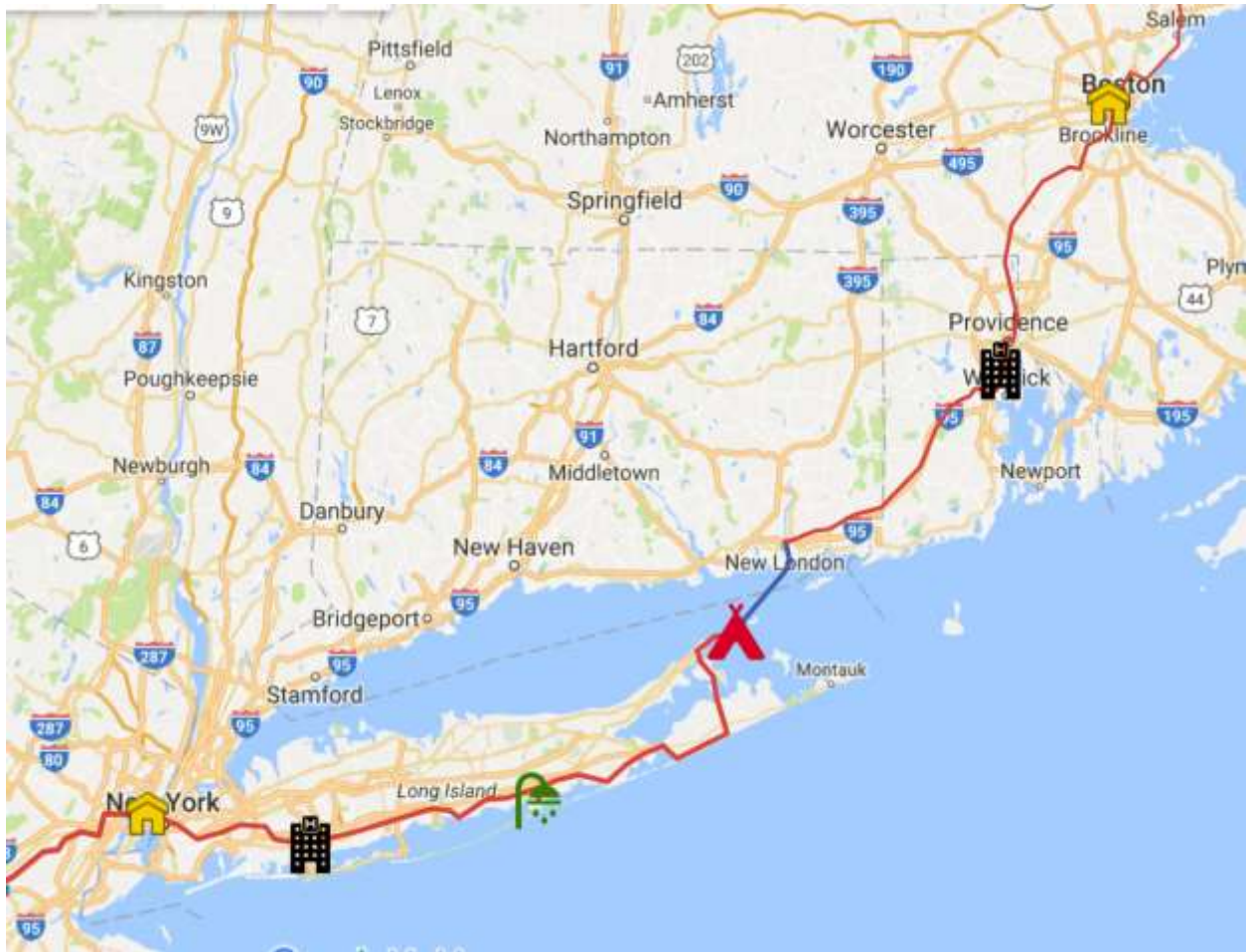


Season 3 – Part 2. Into New York City.



Sa 24.10.2015, day 104. On the road again

Siria worked really hard to try and organize a warm shower around Providence but in the end nothing materialized. So we basically biked off without knowing where we were going to spend the night. Getting out of Boston was the usual suburbia with traffic and big roads. We stopped for lunch by the sea and continued on. The ride got much nicer with a wonderful bike trail leading all through the forest. Soon we found ourselves getting into Providence. We entered from the east and went straight through the university quarter. The area was quite nice and we were half thinking of pitching our tent somewhere in the park. Right outside Starbucks we found another was a cozy little place where we could have stealth camped, but in the end we decided to push on. We biked through Providence as night was falling. It is a very nice city actually. Pity we didn't have more time to explore. We finally decided to head on towards New London where the Long Island ferry leaves from. There was a rather cheap Motel 6 on the way, that we thought we would take if we didn't find anything else. We soon found ourselves biking in the dark in the suburbs of Providence. The area we were in somehow didn't feel right to me. I didn't like stopping at red lights and wanted to keep moving as much as possible. We finally reached the Motel and I was quite relieved to get there actually. Funny how sometimes you have a feeling that something is not right. My opinion is, it's always good to listen to your gut feeling... We spent an hour or

so in Dunkin's using the internet. The only thing we had were two bagels, as everything else from DD's is pretty disgusting.

Su 25.10.2015, day 105. Ferry to Long Island.

From the Motel 6 down to New London was quite a long ride. And it was pretty tough as well, wind was not really in our favour and there were no high hills, but lots and lots of them. We had late breakfast under a highway bridge out of the rain and got to the ferry in good time just when the sun had set making all the clouds nice and pink. We didn't have a place organized to sleep, so we simply got off the ferry and camped on the parking lot of a trail head, just beside the ferry terminal.













Mo 26.10.2015, day 106. Very nice ride along Long Island

The eastern most tip of Long Island is very rural. Right at morning we had our first great experience. We went into a café for breakfast. Immediately everyone started talking to us. The lady who owned the café had a son who crossed the US. So she was very interested in our project, finally she gave us some scones and later even some goodies as dessert. And one guy who was chatting with us even gave us 20\$ to go and get lunch!

We decided to take the longer route heading south towards the ocean and to where all the rich people live. The ride involved some ferries, which was nice and then pretty soon we reached the next milestone of our trip. 5000 km pedaled in just over 100 days. This is really an impressive number. It is about the same as Basel to Astana in Kazakhstan and further than from Basel to Tehran in Iran. We were really highly spirited and interviewed each other while riding along the sandy beaches. There were huge parking lots, but not a soul was there. We toasted some bagels on the beach and pushed on towards Mastic Beach, where we had a warm shower organized. We rode past vast mansions that all seemed unoccupied but that were being tended by lots of caretakers that all looked very Mexican. For me it is clear that the Republicans will rant about illegal immigrants but will never do anything to reduce the number. If they would solve it, then where would they recruit the cheap labour that they exploit to keep their homes?

The ride in the evening turned out being not so nice. Mastic feels like a poor run down sort of place and traffic was terrible. Also it was dark by the time we got there. We finally arrived at Rudi's place who was offering a spot on his lawn to pitch our tent through WarmShowers. We said hello and pitched our tent

and had a shower. We chatted for a short time but soon went off to bed. The night was not so restful. There was shouting and arguing going on in the house next door. Then there was the sound of rustling of leaves as if someone was sneaking past. And at about 4am I heard some small animal start to eat grass right next to my ear. Funny how if I am not fully confident about where I am sleeping I wake up at the smallest noises. A good instinct actually, I guess...















Tu 27.10.2015, day 107. Into Suburbia

Riding got tougher. First there was the constant stop and go at red lights, then there were a lot of 4 or even 6 lane roads, sometimes without hard shoulder. We didn't have a place to stay the night and were planning to find some motel or other. Close to dusk we quickly did the usual dash into McDonald's for internet to find a place to stay. A Croatian guy started talking to us. We were already thinking this could be our ticket to a free night! But unfortunately it wasn't, but it was still nice chatting to him...

So we finally took a Motel for 110\$ in Merrick. It was a safe haven. And for now we have the budget to do this.





We 28.10.2015, day 108. Into New York just before the storm!

We knew there was a storm coming. We have learnt from the past, so we checked several weather forecasts and they all seemed to more or less agree. The good news for us was that the wind would be in our backs and that the real bad weather was only due after lunch. So we got up well before sunrise and had breakfast in the dark. At first light we set off, rain gear ready to put on whenever it became necessary. Riding was actually significantly easier than the day before, as the bike route took us straight through residential areas with little traffic. We saw quite a few flags raised to half mast. We later learned that a black police officer had been shot dead in Jamaica, a borough that we biked straight through. But we never felt unsafe or threatened. In fact we had a very nice experience with two black guys who called out to us out of their car and then stopped ahead of us to find out who we were. They couldn't believe we came all the way from Europe, they seemed to have had no idea where Switzerland was, but they certainly found our adventure very cool indeed. So after the obligatory selfies we headed off...

The rain started when we arrived in Brooklyn. And when we got to Brooklyn Bridge it was already quite bad. The NYC skyline was completely engulfed in the clouds, but this somehow made the experience even more special. There were very few people on the bridge and we had fun filming and taking photos. We spent very little time on Manhattan itself. We biked straight across. It really surprised me how narrow the Island actually is. We took the ferry across to Hoboken. There we had agreed to meet up with Tanya at about 3pm, a good friend of our family, who had very kindly offered to let us spend some days in her flat. We arrived early and so went into a Sandwich place to get out of the rain, which by now had turned into a full-fledged downpour with strong winds to boot.

Eventually we had to go back out into the rain and the wind for the last 2-3 kms to Tanya's flat. We were soaked when we arrived. Tanya was absolutely great. Totally relaxed about us bringing our wet bikes through her wonderful flat. She had fresh towels, bed-cloths, food, even beer all ready for us. And no sooner had we arrived than she headed off again leaving the flat completely to us. At 5:30 we had arranged to go for dinner with her parents Hans and Imelda. Tanya came to pick us up, but when we arrived at the restaurant, we found that there was a power black-out. We later learnt that a tree had fallen on the power lines and blew a transformer. In fact we saw the blue flash while driving towards the restaurant.

So an alternative place had to be chosen. We finally went to a place run by a Swiss (Wallis and Jura) couple. It was great and I truly enjoyed the taste of home and the soufflé for dessert was the uncontended highlight!











Th 29.10.2015, day 109. A Day in New York

It was really nice to sleep out in a real bed in a whole apartment for once and we savored the experience. We took the Path train from Hoboken to the World Trade Center, had a quick look at the Memorial and then walked all the way up to the MoMA where Sara, a yet another friend of the family and a great person! She had museum tickets waiting for us. Call me main stream, but I really liked the works by Picasso. Such a development in his career, such a wide breath of different styles and methods, and also such a great sense of humor (at least this is what it seemed like to me). Maybe I should buy a book...

We had a coffee with Sara and arranged to meet again at 5:30. She then took us to the High-Line, which is an old aerial railway line that has been turned into a park. It is really well made and very popular indeed. We got on it just after the sun had set and the sky was the most incredible pink. Excellent timing! After the High-Line we said goodbye to Sara and walked all the way back up to Times Square. By the time we got back to the flat in Hoboken it was already quite late and we were pretty worn out. We made a salad for ourselves and then went off to bed.



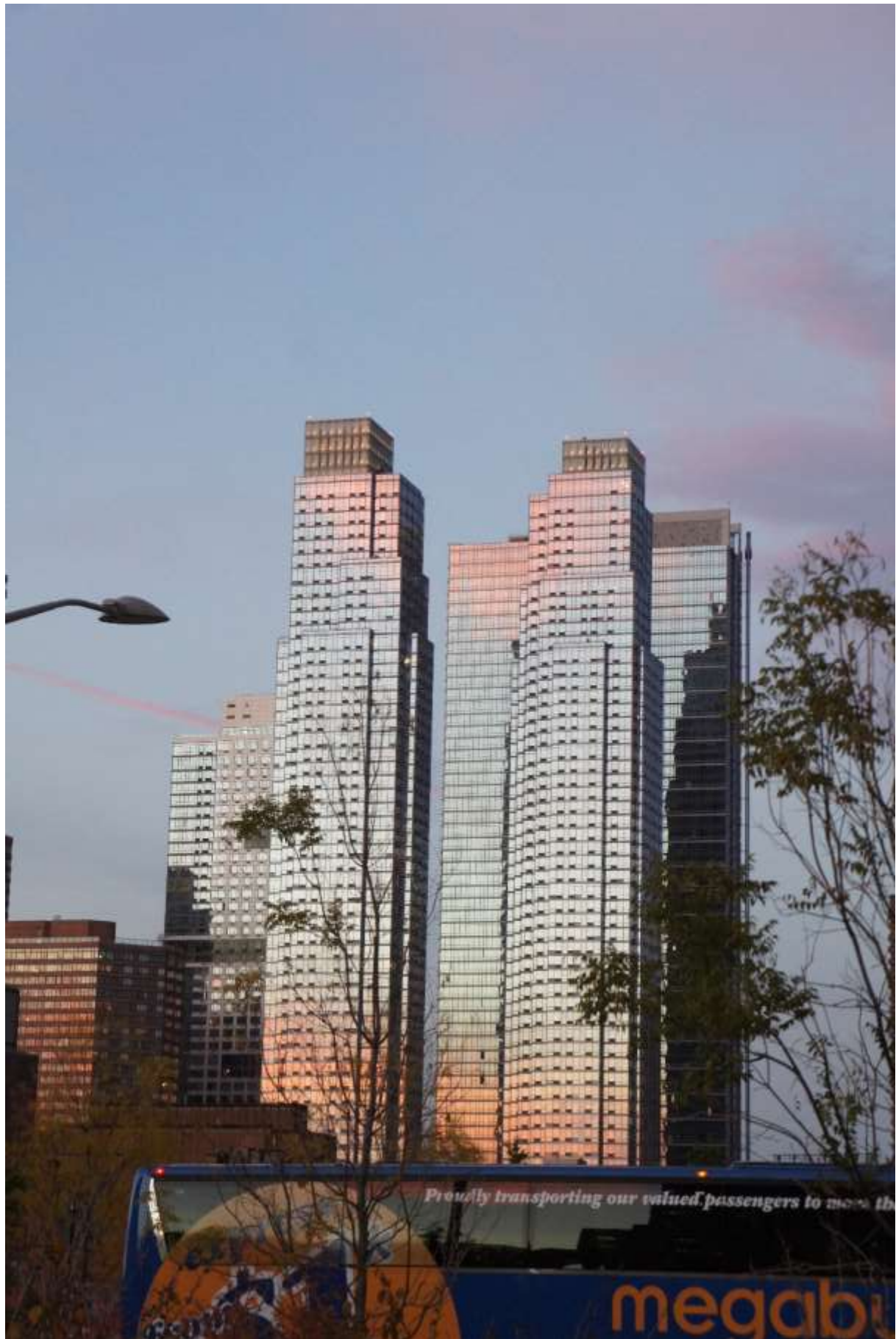


















Fr 30.10.2015, day 110. Last day in New York and dinner with friends.

The day didn't start off too well. We had a big argument about nothing really. I overreacted to Siria saying that something was complicated. I am really sensitive to her saying "it's complicated", "we won't make it", "there is no time", etc... Also "the other way would have been faster, easier, nicer, etc..." drives me nuts. It's always the same story. I really must try to be a bit more relaxed about this! But in general I really have to say that we are handling the situation of being on top of one another 24/7 really well.

In the end the day on Manhattan was far too short. We just made it to Central Park and back again. In retrospect it would have been better to stay in Hoboken. There I go, exactly with such a "it would have been better..." sentence ☺

We were invited for dinner with Tanya's family and it was absolutely stunning. They said that they don't go to museums. Food is their museum. And when we started eating I saw what they meant! The food was absolutely divine! The day before I had mentioned that I miss "Leberli", a Swiss delicacy and sure enough, Hans cooked Leberli for us. And they were out of this world!!

They drove us to the station and we said our good-byes to these wonderful people. On the train it was funny watching all the teens all dressed up for Halloween. And all of them drinking like mad out of bottles wrapped up in brown paper bags. So what the hell is the brown paper bag all about? Everyone knows there is a bottle of beer hidden in the bag! This is about one of the most stupid rules ever.





