

...in which intrepid **Pawn** goes looking for a Fairy Tale park and finds himself lost, missing a concert in the end...



The name says it all...

This morning began oddly, and just went downhill from there. Firstly, I awoke at 03:30, wide awake. Having not gotten to bed until 00:30, this wasn't so welcome a development. Giving up on willing myself back to sleep, I arose and spent the next couple of hours writing, which is its own reward, after all.

Back in bed by 5:30.

Stirred at 11:30 by an incoming text message, but then remained in bed until 12:30. Now caught up on sleep, arose again.

Having had a prodigiously busy autumn, with travel all over the US, many weekends worked-through, many weeks of 60 or more hours worked... part of the reason for this trip was to relax and catch up on sleep, reading and personal time. I am certainly getting that, but do feel some guilt that I am wasting the opportunity of being in Berlin, when what I'm doing here could have been done in Cudahy, fer cripes sake!

Okay, friend PK has recommended a visit to Märchenbrunnen, Am Friedrichshain. This is a Fairy Tale sculpture garden originating about 150 years ago, which has waxed and waned over the years, due to expenses, vandalism, wars, etc. Finally restored in 2006, it sports a lovely grand fountain, in a classic Venetian style, formal hedges of which any British would be proud, and other incidental magic. All of this on just the corner of the first public park built in Berlin.



I checked the online guides on Berlin transport for information on transit day tickets (7€, -/day) and sizing up the landlord's handy map to local attractions, like the BVG transit ticket stop, and out the door I went. Strolled up Heinrich-Hein Straße towards the BVG, but never found it. Did find a post office, and use the ATM therein, but decided that I would keep strolling, since the best information I had was that the park was just over a mile away.



I found the park just fine, and found, too, that most of it was boxed up to protect from the cold, so it was more a garden of wooden crates than a vibrant fairy tale fountain. Oh well. Snapped some photos of said crates, and headed back homewards.



Okay, not directly homewards. I could easily have retraced my path. I still have short term memory, after all, but I was already out and about, and figured I could venture into the heart of Berlin a bit more, and then swoop south, across the river Spree, back to Heinrich-Hein Straße. Not so easy, it turns out. See, my phone, it doesn't seem to get data access here. It should, it's supposed to. We

pay an extra monthly fee for global roaming — voice and data — and I know voice still works, since I keep getting robo-spam calls here, but no data! Without data, no functional GPS. The GPS still knows where I am, but Google maps has no maps to put that little blue dot on, so I'm just a dot in the sea.



Having come to expect my phone to know where it is, I hadn't bothered to bring an actual map with me (what foolishness!) and so ended up consulting bus-shelter maps to wind my way back. That didn't work so well, either. Drats!



It was about 14:30 when I left on this quest, and about 15:20 when I left the park and headed back home. It was 17:30 when I finally stepped back on to Heinrich-Hein Straße, and into the Sushi For You shop. My feet were sore, my pride bruised and my appetite whetted. I ordered sushi — Lach Menu, which was two nice nigiri sake, a sake maki, 2 Alaska maki and 2 inside-out kappa/sake maki. All that for 14.40€, or about \$16. Great deal, and well packaged to make it home, with loads of soy sauce, wasabi and ginger. Yum! Also stopped at Edaka for some oranges, snacks, & sweets.



Home by 18:00, at last, and as I removed my shoes I knew there was no way I was going to make my previously booked programme of Stravinsky, Schoenberg & Haydn at the new Pierre Boulez Saal. Oh well. Like I said, the whole purpose of this was to rest and relax, and that's what I'm doing.

Lessons learnt; Don't rely on phone. Bring up trip in City Mapper, which does a good job of caching local map tiles, so if one loses data access, what's in memory is at least somewhat useful (this is ultimately what got me back on track). Get over hesitancy to talk to the locals, which was caused by surly store clerk on day 1.