

Through the longest canyon in Europe

Leaving Serbia Danube shows us her most wonderful landscape. At the Iron Gate the stream flows pressed between hills with woods and steep rocks. Our bicycle-guide promises us two exciting days in the Serbian National Park Derdap: Channels without light and wonderful views from the highway.

Over night in Golubac there was a strong wind. The next day Danube was broad like a Lake. Brown waves beat at the riverside sounding like an ocean. We had to start against the wind – a fight against the wind. Shortly after Golubac there is the so called castle Golubac, a large fortification with thick walls and towers, which are built into the rock. Our road leads through this fortress. On the right side there is the rock and left the Danube streams out of the canyon. The wind gets stronger here. There for we go on very slowly. Brigitte has problems with breathing caused by her asthma. Fortunately the road is even and the wind slows down.

Exciting drives through the channels

We had our stuff for the unlightened channels, because we didn't know how long the channels are. We had lights for our tandem and the trailer and we had torches and for the head. When we entered the first one we immediately switch on our lights. But it was overdone: the channel had the length of 220 meters and we could see the light at the end of it. We went through a dozen of channels. The longest one had the length of 350 meters with a curve where it was really dark and we were glad of our lights.

A landscape like paradise

The road wasn't busy. Along the road less garbage, no burning fields and no barking dogs. Quite different to the trip before. It was like driving in paradise. Hundreds of butterflies flying in the air.

In the midst of the canyon in Dunij Milanovac we looked for a place to sleep. In the tourist information we met a couple with bicycle: Josef and Vera. We all together went to privat hostel. An elder woman picked us up at the road and lead us to her house ornamented with a lot of flowers. She gave us figs from her garden.

Josef and Vera are in an early retirement and on the road through the Balcan for a couple of months. We spent our night together talking about our experiences on bike.

The next day we had to climb the High-road. Soon the ships on Danube appeared like toys. There is a wonderful panorama with steep rocks up and downwards on both sides. At the most narrow point Danube is pressed through on only 150 meters.

Stressful finish

In the afternoon we were compensated by a wonderful running down. At the end of the canyon at the dam of Sip there is a checkpoint to Romania and the national park ends there.

Garbage and bad smells immediately were there.

In the evening in Kladovo we had to decide between a very simple Hotel with the flavor of socialism or a four-star-Hotel. We decided for luxury and finished the day in the sauna and swimming-pool.

In Serbia our last aim was Negotin. On the way to there exactly that happened we were afraid of: a barking dog who followed us. Soon a second dog. We couldn't chase them away. When one of them tried to catch Wolfgang's foot Brigitte took her pepper-spray. So we could leave them behind but the wind came from back so we also were treated by the pepper-spray. Wolfgang's legs and Brigitte's arm and face burnt. Fortunately we wear our sport-glasses so our eyes were sheltered. Our Hotel in Negotin also had a swimming-pool where we cooled our wounds.

The next morning Brigitte's face still burnt terribly but we went on to Bulgaria.