

Part 5 Europe 2025 for Cathy's blog.

Tuesday 9th April 2025.

After another good breakfast, we had a quick walk out into the city of Cologne. On our shopping list was Listerine, lip balm, cough lollies and electrical converter plugs. We shopped at the DM store (like a Priceline) and the Media Markt (like a JB Hifi store).



We found a Roman road and entrance to the Roman sewers.

Then we had time to visit the Dom again. We went down into the crypt.



Here is a small chapel. The crypts with the bodies are gated. This is just a small section of the rooms and corridors under the main floor of the Cologne Dom.

Out into the bright sunshine again and we “zoomed” with the family. Great to see and hear everyone and share the view of the Dom and the square in front of it.



Side view of the Dom and jet trails clear in the blue sky.

You can walk to the Hauptbahnhof from the Dom. Then we easily found our platform and where the carriage we were in would stop. It was crowded and the people with their luggage (us included) took a bit of time to board the train.

The ICE trains have comfortable seats, charging ports (power... but we had a USB direct plug-in charger) and a small coffee shop.

The train got up to speeds of 250km an hour, but was slower through the towns. It took three hours to get to Amsterdam. No passport control.

The Amsterdam Centraal Station is impressive too, with many platforms and tracks, for international, inter city and local trains.



This is only part of the station.

Due to the canals, you cannot walk around the station building. You have to walk through it, along the rows of shops (we found this out by walking the length, then having to walk back!)

They are working on tram lines, roads and footpaths around the station, which made it a bit tricky for us with luggage. There were so many people walking along with rolling suitcases and we found our hotel.

Hotel prices are very dear in Amsterdam. Our hotel had taken over two or three buildings and the floors had slopes of about half a “floor” as you went from one building to the next.

Our room was plain, but clean and quite large.

After putting our luggage in, we went out for a walk.

Amsterdam is just as it should be, busy with bicycles, people (and cars) and canals and one way roads along the sides of the canals. The buildings are nestled next to each other and not all of them are “straight”.



The planter boxes in Amsterdam have tulips.









Many of the streets are narrow and a bit winding. They are also dirty! There is rubbish and cigarette butts everywhere.



The canals are still used for transport. This little boat had to do a three point turn to come from the canal (to the right) and turn to go up the canal in front.

We found Anne Frank's house, but you have to book three weeks in advance to visit. The whole front of the house is covered with scaffolding and covers for repairs. We did find her statue too.



We had hamburgers for tea in a nice, clean cafe with quite a few people. The prices are still quite high but you have to just grin and bear it. Add a tip and tea cost 45€. (Cologne was dear too.)

After tea, we went back to our room for a shower. The towels were stained. There was only shampoo and body wash (no conditioner or tissues or anything). It was warm and the beds were comfortable (and it was just for one night). Not much for the price.