

Cumbrian adventures; Part 3. February Half Term. Great Langdale

Ruby the VW campervan is parked in the spectacular Langdale Valley, our home for the next three nights is the National Trust Campsite Great Langdale.



We packed away at Coniston in damp and drizzly conditions and made our way to Ambleside for provisions- I was fairly confident we wouldn't even find a shop in Langdale valley. On the way to Ambleside we made a

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stop at Yew Tree Farm which was filming location for the 2009 Blockbuster, Mrs Potter.



We used the opportunity in Ambleside to visit the local butchers for some sausages and steak, (and another sausage roll) in the hope we may manage a sneaky bbq tomorrow- the weather was set to improve.



Ambleside is a pretty little town, however it was swimming in tourists - which is off putting for us, so we didn't stay too long at all. It was then only a short drive to Great Langdale. As soon as you arrive into the valley the grandeur of the mountains that surround you almost overwhelm you. I've visited here

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before when I was young and even despite the drizzle, I was thrilled to be back with Kee-fy and Jazz.



Our pitch on the campsite was one of the best on site. This was because we'd booked one of only 5 electric pitches back in October. The rest of the site is a kind of free for all. Fine when it's quiet but by the end of the weekend parts of it resembled a car park and we would not have wanted to pay to pitch up like that. There are new facilities on site including lovely hot showers in a heated block. Again, perhaps not enough for a full site, but we managed well.



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We enjoyed a ploughman's lunch whilst we waited for those clouds to dry up, which they did and we were able to have a wander to a couple of the pubs – there are 3 within 15 mins walk. I remember many a (soft) drink in the Old Dungeon Gyll Hikers Bar when I was growing up on family trips to the Lake District. But it was pretty special to be having my first alcoholic drink here – a pint of Old Peculiar for us both went down a treat.



We took the footpath half a mile along to the next pub, Sticklebarn, a National Trust run pub and restaurant and enjoyed the local Lake District Pilsner lager before heading back to Ruby for our slow cooker Beef and Tomato Stew which was delicious and a night

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reading (no phone signal or Wi-fi!)



Friday dawned a stunning morning, and we enjoyed a lazy morning with our first al fresco breakfast of the year, a simple beans and sausages on toast. We opted for a lower valley walk today despite the weather being smashing as we were gearing up for a BBQ and to make the most of the glorious out of season weather we felt a lunchtime feast would be best. We stopped for a couple of beers at Sticklebarn as the route passed it, before winding our way back towards the campsite. We still clocked up 3.5 miles and the views were stunning.



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Keith prepared the most fantastic bbq- consisting of local steak, and pheasant sausages and venison sausages. The backdrop was stunning and rivalled the top spot on our list of the best bbq locations of all time.



We made our way back to the pub for another beer – the lure of their free wifi too much for us!

Saturday was another beautiful day. We had to keep reminding ourselves that it's only February, and we're in the lakes! An area that

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is usually more familiar with rain!

We were going to walk up and have a picnic at Blea Tarn, but from our pitch we could already see some walkers up on the top of Langdale pikes and we just couldn't resist, so after a quick omelette for breakfast we threw together a packed lunch and set off towards Sticklebarn to begin the ascent up to Stickle Tarn. The path was surprisingly good, and therefore resembled the m25! However it was lovely to see so many families out enjoying the great British outdoors - and it was boiling!☹️

The first stop, stickle tarn was about 1.25 miles uphill from stickle barn, but with the easy path we breezed up with no problems

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at all.



The next stage of our route took us over Harrison Pike, which was less easy, however the views were absolutely breathtaking. In fact Keith announced it was the best view he'd seen in England.



The route carried on towards the pike of stickle, which took us rock climbing in several places and hanging on for dear life at one point. We managed the pike of stickle, I nearly bottled it, but I was proud that I carried on,

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before the long steep and terrifying descent back to the start. It was a fabulous walk but really challenging, and by the time we got down dusk was starting to fall as was some drizzle. We'd made it in good time but a 5.5 mile walk still took us 6 hours! ❌❌❌❌

We had a couple of beers which didn't touch the sides and then went for an Old Peculiar at the Old Dungeon Gyll, one for the road. Dinner was chicken fajitas at Ruby which was delicious, however I'm certain that if the chicken hadn't have defrosted during the day we may well have indulged in a meal at the Old Dungeon Gyll as their fish and chips looked amazing!



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Our time in the Lake District was sadly at the end, we got up early on Sunday and made the journey back south and then east. With aching legs and rosy cheeks we are returning feeling relaxed and ready to tackle the next half term.



Until next time

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