

## 2 – CETINJE, BUDVA AND KOTOR BAY

Monday, 7 April

Although my jacket was much drier this morning, I turned the heat on again as soon as I was up and about. When ready, I went downstairs for breakfast and joined some of my travel companions, who were looking forward to today's excursion up into the mountains and to the former royal capital of the country, Cetinje (pronounced *Tset-in-yeh*). Afterwards I returned to my room to brush my teeth and collect my bag, then hurried downstairs and jumped into the waiting coach. As it had snowed up in the mountains overnight and was quite cool now, I had taken the precaution of wearing my jumper, my dried cotton jacket, and a warm black padded jacket.

As we left Budva and drove up into the mountains, Dada told us about where we were going and the town's history. Cetinje, founded in 1482 by Ivan Crnojević, is situated on a small karst plain surrounded by limestone mountains; about 14,000 people live in the city, which contains several national institutions, including the official residence of the president of Montenegro. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it endured many privations due to attacks by Venice and the Ottomans, and the court and monastery of the Crnojević dynasty were destroyed. It was only at the end of the seventeenth century, in 1697, that Cetinje began to flourish again under the rule of the Petrović dynasty, founded by Danilo Petrović. The city made great progress under the rule of Prince Nikola I Petrović, when many public edifices were built. When Montenegrin independence was recognized at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, Cetinje became the capital of a European country. The city flourished between that year and 1914, for many renowned intellectuals from other South-Slavic regions came to stay here and make a contribution to the cultural and educational aspects of life. During the interwar period, the city expanded its territory. However, when the Parliament of Montenegro decided that the administrative organs should be located in Titograd (previously and presently known as Podgorica), Cetinje went through a difficult crisis. By building certain industrial sections and at the same time neglecting the development of the city's traditional, potential cultural and tourist capacities, the chance to create a strong basis for more solid prosperity was lost.



*Snow in the mountains*



*A view of the Montenegrin coast from the mountains*

Now away from Budva and the hotels, the mountains before us looked stunningly beautiful in their wintry garb. When we eventually stopped at a viewpoint and got out of the coach, we gingerly made our way across snow and slippery ice to take photos of the magnificent view looking down to the sea and the surrounding countryside. The cold fresh air up here was quite intoxicating. As I was the last person to return to the coach, Dada very kindly made her way over to me and helped me as my rather formal shoes were inclined to slip on the ice.

Back in the coach we continued our journey, leaving the coast behind and driving through the beautiful mountainous region. Thanks to the snow and bright sunshine, the views here were quite stunning; during the journey I recorded a couple of movie segments of our progress along the twisty road. It felt very strange being in this magical wintry landscape after the previous day's rain and the hot sunny days beforehand.



*The Court Church in Cetinje*

It did not take us too long to reach Cetinje, which was set in a wide valley surrounded by the mighty snow-capped mountains. We came to a stop in a large coach and car park and, walking slowly and carefully, made our way towards the city's historic centre. As we approached the main square, I took some photographs of

a pretty little church nearby: later I discovered that it was the Court Church, built in 1886 on the ruins of the ancient Cetinje Monastery. According to what I had read, it contained the tombs of Ivan Crnojević, King Nikola, and Queen Milena.



*The main square in Cetinje*

We then walked around the side of a large building and found ourselves in the main square. Dada explained that the building was the former Royal Palace, now the Museum of King Nikola, and that it had been built in 1871. From the outside it did not look particularly striking or elegant. We followed Dada inside and, after she had spoken to a lady in the hallway, we were brought into a large room where we saw cabinets full of weapons, and also large portraits of the king and queen hanging on one of the walls. When another group of tourists arrived, we went into the room on the opposite side of the hallway, which contained an elaborate fireplace and various other antiquities.

After viewing these two rooms, we went upstairs and saw many more rooms, some of which were quite elegant and older in style than what we had just seen. Included were an impressive dining room and various bedrooms decorated in different styles; some of them contained very ornate and beautiful furniture. Much to our surprise, Dada told us that there was a connection between this place and Ireland, for George Bernard Shaw had befriended the king and queen, and had given them a present of a painting depicting a horse. He had also given them an upright piano, which we saw in one of the rooms. Before we left, a lady in our group and I admired a wall that had been papered not with conventional modern rolls of wallpaper, but with one huge sheet of paper that had been glued to the wall.

Back outside in the square, Dada pointed out some things that should be seen, told us where the main street and the shops were, and asked us to be back at the coach by 11.45. After I had taken a few photographs, I wandered over to a souvenir shop and bought some presents for friends at home, such as fridge magnets, scarves, key rings, and a small bracelet; the whole lot came to €25. I put the purchases in my bag, took out my camera, and set about wandering up the elegant pedestrianized main street, where I stopped here and there to take photos of some of the fine buildings. En route I noticed several people brushing snow off the pavements. I was now very glad that I had piled on the clothing before leaving our hotel this morning!





*Top: the main street in Cetinje and the Fairy of Lovéen. Bottom: Vlach Church*

After going too far up the street, I turned back and found the former French embassy, which was quite a fine building. Turning up another street, I emerged at a small square, where I found the Fairy of Lovéen: an unusual statue and monument dedicated to 350 American Montenegrins who had died when their boat had been sunk off the coast of Albania as they were returning to fight during World War II. Nearby was the small Vlach Church, which was closed. The Vlach people were a Romance-speaking pastoralist community who moved to the less accessible regions of mountains and lands within the Croatian Kingdom and the Republic of Venice when the Slavs arrived. The fence around the church had been made using 1,544 gun barrels taken from the Ottomans during the nineteenth century.



*The History and Art Museum*



From here I turned back and went off in another direction, stopping to photograph the large and elegant Government House (now the History and Art Museum), which was painted yellow and white. I was hoping to see inside this building but time was now running out. I moved on, walking through a small, though delightful, circular garden, then made my way to the Cetinje Monastery. Although rather unimpressive from the outside, the chapel with its magnificent iconostasis and icons, and a couple of small rooms that were open to the public, were worth seeing. After my brief visit, I wandered outside and took some photos of the view between the nearby trees.



*Cetinje Monastery, and a view through the trees*

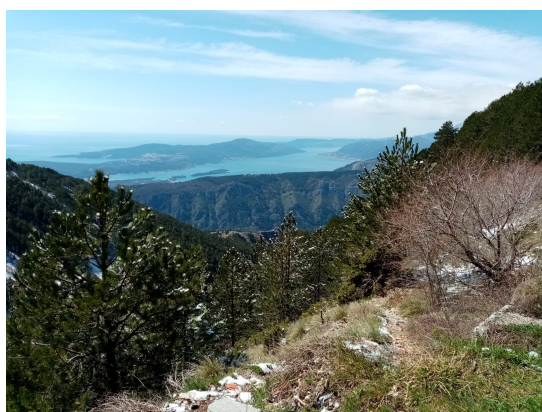
Having seen as much as I could during our brief stay here, I joined one of the ladies from our group and walked back to our coach. As much of the snow had melted and had been swept to one side, the going was much easier this time. Back at the coach we joined some of the other members of our group and, when everybody was inside, we set off again for our next destination: Njeguši (pronounced ‘*Nyeh-goo-shee*’) village, the birthplace of the Petrović dynasty. Montenegro had been ruled since 1516 by *vladikas* (prince-bishops), who had a dual temporal and spiritual role, subordinate to the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć until its dissolution in 1766. However, since Orthodox bishops are required to be celibate, the crown generally passed from uncles to nephews. The House of Petrović-Njeguš was the Serbian noble family that ruled the country from 1697 to 1918. As we neared the village, the Palace of Biljarda

was pointed out to us. It had been designed and financed by the Russians in 1838 for Petar II Petrović-Njegoš, and is now the Njegoš Museum. Dada told us that, as with previous prince-bishops, Petar II was obliged to pass his temporal power to his nephew.



*Njeguši village and the restaurant, near Cetinje*

Driving along a narrow road in the village, we had to stop when another coach approached us from the opposite direction, then reverse into a laneway in order to let it pass. Afterwards we continued on our way, and finally stopped at a brown wooden building by the roadside. We were now led around to the back of the building, where we would have our lunch, and shown a large dark room in which bundles of prosciutto were hanging from the ceiling, drying. We were then brought into the main dining area, where we found long wooden tables and benches. We sat down and very soon members of the staff brought us trays of prosciutto, locally-made cheese, and bread. The choice of drink was either red wine or water. I poured a little of the wine into my glass and tucked into several slices of bread with either prosciutto or cheese, both of which were excellent but not very filling. There was plenty of lively conversation and laughter during this impromptu light lunch. Afterwards I looked at an elaborate one-string bowed musical instrument and managed to play a couple of melodies on it. Other items that could be ordered and purchased were traditional caps and jackets. Outside was a long table where chunks of prosciutto were for sale; I bought one for €12. As the view from the building was quite pleasing, several of us took photographs of it.



*The view of Kotor Bay and the mountains from Lovćen National Park*



When we eventually resumed our seats in the coach, we drove off to a spot in the Lovćen National Park from where we would be able to look down over a splendid view of the mountains. We should have been brought to another place where the view was even more spectacular but, as the road was icy and hazardous, we had been advised not to go there. We soon reached the place and parked the coach off the road, close to other coaches and cars. As quite a number of people had gathered along the side of the road to admire the view, Dada encouraged us to walk past them and enjoy the scenery from a better viewpoint. From here we gazed at a fine panorama that included the surrounding snow-capped mountains, the blue sea, and the entrance to Kotor Bay far below. Bathed in the afternoon sunshine, it all looked quite spectacular. After I had taken a few photos, I ambled back to the coach.

Because of the dangerous conditions ahead, we now drove back to Budva along the road that we had used this morning. Soon we were back in familiar territory, approaching our hotel. I went to my room, where I lay on my bed and rested for a while. Afterwards I went out for a stroll through the hotel grounds and then by the sea, where I met a lady in our group who lived in Northern Ireland. We chatted for a while until I said goodbye to her and turned back. Hungry by now after such a light lunch, I headed for the restaurant in Block 1, where I ate a slice of pizza and a few other things, followed by a cup of tea and an ice cream cone. As I had never put ice cream on a cone before, I accidentally crushed the cone. While I rescued what I could of the mess, a lady beside me did exactly the same thing and broke her cone! I was more gentle on my second attempt, and left happily licking my ice cream.

Back in my room I sent some messages to friends along with photos that I had taken today. Afterwards I brought my diary up to date, then went downstairs for dinner. This evening I sat with Aisling and the lady I had sat beside the previous evening. I had a good meal, then went with them to the bar, where I asked for a glass of beer and joined some other people for a chat. Later, when I had finished my drink, I walked back to my room, where I finished writing my diary, watched the BBC News channel for a while, then went to bed.

Tuesday, 8 April

As nothing had been scheduled for today, we all took things easy. I woke shortly after seven o'clock, and by about 8.30 a.m. I was in the dining room having breakfast with one of the ladies in our group. Shortly afterwards we were joined by two more people. Later, when I got up to get some more food, I saw Rory and Aisling at another table. When Rory suggested that we set off together at about 10.15 for the old town, I thanked him for including me, then returned to my room, where I got myself ready. I joined my companions in the main reception area, where I discovered that more had decided to come with us. However, a group of ladies went off in the opposite direction once we got to the main gate of the hotel. Aisling and a lady strode on ahead when we approached the tunnel, leaving Rory and me behind.

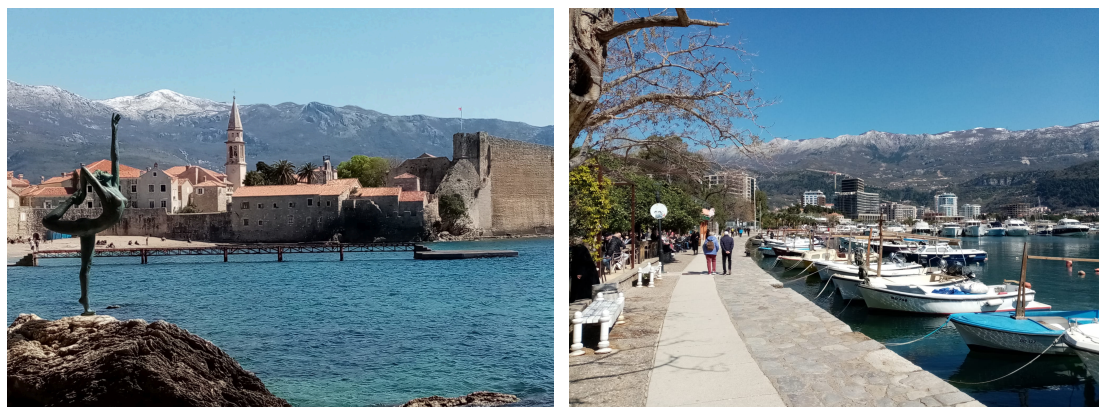
After the tunnel we ambled along the seafront, stopping from time to time to take photographs. Rory had what looked like a cine camera, but it turned out to be an electronic camera that stored moving pictures on a disc. Although it was quite cool out, it was pleasantly sunny and everything looked wonderful in the morning light. From here we could still see some traces of snow on the mountain tops.

Eventually we arrived at the old town and went into it, wandering around the narrow streets, then found ourselves in the area where the churches were. As the large

Catholic one was open, we went inside to take a look, and I drew Rory's attention to the 12th-century icon of the Madonna and Child, which he admired.

After visiting this church, we went to the Orthodox church nearby, which was also open. Here I pointed out the various icons on the walls, the ceiling and on the iconostasis, and told Rory what I knew about the Orthodox religion. When Rory wandered outside later, I had a look at what was on sale at the back of the church. Here I saw what looked like tiny books, though made of wood; when opened, they revealed a couple of icons painted in the traditional style. As they were beautifully crafted and only cost €3 each, I bought two, which I would give to a couple of Orthodox friends from Ukraine when I returned home. I then joined Rory, who was now looking out towards the sea and enjoying the scenery. After I had chatted to members of a film crew who were setting up their equipment, we then set off to have a cup of tea and a snack in a nearby restaurant that Rory had been in; he told me that a cup of tea or coffee with a cake would cost just €3. However, we now met one of the ladies in our group who told us about a path nearby, and encouraged us walk along it to a beach that was not far away.

We therefore left the little town by a side gate, found the path, and set off. We were glad that we had followed the lady's advice, for the views of the sea, the cliffs, the mountains, and the old town were superb from here. En route we stopped several times to take photographs. When we eventually reached the beach, we stopped to admire it and watched people relaxing or swimming in the sea. We then made our way back, stopping to take more photos from time to time. With the old town now in front of us, we had an excellent view of it.



*Budva Old Town, and the waterfront leading to our hotel*

Back once again at our starting point, Rory then led me to a nearby street, where we found the café that he had spoken about. Rory selected a cake and a cup of coffee, and I selected an unfamiliar Italian snack and asked for a cup of tea. I added the contents of a little sachet to the tea, which gave it a delightful taste. A little later, one of the ladies from our group, whom I had not yet met, joined us, and she too ordered something to eat and drink.

When we finished, we paid our bills and left. Taking the main path along the bay, we now returned to our hotel. Although a little warmer now, it was by no means hot; a little snow could still be seen on the top of the mountains. We soon reached the tunnel and the hotel, where we promised to meet for lunch on the terrace of Block 1. We went to our respective rooms first, where we relaxed and attended to a couple of things. I then met Rory at the appointed place, where I found him photographing the



grounds. As there was no cutlery on the tables outside and it was a little cool in the shade, we decided to eat indoors, despite the noise of children running around and shouting.

After we had eaten, I returned to my room and slept for about an hour. When I woke up, I returned to Block 1, where I drank a cup of tea, then went off for a walk around the grounds and along by the sea. Back again in my room, I sent some more photos that were in my phone to some friends.

In the evening I made my way the dining room at seven o'clock and found it quite crowded. Having helped myself to a bowl of soup, I sat down beside a lady who was in our group, but to whom I had not yet spoken. We chatted together during our meal and later were joined by one of the men in our group. We learned that the lady had worked as a travelling salesperson for women's clothing. When later I went to get myself a glass of water, some ladies from our group who had been celebrating a birthday, gave me half a bottle of champagne as they had already drunk enough. I brought it out to our group at the bar, but as I was unable to find anybody whom I knew, I returned to the dining room and gave it to some other people in our group.

I then returned to my room, where I watched some items on the BBC News channel and wrote my diary before going to bed.

Wednesday, 9 April

Although cool, it was a fine sunny morning today and the sky was blue. I woke shortly before 6.30, got myself ready, did my exercises, then wandered over to the dining room for breakfast. Although the place was quite packed, I managed to sit with some of my companions. Knowing that we might return late this afternoon, I ate well. At 7.30 we made our way to the coach and set off on our final trip of this holiday: to Kotor Bay and the old town of Kotor. I was looking forward to this, knowing that my mother had visited the region and had spoken highly of it. Leaving Budva, we headed north-westwards towards the mountains along the road that had been too icy to travel on two days previously, then headed downhill to Kotor Bay. En route we stopped at a spot where we could take photos of the fine view. As the weather was perfect, the place looked superb. We then continued, approached Kotor, and stopped near the entrance to the old walled town. When we were all together, Dada told us that this was where we would all have to meet at the end of our time here, then brought us through the main gate into the old fortified town.



*Kotor Bay*

Although once populated by the Illyrians, it is not known exactly when the first settlement of Kotor was founded. It was first mentioned in BCE 168 when it was settled under the Roman republic, and was known as Acruvium, Ascrivium or Ascruvium. The Emperor Justinian built a fortress in CE 535, having expelled the Ostrogoths. It was further fortified in the tenth century. It was one of the more influential Dalmatian city-states that initially had a Romance-speaking population, and until the 11th century the Dalmatian language was still spoken in Kotor, when it was part of Byzantine Dalmatia. A turbulent period followed until 1391, when Kotor became fully independent. However, the administration, wary of the looming Ottoman danger, asked Venice for protection. Suzerainty of Venice was acknowledged in 1420, and the city became part of the Venetian Albania province of the Venetian Republic until 1797. The four centuries of Venetian domination, during which the city was known as Cattaro by the Italians, would explain why the architecture of the city is primarily Venetian.



*Trg od Oružja (Armoury Square), Kotor Old Town*

Inside the town, Dada drew our attention to the gateway that we had walked through; named the Sea Gate, it had been constructed in 1555. On the wall we had seen a winged lion carved in stone. The date of liberation from the fascists during World War II, 21/11/1944, was displayed over the gate, along with the Communist star and a quote from Tito. Also to be seen was a fifteenth-century stone relief of the Madonna and Child, flanked by Saint Tryphon and Saint Bernard. Within the city, we now found ourselves in the largest square, Trg od Oružja (Armoury Square). Here, Dada drew our attention to the clock tower, built in 1602, and a pyramid-shaped pillory in front of it, to which unruly citizens had been shackled for public shaming.

Stopping at a couple of other buildings, we made our way to the handsome Saint Tryphon's Catholic Cathedral, consecrated in 1166, but reconstructed after several earthquakes. Having admired it from the outside, we were brought inside, where we gazed at the fine Romanesque architecture. Along the sides of the nave were slender Corinthian columns alternating with pillars made of pink stone, both of which thrust upwards to support the series of roof vaults. From where we were, we could see Byzantine-style frescoes under the apexes of the arches. Dada told us that the gilded silver bas-relief screen behind the altar, which we could see clearly, was considered to



be Kotor's most valuable treasure. She allowed us to photograph whatever we wanted, then reminded us that gentlemen were expected to remove their hats.



*Saint Tryphon's Catholic Cathedral, Kotor Old Town*

When we had finished admiring the interior of the church, we set off and followed Dada through some of the quaint narrow streets. As it was relatively early in the morning, few tourists were about. We now approached the Maritime Museum, housed in the impressive Grgurina Palace, and went inside. It was a fine old building with large rooms, and the exhibits included furniture, pictures, women's traditional costumes, and so forth. Only the third storey, with its low ceiling and wooden beams, contained exhibits directly connected with maritime matters, such as large and handsome models of ships.



*Exhibits in the Maritime Museum, Kotor Old Town*

After our visit here, we continued northwards, stopping at an old building where nuns had, at one time, received and looked after unwanted children. We then continued to Saint Mary's Collegiate Church, which had a rather plain exterior. This was close to the River Gate, which had been constructed in 1540. As there was nothing of interest to be seen beyond this except the narrow Škurda river, I went back into the walled city. Dada had by now left us, and the various members of our group had gone off to see the town on their own.

From here I made my way south-westwards, stopping to look inside the grand domed Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church, built in 1909, with its fine iconostasis, then the impressive Saint Luke's Church. Although constructed in 1195 as a Catholic church, from 1657 to 1812 each denomination took turns to hold their liturgies here,

though now it is used as an Orthodox church. Fragments of twelfth-century frescoes still survive, along with two iconostases from the 17th and 18th centuries. The final church that I looked into, which was nearby, was the exquisite Saint Claire's Franciscan Church – probably the finest of them all, despite its relatively small size. The main altar and the two side altars were made of white and coloured marble, and they were decorated with marble statues.



*Top: Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church. Bottom: Saint Luke's Church, and the Saint Claire Franciscan Church, Budva Old Town*

Noting the time, I found my way back to Armoury Square at the main gate, where I looked around for a shop that sold takeaway food, but found only expensive restaurants and over-enthusiastic waiters. I therefore went out through the gate to the area where we would meet Dada, sat down, and chatted to some members of our group. When Dada appeared, she pointed to an underpass nearby, told us to use it in order to cross the road, then to wait on the other side by the water's edge. When everybody was together again, she brought us to a small tourist boat, into which we squeezed; most of us sat out on deck. When everyone was aboard, the motor was started and off we set at a good speed towards our next destination: Gospa od Škrpjela (Our Lady of the Rock Island) in Kotor Bay, which I had read about. The views of the



surrounding mountains and the small villages along the edge of the bay were quite stunning, and the rush of fresh air was very invigorating.



*The boat journey across Kotor Bay to the church on Our Lady of the Rock Island*

The journey took much longer than I had expected – more than half an hour – but we eventually reached the tiny island; it was situated close to another island, Sveti Đorđe, on which there was a church and a graveyard. When we had climbed out of the boat and were on dry land, Dada told us about Our Lady of the Rock Island. The islet had been created around a rock in the sea where an icon of the Madonna and Child had been found on 22 July 1452. The icon was brought ashore but, according to legend, it had disappeared on the following day, but was found again on the rock in the sea. Realizing that the icon needed to be kept in its original place, the locals decided to construct an island and a church to house it. According to legend, the islet was created by local seamen who sank old or captured ships, loaded with rocks, into the sea, then added more rocks over the centuries. This custom of throwing rocks into the sea is still alive now; every year at sunset on 22 July, the local residents hold an event called *fašinateda*, when they sail from the mainland in boats and throw rocks into the sea, increasing the size of the island.



*Inside the church on Our Lady of the Rock Island, Kotor Bay*

Having told us this, Dada then brought us into the small but very beautiful Roman Catholic chapel, which had been built in 1630 and renovated in 1722. Inside we gasped as we admired the ornate ceiling, the Venetian paintings, the elaborate marble altar above which the famous icon of the Madonna and Child was displayed, and the

silver votive tablets. Dada pointed out these items of importance, told us the history of the chapel, then brought us upstairs to a small museum where we were able to see a collection of votive paintings, silver votive tablets, and a famous votive tapestry. The tapestry had been made by a lady from the nearby town of Perast; it had taken her twenty-five years to finish it, eventually going blind, while waiting for her sweetheart to return from a long journey. She had used gold and silver fibres to create the tapestry, and – amazingly – strands of her own hair.



*A view through a window in the chapel (taken by Aisling Glynn)*



*The church, and a view from Our Lady of the Rock Island, Kotor Bay*

After this we were free to wander around the little island, admiring the church, the view of the wide bay, and the surrounding mountains; many of us took photos of the church and the landscape. When the boat returned we squeezed into it, set off, and shortly afterwards landed on the eastern side of the bay at the ferry port. Our coach arrived after a couple of minutes and we drove back to Budva. The journey took about half an hour; during it, Rory and I dozed off for a while.

Back in the hotel, I went to my room, where I got rid of my bag and changed into my sandals, then made for the restaurant in Block 1. My late lunch, with Rory and Aisling, consisted of slices of pizza, a sausage, a drink, and an ice cream. Afterwards I

took a short walk in the sunshine, then returned to my room, where I sent some more photos to my friends, and wrote most of my diary for today.

Later I went out for a brisk walk along the bay; as I made my way along the almost deserted beach, I gazed at the mountains that were now bathed in orange light from the setting sun. Looking up at the sky, I saw the moon hanging upside down, with a little of the dark side at the bottom instead of at one side. I turned back at a green area in front of what looked like an abandoned building – perhaps a hotel – and suddenly was aware of a cat meowing somewhere nearby. It turned out to be a large kitten who had climbed to the top of a tree and did not know how to get down. By meowing back to it and making encouraging noises, I persuaded the kitten began to make its way down along the branches and trunk. When it got to within arm's reach, I tried to help, but was hissed at. Eventually the kitten made it to ground level, and I returned to the hotel. Back in my room, I had a shower and washed my hair.

When I had finished and was ready, I walked over to the dining room, where I joined some of the people in our group and had a good meal. After the main course, I ate some toast and cheese, then finished with fruit, cake, and a cup of camomile tea. As most of us needed to pack our cases in readiness for the following day's early start and return home, we said goodnight shortly afterwards and returned to our rooms.

In my room wrote the rest of the day's diary entry while half watching the BBC News channel (more about Donald Trump's tariffs), then went to bed.

Thursday, 10 April

I was awake this morning before my alarm went off at 5.45 a.m. After I had shaved, washed and dressed, I put some more belongings into my bag, then did my morning exercises. Down in the dining room shortly after 6.30, I had a simple breakfast of whatever was available at this early hour: cereal with milk, some fruit, then bread and cheese with a cup of tea. Before I left the table, I quickly made myself a sandwich containing ham and cheese and wrapped it in my paper napkin; this would do for my lunch. I then returned to my room, where I washed my teeth, then left with my little suitcase and bag. I checked out at the reception desk on the second floor and walked to the hotel entrance, arriving there a little before 7.30.

Outside, my little suitcase was put into the coach's hold and inside I sat beside Rory once again. As expected, there were a few latecomers, and we finally left shortly after 7.45. Dada spoke to us for a little while, then left us in peace. Shortly afterwards I gave her my contact details, and she gave me hers.

We made good progress until we reached the road that was being reconstructed, which meant that we had to travel at a snail's pace for some considerable time. Back on a proper road again, we passed the small airport near Tivat, where we saw a plane taking off. We then continued to Lepetani, where we drove on to the ferry and crossed over to the small town of Kamenari. From here we followed the coast road of Kotor Bay and made our way around to the border with Croatia. Fortunately we did not have to wait too long at the two checkpoints, and soon we were driving to Dubrovnik Airport.

When we eventually arrived there, it was very pleasant to step outside into the warm sunshine, collect our luggage, and go into the small building. In my hurry to join the queue for one of the check-in desks, I forgot to say goodbye to Dada and later, when I went looking for her, she, the driver, and the bus had disappeared. The queue moved very slowly, but at last I was free to walk towards the departure gates upstairs. Finding myself now in a large hall, I filled my bottle with water from a



drinking-water fountain, then joined a small queue at a restaurant and bought a muffin. I then sat down with some of my companions to eat the muffin and drink some of the water.

Later we made our way to Gate 21, where we had to show our passports again and go through a security check, during which my little case had to be examined twice; my electric razor and the prosciutto had, for some strange reason, caused some concern. We sat on some nearby chairs for a while, then were let into another area, where we waited for our plane to empty. Shortly afterwards we were allowed to board. I found my way to seat 6F, close to the wings, and was soon joined by a lady named Ann. We chatted for a while until the plane began to move, and shortly afterwards we took off. Afterwards we talked for a while, then later I took out my copy of *Brideshead Revisited* and also my diary, which I began to read and correct.

Ann and I ate our packed lunches when trolleys containing food and drinks were pushed down the aisle. When we had finished eating, I tilted my seat back and fell asleep for a while. When I woke, I found myself looking down over sunlit countryside, with clouds in the distance. Shortly afterwards we crossed over a stretch of sea. When land appeared again a while later, the captain told us that we were flying over Manchester. After I had read more of my diary, I began to write about today, but did not get very far as Ann and I began to chat once again. Soon we left the UK behind and crossed the Irish Sea; shortly afterwards I recognized the Isle of Man, which I pointed out to Ann.

At last we approached Ireland, turned in a big loop over the sunlit landscape far below us, and eventually headed downwards to the runway in Dublin Airport. Our wonderful holiday had finally come to an end.