

There's nothing like the lure of a theme park for motivating your kids to get organised in the morning. We were packed and off just after 8:30am on Thursday, heading for Günzburg, home of Germany's Legoland theme park. The German autobahns are definitely the best motorways we have been on. They also have the fastest cars. Last time we visited Germany, there was no speed limit on the autobahn. The speed limit for cars is now 130km/hr. However we suspect that the speed limit has been introduced to keep the European Union happy, and it doesn't appear to be enforced. Andy drove Pierre at a steady 130km/hr but cars regularly sped past us.

We reached Legoland just after 10am. There were people everywhere as 10am was opening time. When you travel for two months, it's very hard to avoid all school holidays. I deliberately planned for weekdays at Legoland, but our visit was inside German school holidays. It was also the first of three special "Star Wars" days. Fortunately we already had our tickets, so were able to bypass the long lines at the ticket office.

We raced straight to the back of the park and got some good rides in before the queues got long. One of the rides was a water shooting pirate ride. The kids came off that one absolutely soaked, but fortunately it was a lovely warm day. The kids are really good at queuing now, but once queues get beyond 30 minutes they look at other options. Legoland runs an Express Pass system - basically you pay more money to jump to the front of the queue. We decided to concentrate on non-ride attractions for the rest of the day and invest in an Express Pass tomorrow.

A lot of time was spent in Miniland, the area of impressive Lego models. They were all models of European places and the kids loved seeing places like Neuschwanstein and Venice that they had visited. This was our fourth visit to a Legoland (Denmark, Windsor, California and now Germany), but we continued to be amazed at the size and detail of the Lego models. Our favourite was a football stadium made from more than 1 million bricks, with more than 30,000 Lego people in the stadium.





The other highlight of the afternoon was the “Fabrik” shop. It was a like a giant Lego pick’n’mix store. There were hundreds of containers, each with a different Lego piece in them. The kids loved choosing their favourite Lego pieces. It also had “make-your-own” mini figures. They were half the price of the mini figures in the normal shops and the kids were able to select bodies, heads, legs, hair and accessories.

The kids were keen to attend driving school at Legoland. Unlike most driving attractions at theme parks, it was a serious attempt to teach kids about driving. It had three parts of fifteen minutes each - a theory lesson, a practical lesson and production of their licences. We weren’t sure how it would work with the language issues, but were assured that they would be given cards in English. The bonus for us was 45 minutes to sit down and let our



legs recover! The kids loved the practical driving, mastering roundabouts, traffic lights, one way streets etc, and managed to stay on the right side of the road.





The park stayed open longer than we expected so we managed a few bonus rides once the queues died down. Andy had checked us in to our holiday village during the afternoon, so we were able to walk straight to our cottage when we left the park. We are staying at Legoland Feriendorf, the Legoland holiday village about 10 minutes walk from the park. The cottages are in groups, with different themes. We have a pirate theme, complete with Lego treasure chest, Lego parrot, Lego pirates on the wall behind our beds and a rope net on the roof. Each cluster of cottages has a themed playground in the middle. It is far nicer than we expected and the kids loved roaming free in the various playgrounds.





We had dinner at the Feriendorf restaurant, it was Bavarian buffet night. The food was surprisingly good for a buffet and we were all hungry as we had only really snacked all day. It started to rain as we left the restaurant, which was really a bonus as the kids were quite happy to climb into their pirate bunks!