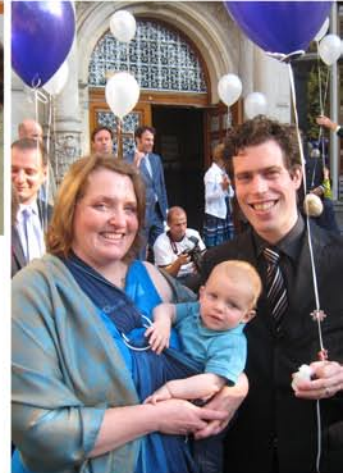




# 2008



**2008** opened with Ivo and Harmony and two-week-old Liam watching a fusillade of fireworks explode over the centre of Utrecht from our balcony of the tiny apartment that we lived in for the first eight months we were in Utrecht.

The beginning of the year was a time of little sleep and lots of learning as Ivo and Harmony adjusted to Liam's presence in their life and Liam adjusted to being in this outside the belly world that he'd avoided as long as he could.

The beginning of the year also saw a change of plans as Ivo sought a new job and we decided to stay in Utrecht rather than move to The Hague. In February, Ivo accepted an Environmental Consultant position at Royal Haskoning, a Dutch engineering and consulting company. And, at the beginning of April, between two trips abroad, we found out we'd gotten a new place to live in a quiet, leafy residential neighbourhood on the edge of Utrecht, a three-bedroom, two-story apartment.

In the first four months of the year we visited five other countries. In January we spent a lovely weekend in Belgium with Ivo's family. At the end of March we spent a week in El Borge, a hill village near Málaga in Spain, and took daytrips to Gibraltar, Ronda and Granada. And in April we took a three week trip to Vancouver and Seattle so Liam could meet Harmony's family and our friends. It was a wonderful trip full of fun and laughter.

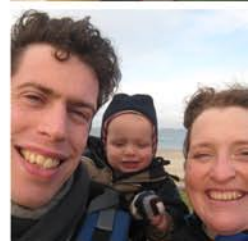
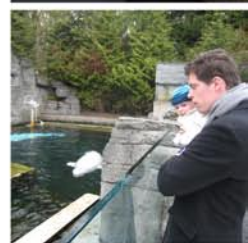
We came back from Canada just in time for Queen's Day on April 30 and then had a very busy beginning of May - Ivo started his new job and we moved into our new house, painting it, buying furniture and appliances and light fixtures and all that. In July, we bought a car, a small station wagon from Seat.

In August, Harmony's mother came to visit Liam and we got to show her around Utrecht, The Hague and Amsterdam. Liam also got to meet his Aunt Mara, in for flying visits on her way to and from vacation in Norway. And our little family had a lovely two week vacation in Germany, with a side trip to Austria, Liechtenstein and Switzerland, bringing Liam's country count to 11 and edging Harmony's ahead of Ivo's (32-31).

Harmony started Dutch classes again in September, now courtesy of the City of Utrecht, who also provide daycare during her classes. Liam enjoys playing with the other kids and the cool toys at the daycare. By November, Harmony tested at one step below complete fluency in listening and reading and "can deal with most things" in speaking and writing. She's continuing Dutch classes until March when she hopes to take a fluency test which will allow her to stay here indefinitely. She's also looking for a job now that her Canadian maternity leave is over.

In the fall we also had two visits from Harmony's cousin Courtney and her friend Jackie, the first involving pumpkins and the second cookies. During 2008 we also had visits from our friends Dom, Karen and Fiona. We enjoy having guests.

The year wrapped up with Liam's first Sinterklaas, birthday party and Christmas dinner here with Ivo's family. Ivo's enjoying his job, Harmony's looking forward to having one and Liam is a cheerful child who grows and changes almost daily. We're settling in here with each other, and we're happy and looking forward to what 2009 brings.



## Our little family wishes you a wonderful 2009!



For details and updates see:  
[copperlioness.com/pannencakes](http://copperlioness.com/pannencakes)