



As expected, we were very sad to leave Lerici behind on Friday morning. Andrea came to say good bye and was still talking a million miles an hour in a mixture of English and Italian. She is such a lovely lady. It was easier getting our bags down the hill than up, especially with the help of the Lerici lift. The lift goes from the castle down to Piazza Garibaldi. It could have been a really helpful lift throughout our stay, if only it had been open a bit more. It didn't open until 10am, then went on a two hour siesta at 12:30pm. After re-opening at 2:30pm, it retired for the day at 5pm. But we did appreciate it this morning, and happily paid the 25 cent fee per person (and the suitcases rode for free!).





We had discussed stopping in Verona en route to Venice, but in the end we decided to flag it. It was a hot day and the kids were keen to get to the water park in the camping ground where we are staying. We had a quick stop in the village of casssss, somewhere between Parma and Mantova. The kids enjoyed a roam on the local playground while we ate our picnic.



Most of the trip was on the autostrada. The Italian autostradas vary in quality and truck density. Some of them are two lanes in each direction - you can get a bit stuck behind trucks when one truck decides to pass in the fast lane (the speed limit for cars is 130km, but only 90km for trucks). The three lane autostradas are better, but tend to be a bit crazier with more vehicles (especially trucks!). Most of the route today was very flat, apart from the first hour through the hills of North Tuscany. We only managed 22 tunnels today.



We arrived at Camping Marina Di Venezia about 4:30pm. It is quite close to Venice, but we had to drive around the lagoon and back down the spit of land just north of Venice. There are many campgrounds along the spit, ours was one of the last. The camp ground is enormous, more like a small town. It has shops, restaurants, a supermarket and lots of kids entertainment. There is even an on site church. They took our passports when we checked in. It used to be common in Europe that hotels etc. held on to your passports during your stay, but this is the first time we have encountered it on this trip. It felt strange to have them taken away!

We are staying in a two bedroom mobile home. It is a world away from Lerici here, but quite comfortable. The kids have always wanted to stay in a camper van and this is as close as

they will get on this trip. The kids were desperate to explore so Andy took them to the beach and water park while I stocked up at the supermarket.

The supermarket made me laugh. Here we are in Italy, but the supermarket was full of German products. The vast majority of campers are German so I guess they cater for them. Everywhere I went, the staff spoke to me in German. When I replied in basic Italian, they still spoke in German. One Italian product I did buy was ACE juice, and the mystery of the ingredients in the Lerici gelato has been solved. ACE is Arancia, Carot, LimonE so a mixture of orange, carrot and lemon. We never would have picked the carrot, but it is a delicious combination. There is a fruit and veggie shop on site too, but it is not help yourself. I managed to come away with a kilo of tomatoes and some carrots for dinner.

Andy cooked a great meal which we ate on our little deck. The kids enjoyed exploring the playground in the evening while Andy went in search of some WIFI. We had none in Lerici, so there is some catching up to do. We are hoping to go to Venice tomorrow - very exciting!