

After my brief travels in Norway (June and July *Newsletters*) I had three nights spare, so I flew to Copenhagen. The school holidays were approaching and aircraft engineers in Scandinavia had decided this would be a good time to annoy everyone by refusing to do various maintenance jobs. That just added to the fun of Gardermoen airport in Oslo. Luckily we were only two hours late departing. My bag aged considerably more than me from the experience and by the time it appeared at Copenhagen the handle refused to extend. But it was my lucky day, as an airport employee with more brute force, dexterity and patience than I have, managed to free it. With various additions of gaffer tape it survived the rest of my trip.

But my airport woes were not yet over: my return flight to Oslo got cancelled, as the stocks of fencing wire and sealing wax at Norwegian Airlines had declined. As it was a



The Copenhagen Metro (above) and a corridor at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek art gallery (right) by Rob Morgan ARPS

connecting flight to my homebound flight, I ended up getting back to Oslo airport the night before – which is all a long-winded explanation for why I had only one full day and two nights in Copenhagen.

Hooray for the Copenhagen Metro, with its frequent, driverless trains and efficient escalators and lifts (though advice in the lifts about where L1, L2, etc. will get you

would be handy) and hooray for its three day travel passes (two day passes are also available, in case aircraft engineers go on strike again).

What to do on Day 1, when Day 2 will evaporate? I did walk around and see several tourist attractions, as did many local school children who were happy to practice their English (Who wouldn't be if your native tongue had silent 'd's? and your capital city is pronounced like a dog from Havana ('Cuban Houn'(d)). The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek private gallery of sculpture and other works of art, housed in an old building with a plant-filled atrium, was a treat.





Local students at Nyhavn happy to practice their English

by Rob Morgan ARPS

Below:
Last Exit in Denmark

by Rob Morgan ARPS

One little-known tourist attraction in Copenhagen is a sign on the motorway past the airport, alerting drivers to the worrying fact that Sweden is all they can look forward to if they do not take the second airport exit. Call me a traffic engineer, but this is far more interesting than a small bronze mermaid statue. The other good thing in Copenhagen was no electric scooters! They were a scourge in Oslo, where you could be silently mown down on any footpath.



As I was travelling alone this time, I had time to reflect on all those previous times I'd travelled alone before meeting Lucy, and ask myself what is the most difficult aspect of travelling by yourself. Having no one to talk with? No, I find I can talk to myself endlessly. Dining alone? Ditto. Falling over in the shower and no one hearing me? Of course not – I can do that at home.

No, as I was reminded in my Copenhagen hotel, the most difficult aspect of travelling alone is to get the breakfast waiting staff to NOT clear your table while you've gone to get more coffee or food. I've tried leaving my serviette neatly on my seat, but not enough waiting staff have been brung up proper to spot that one. Next I tried leaving the serviette roughly placed on my seat. Gone! I've concluded there are a lot of people who don't know the difference between tidy and untidy.



Mmm . . . will I catch the Metro or go and buy a hamburger?
by Rob Morgan ARPS

One option, not available everywhere, is to put the dirty plate to one side, then spell NO in toothpicks next to my unfinished coffee. It's (theoretically) even easier in countries where the word is NI or NY. Not so easy in Russia; impossible in China. But, alas, the waiting staff look at it and think some coffee-crazed kid has been playing with the toothpicks again. They whisk the coffee and crockery away, straighten any toothpicks bent to make the Y and put them all back in the holder.

Even in hotels where the evening staff are too busy nattering to clean up tables, the morning staff are hired on the basis of efficiency: clean it up and move 'em out.

I've gone to great lengths to avoid this problem. I've married at least twice (to the best of my knowledge). But sometimes my wife is unable to travel with me and the ghost of breakfasts past returns to haunt me.

Crash Test Dummy by Rob Morgan ARPS

