

Part 19 Europe for Cathy's blog

Monday 21st April, 2024.

We leave Vienna and sail for Budapest.

We had the Captain's cocktail party in the lounge on the ship, a nice way to say goodbye to all the staff.



Our daily organisers and our Captain.



(I'm quite sure he didn't actually drink that champagne he's holding!)

Tuesday 22nd April, 2025.

This is our last full day onboard.



Passing the Parliament buildings, Budapest (look familiar? It was built to look like the British Houses of Parliament, only a little bit bigger!)

Time for a morning walk (partway up Buda Hill and around the famous Gellert Baths, then back to the ship).





A reminder that every country has its famous composers.



Interesting building in the University grounds and modern equipment.



The air is filled with floating seeds. The trees are in full flower and their leaves have grown.





As well as white and white and pink horse chestnuts, they have these red flowering chestnuts too. Beautiful.

We took a little time this morning to organise our packing; then after lunch, it was time for a city tour.



Patterns in the St. Stephen's Square (no time to visit this cathedral: we will do that in our time in Budapest).



**Shopping strips (that is me holding the phone crooked,
not the buildings!)**



And grand buildings.



Impressive statues.



And I love the big trees.

This afternoon was only a brief moment in this city. Then we went to a music school for the blind, where a humble man played the piano and the organ for us. I am sure he's got extra fingers because he was so quick and expressive and the music was delightful.



Back to the bus and we were caught up in protests. The people are conscious that the government is slowly eroding their freedoms and are protesting weekly.

Knowing only a little of Hungary's recent history, I am both proud of them and a little fearful for them.

On board, we had the Hungarian musicians and folk dancers.





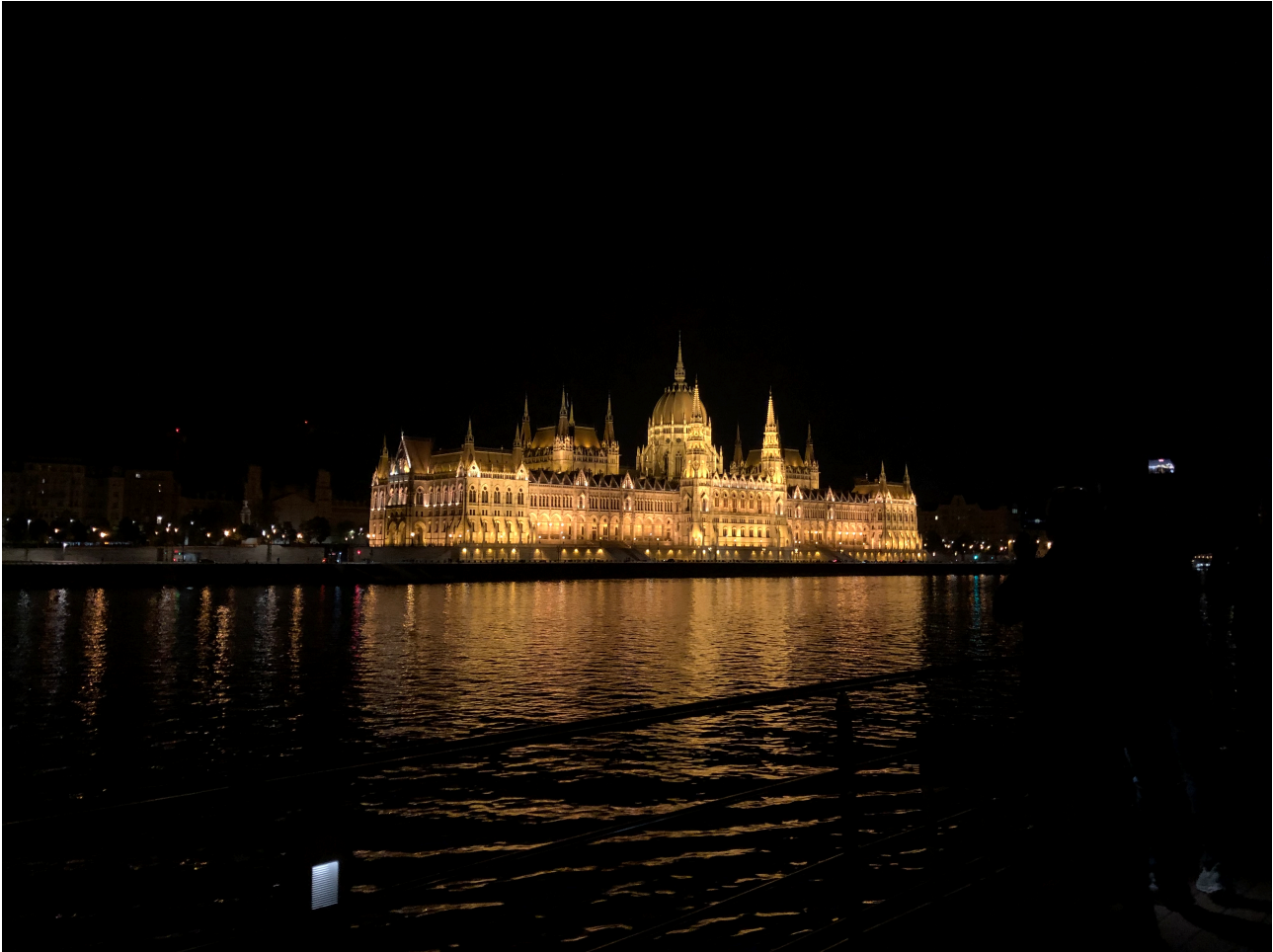
They are dancing with bottles of red wine on their heads.





A quick trip up and back down the river, to see the city lights at night.

Here are the Parliament buildings all lit up.







And so ended our last evening on board. We are (nearly) all packed and ready to leave this floating hotel and the friends we have made tomorrow.

