

# **GERMAN GOBBLER**



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# Mallorca

My wife, Sarah, and I went to Mallorca for our third anniversary earlier this month. We stayed on the northeast part of the island, at the Iberostar in Alcudia Park. We were told by a couple of travel agents that the northeast side was a bit quieter and more relaxing than the party southwest side. Speaking of travel agents, they helped us figure out where we wanted to stay, then we called the resort directly and booked it ourselves to avoid the fees associated with travel agents. We booked flights at super reasonable prices through Ryanair (we use Ryanair A LOT!)

We wanted to avoid the lines and slow moving buses from the airport to the resort, and wanted the ability to leave the resort if we wanted, so we rented a car for our stay. In our experiences (Barcelona and Mallorca), renting a car is super cheap in Spain. Do be aware they'll put a fairly large hold on your credit/debit card for "excess" in case you damage the car and don't get their insurance at whatever the daily rate is. The hold is released upon returning the rental unscathed.

We spent our first two days at the resort, laying by the pool or on the beach, just reading, napping, and enjoying the 80 degree temperatures and sunshine. The food on the resort was surprisingly decent for mass-cooked meals. Breakfast was the same every day--fruit, yogurt, eggs, bacon, potatoes, veggies, and the typical Euro breakfast of deli meats, cheeses, and hard boiled eggs. Lunch and dinners rotated, but always offered some fresh fish, paella, meat, veggies, salads, soups, and desserts. The real food exploring began when we ventured off the resort on day 3...





The dining manager at our resort was very friendly and offered us a couple of recommendations of towns to go see. Our first stop was Valldemossa, a tiny village on the west coast built in the 14th century. The village is in the Serra de Tramuntana, the ridge that offers very scenic driving, and is extremely beautiful, well kept, and quite a delight to wander. One of the culinary delights local to the area is a coca, a small potato roll that was very soft and sprinkled with powdered sugar! After wandering through the town and picking up some local artwork (very reasonable prices for paintings), we stopped in to Quita Penas for lunch. It's a very small restaurant that doesn't even have a menu. They simply offer two things: a large plate and a small plate. We opted for the large because we wanted to try all there was to offer. The woman running the place delivered a tray full of deliciousness--various sausages, cheeses, and drizzles all local to the area and served on warm bread. The sobrassada with fig and honey drizzle was our favorite. We wrapped up lunch and headed for the Port de Valldemossa. The short drive is not for the faint of heart of anxious driver. You must drive down a very steep, narrow road with several 180 degree cut back turns to weave your way down to the water. Parking is limited at the bottom, so snag a spot quickly if you can. The water was clear and gorgeous, the beach small and primarily made of small/medium smooth rocks. There was a handful of folks hanging out on the beach, but most people were at the waterfront restaurant enjoying the view. We didn't stay too long as the day was wearing on us.



The next excursion came on our last day. We checked out of our resort and headed for Deia, another small coastal town offering breathtaking views and culinary treats. We wandered through the scenic city, snapping photos left and right of the wonderful sea views and orange and olive groves. The city

is actually known for its writers and musicians, and seems like a vacation town for the somewhat wealthy. We were really wanting to get down to the beach, so we made the short drive down the steep, cut back roads to see it. The drive wasn't nearly as stressful as the Port de Valldmossa, and there's ample parking at the bottom. Be sure to purchase your parking ticket, or you'll be fined. A short walk from the parking lot towards the beach leads you by a couple of homes hidden in the trees, until you arrive in this quaint little cove. There are two restaurants, one to the left and one to the right, that are somewhat built into the cliffs. The one on the right (facing the water) was closed, so we wandered up to the one on the left for lunch. We sat right on the edge of the water and enjoyed a platter of tasty octopus and some fish croquettes that were cooked to perfection. After relaxing and taking in the views for another hour or so, we settled up and headed to the airport for our return trip. We really enjoyed Mallorca, especially getting off the resort and exploring Valldemossa, Deia, and the old walled city of Alcudia. (I didn't mention the old city because we only stayed there long enough to find the craft brewery, Beer Lovers, and wander around a bit. The owners of the brewery are brothers, and were very excited that we'd come to see them and their operation in what used to be their grandparents' barn. We ended up with a six-pack to enjoy later!)



*James Pauly  
Class of 2004*



# Saxony Switzerland

One of the things I missed about Virginia Tech when arriving in Germany is its proximity to the hiking trails of the Cascades, Dragon's Tooth, and McAfee Knob. I was happy to find that thirty minutes by S-Bahn from the Dresden Hauptbahnhof, there exists hiking trails in Saxony Switzerland that lead to breathtaking views, such as those nearby Blacksburg. A favorite by Dresden locals and tourists is the hike to the Bastei, a natural rock formation that overlooks the Elbe river and town of Rathen. The Bastei bridge is usually the iconic image associated with this national park in books and calendars about Dresden. When arriving by S-Bahn, it is necessary to take a ferry for a small fee across the river. There is also parking nearby when going by car. For nature lovers, I highly recommend taking a day trip to the Bastei when visiting Saxony.



*Eileen O'Shaughnessy*  
*Class of 2013*



For other outdoor adventures, high ropes courses (Kletterwald in German) are very popular. There are courses for all ages and levels. Check out <http://www.kletterwald-darmstadt.de/> for information of high ropes courses in the Darmstadt area.

# Überall in Deutschland

In September until the end of October, Germans typically enjoy Federweißer with either Flammkuchen or Zwiebelkuchen.

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The *German Gobbler* is a newsletter for Hokies to share travel and cultural advice, stories, and pictures during their stay in Germany. We encourage entries whether one sentence, several paragraphs, or a few photos with captions. Contact us to be included in the next issue!