

Easter Holidays day 1, near Ripon

We're finally away! After two horrible weeks of the lurgy hitting our household, and one cancelled long weekend, we spent the last few days preparing Bluebell and wavering between whether or not we should even set off! The weather in Britain has been abysmal to say the least, with headlines of snow across the country, with severe weather warnings not just for snow but also flooding. Looking at the weather map there literally wasn't a county that looked to be ok as we pondered where we could go if we postponed our planned jaunt up to the top of Scotland. So in a fit of tiredness after our end of term con-

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certs and commitments, we decided “sod it- we need a change of scenery, we’re going to attempt to do our planned tour”. Our main motto in life is “fortune favours the brave” and this tour is hopefully going to prove that- either that or we will return, or get stuck somewhere and return to Norfolk with our tails between our legs!

So back to today, poor Keith had to go to school teaching this morning so I stayed put and made all our preparations so that we could set off as soon as he got home. Preparation for these sort of tours is paramount- we needed to make sure we had enough food and drink and gas for the heater in case we did get stuck. We also needed to pack LOADS of woollies! And plenty of booze as

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we had read that the rural areas of Scotland shut all their shops over the Easter weekend and we didn't want to run out of the wet stuff! Other things include charging camera, phones and iPad, make a picnic for the journey, sort clothes, decide on what shoes to take (Lydia!) and general bits like that. I also found time to make 2 dozen chocolate cornflake cakes, like you do!! (well it is Easter, and you never know, they may prove vital if we get stuck...!) Unusually for us, on this tour we haven't booked a single site (other than let James at Clachtoll know that we are intending on getting there at the weekend) so we have the Mapbook, the Brit Stop guide and the POI on our sat nag for the wild camping spots across Britain.

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We set off in the glorious sunshine at 2:30pm with a mixture of excitement and adventure. We have a vague idea of where we want to be and where but we aren't tied down at all. As long as we are back in 10 days then that's groovy!

We drove for 4 hours solid- So, where did we end up? Well, I can't tell you exactly (unless you are in the "club"- number 715!) , because we are staying at a Brit Stop tonight. Brit Stop is a scheme for motorhomes where local businesses, farms, tea shops, pubs etc register to be included in the guide. They basically offer their land and sometimes a facility such as water, or maybe electric, but generally it's a car park. Motorhomes such as us then register on the scheme for a single pay-

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ment of £25, receive a guide book with all the locations in and a lovely sticker for our window and are allowed to visit these car parks to stay for free overnight. Motorhomers are asked to say hello and show some interest in the product, but there is no obligation to buy.

What I will tell you is that we drove through the beautiful Ripon, making a mental note to come back and visit one day, and are parked outside a shed of cows and geese with a fabulous view over the dales and the product here is ice cream!! ☐

So tonight we can see some snow laying on the sides of roads, but it hasn't interfered yet- tomorrow we are aiming for Loch Lomond, so we will see how that goes. We've

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had tea, I've had a couple of gin and tonics,
and frankly the world is looking like a rather
great place right now!

Enough waffle from me,

More tomorrow! ☐



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