

# THE MARTIN FAMILY

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## SWITZERLAND

April 11, 2011

Dear Reader,

I hope that you are well and happy. Here in Zürich, we continue to enjoy a beautiful Spring - a season that coincides with Nazy's birthday (in the Northern hemisphere).

"No, Dan," Nazy replied in response to my query. "Rome was a birthday present for me. There is no need for you to get me another birthday present."

A veteran (and well-trained) husband, I realized that this statement should not be taken at face value. Luckily, I had already acquired a suitable gift. [Suitable? Unlikely. After a cheerful "Thank You, Dear!", Nazy noted that my selection was the wrong color, wrong size, wrong pattern and wrong thing. She exchanged it for a herb garden.]

"I see," I replied. "So, in the interests of family economy and expense control, I should simply pretend that we've already celebrated..."

"We did celebrate. In Rome," Nazy testily replied.

"Could we go to a nice dinner?"

"Well.."

"We can be frugal. After all, even though we couldn't find a McDonalds in Rome, I do know of one here in Zürich."

"Dan.."

"I'll even bring a candle to put in your McFlurry."

"Don't hurry."

"And at home, I'll bake a cake. Just for you."

"The cake is not for me," Nazy retorted preceptively.

Wanting to take Nazy to a new restaurant, I choose Petermann's Kunststuben featuring the Michelin-starred chef Horst Petermann. It's located in Küsnacht on the gold coast of Lake Zürich.

"I know why this restaurant is on the **gold coast**," I thought as I perused the menu. surreptitiously, I sent a text message to my banker:

Transfer thousands from savings to current account.



I chose red mullet; Nazy selected sea bass. I asked for the wine card.

"A Coke **Zero** would suffice," I thought as I examined the vintner's selection. Aware that it was Nazy's birthday, I was moved to poetry:

*Would it be too crass for me to ask:  
for wine selection by the glass?  
What best to go with your sea bass?  
A bottle, my dear, might give you gas  
And unhappy birthday my lovely lass*

"Don't be an ass," Nazy thought. "What about the Chateau Le Tour?"

"Alack and alas! I'll take a pass," I thought. "That doesn't go with fish," I replied. Hopefully.

The dinner was great! The bottle of wine that accompanied the cuisine was delightful.

The next day, we decided to drive to Locarno to:

"... see the Camellia Festival, Dan." Nazy exclaimed.

"The Camellia Festival?"

"The **INTERNATIONAL** Camellia Festival, Dan. It only lasts for 4 days. If we don't go..."

"... we'll miss it."

"Precisely."

"I hope that it's as exciting as the Bern Onion festival and.."

"Dan.."

".. the Richterswil Turnip Parade, Grabunden's Pumpkin championship, the Alpengeller Cheese Pageant, the Kussnacht dancing Santas, the Zermatt Goat Procession..."

"Just drive."

"Yes dear." I replied.

Locarno is in Ticino, the Italian part of **Switzerland**. Our route went directly through the Alps: we took the 18 kilometer St. Gotthard tunnel. We also passed 148 speed cameras and 22 road construction sites. We arrived to sunny shirtsleeve weather, found a place to park and walked along Lake Maggiore to the exhibition.





After the exhibition and lunch, Nazy stopped at the Tourist office.

“We need to take the cog rail to the cable car. After that, we transfer to a chair lift..”

“... *and we will be met by Sherpas with a rope...*” I thought.

“... to Cimetta. We’ll have a great view of the Lake and the Alps.”

The day, while warm, was a bit hazy, But we still enjoyed the view and watched hang glider pilots launching themselves from the mountainside.

Noting that it wasn’t quite shirtsleeve weather at the top of the **mountain**, we played on various swing sets and enjoyed ourselves as we leisurely worked our way back to the town. Aware, indeed, well-aware, that the activities of the day had included a lot of walking, I was ready for dinner. Nazy, on the other hand, wanted to stroll through the town. I tried to redirect her attention with a standard ploy:

“The shops are closed.”

“So you just want to eat?”

“*It’s better than simply wandering about.*” I thought. “Yes,’ I said.

We walked through the city and along the Lake. When we got to the end of the city, I muttered something about needing new soles on my shoes. I also suggested that we walk back by a different route: “... *one that has restaurantS.*” Unexpectedly, Nazy stopped at the first bistro. “*Dan,*” she thought, “*is being a pain.*” I surmise, however, based on conversational fragments (“The wine sucked.” “My throat feels like it’s coated with slime.” “Did you bring any stomach medication?” “Can we stop at the pharmacy and buy a barf bag?” “I hope you’re happy.”) that Nazy was not enamoured.

Take Care and Cheers,

Dan

Other photos from the Locarno trip are available at:

City Center

Cimetta



