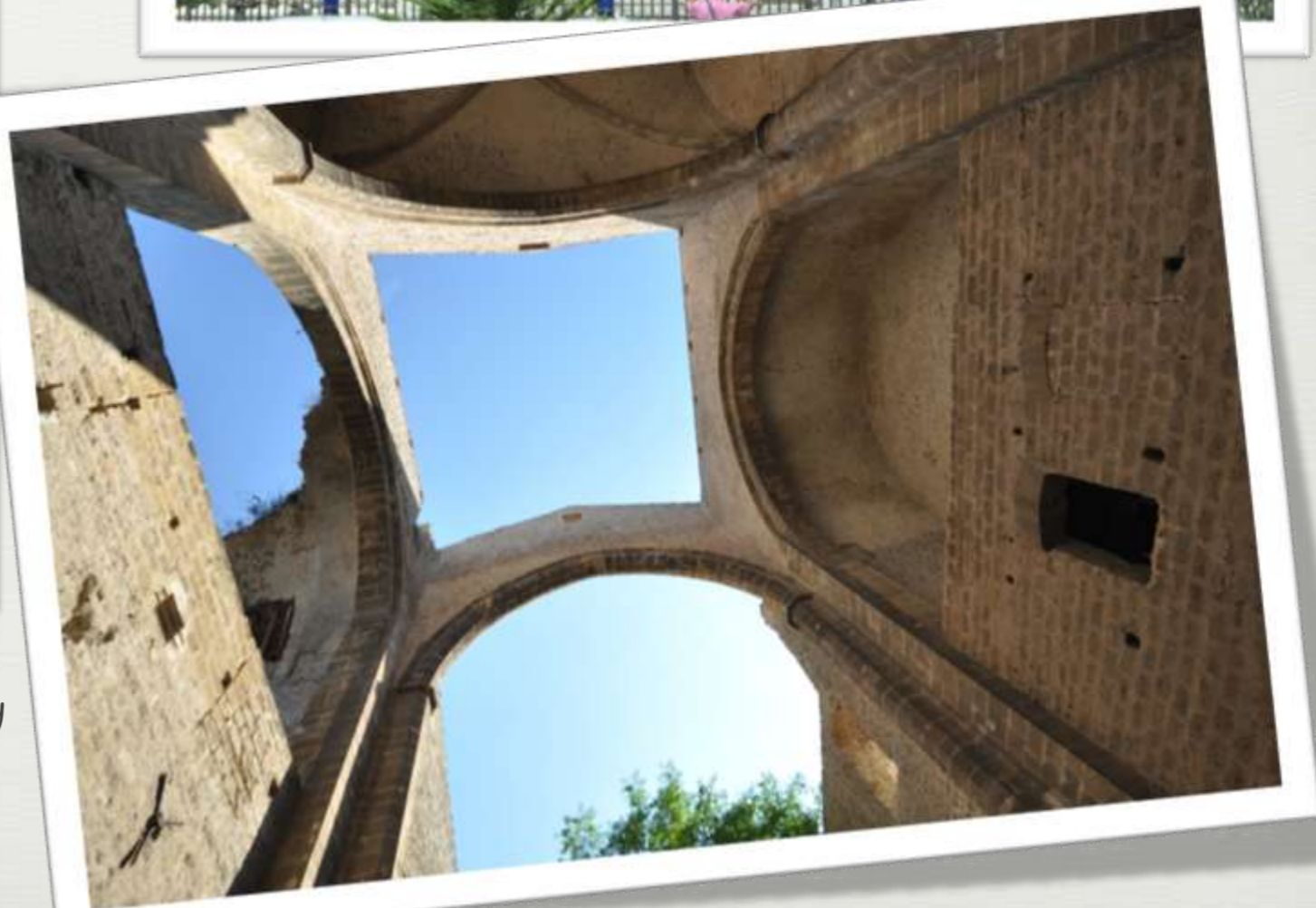


Port of Valetta

Day 6 - Palermo, Italy

June 11, 2011

- Spent the morning with Elias wandering about the ship and in the Mickey Mouse pool on Deck 9
- Dropped Elias off at the Club at 12:30pm so we could get ready for our trip into Palermo
- Visited a number of sites during the bus tour including:
 - An ancient palace from the 1100s
 - The catacombs of Palermo which hold 8,000 mummies (rather spooky and unnerving) – no pictures allowed – they were VERY strict about that
 - An old church near the Piazza de Spasima where the roof fell in centuries ago
- Funny story the guide told of a fountain built beside a convent featuring statues of naked people. The nuns took their revenge by breaking off all the male appendages and hiding them under their pillows. Yeah...right. I'm sure they just kept marble male appendages under their pillows (says the good Catholic girl)
- Also stopped for a gelato - best darn ice-cream I've had in a while



Clockwise starting left top: The 12th century palace, Fountain of Shame, ancient church



*More images from Palermo –
fascinating architecture, scooter
by the ice cream shop*



Day 6 - Palermo, Italy

- Picked up Elias and headed for dinner at Parrot Cay once again
- After dinner, went to the show: Villains Today
 - Was fantastic!!!
 - Lots of references kids would have not gotten
 - Loved Yzma and Kronk



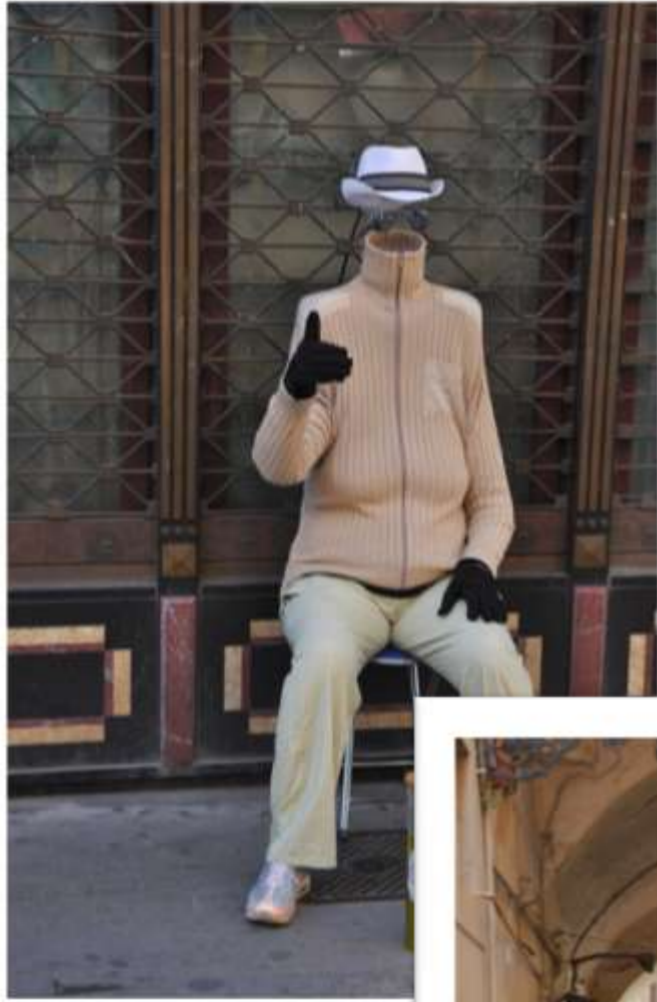
Day 7 – Naples (Sorrento), Italy

June 12, 2011

- Went on a shore excursion to Sorrento - were told traffic lights to the drivers in Naples are suggestions only.
- 70 minute drive from the port along the Amalfi coast
- Went through three long tunnels through the mountains - very cool, Elias loved them
- Sheer cliffs alongside the route were amazing
- Drivers in Italy are scary beyond reason. More than once saw scooter drivers totally ignore the street signs
- Had a little more than two hours to explore the village...lots of shops and restaurants
- Enjoyed a gelato before boarding the bus to head back to the ship



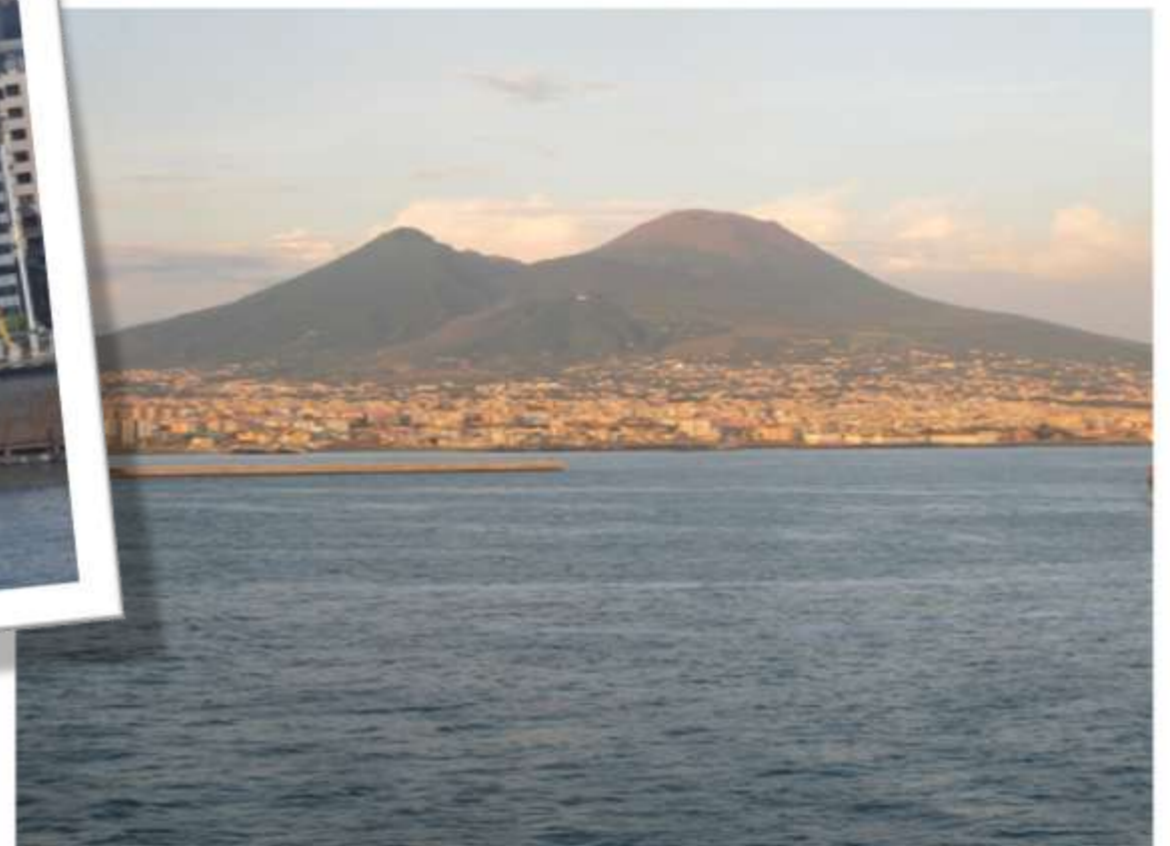
Images of Sorrento (clockwise): Invisible man, view of the water from bridge in Sorrento, lemon soaps, walking along the main shopping district



Day 7 - Naples, Italy

- Back on the ship Elias and Daddy went to the pool and Elias even went down the Mickey waterside a few times
- I wandered the 10th floor deck and got some shots of Naples harbor area and the two US warships anchored in the bay
- Had dinner at Palo's while Elias went to the club
- Early to bed as we have to get up early for Rome tomorrow





Clockwise: Elias on the Mickey Slide, view of Naples from the port, Port of Naples, Mount Vesuvius

Day 8 - Civitavechia (Rome) Italy

June 13, 2011

- Leisurely sightseeing tour of Rome
- 90 min bus ride into Rome and then another 2 hrs of bus tour past the ancient sites
- Just way too much to see in a short period of time - overwhelming
- Leisurely...my butt...





Sights around Rome – sorry, can't remember what they were! Just too many of them!!!



The Coliseum

Day 8 - Civitavecchia (Rome) Italy

- Had 45 min to hang out around St Peter's Square
- Had a bit of lunch and took a few photos before heading back to the bus for the long ride back to the boat
- Had dinner at Animator's Palate where the room went from black and white to full color
- Early night as we had to get up very early for Genoa





St. Peter's Square



*Clockwise: Leah & Gail,
Marcos & Natalie (our
servers), two of the B&W
images that "turned"
color during dinner*



Day 9 - La Spezia (Genoa), Italy

June 14, 2011

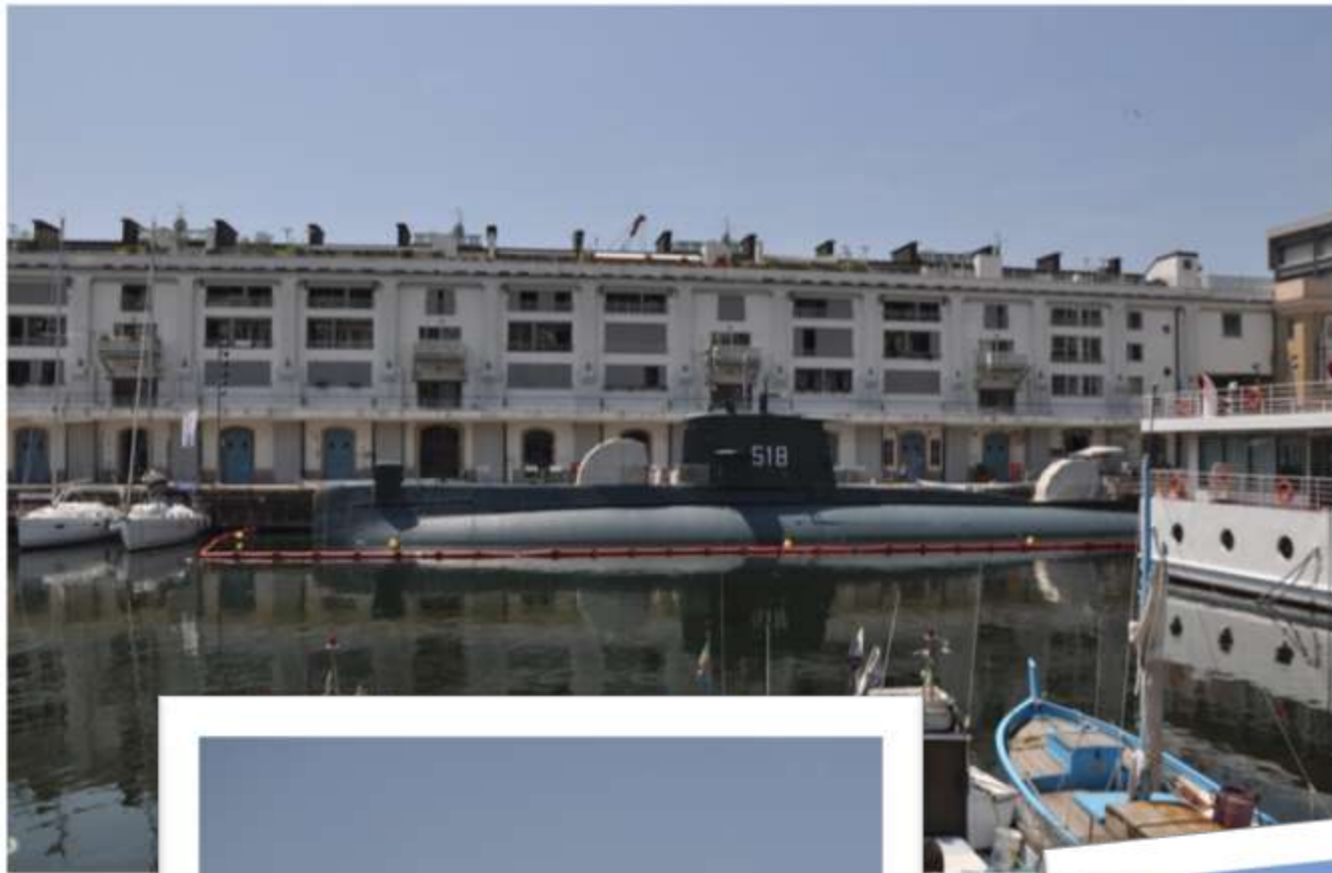
- Shore excursion to Genoa for the marine museum and aquarium tour
- Took a tender to shore (Elias considers them double-decker boats)
- Nice waterfront in La Spezia, but starts to look "grungy" again as you get outside of the tourist areas
- 90 min drive through the mountainous coastline, lots of long tunnels (longest was 1,900m)
- Villages perched on tops of the mountains were strategic posts watching for the enemy
- Had to wonder how people actually lived way up there!



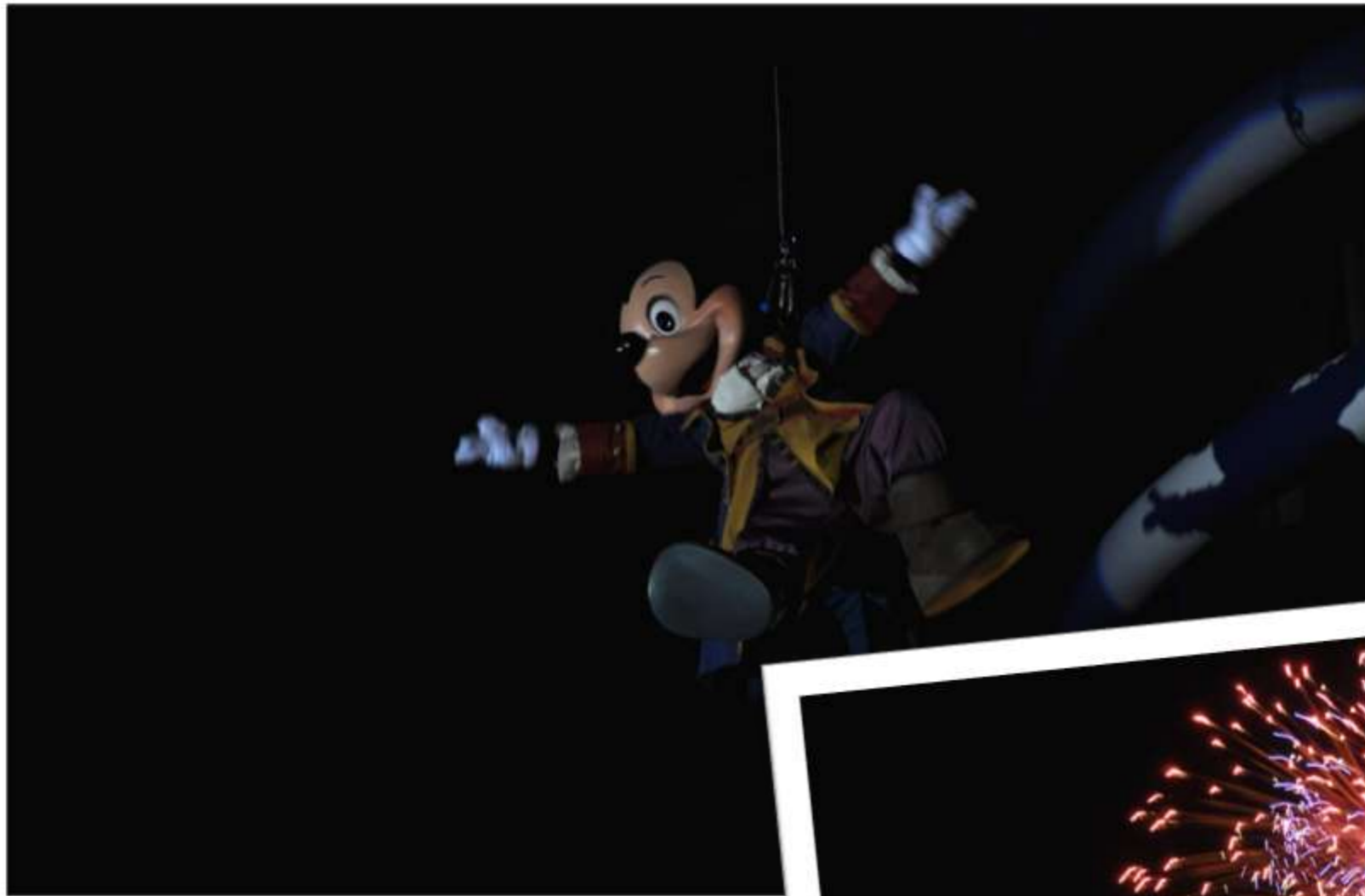
Day 9 - La Spezia (Genoa), Italy

- Toured the marine museum and then a short walk through a decommissioned Italian submarine
- Then a quick lunch (pizza on foccacia bread) followed by a wander through the Genoa Aquarium
- Manatees, seals, dolphins, sharks, tropical fish...was very interesting
- Back on the bus for the long trip back
- Made it back in time for dinner in Parrot's Cay on Pirate night
- Watching the fireworks from the boat (late night...will be hard to wake up in the morning)





Clockwise – Submarine we toured in Genoa, Sea Turtle in the Aquarium, Spanish Galleon replica in the harbor of Genoa, Mountaintop village



The "Pirates in the Caribbean" deck party with fireworks from the ship. Mickey rappelled between the two ship funnels while everyone got all "excited". It's Mickey Mouse, not superman people! Fireworks were awesome (short, but awesome)



Day 10 - Ajaccio, Corsica

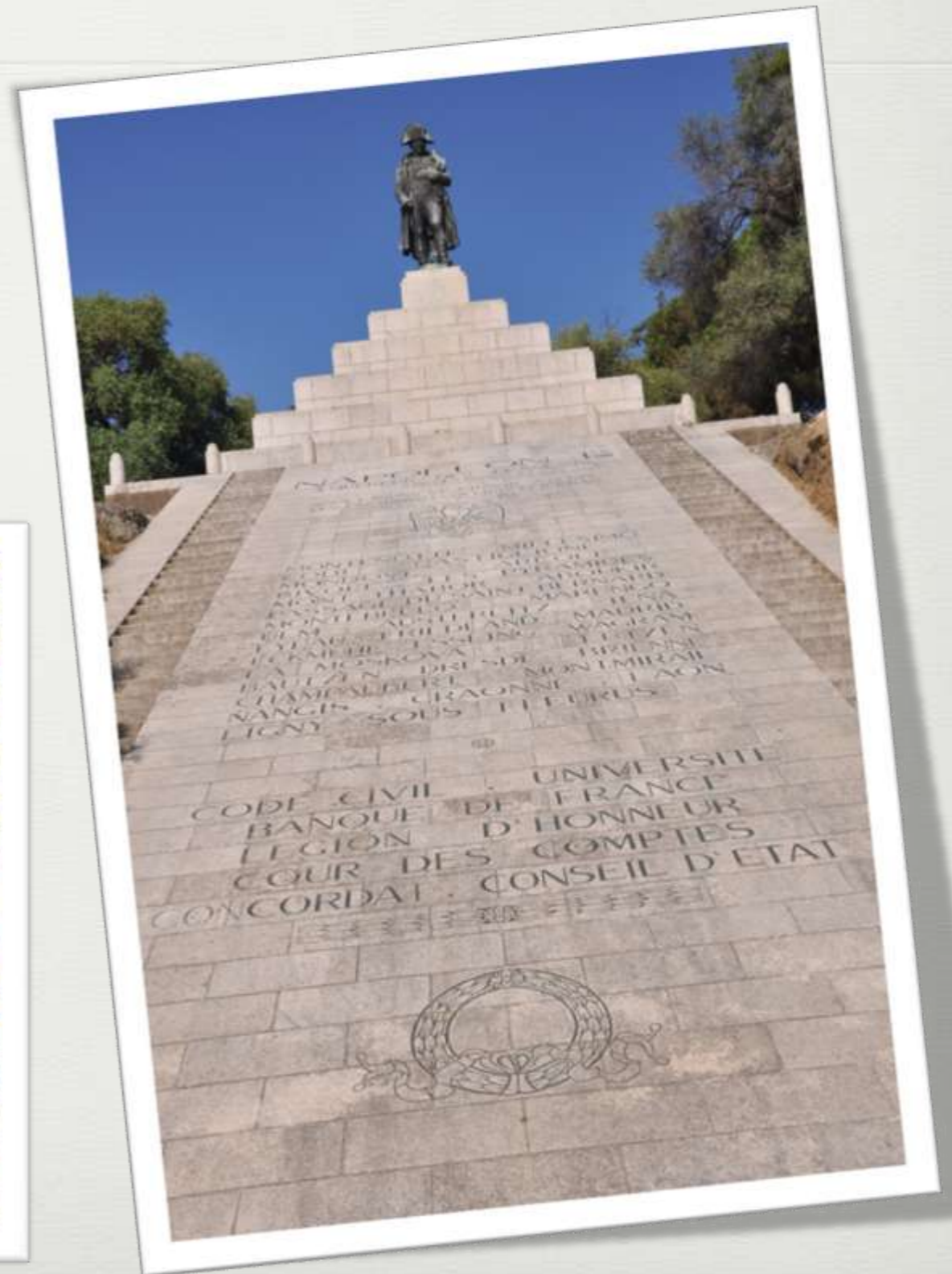
June 15, 2011

- Went to the Tortoise Conservatory on the island of Corsica
- Drive through the countryside to the park was lovely
- The park itself was amazing...over 3,000 tortoises
- Had a great time visiting all the residents
- BTW – they really really really love Napoleon (the people, not the tortoises)



Day 10 - Ajaccio, Corsica

- Dinner in Lumiere's was semi formal
- Then watched Disney Dreams...Elias loved it
- Rob went out afterwards to see the ventriloquist while I watched Megamind with Elias in the cabin



Day 11 – Villefranche (Monaco), France

June 15, 2011

- Port of Villefranche is simply spectacular
- One of our favorite stops
- Took a tender in early and wandered a bit around the old city
- Joined our shore excursion to Monaco and Monte Carlo at the pier
- 45 min drive along the lower road to Monaco was spectacular with the ocean on one side and the Alps on the other



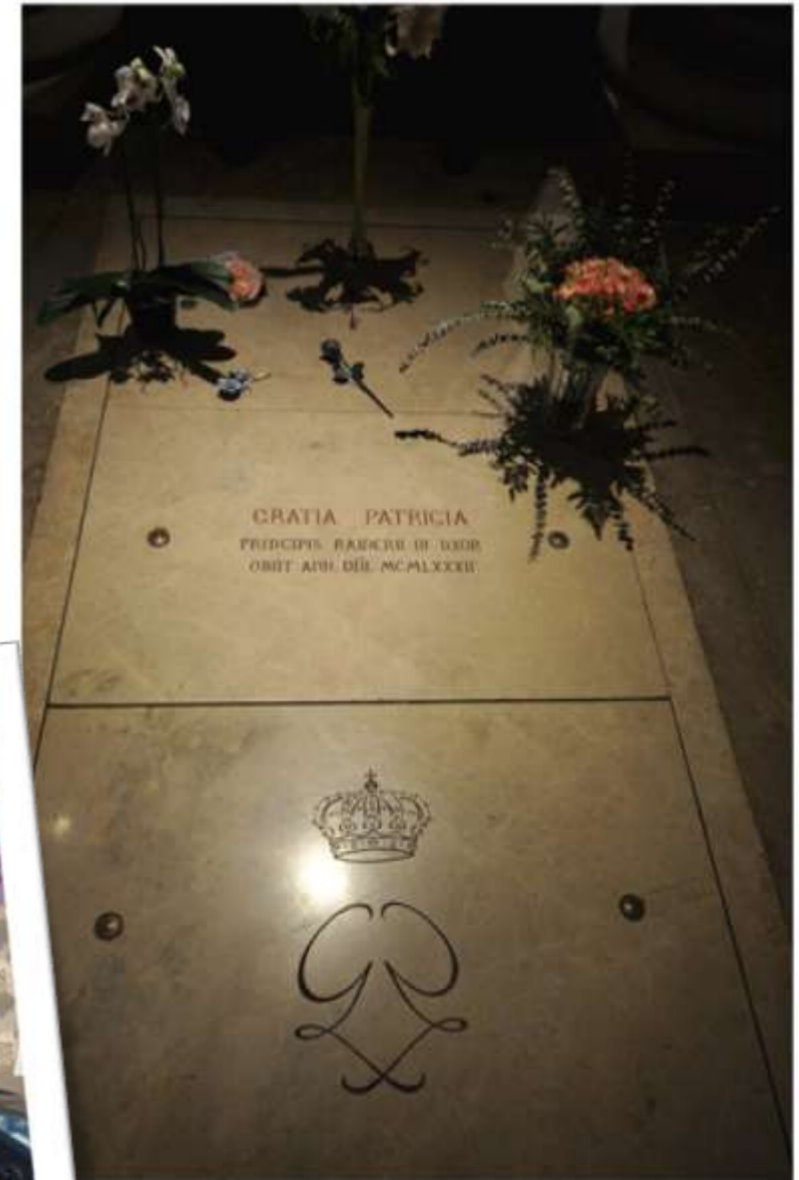


The Villefranche Port

Day 11 - Villefranche, France

- Wandered around the old city in Monaco first with an amazing view of Monaco
- Lovely views of the marina and stopped in a playground so Elias could expend some energy
- Met at the Prince's Palace for the drive to Monte Carlo





Old city, tomb of Grace Kelley,
Police wandering the square in
front of Prince's Palace (police
EVERYWHERE – extremely
safe (no doubt with all the
money there)).

Day 11 - Villefranche, France

- Monte Carlo is amazing
- Parking is all underground as apparently anything "ugly" has been put underground with such limited space in the principality
- Walked up the steps to Casino Square where we stopped for a refreshment - beer :-)
- Spent an hour in the Cafe du Paris
- It was such a fantastic day!!
- Got back to the boat late so we ate at the Topsider Buffet and spending the evening in the cabin watching Beauty and the Beast





Images of Monte Carlo: The casino, the square in front of the casino, just some interesting architecture, and cool cars

Day 12 - At Sea

June 17, 2011

- Our last day of relaxation
- Spent the day wandering about the ship and took a few photos
- Mostly did nothing...except had to pack
- Enjoyed the beer Rob bought in Corsica
- They had the photo sessions with the Disney Princesses (Cinderella and Belle in photo)
- Last big dinner with our table mates in Parrot Cay...tearful preliminary good-byes to Marcos and Natalie our servers



Day 13 - Travel Day

June 17, 2011

- Day of the long flight home.
- First had breakfast with the gang in Parrot Cay and then departed the ship
- Took a bus back to the airport and waited for a few hours (we were very early)
- Flight to Amsterdam via KLM was uneventful
- Arrived in Amsterdam and were amazed by the airport...it was huge
- Took a long time to walk to our gate...had no time to explore
- Boarded the flight to Toronto almost immediately!
- Long flight. Watched a lot of movies (me: Gnomeo and Juliet, the Kings Speech, Rango; Rob: Gnomeo and Juliet, Deliverance; Elias: Charlie & the Chocolate Factory twice)
- Elias fell asleep eventually
- Food on this KLM flight was excellent
- Arrived in Toronto at around 7:20pm and home by 9pm (approx)
- Long day...totally exhausted.
- Great trip, but nice to be home



The Disney Magic