



The girls: Janine & Emily

The date: September, 2008

The destination: Sardinia, Italy

Our third and final trip this year takes us back to a familiar destination: Sardinia. On two previous journeys, in 2004 and 2006, we encountered the wide variety of landscapes this Italian island has to offer, and we were able to capture some outstanding images. So when I started looking round for somewhere to go in the fall of this year, Sardinia was my first choice: the combination of extremely varied coastal areas and a wealth of mountainous countryside should certainly again help us to select a wide range of locations where I can place my models in suitable settings.

As on the last trip, to Provence in the summer of this year, on this occasion I will once again be responsible for both the still photographs and the

video recordings. My new assistant Regina will be providing me with support; this is the first time she will accompany me on a journey. In contrast, the makeup artist Mili has become a regular member of the team; I have worked with her frequently over the last few years.

Janine and Vanessa were the models who had originally been booked for this trip, but the day before we set off Vanessa had to cancel because she suddenly fell sick. I was lucky enough to replace her, even at such short notice, with another model who is definitely just as attractive: Emily was quite prepared to take Vanessa's place and managed to arrange very quickly that she would be away for a few days.

## Tuesday, September 23rd, 2008: Day of arrival

9.00 a.m.: I meet my assistant Regina at the bus station in Vienna. The two of us will travel to Sardinia today in three stages: the first of these is a one-hour bus journey to the nearby Slovakian capital Bratislava, and our flight to Rome leaves from here at noon. On the final stage we take a short domestic flight from Rome to Olbia on Sardinia. Our models Emily and Janine, as well as the makeup artist Mili, are taking a flight direct from Prague to Olbia, so we will meet them there this evening. I'm a little worried about the weather: it's unusually cool and overcast for this time of year in Vienna. It's going to be warmer on Sardinia, but according to the weather forecast there is no guarantee of sunshine there either.

**Taking off from Bratislava. Everything is still going according to plan!**



2.15 p.m.: Everything goes according to plan up to the moment our flight from Bratislava lands at Rome. The trouble begins at baggage retrieval. We wait next to the carousel which has been indicated. And wait. And wait some more. We aren't the only ones: other people seem to be

**But the problems begin as soon as we reach Rome for our stop-over.**



affected by the problem as well. Finally, after an hour, word gets round that our luggage is revolving on a completely different carousel. The Italians really do know how to add a bit of excitement to life at every opportunity!

*4.30 p.m.:* Finally everything has arrived, and at least this gave us something to do between flights. The short flight to Olbia on Sardinia leaves on time and proceeds without incident.

*6.15 p.m.:* But then, at Olbia Airport, the difficulties take on a completely new dimension: my large reflector, which doesn't fit in a suitcase and therefore travels in a bag of its own, has been left behind in Rome. This is bad news, because the thing is pretty essential to my work! The lady at the baggage counter attempts to reassure me: probably the bag will arrive on the last flight, late this evening, so I will be able to pick it up tomorrow morning. But this is annoying, because coming here to pick it up in the morning will take us a lot of time which we need for our work, but at least it does look as though the thing will actually get here.

*7.00 p.m.:* When our girls arrive from Prague the saga continues: Mili's suitcase has been lost. As well as her private luggage it also contains her make-up equipment, and she can't really do her job without that. Which means that we are now without two important pieces of luggage: a pretty miserable state of affairs at the end of a day devoted entirely to travelling here!

*7.30 p.m.:* Since there is nothing we can do to solve the problem of the luggage this evening, we collect the rented car so we can drive to our hotel. At least this time we don't have any difficulty fitting the luggage inside the car, as it is large and has plenty of room. The hotel is only three-quarters of an hour away from the airport, so it will be quite possible for us to drive back here tomorrow morning.

*9.00 p.m.:* As we are sitting in an almost deserted pizzeria in a quite desolate village, it begins to rain... on top of everything else. It's cold anyway. As if we didn't have enough problems already! I hadn't been expecting the weather to be perfect this week, but if it is cold and raining we simply can't do any work at all. At the moment all we can do is hope that everything will get better tomorrow.

*11.30 p.m.:* Late in the evening I get a call from Olbia Airport: my reflector has arrived, and I can pick it up in the morning. So at least the problems appear to be sorting themselves out!

## Wednesday, September 24th: **First day of work**

*9.00 a.m.:* I was careful to choose a hotel not far from the first location where we are scheduled to begin work this morning, so we don't have far to travel. Now, of course, this isn't much use to us, because the first thing we have to do is drive back to the airport, which is in the opposite direction.



**A rather damp beginning to our first working day.**

*10.00 a.m.:* While I now have my lost piece of baggage back again, Mili's mood is getting steadily worse: nobody has any idea where her suitcase is, and there is no record of it in the computer system. „Try again later: may-

be we'll know more then," is all they can say. After three-quarters of an hour on the phone no more information is forthcoming.



**But we have other problems in any case: since our trip back to the airport is only partially successful,**



**... we first have to find some replacement cosmetics for Mili.**

*10.45 a.m.:* The only way Mili can do her job at all is for us to drive to the nearest shopping mall and find a cosmetics store, so we can assemble some provisional equipment for her. We also take this opportunity to purchase some supplies for the day. The general mood among the team is as gloomy as the weather.

*2.30 p.m.:* Since we had to spend several hours trying to solve various problems, by the time we finally get to our first location it is already early in the afternoon. It's a beautiful long beach with light-coloured sand. At least it has stopped raining in the meantime, but it is still very cloudy and not particularly warm.



**Despite everything, we manage a shooting session today, and it's a really good one!**



*3.30 p.m.:* However, the conditions are definitely good enough for our first shooting session. The girls even splash around in the water a little, although it is quite cool. Unfortunately there is a limit to the time we can spend here: although the sun doesn't go down until about seven o'clock, some time before then the light will get so bad that we will have to finish work for today.

*6.30 p.m.:* As we are packing the equipment back into the car at the car park by the beach Mili calls the airport again, to see if there is any news



**But before too long we have to finish for the day, because the light gets too bad.**

about her luggage. Nothing doing. This is a problem, because we are now setting off for quite a long drive which will leave us some distance from the airport this evening. But we have no choice; we simply have to resolve this problem later, so we get into the car and head for our next destination.

*7.00 p.m.:* For tonight I have booked rooms in a hotel a long way to the south of here, in the town of Tortoli. The road to Tortoli takes us straight over the highest mountains in Sardinia, a winding mountain pass with wonderful views – which we unfortunately can't really enjoy, because the sun is now setting, and we will cover the majority of the distance in darkness.

*9.45 p.m.:* It is late in the evening by the time we finally reach Tortoli, after several hours spent navigating the quite exhausting mountain roads, with all their twists and turns. Everyone is tired. I had hoped the end of the first working day would be a more pleasant occasion, but the problems with our luggage have caused us to waste so much time that we can be glad we are still more or less on schedule.

*11.15 p.m.:* It was supposed to be no problem at all to find our hotel in this small town. But it is: after driving around for half an hour without success we finally ask two men who are standing at the side of the road next to their cars, chatting. And they do know this hotel, in fact. But it becomes clear that we don't understand the long and complicated directions they give us, so one of them simply gets into his car and leads the way. We are very grateful for his help, because without his charming assistance we would never have found the small and inconspicuous building in a dark side street. The hotel is simple and plain, and it is also completely empty: the season is over, and we are the only guests.

7.30 a.m.: This morning we are greeted by an extremely pleasant surprise: sunshine! It was raining yesterday morning, and all through the day the skies were overcast, so we hadn't been expecting this at all. Our good mood is slightly spoiled by the quality of the breakfast, though: there is plenty of bread, but the butter which is supplied consists only of two small cubes, and that's hardly enough for five people.

10.30 a.m.: After we leave the butterless hotel and do some quick shopping for the day, we set off on the short drive to our first destination for today. It is a section of the coast with red rocks and bizarre, deformed juniper trees, where we were able to get some wonderful shots on our last

**This morning the weather is fine at last. So we have no time to lose!**



journey with Sarah and Michelle. This place was the only reason we crossed the mountains last night, and on this occasion it was worthwhile: in the shadows of the overgrown trees, against the background of red rocks, the girls look simply fantastic! At last we make good progress. As we are working a man walks past and remarks to me: „Sei fortunato con questo lavoro!“ – „You are lucky with this job!“

2.00 p.m.: Unfortunately the sky becomes cloudy again as the day wears on. But we intend to move in any case: even though this location is very attractive, it does begin to get boring after a while. I have a second location in mind for the rest of the day, and it is quite a long way from here.

3.30 p.m.: Once again we wind our way back up into the mountains, but this time we are on a different road, and it is still light. Still, the drive is tiring and takes quite a long time. By now thick clouds have descended over the mountains, and we can hear the distant rumble of thunder.

4.00 p.m.: Our second destination for today is a small forest with very old trees in a remote region of the central Sardinian mountains. But just before we get to the forest we are hit by bad weather: suddenly it is pouring with rain, and the temperature sinks to 13°C. For a while we remain sitting in the car, waiting in the hope that the bad weather will pass.

**Unfortunately the day doesn't continue as well as it started.**



4.30 p.m.: After half an hour we decide to give up this idea and find somewhere to sleep for the night. I didn't reserve a hotel for tonight, so we could remain flexible, and now the advantage of this becomes apparent. Since Mili's luggage still hasn't turned up, and we have no idea when we will be able to collect it, the town of Nuoro will be a good place to find a hotel. From here we can take the highway to get to Olbia Airport and back relatively quickly and easily tomorrow morning, or even this evening.

6.00 p.m.: Finding a hotel in Nuoro doesn't take long: a large, ugly establishment at the edge of the town which has clearly seen better days has more than enough room for us. It's annoying that

we have again only managed to achieve half the amount of work that is usually possible in one day, but at least we have plenty of time to relax this evening.

*7.00 p.m.:* Since there is no restaurant in our hotel we decide to stroll into the centre of town and look around for somewhere to have dinner. There is a sort of austere atmosphere to the town which reminds me a little of Bucharest. It doesn't get more welcoming until right into the centre of town, where there is actually a pedestrian precinct. But as far as gastronomy is concerned, all we see are cafes and bars, and we could hardly get dinner there.

*7.30 p.m.:* Feeling helpless, we ask a group of young people standing around. They do seem to know a place they can recommend to us, but they are not able to describe the rather complicated way there in English. Once again the problem is solved in charming Sardinian fashion: two young women set off and beckon us to follow them. They lead the way around a few corners, up some steps and along dimly-lit, deserted lanes until we come to a small and very inviting ristorante. We would never have found the way here without them!

**Friday, September 26th: Third day of work**

**Early breakfast isn't a particularly exciting idea.**



**But apart from that, we're looking forward to a really nice day!**

*7.00 a.m.:* The hotel serves breakfast from seven o'clock in the morning, and to make sure we can make up at least a little of the time we have lost, I turf everybody out of bed especially early. Apart from us, there appear to be only a handful of other guests in this large hotel, and we do attract a certain amount of attention: the receptionist, who also appears to be responsible for breakfast, has enough time to study our unusual team with interest. But at least he has plenty of butter for everybody!

*8.00 a.m.:* This business with the luggage is gradually becoming a serious problem: Mili's suitcase still hasn't turned up. And we simply have to spend tonight in Cagliari, the capital of the island right down in the south, because our return flight leaves from there early the following morning. I do know some good locations on the way there – but all this means that we are getting further and further away from the airport in Olbia where we arrived – and where the suitcase will have to be picked up – because Olbia is in precisely the opposite direction.

**Today conditions down at the beach are perfect!**



8.30 a.m.: In any case we have to get down to work, so we set off towards the west coast of Sardinia. At least we have some good weather today; it's sunny and really quite warm, and it looks as though it might well stay that way. After driving for an hour and then doing a bit of shopping in a village store, we make our way to a nearby beach.

10.15 a.m.: While Mili is still making up the first model she finally gets the call she has been waiting for: her suitcase has arrived and can be picked up! It's just as well, because this evening would be our last chance of doing so. But this does mean we will have to finish work late this afternoon and then spend several hours on the highway, so we can first collect the suitcase from Olbia and then drive back in the opposite direction, to the hotel we have booked for tonight in Cagliari.

11.00 a.m.: Which means we should do our best to work as efficiently as possible until then! And the conditions for this are really perfect: the sun is shining down on the long white beach, and not far away there are several rocky bays to provide a nice change. Although there are a few other people here they seem to be staying near the car park, which doesn't disturb us. And the water is even nice and warm, so the girls are happy to splash around in the sea a little. When they have a break Regina and Mili also take the opportunity to go for a swim – and I have to be careful they don't end up in the background of my shots.



**At last it really feels a bit like a holiday!**

3.30 p.m.: Since the baggage department at Olbia airport closes at eight o'clock in the evening, we will have to set off by five o'clock this afternoon at the very latest. We spent a long time on the beach, so there isn't much time left – but I would still really like to get in a second location today. Not far away are the ruins of an old stone watchtower, upon the rocks high above the ocean. We can just about make it, so we waste no time in setting off!

4.00 p.m.: Unfortunately conditions up at the watchtower are far less perfect than they were down at the beach: it's quite cool, and a very strong wind whistles around our ears. Emily stands right in the wind shadow of the tower,



**The wind up at the tower is so strong, it takes three people to hold the reflector in place.**

where it is reasonably quiet, but for everybody else things get quite complicated: I can hardly keep my camera still, with the gusts of wind tugging at me, and Regina needs the help of both Mili and Janine in order to hold the large reflector in place. The three of them look as though they are on a sailing boat in the middle of the North Sea as they clutch hold of the thing with all their might!

5.15 p.m.: In any case we don't have time for more than one series of photographs and a video clip, or we will not get to Olbia in time to pick up the suitcase. We quickly throw everything into the car and roar off. Since we have to come back this way in any case on our way to Cagliari, Regina gets us to drop her in a nice little village; that way she doesn't have to spend the entire evening in the car.

7.30 p.m.: This time everything works out, fortunately: we get to Olbia in plenty of time, and Mili is finally pleased to be reunited with her suitcase. There isn't much time for anything to eat, so McDonald's seems the best option. And now we have another four hours' drive to Cagliari in front of us. About half way there we have to



**By late afternoon, though, we have to finish work, to make sure we get to the airport in time.**



When we have picked up the luggage we still have to drive right across the island this evening.

leave the highway briefly, in order to pick Regina up again; by now she has begun to feel bored with her nice little village.

*12.30 a.m.:* By the time we get to the hotel in Cagliari it is past midnight. At least we don't have to spend much time searching for it; the directions we were given are clear and comprehensive. The hotel isn't bad at all – pity we have to check out early tomorrow morning!

## Saturday, September 27th: **Departure day**

*6.30 a.m.:* Our flight from Cagliari departs so early that we don't even have time to drop in at the breakfast buffet in the hotel. But luckily it's only a short drive to the airport, about 20 minutes.

*7.00 a.m.:* When we get to the airport we first have to clean all the rubbish out of the rented car. It really is amazing how much stuff builds up inside a car in just three days! Once the car has been returned in reasonable condition we head over to the check-in. Today we are all travelling together on the first stage of the journey, on a short domestic flight to Rome. There our paths

will part again; Mili and the models are flying from Rome to Prague, while Regina and I will take a different flight from Rome to Bratislava.

*10.15 a.m.:* When we get to Rome we have quite a lot of time to kill, because our connecting flights don't depart until this afternoon. But it still isn't worth driving into the city, as the airport is some distance outside the centre. So we have plenty of time to spend our money in the airport shops and eat luke-warm sandwiches. Then we say goodbye to Janine, Emily and Mili, so that they can explore the wonderful world of this major airport by themselves, without having to show any consideration for us.



**Finally, at Rome Airport, we part to go our separate ways.**

*5.30 p.m.:* When Regina and I finally reach Bratislava, after long hours of waiting and a reasonably short flight, the saga of our luggage enters a new chapter: the reflector has once again been left behind in Rome! By now we find all this pretty amusing. It really isn't so bad this time; I won't need it in the immediate future, and the Slovakian baggage service gives the impression of being fairly competent. At least I won't have to haul the thing all the way back home with me.

*7.30 p.m.:* Once the shuttle bus has dropped us in Vienna I say goodbye to Regina. This marks the end of the journey for us, and our girls should also have reached their homes by now.