

Friday morning started rather early with Matt and I up at 3am. Anna slept in for a few more hours – all very predictable.

We were all dying to go outside and get some fresh air as we had hardly been outside for 3 days. The air was certainly fresh, but the cold was actually quite welcome. There is very little wind so it doesn't really eat into you and every building is warm. A lot of time is being spent peeling layers of clothes off inside and putting them back on to go outside.

We got the bus down to the city. The kids loved sitting in the front of the bus upstairs. We checked out a few shops first, but Matt's tolerance for shops (unless they are of the electronic type!) is pretty limited. The girls will have a proper shopping day another time. It was just great to wander in this beautiful old city, checking out the famous sights but also the tiny courts and closes. There were very few tourists down at Princes St, which is a complete mess as it's all dug up for the installation of tram lines. The locals are all dead against the trams, sounds like it has been a bit of a disastrous project so far.

There were plenty of tourists up around the Royal Mile and the castle, but still not crazy busy.



Looking over Princes St gardens onwards the castle.



Heading up to the castle (which we explore properly another day)



Inside the castle walls



More modern entertainment



Just to prove they do have sunshine in Scotland - a church by Jo's flat

In the afternoon Jo took us to Waitrose supermarket to stock up on groceries. It is so much fun grocery shopping in a different country. We loved stocking up on different goodies, especially the yummy chocolate biscuits they have here. Britain and Europe have a reputation for being expensive, but with the current exchange rate, the groceries were significantly cheaper than we would pay at home.

We are finding the Scottish people incredibly welcoming. Everyone in Braid Manor (the block of flats where Jo lives) is really friendly and welcoming. It is like one big family here, and we have already been into 4 different flats for a tour! Staying with locals while travelling adds something to travel that you don't get if you stay at hotels, so we feel very spoilt.

Braid Manor



View from Jo's kitchen



We all survived the day without falling asleep, so fingers crossed the early risers will not be so early tomorrow!