

Thursday the 23rd of July 2009

This day we went further on to Tallin that was our last stop before going back to Norway.



Tallin's flag



Tallin's coat of arms

Tallinn (until 1918: Reval) is the capital and the largest seaport town in Estonia. The city has a little more than 400 000 inhabitants and lies far north on the Baltic peninsula, 80 km south of Helsingfors. It was captured by the Danish in 1219 and sold to the Teutonic Knights in 1346. The city was under Swedish rule from 1561 until the Swedes lost their possessions in the Baltic to Russia in 1710 during the Great Northern War. It was capital in the independent Estonia from 1919 until the Soviet occupation during and after the second world war and became capital again after Estonia's independence in 1991.

The city's old-town, *Vanalinn*, was entered on to UNESCO's world heritage list in 1997.



Estonia's flag



Estonia's coat of arms



Estonia's position in Europe

Estonia has been inhabited by finnish-ugric tribes since pre-historic times. They were christianized after long-lasting crusades that ended in 1227 when Denmark had conquered the northern part of the county and the German Swordbrothers the southern part. Denmark kept the northern Estonia until 1346. German dominion over the northern Estonia lasted until Sweden conquered the area in 1561. Russian invasions in 1481 and 1558 were beaten off. The southern part, Livland, was under German rule until Poland-Lithuania conquered the province in the 1580s.

Denmark's historical connection to Estonia is the background for the legend of the origin of the Danish flag, Dannebrog. According to legend, Dannebrog fell down from the sky during the battle at *Felin* in Estonia during the crusade that king Valdemar II conducted against the heathen Estonians. The Danish were about to loose when the flag miraculously descended and gave them courage and victory. Various versions date the incident either to 1207 or to 1219, and the battlefield is also said to be *Lyndanisse*.

In 1625 the whole continental Estonia came under Swedish rule. The Swedes kept the administrative division of two provinces. Estonia was the designation to the coastal strip of land in the north along the Gulf of Finland, while Livland in the south in addition included parts of present Latvia. This partition was in existence until the 1900s. King Gustav II Adolf forced the German nobility to give the farmers bigger freedom, and to establish a printing works and a (German linguistic) university in Tartu (earlier *Dorpat*) in 1632.

During The Great Nordic War, Sweden was broken as a great power when Russia conquered Estonia and Livland in 1710, a conquest, which was verified at the peace treaty in Nystad in 1721. The farmer and the citizens stayed mainly German speaking as long as the Russian government lasted, and Estonian language was roughly speaking only spoken by the bonded farmers. They obtained better conditions when Russia annulled the bondage in Estonia in 1816 and in Livland in 1818.

After the collapse of the Russian Empire during the October revolution, Estonia stated its independence 24. February 1918. Was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940, occupied by Germany in 1941 and by the Soviet Union again in 1944.

The Soviet occupation of Estonia lasted until 20. August 1991.



We had booked at Pilve Apartment Hotel. This was a bit outside the centre, but we didn't need more than about half an hour to walk to the centre of the town.

This were appartments that was equipped with a kithen.

There was also a small balcony, where we could sit outside.



On our way into the town the first day, we have reached Kiek in de Kök. It was built as a cannon tower late in 1475. The tower is 49,4 meter high, has a diameter of 17 m, and the walls are 3-4 m thick. It was once the largest of its kind in North Europe.



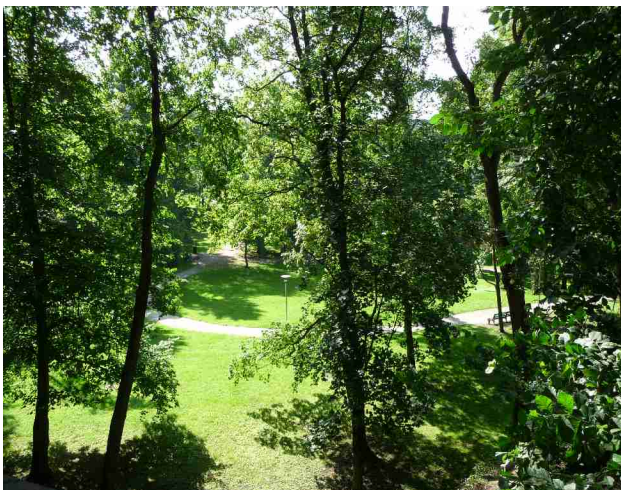
Right beyond we can see the steeple of Nikolai church.



This is a small monument in memory of the liberation



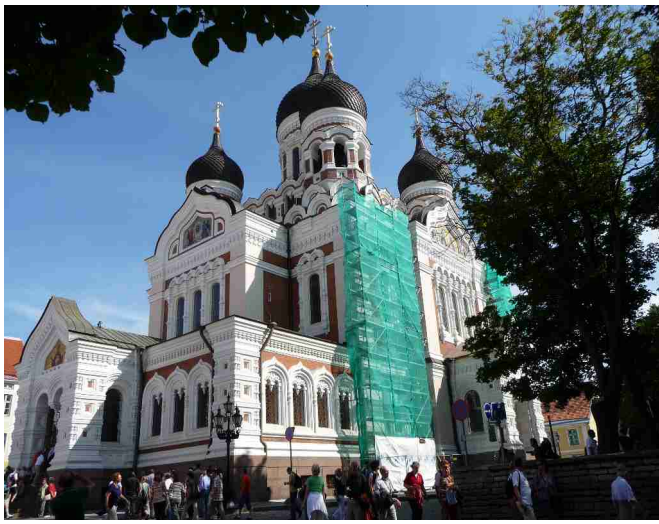
At the top of the 45 meter high Long Hermann (Pikk Hermann) on the corner of the Estonian parliament building, the Estonian flag is waving as a symbol of Estonian independence.



Hee we are looking down into the Hirve park



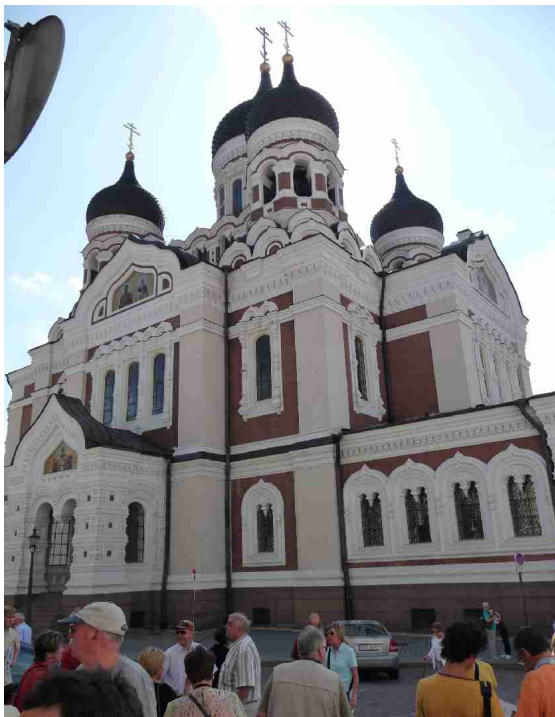
According to Estonian legend, Linda was married to Kaley, who founded Tallin. When Kaley died she built the Toompea hill as a memorial



The Alexander Nevski cathedral. The church is from late in the 1800s. It is the largest church in Tallinn, and is dedicated to duke Alexander Nevski.



The Toompea palace seen from the Lossi square. Estonia's parliament and the government offices lie here.



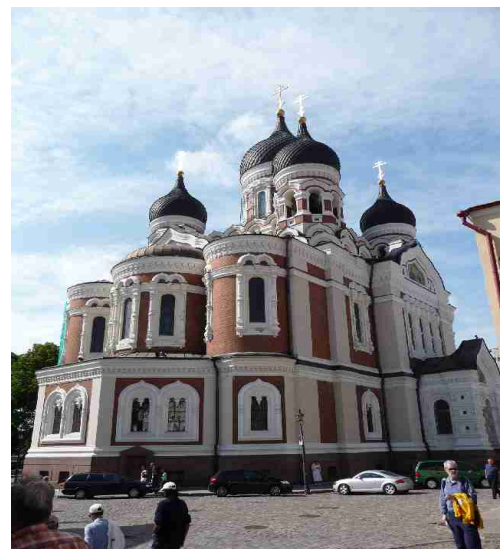
The Alexander Nevski cathedral seen from another angle



This is the Cathedral, Virgin Mary's Cathedral. It is the main church for the Estonian Lutheran church.



Beer shop from the old days



Passing the Alexander Nevski cathedral again



On our way down from the Toompea hill



Kjell walking beside the old city walls



Arriving down to one of the many city gates



It is possible to rent bikes



Another part of the wall. In the middle of the 1500s the whole of Tallinn was surrounded by a wall that was 2-3 meter thick and over 13 meter high. Totally there were 40 defensive towers along the wall.



Here is a good old fencing fight going on



Still fencing



More wall and more towers



Nice old houses



To the left Loewenschede tower



Loewenschede tower from various angles



The large seashore gate



The three sisters are three restored houses, standing side by side with nice decorations. See below.



The tower Thick Margareta. It has a diameter of 25 meter and the walls are up to 5 m thick.



Original sign



We had lunch at the restaurant to the left. The house to the right is Hueck's House, who has played a important role in Tallinn's history.



The two lime trees in front of the house, is planted by the Russian czsar Peter I.



St. Olaf's church. This church is one of the main attractions in Tallinn, and is in fact named after King Saint Olav. In the 1800s this church was one of the worlds highest buildings. The church shall once have had a steeple of 159 meters height. Today the steeple is 123,7 meters high.



This is the house of the Blackheads that was a guild of young, unmarried merchants. They played an important role in Tallin in the Middle Ages.



This is the dragon gallery with a jugend facade



Dial on the Holy Spirit's church



Approaching the city hall.



Looking in the opposite direction



The city hall was finished in 1404. Old Tomas, a weather cock in shape of a soldier has been in the top of the steeple since 1530



The city hall square



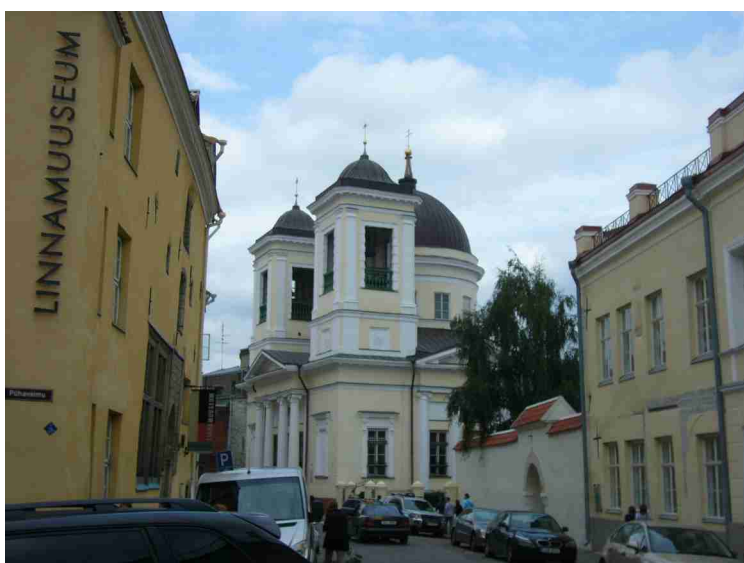
This pharmacy is believed to be the oldest pharmacy in the world. There is documented pharmacy activity since 1422, but probably much longer.



In a side street



Outside the Dominican convent.



St. Nikolaus orthodox church. It is dedicated to St. Nikolaus, the tutelary saint for fishermen and sailors.



Walking into the Katarina passageway.



Street picture



We had lunch at this restaurant. It was the first true Russian restaurant in Tallin and it is still recognized as the best.



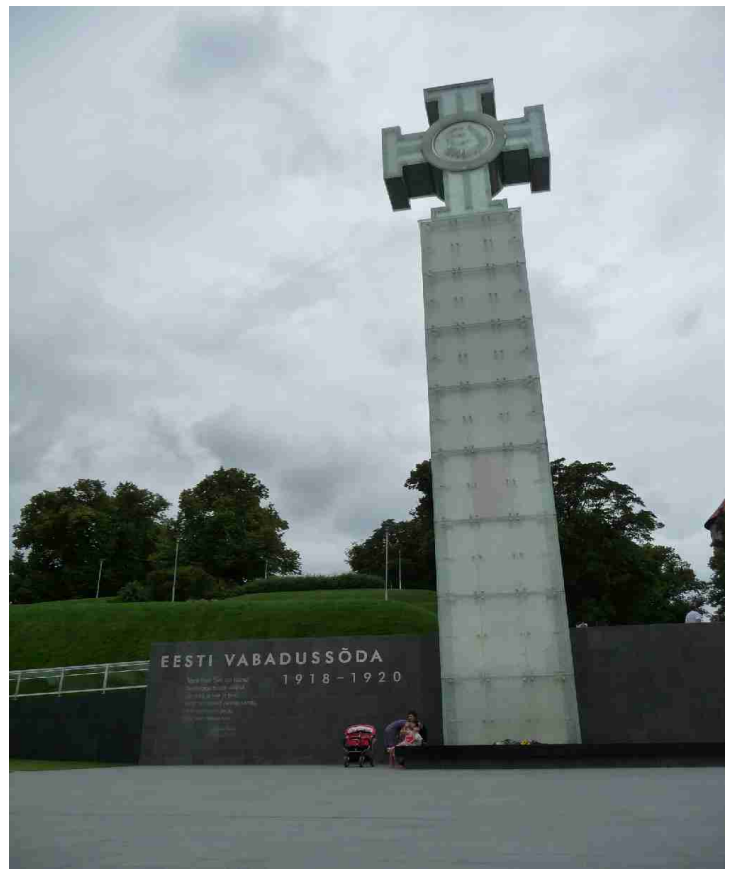
The mascot of the restaurant. It was possible to have bear steak if there had been a successful hunt



Pepper and salt boxes with holes pinched through the cap



Serving staff



The freedom monument