

# Travelling by scooter through Scandinavia



**August to October 2010**  
**by Beat Lenel**

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## Germany

*01.08.10 Thal to Kassel* At 06:30 in the morning I leave in Thal. We have 12 deg C in Thal, but as soon as I get into Bavaria, the temperatures sink towards freezing. The meadows are covered in dew or frost. I take the freeway, as riding is no fun in this cold. In Würzburg it starts to rain hard. A 100kms later the rain stops and now it only rains at times and less hard. So far, the rain gear holds. Every 100kms I have to fuel up; in one place the attendant shows up and asks whether the pump was broken, because I took so little gas. But then, my tank only holds 3.8lt of fuel and I did top it up. In Kassel I check into the YHA. Do a historic city tour: Cultural Railway Station, stairs road, Königsplatz, Martinskirche, Bruederkirche, Karlsauen where the Zisselfest celebration takes place and via the civic museum back to the YHA. At 21h a thunderstorm starts, luckily I am already in the dry. In my room I meet my roommate, it is Mark from the canton of Berne, who has cycled here by doing 200km per day (!!!) and is going on to Stockholm

*02.08.10 Kassel to Flensburg* When I got up, it had stopped raining. Although the sky is covered by dark rain clouds, the road is dry. I serve myself from the breakfast buffet and hit the road at 07:30h. Despite the menacing rain clouds it remains dry. I ride on the freeway via Hannover and Hamburg in direction Flensburg. At Soltau I buy some food from a discount store. In Hamburg, at the entrance of the Elbtunnel, there is a 14km traffic jam. Despite my worries and because of my cheeky driving I manage to get through in half an hour. Near Kiel a lorry hoots and flashes at me. I think that he wants to ride me off the road, so I ignore him. Only when the other lorries ride on the shoulder of the road I realize that the funny signs I saw mean, that slow traffic has to ride there. Sometimes the sun comes through the clouds, although the sky is covered with dark rain clouds. At five I arrive in Flensburg. Ich check into the Youth Hostel and explore the historic city center: Nordertor (Northgate), Volksbad (Public bath), Museumswerft (Museum shipyard), Flensborghus, over the St. Mary's stairs to the panoramic view from Duburg, Oluf-Samson-Alley, Hugo-Eckener-House, St. Mary's Church, Kompagnietor, Salon Steamer Alexandra, Holmhof, Südermarkt, Holy Spirit Monastery, City Hall. The city appears clean, beautiful and touristic, with many small shops for cheap goods which are obviously bought by the Danish day visitors. Although everything is now covered by rain clouds, it rains only shortly. I hope that the clouds will shed their rain in the night, so that tomorrow, I can continue in the dry.

## Denmark

*03.08.10 Flensburg to Copenhagen* I breakfast with my roommate, a 70-years-old Bavarian, then I leave, but the sky is overcast. I cross the border on the freeway, but now there is a new problem: As there is no customs, there are no ATM machines. And I need money for the toll bridge. So I take the next offramp and look for an ATM machine, which I do find after some asking around. On the byroads I drive up to Kolding, where I have to join the freeway again, the only road connection with Kopenhagen. Across a huge suspension bridge I reach the island of Fyn with the city of Odense, thereafter across a further even bigger suspension bridge the Island of Sjælland where Copenhagen is located. Shortly before Copenhagen I catch the wrong offramp and find myself on the wrong freeway. I manage to get on the right freeway and find the youth hostel quite well with the instructions of Google maps. I check into the YMCA and am sent to the library for Wifi reception. There I am surfing for two hours getting information on my onward journey in Sweden and publishing my diaries. Unfortunately I have still not found any accomodation in Malmö. I walk on the Vesterbogrøde to the city centre, where I see the entrance to the Tivoli. In front of the city hall, some Mexicans play the pan flute, exactly the same as on the Zocalo in Mexico City. I follow the Frederiksborggade, where there is everywhere street musicians, Clowns, Magicians and other artists. Visit the Holbro, the Kongens Nytorv and the Nyhavn, which beautifully lit in the evening light. Then I slowly walk back to the youth hostel. My roommate is an old woman, which returns at midnight and starts sorting her thousands of plastic bags causing considerable noise and then sitting on the bed with the light on.

*04.08.10 Copenhagen* I go first to the tourist information, then to the bank, where I change some USD into DKR. Then I start doing the historic city walk: City hall, Nytorv with the court house, Kompagniæstraeden, a pedestrian zone with many small shops, Højbro with the equestrian statue of Bishop Absalon, the founder of the city. Kongens Nytorv, Nyhavn where I do a boat tour. We explore the area of Holmen, which was built to be as a replica of Amsterdam. Today, it is dominated by the modern opera house. After an hour we return to Nyhavn. I continue walking, past the Royal Danish Playhouse to the Amalienborg castle, whose northern wing is being prepared for the new royal couple. From here to the place where there is usually the little mermaid, now it is at the world exhibition in Shanghai and in its place is a big screen showing it live in Shanghai via Webcam. Through the Kastellet which is still used by the military and surrounded by a moat, I walk to King's Garden, where a very witty puppet show is shown, "Barber's Shop". Then I visit Rosenborg Castle, which I explore in detail. The castle has small and narrow rooms, which are stuffed to the ceiling with regalia. For almost 200 years the castle has been used as a store for excess regalia. In a strongroom in the basement the crown jewels are on exhibition. They are really overwhelming and supposedly very valuable. I continue to the round tower, which inside has a drivable ramp. Maybe because this was once upon a time the access to the library of the university

and the heavy books were supposedly brought by a cart. From here, there is a good view over town. Via university and Quartier Latin I return to the hostel, where I do the bookings for Stockholm and look up the campsites on the way to Stockholm.

*05.08.10 Copenhagen* I leave only after nine to the National Museum, which is just about to open when I get there. The huge museum, whose admission is free, is far too big to be seen in a single day. I choose to see the exhibition "Danish Prehistory 13000BC to 1050 AD". Amazing is, that the Danish only started to develop in a continental manner from the year 1000, before they were more or less traditional vikings. I then proceed on the first floor with the Danish Middle Ages and Renaissance 1050 - 1660, and the Prince's Palace and the History of the Museum (It formerly was a royal palace). Eventually I visit on the third floor Toys and Stories of Denmark, which pictures the years 1660 - 2000. As it is already 15h, I quickly proceed to the National Museum of Arts (SMK, Statens Museum for Kunst). On my way there, I buy some food at a supermarket and eat it in the botanical garden. I arrive at 16h and proceed to the modern art section which has some very valuable pieces from Baselitz, Picasso, Matisse and others. From there I visit the section of modern Danish art, which is quite remarkable too. When I am in the section of Older Danish Art, the museum closes and I have to leave. I walk back to the YMCA and quickly fill up the scooter (whereby I struggled to find a petrol station) and exchange all my left-over DKR in Norwegian Crowns, as I will cross the border to Norway far from any ATM machine. Denmark is much like Switzerland: Clean, well-organized, without too apparent social problems. The prices especially for food are skyhigh. It looks as if the minimum charge for edibles is around 20 DKR (4 USD), which stands in sharp contrast with restaurant food which is less expensive than in Switzerland, from 35 DKR upwards.

## Sweden

*06.8.2010 Copenhagen to Malmö* I get up early in the morning and get ready. Of course I am far too early, because the office only opens around 08:30h and I cannot take out the scooter earlier. I walk into town and return just in time. Now I can load the scooter and leave. I find the freeway, which I had googled yesterday, quite easy and first ride through a tunnel, then across the huge Oresund Bridge. It takes about 40km to Malmö. There is a tourist information booth right at the freeway and they give me a map and mark the camp site. I still get lost, as I tried to memorize the map and then took a wrong turnoff. Eventually I do get to the campsite and check in. I meet a 66-year-old German artist, who rode on his heavy BMW motorcycle all the way from the Toscana. Then I ride into town. But once more, a thunderstorm is threatening. I don't trust it, change some money and return to the campsite in order to pick up my rain suit. Then I ride to the supermarket, where I shop some groceries. It is really as I was told: Food is even more expensive than in Denmark. After a very frugal meal on the dunes (whereby I get splashed when opening the cooldrink bottle) I ride into town, park the scooter on the Gustav Adolfstorg and explore town on foot: Stortorget with the equestrian statue of Karl X. Gustav, city hall, St. Peters church, Davidshallstorg where once more there is a facade entirely grown over by ivy, Slottsparken which is divided by moats where cycleboats circulate, then around the castle and back to Gustav Adolfstorg. From there by scooter to the public library, where there is free wifi and I am eventually able to make my onward bookings for the youth hostels up to Stockholm. Now I am booked up to Luleå. I ride back to the campsite, where I have a very basic supper (bread and water) and write my diaries in the kitchen (as there is a plug here).

*07.8.2010 Malmö to Oskarshavn* I do get up early and am one of the first ones in the showers, but until I have finished packing all my things and rolling up the tent, it is half past seven. I take the freeway E20, as I know exactly how to get on. I then stay on there, as my travel map doesn't show an alternative. The sky is dark, but it is still dry. Then it starts slowly drizzling, after Kalmar it rains properly. Fortunately, today's target is reaching Oskarshavn, 75 km past Kalmar. I cannot get a room at the YHA, but I get a room at a boarding school which is renting their rooms during summer vacation. The village has a big harbour, which is obviously closed on a Saturday afternoon.

*08.8.2010 Oskarshavn to Stockholm* I'm leaving before the reception opens. The rain is pouring down, my fuel consumption increases enormously, even though I hardly get on. And far and wide, no gas station. When one comes at last, it only works on credit cards. I stop and try with my credit card to buy petrol, but it keeps saying: wrong code. I call the credit card center in Switzerland who tell me that they could do nothing, I had to wait until Monday. So I pour the contents of the jerrycan into the tank and drive on to the next gas station, about 50km away, unfortunately also unattended. And it even refuses my bank notes. Fortunately, I can convince another customer to fill my tank on his card, and pay him the amount in cash. So I can fill up the motorbike and the jerry can. I am driving in the rain, coming again into populated areas where I can fill up with cash. The fuel consumption is increased dramatically and some point I'll have to readjust the carburetor, because the exhaust is black instead of gray. I hope it is not a technical problem that is starting to manifest itself. My carefully planned hostel itinerary would not tolerate such. For every day I have to travel a certain distance. No margins included. At two o'clock I arrive in Stockholm. Promptly I miss my exit and must stop at a gas station and ask for directions. No problem, I did not stray far from the path. I find the Gustav af Klint easily and check in. Then I send a text message to Kevin Russi that I had arrived. He replies and soon after I meet him and his girlfriend

Regula at the Royal Palace. He invites me for a drink - I have no more money, having spent my last crown for the hostel and only tomorrow the banks will open again. After that I buy something to eat in a supermarket and revel in the free Internet, which I use to plan my Norway trip. For that is not easy, although there are many youth hostels in Norway, the town names mean nothing to me. I have to look them all up on my travel Atlas and simultaneously calculate the routes using Google Maps.

*09.8.2010 Stockholm* Just when I want to go into town, it starts raining heavily. I run back to the ship and put my waterproof clothing on. Then I go back to town. In the city center I change my USD and then I visit the royal palace. This moment the weather improves and even a little sun comes out. I visit the Royal Apartments, which look just like any other royal palace, with old-fashioned furniture and heavy carpets. Then I visit the treasury, with the royal crowns, swords, scepters, and Empire apples. I skip to the Tre Kronor Museum in the former cellars of the palace, which is not particularly interesting. Finally, I visit the Museum of Antiquities of Gustav III, which includes a couple of wildly collected antique statues. From here I walk quickly to the changing of the guard, which is just about to take place, with a lot of marches (played by mounted soldiers!) and useless manoeuvres just for public appeal until they can hand over duties. Now I visit the Storkyrkan, which charges a high entrance fee and is especially famous for its larger-than-life St. George the Dragonslayer statue. The dragon here is apparently representing Denmark. I visit the German St. Gertrude's Church (Tyske Kyrkan), which has a funny cabin inside, the royal box. I continue to Katarinahissen, a lift to a bridge, from which one has a good view of Stockholm. After a quick lunch at McDonalds I proceed to Vasamuseet where the sailship Vasa, which sank on its maiden voyage on 10 August 1628 is on display, almost completely restored. The 69m long vessel, with its huge proportions for a timber ship is very impressive. Apparently, the captain knew about the problem with the stability, but did not dare acting against the orders of the king, who caused to a great part with his ill-considered changes to the design the stability problem. The next ships were built wider and more bulbous, so that sufficient ballast could be added. From here back to the ship, where I quickly call MasterCard who presumably solved the card problem. Quickly I remove the air filter of the motorcycle and cleanse it. But it does not appear to have been the problem of the too rich mixture. Then I walk back to Gamla Stan, where I meet up again with Kevin and Regula. We eat pizza together. Then I have to return to the hostel, as I still must prepare for tomorrow's departure.

*10.8.2010 Stockholm to Sundsvall* I am waiting until the supermarket opens and buy some breakfast before I leave Stockholm on the highway. The first half hour, it is still dry, so I get cocky and take off the rain gear. That was stupid, because shortly thereafter it begins to rain vehemently. At the first refueling I find to my relief that my MasterCard is working again. I continue riding in the pouring rain. Sometimes it rains so strong, that the rain drops sting my face and I have to slow down. Despite the good rain gear, the water seeps through the arm and leg cuffs, and other not so well sealed points slowly into the interior and what is particularly nasty, into the shoes. Finally I arrive in Sundsvall. As the office of the hostel is not yet open, I drive quickly into town to the Tourist Office and let them enter the attractions on the map. Then I'm going back to the hostel, check in and go right back into the city, where I very quickly look at the city, visit the museum (by the way, despite the huge budget for the presentation it is by no means exceptional), to a supermarket to buy food and view the church at least from the outside. Then I'm going back to the hostel where I hang my things to dry. I want to tighten the chain of the motorcycle and notice to my great horror, that the maximum elongation is used up and the chain gone. Now there are only two options: shorten the chain (very bad, but does get me further), or a new chain.

*11.8.2010 Sundsvall to Umeå* Shortly after leaving Sundsvall, the rain starts beating down on me. But this time I am prepared: I got into my rain gear before leaving Sundsvall. The landscape must be very beautiful, in particular Höge Köste, but I don't see anything of it through the perpetual downpour. When I arrive in Umeå. The rain had stopped. The Vandrerhem is still closed, so I get directions from the tourist information office and then go to the motorbike workshop, where I buy a new chain and some more chainlube, hoping that this chain will bring me up and then home safely. There is some difficulties installing it, because the chain lock refuses to close. Eventually this problem is overcome and the chain fitted. I then visit the artists' garden in Umedalen. The former factory area has been converted into a residential area and there is an abundance of pieces of art all over the place, apart from several exhibition rooms. Some of the sculptures are excellent. I then quickly buy something to eat from the supermarket and return to the Vandrerhem, which is just about to open. I check in - despite of my sleeping bag I am made to hire linen. On top of that, the internet is not working. I thus send my broadcast from the library and walk to the Gammlia, the museum part of town. There is a classic car meeting taking place and I can marvel at the classic american cars on display, some of them entirely unrestored, which makes them even more genuine. An Italian brass orchestra is playing, the Banda Musicale Margherita from Cameri. Now there is even some sunshine.

*12.8.2010 Umeå* Today, the weather is clearing up. I am very happy about that and can do my sightseeing for the first time since I started this journey without taking any raingear along. I explore the city centre, a clean, well-built, modern town with an abundance of shops for everything one can imagine. I then walk to the Gammlia, where I first look at the historic buildings, whereby I may watch a baker baking traditional Sami bread, which looks exactly like near eastern bread and also tastes similar. When the museums open, I first visit the

Sjöfartsmuseum, where they have a steam tug, the S/S Egil, on display. The ship was built in 1914 in Germany and taken off service in 1953. It still has its original steam engine, a steam winch and a steam pump. The next museum I visited was the Västerbottens Museum, which features the obvious natural history part with stuffed animals, but also a very interesting ski museum, where you can see the oldest skis found (3500 years old) and a large collection of skis through the centuries. Amazing, that today's cross-country skis were already fully developed a 100 years ago. I then continued to the Bildmuseum, which featured an exhibition the works of Pia Arke, a very avantgardist artist who experimented also with a huge camera obscura. The artist was born in Scorebysund in Greenland, which kept dominating her works. I then walked to the University and from there via Ringstrandska Villan, a mansion made from timber and corrugated iron, back to the Vandrerhem. I further explored the Stadshus and Gamla Bron (a cyclists bridge over the river), where they even provide free compressed air for the cyclists. Umeå is doing a lot for its cyclists. Not only are there separate cyclist tracks on the roads, there are particular cyclists bridges and signs for them. Considering that summer is so short. Everywhere there are Estate Agents shops. Properties seem to be about the same price as in Switzerland in proximity of town, but with increasing distance prices drop. All day long the sun was peeping through the clouds, which really helped to raise my spirits which seemed to be drowned by the perpetual downpour.

*13.08.2010 Umeå - Skelleftea – Luleå* The first time sunshine! I get up early, eat a huge breakfast and drive off. The sun is shining, the first time I can see what there is by the roadside: Deep green meadows, deep blue fjords and rivers whose water is dyed dark brown from the forests. Everywhere farms that store their hay bales in the fields. In Skelleftea, I stop and go to the tourist information who recommend Bonnstan and the Nordana Cultural Centre. I park the bike at the Nordana Center and walk to Bonnstan, a church town. Because the distances in Sweden are so large, many families had to make large journeys to church. Therefore, they had a tiny house near the church, where they could sleep and cook before they went to church. My next stop was in Jävre which is known for its beautiful lighthouse looks picturesque. Unfortunately, the town is divided by the highway. From here I continue to Luleå, where I get terribly lost and must backtrack several miles, until I get the right turnoff. I check in at the hostel and go straight on to Gammelstad, another church town that is considerably greater than that in Skelleftea. It is interesting that it previously had a port, but is today kilometers away from the sea, because the surface has lifted. I buy a food for Finland, because I get there on a Sunday and do not know if the stores are open then. It is interesting that in Sweden stores are permitted long opening hours. This makes life much easier. The weather forecast for next week says cold temperatures, but no rain.

*14.08.2010 Luleå* In the morning, still sunshine. I explore the city park Gültzaudden and downtown that is quite extinct in the morning. In Sweden, the day usually begins at 10 or 11 o'clock. Very beautiful are the flowerbeds opposite the bus station. I walk back to the hostel, eat a few Köttbuller (which you can buy cheaply in the supermarket) and run to the supermarket where I buy my supper. Then to the Norrbotten Museum, where I look at the exhibitions - Photographs by Marie Nilsson, something about the Swedish-Russian war, an ancient bedroom, something about Sami culture and very strange paintings of Kristina Nilsdotter. I am driving quickly to Storheden, where I buy at the car spares supermarket "Biltema" a five-liter jerry can. I do not think I will get through with my current range of 200km. So I can, if this proves to be true, take a maximum of 11 liters of fuel for a 400km range. Then I leave the scooter at the hostel and walk to the pier, even a little too early to catch the boat to Klubbviken. The trip to the islet Klubbviken takes place in beautiful sunshine and I explore a corner of the islet on foot. After only one hour, the boat returns. Meanwhile, the sky has darkened and it threatens once again heavy rains.

## Finland

*15.08.2010 Luleå to Rovaniemi* Despite a bad weather forecast, I start in plain sunshine from Luleå, while everyone else at the hostel is still sleeping. As I will be leaving Sweden, a few words about the Swedes: They are friendly, correct, but always at a distance. It is not easy to chat with them, as they keep very much to themselves and are used to foreigners and have often travelled themselves extensively. Sweden is not as expensive as its reputation, but certain foodstuffs are indeed inexplicably expensive, while electronics and car hardware, clothes and furniture, are very competitively priced and rather less than in Germany. In Haparanda I quickly stop at the famous Ikea store - Haparanda is said to be built around it - then I cross the border to Finland. Around noontime I arrive in Rovaniemi, not thinking that Finland has GMT+2 which means it is already an hour later. I check in at the Hostel Rudolf, where I get a single room. I explore the town: Koskikatu, down to Hallituskatu. Still plain sunshine. As it is Sunday afternoon, not everything is open. I walk along Koskenranta at the banks of the Ounaskoski river to the Arktikum, a Museum. The displays are about the arctic, the polar light and the Sami culture. More interesting is the architecture of the building, which is mainly subterrestrean with a light channel running north to south. I then walk to the other end of town to the Rovaniemi Church, the picturesque Kirkkolampi lake and across the bridge to the orthodox church. It's a beautiful evening, the sun casting everything in a golden light. By the way, it is not just by chance that Rovaniemi is such a modern city: It was destroyed by the Germans in 1944 and rebuilt in the 1950s, partially by Alvar Aalto.

*16.08.2010 Rovaniemi to Inari* I leave about at 8am, much too early for the ice cold morning. Up to the first refueling stop I am almost freezing off my fingers: A Chinese restaurant in the middle of nowhere, with a petrol pump. Of course, the card does not work and so I have to break my banknotes inside and use cash. I am riding in plain sunshine, from time to time comes a storm cloud and it is raining a bit, but on the whole it stays dry, to my greatest relief. Sodankilä and Ivalo and turn out to be quite big towns, with an abundance of gas stations and even supermarkets. Shortly before Inari I stop at the bear caves and explore them (the bears have moved out for some time) and the observation point on the lake Inari, from which one can only see the lake in the distance. Maybe the water level has dropped? In Inari, I buy some food at the supermarket, then I visit the Siita Museum with an exhibition on the Sami (here I am now almost an expert) and the arctic animals and their hibernation. Outside is a large open-air exhibition of Sami dwellings, which used peat, grass and wood, and finally built simple wooden houses. Today, the Samis live in modern houses, which differ little from those in Switzerland. Also interesting are the, strangely designed animal traps. I drive on to the youth center Vasatokka where I had reserved a bed for two nights. The center is located about 10km outside of Inari, a top modern building with all amenities such as heating, Internet, etc. I tighten the chain of the scooter a bit and lubricate it.

*17.08.2010 Inari* Much too early in the morning I drive 9km on a dirt road to the parking place where the walking trail to the Otsamo starts. In the morning cold I hike up to the Otsamo. Now and then, the sun peeps through the clouds. The ground is densely covered by berries and mushrooms. The trees are small, possibly because of the perpetual strong winds. On top there is a small hut as a shelter for the hikers, including a fair stock of firewood and a gas stove. On top of it is something like a lookout platform, although some planks seem a bit rotten. One can see lake inari in the distance and many of the other lakes. Hiking back I meet the receptionist of the Inari Youth Centre with a class of pupils. When driving back, I see quite a few reindeer, but cannot take a photo of them; they are too shy. I then drive into Inari, where I have a cheap and filling lunch from the supermarket and then walk along the shoreline. I then drive to SIIDA centre, where I ask for directions to the hiking trail. I have to drive a couple of kilometers until I arrive at the gate of the Pielpajärvi Church trail. The distance is not quite clear - it varies between 5 and 7.5 kilometers, but it is a thoroughly enjoyable walk in the sunny forest. I visit Pielpajärvi church, which is a very simple wooden church dating back from the 1750s. Then I continue hiking to Pielpamono. There are many hikers on this stretch who are apt to catch the boat. At the end of the trail there is a hut as a shelter for the hikers, again with lots of firewood, and a jetty for the boats. As it is still early, I turn around and start walking back. Upon arriving at the parking lot, I am quite tired. I quickly fuel up the scooter and drive back to Vasatokka, where I do my laundry and chat with Jarek on Skype.

## Norway

*18.08.2010 Inari to Nordkapp* I only wanted to leave at 9am, because of the morning cold, but the dark sky shows no scope of improvement, so I leave at 8am. Up to the border town Karigasniemi it is going up and down. It is so freezingly cold that I can hardly move when I arrive. I fill the tank and choose some bananas from a box of overripe bananas - I do not like green bananas. But I don't have to pay for the bananas, they are free. So I eat the bananas, which give me some extra strength to continue. At the supermarket in Karasjok they explain exactly where I can find the ATM. So I can withdraw some Norwegian money. I continue to Lakselv, where I have to fill up again. Then the road takes me along the picturesque Porsangerfjord. Everywhere there are houses, many of them obviously with all comforts such as in Switzerland. And everywhere there seems to be electricity and telephone. Some of the houses seem to have no access road, they are only accessible from the water. A strong wind blows, so I sometimes struggle to keep the scooter under control. Everywhere there are reindeer at the roadside. Quite unexpectedly I come to the entrance of the Nordkaptunnel (6875m long), which leads under the sea to the island Mageroya, where the North Cape is located. It goes steep down to 212m below sea level. Then for a time even before an equally steep ascent begins. I pay the 70 kroner toll and drive on to Honningsvåg, where I have booked a dormitory bed in the youth hostel. I unload my luggage, fuel up the scooter and go right down the 30km to the North Cape. But they tell me if I went in today, I would have to pay again tomorrow. Which I certainly won't, because the fee is extremely high, so I turn around and will make the souvenir photo tomorrow. In the hostel I have to warm up again, I'm all cold. No wonder with these temperatures, they are at 3-7 degrees. Minus wind and driving they must be at -5 to -9 degrees.

*19.08.2010 Nordkapp* I indulge in the fantastic breakfast buffet the youth hostel offers. And this in Norway, where food is almost a luxury. When I had my fill, I fuel up my scooter and start sightseeing Honningsvåg, a not-so-pretty fisherman's town stuck to the edge of the Storefjell mountain. But it is well equipped, all facilities are there. I then continue to Nordvågen, a small fishing village, where the road ends. I backtrack and drive in direction Nordkapp, stopping in Trollholmen, a couple of picturesque houses stuck on a small islet. Then I ride straight to Nordkapp, where I first go in by myself. Upon noticing that I am the only person so early in the morning, I quickly push my scooter around the backside of the main building and put it right in front of the Nordkapp Globe. Then I take a couple of photos of me sitting on my scooter in front of the Nordkapp Globe. Before the first tourists come in, I push the scooter out again and start driving to the parking of the Knivskjelodden hiking path. The path is not well marked, but I quickly find my from stoneheap to stoneheap.

The ground is marshy, often I have to cross a little stream. The fog is hanging deep in the valleys. The plains are strewn with granite, in between now and then a snow white quartz. Reindeers are interestedly watching me passing by. There are no other hikers. The last stretch is on rocks, which are quite slippery as there is water flowing over them. My left foot gives me the usual problems, maybe because of the very difficult path. Eventually I arrive at Knivskjelodden. There is a group of Frenchmen there, some Italians also. I have my photo taken and sign the book which is in a little tin case. I quickly start backtracking. Again, I am all by myself. Eventually I meet somebody and he turns out to be Swiss, too! We chat for a long time. I then walk back to the parking and drive to Skarsvag. The small fishermans village has a magnificent harbour. As I have been sweating a lot, I am now all wet and cold, so I drive back to Honningsvag, where I fuel up and quickly go to the post office, which turns out to be already closed. So I return to the Vandrerhjem where I have a delicious hot shower and tumble dry my wet clothes.

*20.08.2010 Nordkapp to Alta* Once more I feast on the vast breakfast buffet. Then I leave in the morning cold, well packed up in all my winter clothing. It is indeed freezing cold. At the tunnel I change glasses, but no improvement, I can hardly see where I am driving until the tunnel ends. This time there are reindeers everywhere. At one point, I have to stop because a herd of reindeers is blocking the road. They peacefully walk past me on the right side of the road. So they learnt how to behave in traffic, won't be long and they set flickerlights when they turn. In Olderfjord I turn left onto the E6 and ride over a plateau with every now and then a couple of houses, each with a caravan next to it. In the meantime the sun has come out and it has become pretty warm. When I get to Alta it is only around noon. I ride to the Alta Museum, where I see the world-famous stone carvings, which are between 6200 and 2000 years old. They depict mainly reindeer, but also people hunting and boats. I then visit Alta museum, which has little of interest on display. From here I continue to the youth hostel, which turns out to be the hotel of a golf course, which also rents out single beds as dormitory beds. I check in and leave immediately again. First I drive in direction Tirpitz-Museum, but as I see that my time runs away, I turn around and ride in direction Gargia. Only when I am halfway there I see to my horror that my tank is empty and I won't make it back if I continue. I turn around and drive back to Alta, where I fill it up. Then I ride to Gargia, where I cannot find the hiking track to the dam, but do some hiking nevertheless. It is now 17:30h and it begins quickly to become very cold. So I return to my scooter and drive back to the hostel.

*21.08.2010 Alta to Helligskogen* When I leave with my hands full of luggage, the door slips from my hands and bangs against one of the shelves mit Golf accessories, whereupon the floor is spilled with golfballs. Fortunately nobody notices this. I load the scooter and drive into the ice cold morning. The fog is hanging low on the snow-capped mountains, the snowfields reach sometimes almost up to the road. Im getting from one fjord into the next, sometimes climbing upon the mountain range and then descending again. After 10am, the sun pushes through the clouds and a beautiful day announces itself. The calm, sunlit sea in the fjords, the red houses with the white window frames splattered along the road, the little white fishing boats tied up along the shoreline. Sometimes one can see the round mounds of a fishfarm. I keep stopping and taking photos. Instead of buying petrol, I refuel from my jerrycan which I will not require any longer. I pass several tunnels, the longest of them 5 and 3 kilometers long. Around noontime, the sun hides again behind clouds and I am almost at my destination. In Skibotn I refuel at a decrepit service station and turn left onto the E8 which leads to Helligskogen. In Helligskogen, I first stop at a deserted army camp, mistaking it for the youth hostel. Only after consulting with the picture on the YHA directory I realize my mistake and try at the next turnoff, where I find my night quarters. I check in and unload my scooter. Then I ride another 20km over the border to Finland to Kilpisjärvi, which is splattered out over 10km along lake Kilpisjärvi. There is little to see, but I can fuel up my scooter (not quite the least important in such a remote area) and stock up my food for my further travels in Norway. On my way back, a pretty tame reindeer keeps walking next to my scooter until the car behind me gets impatient and chases him off. Back at the youth hostel, I take a walk in the magnificent landscape on the huge boulders which some glacier must have deposited during the last ice age here.

*22.08.2010 Helligskogen - Tromsø - Narvik* When I leave Helligskogen, it is raining, near freezing and dark. The sky is covered in rainclouds. No good sign. I drive the 30km back to Skibotn, where I fuel up. With a full tank, I ride on the E6 in direction Tromsø. In Fagernes I fuel up again, only a liter, very much to the dislike of the attendant. Now I am ready for the 70km to Tromsø which I try to do as fast as possible, as time is running away. Within the hour I arrive in Tromsø, where I park the scooter on the quay and start exploring the centre of town. I am very surprised to discover that the centre is tiny, with the pedestrian-only storgatan as the main street, imposing new buildings for the city hall, the house of culture and the library and a few last-century wooden houses, some of them pretty dilapidated. There are ultra-modern buildings in the harbour area. I have a hamburger at Burger King and get back on the scooter, riding the 70km back to the E6. The weather has worsened, it is now raining a bit. The rest of the road to Narvik is a Schlepp. It is raining sometimes hard, sometimes less. The road is slippery. The weather is freezingly cold, so that I must be grateful that it is only rain and not snow falling. I am not driving along fjords anymore, but through forests. Now and then there is a little town with shopping centre, fuel station and other amenities. It is quite clear I am getting back into more densely



populated areas. Over one fjord, I am passing on a giant suspension bridge. Eventually I arrive in Narvik, where I find the youth hostel without a problem.

*23.08.2010 Narvik* After indulging in the breakfast buffet, which was the same as for the hotel guests, I jump on my scooter and drive to the power station lookout, where one has a great view over Narvik. I then drive to another lookout, which I struggle to find, giving me a view over the harbour with its iron ore shipping works. I drive the scooter back to the hostel, park it and walk to the Oevreveien lookout. I then walk across town to another lookout, where I also find the railway worker's monument, hidden behind trees. I then proceed to the Red Cross War museum, whose name is misleading because it is about the battle of Narvik. The museum itself is pretty stuffy but it gives some idea about what took place in 1940. I learn there that the wreck of the destroyer Georg Thiele is still visible today. So I walk back to the hostel, get the scooter and drive about 15km to a power station on Rombaksbotn, the closest point one can get by vehicle. From there I hike about half an hour through pretty dangerous territory - everything is slippery and the sea right below. I eventually manage to climb to the ship wreckage and take a couple of close-up photos. I hike back, jump on my scooter and want to leave. But in the meantime, the barrier to the area has been closed and padlocked. And the barrier is very low and very wide, I cannot push the scooter through underneath nor can I push it through at the side. There is only one solution: On the side there is a huge rock, grown over with moss and grass, only about 40cm over the street level. I get off, start the engine and ride the scooter right up the rock. The front wheel goes up alright, but the rear wheel only partially. I switch the engine off, climb onto the rock and pull the rear section up. I then ride the scooter off the rock and am back on the road. Driving back to Narvik, I try the Ofoten Museum, but it is already closed, although it is only 15:30h.

*24.08.2010 Narvik to Bodø* I leave in the most beautiful sunshine, but it is ice cold. Every time I ride in the shade, I realize how bitter cold it is, but in the sunshine, it is tolerable. Since I'm not sure whether there is gasoline on the way, I fill up my jerrycan at the last gas station, of which I know for certain that it is available. I drive through the beautiful, blue fjords, then through the mountains. After about 80 kilometers, I have to take a ferry from Skarberget to Bognes across the Tysfjord. The 9:50 ferry is just about to leave, I am the last to board. Twice I cross a fjord on a huge suspension bridge. Then I ride on a mountain road on which I ride through more than 12 tunnels, some of them several kilometers long. The weather holds. Finally I arrive in Fauske, and have now used the contents of my jerrycan. I turn in direction Bodo and ride the remaining 60 kilometers, a beautiful stretch, to Bodo. Already 10 miles from Bodo one can make out the suburbs. There is industry, residential areas and businesses. I stop at the airplane museum which I visit, although I only have 1.5 hours more, because it closes at 16 clock and it is already 14:30. The exhibition is divided into two halls: civil and military aviation. I first visit the Tower, then the civil aviation section, where there are some De Havilland Otter and a Ju-52 with floats on display. Then I look at the military section, which has locally made airplanes, a Catalina flying boat, an F-15, a SuperSabre, a Saab trainer and many other aircraft on display. Also, the role of the Norwegian Air Force in WW2 is thematized, whose existence would probably be denied altogether by the other war participants. I then ride into town, to the tourist information where I get a map and then look up my hostel, the City Hotell. I check in quickly and have a quick walk through the center, then I jump back on the scooter and ride 32km to Saltstraumen where I want to watch the Maelstrom, which is due at 18h today. Every day - because of the tides at different times - the Fjord empties itself in a massive maelstrom into the sea. In Saltstraumen there is a narrow strait - a huge bridge was built across it - and the current achieves enormous speeds and swirls. I observe the maelstrom from the bridge, then from the shore. Because of the impending rainstorm I quickly return to Bodo. But it does not rain.

*25.08.2010 Bodø to Mosjoen* I leave Bodø in the morning, well in time to fill up the tank. The air is icy. In Fauske I fill up again and head in direction Mo-I-Rana. The sky is now all covered in dark clouds. It is freezing cold. I am passing several tunnels, the longest of them 8km long. I miss the only petrol station on the way and start getting worried whether I would last to the next petrol station. Just this moment, the National Park Tourist Centre shows up and has a petrol pump. I refuel, put all my rainclothes on and continue. A very bad backache with a stiff neck is troubling me. Upon arriving in the area of Mosjoen, about 15km before town, I cannot bear it any longer, stop at a camp site, rent a cottage and have a hot shower, in the hope that this might relieve my pains. Try to call Saethe Åsen, which I manage in the second try.

*26.08.2010 Mosjoen to Åsen* When I get to the camp kitchen, I have a long talk with a German family who also stopped here just for the night. In Mosjoen I refuel and stop at a supermarket, to buy some breakfast which I eat then and there. I then continue driving through the extremely cold mountains. There is sprinkle of rain now and then. There are dark rainclouds in direction of my destination. A family of moose is at the roadside, fortunately not crossing the road. At the National Park there is petrol station, where I can refuel again. In Grong I wanted to refuel, but I miss the petrol station. As none comes up, I decide not to turn around but to continue in direction Steinkjer. Because of the cold and the rain, the consumption of my little scooter skyrockets, it is using 2.6 instead of 2.2 litres per 100km. So 40km before Steinkjer, the tank gauge says "empty". I continue, but am getting increasingly worried. When I stop at a farm to ask for the next petrol station, they are so helpful, they immediately want to give me some petrol, although they tell me that the next petrol station is only 7km away. I

am confident to have fuel for another 7km and drive on. And indeed, there the first petrol station of Steinkjer materializes and I can fill up - there were only 3dl of petrol left. I continue through Steinkjer, a modern, sprawling city in direction Trondheim. Soon I see the sign "Åsen" and stop at the local Coop supermarket. I call Åsen, who immediately comes to the place. I then follow his car to his farm in the outskirts of the town. Sæmund has stopped farming pigs, but still plants crops. He is working in the nights, delivering newspapers to the remote farms. Every night he drives 120km. He prepares a typical Norwegian supper for me, Sodd, which consists of meatballs, potatoes and carrots. For dessert, there is even a piece of cake and some grapes! After this big meal, I go to sleep while Åsen starts his nightly delivery tour.

*27.08.2010 Åsen to Trondheim* I wake up late and write yesterday's diary, which I put online. When Åsen returns from delivering newspapers, we have a grand breakfast and then we make pictures of us two and the dogs, the Bernese Sennenhunds which he breeds. We take pictures with both cameras and then he offers cake and tea. Finally I say goodbye and I leave. The sun is shining and it is not so cold as yesterday. Within the hour I arrive in Trondheim, where I ride on the E6 into town. There is detours and detours from the detours, so that I completely lose any sense of directions and end up in the city center, where I have to park my scooter. Suddenly, I feel a strong diarrhea coming up - probably I have not been clean enough with the dogs. I run to a McDonalds, but the toilets are closed. So I quickly get into a shopping centre but the toilets require 10Kr-Pieces. I change a 20Kr piece and eventually manage just in time to get to the toilet. What a stress. Thereafter I go to the tourist office, have them explain where I find the Vandrerhjem and head off. But once again there is one-ways, detours and more detours, so that I get completely lost. Only when I come across the railway line I can get a bearing on the map and find the Vandrerhjem. I check in, park the scooter and then walk back into town, where I cross Solsiden with its posh shopping centres in the old wharf buildings, then to the large wooden palace Stiftsgården, the Torvet with the statue of King Olav, past the Kunstindustrimuseum to the 12th century Nidaros Domkirke and the Archbishop's Palace from the same period. From here to Gamle Bybro, a historic bridge with a wonderful view over the Nidelva river and the Bryggen, the colourful 18th and 19th century warehouses along the river, on rotting wooden stilts, some of the warehouses lagging towards the river, others set on massive and ugly concrete foundations. I then get to Bakklandet, a picturesque cobblestone part of town with beautiful old houses. Obviously something is going on in town, everywhere there are young people, some of them in costumes. I walk back to the centre where a youngster wants to sell a very obvious drawing and explains that they are celebrating the begin of studies.

*28.08.2010 Trondheim* Although I could hardly sleep last night because I drank too much coffee, I wake up at the usual time am at 7 am at the breakfast room. Despite yesterday's diarrhea, I can eat normally again. About 9am I walk into town, where I visit first the cathedral. I join a very informative guided tour. Then I am allowed to climb the tower and visit the crypt with many medieval sarcophagus lids. Then I visit the crown jewel museum, displaying the Norwegian crown jewels, the military museum, which focuses mainly on the German occupation of 1940 and the Cathedral Museum in the Archbishop's Palace. Then I go to historical Krisianstenfestning, but it is permanently closed because of reconstruction. I have a good view over the city, though. The sun is shining. Still in the sunshine I take the boat to the island of Munkholmen, originally a monastery island. The Germans turned the island in WW2 into a fortress with anti-aircraft guns. Like a Swiss cheese it was riddled with bunkers. Upon returning, the sun had disappeared and dark rain clouds appear. I quickly walk to the hostel which I reach just as the rain begins.

*29.08.2010 Trondheim to Sjøa* When I want to go to the breakfast room, I notice that today breakfast is only at 8. I pack my things and load the scooter. My roommates, the band "Endphase" from Berlin, although all of them are Spaniards, are still sleeping. The clouds are not so threatening anymore. I have breakfast and quickly drive off, refueling the scooter and the jerrycan in Trondheim. Soon the sky gets completely covered with black clouds. I change into my raingear. Just in time, as it starts raining. From now on it rains sometimes less, sometimes harder, but it does not stop. In the rain, the temperature seems colder than what it is: In reality we still have 10 deg C. In Otta I fill up again and drive the remaining couple of kilometers to Sjøa, where I had reserved a bed at the YHA. It is a brand new YHA, with a high level of comfort. I have a hot shower to put life back into my feet. There is absolutely nothing to do. The internet is out of order. Walk to the village, to the blockhouse factory and just in time back to the hostel, before the rain gets worse again. Watch TV.

*30.08.2010 Sjøa to Oslo* In the morning, the summits of the mountains are covered with fresh snow. I am the only guest now and a huge breakfast is served for me alone and I do justice to it. I then leave in the icy air of the morning. Soon after Sjøa, the sky opens up and there is sunshine, although it remains very cold. For two days, I had been very worried about the rear tire of my scooter. It has been losing thread very rapidly and while it was still alright in Trondheim, it was down on the wearmarks in Sjøa. I stop at a motorbike shop in Lillehammer, but they don't have the tire in stock and send me to a Honda dealership, which doesn't have it either. They recommend to carefully drive the scooter to Oslo, not faster than 70 km/h, where the - for Norway exotic - tire might be ordered. I thus continue to Oslo. 20km from Oslo, the rain catches up with me. With the instructions of Google maps I find the Anker hostel alright. I then immediately drive to MC Oslo, where they tell me that they don't stock the tire and I was welcome to try another workshop. In the meantime I was aware that nobody would

get me the tire if they did not have it in stock so I insisted that he called the supplier. It took a lot of persuasion until they really did so and - o miracle - the tire was available, would be delivered tomorrow. I make an arrangement that I am called when the tire arrives and drive back to the hostel. I park the scooter and walk down storgata, past the Domkirken to the Slottet (Royal Palace). From there through Johans Gate, past the National Theatre, the Christiania Theatre and the Stortinger to the railway station and back to the hostel. There I am told that I could not leave the scooter there. I walk in the area and find a scooter parking a couple of roads further on, where I park the scooter.

*31.08.2010 Oslo* Today I am quite happy not to have to eat a huge breakfast. I walk to the Akerhus fortress, at this time rather deserted. As the Information Office does not open as announced by 9am, I go on to the Opera House, a modern building, whose roof can be climbed. I explore the roof and then walk towards City Hall. Suddenly I have a bout of acute diarrhea. I'm looking for a toilet, but it is not yet 10am, thus are all restaurants closed and there are no public toilets. In the very last moment I find a Burger King, who lets me use his toilet. That was close. I then walk to the city hall. In the 1936 built brick building, the award of the Nobel Prizes takes place. In the hall, is even an organ and wall paintings thematizing the German occupation. From here to the royal palace, whose photo I could not take yesterday in the contralight. I continue to the National Gallery. There are many works by Norwegian artists. An entire room is dedicated to Edvard Munch. His painting "The Scream" is here, but it is actually much paler than in the prints. I then visit the nearby historical museum. The exhibition "Runes" is interesting as it shows how runes were sometimes for pure pastime carved into bones, some quite rough spells. In the museum I receive a phone call from MC Oslo, that my tire had arrived. I still finish seeing the exhibition of African, Egyptian and Asian exhibits and walk back to the hostel. There, I grab my rain suit and helmet (it just in time started to rain again) and ride to MC Oslo, where it takes about two hours to fit the tire. They have never seen such a scooter before and I notice how some mechanics make a test drive. I ride back to the hostel, park the scooter and walk back to town where I hope that the Museum of Contemporary Art is still open. But the information in the Lonely Planet is wrong, it's already closed. So I walk back. My attempt to buy a piece of ordinary soap fails, since in all supermarkets they only have Dove and another brand as well as a five pack of cheap soap, but nothing else. I only want a piece of ordinary soap, not Dove or medicated soap!

*01.09.2010 Oslo* I ride my scooter to Bigdøy peninsula, where I stop at the Viking Ship Museum. There are three ships on display: The Osberg Ship which was built around 820 AD for a viking queen, richly adorned and excellently preserved, but not a seaworthy battleship. The second is the Tune Ship, which is only preserved partially, but the huge burial chamber made of logs is still almost complete. The third ship is the Gokstad ship, which was a seaworthy vessel manned by 32 rowers, also in excellent condition. There was some booty buried with the vessels and the Osberg ship was buried with three richly adorned sledges and a wagon. Amazing is the size of the vessels, the Gokstad ship was 23 metres long and 5 meters wide. The viking ships were built in clinker construction, which means extensive use of iron was a prerequisite, as the planks were riveted together and also the rudder had some steel parts. From here I continued to the Kon-Tiki museum which thematized the expeditions Thor Heyerdahl undertook: Kon-Tiki (1947), RA I (1969), RA II (1973), Tigris (1977). I crossed the street to the Fram museum. The sailship first used by Fritjof Nansen and then by Roald Amundsen is displayed in a triangle-shaped building. I started reading the completely confusing explanations but at one point had to stop because they made no sense whatsoever. Either was information missing oder they were in the wrong order. The ship itself was quite impressing. It must have been quite old-fashioned in its days, but it certainly served its purpose well. A fully wood-built vessel with reinforcing struts all over, a diesel engine and its main propulsion being the sails. They initially had a windmill to produce electricity when the ship was frozen in. What I did not know: Amundsen was always in financial difficulties and a wealthy Norwegian-Argentinian, Don Carlos, financed his South Pole trip. He nevertheless fell into bankruptcy and his Argentinian friend even had to buy his home in Oslo to prevent Amundsen from being on the street. From here I proceeded to the Vigelandsparken, where the famous Norwegian Sculptor Gustav Vigeland (1869-1943) had built a quite fantastic sculpture park. A bridge lined with sculptures of people and a lifetree on a hill are the main vistas. I then visited the Oslo Bymuseum (city museum), which thematised the development of Oslo into a city. Surprising is, that Oslo played a minor role until mid 19th century und only flourished after independence from Sweden. By then the sky had filled with rainclouds and I hurried back. There I parked the scooter and started walking along the Akerselva stream to Gamle Aker Kirke. The church was supposed to be closed already, but the custodian had forgotten something inside and was just opening the door, when I arrived and asked him, whether I could have a peep inside. I could and was surprised that inside, it was not smaller than the cathedral. The church was built in 1100, the windows being cut much later. On my way back, I visit the Var Grelsers Gravlund where Ibsen and Munch are buried, then the Trefoldighetskirken, which is also used as a free café for the "disadvantaged". Just as I get home, heavy rain starts.

*02.09.2010 Oslo* Today heralds a fine day with sunshine. I am again visiting Bigdøy Peninsula. At 10am I am at the Norsk Folke Museum. The entrance fee is steep - 100 crowns - but it's worth it. There is a huge collection of traditional Norwegian houses, some of them were transferred here over a hundred years ago, others recently. Particularly noteworthy are the stave church from 1200, the medieval farm Setesdal, the Telemark farm and the

town houses of Enerhaugen. In some of the town houses there are museums with furnishings from different periods. Then I visit the exhibitions on Norwegian folk art, Norwegian Church Art, 50's and Norwegian folk costumes. I am returning to the city where I once again visit the Akershus Fortress, and then the Samtidskunstmuseet, which has only very strange exhibits on display, many with video, which I do not appreciate. There is an exhibition about women artists, but these works are incredibly avant-garde. I also visit the Museum of architecture, showing an exhibition on the Danish architect of the Royal Palace, Hans Ditlev Franciscus Linstow, who had to build the palace with great financial constraints.

*03.09.2010 Oslo to Geilo* I have not slept well, the Pole on the bed above me was restless and the bed unstable. I get up early, shower, pack up, eat my breakfast quickly and get on my scooter. Traffic through Oslo, usually more or less packed, is no problem at this time. At the first refueling I want to change the glasses - I wore the corrected glasses in order to read the signs better - and realize to my horror that I had probably left the goggles behind in Oslo. This is somewhat problematic, because in this great cold, my eyes water so much that I see little. The goggles are completely sealed to prevent this. I call the hostel and indeed I have left them lying on the till at checkout. I cannot return because rushhour traffic has long set in, so I continue as is. When I go a little slower and the cold is not so great anymore, I can see a bit more. Shortly after noon I arrive in Geilo, where I check in at the Hostel. Actually, this is only an associated camp site that gives me a Cottage at the hostel price. I walk to the tourist office, where I get a map. With its help I walk around Veslefjorden and Slattahölen, two shallow little lakes, and back to the campsite. I am amazed how the children play in this cold weather in shorts and T-shirts soccer.

*04.09.2010 Geilo to Bergen* When I wake up, it is -3 degrees C. My scooter is covered by a thin layer of ice. I take a long time for Breakfast and drive off after 9am, in order not to get on icy patches on the road. Meanwhile, the sun shines, but it is still very cold. I drive across the Hardangervidda plateau, then it goes through several tunnels (which I've never seen before) from the 1100 meters altitude down to Eidfjord on the Hardangerfjord. Meanwhile, it is quite warm in the sun. From Brimnes after Bruravik I take the ferry. There I meet two Norwegian motorcyclists, who are quite thrilled that I have been to Nordkapp with my scooter. On the other side, I continue on the picturesque E7. I drive along the Hardanger fjord towards Bergen. The fjords with the small villages along the shore are extremely beautiful in the sun. Once I turn from the main road and follow for a few miles a side road. In the end I join the E16, which leads through several tunnels to Bergen. In Bergen I take somewhere a wrong turn and end up in Frydenbø from where I have to return through the rushhour traffic back to the city center. Then I find the hostel dorm.no without problems. I want to check in, but for some reason they have lost my reservation. Only when I show them the Reservation confirmation on my netbook, it is found and their records corrected. I set myself up and walk into town. In bright sunshine I explore Zachariasbryggen, Bryggen, Bergenhus Fortress with Haakon's Hall and Rosenkrantzarnet, as well as the Theatre Building from 1909. In a supermarket I buy fish cake and walk back to the hostel. There, a group of exchange students are about to cook spaghetti and have just succeeded, to spoil about a kilo of spaghetti in such a way, that they must be thrown away. In between, I quickly fry my fish cake and eat it, but they taste dreadfully. In the dorm I met a German with whom I talk a long time.

*05.09.2010 Bergen* In the morning, there is sunshine and fine weather. I go to the tourist office and ask them how to buy my tickets most economically. They tell me that the Fløyen Funicular is free this morning. So I quickly go there and ride to the top of Fløyen, about 300m above Bergen, Bergen's recreational area. From there I walk back to Bergen, to the Hanseatic Museum. The museum is set in a warehouse which is about 300 years old, with sleeping quarters for the employees. They had no heating, though, because the valuable merchandize should not be exposed to the risk of fires. If the employees wanted warmth and food they had to go to the Schöttstuen, a large canteen in a safe distance from the warehouses. Next I visit the Rosenkrantz tower, named after a Danish governor who had the existing tower dating from the 13th century (King Magnus Lagaböte) converted. The exhibition was quite unstructured, but I did enjoy the section about the King Magnus Lagabötes codex. The tower and Hakoon's Hall were destroyed in 1944 by the explosion of a German ammunitions ship in the harbour, but later restored to their previous splendour. I then visited Hakoon's Hall, where there was not much to see as everything inside is new, only a medieval flute concert with explanations in Norwegian took place. I continued to the Schöttstuen, the medieval canteen of the German hanseats, with a large fireplace, kitchen and chairs and tables. Then I stroll through the alleys of Bryggen. I continue to the Fiskerimuseet, where models of fishing boats and fishing equipment are exhibited. I then walk quite a distance to the second exhibition, where an abundance of outboard engines, inboard engines, some of them semi-diesels and even some steam engines are on display. I learnt that Ole Evinrude was a Norwegian who emigrated to the USA and invented the outboard engine. Outside, a couple of engines are running, at very low revs. Via Sverrenborg I return to town, where I walk right up to Johanneskirken and the Botanisk Hage (botanical garden) and via the Lille Lungegardsvann back to the hostel, where I eat my supper. I then return to Lille Lungegardsvann where I sit in the sun and write my diary.

*06.09.2010 Bergen to Borlaug* I leave as usual at 8am. Initially, there is some traffic buildup in Bergen, then I get on the almost deserted freeway. Outside Bergen I refuel the scooter and the jerrycan. Then I ride on the E39

in direction Sognefjord. The sun shines, the weather is fine and in the sunshine it is warm, while it is still quite cold in the shadow and in the tunnels. There are a few tunnels with daring routing. A fjord is completely fogged up, with a visibility of no more than 10m. My glasses get covered by little waterdrops, so that I cannot see anymore. Then I cross a several kilometers long tunnel and in the next fjord, the sun shines again. In Oppedal I don't have to wait at all, the ferry is just about to leave. I cross the Sognefjord to Larvik. On the sunny north side I continue. Höyanger and Balestrand are some of the pretty towns I pass. From Dragsvik to Hella I take the second ferry. Also here I don't have to wait. From here I drive only past Kaupanger to Mannheller, where one leaves the several kilometers long tunnel and end up directly at the ferry terminal. Also here, the ferry is just coming in so that I don't have to wait. I cross Sognefjord for the last time to Fodnes, from where I ride to Laerdal. On the historical road I continue to Borgund, where I visit the Stave Church. Unfortunately, they are just about to do some renovations, so that a scaffolding is preventing me from taking good photos. The church was built in 1180. I then start looking for the youth hostel, but I don't find it here nor at the main road. I drive back to Stavkerken, because I thought that the youth hostel was nearby. When I ask for directions, I am sent back to the main road. I stop at a caravan park and ask them whether they were the YHA, but they decline and send me another 8km on. Eventually I find Borlaug, directly on the freeway. I check in at the youth hostel and visit the Borlo Byggetun (buildings museum), where there are a few copies of historical houses with grass roofs.

*07.09.2010 Borlaug to Oslo* I have my breakfast at the Vandrerhjem and leave early. The sky is covered by dark clouds and it threatens to rain. Now and then there are a few drops, but it does not start to rain hard, because I manage to get out of the dense clouds and further south, the clouds are higher up and less black. At every Stave Church I stop, first at Øye Stavkirke (1125). After Øye I am stopped and have to wait for half an hour until I can continue, because they are cutting trees above the road. I stop again at Lomen Stavkyrkje (1180). The weather remains overcast, but it does not rain. In Hedalen I even take a 10km detour to get to the Hedalen Stavkirken. There I want to look up my position in the map and to my horror I notice, that I left the map behind in the youth hostel. From now on I will have to navigate without a map, which makes life extremely difficult. I now continue quickly to Oslo. In Oslo I first take the wrong offramp and have to drive a long distance until I can turn around to get to the Anker Hostel. There I pick up my goggles which are still around. I then continue to the Haraldsheim. As further out of town there are no street names, I get extremely unsure of myself which results in me getting totally lost. When I ask a woman directions, by chance she knows exactly where the road is I am looking for and gives me accurate directions to get there. I get now into Haraldsheim (not without taking another wrong turn) and put up for the night in a tiny crowded room, where the other guests seem to have occupied the vacant beds also.

## Sweden (2)

*08.09.2010 Oslo to Karlstad* The two Chinese boys in my dorm have fallen asleep, having their running laptops in front of them. That's why the chair was in such an awkward position! An old man is snoring away like chainsaw that refuses to start. The dorm is extremely crowded and the Chinese boys have strewn their belongings all over the floor, ignoring the cupboards which are meant to take up the luggage. I stop up my ears in order to sleep. After a short and often interrupted night, I get up early, have breakfast and pack up. By 8am I am cruising in direction Karlstad. Fortunately it is not so cold. The sky is covered by dark rainclouds, but they remain high up and there is no rain. I ride on the E18 in direction Stockholm. After a short stretch of real freeway there is a detour and then a detour from the detour. No roadsigns. At an intersection I go straight instead of left (which was deemed closed but nevertheless open). After about 10km I am completely lost. I ask the driver of another car for directions and he tells me that I have to return all the way. I do exactly as he told me and indeed, I manage to get back to the freeway, which goes on for another 10km and ends then. After another 20km I arrive in Marker on the Swedish border. I cross the border without any problem and refuel the scooter. Petrol is about the same price in Sweden as in Norway. Because of the threatening rainclouds I drive a bit faster than usual, almost all the way at least 80 km/h. When I arrive in Karlstad, the exits don't have the names given in Google Maps, so that I ride straight past the right offramp and have to turn around. I find the hostel alright, but it is still closed. I drive to the Tourist Office, where I get a map and directions to the main sights, of which there are few. I quickly visit Prämkkanalen und Oestrabron, an old bridge with 12 arches. As the sun has come out, I drive to Frödingsstenen, a memorial to Gustav Fröding, a poet and seemingly the only great son of Karlstad there ever was. Then I drive to the nearby Alsters Herrgard. The stately manor is the birthplace of Gustaf Fröding. I make a short walk to Fägelhorn, where there is a wooden tower for a better view over the lake. Now dark clouds start covering the sky and I quickly hurry back to the hostel, not without stopping at Lidl and buying something for supper. Thanks god food is affordable again. I check in at the Vandrerhem and then drive to Biltema, where I buy a litre of motorbike oil. How I am going to change my oil, I don't know yet, but somehow I shall manage. Biltema is a fantastic automotive supermarket, where everything around the car, motorbike and bicycle can be bought cheaply.

*09.09.2010 Karlstad* I start the morning in exploring the city on foot. I walk across the Västrabron, where there is a sculpture of Selma Lagerlof, to Stora Torget, the main square with the Radhuset. Again, there are "bicycle

freeways" where the cyclists zap at breakneck speed through the city and one has to be careful to avoid being run over. I explore the pedestrian zones and visit the Domkyrkan of 1730, which is equipped with two organs, but otherwise the interior is not impressive. There is an exhibition of photographs that are mounted on thick glass panes, which look very interesting. I visit the Bishop's Garden, the residence of the Bishop of the Diocese of Karlstad, then the statue of the waitress Sola i Karlstad (Eva-Lisa Holtz, 1739-1818), the statue of Charles IX (1926) and the Kvarteret Almen, the oldest buildings in Karlstad. From here I walk to Mariebergsskogen, a city park. I visit the historic houses that have been moved here, including two windmills, however, both in a miserable condition. Then I hike the Marieberg Strandangar trail that runs partly on boards on posts. There are two observation towers, the Lille Fågeltorn and the Fågeltorn. I quickly pop in at Naturum Värmland, but it is just an exhibition about animals, more for children than adults. I walk back to town, where I buy something for lunch and eat it on the Stora torget. Then I visit the Värmland Museum. Only the art department is open. Only local artists are on display. There are both very good as well as inferior works. Also interesting is the building from the 1930s. Over Östrabron and Gubbholmen I walk back to the hostel, where I meet the janitor, who is originally from Brandenburg. He gives me an important tip, that just across the road is a waste disposal site. So I know where I can make change the engine oil. I drive until the oil is really hot, then I go to the disposal station, where I change the oil and can easily dispose of the waste oil. Back at the hostel, I get an email from Dani Beeler that he is looking for information on his boat in Karlstad sailing club. I persuade the receptionist to print the e-mail and drive to the small boats harbor. On the way there, I lose both the map and the printout. So I drive the same route again and find them again. Then I go to Småttshamn, where I meet Steen Christiansen, who is just about to enter the closed clubhouse of the Karlstad Segelsällskap. He not only has a lot of information, he himself has been riding on Alice II and we chat for a long time. The e-mail is pinned to the bulletin board. He tells me also about the steam boat "Polstjärnan".

*10.09.2010 Karlstad to Stockholm* Before breakfast, I load the scooter. I eat my breakfast quickly and drive off. The sky is completely clouded and I expect rain at any time, but it remains dry. I am riding on the E18, which is a freeway. Already after 50 kms I have to refuel. I check the oil and all is well. After 150 kms the road forks and I have to turn on the E20. The drive is relatively monotonous, with the constant threat of rain clouds. Shortly before 14h I arrive in Stockholm, where I check in on the Gustaf af Klint. I visit the Stadsmuseet, which has a remarkably good exhibition about life in Stockholm from 18xx to today. Then I walk to Riddarholmen, the island with the monumental palaces. As the clouds are getting darker, I quickly walk the other way, to Folkungagatan on Södermalm, where I buy my dinner at Lidl. On the boat, I met a German from Hessen, who is very interested in my travels. Today my ears are ringing from the wind noise.

*11.09.2010 Stockholm* I get up early because I want to shower before the others do. Then I am by 8am on the road and everything is closed. Today is Saturday, therefore are not even the supermarkets open, so that one could buy something for breakfast. I walk towards Östermalms Saluhall, but can not find it. I turn and walk to the island of Djurgården, the Skansen Museum. The museum is the Swedish counterpart to the Ethnographic Museum in Oslo, but much more extensive. I visit the many farms and houses from all over Sweden, there are also some Swedish animals, but more like a children's zoo. Interesting are the mechanical workshop with a belt drive from the 1920s, the carpenters workshop from the same period and the glass blowing workshop. I chat with the lady in the greenhouse, which is interested in South African plants and therefore often travels there. On the Solliden Stage is a meeting of the Grey Panthers in progress, with booming music and hours of announcements. By 16h I walk back. The Stockholm half marathon is in progress, everything is fenced off, again live bands playing. I buy at Lidl something for dinner and go back to the ship, because now I am tired.

*12.09.2010 Stockholm* At 9am I walk to Lidl to buy something for breakfast. I then walk over to Skeppsholmen, where there are Skeppsholmen festivities being held. There are many interesting exhibits, I visit the af Chapman sailship, then on Kastellholmen the Brigg Tre Kronor exhibition (where they are splicing steel cables, the Brigg is in Gdansk), then along the many historical ships moored (and with detailed descriptions in Swedish and English). There are music bands playing and activities. On two army vessels I may go on board and marvel at the massive engines. The mine sweeper does 50 knots and has three Italian V18-Engines, using 400 litres of Diesel per hour. Eventually I still do my initial activity, namely visiting the Moderna museum, which is very well organized, with comprehensive audio guides, but has in the majority mediocre works, although there are some Picassos and some Warhols. I walk once more around the island, when it gets 17h and I have to return to the Gustaf af Klint, pick up my luggage and quickly eat something. Now I have an hour to get to the check-in which is at the opposite end of Stockholm. Traffic is congested. I use the Stockholm map which gets me indeed to the ferry terminal, even early. I have to wait for an hour until I can drive the scooter into the belly of the huge ferry. The only two-wheeled vehicle today. In the cabin I meet a 75-year-old Finn, who speaks very good English. Internet access on the ferry does not work today.

## Finland (2)

*13.09.2010 Turku* I get up at 5am and wind the watch one hour ahead. Punctual at 07:15 the ferry arrives in Turku. I am one of the first ones leaving the ferry. It is raining. I drive to the youth hostel, which is already open and offers to let me wash my clothes for only €2, which I do immediately. As I wash all the clothes together, the whites ones get a grey tinge. I walk into town and visit the cathedral, which was built in the 13th century and since then burnt down several times and was rebuilt slightly altered. Then I visit the cathedral museum. I walk to the Luostarinmaen käsityömaismuseum, which is closed although it should be open according to the guidebook. I walk to the market square (Kauppatori). It is raining cats and dogs. At the market I buy prunes and bananas, which are my cheap lunch. Then I have to seek refuge in a shopping center and return to the youth hostel, as the rain builds up. It is Monday and all museums are closed today. The weather forecast is bad, it will also rain on Wednesday, when I am to drive to Helsinki. I spend the afternoon at the Forum Marinum, where there are some vintage ships, some ship models and an extensive collection of outboard engines.

*14.09.2010 Turku* In the morning I walk to Puolanmäki, a civic park, then again to Luostarinmaen käsityömaismuseum. The ticket booth is now open, but just to tell me that the museum was closed for season end. That's not in accordance with what is written outside and I suspect they closed it for urgent repair work. I walk to the castle, whose vast exhibition I visit. The castle was destroyed in World War II to a large extent and thus the interior in the main building is from 1961. The exhibitions provide partially English and partially German explanations on separate leaflets, but everything is very chaotic, not only the order on the leaflets, but also the exhibits. Finnish and Russian arms are next to a Torah scroll and Islamic headgear. What are they doing in here? In the large tower there are rooms decorated in the style of a particular era. In the basement is the prison, which in medieval times was probably deemed comfortable, with bedsteads and straw mats. Meanwhile, the sun came out a little. I walk to the Turun Taidemuseo (Art Museum), which has a lot of works of Finnish artists, most of which are very good, and a collection of European miniatures of the 18th and 19th Century.

*15.09.2010 Turku to Helsinki* It is raining, when I leave. I initially planned to visit Naantali on my way out of town, a detour of about 40km, but as the rain is pouring hard, I leave it. I have great trouble finding a petrol station in Turku. When I eventually find one it is not only automatic, it refuses foreign cards. The smallest cash amount it accepts is EUR 5.00, so I have to fill my jerrycan too. The user guidance can be set to German, but the translation makes no sense whatsoever. I almost spent an hour there. I then continue in the downpour to Helsinki. 20km before Helsinki there is an information booth where free maps of Helsinki are obtainable. This is very practical, now I find the hostel without any problems. I leave my luggage there and walk into town. At the moment there is only a drizzle. By ferry I get to Sveaborg (which is in Finnish Suomenlinna, which means "castle of Finland", while the older Swedish name means "castle of Sweden"). It consists actually of four islands which are linked by bridges. The fortifications are impressive, even more so when considering that the greater part has been destroyed in the British Bombardment in the Crimean War (when it was a Russian possession). There are still many bunkers covered with earth and WW2 guns. The museum is just a waste of money and doesn't have any meaningful exhibits. I walk back to the ferry, which is leaving in half an hour's time, which allows me to visit the islands Lilla Ostersvartö and Länsi-Musta. I catch the ferry back in the pouring rain and have to ride back to the hostel in a tram, as walking is out of the question in this downpour.

*16.09.2010 Helsinki* I validated my day ticket, then jump on the tram. I stop at Töölöntori, a small farmers market, then I visit the Temppeliaukio Church, which is all carved into the rock. To the Kauppatori, where I ask at Linda Lines for ticket prices, but EUR 39 are far too expensive. I do the entire loop of tram No. 3T/3B. I stop at Hakaniemi Market Hall. At the Senate Square I visit the cathedral, built by CL Engel, and the statue of Tsar Alexander II. Then I travel by tram no. 4 to Katajanokka Island. The Kaneva terminal looks run down and deserted. Nordic Jet Line has gone out of business. Then I ride to the Olympia Terminal. I visit the Wanha Kauppahalli, where I buy a sandwich for lunch. At the presidential palace, a state reception with a military parade is under way. I visit the Orthodox Uspensky Cathedral, also built by CL Engel. Take Tram No. 6 to Hietalahdentori. Check out the local indoor market, a flea market. Take a tram to the botanical garden where I sit for some time in the sun. To Mikonkatu near the main railway station, where I look at the Finnish National Theatre and the statue of Aleksis Kivi. Back to Senate Square, where I visit the Helsinki City Museum, which is free but nevertheless very well structured. Now the sun slowly disappears and I return to the hostel.

*17.09.2010 Helsinki* Today is my museum day. I visit the National Museum of Finland, which has an excellent exhibition of Finnish history from the Stone Age to the present. It is interesting that in a cave traces of human habitation of BEFORE the last Ice Age have been found. At four o'clock I have to leave because I still want to visit the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art. The museum is housed in a very modern building. The exhibitions are extremely wild, with many video performances. I appreciate that there are many works by young Finnish artists. On the fifth floor there is an exhibition of Damien Hirst and his contemporaries, the Young English Savages. The art works by Damien Hirst, however, are surprisingly interesting, not just plain crazy. All day long it was raining, but in the evening, the sun comes out.

*18.09.2010 Helsinki-Hämeenlinna-Tampere* Under a pitch-black sky I drive off in Helsinki. Heavy rain starts. In Hämeenlinna I stop and visit the castle. The castle was rebuilt a couple of times. Now they have reconverted it to its initial condition, but it is clearly visible that this is all new. There is an exhibition on the history of the region in the stone-, bronze- and iron age, an exhibition of Russian children's drawings from Karelia (surprisingly good drawings, the 12- to 14-year-olds have a much higher level of sophistication than in Western Europe) and an exhibition on the finlandization. I continue driving, still in the rain. In Tampere I want to refuel and have to battle once more with a petrol station which has no staff, does not accept foreign credit cards and has only Finnish instructions. I am driving all the way into the city center and have to drive back until I find the youth hostel. I check in and visit town. The rain has stopped and sometimes the sun comes through and I quickly take pictures. I visit the cathedral (built 1902-1907) and Hämeenkatu up to the Alexander church. I buy food for today and tomorrow at Lidl. I meet my roommate, Dan, a German-Romanian. My supper is fish.

*19.09.2010 Tampere* In the morning, a grey sheet of fog covers the sky and it is raining hard. I nevertheless leave the hostel and visit the Orthodox Church, then the ultra-modern Kaleva-Church, which looks from outside like a highrise building, but from the inside impressive and light. For the concrete walls, a special technique, a sliding mould, was used, rendering the walls smooth. The reverend greets every member of his congregation personally. I chat with him, but have to decline his offer to take part in the service, as I am still to visit a few museums. In the pouring rain I walk to the Lenin Museum. On the way I stop at a flea market and buy a cap in order to protect at least my head from the rain. I arrive slightly too early at the museum. The museum is very interesting, because the life of Lenin is described from the former Soviet Union's point of view. Particular attention is paid to Lenin's stays in Finland. There is also an exhibition of "Socialist Realist Art", containing the most pathetic paintings I have ever seen in my life. A waste of good canvas. Then I walk to Finlayson's factory, to the Werstas museum, where the excellently preserved steam engine, built in 1899 by Sulzer in Winterthur of Finlayson's Textile Mill is on display. There is also an exhibition on the life of the workers of textile mill, as well as an exhibition on the production methods, patterns and products of the textile mill. I leave shortly before the museum closes. As I want to walk to Pyynikki Park, the rain builds up and I have to return to the hostel. There I eat something and leave again. Now I walk Hämeenpuisto (an euphemistic name, it is less a park and more of a main traffic thoroughfare) up to Näsinpuisto Park, from where there is a good view of Lake Näsijärvi. I can make out a few beautiful steamships moored at Kortelahti. Then I walk Hämeenpuisto in the increasing rain down to Lake Pyhäjärvi, 18m below the other lake. I have to take refuge under the road bridge, as the rain builds up. As soon as the rain lessens, I walk through the old textile mills (now mostly used for different purposes) across the Tammerkoski river back to the hostel.

*20.09.2010 Tampere to Helsinki* I get up late and feel a nasty flu arise. So I go straight to the pharmacy to buy something against it. The drugs are quite expensive, but I hope that I can fight off the flu: Vitamin C, Echinacea and strepsils. Then I go to the nearest flea market and buy a woolen scarf. Since it is raining outside I will not go out, but surf the Internet and read a little about Lenin and his comrades. By 13h it's time to leave, if I want to reach the port just at the time of the check-in. The sun shines, only after Hämeenlinna it starts raining. On the way I stop at a supermarket and buy something for dinner and for breakfast. Shortly before 6pm I arrive at the port. I meet Germans, who drove their Landrover all through Karelia. I am the first to drive in and put the scooter into the belly of the ship, then I go to occupy the best place in the cabin. When I'm all settled, I go downstairs again and strap the scooter crosswise in. I still feel sick.

*21.09.2010 Helsinki to Rostock* I get up late. I still feel sick. Meet in the front parlour of the boat Martin Richter from Chemnitz, who rode his bicycle to Nordkapp and back. We spend the day talking about Wartburgs, Trabants and other important topics and surfing the internet.

## East Germany

*22.09.2010 Rostock* The flu and cold still have me in their firm grip. I feel sick, am coughing and my nose is running. The day starts with plain sunshine. I start exploring Rostock: St. Nicholas Church, which was strangely rebuilt after substantial destruction in World War II: In the attic they made apartments and offices, making big windows in the roof. Then Kröpeliner street, bought breakfast at Lidl and ate it at the Kröpeliner gate. Went to the hairdresser to cut my hair and bought a mapbook of Germany (and stupidly a big and heavy book about Trabant cars), continue to Doberaner square and then along the city wall from the Kröpeliner gate to the university church, where I visit the cultural history museum of Rostock. There is Rostock tableware and guild cup, works of Dutch painters, a small collection of toys and an exhibition on memorabilia. Walk to St. Mary's Church, which appears dark and uninviting, but has a few extraordinary furnishings, such as the giant astronomical clock (still running) and the strange princely gallery. Walk to the main station take the S-Bahn to Warnemünde, where I walk on the pier to the green lighthouse at the harbor entrance. Last night, our boat passed through here. There are beach chairs and even still bathers. Back in the old town of Rostock, I explore this time not only the Nikolai Church, but also St. Peter's Church at the Old Market Square.



*23.09.2010 Rostock to Berlin* I pack and leave on the E55 in direction Berlin. The weather is good and the sun shines. At Güstrow I turn off the freeway, refuel and ride on side roads to Güstrow. From there I return to the E55. I notice that there are many "for sale" boards on houses. The ride is monotonous and leads through flat territory and forests. The cold is harassing me a lot, my nose is free-flowing and I am coughing hard. I get the right turnoff to Berlin and find my way to Kantstrasse. Thanks to the map bought yesterday, I have no trouble finding the hostel. I put up at the hostel, where I am supposed to pay a supplement because there is a marathon tomorrow, but this is waived. In plain sunshine and warm weather I walk along Schöneberger Ufer to Potsdamer Platz, then to Brandenburger Tor and the Reichstag, where I wait for two hours for being allowed to ascend to the glass dome. The walk up the glass dome and back is indeed very impressive. The I walk along "Unter den Linden" to the museum island, from there via Friedrichstrasse and Potsdamer Platz back to the Hostel. There I treat myself to the buffet. As I am very sick with flu and cold, I have to go to bed early.

*24.09.2010 Berlin* Beautiful summer weather, warm temperatures greet me. I walk to the Gedächtniskirche and the Kurfürstendamm. Buy a day card for the underground and ride to Charlottenburg Castle. Then to Wilmersdorfer Strasse. Visit the exhibition of the Berlin Wall on Alexander square. Visit the still existing part of the Berlin Wall in Bernauer Strasse. Upon leaving the exhibition I confound a clear section of glass with the passage next to it (without glass) and bang my head against it, bending my glasses. To Friedrichstrasse Railway Station (Railway Station of Tears during GDR times). Wal to the GDR-Museum behind the cathedral, then to the GDR-Motorbike-Museum where there are perfectly preserved MZ, AWE and Simson motorbikes, as well as some Trabbis. Walk along Unter den Linden to the Brandenburger Tor. With the short underground to main station. Explore the brand-new main station. By train via Friedrichstrasse to Potsdamer Platz, back to the youth hostel. Write post cards.

*25.09.2010 Berlin - Potsdam – Dessau* Ride by scooter to Potsdam. It rains only a but, but there is low-lying fog. In Potsdam, I go to Sanssouci Palace. Now there is a drizzle. I buy a day pass for all the sights and start Sighseeing: Sanssouci castle, i.e. the apartments of Frederick the Great (Friedrich II), the guest rooms, then the castle, the wine cellar with the office of the sommelier, the Hofdamenflügel (nota bene: not for his wife Elizabeth, whom he had relocated to another castle in Berlin, the couple lived separately). Next stop was the historic windmill, which is actually new, because it was destroyed in the the last days of World War II. Now everything is working. Next to the new chambers, the huge Orangerie, built by Friedrich Wilhelm IV in the Italianate style, where I also climb the tower. Then, to the dragonhouse, now used as a restaurant and to the Belvedere lookout, which has been completely rebuilt, because it was destroyed in World War II. Then to the Chinese house, with many gilded figurines, modeled on a Chinese garden pavilion, then to the Roman Baths, in the style of the ancient Romans and to the enchanting little Charlottenhof Palace, where Friedrich Wilhelm IV used to live as crown prince. On to the giant New Palace, which Frederick the Great had built to demonstrate the economic power of Prussia. I visit the private chambers of Frederick II, rarely used by him, spooky in the darkness, as it is dark outside because of the bad weather and there are only a few lights in it, to prevent fading of the historical materials. Then I visit in considerable haste the halls and guest apartments of the New Palace. In particular, the shell hall on the ground floor hall is impressive. Meanwhile, it rains in torrents and it is almost 6pm. I haste back to the site information center where I left my things in a locker, because they close at 6pm. I just about make it in time, then I put on all my rain gear and drive off. I ride back and forth in Potsdam, but I cannot find no gas station. A cyclist calls out to me that the rear light is not working. I do not know how he could have known that, but it's true. Now I must even more urgently find a service station, but there is none. So I follow the signs to the highway and hope to find a service station there. But nothing. I drive many miles, without finding any towns or service stations. Finally I get to a village with gas station. I fill up and want to buy a replacement bulb, but they sell them only in pairs. The saleslady tells me that I should just ask in the garage next door. I do so and am given the bulb even for free. I put it in and the light works again. A scooter driver gives me the advice to ride on the bicycle path for 20 metres to get on the motorway. I do so. But the signs now say permanently "Berlin", so I'm probably wrong. I stop and ask a van driver in the parking lot. He looks my destination up in his Navigation system and confirms that I drove in the wrong direction. At the next exit, I turn around. The rain is getting stronger. Moreover, it is dark. The highway is not lit, the rain is obscuring my goggles. Although my speedometer shows 80 km/h, it is like stalling. Only with great difficulty I see the right road boundary through the torrential rain. Finally the exit Dessau appears. I fill up once more and ride straight into Dessau. I cannot read the traffic signs, so I miss the turnoff to the Bauhaus. After asking for directions, I find the Bauhaus and can check into a classic Bauhaus room.

*26.09.2010 Dessau* It was not all that easy to sleep in the Bauhaus, because there were permanently sounds as if some sheet iron was beaten by the wind. Today it keeps raining without cease. At 8am I walk down Kornhausstrasse and back. In a bakery I buy some buns for breakfast. Everything else is closed. I walk into town, which appears extinct. Nobody is in the streets and everything is closed. There is no traffic whatsoever. I walk back to the Bauhaus, where I visit the permanent exhibition of the Bauhaus. At 11am I take part in a guided tour through the Bauhaus. At 12:30 I take part in the second guided tour of the Meisterhäuser (lecturer's houses). We visit the Klee/Kandinsky Meisterhaus. The headmaster's house and the first Meisterhaus were destroyed by a

bomb in WW2. From here I walk to the Hugo Junkers museum. The exhibition is very poor, for one the parts seem not to be connected and gas boilers and airplanes are in a random order, on the other hand there really is only one Junkers plane, one of the Ju-52-3m which were at the bottom of a lake in Norway. In front of the museum there are a few battered Russian jetfighters and the remains of the windchannel of the Junkers factory. I walk back to Bauhaus, where I visit the IBA (international building exposition), a confusing exhibition on the redimensioning of cities, with far too much multimedia contents and text, but without any visible message. I ask myself how clever it could be to destroy vacant flats. I walk to the main station to the internet cafe, where I eventually manage to book the hotel in Zwickau, which I did not manage on my own computer (because I am using IE and not Mozilla). For supper I prepare my last emergency food.

*27.09.2010 Dessau to Leipzig* I leave at 7am in torrents of rain in direction Leipzig. Suddenly the signs Leipzig stop. I ask a car driver and I am to my surprise right. When I get on the freeway, not much can go wrong now. I am driving against the rainstorm. The rain hits me sore in my face. Eventually I arrive in Leipzig. I stop under a bridge to consult my map, when I hear a bang and two cars on the intersection nearby have just had a pretty serious collision. I find the hostel without any problems and can put the scooter in their backyard as promised. I am dripping with water and despite the raingear, I have got pretty soaked. I stow my luggage away and go to town: Hauptbahnhof (central railway station), Nikolaistrasse, Nikolaikirche (famous because here the protests against the GDR regime took place), Specks Hof, the incredibly funny sculpture "untimely contemporaries" by Bernd Göbel, Augustusplatz with the not-so original reconstruction of the opera house, Grassimuseum (closed), Gewandhaus, a monumental GDR concert hall where there was quite a squabble over the frescoes, because the painters Sighard Gille and Wolfgang Peuker did not get on together, the City tower and University, to Mädler Passage, past the baroque Naschmarkt and stock exchange. Through the Old City Hall and Barfussgässchen to St. Thomas Church where Johann Sebastian Bach worked. Then to the huge New City Hall (1905) with its high tower. Right next to it is the modern Casino Shopping Center. Passing the (closed) Kunsthalle der Sparkasse Leipzig and to Gottschedstrasse, actually a food mile, but in this weather rather dismal.

*28.09.2010 Leipzig* It is raining less intensively as yesterday. By tram, I go to the Völkerschlachtdenkmal (monument of the 1813 battle). The monument is huge and it amazes you how big the stones are it is built of. Since it is being renovated and I also had to wait a while until it opens, I return and visit the Zeitgenössisches (contemporary history) forum. On the third floor I visit the very funny and instructive exhibition "Apart from fun, humour and politics in Germany", then the excellent exhibition on the GDR time on the second floor. Time enough for me just to complete the Stasi Museum, then it is 6pm and I return to the hostel. The collection of the Stasi Museum is online available on <http://www.runde-ecke-leipzig.de/sammlung>

*29.09.2010 Leipzig to Dresden* It is raining, too, today. But the sun peeps through the clouds around 9am. I walk to Nikolaikirche and Neues Rathaus, to make pics without the rain. But upon arriving there, it is even more dark than yesterday. At 10am the city history museum opens. There is a relatively small exhibition, but with many exclusive exhibits, such as paintings by Lucas Cranach. It also shows, how Leipzig was issued with Market privileges, which sped up its rise as a trade fair city. Shortly before 1pm I am back at the Central Globetrotter Hostel, where the receptionist helps me to shove the scooter up the steep stairs of the backyard, while the engine keeps cutting out because it is still cold. Eventually it is up there and I ride the scooter around the house and load it. Then I leave Leipzig in direction Dresden. It is raining and dark. The distances are contradictory: Whereas it said 104 in Leipzig, I end up doing 125 km to Dresden. I have no problem finding the hostel and check in. Then I shop at Lidl for my supper and breakfast.

*30.09.2010 Dresden* Today, a little sun is coming through the clouds. I visit the old town of Dresden: New Synagogue (an ugly block with no windows), past the Frauenkirche to the Palace Square and the Zwinger. I try to get into the Semper Opera House for the guided tour, but no chance, tickets are available only through Internet. I visit the Frauenkirche, which was only rebuilt in in 2005, and the crypt (lower church). The war damage was devastating, although the church itself was not hit by bombs, the burning houses next to it collapsed into the church, the sandstone columns burst because of the heat and the church collapsed. I walk back to the hostel where I change to a lower bed. Then I walk back into town and visit the Transport Museum, where there are few, but high-profile exhibits, in particular a two-door Wartburg 311 coupe and a Wartburg 655 prototype. The large model railway is closed. It is astonishing that in the GDR, automobile and boat racing has been carried out intensively and the necessary engines, were built in spite of great difficulties. I walk on to Kreuzkirche, where I climb the tower from where I have a beautiful panoramic view of Dresden. The historic buildings are all black on the outside, back from the firestorm of 1945. Unfortunately just behind the historic center, an ugly GDR-style People's Palace, with socialist realist murals, was built. On the way back I walk across the new town, which now has the much older buildings than the Old Town because it has remained largely spared from the bombing.

*01.10.2010 Dresden* Today is good weather. I go to the Residenzschloss Palace and visit the Hausmannsturm (with the coin collection), from where I have a good view over Dresden, and the Turkish Chamber, a more than 300 years old collection of exotic armor and weapons. Then I walk to the "Automanufaktur Dresden", of

Volkswagen, the "glass car assembly factory" where the VW Phaeton luxury model is manufactured. We are led through the production process, where every day 35 Ultra-Luxury Karrosse are produced. Each vehicle is individually configured for the customer, virtually every part can be selected individually. The production is spread over two floors. The latest technology is used and the assembly appears very trustworthy. After that, I quickly return to the Royal Palace, I still have to visit the remaining museums. I Walk through the Neues Grünes Gewölbe, stuffed with precious things, which August the Strong collected with enthusiasm. Then I visit the exhibitions "to measure precisely = locate your rule" (historical instruments for surveying), the prints and drawings section with the special exhibition of Herrmann Glöckner, works till 1945, which I did not like at all, the special exhibition "future since 1560," a journey through the history of the collection. In the end I visited the English staircase, which was only recently fully repaired. Most impressive is that some showrooms, especially those of the last exhibition, will only have a new floor, and otherwise are what they were after the firestorm of 1945. The walls are black, the plaster is chipped off, the wooden parts burned. This is a pretty terrifying backdrop and has the effect of a recall of the events in 1945. All the more so as all historic buildings in Dresden are black on the outside, 65 years after the fire storm (more about it in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombing\\_of\\_Dresden\\_in\\_World\\_War\\_II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombing_of_Dresden_in_World_War_II)). The East German Government had little understanding of the historical buildings and more was demolished than what would have been necessary. In the end I visit the (catholic!) Hofkirche (cathedral), which has been completely rebuilt, in pretty Lutheran way.

*02.10.2010 Dresden* Today I burned up a total of 30 € for entrance fees! At 10:00am, I attend the guided tour through the Semper Opera. The opera was completely destroyed in 1945 und still during GDR-times rebuilt after the original plans of Semper, but longer and wider than before, to make room for modern stage technology. The ceiling and wall paintings and interior decoration made of marbled plaster match exactly those of the original Semper opera. Then I take part in a city tour by paddle steamer of the white fleet, PD (paddle steamer) Kurort Rathen. The historic paddle steamer was built in 1896 in Blasewitz, has a length of 55.76m and a width of 5.02m. The oscillating two-cylinder compound steam engine produces 140 hp. The boiler, which has been replaced, is fired with oil. The steamer was overhauled completely in 1994. We drive past vineyards, the castles Albrechtsberg, Lingner Castle and Eckberg, under the "Blue Wonder" bridge (where the chimney is lowered) until Löschwitz, where we turn around. I then visit the flea market on the banks of the river Elbe, where I buy the book "40 years of the GDR" (actually wrong, because the GDR only lasted for 39 years and 360 days) and a GDR Motorsport magazine. Then I walk to the botanical garden, which is disappointing and poorly maintained. I walk back to the Zwinger, where I visit the Armoury and the Old Masters Picture Gallery. The number of images of world class is so overwhelming that the individual pictures get a bit lost in there. There are dozens of old Dutch masters like Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Peter Paul Rubens. Impressive is the Sistine Madonna by Raphael, which seems more like the big sister of the baby that she carries in her arms. The many detailed pictures by Canaletto are a feast for the eyes, he was later appointed to the court of Saxony. Also an icon of classical painting is Rembrandt's self-portrait as a lost son squandering his money. The paintings of Lucas Cranach stand out for their exceptional craftsmanship. In the end I quickly visit part of the porcelain collection, before I am turned out because the museum closes. I walk along the booths of the city festival, which starts today, back to the hostel.

*03.10.2010 Dresden to Chemnitz* All night long there were footsteps and the sound of luggage being unpacked and packed. The day starts with beautiful weather, although it was raining last night. I ride on the freeway to Chemnitz. Once I have to refuel, then I arrive - the distance was minimal, less than 80km. In Chemnitz I have trouble to find the youth hostel, because I miss a turnoff. Eventually I succeed. The receptionist is just there, so that I can check in. I leave my luggage there and ride off straight away, to the museum of industry. I visit the industry museum. There are all kinds of industrial produce, which were made before WW2 and afterwards in the GDR in Saxony. Only now I realize how advanced technology was in the 1940s in this region and that there were still improvements right up to the 1970s. In the engine workshop I chat for a long time with one of the employees. In the basement there is textile machinery, most of them still in running condition and wired and ready to run at the push of a button. When I am through, I ride a few blocks to the Museum for Saxon Vehicles. There are many rare motorcycles - there were at times a dozen or so manufacturers in Saxony, although they did not all make the engines themselves - and a Phänomobile and some IFA's and DKW's from the time shortly before and shortly after the war. There is also a special exhibition on Russian motorbikes. Particularly impressive is a giant motorbike, self-made with lots of skill from airplane parts. At the railway station I buy a box of meat balls for supper and ride back to the hostel.

*04.10.2010 Chemnitz* I drive to Flöha and then to Augustusburg where I visit the motorcycle Museum. Of all the motorcycle museums, this is the best structured, but still has comments from the communist era. There are some fantastic exhibits. like a replica of a Daimler riding machine and the first series production motorcycle, the Wolfmüller & Hildebrandt, which offered good performance, when running, but was still built with steam engine technology. From here, I continue to Zschopau where I visit the old town. Then I visit the Motorcycle Museum at Wildeck castle - also with many interesting historical documents - and the renovated rooms and and the tower. A waste of money because there is nothing at all to see. I am looking for the former MZ factory and end up at a

factory that turns out to be an old cotton mill (now a furniture shop). Have a long chat with a lady who works there. Thanks to her directions I find the former DKW/MZ factory, which is today, apart from a few tenants, completely empty. I drive on the highway to Chemnitz, where I park the bike in the center and explore the inner city which is dominated by monstrous department stores and shopping centers. The Red Tower is completely surrounded by scaffolding. The huge head of Karl Marx is still there, but now seems to be completely out of place. In a supermarket I buy something to eat and return to the hostel which is located 4km from the centre.

*05.10.2010 Chemnitz* In the morning I drive to Klaffenbach where I visit the moated castle. Have a long chat with a few workers who pass when I park the scooter. The castle looks very pretty in the morning sun, set in its pond. Nearby, parking in a hall, there are a few IFA W50 trucks from the communist era. I return to the city where I park at the castle. I explore the park and castle pond. By 11am the museum opens. Admission is overpriced at EUR 6.00, but the exhibits - mostly religious wooden sculptures - are of excellent quality and well labeled. The two guards follow me at every turn, they are happy to have someone to guard. Upstairs, the city history is shown very briefly and fragmented. At least I learn how the medieval city had to give way to a mercantile city that was in 1945 completely destroyed by Allied bombs. In GDR times a futuristic city concept was developed that required the leveling of all the remaining older buildings. It was fortunately only partially implemented. From the museum I ride into the center where I park the scooter at the Edeka market. At St. Peter's Church I meet the PR responsible of the city and we chat for an hour. St. Peter's Church suffered only minor damage during the Second World War, but is of limited historical value, as it was built at the end of the 19th century in a mishmash of styles. I visit the public swimming pool, which has allusions to the Bauhaus style, but far less consistent than the Saxon car museum and strongly influenced by nazi pomp. I walk past the Marx-head (nicknamed Nueschel) across the city center. At DASTietz I visit the Petrified Forest. Along Bahnhofstrasse there are still two socialist sculptures that I visit as well. Then I walk back to Edeka, get the scooter and return to the hostel.

*06.10.2010 Chemnitz to Zwickau* In beautiful sunshine and warm weather, I ride on side roads to Zwickau. I notice that not all newly built buildings are still occupied. In Zwickau I go directly to the August Horch Museum. I park the scooter and visit the museum. Mr. Tausch, which has previously worked at IFA, makes an individual tour with me through the entire museum. The museum is not only equipped with elaborately restored Horch, Audi, DKW and Wanderer cars, the captions are all very well written and the cars are placed so that they can be photographed. I am particularly pleased about the Trabant section, which has almost all the Trabants which ever were built, there is a P50 and a P70 and even an IFA F9, which corresponded exactly to the DKW F89 (3 = 6). Finally, I may visit the August Horch villa adjacent to the Museum. The contents of the villa corresponds exactly to the original, but had to be reconstructed, because the original furniture no longer existed. At half past three I ride to a 4-star hotel Amedia, where I check in. I booked the room at hostel prices on the web. Then I ride to the city center. I visit the St. Catherine church, the niedere Kornhaus, the Powder Tower and the city wall remains, the main market with the town hall, the Robert Schumann House and the Gewandhaus, the St. Mary's Cathedral, which I explore in detail. The priests houses are right next to the cathedral. Then I walk to the Trabant monument at George Square, a small stone statue of the Trabant. I walk back to the Schumann House, where I visit the Robert Schumann Museum. Then I return to the hotel.

*07.10.2010 Zwickau to Bayreuth* I did not sleep well, despite the luxurious hotel. Whenever I opened the window, there was too much noise from the busy road below, but when I closed it, it was too stuffy in the room. On top of that I suffered from headache, so that I woke up pretty tired. The good breakfast buffet gives me some strength back. Upon leaving, there is beautiful weather with plain sunshine. At Schönfels Castle I stop and take a few photos. I ride on byroads to Plauen, then I continue to Hof. Suddenly the road is closed and no detour signposted. A local stops next to me and tells me to follow him. On very narrow byroads (which were of course closed for cars) we ride around the roadworks. I continue in direction Hof, when the same situation repeats itself: The road is closed and no detour signalled. I ride to a small village nearby and then in direction Hof, which again takes me to the roadworks. Thus I just follow another car and indeed, it takes me via small byroads around the roadworks. Now I only have to follow the roadsigns to Bayreuth. In Bayreuth I ride the last few kilometers on the freeway, because I have only directions from the freeway to the hostel. I check in at the Bayreuth Youth Hostel, one of the most primitive youth hostels I have stayed in: No internet, the stove works on coins and there is neither furnace nor microwave. I leave the luggage at the room and return to town, which I explore: (Richard Wagner's) Festspielhaus, then Schlosskirche (Baroque, low ceiling), and tower (I did not climb up), markgräflisches Opera house (only from the outside), then back to the Festspielhaus, where I take part in a guided tour. The Festspielhaus looks from the outside like a decrepit car factory and from inside like a third-class vaudeville, which has been vacant for years. It is said to have excellent acoustics, though, because so much wood was used inside. The capacity is about 2000 persons, the seats are not upholstered. The orchestra ditch has sound-guidance walls and cannot be seen from the audience. The stage is said to be one of the largest on earth and uses modern technology nowadays. I ride back to town and visit the New Palace, the beautiful Hofgarten with its Canal and the little island in it, the "Wahnfried" mansion of Richard and Cosima Wagner as well as their tomb in the garden of the house. Then I visit the Stadtkirche, which is all scaffolded and the Historical Museum,

where there is an exhibition on "Jewish Bayreuth", which offers interesting information on prominent Jews of Bayreuth and the here particularly nasty persecution of Jews during the Third Reich. This seems to have been by design, as Hitler had plans to make Bayreuth a pompous nazi city. Fortunately, these mad plans were never executed. I walk to the synagogue, whose interesting side may not be viewed from the road, because they built a wall around it. In a supermarket I buy something to eat and prepare it on the coin-operated stove.

*08.10.2010 Bayreuth to Bamberg to Nuremberg* In ice cold, but sunny weather I start in direction Bamberg. I ride on byroads through the Fränkische Schweiz, stop first at Fantaisie Palace. I get past several castles, one of them Schloss Wiesentfeld, where I stop to take a picture. In Bamberg I park the scooter in a byroad. I quickly visit St. Otto's church, then I march on foot to the historical centre. The impression of the rich baroque architecture in the plain sunshine is overwhelming. I see the Maximiliansplatz, St. Martin's church, and Schillerplatz. I then go to the tourist information office, where I get a map of the city centre. I explore Untere Mühlen and Altes Rathaus which sits in the middle of a bridge over the left Ringlitzarm river. Then I visit Pfarrkirche unserer lieben Frau, the Carmelite monastery, the cathedral, a huge building with the graves of emperor Heinrich II and pope Clemens II. Around Domplatz there is the New Residence and the Alte Hofhaltung (the economy buildings of the court). Everything is wonderfully preserved. Via St. Jacob I walk to St. Michaels, a former benedictine monastery on Michaelsberg. I then descend into town, walk along Klein-Venedig (where I meet an old woman with whom I chat about the old times when her property got flooded now and then), along Grüner Markt to Maximiliansplatz. A short exploit takes me to the New Synagogue which is - understandably - built like a fortress. Across Luitpoldbrücke I walk back to Theuerstadt. I try to backtrack to Route 22, when suddenly the road is blocked because of roadworks and no detour signalled. I end up on the freeway, which I follow until leaving the outskirts of Bamberg. There I return to the byroads. I drive through picturesque Forchheim and on to the university city of Erlangen, where I have to get back on the freeway. In Nuremberg I ask a cyclist at an intersection how to get to the adjacent Germanic Museum. From there I find the hostel without any problem. I park the scooter and unload my luggage, then I start exploring Nuremberg: St. Elisabethenkirche (catholic), St. Jakob (lutheran), Weisser Turm, Lorenzkirche, Nassauer Haus, Heilig-Geist-Spital (holy spirit hospital) built on the river Pegnitz, Hauptmarkt (Main market) with Frauenkirche (Our Lady's Church) and schöner Brunnen (beautiful well), Rathaus (city hall), St. Sebaldskirche (St. Sebald Church), St. Sebald Pfarrhaus, Platz am Tiergärtner Tor with beautiful old houses, Burg (castle), Maxtorgraben (old city walls, has nothing to do with Maxtor or Seagate harddisks). In a supermarket I buy my supper and walk past Insel Schütt back to the hostel.

*09.10.2010 Nuremberg* In the early morning I walk through town to shoot a few photos in the beautiful morning sun. It is bitterly cold, probably just at freezing point. I manage to shoot the missing pics of the castle. On the main market, a large vegetable and produce market has been installed. I buy a can of potatoes for tomorrow, Sunday, then I walk to the station where I take the tram number 9 to the Nazi Party Rally Grounds. I walk the proposed route: Planned conference hall for 50,000 people, whereas only two head buildings and the walls were built. The roof was never built. Then along the Dutzendteich to the "big road", the parade grounds, which was made of exactly hewn granite slabs. I continue to the foundation stone for the German Stadium, which was to accommodate 400,000 people and would have been 82 meters high. Fortunately it was never built. Then I continued to the Zeppelin Field, the only building ever completed. From the rostrum Hitler used to hold his speeches at the Nuremberg Party Congress. The facilities at the Zeppelin Field were soon dilapidated and had to be partially demolished because of the danger of collapse. The stands are mostly overgrown. I walked back to the Congress building, where I visited the Documentation Centre. The history of the Nazi Party is displayed historically and politically correctly. The building, which has been built into the ruins of the congress building, is meant to create an enormously depressing mood. After that I visit the special exhibition "The track, the logistics of the racial fanaticism" that demonstrates the role of railway and the concentration camps. I return to the station and walk back and forth across the city. The sun is shining, the sky is cloudless and I don't want to be in a museum, although there would have been some interesting museums. I walk to the castle, then I walk along the west side of the wall. One can walk on top of the city walls, where beautiful gardens have been created. At the Fleischbrücke, a white piano stands in the middle of the bridge. The pianist, Rainer Weiss of Cologne ([www.openclassics.de](http://www.openclassics.de)) is playing classical music, to make it more popular and probably also because he seeks contact with the audience. I listen to him for a long time, then I return to the hostel, the Lette'm Sleep at the Frauentormauer 42, which is really very pleasant.

*10.10.2010 Nuremberg to Augsburg* Because of the morning cold, I leave Nürnberg later than usual. There is bright sunshine, but it is very cold, even in the sun. I ride on road No. 2 in direction Augsburg. In Donauwörth I break the journey. I refuel, check oil and tire pressure, tighten and lubricate the chain. They have some kind of trade fair or something going on. I walk through the pretty town. Then I drive the remaining 40 kms to Augsburg. In Augsburg I get on the freeway in order to follow the directions to the youth hostel. I thus find it without the slightest problem. I check in. The floor of the room is all sticky - somebody spilled some sweetend cooldrink here. I ask that the floor be cleaned. The cleaning lady, pretty upset about it, does it moaningly. One of my roommates confesses that last night he was pretty drunk and must have spilled some lemonade. I drive down

to MAN where they have the first Diesel engine in the reception hall, but it is closed and it is difficult to see it through the window. I then park the scooter at the hostel and walk to the Fuggerei, the world's first social residence, dating back from 1521. I visit the bunker, where the history of the destruction in WW2 and the reconstruction is displayed, then the the museum and in the end the show house. From here I walk into town, to Rathausplatz, Moritzplatz, Königsplatz, Synagogue (which is closed today), St. Anna, which is open, to my great surprise, but all scaffolded, then Kennedy square, Peutingenhaus with cathedral. I then walk along the remainder of the city walls high above Unterer Graben where I stay.

*11.10.2010 Augsburg* In the morning I walk to the Red Gate, then to the craft museum, which is just about to open up. It is interesting to see how the guilds present themselves. Then to the Evangelical St. Ulrich Church, where I have a long chat with the attendant. Then to the attached Catholic Church of St. Ulrich and Afra, where there are two Fugger chapels (these are actually two niches in the aisle). Next to the City Hall, where I visit the Golden Hall and the exhibitions on the ground floor (History and Holocaust Memorial). I continue to the Church of St. Anne, where I wait until the guided tour starts. I am the only participant. Mrs. Meissner nevertheless does the tour and explains the tombstones, murals and pictures in the cloister, then the details in the church. It is interesting that the church was originally a Catholic convent, then a Protestant Church, then Catholic, and then again Protestant. I walk upstairs and visit the Martin Luther Museum. Then I walk to the Cathedral, which I also extensively explore. I walk on to the Mozart house, where Leopold Mozart, father of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, lived. Then I go back to the hostel, walk again to Mozart House and on to the Wertachbrücker Tor. Then I walk back into town, where I buy a can of potato soup for supper.

## **Back to Switzerland**

*12.10.2010 Augsburg to Thal/SG* At 9am I get a phone call from the MAN Museum, that the museum was only open to the public in the afternoon, to late for me, as it would force me to ride to Switzerland in the dark. Although I leave Augsburg late, it is still very cold. The sun shines, the weather is fine, and I just wear some more warm clothes against the cold. I decide to ride over backroads which poses no problem, but I have to stop several times to warm up. In Lindau I stop at a supermarket and do my week's shopping, having great trouble to fit all the food into the scooter. Then I cross the border back into Switzerland. Hans Zingerli had hung a big deer antler at my door with a welcome message. Because the kitchen door was locked and I had no key for it with me (the key was inside) I had to wait until Hans returned, as he has the second key. I used the time for cutting the lawn behind the house, in front my neighbours had done it for me. Hans invited me to have supper with them. I could not get online, though, because during my absence, my internet equipment had stopped working.



## Pictures



Nordertor, Flensburg, Germany



Tivoli, Copenhagen, Denmark



Change of guards, Stockholm, Sweden



Gammelstad, Luleå, Sweden



The scooter at lake Inari, Finland



The author at the Nordkapp, Norway





Below the Nordkapp monument, Norway



Boathouses between Alta and Skibotn, Norway



Wreck of the German WW2 destroyer Georg Thiele, Rombaksbotten, Narvik, Norway



The Maelstrom in Saltstraumen, Bodø, Norway



Bodø, Norway



Sæmund with the author, Åsen, Norway





Trondheim, Norway



House with traditional roof, Sjoa, Norway



The author on board of the Fram, Oslo, Norway



Panorama from Akershus over the harbour, Oslo, Norway



Bergen, Norway





Near Sogndal, Sognefjord, Norway



Ferry Mannheller to Fodnes, Sognefjord, Norway



Hedalen Stavkirke, Borlaug to Oslo, Norway



Vandrerhem, Kasernhöjden, Karlstad, Sweden



The castle at Turku, Finland



Helsinki Cathedral (C.L. Engel), Helsinki, Finland



Gun, Suomenlinna/Sveaborg, Helsinki, Finland



Warnemünde near Rostock, Germany



The author at the Brandenburger Tor, Berlin, Germany



New Palace, Potsdam, Berlin, Germany



Bauhaus, Dessau, Germany



Spy bugs, Stasi-Museum, Leipzig, Germany





Peace column (by Andreas Stötzner), Nikolachurch, Leipzig, Germany



Theatre square with cathedral and residence castle, Dresden, Germany



Former MZ factory, Zschopau, Germany



Horch 350 Limousine, 1929, August-Horch-Museum, Zwickau, Germany



Festspielhaus, Bayreuth, Germany



Klein-Venedig, Bamberg, Germany



## Maps

