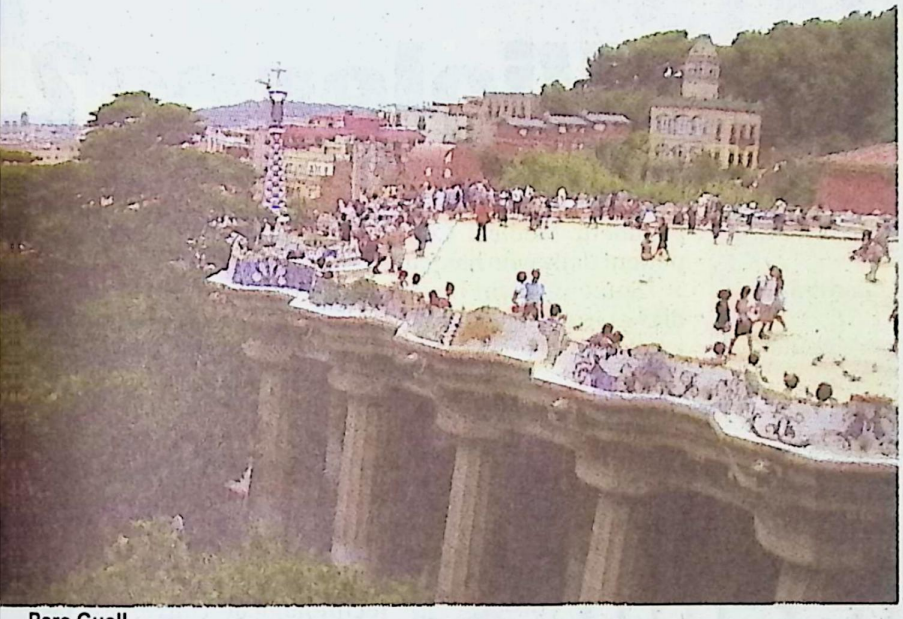


Parc Guell



The ceiling of gaudi.

borhood of Gracia. In the hot summer air of Barcelona, once I sat down on that bench I was glued. Bryan had to drag me off! Summer days in Barcelona are slow and lazy. It's no use fighting it. Everything shuts down in the afternoon for siesta. I couldn't find a post office open one afternoon to mail postcards they were all closed. We'd go home in the afternoon and nap for a few hours, ready for dinner at about 9pm. Any earlier we might not find something open! The nights are cooler and that's when people go out to take in the city and it's rich life.

Besides Gaudi's works, we were treated to a surprise the second night we were in Barcelona. Little did we know that the host family we were staying with lived one block near "Camp Nou" the famous stadium of Football Club Barcelona, one of the best teams in the world. On our way to dinner one night, Bryan and I followed the noise to the stadium and stumbled upon a game between FC Barcelona and Boca Juniors of Buenos Aires, Argentina. It was an exhibition game and it was beautiful. FC Barcelona won 2-1. The game ended at midnight and we headed for dinner afterwards, energised by the victorious Barcelona crowd. Seeing players such as Henry and Puyol live, was a dream come true. And talk about serendipity I was travelling with two soccer jerseys in my luggage they were FC Barcelona and Boca Juniors. Our stumbling upon the stadium and seeing the game was meant to be!

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Another unplanned event when the week we were in Barcelona, was the week of Fiesta de Gracia. It is a festival in the neighborhood of Gracia where inhabitants decorate the streets in all kinds of themes one can imagine. The best part is that it culminates on Thursday night with an open air concert with music in Catalun, Spanish and English. My flight back home left at 8am on Friday morning and so we spent Thursday night feeling the pulse of this magnificent city. After one last stroll by the harbour when the concert ended at 4:00am, we headed home. I packed up and left for the airport, tired but content. I was five years older than on my last visit to Barcelona, but this time Barcelona's summer air had given me renewed energy. Once again sleep had been optional.

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