

## Cities

4-3-23

Madison is a terrific city. I'm glad that I ended up here. But there are many other places where it would be fun to spend some time, not just as a casual tourist. I think the ideal would be to rent an apartment in a place for six months or so and really get to know people and explore the territory. But where?

First on my list might be a small town in Italy. Doing just that in Fermo, Italy, last summer certainly wet my whistle, even though it was for only two weeks. It was out of the tourist path so that we rarely heard people speaking English in casual conversation although, thankfully, many people understood our English, probably much better than my faulty attempts at Italian. How I miss walking up to the outdoor café after breakfast for a morning cappuccino while looking out over the hills and valley to the Adriatic. I could go back there in a heartbeat and stay while my Italian improved from dreadful to barely adequate. That would probably take six months!

If I were able to drag my husband anywhere, it would probably be to New Zealand. We did spend several days in an Air B&B in Queensland, watching our 14 month old granddaughter while her parents enjoyed their honeymoon. We also house sat for friends in the small town of Lyttelton which is over the mountain from Christchurch, sans granddaughter this time. It really makes a difference when you have a home port. You can go to the local market and bring the finds home to prepare a meal, (local venison in this instance), explore from home base in all directions, and still know where you will be bedded down that night.

The next place I might pick is Portugal. Forget speaking the language! Portuguese is tough. But there are beautiful tiles everywhere, on the walls, the sidewalks, the fountains. A couple of weeks there would probably do me, but who knows.

After that I could see spending some time in a small British town. London would be accessible by train, so I could travel into London in order to take in music and art, but still sink deeply into the atmosphere of a small village.

That all sounds like such fun. I doubt that I'll ever really get to indulge in any of these adventures, at least not for extended times, but it is nice to dream and to remember the short tastes of immersion that I have been lucky enough to experience.