



Plaza de San Francisco, Quito; a marine iguana suns itself on a beach in the Galapagos, below

they were big enough and had tongues.

Then it was back to Quito's old town where we had already spent two nights at the charming Casa Gangotena, with its grand architecture, pretty garden and terrace and its sumptuous rooms. We enjoyed a morning on a foodie tour, visiting markets and trying local delicacies. As a first-time visitor to South America I didn't know what to expect of Quito, but I found the old town really beautiful. It's the world's first UNESCO-protected city and you could easily spend hours wandering around the cobbled streets, visiting awe-inspiring churches and gazing at the magnificent colonial buildings.

The final week of our trip was spent in the Galapagos with five nights on the fantastic MV Santa Cruz visiting five islands. As one of the larger ships operating in the area it has plenty of space and facilities on-board, as well as a great choice of activities, perfect when you're travelling with children. I had read that the number of tourists visiting Galapagos had sky-rocketed over recent years so I was expecting a queue of cruise ships at each island, all jostling to off load their guests.

This wasn't the case at all, as there is a limit on visitor numbers and time allowed on each island so as it turned out, our ship was the only one docked at each visitor site. We were in a group of ten so even though there were 90 people on the boat, we went around the marked trails separately, meaning it didn't feel crowded. Although there wasn't a massive variety of wildlife, what there was was there in huge numbers and they were utterly uninhibited, which meant magical, close-up encounters with fascinating, unique creatures. Marine iguanas would lie together in mounds, arms draped over each other, staring up at the sun with what looked like huge smiles across their faces. Blue-footed boobies, lizards, flightless cormorants and giant tortoises are all in abundance.

The highlight of my trip, however, was the snorkelling which you can do most mornings and afternoons, either from small boats or from the beach.

There were huge sea turtles, penguins, sea lions, rays and sharks, not to mention the hundreds of brightly coloured fish.

We spent our last two days on Santa Cruz Island, which didn't feel like it was even part of the same archipelago we had just been exploring. It has a population of 20,000 people and is a bustling place. The award-winning Finch Bay Eco Hotel

was lovely. It served delicious food and was set in great surroundings right by a beach, hedged in by mangroves. The pool, too, was a big hit with the children, making the stay a great way to end our trip. We did manage to drag ourselves away from the hotel to take the 50-minute walk to Tortuga Bay, where we hired kayaks and paddled with sharks and turtles. This huge swathe of white sandy beach is home to massive marine iguanas and popular with surfers and their families.

If you're passionate about wildlife, and especially if you want to pass on that love to your children, this holiday, taking in two of the world's greatest ecosystems on the one journey, truly is a trip of a lifetime.



THE FACTS *Journey Latin America specialise in tailor-made holidays and group tours to Latin America and Antarctica. Its 15-day family holiday including three nights at Casa Gangotena, three nights at Sacha Lodge, five nights on the MV Santa Cruz and two nights at the Finch Bay costs from £3,142pp based on a family of four. This price includes flights from Edinburgh or Glasgow, domestic flights, transfers, excursions and most meals. For further information contact Journey Latin America (0208 747 8315, www.journeylatinamerica.co.uk).*



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Bigger picture

Art and culture collide with beer and sausage in the heart of Bavaria

JIM GILCHRIST

With the two-week bacchanal of Oktoberfest and the huge scale of some of its beer palaces, one tends to think

of Munich in terms of quaffing frothing steins, rather than soaking up art, but the Bavarian capital also boasts art collections of international significance. Now its museum and gallery district is poised for the re-opening on Wednesday of the Lenbachhaus municipal gallery, home of a world-renowned collection of works by the early 20th-century Blauer Reiter (Blue Rider) group of artists, and remodelled to a striking design by British architects Foster + Partners.

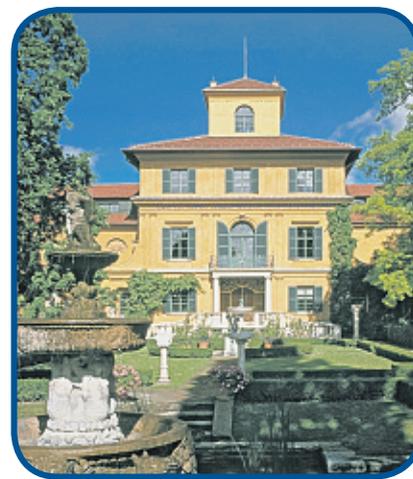
The Lenbachhaus occupies the former Tuscan-inspired villa and studio of Franz von Lenbach, a popular portraitist who died in 1904. In 1957 it

was transformed from a municipal gallery into a world-class one when Wassily Kandinsky's companion, Gabriele Münter, bequeathed more than 1,000 works by members of the Blauer Reiter expressionist movement, including 90 paintings by Kandinsky, as well as paintings by herself and by other eminent artists such as Franz Marc and Paul Klee.

None of the canvases was back on the walls during my preview visit, as work continued on the new wing, strikingly clad in Foster's gleaming façade of golden metal rods, reflecting the ochre finish of the original house. However, in the glass atrium connecting new and old, Olafur Eliasson's *Wirbelwerk*, a 26ft high vortex of glass and steel, hung imposingly from the ceiling. Once it opens, visitors will see the gallery's collections in a new light - quite literally, thanks to a groundbreaking LED lighting system developed by Osram and artist Dietmar Tanterl.

Von Lenbach deliberately situated his villa close to Munich's two great galleries of the Pinakothek and Glyptothek, at a time when the city was an important centre in European art. Today, you can stroll within a few minutes from the transformed Lenbachhaus to the other galleries of the museum district, the Alte Pinakothek, Neue Pinakothek and the 2002 Pinakothek der Moderne.

We headed for the mighty Alte Pinakothek, currently hosting (until 16 June) the Paintings of Jan Brueghel the



48
HOURS IN
Puerto
de la Cruz

- **Friday, 2pm** Villa living is the way to go in Tenerife's north. Villa Tenerife (weekly from £650, www.ownersdirect.co.uk/canaries/c5067.htm) sleeps eight and is just uphill from the centre, with views of the town and Spain's highest mountain, Teide.
- **3:30pm** Descend into town and explore Puerto's trio of black sand beaches. You'll need an ice-cream afterwards. Helderia Fredino (Plaza del Charco) make the town's best.
- **7:30pm** Puerto is famous for its fresh seafood and the place to savour it is the restaurant above the local fisherman's cooperative, La Cofradia (Calle Las Lonjas 5, tel: 922-383409). Ocean views accom-





Clockwise from main: Munich's main square; Olafur Eliasson's *Wirbelwerk* installation; the original villa at the Lenbachhaus municipal gallery



Elder, featuring works by the Flemish master from the Alte Pinakothek's own vast collections, and placing them in the context of other artistic Brueghel family members such as Jan the Younger and the two Pieters, Younger and Elder.

Taking in the entire museum district could occupy many days, but it is also worthwhile crossing the River Isar to visit the extraordinary Villa Stuck, one-time home of painter Franz von Stuck, champion of Munich's own take on Art Nouveau. The villa is currently hosting an exhibition about the radical theatre designer Frederick Kiesler, whose often stark stage and exhibition assemblies are in marked contrast to von Stuck's original rooms, with their lavish Art Nouveau decoration.

For a good overall sense of the city, try a walk conducted by Munich Walk Tours, whose amiable American guide, Levi, led us from the central Marienplatz, dominated by the gothic spire of the Neues Rathaus with its famous Glockenspiel, and through the outdoor

Victualienmarkt, its shops and stalls crammed with vegetables, fish and a thousand ways with pork and sausage.

Then it was on into the great green expanse of the Englischer Garten, the largest park in Germany, with its Chinese pagoda, and, bizarrely, surfers riding the artificial wave of its Eisbach, immediately below the rumble of city traffic and adjacent to the Haus der Kunst - a surviving example of ponderous Third Reich architecture.

And, yes, there remains the shadow of that other Munich, which was the birthplace of Nazism. Sitting amid the rococo elegance of Café Tambosi, looking across the Odeonsplatz, we recalled our guide's account of early Nazi rallies and why a nearby alley, the Viscardigasse, is "Dodger's Alley". Citizens used to cut down it to avoid being forced to give a Nazi salute to the memory of 16 Nazis killed by police there during Hitler's failed "Beer Hall putsch" of 1923.

Art, culture, and a tumultuous history - but there's no getting away from beer in Munich. The city runs on the

stuff - there's a 30,000 litre tank of it buried under the food market, while in the Hofbräuhaus, they shift more than 10,000 litres daily (and that's off season). With space for 1,000 quaffers on its ground floor alone, the crammed Hofbräuhaus can feel like hell on earth with an oompah band. Less frantic are some of the other excellent bierkellers such as the Weißes Bräuhaus and the Altes Hackerhaus.

We particularly took to the warm and friendly old Café am Beethovenplatz - great food, wheat beer and jazz or classical music every night. And nothing quite works up a thirst like looking at art.

THE FACTS *easyJet* (www.easyjet.com) flies daily from Edinburgh to Munich, from £27.99 including taxes and charges. For further information see www.lenbachhaus.de and www.munich-tourist.de

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Bargain Breaks

COMPILED BY ALICE WYLLIE

CATALAN CLASS

Head to Barcelona for a three-night break, with prices starting from £328pp. This includes accommodation at the two-star HLG City Pelayo on a bed-and-breakfast basis, and return flights from Glasgow departing on Thursday. Call 0800 408 5594 or visit www.jet2holidays.com

SPICE OF LIFE

Depart London Stansted on Friday for a five-night trip to Marrakech. Prices start from £246pp including accommodation at the three-star Tachfine Hotel on a room-only basis. Call 0203 320 3320 or visit www.ebookers.com



CADDY SHACK

Book in to The Bamburgh Castle Inn in Northumberland for a two-night golf break with prices starting from £142pp. This includes accommodation on a bed-and-breakfast basis and three rounds of golf on three different courses. Call 01665 602 632 or visit www.alnwickgolfbreaks.co.uk

pany the superb white fish and shellfish. ■ **10pm** Puerto de la Cruz boasts a cultural edge Tenerife's southern resorts largely lack. Slick minimalist Pequeño Buda (Calle Iriarte 26, tel: 922-374192) is home to cultural shows, comedy, live bands and club nights.

■ **Saturday, 8am** Views of Mount Teide dominate Puerto. If you want to climb the big one El Cardon (tel: 922-127938, www.elcardon.com) can sort a permit, pick you up at the villa and look after you on the tough climb.

■ **4pm** Puerto de la Cruz's Archaeological Museum (9a Calle El Lomo, www.arqueopc.com) is in a charming 19th-century mansion, with fascinating exhibits, artefacts from the Gaunche, who inhabited the island before

the Spaniards conquered the area.

■ **8pm** Set in a leafy courtyard Tito's Bodega (Camino del Durazno 1, tel: 922-089436) evokes the days when Victorian Britain came to convalesce in Puerto's idyllic climate. Serves superb Canarian food.

■ **Sunday, 10am** The Canaries' greatest architect was Modernist Cesar Manrique. Appreciate his style as you laze at the waterfront Lago Martiánez lido (Avenida Familia Betancourt y Mol, tel: 922-385955).

ROBIN MCKELVIE

THE FACTS Return Ryanair flights to Tenerife from Edinburgh (www.ryanair.com) start at £130. Robin travelled around Tenerife as a guest of www.carrentals.co.uk, which offers car hire throughout the island, www.webtenerife.es



A view of Puerto de la Cruz, main; Mount Teide, inset