

fao Casa gazette

AUGUST 2012

Saint Lucia, West Indies

Buone Vacanze

**Last Rides: Crossing
the Deserts to Cairo**

**The 2012 Hunger Run
Sunday 21 October '12**

Images and Outlooks

Ricordi Gastromusicali

Isola Tiberina`

di Patrizia Cimini

Un fiume che non ha mulini
Si sorprende ai cormorani pescatori
Alle penne d'amsterdam gabbiane
Ai covoni fangosi case delle nutrie.

Un fiume lento nelle canne riflesso
D'oro continuo dedicato agli dei confusi
Con Nausichee d'acqua dolce
E carri di lino e canapa
S'abbaglia dell'aria tormentina
Che s'apre a prua dell'isola migliore del suo corso
Quell'isola costante che ne pettina i gorgi
E stiva millenari residui d'ambra
Colpo a colpo.

Su quella
Gli abbracci con la terra
Dei ponti
Sono addii
Sono ritorni
Cauti affacci, brevi accenni di palma henné.

Sabbia alla sabbia l'isola dimora
Incontentabile di voli bianchi
Quattro colombe erme prima
E vive poi
S'annicchiano sulla sinagoga
Il sole sventaglia le code
Miracolo flamenco.



fao Casa gazette

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Panorama with Pitons,
St. Lucia, West Indies

photo by Emma Hippolyte

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Saint Lucia, West Indies

(Info from Wikipedia and Tropical Traveller Vol263 June 2012)

compiled by Edith Mahabir



Petit piton and Heritage Monument

photo by Emma Hippolyte

Lévé! Get up! Experience the heart and soul of St. Lucia. A little jewel in the Caribbean where sun, surf and crystal clear water guarantees a wonderful vacation for those seeking sun and total relaxation. The island however offers much more than that in addition to great food and cocktails and lovely friendly people. I just spent a short holiday there and will definitely return for a much longer one in order to take in also the novelties offered under the Community based Eco-Agro Tourism project in the DenneryMabouya Valley. This tour promises an authentic St Lucian experience of music and culture and other unique attributes. In my few days I was only able to pack in a lot thanks to my very generous and kind

hostess, Emma Hippolyte (ex-FAO colleague, and now Minister of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs). I was able to visit and experience Castries, Gros Islet, the Pitons, Soufriere Sulphur springs and Village, one glorious day of sun and sea at the Rodney VC Beach and a visit to an estate where the cultivation of anthurium flowers (white, pink and red) was the main activity in addition to fruit trees. I realize that there is much much more to see and do there, so if you go to St. Lucia plan at least ten days. Armed with travel pills if you stomach does not take winding hilly roads.

Saint Lucia (French: *Sainte-Lucie*) is a sovereign island country in the

eastern Caribbean Sea and is part of the Lesser Antilles, it has a land area of 617 km² (238.23 sq mi) and has a population of 174,000 (2010). Its capital



is Castries. Two Nobel laureates, Arthur Lewis, an economist, and Derek Walcott, a poet and playwright, have come from the island.

One of the Windward Islands, it was named after Saint Lucy of Syracuse by the French, the first European colonizers. They signed a treaty with the native Carib people in 1660. England took control of the island from 1663 to 1667; in ensuing years, it was at war with France 14 times and rule of the island changed frequently (it was seven times each ruled by the French and British). In 1814, the British took definitive control of the island.

Saint Lucia has a legal system based on British common law. The judiciary is independent and conducts generally fair public trials. The financial sector has weathered the global financial crisis, but the recession has hurt tourism. The local currency is the East Caribbean dollar (XCD) and the current exchange rate is €1.00 = XCD3.31.

Representative government came about in 1924 (with universal suffrage from 1953). In 1979, Saint Lucia became an independent state of the Commonwealth of Nations associated with the United Kingdom. The island nation celebrates this every year with a public holiday. It is also a member of la Francophonie.



Map of St. Lucia

History of Saint Lucia

Europeans first landed on the island in either 1492 or 1502 during Spain's early exploration of the Caribbean. In 1643 a French expedition under the direction of Jacques du Parquet, the Governor of Martinique, established the first permanent European settlement on the island. The Governor De Rousselan signed a treaty with the local Carib people in 1660. Like the English and Dutch on other islands, the French began to develop the land for the cultivation of sugar cane as a commodity crop on large plantations. After the Seven Years' War between Great Britain and France the Treaty of Paris (10 February 1763) confirmed an exchange of colonial territories by the signatories.

When the British acquired the island, planters were trying to use the Carib

(continued on page 8)



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Twin Pitons and Soufriere village

population as labourers. The British imported enslaved Africans as workers. Many Carib had died because of lack of immunity to Eurasian diseases, such as smallpox and measles. Others died from overwork and maltreatment by the Europeans. Caribbean conditions were harsh, and many African slaves died as well, requiring continued importation of new captives. The British continued to import slaves until they abolished the trade in 1808. By that time, people of ethnic African and (less so) Carib descent greatly outnumbered those of ethnic European background.

Saint Lucia continued to be contested by France and Great Britain until the British secured it in 1814, following its war with the United States. Saint Lucia was considered part of the British Windward Islands colony. In the mid-

Twentieth century, it joined the West Indies Federation (1958–62) when the colony was dissolved. In 1967, Saint Lucia became one of the six members of the West Indies Associated States, with internal self-government. In 1979 it gained full independence under Sir John Compton. Compton, of the conservative United Workers party (UWP), served as prime minister from 1982 to 1996, after which he was succeeded by Vaughn Lewis.

Kenny Anthony of the Labour Party was prime minister from 1997 to 2006, when the UWP, again led by Compton, won control of parliament. In May 2007, after Compton suffered a series of ministrokes, Finance and External Affairs Minister Stephenson King became acting prime minister. He succeeded as prime minister after Compton died in September 2007. In November of 2011, the honorable Kenny Anthony was re-elected as prime minister.

Saint Lucia is a Commonwealth realm; Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of State of Saint Lucia, represented on the island by a Governor-General. Executive power, however, is in the hands of the Prime Minister and his cabinet. The prime minister is normally the head of the party commanding the support of the majority of the members of the House of Assembly, which has 17 seats. The other chamber of Parliament, the Senate, has 11 appointed members. Saint Lucia is a two-party parliamentary democracy. Five political parties participated in the November 28, 2011 General Election. Dr Kenny Davis Anthony of the St Lucia Labour Party won eleven of the seventeen seats. Saint Lucia is a full and participating member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organisation



Emma in Anthurium Plantation

of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and La Francophonie.

Quarters of Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia has 11 quarters, or parishes of the island, under the French colonial government which was continued by the British: No. 1 Anse-la-Raye Quarter 31.0 km², No. 2 Castries Quarter 79.5 km², No. 3 Choiseul Quarter 31.3 km², No. 4 and 6 Gros Islet Quarter 101.5 km², No. 5 Dennery Quarter 69.7 km², No. 7 Laborie Quarter 37.8 km², No. 9 Micoud Quarter 77.7 km², No. 10 Soufrière Quarter 50.5 km², No. 11 Vieux Fort Quarter 43.8 km², There are two others, namely, Canaries Quarter 15.9 km², and Forest Reserve Area Quarter 78.3 km².

Population of Saint Lucia

The population of 174,000 (in 2010) is evenly divided between urban and rural areas, although the capital, Castries, contains more than one-third of the

population. Saint Lucia's population is predominantly of African and mixed African-European descent, with a small *Indo-Caribbean* minority (3%). Members of other or unspecified ethnicity groups, account for about 2% of the population. The official language is English however (Kwéyò or Saint Lucian Creole French), which is a French-based Creole colloquially referred to as "Patwah" (*Patois*), is spoken by 95% of the population. This Antillean Creole is used in literature and music, and is gaining official acknowledgement. It is derived chiefly from French and West African languages, with some vocabulary from Carib and other sources.

About 70% of the population is Roman Catholic, influenced from the days of French Catholic rule and evangelization. Most of the rest belong to other Christian denominations, including Seventh-day Adventisms (7%), Pentecostalism (6%), Anglicanism

(2%), Evangelical Christianity (2%), and the Baptist faith; in addition, about 2% of the population adheres to the Rastafari movement.

There is one public hospital and one private hospital in St Lucia. There was a second, but it was burnt down in a fire in the early hours of September 9, 2009.

Culture of Saint Lucia

The culture of Saint Lucia has been influenced by African, East Indian, French and English heritage.

Festivals

Saint Lucian cultural festivals include *La Rose and La Marguerite*, the first representing the Rosicrucian order, and the second representing Freemasonry. This can be seen on a mural painted by Dunstan St Omer, depicting the holy trinity of Osiris, Horus and Isis.

Each May since 1991, Saint Lucia has hosted an internationally renowned **Jazz Festival**. The biggest festival of the year is the **Saint Lucia Jazz Festival**. Held in early May at multiple venues throughout the island, it draws visitors and musicians from around the world.



Saint Lucia Jazz Festival in Castries

Traditionally in common with other Caribbean countries, Saint Lucia held a carnival before Lent. In 1999, the government moved Carnival to mid-July to avoid competing with the much larger Trinidad and Tobago carnival and

so as to attract more overseas visitors. Together with Caribbean music genres such as **Calypso, Soca, Dancehall, Reggae, Compas, Zouk and Salsa**, Saint Lucia has a strong indigenous folk music tradition. A popular folk dance is the *Quadrille*.

In May 2009, Saint Lucians commemorated the 150th Anniversary of West Indian Heritage on the island.



Cricket is a popular sport in the country. Seen here is the **Beausejour Cricket Stadium** which hosts international cricket matches for the **West Indies**.

Education

The Education Act provides for free and compulsory education in Saint Lucia from the ages of 5 to 15. Public spending on education was at 5.8 % among the 2002–2005 GDP. Saint Lucia has one university; University of the West Indies Open Campus, and a few medical schools.

Tourism in Saint Lucia

Tourism is vital to Saint Lucia's economy. Its economic importance is expected to continue to increase as the market for bananas becomes more competitive. Tourism tends to be more substantial during the dry season (January to April). Saint Lucia tends to be popular due to its tropical weather and scenery and its numerous beaches and resorts.



A panorama of Marigot Bay

Popular tourist attractions include a drive-in volcano, the Sulphur Springs (in Soufrière), the Botanical Gardens, the Majestic twin Peaks “The Pitons”, a world heritage site, the rain forests, and Pigeon Island National Park, which is home to Fort Rodney, an old British military base.

The majority of tourists visit Saint Lucia as part of a cruise. Most of their time tends to be spent in Castries, although Soufriere, Marigot Bay and Gros Islet are popular locations to visit.

Other Tourist attractions include: Boat tours, aerial tours, Saint Lucia Heritage Tours, Visits to St. Lucia National Trust (Pigeon Island National Landmark) was once a naval station and among the military remnants you now find well laid trails passing through attractive lawns and wooden areas to reveal captivating vistas and cozy coves. The Forestry Department also organizes hikes into the lush rainforest, also birdwatching tours – qualified guides are provided for these activities. **Rainforest sky-rides** creates a tranquil and enriching experience, skimming along the rainforest canopy in open-air gondolas with knowledgeable guides.

Other sites of interest are: the **Diamond Falls and Mineral Baths** which offer a glimpse of beautifully designed tropical gardens sculpted around the picturesque waterfall and mineral baths. **Toraille Waterfall**

offers a short walk along a path edged with tropical blossoms to a cool waterfall where bathing is permitted. **La Sikwi Sugar Mill** provides a complete overview of the sugar industry, once the crop of the island, inside a marvellous example of a sugar factory set within an attractive garden. **Rhythm of Rum** takes place at the Saint Lucia Distilleries and blends history with a sampling of the island’s award winning rums and liqueurs.

Scuba Diving haven with many sites to admire the underwater beauty and landscapes among which: **Anse Chastenet Reef, Anse La Raye, Coral Gardens, Fairy Land, Keyhole Pinnacles, the Lesleen Shipwreck** (165 foot freighter which lies upright in 60 feet of water), Superman’s flight continues along the wall at the base of the Petite Piton where it falls off to 1600 feet in depth - divers drift along the current emulating the super hero’s flight between the Pitons in Superman II. There are many dive shops providing equipment to subs for rental.

Deep Sea Fishing. Captain Mike offers a great day at sea and the chance of catching a big one i.e. marlin, swordfish or Dorado.

Kitesurfing and Windsurfing at Vieux Fort where an almost continuous breeze provides the ideal conditions ■

Buone vacanze....

Ma al rientro, impara anche tu a staccare la spina..



di *Enrica Romanazzo*

Sono arrivate le tanto agognate vacanze. Aspettiamo questo momento tutto l'anno. Le valigie sono pronte, come la lista delle ultime cose da portarsi dietro per vivere giornate spensierate all'aria aperta. Come si fa a vivere rintanati al chiuso in spazi sempre più piccoli in città sempre più grandi? Me lo chiedo ogni volta che mi accingo a partire per raggiungere il sole che accarezza la pelle e riscalda nei pomeriggi freschi e leggeri in riva al mare immobile, turchese... Là dove, dietro gli occhi chiusi, il sole diventa buio illuminato, acceso.. In vacanza il sole lo prendiamo noi.... In città ti prende lui mentre ti muovi nel mezzogiorno di fuoco della pausa pranzo, nell'afa insopportabile della città inquinata.. Il sole brucia ed acceca quando cammini sui marciapiedi assolati e respiri le esalazioni che provengono dal bitume delle strade... Che bello vivere il passare del tempo illuminato dal sole che sorge e tramonta sul mare. Ogni vacanza è una piccola storia di fuga dalla città, di migrazione verso un territorio in cui natura e relax rendono la vita una piacevole avventura da assaporare giorno per giorno, in cui potersi ricaricare di energia. C'è chi

al mare preferisce la campagna, in cui la vita si apre all'energia degli spazi aperti, alla natura. C'è chi ama fare lunghe passeggiate tra i frutteti delle valli o escursioni in quota, chi ama cimentarsi in attività sportive, chi fare divertenti pic nic nei prati... Dopo un anno sempre di corsa, con la mente costantemente occupata dagli impegni della giornata, è arrivato il momento di staccare la spina e prepararci a vivere le giornate all'insegna della lentezza, per scoprire tutti i colori ed i sapori della natura, seguire i ritmi biologici e naturali e dimenticare quelli imposti dalle lancette. Stiamo per assaporare il sogno di un mondo senza fretta, senza agende colme di appuntamenti, senza orologi e scadenze. Stiamo per raggiungere luoghi in cui faremo di meno, non saremo sempre connessi, osserveremo il sole calare dietro gli alberi, ascolteremo il cinguettio degli uccelli, assaporeremo la bellezza di ciò che ci circonda, mangeremo lentamente e meglio, ci concentreremo su una cosa alla volta, respireremo e non avremo comandamenti... Ma il tempo passa in fretta ed una volta rientrati in città, basta un solo giorno per annullare i benefici effetti

delle vacanze. Si ricomincia con la casa, il lavoro, i mille impegni quotidiani, le lavatrici da fare.... E lo stress risale pericolosamente ai livelli di guardia.... Ed allora? Dobbiamo imparare a prenderci delle pause per regalare alle nostre giornate una marcia in più. Cioè abituarci ad affrontare le giornate senza ansia, cercare di continuare a vivere in città come se si fosse in ferie, ritagliarsi degli spazi per fare passeggiate all'aria aperta, cercando di dedicare tempo a ciò che fa bene al corpo ed allo spirito. Coloro che non riescono mai a staccare la spina, possono intraprendere un percorso che miri alla conoscenza di se stessi ed all'unione armoniosa di mente e corpo. Condizione indispensabile per conquistare equilibrio e serenità e tenere alla larga stress ed ansie quotidiane. Tra le varie tecniche in uso potrete trovare quella che più si avvicina al vostro modo di essere.

“L'antroposofia è una via della conoscenza che vorrebbe condurre lo spirituale che è nell'uomo allo spirituale che è nell'universo. Sorge nell'uomo come una necessità del cuore, della vita del sentimento, e può essere pienamente giustificata se soddisfa questo bisogno interiore”

HATHA YOGA E RAJA YOGA

Il corpo è lo strumento che ci consente di lavorare su noi stessi. Se siamo deboli e doloranti, sicuramente ci sentiremo abbattuti o insoddisfatti, difficilmente avremo la mente libera e serena. Lo Hatha Yoga, delle posture mantenute in maniera stabile e confortevole con l'aiuto della consapevolezza del respiro, consente a tutti di migliorare lo strumento, la propria “macchina lavoro”. Per mezzo di flessioni, estensioni e torsioni, diamo tonicità alla muscolatura ed elasticità alle giunture, miglioriamo la funzionalità di tutti gli organi interni del corpo. Con il Pranayama utilizziamo i metodi per attivare e regolare la forza vitale e con ciò ottenere uno stato più elevato di energia vibratoria. Lo strumento di lavoro è il respiro, che fa da ponte fra il corpo e la mente, coordina i movimenti, modula lo sforzo e lenisce le tensioni. I risultati così ottenuti dal corpo e

dal respiro portano beneficio alla mente, che si calma ed è libera di rivolgersi a sé. Possiamo allora praticare il Ritiro dei Sensi (Pratyahara) e la Concentrazione (Dharana) e, quando quest'ultima permane stabile come spazio vuoto fra un pensiero ed il suo successivo, accade la Meditazione (Dhyana). Allora per tutti qualcosa cambia.....ed entriamo nella pratica del Raja Yoga, per ottenere una mente chiara e limpida, in grado di osservare se stessa.

YOGA AYURVEDA

Lo Yoga è una scienza completa della vita che ha avuto origine in India migliaia di anni fa. E' il più antico metodo di crescita personale del mondo comprendente il corpo, la mente e lo spirito. Gli antichi Saggi dello yoga possedevano una profonda comprensione della natura umana e di tutto ciò di cui l'uomo ha bisogno per vivere in armonia con se stesso e con ciò che lo circonda.

Questa scienza della lunga vita, è l'antica disciplina indiana che utilizza erbe, minerali, oli per curare vari disturbi comuni. E' fondamentale per la dottrina filosofica ayurvedica la convinzione che noi tutti possediamo tre dosha o umori: il VATA (vento o aria), il PITTA (fuoco-bile) e il KAPHA (muco-acqua-terra). Questi tre umori insieme formano il TRIDOSHA e la malattia non è altro che il risultato di un disequilibrio tra di essi. L'ayurveda cerca appunto di riportare l'equilibrio, e quindi anche la buona salute.

IL METODO PILATES

E' un sistema di allenamento sviluppato all'inizio del '900 da Joseph Pilates. Traendo ispirazione da antiche discipline orientali quali Yoga, (India) e Do-In, (Giappone), Pilates ha scritto almeno due libri in cui illustra il suo metodo: Return to Life through Contrology e Your Health: A Corrective System of Exercising That Revolutionizes the Entire Field of Physical Education. Pilates ha chiamato il suo metodo Contrology, con riferimento al modo in cui il metodo incoraggia l'uso della mente per controllare i muscoli. È un programma

di esercizi che si concentra sui muscoli posturali, cioè quei muscoli che aiutano a tenere il corpo bilanciato e sono essenziali a fornire supporto alla colonna vertebrale. Il metodo è indicato anche nel campo della rieducazione posturale. In particolare, gli esercizi di Pilates fanno acquisire consapevolezza del respiro e dell'allineamento della colonna vertebrale rinforzando i muscoli del piano profondo del tronco, molto importanti per aiutare ad alleviare e prevenire mal di schiena. Con questo metodo di allenamento non si rinforzano solo gli addominali ma si rinforzano anche le fasce muscolari più profonde vicino alla colonna e intorno alle pelvi. Il punto cardine del metodo è la tonificazione e il rinforzo del Power House, cioè tutti i muscoli connessi al tronco: l'addome, i glutei, gli adduttori e la zona lombare. Gli esercizi che si eseguono sul tappetino (Pilates Mat Work) devono essere fluidi e perfettamente eseguiti, devono inoltre essere abbinati ad una corretta respirazione.

Il metodo Pilates non ha marchio di registrazione per cui ogni insegnante di educazione fisica motoria lo può adattare al suo stile e alla sua personalità, ma si deve rifare ai principi basilari del Pilates che sono sei:

- 1 - la Respirazione sempre ben controllata e guidata dall'aiuto dell'insegnante come nella pratica dello Yoga (nello specifico nel Pilates si inspira nel cominciare l'esercizio e nel momento dello sforzo maggiore si espira, a differenza dello Yoga, si inspira con il naso e si espira sia con il naso che con la bocca e per ogni esercizio vi è un preciso ritmo);
- 2 - il Baricentro, sinonimo di Power House, visto come centro di forza e di controllo di tutto il corpo;
- 3 - la Precisione, ogni movimento deve avvicinarsi alla perfezione, un lavoro a circuito chiuso dove l'insegnante deve avere continui feedback dall'allievo;
- 4 - la Concentrazione, massima attenzione e concentrazione in ogni esercizio, la mente deve essere il supervisore per ogni singola parte del corpo;
- 5 - il Controllo, controllo su ogni parte del corpo, non si devono effettuare movimenti

sconsiderati e trascurati;

6 - la Fluidità, questo principio è la sintesi di tutti i concetti precedenti.

FLOWOORK

E' un tipo di ginnastica che si rifà allo Yoga ed al Pilates, quindi alla respirazione cinese (con l'addome), respirazione Hata (con il torace), semplici stretching a terra per preparare i tendini e i muscoli alle asana più intense. Studio dell'OM e rilassamento completo in Shavasana.

METODO FELDENKRAIS

E' un metodo di auto-educazione attraverso il movimento, che prende il nome dallo scienziato, fisico e ingegnere che lo ideò: Moshé Feldenkrais (1904-1984). Si basa essenzialmente sul prendere consapevolezza dei propri movimenti e dei propri schemi motori e quindi, attraverso il movimento, di espandere la consapevolezza di sé nell'ambiente. È composto da sequenze di semplici movimenti che coinvolgono ogni parte del corpo, dall'ascolto profondo delle sensazioni che essi suscitano, dallo sviluppo di nuovi modi di muoversi, attecchirsi e percepirsi. Il metodo Feldenkrais si propone di mettere la persona in grado di guidare il proprio apprendimento. È accessibile a tutte le persone, di qualsiasi età e condizione fisica.

MUSICOTERAPIA

La musicoterapia è l'uso della musica e/o degli elementi musicali (suono, ritmo, melodia e armonia) da parte di un musicoterapeuta qualificato, con un utente o un gruppo, in un processo atto a facilitare e favorire la comunicazione, la relazione, l'apprendimento, la motricità, l'espressione, l'organizzazione e altri rilevanti obiettivi terapeutici al fine di soddisfare le necessità fisiche, emozionali, mentali, sociali e cognitive. La musicoterapia mira a sviluppare le funzioni potenziali e/o residue dell'individuo in modo tale che questi possa meglio realizzare l'integrazione intra- e interpersonale e consequenzialmente possa migliorare la qualità della vita grazie a un processo preventivo, riabilitativo o terapeutico ■

Last Rides: Crossing the Deserts to Cairo

by Peter Steele

Ninety days on the road and the 15,000 km journey from Cape Town to Cairo was completed during the first week of June. Two bikes and four riders – with Kristian riding the entire journey and three others sharing Anna’s bike – followed the road north from South Africa into Namibia before shifting direction to ride up the eastern side of the continent. The road tracked into Zambia and Malawi and then turned north again - into Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia, before exchanging the greenness of the East African highlands for the deserts of Sudan and Egypt.



Lake Nasser ferryboat. The Egyptian MV Sagalnaam in all her functionality berthed beneath the Aswan High Dam; end of the journey and empty of passengers. Crowded or not, the night had passed relatively uneventfully, people had been fed, processed on board by Egyptian immigration and quickly shifted into the taxis, trains and buses that met the ferry.

Transition time: ferry boat magic

If Ethiopia and Sudan represented the poorest of the countries through which we had travelled (*well, Malawi too*), then we knew that the ferry boat from Wadi Halfa in Sudan to Aswan in Egypt would represent a return to the wealthier, more-orderly and easier part of the continent; and so it proved, catching up on the blog from the convenient Nile-side walkways of the Isis Hotel in Aswan two days later. This was luxury indeed.

Glance up from the laptop and there is one of the world’s best known views of the River Nile below the second cataract; the view popularized by the film of Agatha Christie’s story ‘*Death on the Nile*’ - of the sand dunes

on the opposite bank, Elephantine Island (*with the Movenpick hotel and its picturesque Soviet-empire airport tower design, which changes colour at two minute intervals at night*), the feluccas that skim the river (*servicing tourists*) and the peaceful quietness of the fast flowing water. Everything including the river itself is cleaner – all that sediment carried down from Ethiopia is deposited on the upstream side of the high dam at Aswan. And there is no sign of sand blow either.

So, Aswan represented a kind of watershed for the ride north – rich(er) world, but one where we knew we would soon be getting ready to finish the ride. E-mail traffic could be collected here, and we were already in contact



El Giza Pyramids, Cairo. Journey's end. We'd camped just 10 minutes from the world's most famous man-made structures, and couldn't resist this final photo shot. It was six in the morning and traffic was light.

with a couple of freight forwarders located in Cairo. We had a week to get there and finalize things. Meantime, we enjoyed a little luxury in a mid-price hotel that was, like so much of the local tourist industry, empty of tourists. Make your offer and see if management will accept it – prices are <50 percent of those posted, and will probably continue to fall into the next period. *Now is the time to go to Egypt.*

I was here two years back and the town was overflowing with tourists – the souk opposite the hotel so full of people you could hardly find room to move of an evening. Now you can see down the entire length of the main walkways between the shops and kiosks, and there were only locals shopping. There is a surreal feel to Aswan after the emptiness of Sudan; it is so pleasant, orderly and easy; a great place to live. It also felt a deal cooler alongside the river.

Crossing Lake Nasser to get to Egypt

The ferry crossing dominated planning and travel once into Sudan; you have to meet schedules for departure late Wednesday

afternoon – this is a once-a-week ferry - and you have to have tickets and freight space allocated for whatever you are travelling with – bike, car or truck. Push bikes you can ‘push’ on to the passenger ferry (they stack them on the roof); motorbikes are also sometimes taken on board – we were told (and we’ve read and seen them on blogs ‘pushed’ into the passenger walkway on to the ferry boat) but this is not the time of year for cutting corners of this kind – there is simply too much pressure on space. So, all vehicles are shipped on a barge that is hauled separately 550 km down the lake, with timing the main constraint. More by luck than anything else, our barge arrived the day after the ferry. (People have sometimes waited a week or more for their vehicles.)

Whether this is always like this in May-June, who knows? We were told about flight cancellations due to sand blow/sand storms that had forced more people on to land transport, but you would have to be a certain kind of traveller to undertake the three days travel required to get to Cairo from Khartoum

by road/ferry/rail, when the convenience of a two hour flight was available. Sure, price is important too, for land travel is much cheaper.

For the African long haul the Lake Nasser ferry is a feature of the East African route; you cannot 'overland' between Egypt and Sudan any other way. There are roads, for example, south of Abu Simbel on the lake side and along the Red Sea coast, but neither are open to foreign overlanders. So, hassles or not on this most uncomfortable of ferries, it's a great experience and one that will quickly be relegated to history for the roads that will eventually open and bypass the lake. In theory you could simply GPS yourself across the open deserts now – except you are not allowed to do so by the military.

It doesn't make sense to leave those newly-built Sudanese roads unconnected to the existing Egyptian networks that stretch northwards along the Nile Valley from Abu Simbel. There is simply too much trucking commerce to be exploited. And, with regional development, this will probably also include

the respective national rail networks (decrepit as they may be - particularly in Sudan).

Finding living space

Our ferry was reportedly carrying close on 600 people – twice the 'normal' numbers. (*This presupposes a recommended/ratified number of passengers, etc. – which is how many?*) Certainly the ship was crowded and there was hardly a footprint of deck space available during the night as people spread out and slept just about everywhere. We connected with a bunch of travelling companions whom we had first met at Jungle Junction in Nairobi – a Dutch family of four and an Englishman in their respective vehicles – and two backpackers, respectively, from Australia and Switzerland.

Our 'agent' in Wadi Halfa recommended capturing deck space – and this worked out reasonably well – an enclave of foreigners walled in by overnight bags, backpacks, food boxes and more. Others did much the same as the deck divided into clans, families and other groups. Voices were sometimes raised and



Nile at Aswan. The beauty and elegance of the Nile from the veranda of the equally delightful and pristine Old Cataract Hotel – luxury accommodation at a budget price for mid-2012. But you could enjoy the views of river and dunes for the cost of a drink – and you'd still have the place to yourselves.



Road to Cairo. Cross the Eastern Deserts and you travel an empty country; only 10% of the land in Egypt is habitable. To one side the Red Sea and on the other the limitless drylands that stretch to the Atlantic Ocean almost 5,000 km away. The coastal highway ticks off the kilometres to Cairo.

words broke out between neighbouring groups that could not always agree to demarcation lines.

For all that, our little group was an easy target and, without a rugged 'wall' to protect our space, we were quickly encroached by the more avid, quick and experienced travellers – usually individuals - seeking a single sleeping space. With a bedroll laid out and a body in place there is not much that can be done to reclaim space - particularly when neither can communicate in the others language. Anyway, foreigners are relatively low down the pecking order with these kinds of things – and their resources of space are typically fair game.

Sleeping becomes a challenge

Actually getting to sleep and then remaining asleep was something of a challenge. The ship loudspeaker system was continually calling named passengers to come and collect their documentation right through until after midnight. Then, with a really quiet ship around you and everyone asleep, the call to the faithful was broadcast across the ship at 04.30. This put the toilets/ablutions under intense pressure for washing; people spending

minutes vigorously washing hands, feet and the exposed parts of arms and legs. Queues formed for access to the three wash basins and two cubicles in the latrines close to us. Woe betides those with demanding bowels (you would literally have to hang out over the lake).

And then the entire deck was occupied by standing and/or kneeling people running through their prayer routines. The rest of us - minority atheists and Christians alike - who remained laid out on deck were simply swamped by the numbers. An hour's lost sleep – probably. But, as always and in retrospect, a great experience.

Temples at Abu Simbel

Unique to ferry passengers was the night view of the twin temples of Abu Simbel – the site to which these Thirteenth century BC structures were moved at the time of the construction of the Aswan High Dam during the 1960s. Four or five kilometres from the ship across the dark water you could easily pick out the two temples – the 'Great Temple of Ramses II' with the four large seated statues, and the 'Small Temple of Hathor & Nefertari' with the six standing statues. It was a 10 minute



Loading the barge. We'd kept pace with a couple of vehicles since Nairobi – all heading for the same ferry for the same week. As the level of the lake dropped the ferry boat and the barge docked further into the lake, which created difficulties when loading vehicles. The big 4x4 Mercedes camper bottomed out on the ramp when loading backwards. The dainty bikes had no such difficulties.

interlude of gazing at lights and colour, before the temples faded into the distance and became lost. Impossible to capture that sense of wonder and reality that represented the realpolitik of the region almost 3 500 years ago, and the role of these temples in projecting the dominance of Upper and Lower Egypt over the Nubian kingdoms further south. Night-time photos with little hand-held cameras are a poor substitute for real life, and capture little of the ancient history of these long-forgotten peoples.

Cairo via the Red Sea coast

There was a sense of 'journey's end' once

across the Egypt/Sudan border and, with the bikes re-registered and fitted with Aswan number plates, our Egyptian driving licences packed into our document case and the bikes loaded up, Cairo was little more than a couple of days away. You can ride the agricultural roads north along the Nile Valley, but this is an endless avenue of small trading towns, bus parks and – the motorists nightmare - speed bumps - located 100 metres apart wherever there were settlements. So, we chose to cross the eastern deserts and to ride north along the coast of the Red Sea. At least the military convoy system has been dropped in recent times, and you can travel independently.



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Who could resist a dip in this most exotic of holiday destinations – the Red Sea. Well, ‘exotic’ it may be around the main centres – Sharm el-Sheikh, Hurghada and Safarga, for example – but elsewhere the coastline was simply ... desert – with small groups of oil platforms out to sea, the occasional and dilapidated military depot (with those ubiquitous ‘no photographs’ signs) and equally dilapidated truck stops. The closer to Suez the more pronounced the ribbon development of beach parks, hotels, shopping malls and holiday homes – kilometre/hectare after kilometre/hectare – thousands of partially completed buildings surrounded by construction sites, with the modern north-south two lane highway skirting everything. With Egypt struggling economically to come to terms with the social revolution of the past 18 months, now would be a very good time to make an offer on that holiday home on the Red Sea that you have always fancied.

Sending the bikes home

Cairo we already knew, but not from the seat of a motorbike. Like traffic patterns everywhere, however, you quickly get to read the road and adapt to local practices. The freight agents had their main office in Maadi to the south of the city – but we couldn’t find low cost accommodation there; we looked and failed – eventually staying at a camping/motel place just a few minutes ride from the El Giza Pyramids. And, as it turned out, this was also where the company had their Cairo warehouse – where we eventually delivered the bikes for shipping back to the UK.

There was a sense of loss from daily routines without a couple of bikes on hand – with dependency upon others for transport, and with the added constraint of all that gear that we had to shift – 70 kg in total. And we know this because this is the extent of the check-in luggage allowance that we had on our respective Egyptair and British Midlands flights to London.

Journey’s end

The journey ended where it began – at London’s Heathrow Airport; we’d departed Cairo with 15 minutes between flights – Kristian leaving first – and expecting to arrive within 30 minutes of each other. The

earlier BMI flight, however, was delayed – but we didn’t know that at the time. The meet and greet family group at Terminal 3 were as welcoming as ever, but where was Kristian? I had seen the flight number on the carousel, and hung around looking for him. As it turned out, there were *two* BMI flights incoming from Cairo at the same time and with similar codes that evening, and the second had been routed to Terminal 1. So, more last minute rushing around. Lost at LHR without our SAVNAT - it was a fitting end to a challenging three months of riding Africa on two wheels.

And about those bikes

We chose to ride Suzuki DKZs – single cylinder 400 cc water-cooled, lightweight, strong and mechanically simple bikes – as a pragmatic choice concerning cost, handling and, importantly, the ability to maintain them on the road. These were real advantages too – for we were able to carry-out DIY R&M and, when required, find Suzuki agents in the main centres with the specialized advice and skills required. These older bikes had none of those killer computer-based engine management systems typical of modern bikes that cannot be fixed outside Europe.

And the reality of R&M? A carburettor seal in Windhoek; a couple of oil changes – Lusaka & Nairobi; tyres, headstock steering bearings and a clutch cable in Nairobi and – a perennial issue with both bikes – dust, vibration and connections in the wiring looms – that resulted in poor charging, refusal to start and similar issues. We had spent the last couple of days in Cairo bump starting the yellow bike – it simply would not charge sufficient to rotate the engine fast enough on the starter. Next time? Fit a kick start.

The bikes were not particularly comfortable for long-distance travel – and better suited smaller riders. Sure we’d choose them again – they proved themselves and there is this thing about knowing your bike.

We had bought the bikes on eBay, and this is where they will eventually be sold; that is unless there are any enthusiastic readers out there looking to make a Cairo to Cape Town journey next winter ■



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The 2012 HUNGER RUN

Sunday 21 October 2012

Traditional 10-km run and 5-km walk in Rome's historic centre

The Seventh edition of the **HUNGER RUN** (formerly known as the "Run for Food") is set for **Sunday, 21 October 2012, starting at 10:00 hours from Terme di Caracalla Stadium.**

The **HUNGER RUN** is organized by the Gruppo Sportivo Bancari Romani(GSBR) (also technical organizers of the well known Roma-Ostia half marathon, and of the Rome edition of the Komen Race for the Cure) on behalf of FAO, IFAD, WFP and Bioersity International, with the collaboration of the FAO Staff Coop and Roma Capitale and the sponsorship of United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU).

Proceeds from the event will finance support to poor rural women in drought-stricken Kenya, under a joint FAO/IFAD/WFP project there. The same project will receive support from a fall SMS campaign being organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs jointly with FAO, IFAD, WFP and Bioersity International.

For more information, for maps of the itineraries of the race(s), and to register, visit the **HUNGER RUN** official web site, available at: www.HungerRun.it. Advance registration (10 EURO) is recommended.

The Multi-Cultural Caracalla Village. As in the past editions the FAO Staff Coop will organize an international Food Fair with savoury dishes and sweets from around the Globe, multi-cultural performances and exhibitions and entertainment for children and a *Mercatino* with handicraft and souvenirs from around the world, silver and costume jewellery. All of this in the Village inside the Stadium. All proceeds from the sales will go to the project in Kenya above. There will also be a Bar serving coffee and soft drinks.





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Images and Outlooks

*Editorial Committee
FAO Casa Gazette*

Colleagues and friends,

Everyday we are subjected to the many changes around us and this makes for an interesting approach to life - particularly where we are able to embrace these changes with enthusiasm.

Our gazette is an important means of linking our estimated readership of more than 10,000 people around the globe.

The gazette belongs to you all, and it reflects that way in which we see ourselves and exchange news one-to-the-other; and it helps provide a corporate view that is different from the more formal public images that we present. Equally important, is the content of your journal - reflecting as it does the letters, articles, comments and news that is submitted by everyone.

A new year has begun and as international civil servants our main concern is and will be to continuously fight with all our forces against hunger and poverty. We are one family, one body. However like the cells of a body we are scattered all over the world, we live different experiences in various part of the globe. Space physically separates us, probably we will never meet but we have a means of communication to know each other; to share our hopes, our lives, our thoughts, our experiences; it is the "FAO Casa Gazette". The Editorial Committee of the FAO Casa Gazette would really appreciate receiving from all of you articles (typewritten electronically), poems, short stories, pictures, drawings and paintings.

You do not need to be a journalist, you do not need to be a professional writer; you only need the goodwill and the desire to share an experience which could awake curiosity, emotions, minds, which could warm hearts, which could enrich each other. The "space" which separates us will continue to exist but for a little moment we will all feel closeness .

Is there is anything that you would like to communicate? You may be living under difficult conditions but for sure you know and meet interesting and unique people. You have the opportunity to show us interesting places and lifestyles where probably the majority of us will never visit. If you feel you want to share an experience with your colleagues through the FAO Casa Gazette, we would only be too happy to publish it? Our only request is that your contribution should not contain offensive statements towards member countries or religious beliefs and cultures of any population(s), nor harsh criticism of our Organizations. This is because the FAO Staff Coop is a social, cultural and sports entity and not political.

We look forward to meeting you on the pages of the FAO Casa Gazette and extend to you and your families best wishes for 2011.

Remember; the FAO CASA Gazette belongs to everyone!

RICORDI GASTROMUSICALI



Vi ricordate i motivetti da ombrellone che mandavano i Juke box negli anni 60?

Quelli che hanno fatto da colonna sonora alle nostre spensierate vacanze balneari?

Chi non ha nostalgia di quelle lontane estati vissute con la semplicità e l'allegria della giovinezza?

Bene questi motivi dai ritornelli leggeri ed orecchiabili legano con i cibi leggeri e freschi dell'estate.

Sull'onda di ricordi gastromusicali, vi presento uno spartito di ricette semplici e gustose da eseguire per i vostri ospiti delle vacanze.....

PASTA AL POMODORO FRESCO PECORINO E RUCOLA

PRESENTAZIONE



Questo piatto semplicissimo, è gustoso e leggero ma sostanzioso e completo in quanto contiene carboidrati, proteine e verdure. E' perfetto per una bella cena dopo una giornata di nuoto e giochi sulla spiaggia. Per chi ama trascorrere le vacanze al Sud, questo è il piatto ideale. Perché la rucola, il pomodoro, del buon olio di oliva extravergine ed il formaggio sono di facile reperibilità in questi luoghi. Il segreto del piatto sta nella qualità e nella freschezza degli ingredienti.

INGREDIENTI: pecorino dolce, pomodori freschi, aglio, olio d'oliva, peperoncino, rucola, basilico, sale e pepe

PREPARAZIONE

In una padella soffriggere in olio di oliva due spicchi di aglio e un pezzetto di peperoncino. Tagliare a pezzetti il pomodoro fresco ed aggiungerlo per un breve tempo di cottura (5-10 minuti). Salare ed aggiungere un pizzico di zucchero in modo da togliere l'acidità al pomodoro. Con un coltello di ceramica (in modo che le verdure non anneriscano) tagliare a pezzetti il basilico e le foglie della rucola. I gambi non vanno buttati ma utilizzati nell'acqua in ebollizione. Scolare gli spaghetti al dente insieme alla rucola bollita, ripassarli nella padella in cui avete preparato la salsa di pomodoro. In una ciotola sciogliere il pecorino grattugiato con due cucchiaini di acqua di cottura della pasta, versare e girare in modo che la crema di pecorino si sparga in modo uniforme. Prima di servire aggiungere abbondante rucola fresca ed il basilico sminuzzati. Girare bene e servire sul piatto con una bella spolvera di pepe macinato fresco.

INSALATA DI ORZO PERLATO AI GAMBERONI E ZUCCHINE

PRESENTAZIONE



L'orzo è ricchissimo di proprietà curative: è rimineralizzante delle ossa, previene le affezioni polmonari e cardiovascolari, è nutriente e tonico, ed è molto indicato in caso di gastriti, coliti e cistiti. Inoltre facilita la concentrazione e l'attività cerebrale in quanto contiene magnesio, fosforo, potassio, vitamina PP, E calcio e ferro. L'orzo perlato è favoloso ed indicato per tutte le stagioni... questa ricetta è praticamente

una insalata di orzo e deve essere tenuta in frigo fino a mezz'ora prima del suo utilizzo. Per un pranzo in riva al mare, invece del solito panino, è preferibile optare per cibi freschi e leggeri. Questa pietanza, nutriente e gustosa, risulta piacevolmente fresca e digeribile. E si può preparare la sera per consumarla in spiaggia il giorno successivo. Basta organizzarsi con una borsa frigo, piatti e posate di plastica.... Ed una generosa porzione di frutta fresca per completare il pasto.

INGREDIENTI: Orzo perlato – zucchine - gamberoni cotti al vapore – Olio d'oliva – pomodori – rucola – mais.

PREPARAZIONE

Per preparare l'insalata d'orzo iniziate facendo lessare l'orzo nell'acqua bollente secondo le indicazioni sulla confezione. Nel frattempo, lavate i pomodorini e tagliateli in quarti, tagliate a julienne le zucchine e fatele saltare in olio d'oliva, cuocete i gamberetti al vapore e sminuzzate un ciuffetto di rucola fresca. Quando l'orzo sarà cotto, (ricordatevi che deve rimanere un po' croccante), scolatelo bene e fatelo saltare nella padella in cui avete cotto le zucchine. Togliete il tutto dal fuoco, fate raffreddare, e poi unite i pomodorini, la rucola, il mais, i gamberoni, l'olio d'oliva, sale e pepe. Lasciate riposare il tutto prima di consumare.

FILETTO DI TONNO AI PEPERONI

PRESENTAZIONE



Il tonno lega perfettamente con un contorno di peperoni grigliati o arrostiti al forno. Questo binomio è vincente se arricchito con pomodoro fresco, prezzemolo, capperi ed olive. E' preferibile preparare il contorno vegetale almeno un'ora prima di servirlo in modo che si insaporisca. Quando verrà adagiato sulle scaloppe di tonno appena scottato, gli conferirà un sapore davvero speciale.

INGREDIENTI: filetto di tonno fresco – peperoni arrostiti – olive – capperi – pomodori pachino – acciughe – cipolla fresca- aglio - prezzemolo - olio d'oliva – sale e pepe.

PREPARAZIONE

Scottare un filetto di tonno che deve rimanere tenero e rosa all'interno. Tagliatelo a scaloppe e servite con un contorno preparato con striscioline di peperoni arrostiti e spellati, pomodorini pachino tagliati a pezzetti, capperi, olive, un'acciuga sminuzzata, qualche fettina di aglio ed abbondante prezzemolo. Il tutto verrà adagiato sulle scaloppe di tonno e guarnito con fette di cipollotto fresco ed una bella spolverata di pepe macinato fresco.

INSALATA DI PATATE ALL'ANETO



INGREDIENTI: Patate, olio extra vergine di oliva, maionnaise, aneto, cipollotto fresco, sale e pepe a piacere.

PRESENTAZIONE

Questa insalata fredda di patate condita con cipolla fresca, aneto e maionnaise è perfetta per arricchire una cena a base di carne o pesce e verdure grigliate, soprattutto se non si ha voglia di preparare la pasta. Le verdure grigliate e l'insalata di patate si possono preparare la sera prima o la mattina presto e lasciarle in frigo. Dopo una giornata all'aria aperta, per una cena veloce, basta cuocere carne o pesce ed accompagnarli con questi splendidi contorni. L'aneto ed il cipollotto conferiscono a questo piatto un gusto delicato ed originale.

PREPARAZIONE

Lessare le patate, spellarle, tagliarle e condirle con olio di oliva stemperato in un cucchiaio di maionnaise. Aggiungere sale, aneto e fettine di cipollotto fresco.

