

Our annual Pilgrimage to Scotland Part 3: A quick stopover at the Lake District

Ruby the campervan is parked up alongside Gillside Beck- we arrived here yesterday, Friday, after a fairly longish journey from our Loch Ness Brit Stop. The reason for departing Scotland a day early is stood proudly behind us, and frankly looks scary as hell- perhaps that's where the name Helvellyn comes from! For a couple of years now, Keith and I have talked about how we'd like to tackle Helvellyn and Striding Edge. For both of us,

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it's a personal challenge. Neither of us particularly like hill walking, and I'm terrified of drops, yet I have spent hours marvelling at people's instagram pics of Striding Edge. I just knew I had to go and give it my best foot forward. Luckily, my husband is also crazy so despite his hatred of walking up hills agreed to attempt it with me, if the weather looked ok on our way home from Scotland.

So back in February we booked our pitch at Gillside Farm, knowing there was a hefty chance we'd cancel if the weather looked bad. We'd been about internet for well over 24 hours and finally picked up 4g as we passed through Fort William. Keith was driving and I checked Patterdale - well it was blowed it was only showing full sun for tomorrow. "Off we

Our annual Pilgrimage to Scotland Part 3: A quick stopover at the Lake

District
go then”, I said, feeling the colour draining
from my chops!

Gillside Farm is nestled right at the bottom of the main path from Glenriding up to Helvellyn- so on arrival we decided to check where our oath started, before prepping our rucksacks, making a packed lunch and enjoying a simply cook Murgh Kari curry for tea. The mood in the Ruby was certainly of apprehension! We watched the live election debate before calling it a night. I dreamt that we got stuck on Helvellyn! What a great dream-not!

Saturday dawned as promised, absolutely glorious. There really is nowhere as beautiful as the Lakes in this weather! Apprehension was

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District
again strife! We moved around our daily routine almost in silence- I chucked some venison and a few bits of stray veg into the slow cooker to bubble away ready for our return. Keith packed, double packed and triple checked the rucksacks. By 09:15 we'd had our porridge and cereal bars and were ready to go. I was BRICKING it.



The first mile is literally uphill. There is no relief from it – it is hard. Really really hard. Loads of people passed us, we were both puffing like a steam train and I was almost ready to chuck the towel in. However-the views were stunning and that really kept us going. The views to Ullswater were sensational.

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After over an hour and exactly a mile- the uphilliness became easier! I thought I'd suddenly become super fit but Keith declared "hur-ray, we are now following the contours rather than crossing them" We were rewarded with great views of Helvellyn and red tarn and actually started enjoying ourselves!

 Before we knew it we were reaching the start of Striding Edge. I gave myself one last talking to and before I know it we were across! Striding Edge if you are not familiar, is a ridge that leads to Helvellyn, England's 3rd highest behind Scafell and Sca. It was really, really hard- in fact a man in front of us stopped and turned round- he said he could-

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District
n't cope with it any more- so was going to
find the easier path. Keith and I (and jazz!)
kept our heads down, took it very slowly and
carefully and stopped regularly for photos -
AND I DIDNT HAVE A PANIC ATTACK! 





I still can't believe we walked across that ridge!!!

Getting to the other side my legs were like
Jelly. Then we realised we had nasty scram-
ble ahead to get to the summit. It wasn't a
scramble it it literally was rock climbing.

Omg. ☐ However the camaradory between all
the walkers was fantastic - and as we
crossed the last ridge before the summit I

Our annual Pilgrimage to Scotland Part 3: A quick stopover at the Lake

had a tear in my eye! We'd done it! Bucket District
list ticked ☐



After a cheese roll or three we discovered it was as steep if not worse on the way down! Off we set, taking so much care- we even had to carry Jazz over a couple of bits as he refused and dug his claws in! Slowly we descended and 3 hours later we were back at Ruby feeling immensely proud of ourselves!



We had a swift dram before continuing to the pub for a couple(including a Lake District Gin!!) and returning to Ruby for our venison stew.



Tomorrow we head home (sad face!) we

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District
have had a blast and couldn't have wished
for an sweet finish today. We've survived 10
whole days in our downsized campervan with
no pop top. Ruby is working for us! Hurrah!

Until next time

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3: A quick stopover at the Lake
District

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