

The Motoroamers'

37 BEST BITS

Sharing our highlights after 6
years on the road



BY THE MOTOROAMERS

www.motoroaming.com



1 INTRODUCTION

Sat in a café in Frampton-on-Severn in Gloucestershire on our 6th Vanniversary, we challenged ourselves by listing our most *memorable moments* since we hit the road in 2016. What followed was an interesting hour as we reminisced over our highlights. My fingers smoked as I tried to keep up, typing the fast and furious outpouring of memories we have shared with Scoobie.

It seemed to us, that a great way to celebrate our life on the road was to capture those best bits in an eBook and share with you our sensory experiences and six year best bits in the hope that they continue to inspire you to travel.

The Motoroamers' story - the short version!

Formally, we are Karen and Myles; digital nomads who are inspired to discover the world with the freedom and choice that this travelling lifestyle has gifted us. More lovingly we are known as **The Motoroamers** and in March 2016 we packed up and packed in our life in UK for a gap year of travel whilst we sold property. The grand plan was to put down roots in the south-west and find the 'good life', once we had sown our travel seeds.

With visions of a small-holding, donkeys, chickens and soil tarnished fingernails put aside, we hit the road in our motorhome Scoobie. We were ready for adventures and exploration that would soothe our curious spirits and satiate our inner-adventurer. Yet a few weeks into our trip we discovered that this was the life we wanted permanently and that 'going back' was not an option. So from that moment on, 'home' became the place where Scoobie's tyres rested. We found love in every dawn, each new vista cleansed our eager eyes and fed our desire to live with freedom, fearlessness and choice.

In our first year with our trusty stead, a Pilote 740 (7.5m), we visited 10 countries and covered 12,000 miles; from Spain to Slovenia, to France, Belgium and Netherlands. A rich array of adventures that tempered our need to feel alive after too many decades of corporate stress and burn-out. Spring 2017 heralded a new set of adventures as we began an epic journey into uncharted territory. The idea was to travel across to [Greece](#) and then follow a natural passage through the eastern borders of [Bulgaria](#) and [Romania](#). What incredible cultures and natural

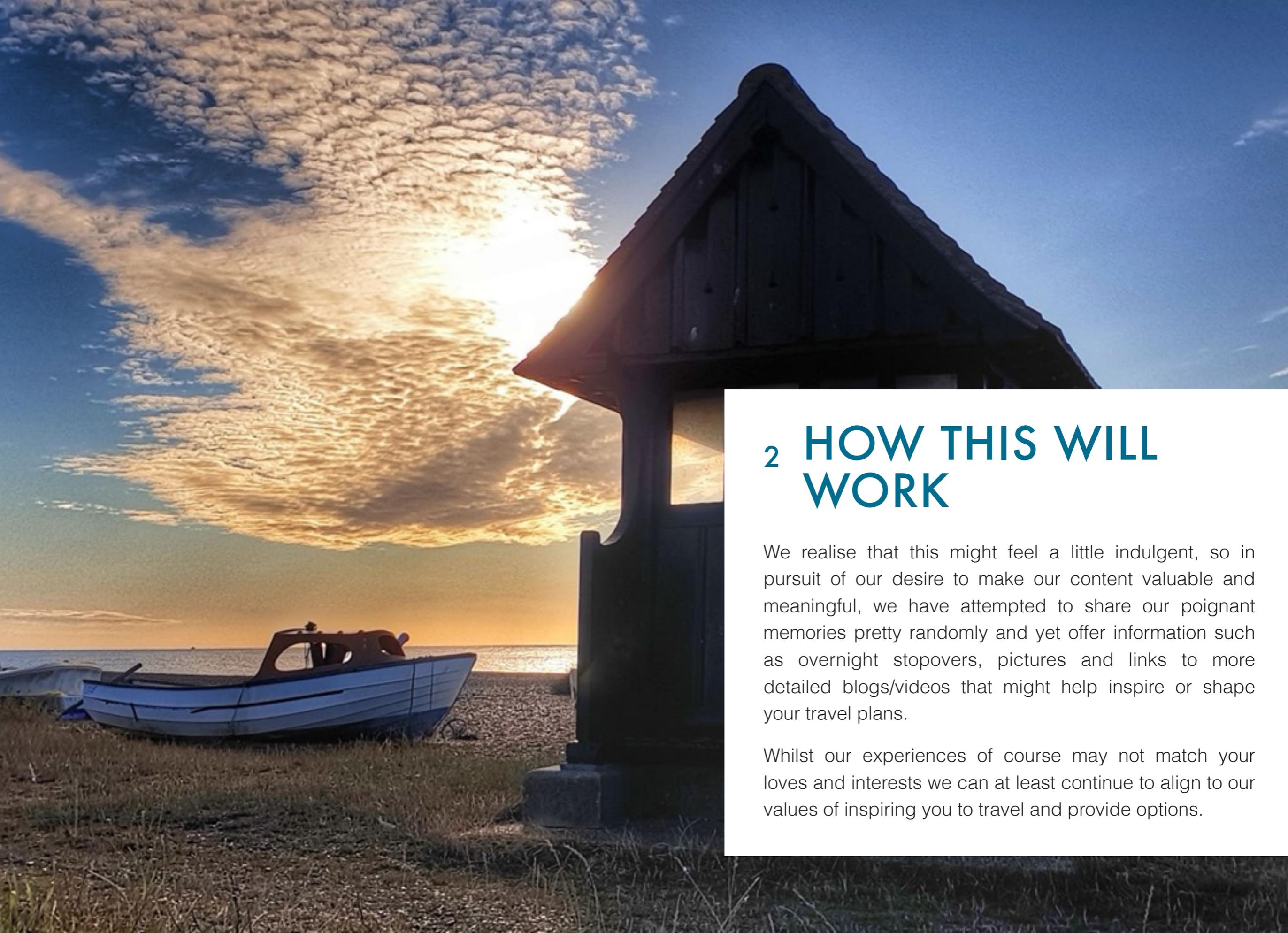
wonders these countries had to offer. So young on the European stage and yet a whole new set of experiences for the eager traveller.

2018 was all about uncovering the scars of [Poland](#) and [Slovakia](#) and 2019 our adventures took us into the Nordic highlights of Scandinavia's north eastern trio of [Denmark](#), [Sweden](#) and [Norway](#).

Then early 2020 a magical mystery tour of [Morocco](#) awaited us as we stepped out of our comfort zone and onto the African continent with the leap of a gazelle. Little did we know how poignant this trip would be as Covid swathed around us and Moroccan borders started locking down within four days of leaving the country. Who would have thought that over 18 months would pass before our wheels could turn again in earnest.

Six years on from our epic departure from the UK with 69,000 miles and 21 countries under our belt we truly have amassed a massive basket full of memories. In fact so many it really was hard to prioritise the list down to our top 37! Yes a slightly random number, although it really was impossible to make it 35! I hope you will forgive us. So let's go.



A scenic sunset over a beach. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the sky and the water. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. In the foreground, a wooden boat is beached on the left, and a wooden structure with a gabled roof is on the right. The overall mood is peaceful and nostalgic.

2 HOW THIS WILL WORK

We realise that this might feel a little indulgent, so in pursuit of our desire to make our content valuable and meaningful, we have attempted to share our poignant memories pretty randomly and yet offer information such as overnight stopovers, pictures and links to more detailed blogs/videos that might help inspire or shape your travel plans.

Whilst our experiences of course may not match your loves and interests we can at least continue to align to our values of inspiring you to travel and provide options.



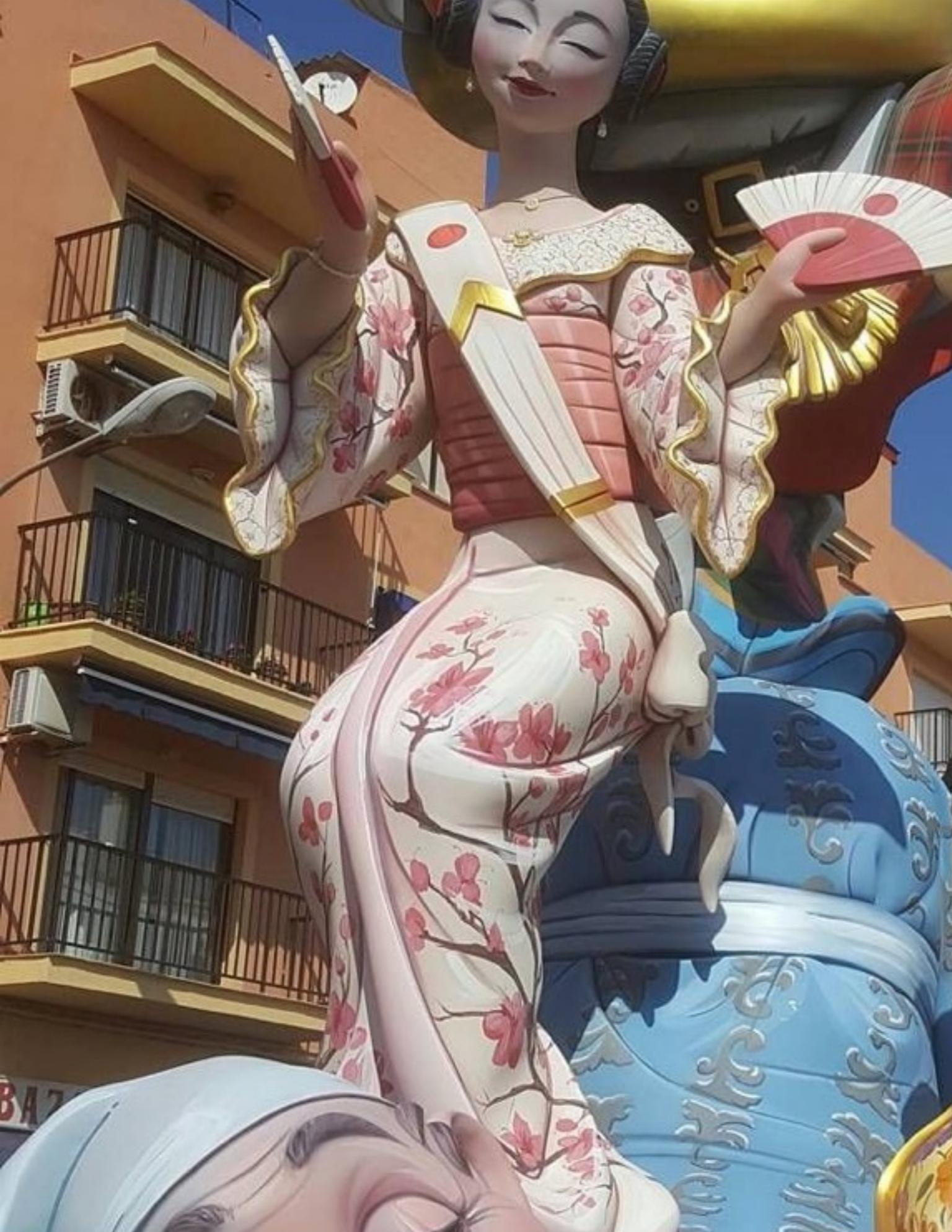
We have produced one of our popular [Interactive Maps](#) that provides a visual presentation of **37 Best Bits**. You can click on and zoom into our country favourites and our overnight stops. Plus during the course of this eBook we take a more detailed tour of our highlights from the last six years and invite you into our life on the road and the meaning that each of these places have had on our lives. Sharing stories and the things that shape how we experience life seems like a lovely thing to do.

As we always try with our productions, we will make this as much about a visual immersion, taking you with us as we reminisce about the places that have in some way touched our lives and left an indelible mark on our hearts. Whether a place has moved us, wowed us or even changed the way we see the world and our place within it.

Hopefully the map, pictures, the stories and practical elements of this celebratory tour will bring some of our experiences to life. For the [37 Best Bits Interactive Map click here.](#)

With love as always from Karen, Myles and Scoobie.





3 CULTURAL TREASURES

This first selection of memories kicks off with one of the aspects of travel we love the best; its culture. From monuments marking important historical events to festivals and traditions that give a country its identity. We love all the hallmarks that make each country unique.

Check out these first five treasures on our cultural memory board, with our stories and experiences woven into them.



Spain has one of the greatest party vibes of any of its European neighbours and it seems that almost every month there is some sort of festival celebrating a religious event or simply playing out their local traditions. During what feels like an annual pilgrimage south, we have been privileged to witness Easter's Semana Santa parades in Cadiz, the pre-Lent carnival in Águilas, Murcia and the Las Fallas celebration in Dénia, Valencian Community. Each one unique and honouring something completely different. Check out what two of our favourite fiestas looked and sounded like.

1. Águilas Carnival and Las Fallas

As a religious celebration, the Rio de Janeiro style carnival or Águilas, is a sight to behold. And the best bit was that we stumbled upon it completely by chance as you often do as novice travellers. Murcia as a region is renowned for its carnivals with events happening in every town. Although it is Águilas that is famed as the Carnival Capital of the county. It is steeped in tradition and is around 200 years old. Apart from recent years with the pandemic, the carnival takes place between February and March depending upon when Easter and Lent fall. The town parties hard the two weeks before the period of abstinence.

Five hours of entertainment fill Águilas' streets from late afternoon until late into the night with tiered seating for just €10. Music, colour, feathers and an vibrance that is electric fills the air, as float after float move through the crowded streets. You cannot help being drawn into the intricate costumes, dance routines, carnival themes. Five hours flies by as you watch in amazement as each



part of the procession seems to outshine the next. It is worth being in Spain for this massively important event, which has now received an International Tourist Event accolade. To transport yourselves there, why not check out our video by clicking the video below. You'll not be disappointed.



We have a number of places that you can stay and whilst the wild camping rules in Murcia have tightened in 2022, during carnival season we sense that the rules are relaxed somewhat.

There is a [campsite](#) to the south of the town about 1.5 miles away (although this will need booking up early). There is also a secure [Aire](#) at the garage 3 miles out of town and then there are a number of wild spots; the most popular is [Carolina Beach](#). This is where we stayed and cycled in. Alternatively you could park even further south 4 miles from Águilas at [Playas Las Palmeras](#), which is also increasing in popularity although another of our favourite spots. The advantage of this location is that it sits in Andalucía and so the wild camping laws are less restrictive.



Las Fallas, Dénia - Valencian Community

Just one month later, falling on 17th-19th March each year, the streets of Dénia and many other towns in the VC come alive to the sound of revelry and characterful monuments that your eyes will not quite believe. 30ft statues that grace each local region of the town tower above streets like giants. And this week is the culmination of a whole year of work, fund raising and construction.

This localised tradition began back in 1947 and despite a short break in 1967/68 and during the pandemic, this tradition has stood the test of time. Born out of a practice by carpenters who had wood that needed using up, the festival of San Jose on the 19th March signals the culmination of this event.

Three distinct phases take the locals and visitors through three days of celebration; the *Planta* when the statues are placed around the town, the *Day of Offering* when dressed in the traditional costume of the region, ladies offer up flowers to the Virgin Mary. Then after being judged and given awards, all statues except the category winners are burnt in the *Crema* - the burning!

As you walk around the streets in admiration of these magnificent monuments depicting current affairs, you are carried along with the air of excitement and music as bands of young people dance through the streets. Firecrackers snap in the day-time air and it seems as if the whole town vibrates with Las Fallas spirit.

A word of caution - be careful with the pronunciation. Do not fall into the trap of saying Las Fallas - which translates as penis. It must be Las Fayas. :-)



We have always stayed at [Camping Los Pinos](#) which is to the south of the town although there are a couple of freebie places that are tolerated at [Fernandos](#) and in the old town [Avenue de Europa](#). If you decide on the campsite, at this time of the year you will need to book. So give Monica or a member of the team a call and say that The Matoroamers sent you.

This cultural explosion will throw you into the heart of Spain's unique traditions and I invite you not to be blown away by the whole experience. Whether it is the history, the craftsmanship or partying, it is something you just have to put on your list, if you haven't already.

Of course given the Schengen challenge, you could incorporate both Águilas Carnival and Las Fallas in Dénia in one trip and perhaps if you're lucky you could also witness the Semana Santa around Easter. This is what travel is about.

Check out our video by clicking the image here and our blog [here](#).





2. Carresqueira - Comporta, Portugal

Sometimes just searching on the detail of Google Maps will uncover some incredible, off-the-beaten track places that hold a story few tourists get to hear. That innocuous little blue camera symbol is the doorway to something special and as travellers it is our responsibility to check them out. One such place we discovered was on the west coast of Portugal just south of Lisbon.

Carresqueira is just three miles east of the stork capital of Portugal; **Comporta**, which, all on its own, is a force to be reckoned with. With its longest sandy beach in Europe and chattering storks nesting on the most precarious of precipices, you could be forgiven for missing out Carresqueira. It's not even signposted. So by dragging ourselves

away from its white sandy beach, we unveiled a piece of Portuguese culture that beats the beach-bum ocean.

Suspended between heaven and sea, Carresqueira's rudimentary architecture is unique in the world. It was first built back in the 1950s when oyster fishing was at its peak. With a 10m range between the mud at low tide and the waters of high, fishermen started to knock posts into the mud and create bridges from land to sea so they could continue to fish. Generations of fishermen have continued to develop their 'port', made up of basic shacks, posts and planks. It is so photogenic and when we visited, watching the fishermen go about their business upon these seemingly unsafe structures, was incredible. No ice cream shops here, no tearooms; just a primitive network that defines fishing in these parts. What an incredible place.



We stayed at two spots, both driving or cycling distance away in Comporta.

* In the town itself is a free [Aire](#) with services

* Or you can go to Comporta's award winning beach and stay in the [car park](#) for 48hours.

The atmospheric port of Carresqueira
with its fishing heritage and
photogenic, rustic pontoons.





3. FALKIRK WHEEL AND THE KELPIES - SCOTLAND

One big advantage to having more time in the UK is that we get to experience the authenticity behind our own culture and natural beauty. Touring Scotland in the autumn of 2021 was lovely and offered us plenty of fresh experiences. The raw beauty of the countryside of course wins hands down and even through the veil of bad weather we often endured, the landscape's canvas was simply stunning. Yet at the end of our five week excursion, our road-trip was topped off with the world-famous landmark of the **Falkirk Wheel** and Duke and Baron, **The Kelpies**.

What unique monuments they are that put Scotland well and truly on the global and cultural map.

As we drove to the Aire that sits above the Falkirk Wheel built in 1998, we could immediately sense the magnitude of this feat of

engineering; the world's first and only rotating boat lift. Even though we have seen the **Anderton Lift** in **Nantwich**, this beast is something else. Now I'm not much of a technical girl; nature is more my thing, although I couldn't help being drawn to the construction of this mechanical beauty. And of course a tourist trip on boat was a must. For **£13.50pp** we had the chance to sit up close and personal to every one of the 15,000 nuts and bolts. We were carried 35m up into the sky with the grace of a swan as we headed for the Union Canal which, back in the day, was connected to the Forth & Clyde by the passage of 11 locks. These were dismantled in 1933.

From the lower level, the eye-line scenery slowly changed as we glided in our self-contained, watery pod and soon our lofty position awarded us with an incredible view across the Scottish land. Our

hour's trip took us along the aqueduct and through the Roughcastle Tunnel which springs into a kaleidoscope of colours as you pass through. A quick turn on a sixpence and we're on the return journey all the while getting an engineering masterclass from our guide.

And just when you think that your experience is over, you wait until the darkness descends and the wheel, like fireflies lights up and begins its very own neon dance. Standing at the end of the aqueduct, the ever-changing colours are just mesmerising and you have this magnificently entertaining light show, all from the comfort of your front row seats in the **Aire** that sits above the wheel.

The diversity of this top tourist attraction, which is so embedded in the culture of the local area, is an absolute must - especially when you combine it with The Kelpies just down the road.



The Kelpies, Duke and Baron, just five miles away by road from the Wheel, cannot be missed as part of your Scotland road-trip. We had seen these works of art on many Facebook posts so wondered whether we really needed to add them to our itinerary. We are so glad we did, as much like any 'works of art' natural or otherwise, seeing them for yourself is so important. So often pictures do not do a place justice; you have to feel it, see it and be part of it to have your very own personal experience.

Parked up in our overnight spot in the first of the **car parking areas**, The Kelpies are just a 10 minute walk away along the canal. As you approach these 30m high beasts you can't really appreciate their enormity until you stand beneath them. They are the largest equine statues in the world and are now classed as a Five* Tourist Attraction, drawing people from around the world to marvel at these horsey personalities. They were originally designed to bring together a community and now they bring together strangers from around the globe.

Duke and Baron are iconic because firstly they are incredible pieces of art and secondly they are also symbolic of Scottish culture, honouring the heavy horses that were so intrinsic to the carving of the local economy in years gone by. I found myself mystified by these majestic creatures almost seeing them as alive they were so lifelike. With their metallic locks glistening in late afternoon sun and their reflection mirroring back from the Forth Canal, the whole setting is mesmerising. My camera and I had a field day. And yet, like the Wheel, their whole character changed as the sun drifted beneath the horizon. From dusk til dawn the horses come live in a blaze of glorified colour that takes the whole experience into another dimension. Come see these creatures they deserve your time....





4. ZALPIEZALPIE - THE PAINTED VILLAGE POLAND

Poland all by itself could easily make it onto our top 10 list let alone our top 37. So to narrow down the highlights and poignant moments was particularly tricky for this profoundly humbling eastern European land. Yet prioritise I must. So I felt drawn to list Zalipie - an entire village of traditional painted houses.

Just 50 miles east of Krakow, in the middle of nowhere is this idyllic village of no more than 30 houses, most of which have been adorned with an artistry that makes this one of the most beautiful villages you will ever see. This is so far off the tourist trail, that you will not be inundated with crowds. We visited in July 2018 and only shared our time there with a handful of people. It is a hidden gem, a Polish secret that they care not whether the rest of the world knows about them. There is no ego or PR surrounding this authentic place;

just a magical, unicorn, sparkle dust type of place, more suited to a Disneyland set. Yet here we are in Poland.

As you walk around the village, each house has a slightly different design and it begs the questions why, how, for what purpose? As the museum attempts to share, the tradition of painting their houses goes back at least 100 years. The women folk cooked with smoke stoves and with only small chimneys their homes would soon get tarred with soot. So they would paint their homes to cover up the damage. The tradition has been embellished over years as cooking became less of a messy task and soon everything was being painted from gates, to window frames, post boxes and dog's kennels. Even today despite more modern houses taking up position in the village, fervent painting competitions seems to ensue between neighbours wanting the most colourful accolade.

You somehow feel as though you step back in time to a Thomas Hardy novel and feel like a horse and cart would feel at home clattering through the lanes or that you might meet Tess of the D'Urbervilles floating through the fields. It is a wonderful place which is deftly able to remove you from the heart-wrenching history that is etched into Polish countryside. For a moment you can take respite from their tragic tales and absorb yourself in something lighter, brighter and prettier before you return to the Poland that will humble you with tales of repression and horror.

We asked the lady in the museum, in our best Polish, if there was anywhere we could stay overnight and she told us where we could park safely a just beside the [school](#).





5. BUZLUDZHA MONUMENT - SHIPKA PASS, BULGARIA

Bulgaria is a country steeped in eastern culture which its European membership has yet to influence. So a road-trip through this rustic and sometimes simple existence is an education for anyone who hasn't ventured into the lands east of Berlin. We found Bulgaria took some getting used to, if for no other reason than the Cyrillic language is tough to learn. And a shake of the head does not mean 'no' in Bulgaria, it is a most definite yes. Now that's an odd cultural shift for us westerners although this is why we love travel and how it educates us.

Of our four weeks in Bulgaria in July 2017, one of most outstanding memories was **Shipka** for its ostentatious and gilded monastery and then the UFO up on **Shipka Pass**. Well you have to admit that this building doesn't look of this earth.

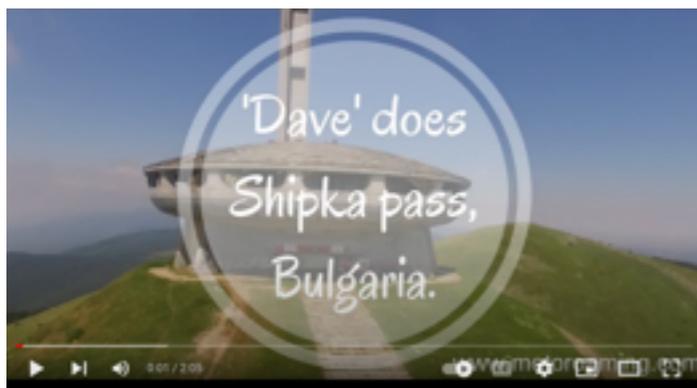
Buzludzha is actually the name of the mountain on which an epic battle between Bulgarian rebels fought the Ottoman army back in 1868. This battle, which saw the Ottoman's outnumber the Bulgarians, served as an inspiration for Bulgarian's liberation from the Empire which came to pass some 10 years later, further down the valley.

In 1944 there was a further attack between the Communists and the Detachments from the Bulgarian Army who were operating here. So in commemoration of these events, the Buzludzha monument was erected in 1971. It was like a community hall - just a lot bigger; it was a museum most often and then hosted special events by the Bulgarian Community Party. Sadly with the fall of Communism in 1989, the building came into disrepair and today stands vulnerably

against the onslaught of swifts who now call it home. We understand that the building is cordoned off to the public for safety reasons.

We **stayed for the night** in the shadow of this this skyscraper waking up to its superior gaze as it purveys the valley below. You can just see Scoobie from the picture to the right.

It's such a shame that this monument has crumbled as their history is part of the fabric of their modern life. So I do feel as though it should be preserved so future generations can understand their heritage. Still who am I; just a traveller looking on!



Check out our video footage of this magnificent relic of a Communist past. Click on the image to the left.





4 STUNNING PLACES

Often people ask us where our favourite place in Europe is, after six years. Favourite is a word we try to avoid using, as to say one place is superior to others, somehow undermines everything else we've seen and felt. So we try focusing on highlights and places that we would go back to in a heartbeat. After all, every place has its own uniqueness and character.

So in this section we share places (not countries) that we would love to go back to, would highly recommend to others or that in some way touched our hearts and spoke to our souls.



6. THE JULIAN ALPS - SLOVENIA

Slovenia was one of our revelations in our first year of travels. By the time we arrived in the north of the country we had already decided to go full-time after initially only planning on a gap-year. So this was one of our most adventurous steps into the unknown after five months of the relative safety and knowingness of Spain, France and Austria. I remember clearly the butterflies in my tummy as we entered new territory and a brand new language that neither of us had any experience of at all. That feeling makes us realise how exciting travel is and how it drives us to continue finding new and off the beaten places that somehow stretch us out of our comfort zones.

Our arrival into Slovenia was right in the top left-hand corner where the Italy, Slovenia and Austria borders meet like mothers at the

school gate. Yet three more different countries you could not get; different in culture, scenery, attitudes and history.

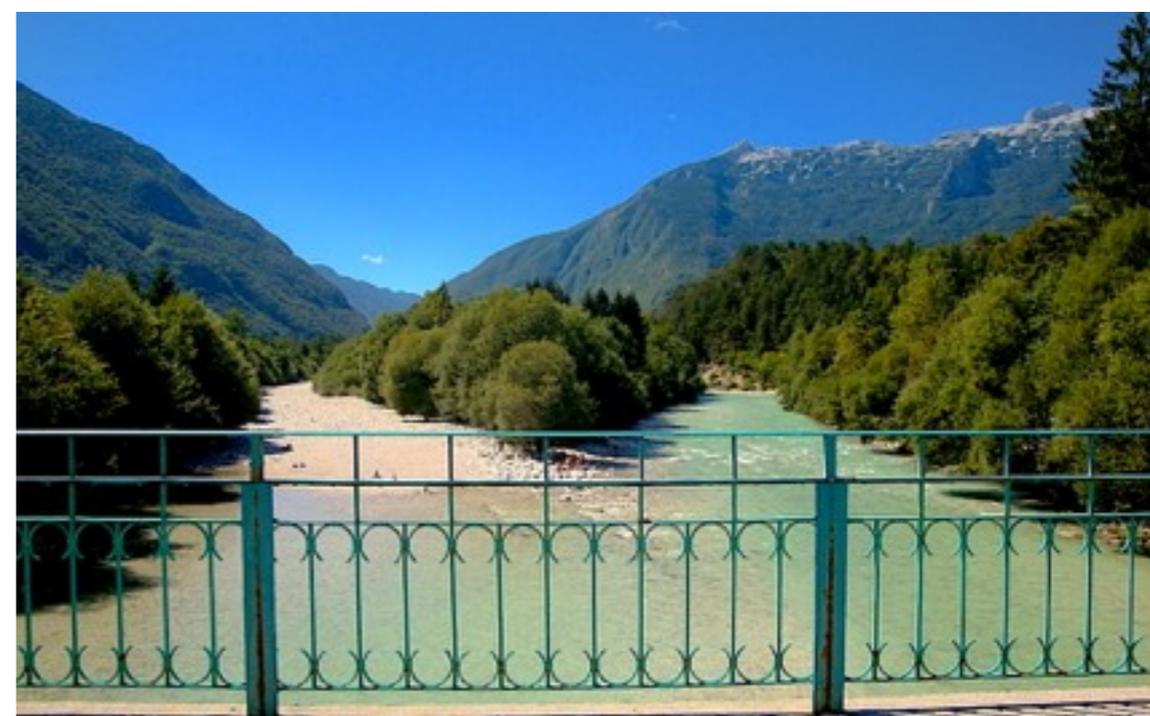
The Julian Alps are on the north-western side of *the* Alps and were named after Julius Caesar by all accounts; every day is a school day. Although they are so different to the mountains of Italy, Austria and France with emerald and ice-blue waters that course their way down through the stunning Soča Valley in the Triglav National Park. With our starting point being the charming **Kranjska Gora**, we began to get a flavour of this alpine region of Slovenia with its limestone giants that reach nearly 3,000m. Their lush green meadows seemed to sing out ‘the hills are alive...’ just in a tongue we didn’t immediately recognise.

With Bovec in the heart of the Park, we had an excellent place to explore with boots and bikes. With stunning mountain scenery, inviting swimming holes, white waters, waterfalls and World War 1 history at Ravelnic, we soon satiate our travelling souls. For more information on Slovenia why not check out our blog [9 Surprises of Slovenia here](#).

On the other side of the Triglav National Park sits the popular **Lake Bled** with its iconic island castle and the stunning **Vintgar Gorge** walk. Although for an 'off the beaten track' destination we would recommend the alternative **Lake Bohinj**, which is far more authentic and lacks the tourists of its neighbour. It is where the locals go to get away from the visitors. We adored it here and would most definitely return. And of course we can't miss a mention for the compact and bijou capital **Ljubljana**, which is also well worth a visit and as cities go, probably one of the best we have visited.

The Julian Alps with its **Vršič Pass**, breath taking landscape and outdoor pursuits, you will not be disappointed to make this part of your European road-trip. We stayed at a number of spots on two separate visits here;

- [Aire](#) at Kranjska Gora
- [Aire](#) at Bovec
- [The campsite](#) at Lake Bohinj
- [The campsite](#) at Kanal
- [The camperstop](#) just outside Ljubljana
- [Saksida](#), vineyard and restaurant at the end of the Soča Valley



Lake Bled - The Pilgrimage
Church of the Assumption
of Mary, 15th century





7. SLOVENE RIVIERA - GOLF OF TRIESTE, SLOVENIA

Staying in Slovenia, we are going to take you south towards the border with Italy and Croatia to the seaside. Yes you heard me right, Slovenia has a coastline, who would have thought it? Certainly we didn't know about this coastal beauty when we first crossed into the country in 2016. And what a delight it is too. We were embraced by picturesque red roofed buildings, imposing churches, atmospheric harbours with clinking boats and sparkling azure blue oceans.

The trio of towns along this 30 mile stretch of coast bedazzle us with their quaintness, which is so far removed from their French and Italian counterparts. **Koper, Izola and Piran** were our three main attractions and the further south you head, the prettier the towns become, Piran being our favourite. With warm seasonal sunshine beating down on our faces, we cycled between the three towns using a dedicated cycle track.

We chose to base ourselves at the delightful **Izola**, slap bang in the middle and then the visits to the towns either side became so much easier, especially given that there is no where to park a motorhome in Piran, which is the *pièce de résistance* of the Riviera.

With its fortunes shaped by Romans, Austro-Hungarian, Italian and Yugoslavian influences, this largely medieval town has evolved into a multi-cultural community. It was only in 1991 that they gained independence with the break up of Yugoslavia and today the number of Italians, who used to be the town's majority, have been super-seeded by Slovenes. It is *the* most beautiful town with its cobbled streets, castle walls and narrow alleyways all surrounded by the inviting Adriatic Sea and is deserving of a visit. Check out our write up on the area on the coast and inland by clicking [here](#).



Left; Piran arial view
Middle Izola town view
Bottom; Piran promenade





Camping Mauterndorf!

The Motoroamer's Campsite Review

8. MAUTERNDORF - AUSTRIA

A quick hop across the Slovenian border and we're into Austria, a country that we have not spent very much time exploring for one reason or another. Although we want to give a big shout out to one of our 'go to' campsites, which has so totally grabbed us by the short and curlies that it enters our Hall of Fame.

As you may know, we are not great lovers of top-end, expensive sites that have a commercial feel to them. We would rather find ourselves on the top of a wild cliff with views out to the infinite. Although there are a handful of occasions where we can honestly say, this is a beaut and [Camping Mauterndorf](#) is one of those.

Nestled in the **Grosseck-Speiereck** mountains near **Salzburg**, the market town of Mauterndorf welcomes motorhomes to its campsite for a mere €19 per night (price based on 2019 visit). It's set up is

most specifically for winter, with its well-being centre with sauna facilities all included in the price. Yet during summer it is equally a gem. With a discount card, we got to travel the cable car up the ski slopes for free and the mountains are incredible to explore. We spent hours up there just wandering around, all to prepare ourselves for a piece of apfelstrudel of course.

The town is just gorgeous, with typical Austrian houses, a castle and a super 2 mile walk from the campsite. There just isn't anything to dislike about this place and it always gives us a bit of space for 'being' after what has generally been a full on travel schedule up until that point. Even the carpets get a good old bash when we're here. We loved it so much that we did a video review, which is most unlike us. So do check this site out and tell them that we sent you.



Check out our vlog review by clicking this video below.





9. GRUYÈRES - SWITZERLAND

When we say Gruyères, you could be forgiven for thinking we suddenly gone all Cheddar on you. What has cheese got to do with our Hall of Fame I hear you cry? Well every cheese has its own origin town and the famous Raclette cheese is no different.

Gruyères in Switzerland is one of those most beautiful towns that you half expect Heidi to come skipping down the road with Peter and a handful of goats. This charming little village is such a throw-back that it feels like the place that time forgot.

With curvaceous cobbled streets, quintessential Swiss chalets and a castle to boot, we were swept away by Gruyères' romanticism. That is until we stopped for lunch only to see the eye-watering prices. Although what's a girl to do when in Rome? You do as the Romans do. So having a cheese Raclette was just a must.

Served with a huge, and I mean ginormous block of cheese, that would last you months back home, bread potatoes and ham, we indulged ourselves in this dairy feast that is second to none. Made locally from herds that feed on these luscious Alpine grasses, the cheese is adorable unless you are intolerant then I'm sure the salad would be as nice! Heated underneath this massive contraption that takes up so much room on the table there is almost no room for beer, you slice the oozing mixture and devour with the tapas style accompaniments until, quite honestly, you are all cheesed out. It is such a great experience and so very Swiss, set in the most amazing Alpine village setting. You serious have to come here. Stay at the [campsite](#) no more than 3 miles away and drive in. There's plenty of parking for motorhomes and campers, so it's all very doable.





10. ALBEROBELLO - ITALY

After the fresh mountain air of the Alps, let's head south to a bit of balmy Italian sunshine. So far south we are heading for the heel and more specifically to one of Italy's [1 Borghi più belli d'Italia](#) - ***Alberobello***.

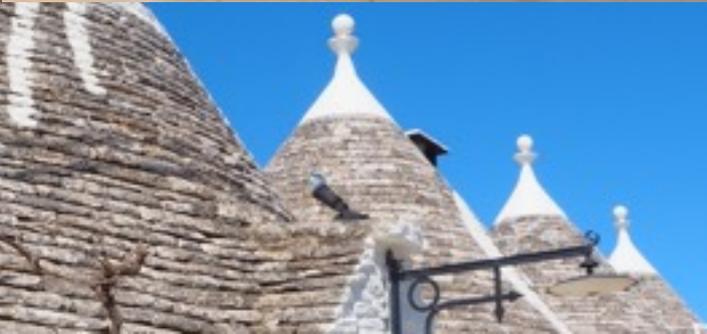
The most cutsey of villages you could possibly lay your eyes on, this place is full of what is known as ***Trulli*** (or singular Trullo). Unique to this Apulia region of Italy, Trulli date back to the 18th century where in an area of forest a small collection of Trulli were built as stores and basic shelters. (Hence the name comes from *abore bello* - beautiful tree).

There are a couple of theories about how the Trulli came into existence; one of which is that houses were so expensive that they constructed roofs that could be easily dismantled if the tax inspector

came. Whatever their purpose, they are truly (if you pardon the pun) magnificent buildings especially when they are clustered together as they are at Alberobello. And as we walked through the streets of this charming town, we felt as if someone had transported us to a film set of *The Hobbit* or *Alice in Wonderland*. It is quite surreal.

And to put the icing on the cake, you can stay in the town's [Aire](#) amongst the olive trees for €20.00 for 24hours and it is literally a stone's throw to the centre of this most delightful of destinations.

Whilst not on our Hall of Fame, as you are in the area, we would also suggest that you visit ***Matera*** which is full of history as a town built into the rock. It really is quite impressive as are the flocks of kestrel which are renown in the area. If you want a sneak preview, then watch the latest James Bond - the opening scenes are filmed here.





11. VENICE AND ITS ISLANDS - ITALY

Of all cities we have ever visited, Venice remains one of the most charismatic, vibrant and soulful for us. We rarely go back to places because the initial impressions can so often alter after your familiarity takes over from the child-like excitement of your virgin steps. Although Venice we always make an exception for.

It has so many different personalities from its bustling Grand Canal to its endless hidden side streets and waterways, to its islands that seem to have a completely unique vibe. To me at least, I can never tire of its energy on one side and its vulnerability on the other. It is by far the most enigmatic of places for me. And the islands of Burano and Marano are equally charming and even more colourful, if that's possible.

Venice is a corner of the world that is so fragile yet still thriving in spite of Mother Nature's watery onslaught. At the mercy of time and

tide Venice has found a unique way of coexisting with nature. Whilst the city may not be winning the battle and in time the Adriatic will force its surrender, Venice remains resolute and stands strong in defiance. It is this unique spirit I think that captivates me right in the depths of my soul.

It amazes me how these seemingly floating buildings can survive, yet survive they do. Boats of all shapes and sizes buzz around the canals transporting people, goods and services and tourists alike. No cars, no pollution except for the cruise liners, who have, thanks to the pandemic, eased up their schedule and allowed the waters to clear. The future may be uncertain for Venice, although for now it seems to thrive and its history and integrity are being preserved as best as they can.



We have stayed in two separate places, one at the [Lido](#) and one just on the [outskirts of the city](#) walls that you can simply catch the metro into its heart. Check out our [blog](#) for more info on making the most of your visit to this incredible city.







12. METEORA, MAINLAND GREECE

Greece is so full of mystery and mythology which sometimes seems to be overshadowed by the mesmerising coastline and golden sandy beaches and yet, as with so many places if you go inland just a bit you uncover some real treasures - enter stage left, **Meteora**. I think this sanctuary should be on the Seven Wonders of the World.

After a journey, through what seemed like an endless flat plane of boringness, we climbed over the mountain from the south and were faced with a sight that lifted my heart. You cannot imagine that this sandstone upland could exist, seemingly in the middle of nowhere. And yet there it is. Meteora. Fingers of rock protruding from the earth commanding our admiration for its presence. These imposing titans are however not just magnificent in their geological creation, they are very special for one other reason; what is upon their crowns.

Whilst at first glance, it may not seem obvious, when you look closely there are 24 monasteries sitting precariously atop of those outcrops; constructed by monks around 13th century. Sadly only 6 are used today and you can get access to them to glimpse the monastic life committed to by the monks and nuns. Meteora is the second most important religious settlement in Greece.

Timing our visit here was a strategic affair given that bus-loads of people travel here to marvel at these magnificent monasteries. Certainly in our experience, an early doors or late afternoon visit is recommended. There's ample parking for motorhomes and the drive around the monasteries is easy and very doable. We go on the principle that if coaches can, we can.

Two of the best times of day to simply 'be' in this area is sunrise and sunset and getting up early really is an investment in your travel experiences. Watching, even in the height of summer, as the low cloud and mist that envelop the boulders, slowly raise their veil as the sun's power melts them away to reveal the regal monasteries that have certainly stood the test of time. I took an early morning cycle with a tiny bit of electric assistance and this took my adventure to a whole new level. No crowds, no coaches just other souls like me looking to grasp a bit of the magic and peace exuded by this place.

Meteora has such powerful memories for us and remains one of the significant highlights from the last six years. Especially given the campsite we stayed at [Camping Vrachos](#) sits right beneath the rocks with a spectacular view from the swimming pool and just a 5 minute drive.

For more info on the area see our video and read our blog which includes your very own personal **Guide to visiting Meteora** pdf - click the book image below.





13. GIETHOORN, THE NETHERLANDS

Let me take you to China, Beijing to be precise! Eh? I know stick with me... I'll introduce you to Cherry who lives in this bustling city full of smog, traffic and suffocating buildings to house the 22 million inhabitants. Cherry dreams of living in Giethoorn in the Netherlands - and who can blame her. In her documentary, **Ni Hoa Holland**, Cherry has immortalised her dream of this romantic location through her social media, which has right royally put this place on the map - for millions of Chinese.

Tucked away in a north eastern corner of the Netherlands you will find what is commonly known as 'Dutch Venice'. A small village that has no roads, just a network of intricate canals that weave around the most beautiful thatch cottages. There is no comparison to Venice - they are two very, very different places although life surrounded by water they at least do have in common.

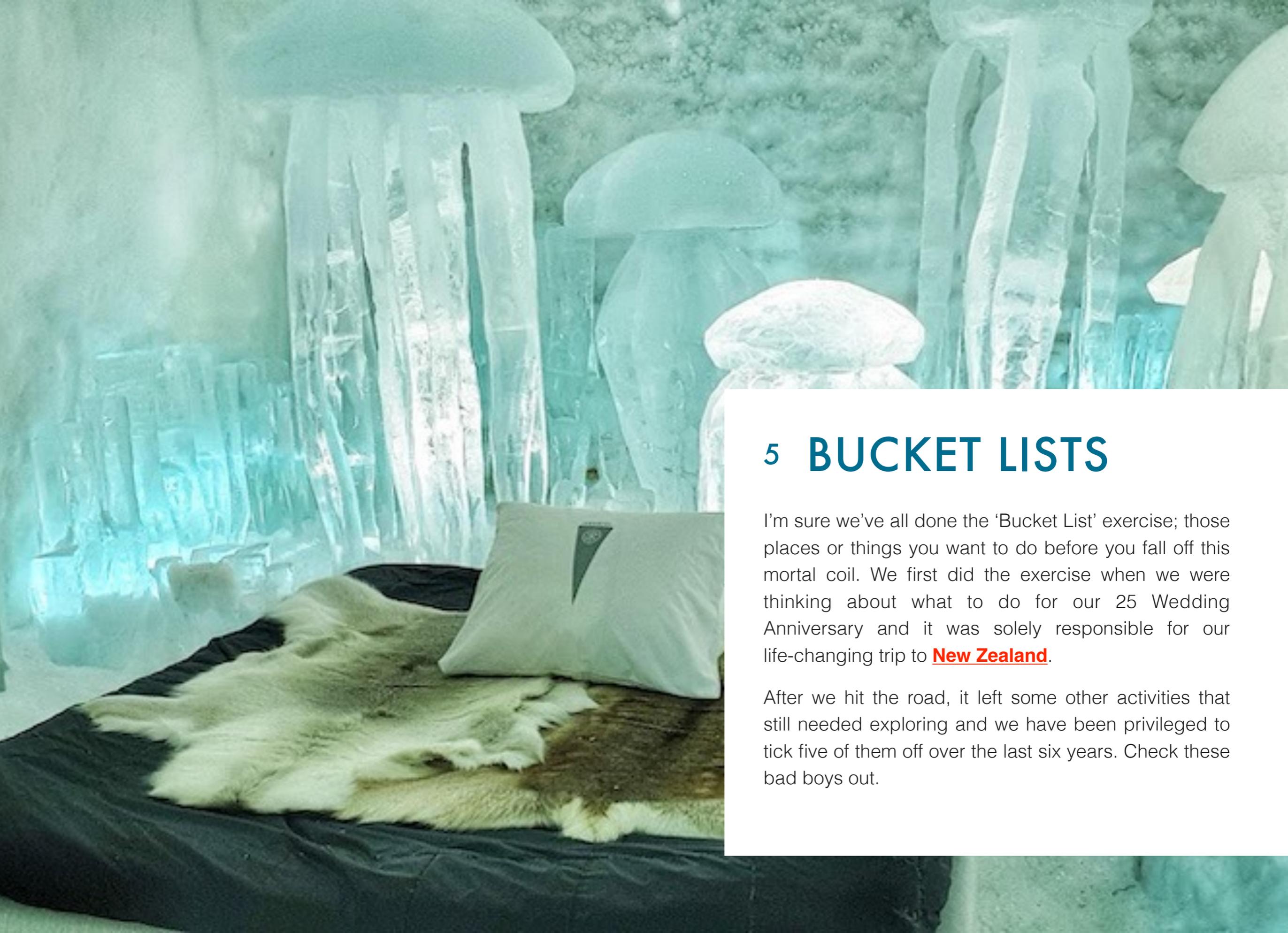
This small scale cutie has its own character and it is such a peachy kind of place. A visit here is so worthwhile even though it is a little off the beaten track.

Thanks to Cherry's profile of Giethoorn, there is a strong Chinese influence found around the village. And on top of that if you time your visit anytime after 10am you will be sharing this special place with coach loads of Asians desperate to experience Cherry's hype about this Dutch secret. So go early to really feel the softness, grace and allure of Giethoorn which simply hovers over the waterways waiting for the inevitable camera clicks that will ensue.

There are plenty of places to park up for the night. We chose **[Jachthaven Marina](#)** for around €13.50 which gives you easy access to the village that is in cycling distance and the wetlands are also pretty to walk too. We highly recommend this little beauty.







5 BUCKET LISTS

I'm sure we've all done the 'Bucket List' exercise; those places or things you want to do before you fall off this mortal coil. We first did the exercise when we were thinking about what to do for our 25 Wedding Anniversary and it was solely responsible for our life-changing trip to [New Zealand](#).

After we hit the road, it left some other activities that still needed exploring and we have been privileged to tick five of them off over the last six years. Check these bad boys out.



14. THE ICE HOTEL - JUKKASJÄRVI, SWEDEN

Watching James Bond's *Die Another Day* in 2002 was the first time that my intrigue over the **Ice Hotel** was piqued. Whilst the film's location was Iceland, I really wanted to go see the original Ice Hotel in Sweden, the first of its kind in the world, first created in 1989. So when we started planning our Scandinavian adventures, you can imagine my excitement about heading to this iconic destination, even if it was going to summer time and almost the furthest north you could get.

I had a little sales number to do on Myles given that it is almost at the top of the world although when we saw how easy it was to cross into Norway from **Jukkasjärvi**, then it was sold to the man with the golden... cheeky smile.

I managed to get a Media Pass with the hotel that gave us permission to fly our drone and gave us free access to the whole

property on the understanding that we promoted the **Ice Hotel** to our audience - well of course, not a difficult job at all. I recall my excitement as we ventured north through the vast forests of **Sweden**, marvelling at all we saw. We had already fallen in love with the country so this really was the icing on my Bucket List cake.

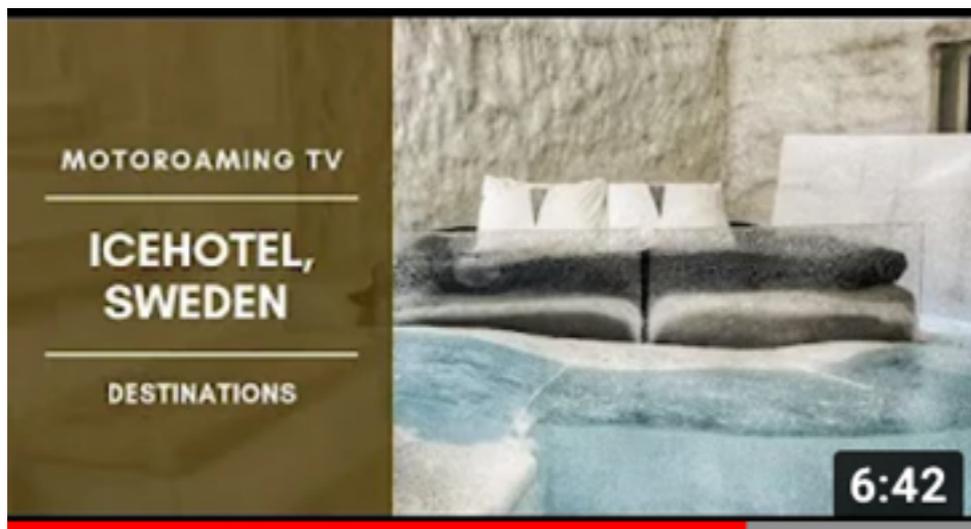
Parking at the hotel's **Camperplats**, we armed ourselves with our Press Passes and trundled off to the *summer Ice Hotel*. Donned in the most cosy ponchos we were blessed to have a tour of this beautiful architectural building that from the outside really doesn't look that icy at all. Although once through those freezer doors you are faced with a steady -5° . So you can imagine Mr Sunshine's view of that activity. Although once inside the designs were just incredible and this 365 Hotel does a great job promoting some fabulous artists who must have creativity running through their veins. Did you know

that when an artist pitches into the Hotel for their work to be showcased, once accepted, they must actually do the ice-work themselves. Converting their designs to ice must be tough.

Of course an obligatory drink at the Ice Bar is a medicinal treat after the chiller zone. You need a bit of a mortgage to have one of their tots although the charm of it is that the glass itself is also made from ice and when you have finished drinking, the tradition is to return the glass back to the river Torne - that is recycling at its best.

Our two-day experience was just incredible. Learning about how they harvest the ice from the frozen river, store it and then use the blocks for the creation of the *winter hotel* ready for the start of their main season in December each year. Even to learn about the concept of the Ice Hotel originated was fascinating. I now can't wait to go back in the winter to stay in one of the rooms overnight and see the Northern Lights - that still remains on **my Bucket List**. For Myles - somewhere in the sun will be just fine for him.

Check out our video first and foremost and the [blog](#) which we did for ourselves and also for the [Hotel](#).







15. MIDNIGHT SUN - ARJEPLOG, SWEDEN

Staying with our beloved Sweden; my second Bucket List tick was experiencing the magic that is the Midnight Sun. What an incredible moment that was. I had been so looking forward to how this would feel as we crossed over the Arctic Circle - which itself was a pretty special event.

Although you don't get the full 24hrs daylight until you reach **Arjeplog**, which is the furthest point south you can see the **Midnight Sun**, we certainly started to get a feel for how long the days and very, very short the nights felt, even just past Stockholm. I remember waking up at 2.30am and wondering what the time was, as it was a very atmospheric dawn-dusk type of light. In fact it was like a perpetual sunset with hues of pink and purple. I recall my heart skipping a beat and a leaky eye as I realised that it was coming....

Just south of **Arjeplog**, we stayed overnight at one of Sweden's 100,000 lakes and stepping outside the van at 11.30pm was a surreal moment as nothing slept - not even us. It was a faint lightness that wasn't quite daytime, although it was as if the night was fighting the light, like an excited kid before their birthday, not wanting to sleep.

And then to the main event - **Arjeplog**. Sitting in Swedish Lapland and just south of the Arctic Circle, this tiny settlement is home to the Sami tribe, nearly 9000 lakes and, in winter is the home of European and American vehicle testing on the surface of the frozen lakes. For us it was about witnessing the Midnight Sun. It was an exhilarating moment. **Parked up on Galtispuoda Mountain**, we entertained ourselves until 11.30 and then began the climb up to the summit

and there it was. The never setting sun. Bees and birds were still going about their business oblivious to the humans who, bleary eyed were trying to soak up what was happening.

Perpetual day, a light that never sleeps, a sun that never sets and we were sitting right in the heart of that moment. What a poignant encounter this was where we came face to face with Mother Nature's extraordinary presence. It was one of the most magical moments I can remember and it will stay with me forever. It was like time had stop still. It gave me a very humble sensation that something not of human control, could influence life so powerfully and all we could do was just sit and watch it unfold.

Of course there was an impact upon our lives; you really do have to get used to living in perpetual light, although your body adjusts. That's the skill of our beautiful mechanics. Sleep is certainly a bit more tricky although not impossible; you just tweak the way you do things. Become more active in the day so you feel sleepy, go to bed at the same time as normal, shut all curtains and skylights to minimise the light and just surrender to what is the norm up here. Getting stressed about it just doesn't help. Your body will do what it needs to survive and thrive. So appreciate this moment because it is utterly special.

For more information on the country we fell in love with, check out our [blog here](#).





16. CHRISTMAS MARKET AT COLMAR - FRANCE

From the land of the all day sun to the opposite end of the calendar - Christmas. I have always wanted to visit a Christmas Market in Europe. It's an odd acknowledgement given that we don't really celebrate Christmas in the traditional way as we hate the whole commercialism and gluttony surrounding it. Yet there's something about the culture and ambiance of a Christmas Market that is so much more than buying 'stuff' especially in Europe who seem to have a much more balanced approach to the festivities.

So in our first year on the road, having the opportunity to tie in a market as we headed north to the UK for a pitstop and Christmas with my mum, we dropped into Colmar. Now for those of you who have been to Colmar, you will understand why this was our chosen destination. After all this is one of the most beautiful places on earth

out of the Christmas season. Can you imagine it with twinkly lights and Glühwein? It is what traditional Christmas is all about.

Parked up at the [Port Plaisance Aire](#), which was absolutely chocker block, we braved -6° to tick off another Bucket List for me - now that's love from Mr Davies who hates the cold. We were treated to five different market venues and a Carol service on the canals with St Nic and children enacting their French Christmas tradition. It was so beautiful and it really warmed the soul or was that the hot syrupy drink that I had consumed one or two of? Hmm perhaps the latter. Although you cannot feel anything than drawn into the cuteness of this cultural pleasure with sounds of laughter, music bouncing off the magnificent buildings and the joy of visitors as they seek out the little kiosks selling their wares. It was truly magical and what an incredible setting to achieve my tick.



Our memories might well be of -6° in November, although it was a magical experience, the photos of which really don't do it or the five markets justice. Whether you go to Colmar in the summer or for a Chrimble market, you will be totally spoilt.



17. LAVENDER FIELDS - PROVENCE, FRANCE

Sometimes a Bucket List is all about timing and often a dash of good fortune and synchronicity. That was certainly true for our visit to **Provence** in our first year. Provence is so iconic for dreamy stone cottages, vineyards and film location sets. Although more deserving an accolade is their lavender which veils so many of this south-eastern region of France in June/July. Swathes of purple colour the countryside that, set against the golden fields of corn and straw bales makes this a sensory explosion experience.

I have always wanted to come to Provence and to be able to time it with the lavender harvest was just too good an opportunity to miss. And miss it we nearly did and in fact we had to go south and come back to make sure we got into the heart of their gathering season. To be honest I hadn't really given any thought to the actual harvest

element of the lavender, I just wanted to see the purple hues given it is one of my favourite colours.

What struck me most about our visit was the up-close-and-personal factor of this iconic scene. Stopping every mile it seemed, poor old Myles just left me to it, losing me in the middle of one particular purple pasture. I lost myself in the sensual burst of colour, sound, smell, a feeling that struck me right in my heart. I never realised that an acre of bees could be so deafening and the colour of such a tiny blossom could be so magnificent. The smell of a single stem is nice, don't get me wrong, although en masse, the heady scent just permeated through every pore of my body. All of these combined to create an enchanting moment in my nomadic life.

On top of this, watching the harvest was a bonus. Seeing drying racks, tractors carefully plucking the purple gold and villages displaying baskets of lavender products just acted as a reminder of the importance of this delicate little flower to the region.

We stayed at a number of places around the region that spanned at least a 50 mile radius;

- [Banon](#) near Mont Ventoux
- [Bedoin](#) also near Mont Ventoux
- [St Clair](#) - Moustieres
- [Camping des Sources](#), Gordes
- [Savoillans](#) wild camping

For more info on our Provence Road-trip, check out our blog [here](#).







18. KEUKENHOF AND LISSE, HOLLAND

Years ago I remember my mum and dad going over to Holland in their caravan and spending time in Lisse, going to Keukenhof and watching the flower parade. Mum was bowled over by the whole experience and from that moment on, it was on my Bucket List.

Mid April 2019 was the year I was able to make my tick and I certainly wasn't disappointed. Now don't get me wrong, it's a massive tourist pull for the area so we had to share our experience with a shed load of people and the campsites were all rammed. Stupidly we didn't pre-book anything so we were very lucky to be squeezed in at [Het Groene Hart](#) (a tulip farm) which was just a 10 minute cycle to tulip central. Check out our blog [here](#).

You can only be impressed by this veritable feast of loveliness, a blaze of colour of every spectrum of a rainbow. Provence's fields of

lavender were for me magnificent, although blimey this visual explosion was so 3D. I never knew there were so many types of tulips. Whoever crafted this sumptuous bulb needs a medal because this flower just make you smile. Even Mr D came under its spell as we cycled the easy routes around the copious fields of blossoms.

We actually visited Keukenhof a few weeks later with friends from Eindhoven and that was another experience altogether. Whilst a bit more architectural and shaped than the random fields around the region, it was still an incredible sight, despite the crowds. Although there is only a very small window to witness this seasonal spectacle it is really worth trying to tie in a visit here perhaps en route somewhere else, like Scandinavia. Of course if you can, combine your trip with King's Day on 27th April - that too is a cultural joy.





6 HUMBLING MOMENTS

You can't travel the world and not be moved by a place, its history, story or the people intrinsically embedded in it. Certainly some of the places we've built in have often be carved out of a desire to pay our respects or honour the events that have taken place.

It's not always an easy visit, although sometimes that lack of ease is an important characteristic as you go just a centimetre towards the horror of what may have happened there. Check out our numerous Humbling Moments and take a seat beside us as we take a no-holds barred ride.



19. ORADOUR-SUR-GLANE, FRANCE

One of our desires, if that's an appropriate word to use, was to educate ourselves more in our World War History as we travelled around Europe. Whilst we have the standard 'school' curriculum knowledge, that doesn't really take you into the soul of the atrocities experienced by inhabitants, soldiers, family, strangers or the architects of war. And to us it felt important.

So when our route back to the UK through France took us within striking distance of **Oradour-sur-Glane**, we knew we needed to stay awhile and tie in an overnight at the [Aire](#).

Oradour was an innocuous village nestled in the Haut-Vienne region of France. Then on 10th June 1944 its story changed in a heart beat and now has become famous for all the wrong reasons.

In the early hours of that day, driven by a rumour that an SS officer was being held at Oradour, the Germany army who were moving

north following the Normandy invasion, ravaged the village, separated the men shooting and burning them. The women and children were taken to the church in the picture above and were burnt alive. Only five survived this pointless massacre who lived to tell of the horror of how people died - 642 in all.

Today Oradour stands exactly as it did on 10th June 1944 and as you walk through streets there is an eery quality to the atmosphere. Ghosts of the dead seem to linger to serve as a reminder of their needless murder. A silence falls over the place, even visitors talk very little - what is there to say after all? Quiet contemplation seems like the only way to be, here in Oradour.

The visitor centre is very well done and pays homage to every single person caught up in this travesty. Be prepared for your very soul to be moved to its core. To read more click [here](#).





20. FINDING GREAT GRANDAD AND THE LAST POST - BELGIUM

Myles' Great Grandad fought in the First World War and he has often talked about trying to find his grave to pay homage. So when we travelled up through to Ypres, it felt like the perfect time to begin our search.

We knew that he was at the **War Cemetery of Mendinghem** in Poperinge, Belgium and after a lot of little roads where we had to pull our bellies and our breath in, we managed to find, what seemed like a hidden cemetery. And there was just a little space for us to park up Scoobie as well.

With much solemnness we began walking up and down the rows of white grave stones and it didn't take too long to find him - there really were no words. Just a silence descended over us both as we acknowledged what finding him must have meant to Myles. He hasn't ever said much about it other than how pleased he was to

have found his resting place. Of course he never did meet him although Great Grandad Hadgett's legacy lives on in each family member.

Can you just imagine the emotion we carried as we stayed **overnight** just outside Ypres for the Last Post? Oh my, the outpouring of grief was enormous for us both. The wall of the Menin Gate had us strangely pouring over each name as if searching for our ancestry. I found plenty of Todds from my family tree and some of those were in the Black Watch, where we descended from on my dad's side. I wonder how many of those carved names had some family connection? It was a sobering moment.

And then the bugles started. There is no more an emotional moment than hearing the raw notes of the **Last Post** and it will never leave our hearts and still makes us cry when we rewatch the video.

Myles finding his Great Grandad





21. LIBEARTY BEAR SANCTUARY - ZARNESTI, ROMANIA

Romania delivered on so many fronts for us; its incredible nature, the local's hospitality, its humbling history to name just a few. Although Romania (and some of its neighbour's) worst traits are their treatment of their bear population.

Romania has one of the largest population of bears in Europe and sadly many of these in the past have been captured and used as tourist attractions. Their treatment of these majestic creatures is little short of abhorrent.

When discussion of visiting a bear sanctuary whilst in Bulgaria cropped up, I remember being vehement about not going anywhere near one - I just felt like I couldn't bear it - if you pardon the pun. The thought of seeing these distressed animals just sent a shiver down my spine as if somehow I could feel their sorrow.

Although as we toured Romania I shifted my thinking and did some research about the [Libearty Bear Sanctuary in Zarnesti](#), reading how their work in rescuing abused bears was changing their lives. They also have a education programme that is altering perceptions.

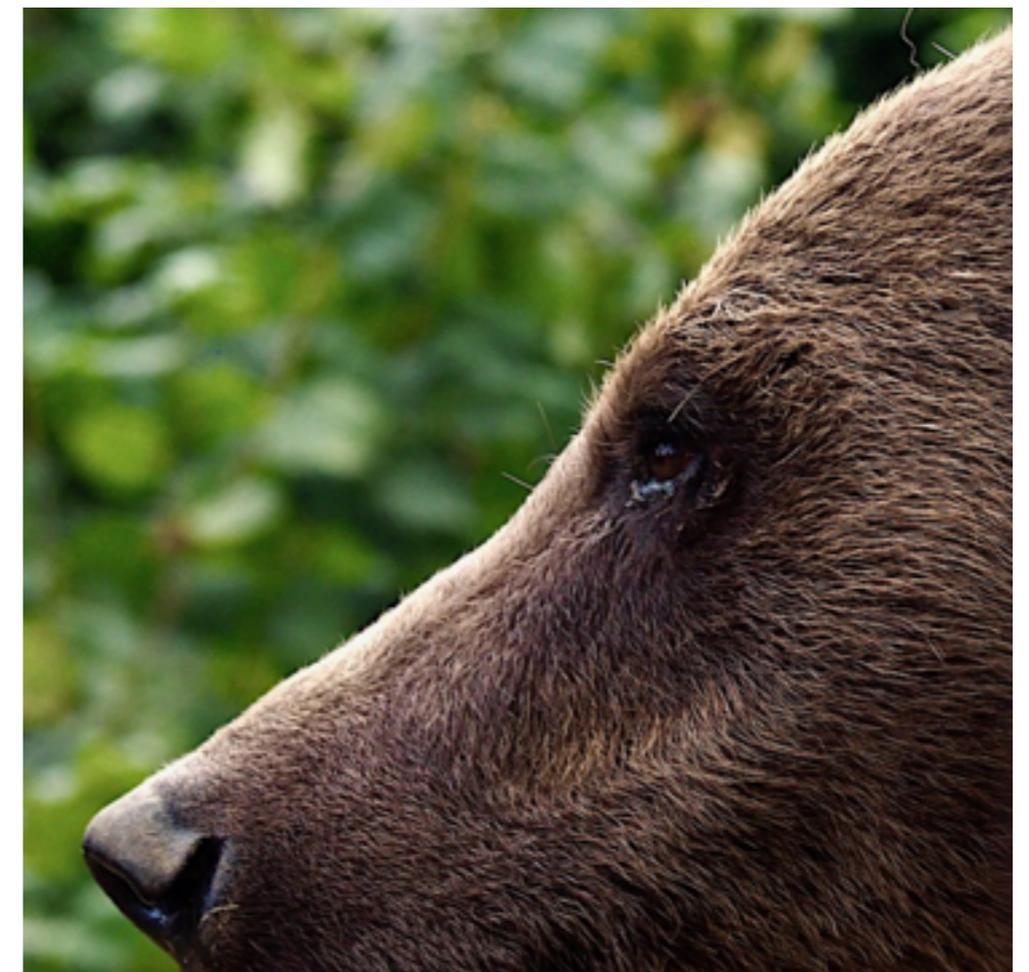
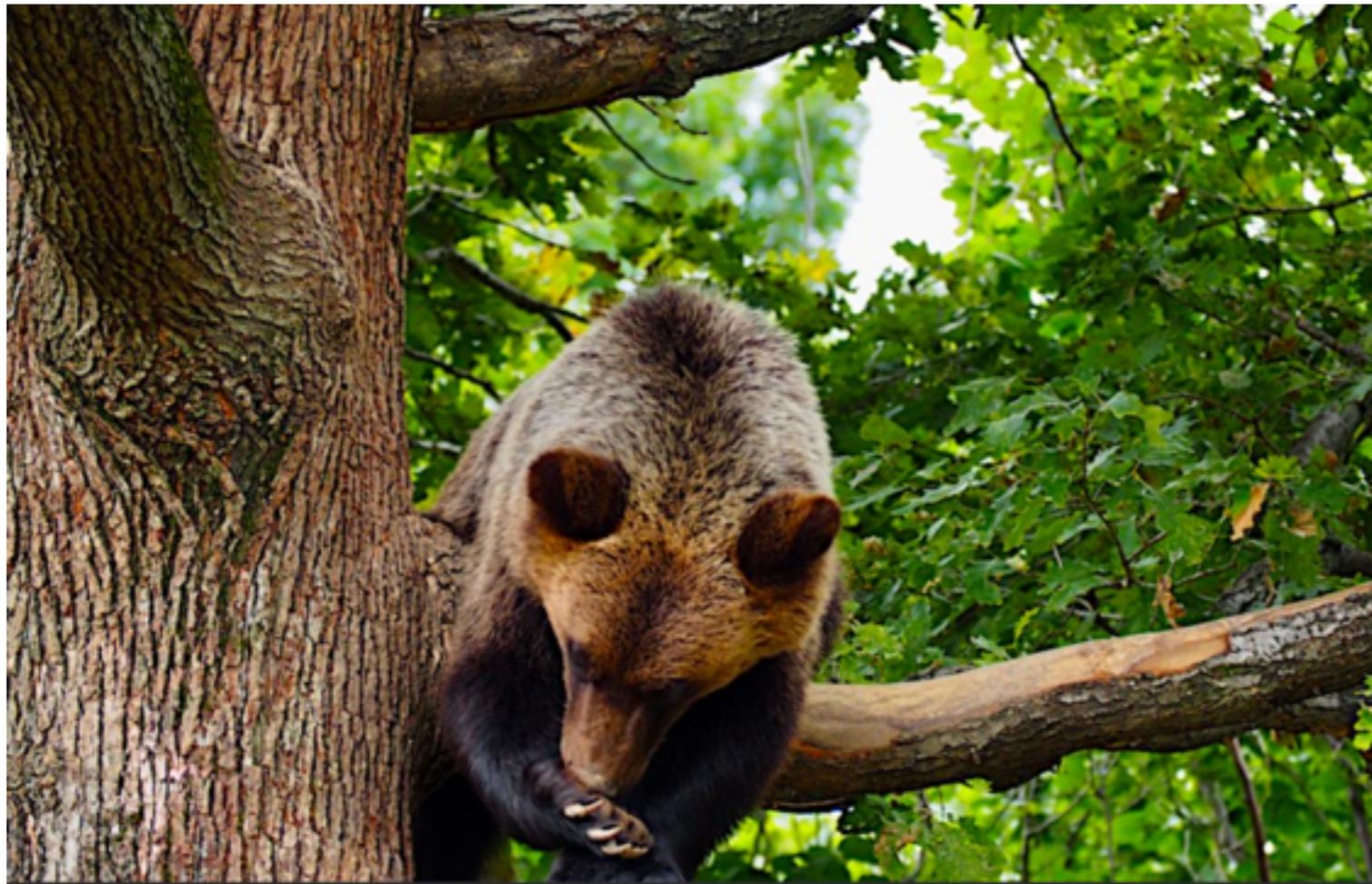
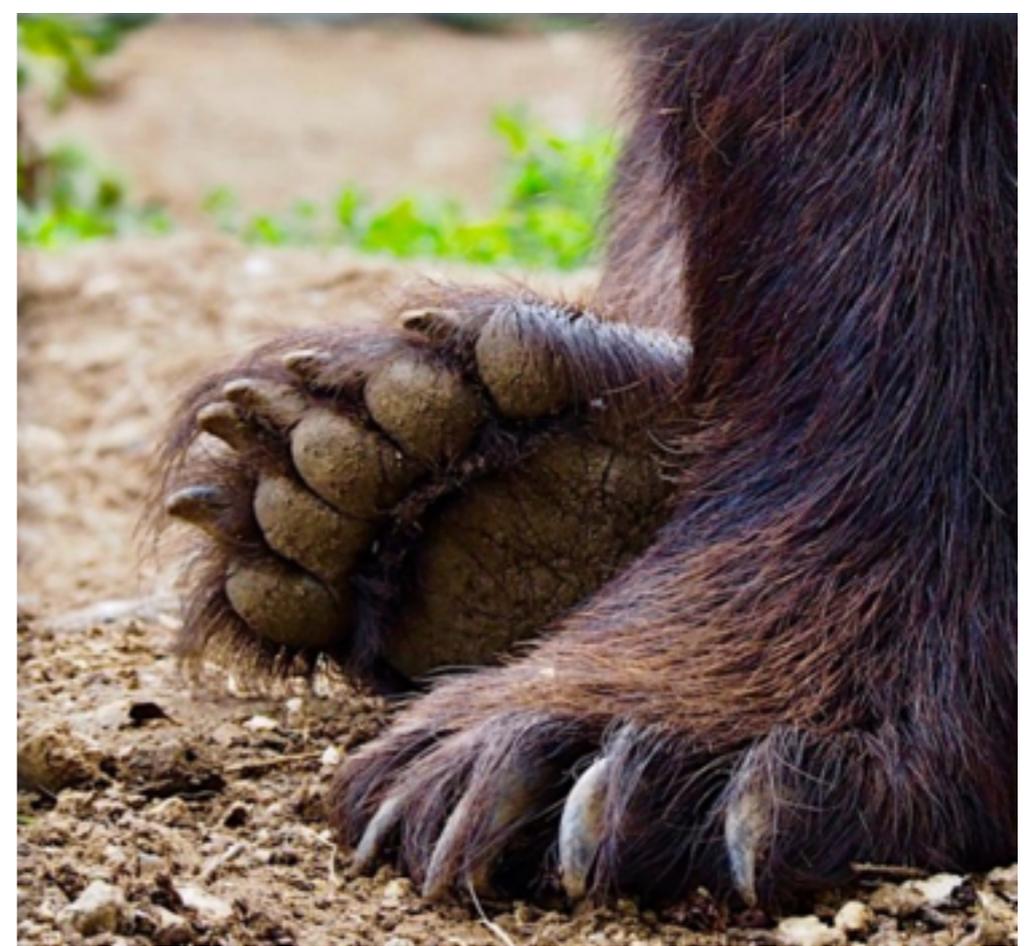
Suddenly I felt driven to visit and see their work and, more importantly to be able to support their charity. Our trip there in 2017 was so memorable.

We did an hour's tour and we were taken to the bears' enclosures and heard about the bear's stories and how their lives have now improved significantly within the safety of the sanctuary. It was such a humbling moment and the work these guys are doing is first class.

I wish more countries would follow suit - particularly Czechia who after a visit to Český Krumlov castle triggered me to feel physically sick after seeing their two captive bears. Needless to say we would never return and I set out on a campaign to have them removed to safety, although my cries fell on deaf ears - even UNESCO and these creatures remain at the castle for the pleasure of visitors!

Still the Libearty Bear Sanctuary are doing terrific work and if you ever have the chance to visit, please support their efforts. We wrote a [blog](#) following our visit, which they kindly posted on their website.

We stayed a [Alpin Ranch](#) with Otilia and Constantine who were amazing hosts with their little pony Zorro. It was a great place to call home and we would return in a heart-beat.





22. AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU - NR KRAKOW, POLAND

You can't say the word Poland and not think about the atrocities of the War. They, more than many suffered at the hands of prejudice's evil and the scars are still there to see. So a visit here is not complete unless you are willing to put your own emotions aside and visit Auschwitz and Birkenau.

As harrowing a visit as it was, it felt important to come here and contemplate the travesty that the prisoners from these two camps endured from 1939. It seems to awful to acknowledge that in our lifetime people could be treated this way and, it seems that despite the horror of war, we still have not learned the lessons.

Over the course of two days, we visited both of the camps and, as an experience, is one of the most powerful and profound places I have ever seen. In many ways there are no words suitable to

describe what you come so close to being part of. The smell in the air, the silence, the emptiness and the narrative that stains the earth beneath your feet.

For us, Birkenau was the 'better' of the two. I say this with a tinge of reticence only because when it comes to Auschwitz, 'better' seems a wholly inappropriate adjective, so let me clarify what I mean. For us being able to enter the grounds of Birkenau freely and wander at our leisure with space for our reflections, away from the crowds, felt much more honouring of those slain. Auschwitz was more like a tourist park where you are hustled through the throng of 'sightseers' whose respect for where they were seemed more distant than their thoughts on supper. Birkenau moved us to tears and its simplicity was stark and shocking and gave us a real insight into the lives of those who were transported here, many to their deaths. It is an

experience that none of us will ever forget and nor would we wish to forget. We hope that the lives lost in that travesty will carry on in each visitor's hearts such that we remember to be kind and to support peace. Their deaths must never be in vain.

The booking of the ticket's required for Auschwitz was not easy and we wrote about it in detail [here](#). Birkenau was though very easy and just a few miles up the road. At both camps we were able to stay very close to their entrances so taking your motorhome is very easy.

- [Auschwitz overnight](#)

- [Birkenau overnight](#)

A health warning though; staying at Birkenau you are almost quite literally outside of the infamous gates where the trains would arrive and I was kept awake for much of the night hearing the ghostly sounds of trains in the movement of the wind. It was an odd place to call 'home' although it did enable us to fully appreciate and immerse ourselves in the camp.

If you would like to read more about our intimate and sensory experiences at both camps, feel free to click [here](#). It makes for emotional reading, believe me, although I have to say I was so glad we had the courage to go and pay our respects, however difficult it might have been.





23. LE MARCHÉ EARTHQUAKE, ITALY

On 30th October 2016 at 0640 we heard a rumbling. Intrigued and just a little perturbed we stuck our noses outside our door to our beachside overnight spot on the west coast of Italy. Things were shaking, just briefly although shaking none the less.

As soon as we realised it was an earthquake, we became very mindful of life's fragility. What we had little comprehension of though was how the jigsaw piece from that day's rumblings fitted into a bigger picture. A picture that takes us back to 24th August that same year, where a 6.2 magnitude earthquake hit central Italy, the ripples of which have been devastating for so many communities. Our little tremor was classed as an aftershock even two months later.

Visiting friends who live in Amandola in 2019, just south of Ancona on the east coast, they showed us the full extent of the August earthquake of which they too were victims, their house being

completely destroyed and uninhabitable. As we drove around the region, support posts on houses were evident and roads were closed to some villages. Other villages, once thriving and full of energy, are now like ghost towns. Personal possessions can still be seen strewn amongst the debris and you are almost waiting for tumbleweed to blow down the streets.

It was a surreal experience, particularly when we visited **Pretare** on the south-eastern edge of the **Sibillini Mountains**. We parked **overnight** in a stunning location that belies the reality just 300 yards down the road. As I walked down the deserted road through the village, gates had been torn off their hinges, bathroom showers were still evident, ripped off the tiled walls and kitchen tables still in place in a room that barely resembled a dining room.



And then I saw a suitcase amidst the debris left by its owners, such was the urgency of their departure. It was quite harrowing. Walking back feeling quite sullen, I met a lady who must have been in her late 70's sweeping her steps. In my pigeon Italian and a bit of Google Translate, I managed to learn that she was the only inhabitant left in this deserted village. She managed to keep the integrity of her home, although can you imagine the loneliness with her community support gone?

My heart burst for her and her solitary existence. I'm sure she must have felt a mixture of gratitude and sadness for her situation.

Thankfully the Government has been really supportive and in many villages there are temporary prefab homes that were erected really quickly to provide homes for their locals. Three years on they are still there waiting for the money to be released to rebuild their homes and their lives.

It was a sobering visit and it just goes to show how we live on a very fine line of comfort. In any moment our lives could change and we are too often oblivious to this delicate balance between life and death.

It certainly has made us more appreciative of what we have and put much more attention into the here and now with just a glance to the future.

Here's a [blog](#) I wrote about our visit to the earthquake region.

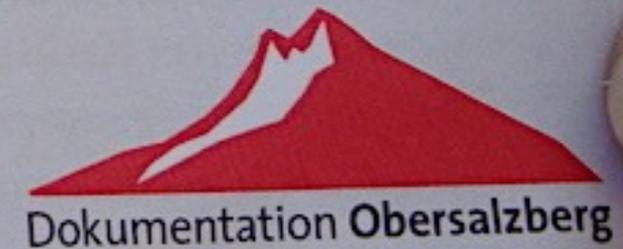




Dokumentation Obersalzberg



Die Dokumentation Obersalzberg ist eine ständige Ausstellung des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte, München – Berlin, über die Geschichte des Obersalzbergs und die NS-Diktatur.



Dokumentation Obersalzberg | Salzbergstraße 41 | 83471 Berchtesgaden

24. DOKUMENTATION MUSEUM - OBERSALZBERG, BAVARIA

It doesn't take very much news about today's 'modern' wars to provoke emotion from what has been before, especially as I write this amidst the Ukraine horror. With lessons clearly not learnt from the travesty of World War 2, it leaves us to wonder what hope there is for the human race. Although let's not make this a political post - let's make it one of a humbling experience that our travels invited us to immerse ourselves in.

Bavaria is one of the most beautiful regions of Germany in the south of the country sitting on the border with Austria. With highlights such as Germany's highest waterfall, **Königsee** and its famous church and **Berchtesgaden**, it is easy to fall in love with this part of the world.

Yet one of the draws for us, on our World War educational tour was to understand more about the region's role in Hitler's battle plans. It is easy to focus on the horror of those who fell victim to his regime and dictatorship, although was there something for us to learn about the man behind the conflict?

So we had in our sights not just **Berchtesgaden**, that was key to Hitler's summer retreat, there was also a drive for us to visit the Nazi museum at **Obersalzberg - Dokumentationzentrum**. We wondered before we entered, how they would present the evil of a man that significantly shaped Germany and the world, and whether it would be a facade or a stark view of the reality.

The museum, which for us was free to enter back in 2017 (you just paid for the interpretation headphones) was intricate in its detail and

its integrity. As we entered the front doors we were presented with a full size Hitler model and floor-to-ceiling poster of a starving Jew from one of the extermination camps. That was our starting point and it hit you right between the eyes. We knew in that moment that this was going to be a 'no holds barred' experience and perversely we were glad of it. It feels so important for future generations to see the truth behind the man and the war and not to have a propaganda presentation that would have been the easiest route. Although all credit to the creators of this museum. They were brutal about the man that was behind the hatred and atrocities.

Walking mindfully around the museum which took us a good couple of hours, we were taken back to the boy, the teenager, the fantasist and finally the devil who single handedly was responsible for the



death of millions of people and their homes around the world. With a sepia hue from the information boards we felt as if we were sucked into each of the moments of time where they illustrated how Hitler's beliefs had been shaped. You really did get behind the man.

Whilst the museum has been remodelled recently, when we visited we also had access to the underground tunnels that were part of Hitler's bunker safe haven. Given that the Eagle's Eye further up the mountain was his summer retreat, further down the valley he had built a maze of tunnels and escape routes down to the village and the railway station.

It really was a fascinating experience and gave us such a powerful and almost too intimate an exploration into Hitler, his strategies and his leadership.

Having seen the war graves, Auschwitz and places like Oradour-sur-Glane, we have a new-found respect for the generation of our grandparents who fought, lived and died for our freedom.

These travel moments are so much more powerful than the school lessons that we endured as children and everyone should be given the chance to see it, feel it and know it.



25. UNESCO PAINTED CHURCHES, MOLDAVIA REGION, ROMANIA

After a lot of solemn listings, it is nice to be able to finish on lighter note, although none the less poignant in my memory.

In the northern region of **Moldavia** in Romania, (not to be confused with the country of Moldova), you will find an area packed to the rim with authentic country life, religious history and practices that form the very foundation of this wonderful country.

Now I must add that I'm a more spiritual than religious person, so I add this section with a graciousness for those who have different beliefs to me. So planning a driving tour of many of [Moldavia's monasteries and the eight painted churches](#) might seem an odd thing to do. Although whilst I may not enter a church for religious reasons, I can enter with an admiration and respect for the beauty of the space and the energy it creates. And boy did Romania impress on both counts.

The magnificent buildings were all built between 15-16th century and the outside walls are all masterpieces inspired by the Byzantine period. Each church with its painted facades tell a different tale depending upon the artist. There has been little intervention in the restoration of these works of art, so what you see is quite literally 'the real thing'. Faded in parts, eroded in others, brilliantly intact elsewhere, these frescos are a sight to behold and whilst after 8 churches you might feel a bit 'churched' out, it is totally worth seeing because, in part you are treading in the footsteps of devoted and creative souls. No two churches are the same and they will wow you.

And it is no surprise that four of the churches are on UNESCO's listing, so that gives them a certain gravitas. We can't recommend this region enough, so please go, they will touch your heart.



We stayed at five different places along the way, combining wild spots with Pensiones and campsites. Please refer to our [Romania Interactive Map](#) for our route and our overnight stopovers.





7 WOW MOMENTS

With our life-time of travels, one of the markers of my 'wow' moments have always been leaky eyes. When I cry then we know it has stirred something deep within me and the scenery or location has had a soulful response rather than an ego one. And the two do feel different for me.

During our six years on the road I could have written a whole eBook on my Wow Moments alone. So I have had to work hard to really prioritise the most special ones. Here are our eight carefully selected moments.



26. THE SAHARA DESERT, MOROCCO

I can honestly say that the desert has never been on my Bucket List, yet once we arrived in Morocco in January 2020, my drive to get down and see this entry into the *7 Wonders of the World* was determined and focused.

The trip from **Ait Benhaddou**, which is in itself pretty magnificent, was full of anticipation for me. Wondering how I would feel about this potentially monochrome landscape. We drove into the eastern edge of Morocco at **Mergouza** where the **Erg Chebbi** was to be our home. Now it might sound strange and pretty obvious to make this statement, although the first thing to strike me was how much sand there was. We're in the desert of course, yet having never been in a landscape like this, I had no idea what to expect. And the roads

were all pretty much sand, and swirling sand at that with the winds that quickly whip up.

We soon found our home for the next four nights at **Haven La Chance** campsite which was right on the fringes of the desert. It was at this point that my Wow began. This was no ordinary campsite. We were parked up in the dunes with archetypal Moroccan architecture, vibrant, floaty fabrics blowing in the Sahara winds and a swimming pool to die for. It was by far our favourite and best campsite during our month tour of Morocco.

This was though, only the starting point. As it was the pinky orange hue of the desert that really drew me. So without delay I went to explore these magnificent dunes. My experience from that first step

was just like transporting me into another world. How could I ever have imagined that the Sahara was monochrome. Yes it was one colour although the shades and tones, the shadow and light, the curves and waves that the golden sand made was truly mesmerising.

Small clumps of greenery made an appearance from time to time, just to prove that the desert isn't a desolate place. Life can exist here albeit a challenging one. And from the middle of nowhere, I stumbled upon Yousef who was a Berber selling fossils made into beautiful items. Myles could not believe that, even in the middle of the desert, I could find something to buy. Oh my how he laughed when I dashed into the van bringing with me a bucket full of sand looking for my purse!

Over the course of the following four days, there was not one moment where I was not in the dunes armed with my camera. We would rise early to catch the sunrise and stay late to catch the sun set, both experiences being mesmerising beyond words. Caravans of camels slowly coursed their way to the highest point to capture the sun's magnificence dressed in rainbow coloured blankets and led by colourful Berber guides. Feeling the sand between my toes felt like I was grounded to the earth, the desert having a direct route straight to my heart. I was truly hooked. Hooked by its vast yet gentle dominance, by its shape, colour, silence and architecture. It was like nothing I have ever seen in my life and tears flowed as often as the desert sands blew and I can't wait to return. It is a canvas that can never look the same twice and as the sound of the Desert Camp drums floated in the air, the Sahara became my most memorable moment EVER. A solitary figure that glides amongst the dunes, lost in her vulnerability that only the desert can absorb with

its wilderness, is returned into the arms of her loved one, changed forever.







27. RUBJERG KNUDE LIGHTHOUSE, DENMARK

I want to keep with the theme of sand for my second 'Wow', albeit a few hundred miles north. Denmark for many may feel that it is a poor and flat relation to its sexier and more dramatic Norwegian neighbour. Yet it is a deceptively alluring country that has such a diverse appeal that you may find yourself taking back any such judgements.

And it was up in the north of the country that after a bit of Moneypenny research, I found a unique story of a lighthouse that has been so affected by Mother Nature that it is teetering on the edge of survival. Consumed by sand and overwhelmed by on-shore winds, the fragility of Rubjerg Lighthouse is all too plain to see.

Originally built in 13th century a whopping 1km from the coast, the journey this lighthouse and its accompanying dunes have endured makes it worthy of a wow. It has been moved, turned into a museum, abandoned and now is expected to have been completely consumed by the sand by 2023. So we feel incredibly privileged to have visited this fragile landscape.

With sands of white that reflect the light from the brilliant blue skies, it seems inconceivable to imagine that this building will soon disappear with only a ghostly memory to show for its ancient history. And I think it is that precarious grasp on life that made it so powerful a landmark to enter into this eBook Wall of Fame.





28. BRIKSDAL GLACIER AND WATERFALL, NORWAY

Norway, it could be argued, has its fair share of wows, with its dramatic fjords, majestic mountains and iconic glaciers. Of the many moments we will treasure it is in the central-south region of the country, nestled in the heart of the **Jostedal National Park**, home to the largest glacier in Europe that we will remember the most.

The western arm of this massive 487 square kilometre landscape of ice you will find **Briksdal Glacier**. Hidden in the **Olden Valley** on a one-way in and one-way out road, your trip will be rewarded with the tallest and most ferocious of waterfalls, the most iconic Norway scenery and an up close and personal meeting with the glacier itself.

Camping at **Melkevoll Campsite** beneath the famous **Volefossen Waterfall**, a 3km hike gets you within touching distance of the glacier. Either walk or take the Troll Cars to within 700m of this magnificent glacier with its ice blue fingers of slowly melting compacted snow and ice. Staying in this idyllic setting, being lulled to sleep by the perpetual cascading waterfall was a wondrous experience all by itself. Yet a short walk up into the National Park, there was a more powerful, breathtaking moment to come.

The **Kleivafossen** is a famous giant amongst its waterfall fraternity. Swollen with glacial waters, this makes the word gushing seem somewhat understated. With a drop of 41m and tons of water being released in any one minute, Kleivafossen is a stunning sensory experience. For the eyes it is visually impressive, for the ears

thunderous and for the body a good old ice-cold shower. This iconic perspective of Norway's glacial grandeur will, I promise blow you away and that is before you even reach the glacier itself.

All in all with record breaking waterfalls, the most stunning scenery and Mother Nature at her best, this takes 'wow' to a whole new level.



And we had grey skies mostly during our visit, so imagine what this could look like with the brilliance of the sun. It is a must-see for tear-jerking and word-loss destinations.





29. CAMINITO DEL REY, SPAIN

On a chilly January morning I prepared myself for a journey that would take me into fear and out the other side a more courageous and strong person.

I remember back to a trip to **Zion National Park** in the US and the infamous **Angel's Landing**. At the time I decided that my discomfort around heights was too great, so lunched alone with the chipmunks whilst mum, dad and Myles took off on the precipice. I've never really liked heights since that point - Myles even less so having attempted part of this crazy walk.

So having researched the **Path of the King** just 45 minutes north of **Malaga** I decided that I would address my fear and book a trip on one of the world's most dangerous walks. It may sound overly dramatic although when you face your fears it does feel like a big deal.

First things first - the **Caminito del Rey** has been renovated after five deaths between 1999 and 2000, and so now is safe and, I have to say, *the* most incredible walk you could possibly do.

The walk was a transformational experience; one because I was doing it on my own and two because of my nervousness around heights. Walking away from Myles and Scoobie towards the tunnel that takes you to the starting point of the hike, submerged me into a very lonely place and it would have been easy to have given up at that point. Although I had bought my on line ticket and I was determined to see what all the fuss was about. So donned with my hard hat (well that freaked me out to start with - what do I need a safety hat for?) and my lunch, I joined my group and headed off. I chose to do the Guided Walk only because I wanted to learn about the history and I'll admit I was just too damned scared to do it alone.

Being 330ft up on the side of the gorge above the **Guadalhorce** river, the reinforced boardwalks gave me nothing to fear despite the soaring vultures above me. This path is over 120 years old, originally created for the workmen who were building the dams at **El Chorro**.

With the snaking path around the gorge walls, each step felt like a massive achievement and at no point did I ever feel unsafe and the three mile walk took around three hours. By the end of the hike I was on cloud nine. Not only were my fears not realised (and that is often the nature of fear) I actually thrived on doing this walk. Even if you have a fear of heights I implore you to consider doing the El Caminito and experience the thrill of this walk which will absolutely wow you. We stayed at **Bobastro** just 10 minutes away, a fantastic wild spot, although there are campsites near-by you can stay at.

Check out my video footage below and our blog where we describe the booking process and more - [Click here](#).





30. SLOVENSKY RAJ, SLOVAKIA

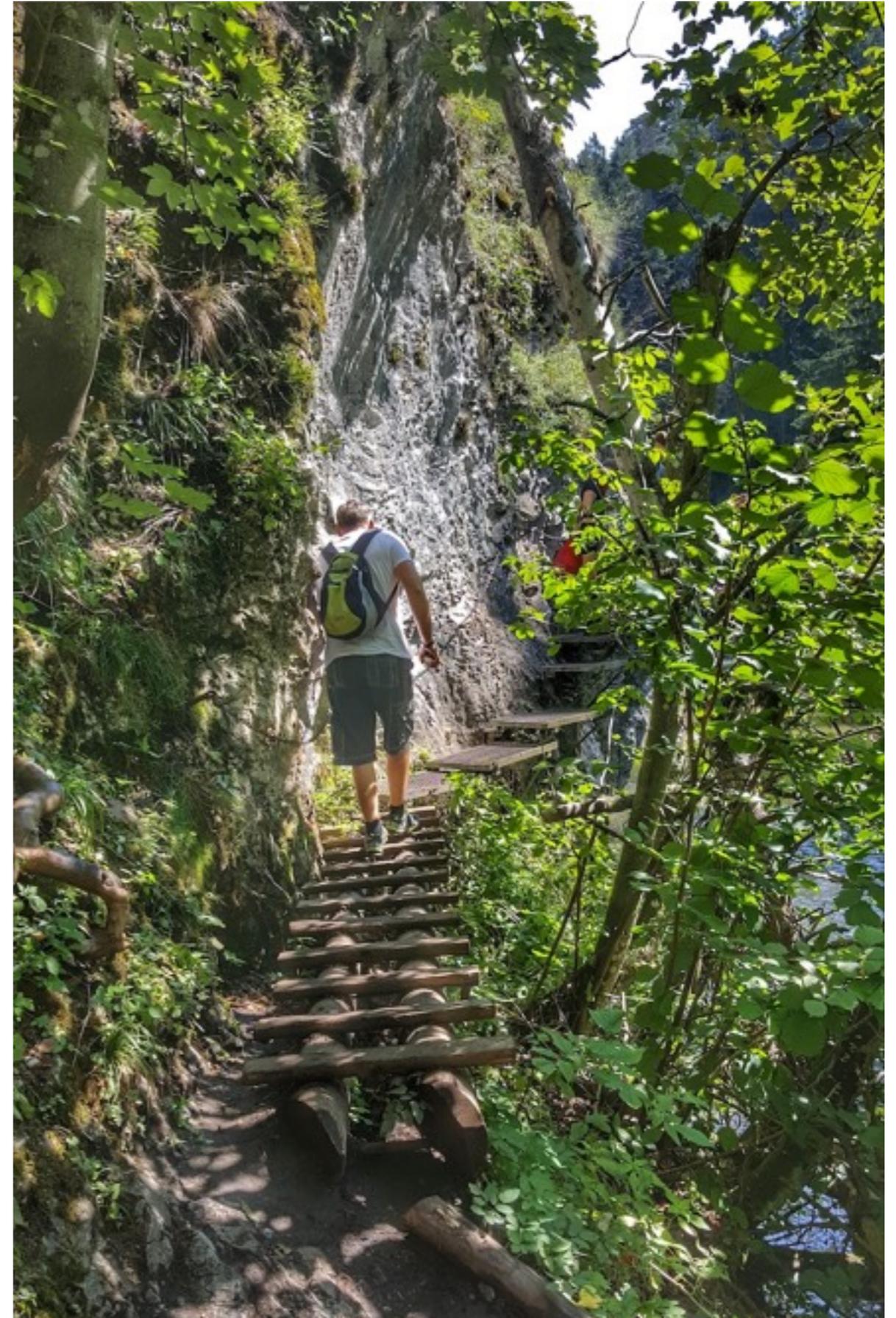
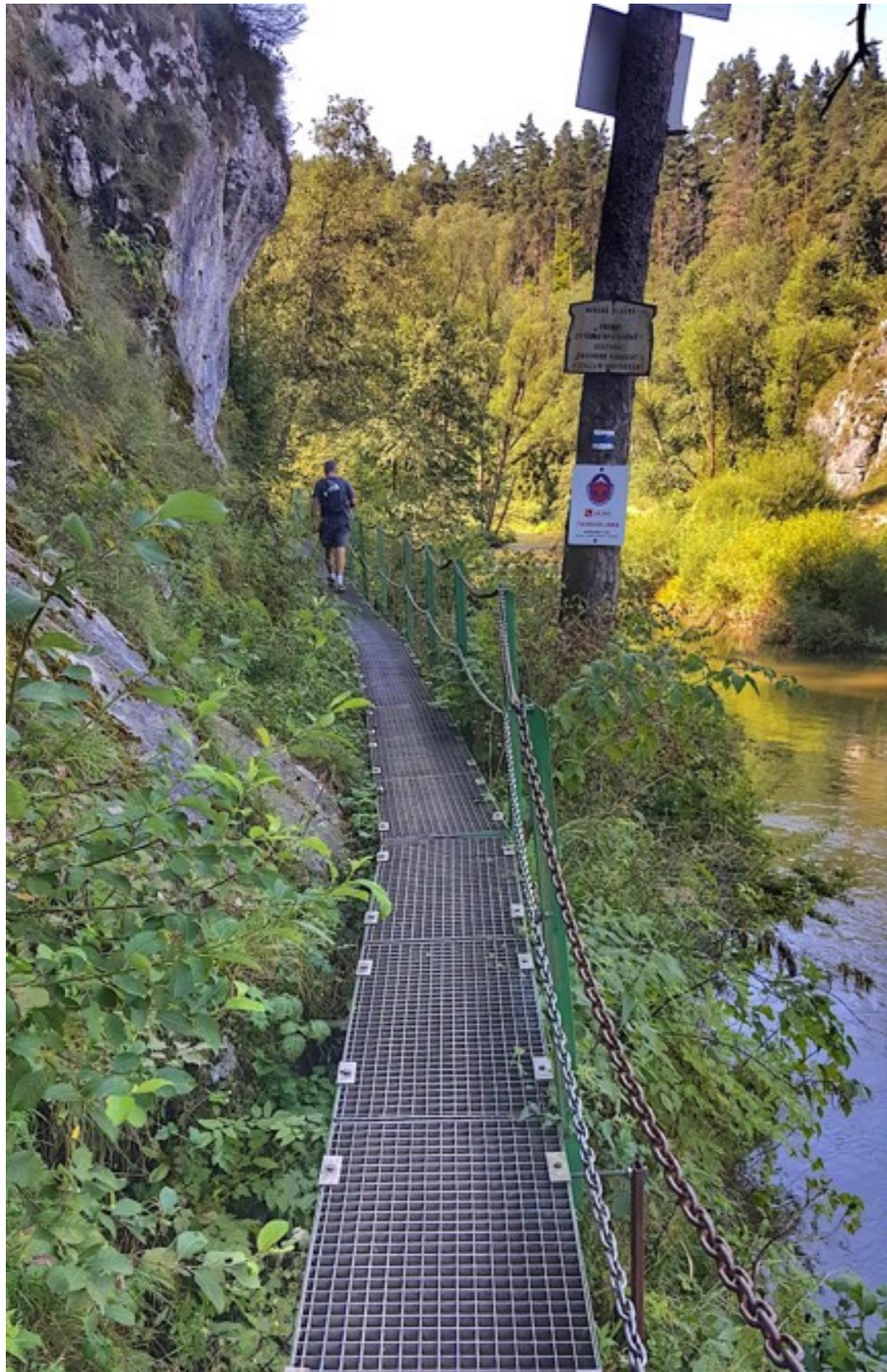
When we met up with fellow travellers Stuart and Elaine in southern Poland, they told us about this amazing walk called [Slovenski Raj](#). When we looked at the photos from their brochures, the wooden walkways, ladders and gorge heights, to me after the Caminito, it was ‘Hell yeah’. To Myles was ‘Really?’ We promised ourselves to check it out, as aside of the walks, it looked like an amazing part of the country.

Camped up at [Camping Podlesok](#) in the heart of the National Park we assessed the hiking options; and I use hiking quite specifically. This was so much more than a walk. Given injuries, fitness and fears, we plumped for ***Prielom Hornádu***, the ‘easiest’ of the routes that was mostly along the floor of the gorge. The other options were horizontal routes, up wooden ladders, that without a risk assessment, were far too adventurous for our little souls. All that

being said, once we began this hike, little did we realise that this too was going to take us to our limits of fitness and discomfort.

8 miles later with sore feet and elevated spirits we were so pleased with our achievements. Neither of us had ever walked so far and on such a challenging path. Granted the other routes were significantly more difficult , although for us, this was more than enough.

It was less the scenery that was the ‘wow’ and more about our achievement of completing this walk. It was a memorable visit and one that we still now talk about with an equal amount of incredulity and pride.





31. ALVOR, ALGARVE - PORTUGAL

Aside of the Algarve's more popular tourist regions, the **Rocky Coast** that extends from **Armação de Pêra** to **Lagos** in the far west packs a real nature punch. With cliffs, coastline and rock formations, if you love the outdoors, then this part of the world is a must. One of our favourite spots, where we were first introduced to this sensational presentation from Mother Nature, is **Alvor**. An authentic fishing village alongside the river and Atlantic Ocean, this has a shade of touristy about it, although nothing like some of its easterly neighbours.

Alvor has so many dimensions to it, from the boardwalk around the dunes and nature reserve, the village itself is delightful and the beach is just a golden sand haven. Although is its cliffs that produce the wow for me. Just a 10 minute walk east you can begin to see how the wind and tide have carved their own piece of artwork, suitable for any gallery across the world. If only we could capture it.

The best of this little treasure is found at low tide, when you can clamber along the rocks and find yourself in a scene perfectly set for a Famous Five adventure or a James Bond movie. Wide expanse of empty, sandy beaches licked only by the last high tide, coves hiding pirate secrets and exquisitely sculpted cliffs. The whole scene simply took my breath away, especially when I timed it at sun rise; the rays caressing the orange cliffs with sparkle and glitter. It is a place I can return to time and time again and still find the magic of a virgin visit.

A walk along the upper coastal path towards **Praia da Rocha** (a 7 mile one way trip - get an Uber back) will award you with blow holes and shapes that look like they belong on the moon. It is an enchanting place of orange delight that makes you reflect on the marvel of nature on one hand and yet its destruction on another. A real paradox of experiences.





32. LA GRAVE, HIGH ALPS - FRANCE

In year 1 we had some incredible experiences that are indelibly embedded in our hearts and minds. And one that stands out as a 'wow moment' for Myles in particular was our visit to the **Grand Alps** and the small town of **La Grave**. Despite being the height of summer, so lofty are the mountains in this region that snow still covers the summits like the foundation on a catwalk model.

We found ourselves a stunning **campsite** just below the **Meije Mountain**, which was to secure our wow without doubt or reason. If the luscious grass, swimming pool and crystal waters of the river were not enough, my promise of a cable car up to the mountain top topped it all - if you pardon the pun. Now I must preface with a reminder that Myles doesn't do heights and a built in cable car is no exception. Still we did it, dressed in walking boots and summer

clothing. We did realise that we would be up high so came reasonably well prepared, although we had no idea that we would be so close to the glacier. So close that we were actually able to walk it. That was a surreal moment for us both.

Here we were, in summer, dressed in shorts and tentatively treading upon a moving sheet of ice destined for some valley 3,200m below us. That blew our minds.

Geologically it was a privilege and even now we can't quite believe that we had been up there. And we would love to go back for longer as there is so much more to do in the area that we just didn't have enough time, given our wanderlust naivety and speedy approach to travel.





33. SFINARI BEACH, CRETE

There are some places that just embed themselves in your heart and memories. **Sfinari Beach** will be one of those destinations for us.

After a busy three weeks on [Crete](#) in the summer of 2017, we looked forward to some down time and to rest Scoobie's tyres. We found a spot on Park4Night and landed on an out of the way beach resort. And tucked away right at the end of the road was [Sunset Restaurant](#). Not only does Yannis and his family run a tight ship with daily freshly caught fish, they have a FREE Aire where you are welcome to stay with fresh water and beach showers. We tried to pay him although, he just asked us to eat in the restaurant, which we did gladly. To watch son Nikos go off each morning for octopus was just amazing, especially when it was on our lunchtime menu the following day.

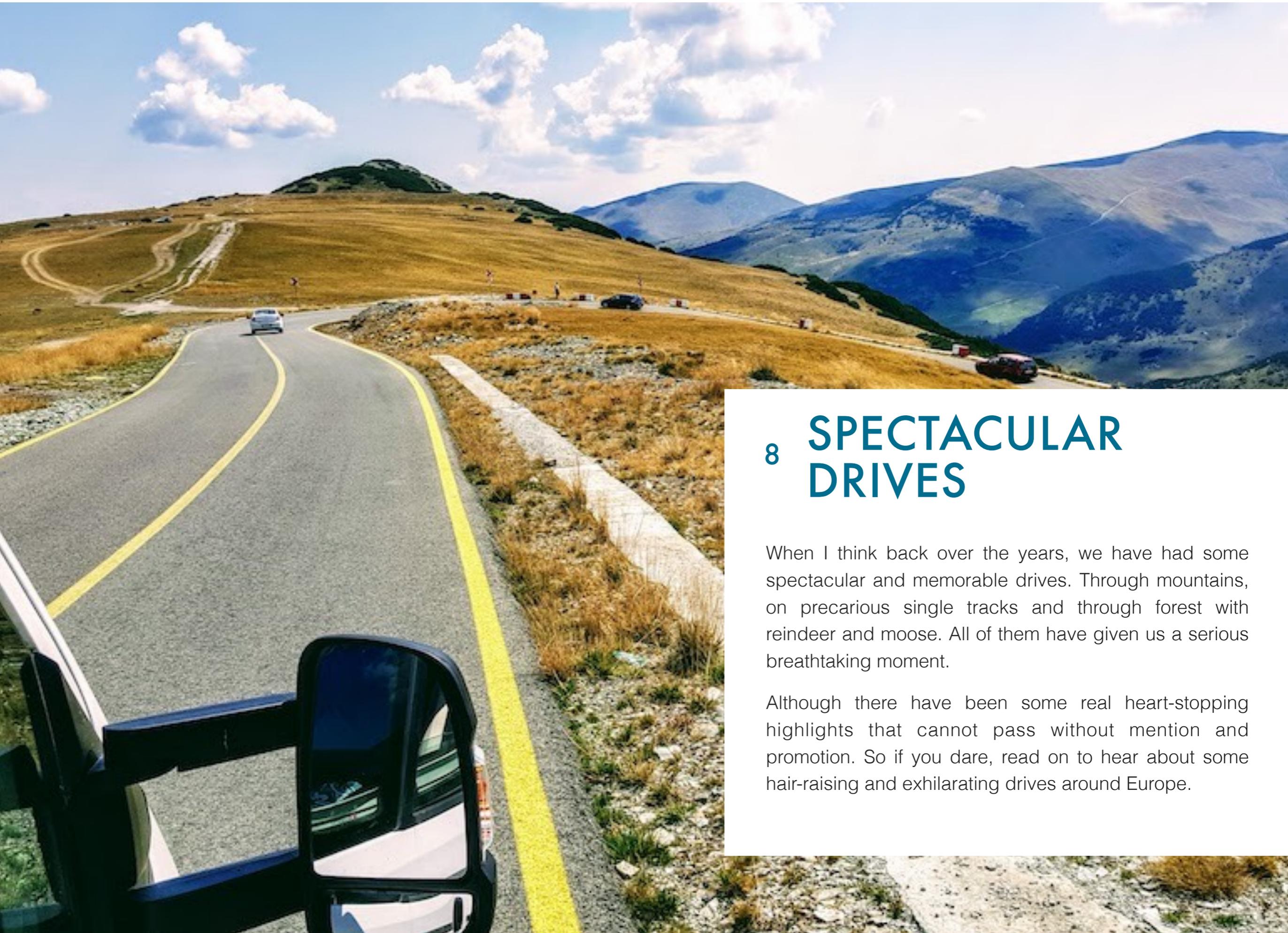
We only intended to stay overnight and ended up staying for three. Such was the tranquility as we watched Yannis milk his goats, a bottle of which we got daily and witnessed the sinking sun producing burnt orange skies reflecting off the ripples on the bay.

Whilst there isn't much to do apart from walk along the beach, we really didn't want anything active. We just needed to rest and Sfinari facilitated this beautifully.

We can't recommend this place enough if you touring the island. For more information on how to make the most your motorhome trip, check out our dedicated eBook on our month's trip by clicking [here](#).







8 SPECTACULAR DRIVES

When I think back over the years, we have had some spectacular and memorable drives. Through mountains, on precarious single tracks and through forest with reindeer and moose. All of them have given us a serious breathtaking moment.

Although there have been some real heart-stopping highlights that cannot pass without mention and promotion. So if you dare, read on to hear about some hair-raising and exhilarating drives around Europe.



34. TRANSALPIN ROUTE, ROMANIA

When you think of classic, must-do drives in Romania, the mind tends to jump automatically to the **Transfagarasan Route** just north of Bucharest. Heralded by UK TV programme, Top Gear as the “Greatest driving road in the world”, you could be forgiven for thinking this way. And don’t get me wrong it was good, especially when I cycled 1/3rd of the route. Although we found better.

We are always searching for the road-less-travelled and thanks to a Eastern European Facebook Page I was part of, so many people recommended the **TransAlpin Route, DN67C**. For us it was far superior, in part because it has a more authentic history than its easterly rival and just for its off-the-chart diversity and natural beauty.

This route is said to have existed back in Roman times although was officially paved in 1938 under the instructions of King Carol II. Often called the King’s Road or Devil’s Path, the TransAlpin route is far less commercial and touristy than its counterpart. And so the drive, with less traffic tends to allow you to take a steadier pace and gawp at the most incredible scenery thanks to the Parâng Mountains.

92 miles of jaw-dropping backdrops, hair-pin bends, pine-forests and infinite views across the Carpathian mountains as far as your eyes can see. This route took us a whole day, having found a quiet wild spot for the night just before the route began in earnest (45.551572, 23.627012). I even found a local selling Chanterelle

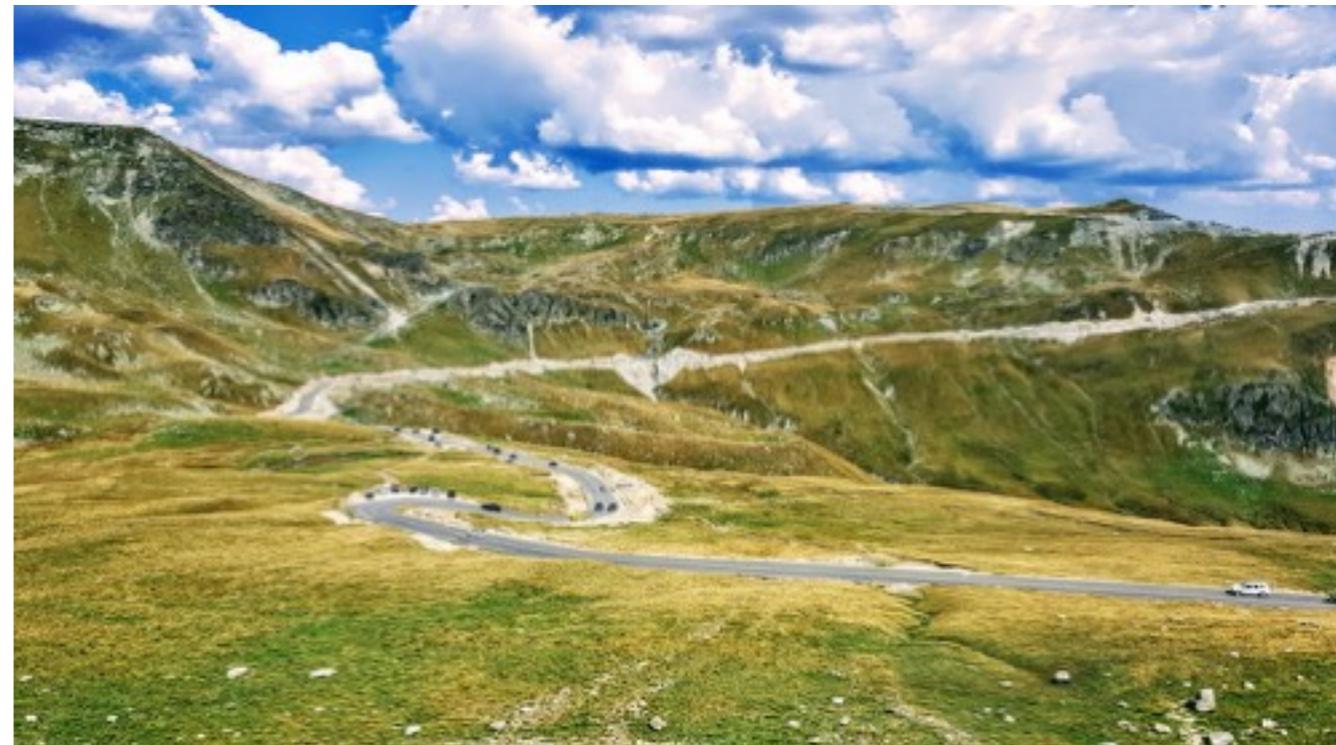
mushrooms, which I couldn't resist and for breakfast they fuelled us for the journey of a lifetime.

Starting out nice and early to avoid any anticipated crowds of an August weekend, there really wasn't any volume of note, so we needn't have worried. With great weather we drove through dense pine forest on the look-out for these evasive bears, to no avail and then entered the mountain section. With serpentine curves and wiggles, this road was spectacular and the colours just blew my mind. We often stopped for photos and just to soak up the vistas in front of us. We saw wild donkeys and mountain shepherds with their flocks which all added to the genuine delight of this driving experience.

As we descended through the foothills of the mountains, a change in scenery blessed our eyes once more, as boulders and forest carved the landscape in front of us. We headed for a well-deserved rest at a campsite on a lake at the end of the TransAlpin Route, reflecting on what was a real highlight of our Romania five week tour. **Camping Ledo** was our resting place costing £5 for the night with electricity. You have to love Romania, it is a very special place.



Our wild spot, bottom left and the views from the top of the TransAlpin Route.





35. THE ISLAND OF SENJA - NORWAY

I've just asked Myles which route he would say was most memorable for him; the route through **Senja** in the northern most reaches of Norway or the **Trollstigen Pass**? He said, and I agree that they are so different you actually can't compare them. **The Trollstigen** is one of those - must do routes in amongst many of Norway's best roads to drive and had the feel of a baby **Stelvio, in Italy**. Although as I had a quick flick back through this guide, nowhere have I mentioned Senja - so this will take precedence, as for us this was the absolute highlight of our seven weeks in Norway.

Senja is Norway's fifth largest island and home to, amongst other things, the world's largest Troll statue. Now there's a thing to hold dear. For us, Senja was the best of Norway wrapped up in one easy to navigate island that had absolutely NO crowds. Our visit here

came right at the start of our Norwegian tour so at that point we hadn't become over-saturated with Norway's beauty.

Blessed with the most stunning overnight stopovers, more of which you can find in our free **eBook**, Senja has a landscape which looks like it has been crafted by Da Vinci, such is its majesty. With its own National Park, Trolls museum, quaint fishing villages, WW2 memorials, remote communities and fjords galore, Senja, despite its northerly location, is an absolute must.

We visited the island on two separate occasions; one from the east and one from the north via the **Brensholmen Ferry**. So our time here gave us plenty of opportunity to drive these spectacular roads and savour the raw beauty that Senja's off-the-beaten-track location offers. Let's see if we can tempt you north with pictures not words.



TOURING NORWAY
**SENJA, NORWAY
IN MINIATURE**
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36. STELVIO PASS, NORTHERN ITALY

If you are an adrenalin junky, then look no further than northern Italy's [Stelvio Pass](#) for a journey that will take your heart rate to the edge and have your hormones soaring through your body. Perhaps though like us, you are more of a challenge seeker, then still the Pass will satiate every pore of your body.

After the joys of Romania's drives we knew that our confidence was high enough to stretch our comfort zone just a little further. And so after we travelled through Slovakia into Austria, Italy was a natural progression and of course the Dolomites and, the giant that is **Stelvio**.

We decided to start, almost by accident at Bolzano on the eastern edge. It was an inspired decision as it turned out as we ended up travelling **up** those pesky little wiggles that you see in the image

above. I would not want to have navigated these in descent with the pressure on our brakes.

Inching forward through the mountains in the lower reaches of the Pass, was all by itself a complete joy and really did lull us into a false sense of security. This was child's play.... And then the twists and turns began and our heart rates increased, our adrenalin started to soar and we settled into the trip that was going to be as memorable as anything we had ever done. We had a much needed stop for lunch half way up which gave Myles a break, who was just a Sterling Moss driver throughout. Although by the time we had coursed our way to the pinnacle of the Pass through 30 hair pin bends, we were glad for a rest. A whiskey helped settle Smiley's nerves. What a blast and I would love to do it again now we know what to expect.



Check out our video by clicking the image above and for more information and tips about making this epic journey, read our blog [here](#).





37. A87 ROUTE - LOCH NESS TO THE ISLE OF SKYE, SCOTLAND

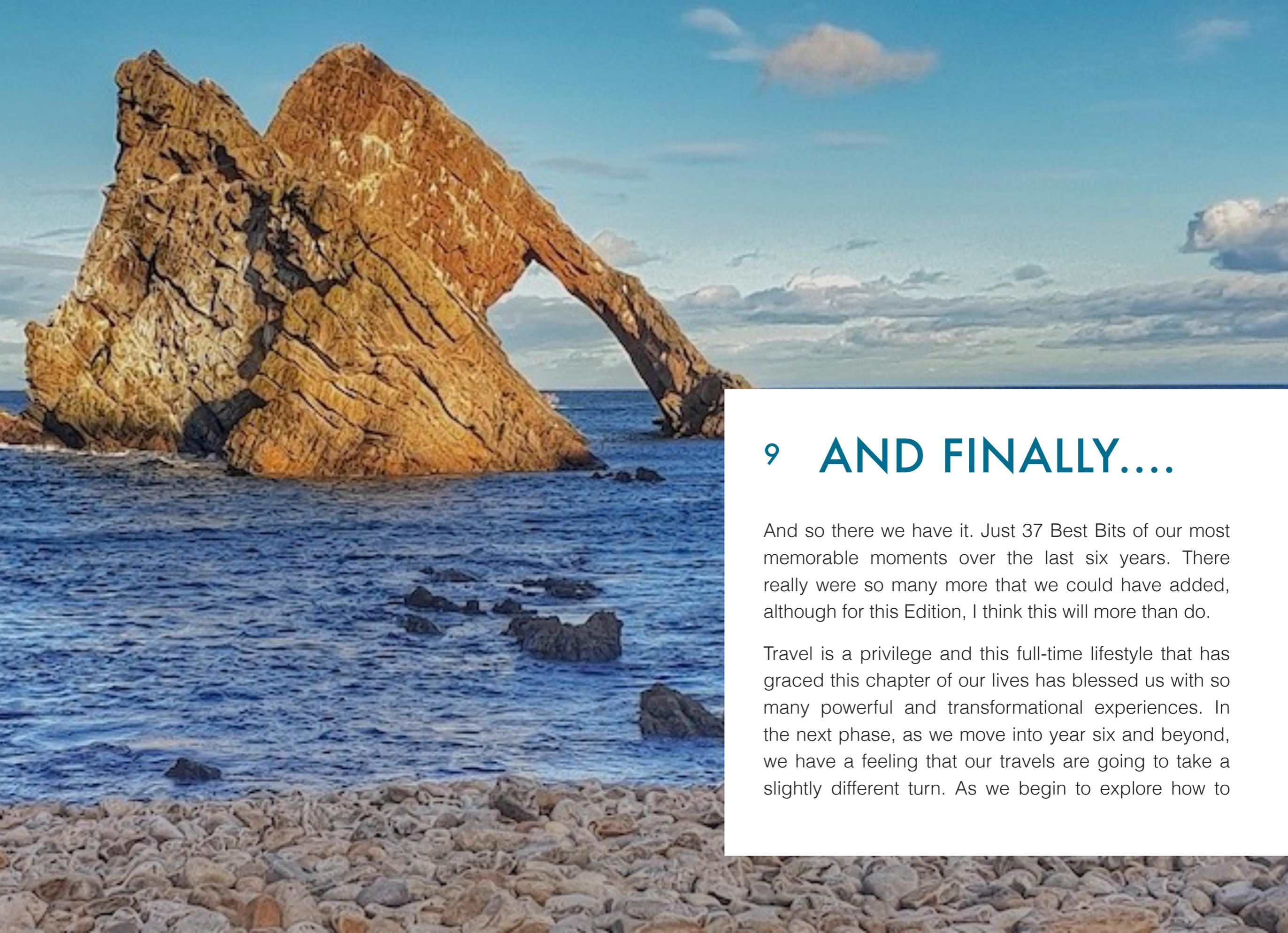
If Brexit has given us anything, it is the opportunity to explore our own home country, something in which we have been found seriously lacking, generally speaking. Scotland has been in our sights for a long while, although with most of our months historically being in Europe and family and friends mostly in the south, we have procrastinated making the journey up there. 2021 ended all that.

Of the many, many routes that we could have included in our highlight memories, the one that stands out the most is the A87 from the southern shores of Loch Ness to the Isle of Skye. With a dash of oohs and a sprinkling of OMG's, the three hour route was littered with views that blew us both away. With mist and cloud bursting rain that you can only get in Scotland, we still thought, that in that moment we were in the most beautiful place in the world. I can only imagine what that route must look like in full sunshine.

With autumn colours that could literally jump off an artist's canvas, the shapely mountains, neat looking forests and lochs just sang to us. For 53 miles, the landscape entertained us and we savoured the mountain giants that asserted themselves despite the veil of mist and cloud.

The stops along the way were plentiful, allowing us to take in the sheer magnitude of this countryside where, if there were anything broader than 3D, this road would be it. It is definitely on a par with some of the sights we saw in New Zealand. With highlights like the loch that looks like the Scotland map and atmospheric ***Eilean Donan*** castle, you'd be crazy to miss it. There's also a fabulous Aire that we stayed at for the night just before we hit the Isle of Skye at **[Auchtertyre](#)** for just £10pn.





9 AND FINALLY....

And so there we have it. Just 37 Best Bits of our most memorable moments over the last six years. There really were so many more that we could have added, although for this Edition, I think this will more than do.

Travel is a privilege and this full-time lifestyle that has graced this chapter of our lives has blessed us with so many powerful and transformational experiences. In the next phase, as we move into year six and beyond, we have a feeling that our travels are going to take a slightly different turn. As we begin to explore how to

balance our Schengen Sentence with our continued European discoveries, perhaps our Motoroaming spirits will take us further afield. One thing is for sure that travel will absolutely feature in every move we make.

We hope that you have been inspired to visit some of these treasures or perhaps feel that you want to share your top spots with us over on our [Facebook Page](#) or on our [Instagram Page](#).

What makes a memory special is unique to each of us and so we hope our collection will give you an insight to the quiriness that is The Motoroamers.

So many more celebrations of life await us, we hope and with grace we embrace them all until such time as an alternative purpose reveals itself.

We genuinely hope that you will continue the ride with this mad pair of wanderlusts and that you enjoy seeing life through our eyes.

Until next time, this is The Motoroamers signing out.



Email us at: themotoroamers@gmail.com

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