

Jougne to Lausanne

Km's to Rome:1,115

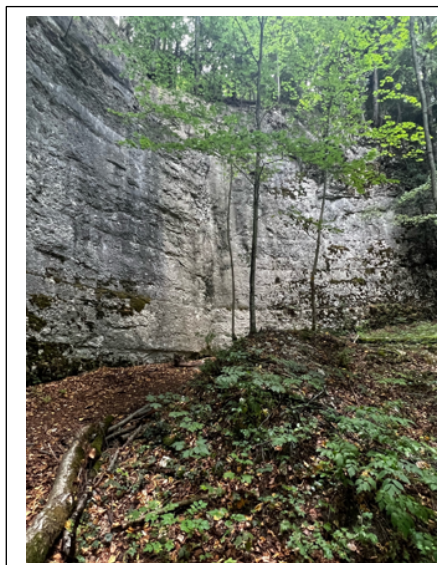
After 38 days on the Via I have finished walking across France. If I was walking to Sydney I would still have quite a way to go and if I was walking from Melbourne to Perth in Western Australia at the same average rate of 25 kms per day I would arrive in Perth in another 89 days, Australia is a big country.

People have expressed amazement that I am tackling this walk especially as I am now 71. It has been hard at times but I have downloaded Norman Swan's new book on ageing to hopefully get some instant relief. Those of you who know me would be aware of my one major financial rule, being from the day you are born to save ten percent of whatever money comes your way (gifts, earnings, windfalls etc) and the rest will take care of itself. Walking long distances is much the same, you slowly accumulate the kms and suddenly you are where you wanted to be. Today I crossed the border into Switzerland although culturally I have been in Switzerland for a couple of days. This is the border marker, the only person who noticed me cross was a wood cutter.

Today's destination was Orbe, through a gorge created by the river. It was an easy lovely walk along trails of leaf mould which

was very nice on the feet. The gorge had some very interesting rock walls and several tunnels cut through the rock with barely enough head height. Also experienced a sun shower while walking through the forest, a wonderful experience after all the heat.

Passed lots of day walkers and bike riders today. The bike riders are very courteous here even stopping to have a chat. This is quite different to some of the riders on the Melbourne trails who can be quite aggressive, people here are much more aware of sharing the track. I was rewarded for my walk in the hot sun by this superb meal in Orbe.



Lightly crumbed perch fillets with salad and chips.

The colours to the left are flowers and herbs finely chopped, topped of with very cold mineral water it was a great way to finish the day.

The Via out of Orbe takes a divergent track to the west so on Day 38 I took a short cut and joined up with the Via later in the day. As I was walking in a small village a lady came over to me all excited that she had seen me earlier in Orbe and asking me all about the Via, there have been lots of nice experiences like this on the walk.

In the same town they were renovating the local community bath house, I know I have been banging on about these bath houses but life is divided into three terms, that which was, which



is and which will follow. We need to value the past to enable us to properly inform the future. I will have to publish a book " great community bath houses of Europe",sure to be a bestseller.

The walk from Orbe to Cossonay is an easy stroll along quiet country lanes and a significant stretch side by side with a waterway, seemingly supplying the immediate houses and farms with water but not irrigation. This is a crop of beans that is showing heat stress, around thirty percent of the crop looks ruined. I have not passed any irrigated paddocks in France or Switzerland but I suspect if they want to continue their intensive agricultural practices I have observed the farmers will have to start irrigating. As I have been sensitive to finding



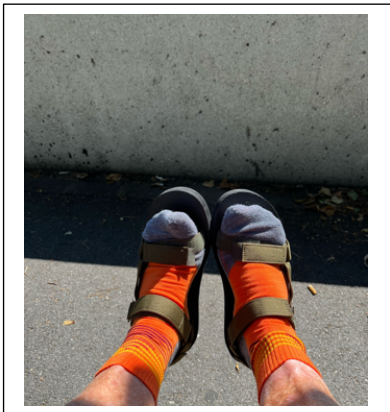
water I have been looking for taps in front gardens, it would seem that up until now in this region you didn't need to water your garden other than the pots, suspect this will change also. The irony is that next to the failing crop was two football fields currently being watered to produce the pristine green we are used to on a sporting arena.

Cossonay is a nice village on top of a hill, still struggling on the hills and St Bernard's pass is only a few days away. Having the pack makes a huge difference, I might hire a donkey for the traverse.

Day 40 takes me to Lausanne with a day's break staying at a fancy hotel on the foreshore of Lake Geneva. On the way in I passed this series of allotments, perhaps over about four

acres. They were just down from some intensive housing developments and had little cabins with stoves fridges etc, like all these allotments they were an absolute mess but what a great thing to provide to the local residents. I passed several more of these on my passage into Lausanne.

Spent my day off replacing my rapidly deteriorating wardrobe, purchased some lightweight sandals and some fancy socks.



Day 42 finds me sitting on a ferry sailing across Lake Geneva. It is ok to take this shortcut as Bishop Sigeric

whose walk to Rome in the 10th century is what the Via Francigena is based on, also took a boat across the lake so I don't feel that I am cheating. His walk was used as a map for later pilgrims to travel to Rome.

It is a very pleasant way to travel if you are ever at Lausanne.



Bonne Camino.