

## 11.9.2016 Leucate

Today we take a break at the beach. When staying in the shade, the temperatures are nice, the wind is almost cool. In the sun it is unbearably hot. Well, our choice is clear... We learn that Leucate is supposed to be the windiest place of France.



Before we are allowed to relax at the beach, Werner has to do some homework. He is checking all hoses to and from the cylinders operating the clutch and is adjusting the length of the piston rod, as our workshop supervisor at home has advised us on the phone. Hopefully this the solution to our problem and we do not need a new clutch, which would be major work on an Unimog.



During his evening jog yesterday, Werner discovered a few stalls selling oysters and mussels just right next to the farms where they grow them. No question where we will have dinner tonight. After walking there for about 1,5km we are hungry enough to indulge in a fresh oyster meal. Six oysters for six Euro is a real deal, but the atmosphere is a little minimalistic. We order mussels as well assuming they would be served cooked in a pot – French style – but these mussels are also served raw like the oysters. A new experience which did luckily not overwhelm our digestive system.





Only after dinner we discover at the back side many more stalls selling oysters and mussels. This stalls look a bit more stylish. We also discover heaps of oyster shells.

A well-known feed expert ;- ) explains that the oyster shells are collected and added to mainly poultry feed (lime).

## 12.9.2016 Leucate, Frankreich – St Pere Pescador, Spanien

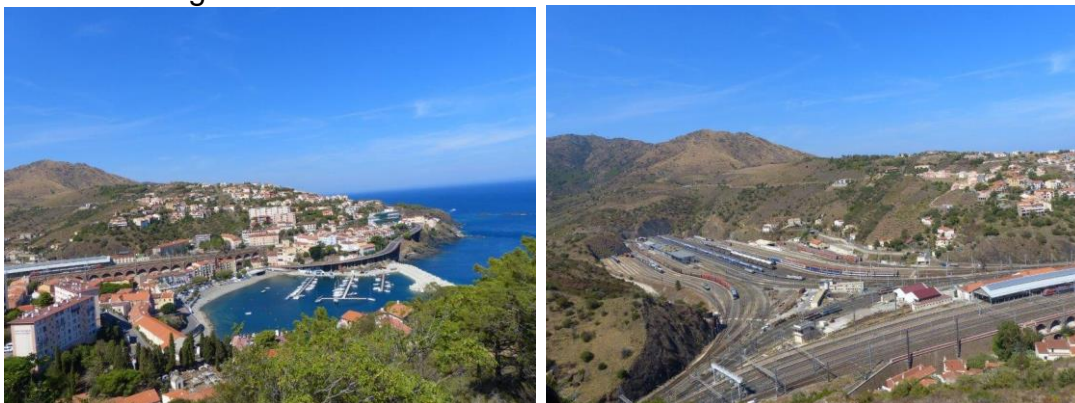


Not far behind Leucate is the city of Collioure on the so called Cote Vermeille (Red Coast). We try to visit the city which is however a not-so-campervan-friendly place. The assigned parking area for campervans is located 3 km out of town on top of a hill. The announced shuttle bus service does not operate; we assume this service is offered only during peak season. Well, we drive on.

We are cruising along the picturesque Cote Vermeille getting closer and closer to the Spanish border.



Soon we reach Cerbere, the French border town to Spain. A small town with a huge railway station. Because trains in Spain run on a different track system, all goods have to change trains here.





After driving 1.030km through France we reach the Spanish border.

The border town Portbou on the Spanish side looks like mirrored to the French border town. Here as well, the huge train station is located in the middle of the city, as due to the different track system all goods have to change trains. This is Europe.



Now we have to get used to traveling in Spain. Unfortunately, we speak even less Spanish than French. The towns we pass through are huge. We expected tiny little villages which you usually find near a border in the middle of nowhere. Well, we had to fight our way through the tiny streets of big cities like Selva and Roses – only to end in a dead-end road. Finally we give up trying to find the camp sites listed in our travel guidebook and go for the nearest big camping site we can see, „L’Amfora“ in St. Pere Pescador.



When arriving in St. Pere Pescador there is a chic new supermarket Bonpreu at the city border where we stop immediately. So many yummy and interesting things are to find in a Spanish Supermarket. There is always fresh fish, all kinds of mussels and of course lots of jamon (Schinken).

The camp ground L’Amfora is gigantic. The very friendly lady at the reception is equally shocked upon the size of our camper van as we are shocked about the size of the camp ground. Our number plate is way too high for the light barrier...

She explains, that this camping ground site with 780 sites is still considered only medium. There are other camping sites with 2000 camping positions! You need infrastructure like for a little village...



### 13.9.2016 Torroella de Montgri, St. Feliu de Guixols

We take advantage of the infrastructure offered for a washing and a dip in the swimming pool. But by early afternoon it is time to release our Unimog and us back into the wild...



We continue our way past rice fields and some very dry corn fields. The Castell de Montgri of Torroella de Montgri is already visible from far away. It is only accessible by foot; in order to protect themselves from pirates, they never build a road up there.



Torroella de Montgri is a pretty little town with a nice coffee shop and an automated machine for bait, well, all you need to keep you happy.





For the evening we want to stay in St Feliu de Guixols, but the camp site for 18 camper vans is already full. We find a back-up parking space where we see other camper vans parking and join them. Luckily this place is even much more spacious than the original one.

St Feliu is as well a charming place. We stroll along the pedestrian zone to the port and enjoy Spanish opening times, as all the shops are still open.



#### 14.9.2016 Barcelona

In the night we had very heavy thunder storms, lightning, thunder and rain. The heavy rain has washed away a lot of sand from our parking space.

On the good side, finally the temperatures are down to more comfortable degrees.

We have a last impressive cappuccino before heading to Barcelona!



The drive into downtown Barcelona is less stressing than we assumed. We only get lost once in one of those mega roundabouts with 200 streets connecting... In the afternoon we reach „Citystop Camping“, which is actually only a guarded parking space. Shower and wifi are included in the price and the subway stop is only 100m away. The whole package at a bargain of 30 EUR a day.



Should we worry that this parking spot is assigned to us right away?

Well, it is new to us (maybe not only for us?), that handicapped parking space for trucks even exists...

And soon after, we are on our way downtown. Our first place to visit is of course the famous Sagrada Familia. 2026 it should be finished...



### 15.9.2016 Barcelona, Sitges

Soon in the morning we are off to Part II of our Barcelona city tour. Placa Catalunya, Rambla Catalunya, the Cathedral where geese live in the cloister, „Mercat de la

Boqueria“, Columbus statue, the port, Olympic Village... We are walking quite a few kilometers today covering the main attractions of the city.



After 24 hours in this fantastic city we drive about 40 km to Sitges, passing by a huge cemetery at the edge of town which extends for kilometers.

In Sitges we discover that the campground listed in our app does not exist anymore. It was converted to buildable land...



## 16.9.2016 Sitges, Tarragona, Peniscola

We end up on a “grey zone” parking, where we spotted some other interesting self-build campervans. In the morning the fence contractors start early to work on the fencing and we hurry up so they would not fence us in.



We reach Tarragona and with a bit of luck, find a parking on the street, which is mentioned in our guide book. Many historic sites from the Roman Empire can be found in this city like a quite well preserved amphitheater, a Roman cathedral, a covered walkway which was in Roman times the busiest shopping street, a Roman circus and a lot more.



We discover a new version of Sangria “Sangria Cava” which is prepared with Spanish sparkling wine – very yummy! We also learn about the Castells, they are human towers or pyramids which are up to 9 stories high. These castells have been “build” since the 18<sup>th</sup> century mainly during festivities and have been listed as UNESCO World Heritage.





In the afternoon we drive to Peniscola, where the campsite is not easy to find. The beach front is completely covered with hotels and skyscrapers containing holiday flats. The castle with the historic old town is very interesting and has served as scenery for movies already, i.e. 'Game of Thrones'.



As the final act of the day we witness a spectacular moon rise.

