

Belated update

Contributed by Apple
Tuesday, 01 April 2008

It aint getting any better but i've had a few requests to keep people updated so here goes.Â

{tab=News}

OK.Â It has been a while since the last update but I didnâ€™t want to depress people with my dreary posts!

The Samaritans phoned ME the other day â€“ they started reading the blog and got worried very fast!

Itâ€™s funny that!Â I was wondering why they had barricaded up the pier in Dun Laoire and posted Samaritan signs all over the place.Â Was it for my benefit?Â Or is that my paranoia just going into overdrive?

Hereâ€™s one for you:

2 girls sitting together, quietly.

Hilarious!

Now that we are all cheered up Iâ€™ll try to bring you all back up to date on developments.

As you know, Nang had to return to Thailand in February as her 3 month visa had expired.Â I had actually found her a job to work in a crÃ¢che through some contacts but due to new legislation introduced in Feb 2007 she is restricted from working in a crÃ¢che.Â Apparently only EU citizens are allowed to work in crÃ¢ches now.Â Non EU citizens who come to Ireland after Feb 2007 cannot work in a number of industries (including restaurants, crÃ¢ches and most service jobs!).Â Yes, itâ€™s true.

So how come there seem to be loads of Indians and Chinese working in service jobs?Â Well, most of them are students and are officially allowed to work 20 hours per week.Â Of course, that is really difficult to control and I am sure that most of them are working more than the 20!

I really donâ€™t think anyone should have ANY issue with a non EU citizen working â€“ as long as it can be proven that there is no EU citizen available to do the job.Â But they have gone to the complete extreme now.Â This has a negative effect on the businesses â€“ as they cant get the required workers.Â I really donâ€™t see any sense to the legislation.

Anyway, Nang went back to Thailand and started the process to apply for another visa to get back to Ireland.Â There is still no such thing as a â€œpartnerâ€• visa in Ireland â€“ even though we have been living together for 6 years.Â I provided all the required documents â€“ including 6 months of my bank statements.Â When the application was submitted they asked for the last 2 weeks of my bank statements!Â Why?Â They have already seen my bank statements for the last few years and

most people don't even have the previous 2 weeks of their statements! As far as I can make out, that is just some paper pushing plonker (ppp) who wants to flex their authority and muscles. Of course, I can't do anything except grin and bear it and provide all the details.

In fairness, this time around all went pretty well with the Irish visa. Except that they only made the visa effective from April 1st so Nang had to wait for a few more weeks in Thailand.

In the meantime, we thought we would use this time to apply for a Schengen visa. My father lives 6 months in the Canary Islands so we thought it would be nice to visit there. Man, what a mistake that was! They really don't make things easy. Nang was explaining what was happening in the Embassy and that there were girls leaving there in tears cause of the way they were being treated. I won't bore you with the details but 3 weeks later she is still waiting. That meant that she has missed the flight for 1st April.

Her new flight is 13th April so we are hoping that if she gets the Schengen visa that she can use the 2 weeks to apply for a UK visa. Yes, I know it sounds like we just love torturing ourselves applying for visas!

It looks like I have finally found a place that will put a heater in my Fortuner. It's typical that this all starts falling into place once Spring has arrived. All the same, I am delighted that I will be able to get it done at all! The crowd that do it are in Kent so I will have to take a few days off work and head over. Again, this is another reason that Nang will need the UK visa! We may even make a longer holiday and drive over to France (Eurodisney) on the basis that the Schengen Visa will work for her there!

I'm almost at the end of my sub-lease of the flat in Dalkey end of May sometime. If I am still in Ireland I would like to stay on in Dalkey. It really is a great little village and I am sure it will be fantastic in the summer. That's presuming that we actually get a summer this year!

{tab=Politics & Biz}

In Ireland, Bertie is still hanging in there. I reckon they are waiting till after he gives his speech at the US congress on April 30th. When he comes home he will be given the boot. Biffo will then be the main man and his arrogance is going to be something awful to have to put up with. I hope he just digs holes for himself all the time!

Stock Markets have crashed and I did well to sell all my financial shares a while back. I sold pretty much at the peak and it was a nice bit of business. However, I held onto my 2 properties in Ireland but they have performed poorly. I got a valuation on my house in Sandyford last month for €550,000. Just over 12 months ago the valuation was €650,000.

Now that hurts!

The economy looks very fragile here at the moment and I see it getting worse before it gets better. Cash is king and it would be a very brave person who invests anything big in the Irish economy now. However, this is usually where the clever people make real money! Rather than being a sheep and following the herd "if you have the nerve" there are probably some good opportunities out there.

In Thailand, things are changing again. After the recent elections it looks like things are beginning to settle down a little. Thaksin has returned home to face the music but I think he won't have much of a problem. There are also recent announcements regarding the easing of restrictions for foreign investment. IMHO, I think this is well overdue. Due to the current global Financial Crisis there is significant investment looking for a home. If Thailand was to get its act together then I am sure that some of this money would make its way to Thailand.

I would love to go back to Thailand but I am still looking for a job or business that would keep me occupied and where I could earn a decent living.

{tab=Sport}

United are looking good for the Premier League this year. They are 5 points clear with a better goal difference so I reckon they should be able to make it over the line.

This week they play in the Champions League against Roma and they should go through to the Semi-finals "probably to play Barcelona.

It's a pity they went out of the FA cup "otherwise they would be looking at the treble again. I was actually at that game Old Trafford against Pompey. I still can't figure out how they lost that game. Just one of those days.

Eddie finally went as Head Coach of the Irish team but it's hard to see who they are going to appoint. I am not convinced they would put Declan Kidney in charge.

{tab=Techie}

The iPhone was launched in Ireland this month but I think it is a complete swizz aka a rip-off!!! They are asking way too much for a 2.5G phone! However, their marketing is so good that I still think that a lot of Irish people will fall for it!

I am back using my Dopod phone for personal use but I use my Nokia 6300 for work. It's a great simple phone but with one major flaw the battery doesn't last long enough!

Last week I found my old Plantronics Bluetooth headset that I put in the washing 1 year ago. For some reason, I thought I would just try to use it again in case it worked and believe it or not it did!

Soon enough I will be in the market for a new phone and I reckon I will need to upgrade my laptop too. Not sure when I will get around to doing this but there are some very good deals out there for laptops now.

I am using Irish Broadband at home in Dalkey and most of the time the connection is fine. However, using Skype is awful. Somehow I think Irish Broadband are limiting the bandwidth on Skype. They have their own VoIP solution and I think it is in their interest that Skype doesn't perform well.

A while back (probably 1 year) I heard about Slingbox. At the time, I didn't take much notice but I stumbled upon it again recently. It sounds like a great idea. In its simplest form it allows you to connect a box to your TV (or sky or DVD) and then watch that over the internet from anywhere in the world! So basically, I could be watching RTE while sitting in Yasothon! No monthly charges just a one-time fee of €250 for the box. Definitely worth checking out more!

{tab=Ents}

Not much has changed on the social scene. I haven't been out drinking that much. Whenever I do head out then I don't last very long. I don't seem to have the same stamina as I had in Thailand. I've started drinking bottles of Tiger beer when I am out - just to give me the feeling that I am back in Asia.

I'm hoping that things will improve when Nang comes back and also now that we are into the bright evenings! ^ ^ ^

{tab=IMHO}

Â

I just re read my last post about settling into Ireland and contemplating moving back to Ireland.Â Interesting post but I dont really know what I was saying.Â I must have been trying to convince myself that things in Ireland werent really that bad.Â But in fact they are!

It's pure shite here.Â Boring.Â Monotonous.Â Shite.

It's too expensive.Â Everything is a hassle and a moan. Â

Sure, it's up to me to make things happen and to be honest I havent been making the effort.Â BUt why?Â I just couldnt be arsed here.Â I dont even know if I really want to settle here.....

BUt I dont know if I want to escape to THailand either.Â I couldnt face another year of doing nothing.Â I really want to take on something and give it 100%.Â Something that I will get enjoyment from and that would provide me with an adequate income.Â I'm not flash and I dont expect massive amounts of money - but I also dont want to be struggling by!

{/tabs}