

Clockwise from top:

1. Tallinn's Old Town in Estonia.
2. Maiu Reismann and Francis in Estonia's Lahemaa National Park.
3. Maiu and Kristi Reismann, the Estonian twins. (Photo by Diana Unt).
4. Orthodox church in Latvia with Francis.



*All photos were taken by Francis Tapon, unless otherwise mentioned.*

Hill of Crosses in Šiauliai, Lithuania.

The Soviets bulldozed this site several times, but Lithuanians kept returning to put more crosses.

Today it's a pilgrimage site. People keep bringing crosses from all over the world.



Emilia Łoś on the train ride from Gdańsk to Olsztyn, Poland.

She was getting a master's degree in biotechnology. She and her family hosted Francis in February. They taught him what a grammatical case is and why you should fear it.



Right: *Laisvės Alėja* (Liberty Avenue), in Kaunas, Lithuania. Lined with linden trees, it is Eastern Europe's longest pedestrian street.



Bottom right: Belarusian friends. Left to right meet Sveta, Alla, and Irina Kurochkina.

Bottom: Dainu Hill Song Garden in Latvia.



Left: Steve and Zsuzsa Rodgers in their summer home on Lake Balaton, Hungary. Two of their three bilingual kids. They all live in Hawaii, so they dress like this all year round. Unlike most Hungarians.

Below: Helena Kolar and Francis randomly reunited in Subotica, Serbia.

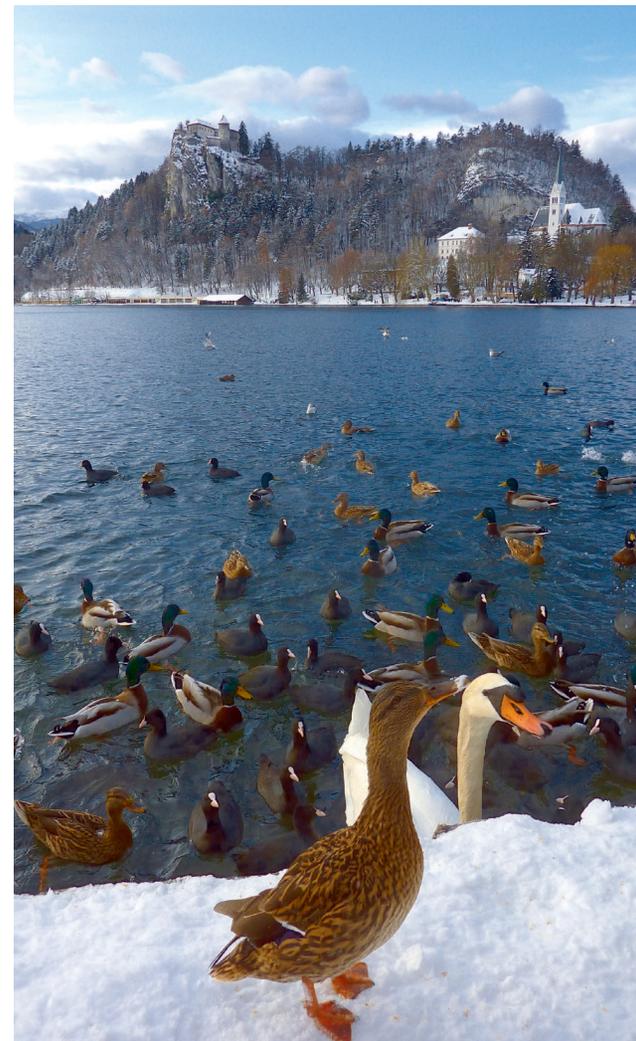




Top: On the far right is Norbert Šabić, Francis's couchsurfing host in Subotica, Serbia. Helena Kolar brought some of her ethnic Hungarian friends along. They all live in Serbia and they love it.

Right: Bled, Slovenia in the wintertime. The Bled Castle, high on a cliff, overlooks the glacial lake.

Slovenia is one of Eastern Europe's smallest countries, but it is one of the most beautiful too.



**Opposite page:**

Top: View from the Croatian sea house where Francis wrote most of this book. Slovenia's old town of Piran sticks out. In the horizon are the snowcapped Julian Alps. Mt. Triglav is the tallest one.

Left: Francis, Ana Mišmaš, and Dušan Trušnovc on Triglav's summit.

Below: Francis celebrates on Mt. Triglav. You would jump like this too if you made it up this hard mountain.





Slaviša Andrić, an ethnic Serb in Vukovar, Croatia. He was a level-headed Serb posing next to a classic slogan. A factory destroyed by Yugoslavia's civil war is behind him.



Predrag Borojević overlooking the Vrbas River by the Fortress Kastel in Banja Luka, Bosnia.



Francis and Ana Mišmaš in the magical Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia.



Francis and the Mostar Bridge, Bosnia. Courageous ones jump off the bridge.



Francis entering Dubrovnik, Croatia.



Serbs in Novi Sad, Serbia. Daniel, Dijana Pavlović, Francis, and Marija Krgović.



Ana and Francis on Mt. Lovćen, Montenegro.

Up: Francis in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

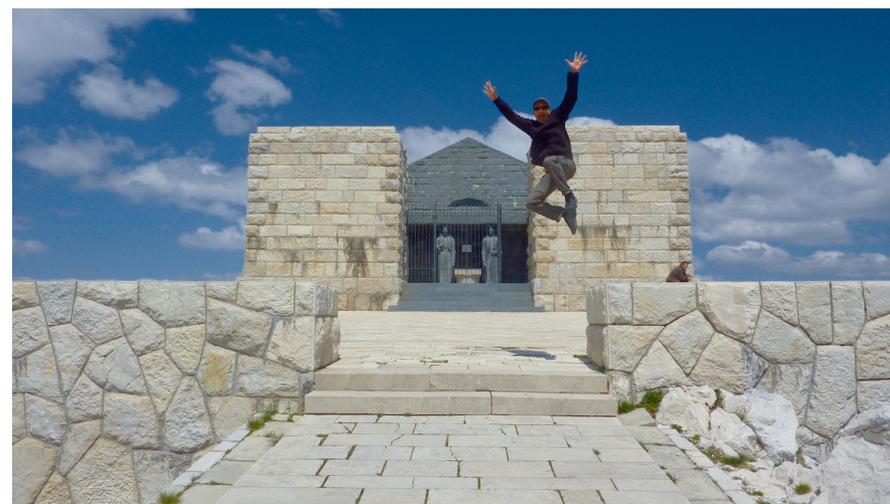
Right: The Mehmed Pasha Sokolović Bridge over the Drina River in Višegrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Below: Ana and Nedžad Osmanlić in Otoka, Bosnia.



Ana in Piran, Slovenia with three funny Serbians from Niš: Nikola Trifunović (waving), Nenad Stojanović (wearing hat), and Branislav Srđanović.



Francis at Njegoš mausoleum, Montenegro. It feels like the pearly gates of heaven.



Overlooking Kotor Bay, Montenegro. Kotor's Old Town is just out of sight below.



Aleksandar Dragojević (right) and Ilija Popović are two Montenegrins playing with a gun in Njeguši. Alex helped Francis often in Montenegro.

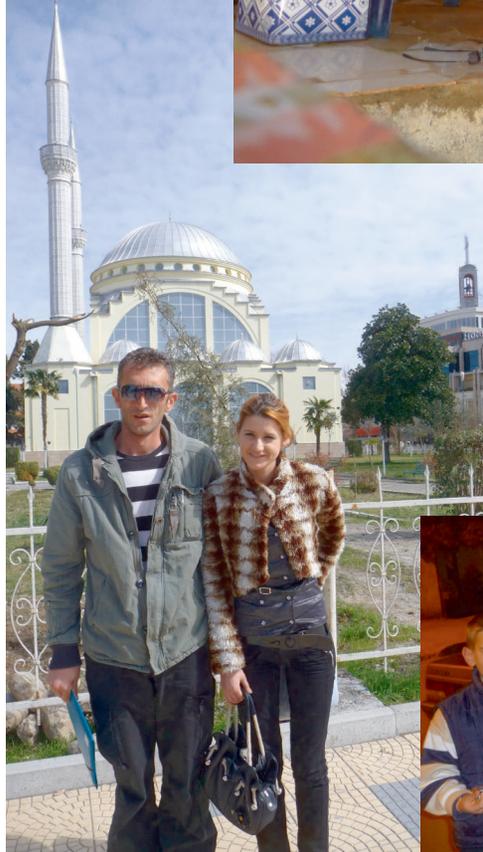


Son of the owner of this ferry that goes down the Drin River in Albania.



From the Rozafa Fortress, which overlooks Shkodër, Albania.

These photos were taken in Albania.  
1. Nevrus Lame and Francis toasting.  
2. A white hat!  
3. Helpful kids in Tirana.



Above: Afrim Gerbeti and his sister in Shkodër.

Right: Dhërmi beach. View from the abandoned hotel. A 4-star campsite! It beats sleeping in the pillbox bunker.





Left: Shpejtim Morina and his friendly family in Prizren, Kosovo. Portrait of Skanderbeg is behind them.

Below: Backyard of the Francis's pot-smoking host in Strumica in Macedonia.

Across: Destroyed Orthodox Church in Prishtina, Kosovo.



Right: Elly Roupcheva in Turkincha, Bulgaria.

Below: Francis backpacking through Bulgaria's Rhodope Mountains in early April.



Crazy hosts in Thessaloniki, Greece. Left to right: Irimi, Maria, Anna, and Niki Tsonidou. They had just returned from the police station after their party was shut down.

Left to right: Martin Marinov, Lidiya, Rumi Doncheva, and Francis. Walking through the park in Varna, Bulgaria.



Bozin Kostadinov's family enjoying an Easter lunch near Nesebar, Bulgaria. Bozin is the man with glasses on the far left, sitting across from Francis. Notice the big beer bottle.





Sulina's deserted beach at the end of the Danube Delta, Romania. This international group had explored the delta that day. The Black Sea is behind everyone.



The Arcul de Triumf (Triumphal Arch) in Bucharest, Romania. It looks like Paris, although Romania's flag says otherwise.



Clockwise from top:

1. Corina Nicolae and Dragoș by the Endless Column in Târgu Jiu, Romania.
2. Silviu with his Rom wife, Bianka in Craiova, Romania.
3. Romantic setting for a wedding in Tiraspol, Moldova.
4. Vladislav Fukalov with Francis in Kaliningrad, Russia.



Above: Ion Babici, TJ Lowdermilk (center), and Francis in a restaurant in Soroca, Moldova. Moldavans drink more alcohol than anyone else in the world, but everyone in this photo was sober.

Left: Francis under a WWII monument in Ribnița. This was in the breakaway republic of Transnistria in Moldova.





Left: An ice fisherman on the Curonian Lagoon in Kaliningrad, Russia. His portable barrier protected him from the cold wind.

Right: Francis, Vadim Zangliger, and his son Artyom in Koenig, Kaliningrad.



Bottom: Qolşarif mosque in Kazan, Russia. The Tatar culture is widespread around Kazan.



Above: Zelenogradsk, Kaliningrad. Baltic Sea in February.



Left: Zoya Panteleeva and Valentina Ushakova (sitting) in Zoya's home in Polonoye, Russia.