



WORLD CUP RUSSIA 2018

A travel blog by Steven F. Shundich

DAY 1



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 20, 2018 · 🧑🏻‍🦱



Day 1, Russia WC: It only took three planes (including one middle seat and one last row window), one metro, one tram, one ferry and two taxis over 20 hours but I am here in Tallinn Old Town. Tallinn, Helsinki, Saint Petersburg, Tallinn 2, Parnu, Riga, Jurmala, Krakow, Auschwitz, Birkenau, Copenhagen and Malmo on the itinerary.



👍❤️😱 Donn Davis, Elizabeth Clarke and 120 others

37 Comments

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DAY 1



Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to **Nimeta Baar * The Pub With No Name ***



June 20, 2018 · Tallinn, Estonia ·



Nimeta Baar * The Pub With No Name *

Sports Bar · Tallinn, Estonia
10,522 people checked in here

Recommend



Derek White, Eliana Mendes and 9 others

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DAY 2

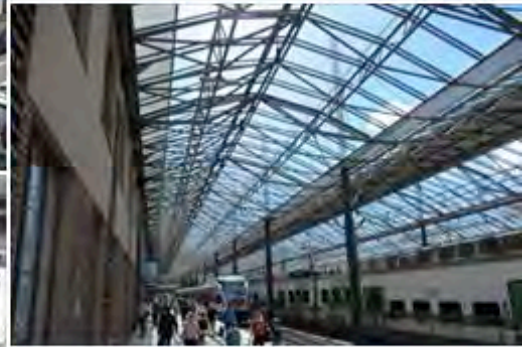
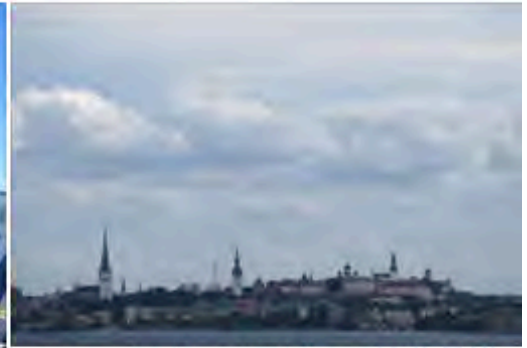


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 22, 2018 · 2 people



Trip Day 2: Russia World Cup, Helsinki to Tallinn: A three-hour, 22-euro one-way trip aboard the Eckero Line ferry from Helsinki rewards passengers on deck eight with Finnish-Estonian versions of "Volare," "Bad, Bad, Leroy Brown" and "It Never Rains in California" — that's why there are multiple bars plying patrons with beer and Long Drink (lonkero in Finnish), a fizzy gin and grapefruit mix. Many Estonians commute back and forth for the higher wages, while the Finns come to Tallinn to drink and go on Tinder dates. Tallinn is a huge cruise ship destination, so pretty much any time during the day you will see gaggles of guided tourists in the well-preserved medieval Old Town, which dates to the 1400 and 1500s.



Elizabeth Clarke, Jeff Rizner and 19 others

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DAY 2



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 22, 2018 · 2 people



Trip Day 2 / Wed night / TALLINN: There is nothing quite like being in a 20 hour travel coma and arriving to a city 59.4370 degrees north (about the same as Juneau) where it doesn't get dark.



Ashley Weech, Sarah Shundich and 30 others

5 Comments

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DAY 3

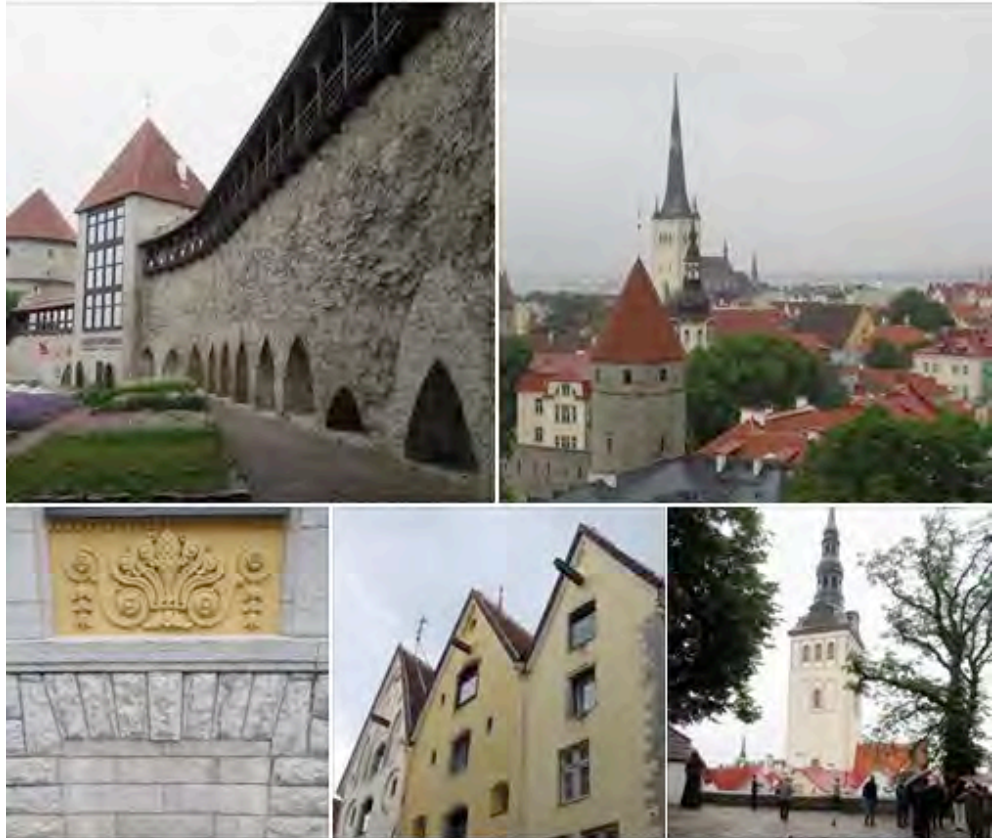


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 22, 2018 · 2 people



Trip Day 3 / Thu afternoon / TALLINN: I never really cared for Rick Steves' seemingly ubiquitous travel drivel on PBS (prolific, that he is), but his Lower and Upper Old Town walking tour for Tallinn was spot on. Who knew that the name "Tallinn" is derived from "Danish town." Or that Estonia has been occupied by Sweden, Poland, Denmark, Germany and, most recently, Russia, until the USSR collapsed in 1991. Or that Skype was invented here. Attention NATO: The population is still 40 percent Russian.



Ann Grob, Sarah Shundich and 25 others

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DAY 3

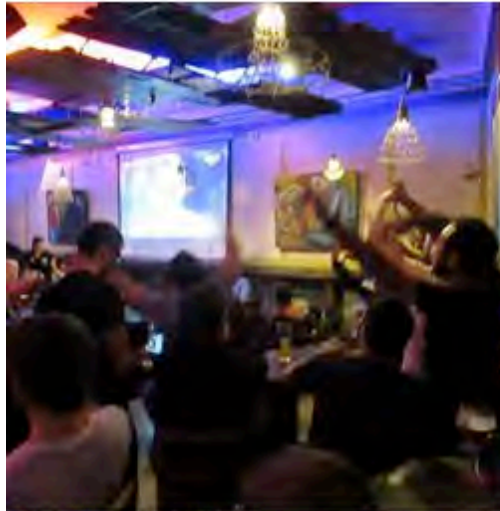


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 23, 2018 · 2 people



Trip Day 3 / Thu afternoon / TALLINN: The best thing about coming to Europe to watch World Cup is the people you meet along the way. At the popular Hell Hunt Pub viewing of Australia vs Denmark, there was civil engineer Nathan and Rhiannen, who sold their home and two cars in Parkes, Australia, to move into a Berlin studio. At the Argentina vs Croatia match, it was Luis (Accenture!) and his two friends from Mexico City, who all live and work in Spain. And the woman from Rome, who is managing the tour of a choir from Eastern Washington University. Those are Brazilians below, cheering for Croatia; mocking Argentina.



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 12 others

1 Comment

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DAY 4

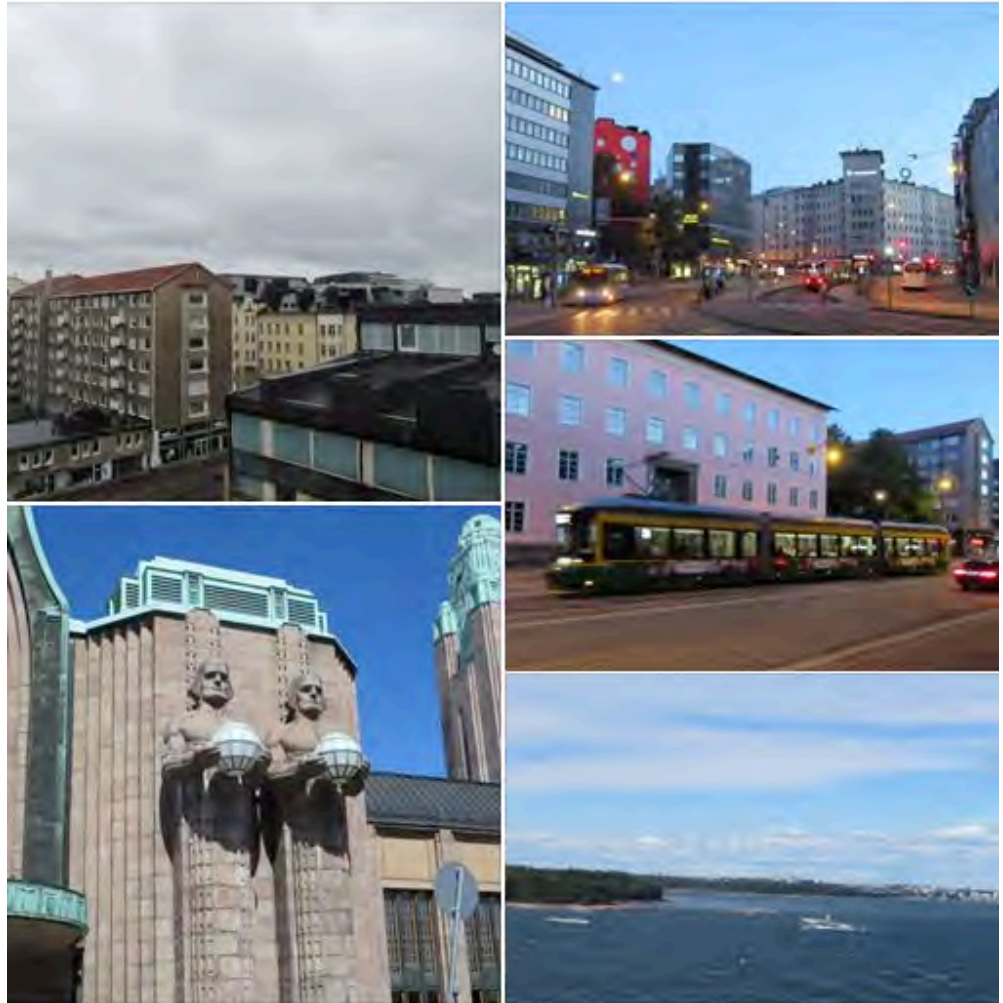


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 23, 2018 · 2 people



Day 4 / Friday / HELSINKI: Welcomed by a stiff breeze, cool temps and rain for my brief stay in Helsinki. The young woman at the hotel reception said, "Oh, you're from the country where no one has seen their parents naked." I'm staying in Kallio, which is where the Finnish hipsters supposedly live. I've only seen ruffians, addicts and drunks so far, but it IS a holiday weekend. And a LOT of massage parlors. Where is Rick Steves when I really need him?



Lolly Watkins Taylor, Ann Grob and 26 others

3 Comments

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DAY 4



Steven Frederick Shundich is in Helsinki.

June 23, 2018 ·



Midsommerfest in Finland.



Helsinki
City · Finland

Christine Rolf and 2 others have been here

Save



Sarah Shundich, Derek White and 7 others

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DAY 5



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 23, 2018 · 2 people



Day 5 / Saturday / HELSINKI: Today was the polar opposite of Friday. Sunny. Blue sky. Almost 80. The perfect conditions for the longest day of the year. Thousands of locals and tourists out on the Esplanade and Market Square. Swimmers. Sunbathing. Paddle board. This was the last thing I expected to see. Let's just say the Finns know how to take advantage of a good thing (e.g. weather etc) when they see it.



Sylvia Stirsman, David Bryan Mcavoy and 14 others

4 Comments

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DAY 5



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 23, 2018 · 2 people



Day 5 / Saturday afternoon / HELSINKI: I take it all back about Rick Steves. I completed my second walking tour from his book, Rick Steves Snapshot: St. Petersburg, Helsinki & Tallinn, in a casual 3.5 hours. Here are a couple of the architectural marvels along the way.



Ann Grob, Derek White and 11 others

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DAY 5

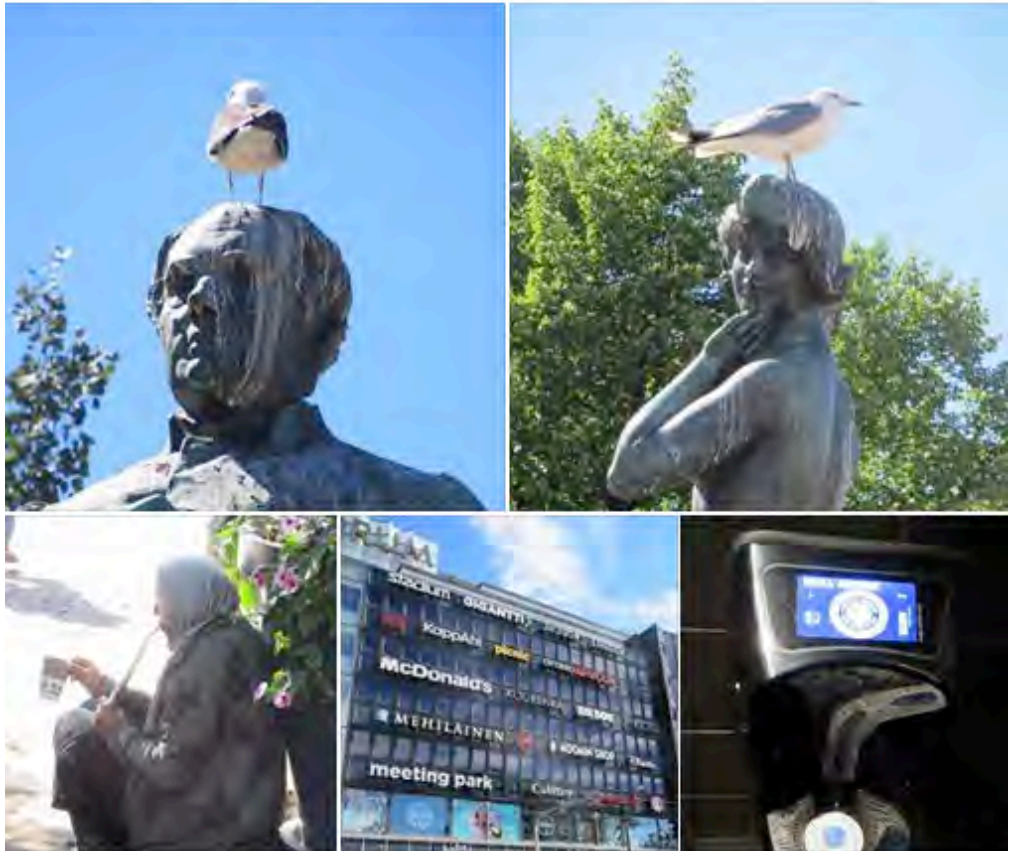


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 25, 2018 · 2 people · ▼



Day 5 / Saturday / Helsinki: Ok, at Market Square, at least I didn't take a photo of the 1) Chinese tourist holding a box of fries on his head to attract an attacking flock of seagulls, to the delight of his giant guided group; or, 2) Local who surrounds himself with bread to actually grab one screaming seagull so people can take photos. Helsinki did surprise me with the large number of stumbling mostly male drunks, zigzagging about beer cans in hand, and the Roma, who were everywhere, camping, panhandling, doing laundry outside the museum. And yes, that's an advertising video display on a bar urinal at Aussie Bar — a first.



Derek White, Sylvia Stirsman and 8 others

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DAY 5



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 25, 2018 · 2 people



Day 5 / Saturday / HELSINKI: Just a few photos. That's me in my Cruz Azul jersey, much to the chagrin of these Chivas loving Mexicans watching the South Korea match. They had just returned from Kazan, where they ate horse and tipped profusely (to the surprise of the locals), and Moscow, where they did the bunker tour 250+ feet underground (the tour guide said World War III has already begun ... DEFCON 1!). The Three Blacksmiths statue from 1932 has bullet hole reminders of WWII. That's the cool inside of the Rock Church. And another look at Senate Square, with the Lutheran Church and government offices, widely regarded as the finest Neoclassical square in Europe. It was built by the Russians, but they used an architect (Engel) from Germany, for a "European style."



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 10 others

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DAY 6

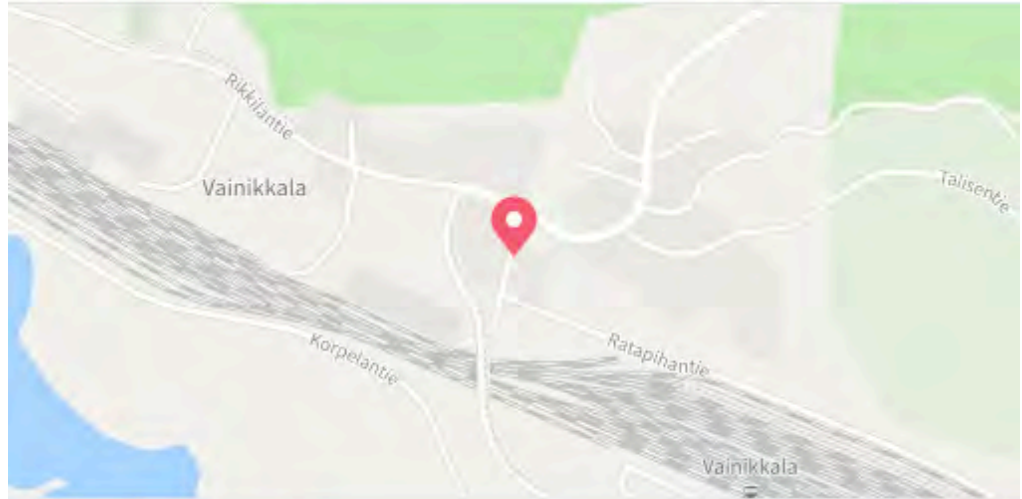


Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to Vainikkila.

June 24, 2018 · 2 people



Getting off 5 am bus to get on Allegro train to Saint Petersburg. Checkpoint!



Vainikkila
Neighborhood

51 people checked in here

Recommend



Carole McGillicuddy, Marco Ottonello and 3 others

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DAY 6



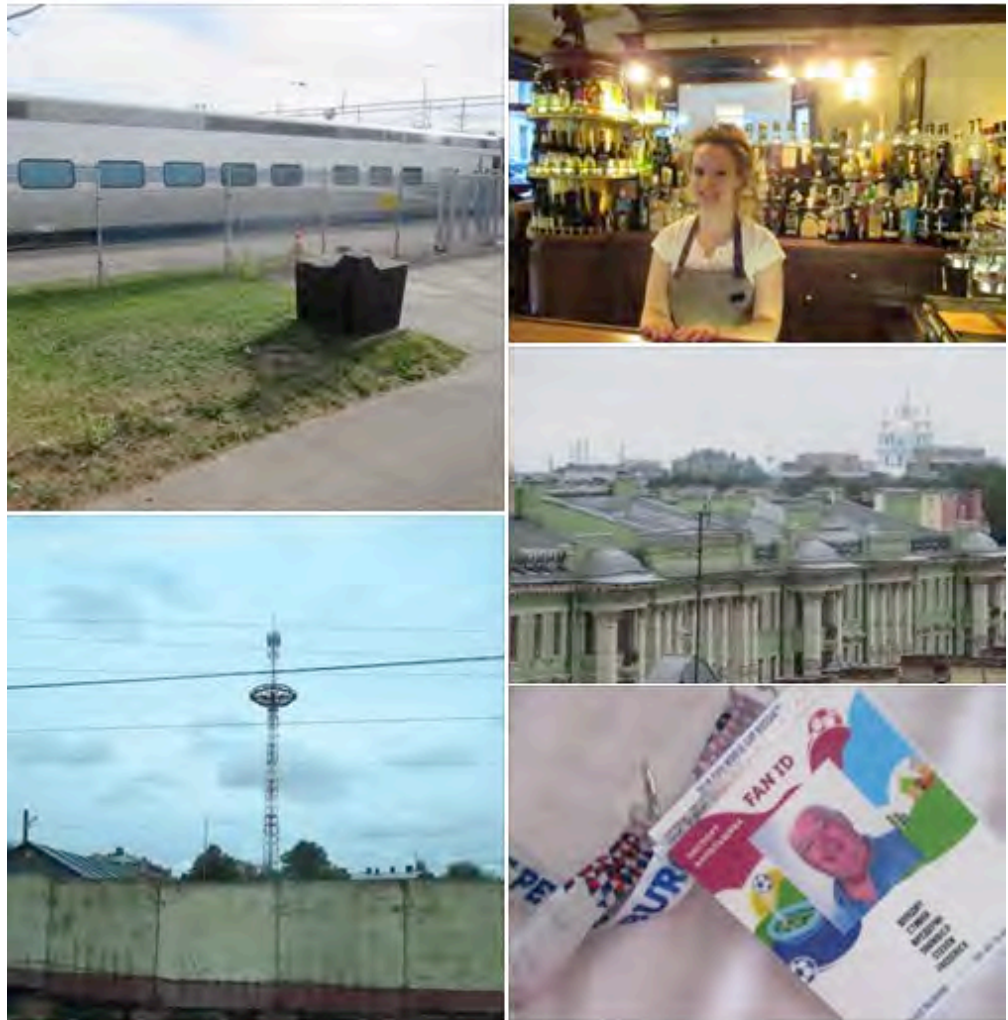
Steven Frederick Shundich

June 25, 2018 · 2 people



Day 6 / Sunday, 24 June / ST. PETERSBURG: The Finnish countryside was green and lush, with streams, lakes and forest. The Allegro train runs between StP and Helsinki in around 4 hours. I actually had to take a bus halfway because they were working on the tracks. It was a little disconcerting going through Russian immigration, when about seven uniformed agents go seat to seat asking 1) how much money do you have with you and 2) What's in your bag? And then they randomly search...

[See More](#)



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 14 others

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DAY 7



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 26, 2018 · 2 people



Day 7 / Monday / ST. PETERSBURG: Spent about seven hours walking StP, with a 2+ hour stop in the Faberge Museum, which was spectacular, if you like incredible creativity, opulence and whimsy on a tiny scale. The Summer Garden was beautiful, with fountains, flowers and trees. The Battle of Leningrad Museum was closed for refurbishment. Nevsky Prospekt, the main drag that cuts through the city was jammed. And Fan Fest, where tens of thousands gathered for the Russia v Uruguay match, was avoided at all costs! There is way, way, way too much to see here. Incredible on a warm, sunny day where the sun sets at 1030 pm and rises at 330 am. My sleep schedule is still way out of whack. More beer?



Piper Sauter, Steve Sauter and 22 others

4 Comments

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DAY 7



Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to Fabergé Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

June 25, 2018 · 🧑🏻‍🦱



Words can not describe ...



👍🤩❤️ Ann Grob, Derek White and 17 others

8 Comments

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💬 Comment

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DAY 8

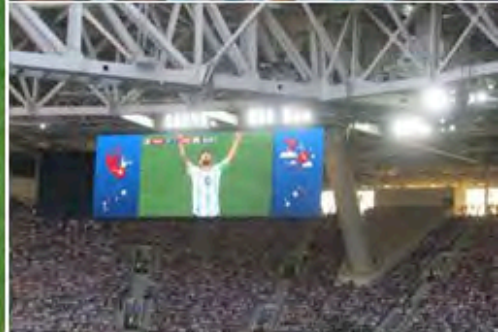


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 27, 2018 · 2 people



Day 8 / 26 June / MATCH DAY / ST. PETERSBURG: There is only one Lionel Messi ... although there were probably tens of thousands of his jerseys among the 64,000+ in the crowd. What a goal! ... His FIRST of the tournament.



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 11 others

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DAY 8



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 27, 2018 · 2 people



Day 8 / 26 June / MATCH DAY / ST. PETERSBURG: What a match! Short captions are on the images.



Ann Grob, Nick Stirsman and 36 others

2 Comments

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DAY 8

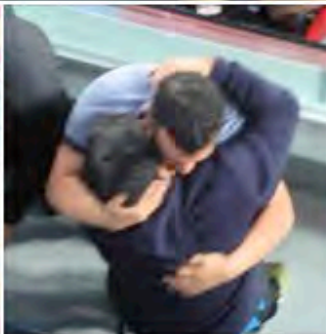


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 26, 2018 · 2 people



It was surreal. Maradona was in a suite no less than six feet directly below me. All the Argentines were trying to catch a glimpse. They literally held him over the edge while fans screamed. At one point it looked like he was going to pass out. No joke. Insane. People absolutely going nuts to get a look.



Ann Grob, Sarah Shundich and 34 others

10 Comments

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DAY 8



Steven Frederick Shundich



June 26, 2018 ·

These are Argentine kids at half who are trying to catch a glimpse of their idol, Maradona, who is directly below me in a suite. I'll post a picture of the top of his hat later. Messi goal: Sensational!



Ann Grob, Derek White and 20 others

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DAY 8



Steven Frederick Shundich is with Shane Tritsch.



June 27, 2018 · 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻

Day 8 / 26 June / MATCH DAY / ST. PETERSBURG: And a few shots at night that don't need captions.



👍 Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 10 others

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DAY 8



Steven Frederick Shundich

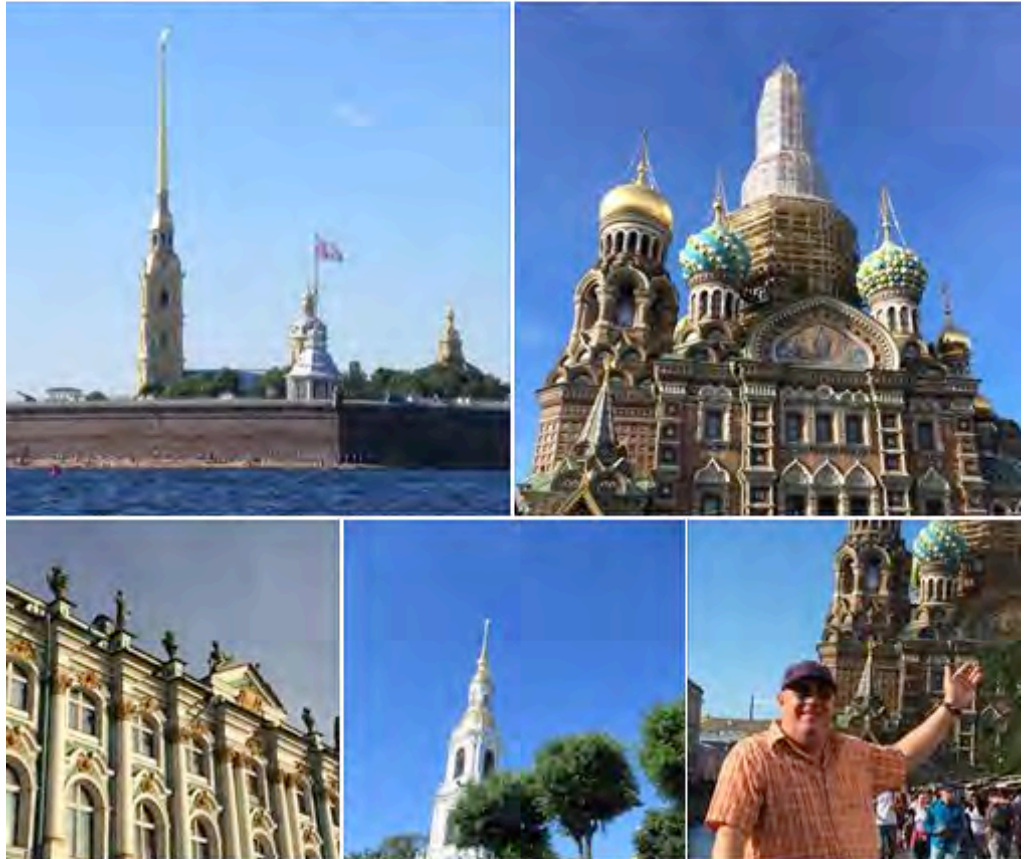
June 27, 2018 · 2 people



For those of you interested in a more verbose Steven Frederick Shundich, like, you can't get enough of me, check into Cincinnati.com, where the gracious writer Paul Daugherty and editor Jason Hoffman have allowed me to infiltrate the Sports pages online:

<https://cin.ci/2yX0VMD>

I plan to contribute three more pieces through July 18. Enjoy!



Elizabeth Clarke, Ann Grob and 28 others

6 Comments



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DAY 9



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 28, 2018 · 2 people



Day 9 / 27 June / ST. PETERSBURG: Some shots from a touristy day after the match, strolling down a bustling Nevsky Prospekt; meandering the labyrinth of the Russian Museum; watching South Korea eliminate Germany from WC at Fan Fest; finishing with a taste of the Winter Palace / Hermitage zone before settling for a beer at Craft Brew Cafe and dinner at Gosti (with Brasil v Serbia, of course). Weather has been a steady and spectacular 75 in the sun / cool and breezy in the shade. Supposed to drop to a rainy 57 by our departure Saturday evening.



Derek White, Sylvia Stirman and 15 others



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DAY 10

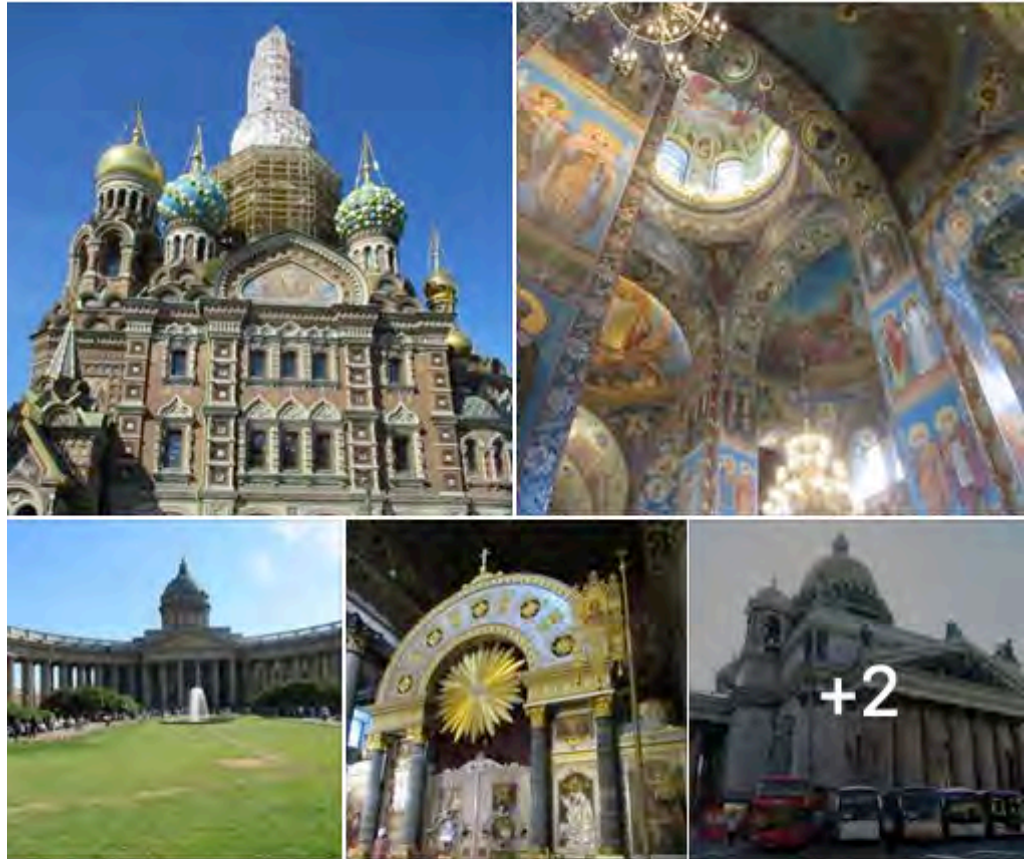


Steven Frederick Shundich



June 29, 2018 · 2 people

Day 10 / 28 June / ST. PETERSBURG: Three quick photo posts today from some sightseeing Thursday. First, churches. Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood was the most opulent, with mosaics covering every square inch of the interior. Kazan Cathedral had a line of worshipers to kiss and pray before the holy relics. And St. Isaac's Cathedral, where you can climb a spiral staircase to the dome, had the most tour buses. All were spectacular in their own way. All different. All on such a grand scale.



Ann Grob, Derek White and 12 others

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DAY 10



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 29, 2018 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑



Day 10 / 28 June / ST. PETERSBURG: A few tchotchkes, for my more base audience. 😊 Captions provided.



Sylvia Stirsmann, Todd Tritsch and 7 others

8 Comments

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DAY 11

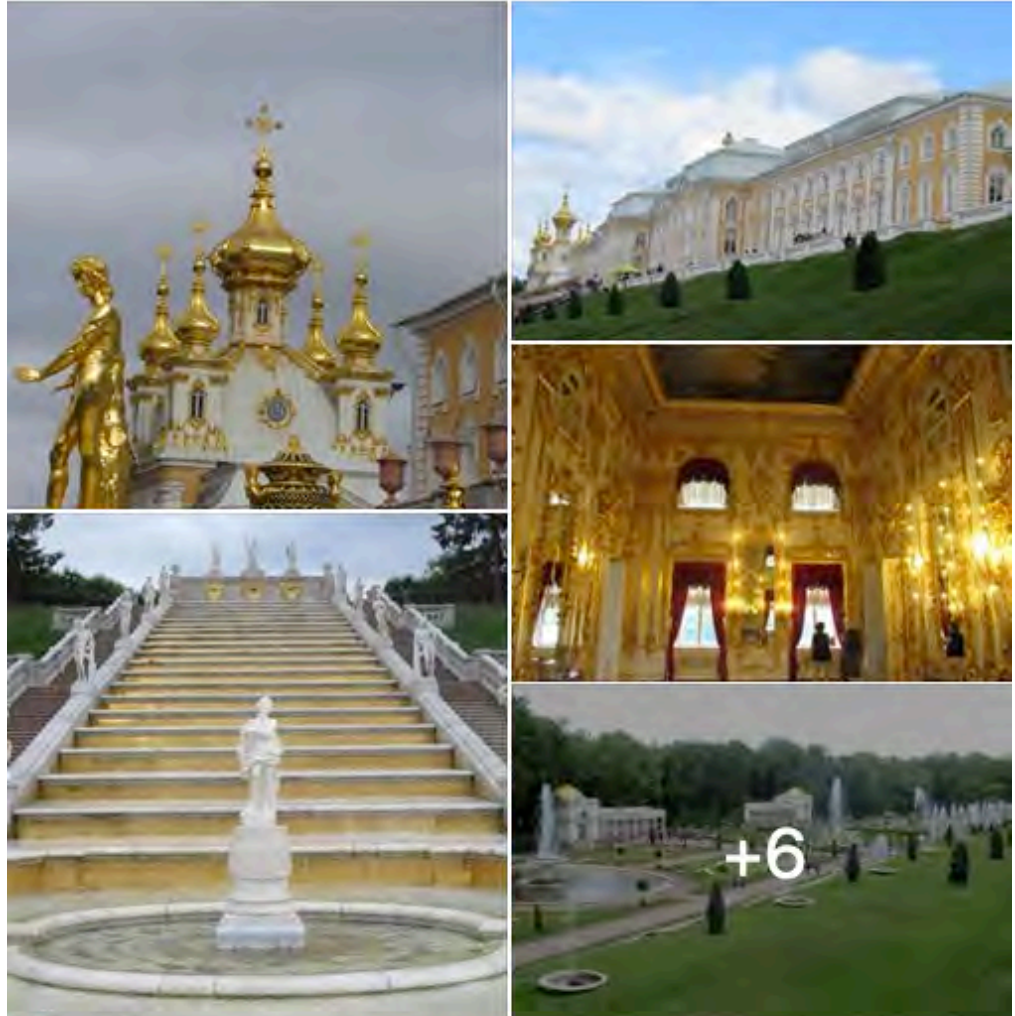


Steven Frederick Shundich

June 29, 2018 · 🧑🏻 · 📌



Day 11 / June 29 / ST. PETERSBURG: Not going to try to use too many words to describe Peterhof Palace, the summer home of Peter the Great. It was built between 1714-1755, then much of it was destroyed in WW2 between 1941-1944. Reportedly, much of the destruction was carried out by Soviet troops themselves, as Stalin was enraged when he learned Hitler had planned to hold a New Year's victory celebration there. Wikipedia makes no mention of this version, which came from Lonely Planet, a guide book known for its journalistic integrity 😊 ! The Soviets started raising money to rebuild Peterhof in 1948, and the reconstruction continues to this day.



👍 Ann Grob, Sylvia Stirsmann and 14 others

3 Comments

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💬 Comment

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DAY 11



Steven Frederick Shundich

June 29, 2018 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 ▼



Day 11 / June 29 / ST. PETERSBURG: A few of the sights before and after our day trip to Peterhof Palace. That's the Marble Palace, a confident Mexican fan's jacket, plenty of available Russian nesting dolls, a view of the old 20,000 seat St. Petersburg stadium and the omnipresent Gasprom Tower, 87 stories / 462 meters of futuristic creepiness.



👍 Derek White, Sylvia Stirsmann and 4 others

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DAY 11



Steven Frederick Shundich

July 4, 2018 · 2 people



Episode 2, Parts 1 & 2, Russia Match and Russia Culture, hot off the press. Best read over coffee and a bowl of Lucky Charms while prepping for fireworks related injuries on Independence Day. Enjoy!



CINCINNATI.COM

World Cup 2018: Dispatches from TML Mobster/Guest Hemingway in Russia, Episode 2



Donn Davis, Ann Grob and 22 others

8 Comments

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DAY 12

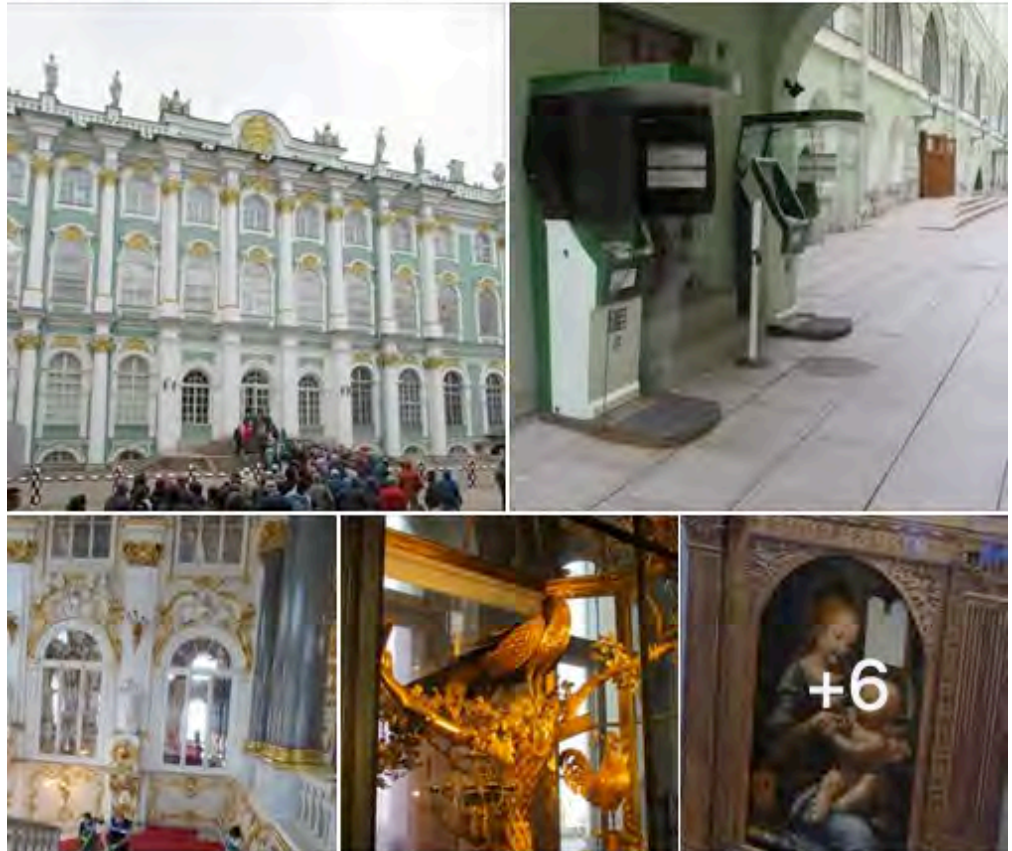


Steven Frederick Shundich

July 1, 2018 · 🧑🏻‍🦲



Day 12 / 30 June / ST. PETERSBURG: Despite overindulging on farewell drinks with Anastasia and Vladimir at our favorite pub, The Red Corner. And then, only steps from our hotel, being coerced into more beer at a basement dive until 4 am (the sun is shining again), we somehow managed to squeeze in three hours at the Hermitage, which is a little bit like changing planes at JFK on your way to Chicago and then telling people you've been to NYC. The lines were ridiculous, tour gro... [See More](#)



Ann Grob, Derek White and 25 others

3 Comments



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DAY 13

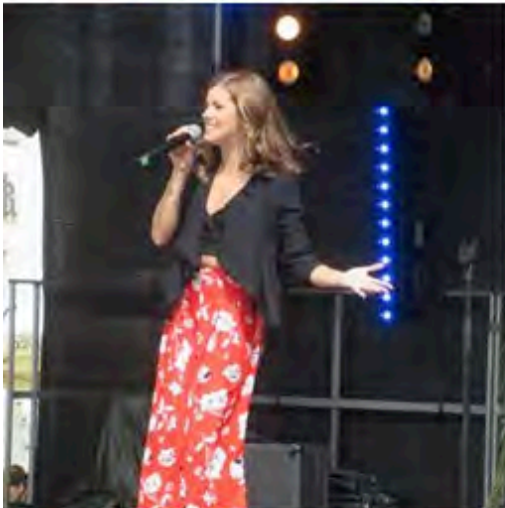
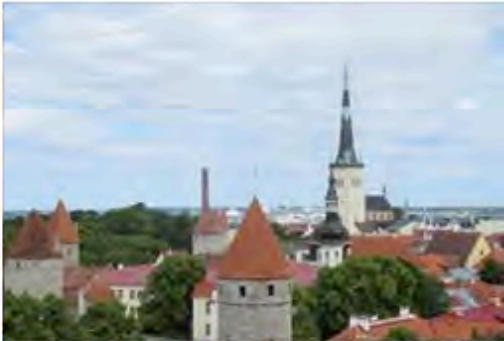


Steven Frederick Shundich

July 2, 2018 · 2 people



Day 13 / 1 July / TALLINN/ Take 2: Passing through Tallinn for another two days, to give Shane a taste of this very pleasant, tourist friendly city. I recreated the Rick Steves walking tour without the aid of the book, which we accidentally left in some StP pub. But this time I stopped at St. Olav to have a snack in support of a youth group raising money for summer camp. The teens were so enthusiastic about Estonia, saying "We are finally free!" — in spite of horror stories t... [See More](#)



Piper Sauter, Ann Grob and 32 others

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DAY 13

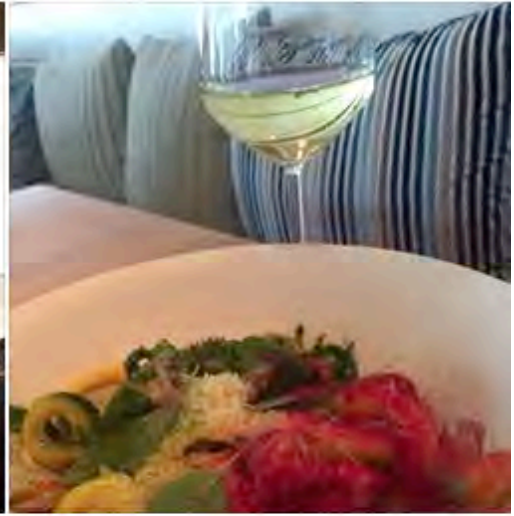


Steven Frederick Shundich is eating dinner at NOA.



July 1, 2018 · Tallinn, Estonia · 🧑🏻🧑🏻🧑🏻

Octopus pasta and Riesling at NOA in Tallinn, with a view over the sea back to the old town. Need to erase the shock of Russia win over Spain with some artistic Estonian cuisine.



NOA

\$\$\$ · Restaurant

4.6

Ranna tee 3, 12112 Tallinn, Estonia



Jeff Rizner, Ann Grob and 21 others

1 Comment

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DAY 13



Steven Frederick Shundich

July 2, 2018 · 2 people



If anyone has recommendations for interesting hotels in Krakow and Copenhagen, please email me. I have one from Ms. Rolf about the boat hotel in Copenhagen. Anyone with AirBnB experience there? Thank you! Shundich@hotmail.com Video: Estonian folk dance at the main square in Old Town Tallinn.



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 3 others

1 Comment



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DAY 14

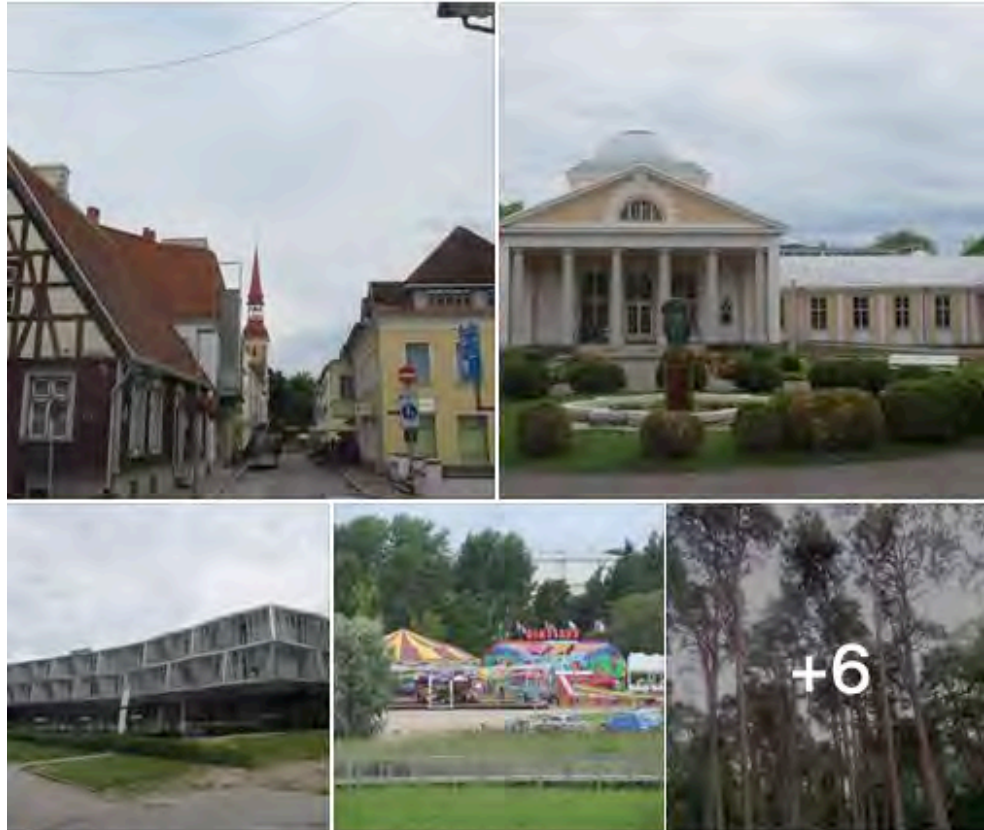


Steven Frederick Shundich

July 4, 2018 · 2 people



Day 14-15 / 2-3 July / Parnu, Estonia: Spent two days at classy Hedon Spa on the Baltic Sea, primarily catching up on sleep and detoxifying. It's a beautiful, peaceful family resort town, with a small Old Town pedestrian square, lots of fancy restaurants and boutique hotels and one fabulous Irish pub, Sweet Rosie's (named after my mom) where we went several times to watch World Cup. There were about 10 excited Swedes for their win over the Swiss, but a pretty non partisan crowd for the almost unwatchable because of all the whining and flopping England vs Colombia match, although I think most wanted to see Colombia get through. A few photos of lovely and relaxing Parnu.



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 7 others

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DAY 16

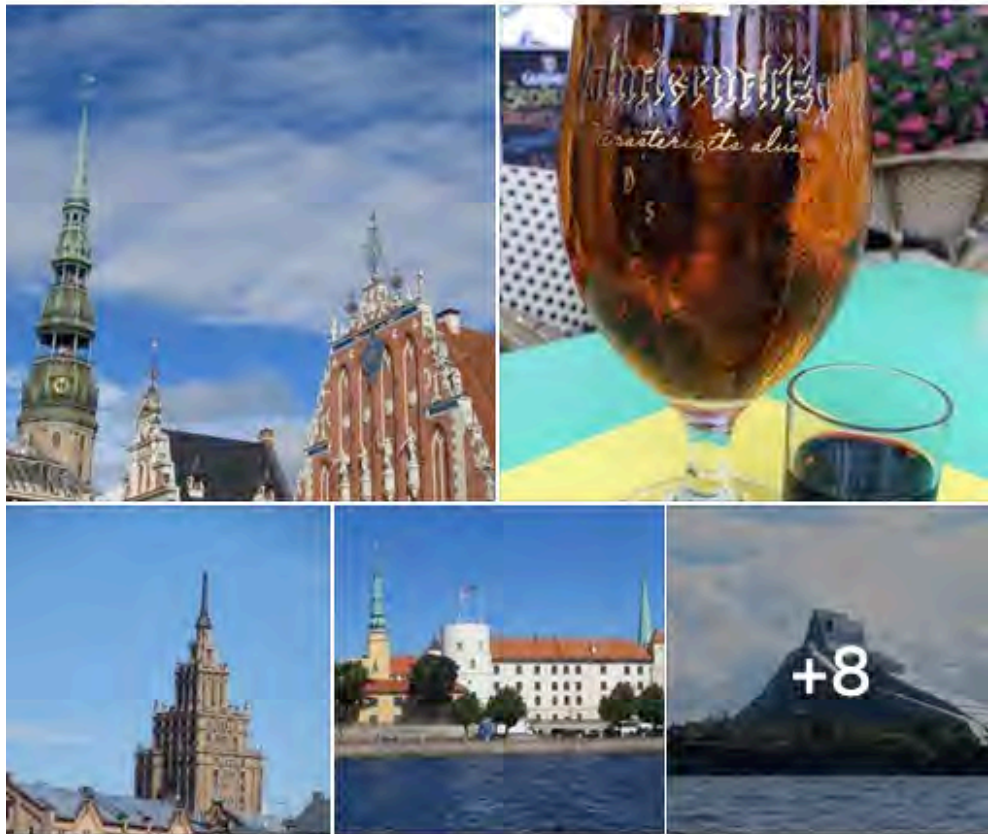


Steven Frederick Shundich

July 7, 2018 · 6 people



Day 16-17 / 4-5 July / Riga, Latvia: Another Baltic capital, another Old Town. Riga was a pleasant enough stopover, with a large outdoor summer music festival in the park, sightseeing and lots of tourists. The difference here were pushy tour promoters and restaurant operators during the day and then after dark annoying and aggressive bike taxi operators — literally peddlers! — pandering drugs and “sexy, sexy.” It was kind of a gauntlet and unwelcome after the relative calm of Estonia. Regardless, we were able to easily pass the time, despite the pause in World Cup. A few photos paint the picture. I will say that once again the history of occupation in this part of the world — by the Germans and Russians primarily in modern times — is astounding. There was a timeline of 1918 posted outside the history museum when the Russians signed a treaty with the Germans after WW1. Latvians had been serving Russia as merchant marines and were having difficulty finding jobs upon their return. There were food shortages. And the train rail widths had to be adjusted because the two powers were on different systems — to make sure goods could be shipped back to the Motherland. And lots of useless rules, rules, rules for the citizenry. Another reason Latvians really appreciate their freedom today.



Derek White, Sylvia Stirsman and 18 others

2 Comments

DAY 16



Steven Frederick Shundich is with **Shane Tritsch** at Riga.



July 4, 2018 · Riga, Latvia ·

2.5 hour Ecoline 11 euro bus from Pärnu to Riga. Grimbergen beers secured. With Shane Tritsch on way to Kraków Friday. Retoxifying :) Happy 4th of July USA!



Ann Grob, Katye Michaud and 46 others

4 Comments

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DAY 18



Steven Frederick Shundich is in Kraków, Poland.



July 7, 2018 ·

A couple of near misses in flight connections but LOT Polish Airlines came through and we made it to Krakow — with luggage. That would be people watching Brasil vs Belgium in the baggage area. Sigh. Five days here ahead.



Sylvia Stirsmann, David Bryan Mcavoy and 13 others

1 Comment

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DAY 18

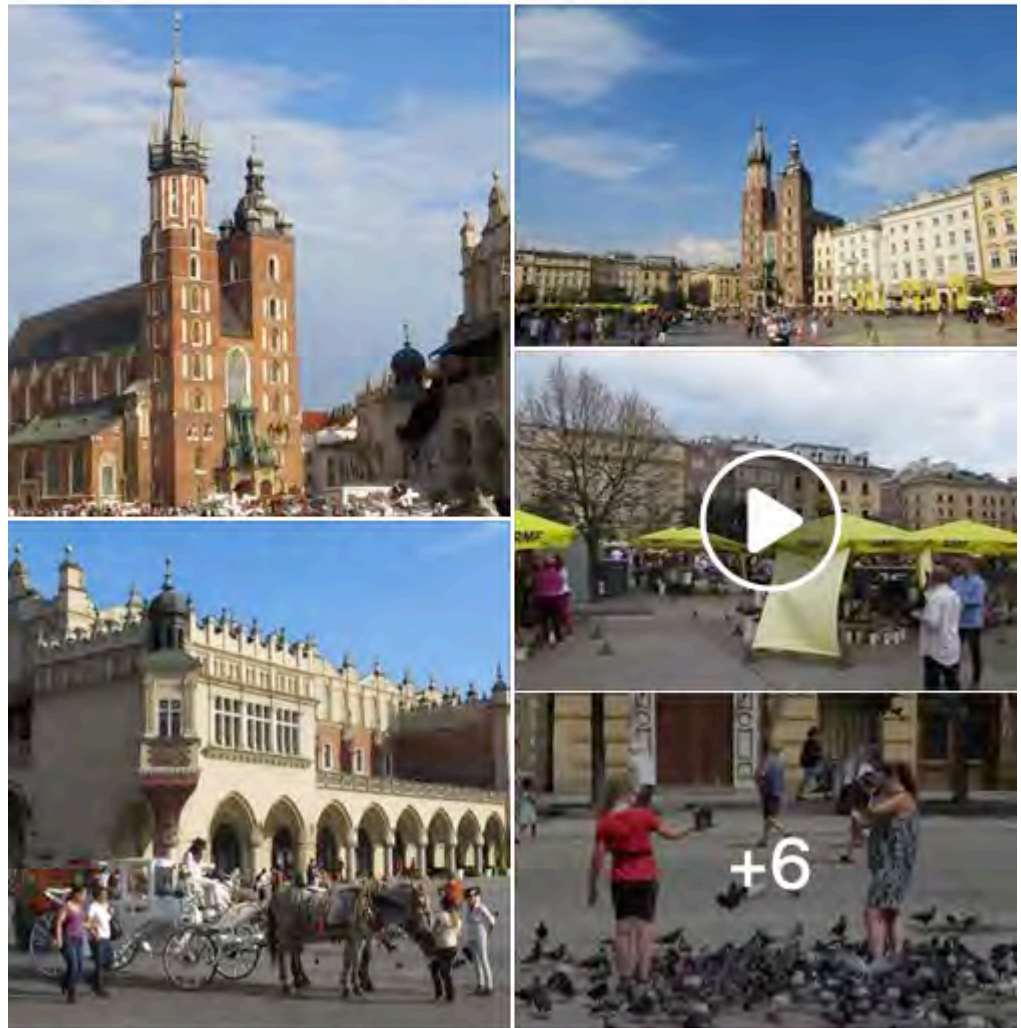


Steven Frederick Shundich

July 9, 2018 · 🧑🏻 · ▼



Day 18-19 / 6-7 July / KRAKOW, POLAND: I am a little behind in my posts, and I'm not going to try to make it up with words. So let some of the pictures speak. The first day in Krakow was devoted to the main market square (arguably the best preserved and largest Medieval square on the planet), where we went underground — literally — to explore the history of Krakow. There were 3D holograms, video, models, artifacts and plenty of English. The museums are so well done. I learned about caltrops (crows feet spikes laid out to injure horses and soldiers in Medieval times), vampire burial rituals (usually bound, decapitated, face down in the fetal position — so as not to get out and wreak havoc), King Kazimierz (who basically created what we now know as Poland from 1333 to 1370) and early inspiration for the #metoo movement (persecution of women with too many gowns or too much makeup — despite ingredients of dog or pig lard). Awesome times! Photos from around the square.



Lolly Watkins Taylor, Ann Grob and 19 others

7 Comments

DAY 18



Steven Frederick Shundich is at Nova Resto Bar.



July 7, 2018 · Kazimierz, Poland · 🧑🏻‍🦱 ▼

A day of WC futbol, one of the last, in Kazimierz, the Jewish quarter of Kraków. 1-1 ROO-SEE-UH(!) vs Croatia at half. When will the Red Run (or is it Redrum?) end? This is my token art shot.



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 6 others

DAY 20



Steven Frederick Shundich

July 9, 2018 · 2 people · ▼



Day 20 / 8 July / KRAKOW: Museum of Ethnography in Kazimierz. Jewish Quarter free walking tour. Schindler's Factory Museum tour. It is 130 am and I am heading to Auschwitz tomorrow, so this will be brief. Let the pictures do the talking! The Ethnography Museum, which is right around the corner from our DADA Hotel (my room number is Wi), is a gem, detailing everyday peasant and otherwise life in the various regions around Poland. Max from Kiev led the free Jewish Quarter walking tour, which was geopolitically charged. And finally, Schindler's Factory Museum tour, where you are told basically that a Nazi spy (that would be Schindler) decided one day for reasons unexplained that he would save 1,000+ Jews who worked in his factory and that there was no list. Hollywood. Very interesting. Forgive the brevity and probable multitude of fact errors. Facebook rush job!



Derek White, Jessica Beauchemin and 8 others

1 Comment

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DAY 20



Steven Frederick Shundich

July 16, 2018 · 👤 ▼



This is Episode 3, with the Final (bummer, Croatia) coming shortly. Thank God for American Airlines email reminders, as I thought my flight home from CPH was Wednesday — it's Tuesday! Doh!



CINNATI.COM

Dispatches from the 2018 World Cup: Chapter 3 Parnu, Estonia; Riga, Latvia; Krakow, Poland

Piper Sauter, Derek White and 3 others

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DAY 22



Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to KØBENHAVN - Kopenhagen -



July 15, 2018 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 ▼

Getting ready for some \$10 Tuborg Classic and some futbol!



Ann Grob, Andrea Shundich and 54 others

1 Comment

👍 Like

💬 Comment

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DAY 29



Steven Frederick Shundich

July 17, 2018 · 2 people



On my way home after six countries over 29 days. Here is the last piece I wrote for [Cincinnati.com](#). Another great World Cup, another fabulous trip. Never stop learning.



CINCINNATI.COM

Final dispatch from 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia: Episode 4, July 11-16 in Copenhagen



Blake Smith, Ann Grob and 33 others

9 Comments 3 Shares

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