

# VISUAL WANDERINGS

Inspiring You To Explore Europe by River, Road & Rail

Issue 4 ~ Spring 2024

## CRUISING THE SOUTH STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

by Richard Briggs

## OUR GREEN VAN JOURNEY

by Robin de Moes & Jeroen Koster

## ON THE RAILS FROM ENGLAND TO ROMANIA

by Gareth Davison

## EXPLORING AUSTRIA

by Annie Brailsford



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## VISUAL WANDERINGS

Around Europe by River, Road, & Rail



ISSUE 4 COVER PHOTO:

Montenegro by @GreenTravelVan

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*Issue 4 is dedicated in loving memory of Monique De Wilde, a cherished supporter.*

~

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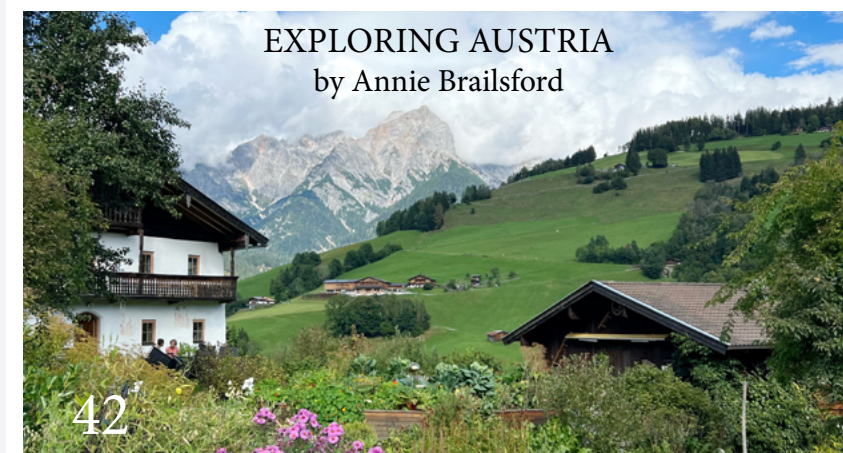
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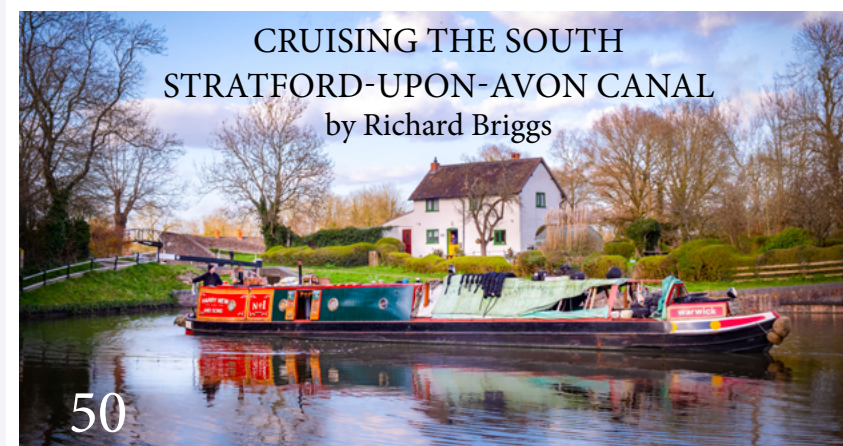
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# Our Green Van Journey

by Robin de Moes and Jeroen Koster

In 2020 we bought an old 1981 Volkswagen T3 with a broken engine to restore and convert into an all-electric campervan.



We realised that the van was more rusty than we initially thought once we started work on it so we decided to take it completely apart and weld a rotisserie to be able to work on it from every angle.

Jeroen has a background in mechanical engineering so the surface preparation and metal fabrication tasks weren't too daunting. However, for most of the electrical part of the build we had to find out along the way!

After a lot of sanding/grinding, cutting pieces to fit the bodywork and a whole lot of welding the van was ready to be taken to the painter. Once back, we could start work on the electrical part of the conversion which consisted of a few main parts:

**Electric Motor** - Our van has a 90kW motor, a very powerful combination combined with the old gearbox!

**Batteries** - We have 6 battery modules of 11kWh which gives us about 60kWh of usable capacity. We were able to fit all the batteries under the van in strong metal boxes to protect them from the elements and the impact of stones.

**Battery Management System & Chargers** - To charge the batteries we installed 3 chargers of 3.3kW each. At public charging stations, we can charge with a power of 10kW so our T3 is fully charged in about 6 hours and, if we do not drive too fast, has a range of about 250 km.

The interior build we made mostly out of natural materials like cork, sheep wool and wood. We have an electrical heater and we cook on an induction plate, both powered by our traction battery and converted to 230VAC by a large 2-4kW converter.

On top of the roof, we installed four 100Wp flexible solar panels. It is possible to charge the big traction batteries when there is enough sun, once our 12V leisure battery is fully charged. However on a sunny day, it is only charged by approx. 2-3% so it's not enough to be able to drive using solar power, but for cooking, and charging our mobile devices it is more than enough.

We also decided to build a pop-up roof ourselves as a little side project. The roof is made out of plywood and protected with 3 layers of epoxy resin. Unlike most of the traditional 'Westfalia' style roofs, ours covers the whole roof so that when open, we have more living space and room for storage.

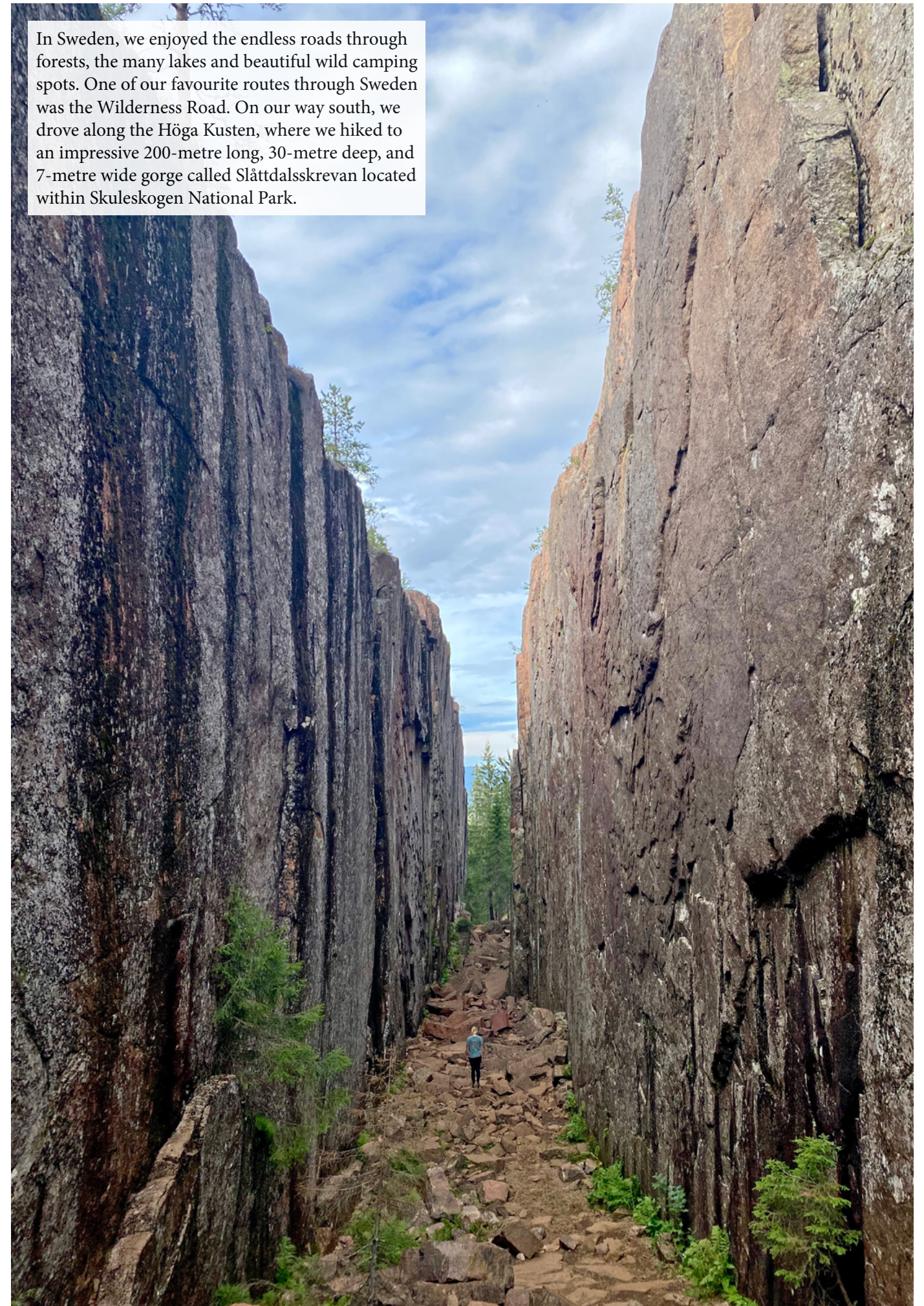
After two years of hard work, our T3 was approved for public roads - our adventures could begin!



We started our road trip in April 2022 from our home in the Netherlands. Our first destination was Denmark and from there we took the ferry to Norway. Norway was really nice to drive through with all the breathtaking views. We drove to Preikestolen to stand upon the iconic cliff, Innerdalen where this photo was taken, the Lofoten Islands, and Måtind, all the while heading north to explore the North Cape before dropping down into Finland. Unfortunately, we rushed through Finland because of all the mosquitoes, it just wasn't possible to go outside!



In Sweden, we enjoyed the endless roads through forests, the many lakes and beautiful wild camping spots. One of our favourite routes through Sweden was the Wilderness Road. On our way south, we drove along the Höga Kusten, where we hiked to an impressive 200-metre long, 30-metre deep, and 7-metre wide gorge called Slättdalsskrevan located within Skuleskogen National Park.



After a month exploring Sweden, catastrophe hit! Our electric motor broke down due to overheating and a manufacturing error. Thankfully the company gave us a new one, a water-cooled version. The downside was that we had to drive home in a replacement car and the T3 had to be towed to the Netherlands. Luckily the insurance company was very helpful and even provided us with an electric car for the journey home!



The second part of our journey was from December 2022 to July 2023. We started in Belgium, drove through France and spent most of the winter and spring in Spain and Portugal. Driving down the east coast of Spain, popping into Gibraltar, and then continuing along Spain's south coast until we got to Portugal, we were pleasantly surprised by the number of charging points that Spain has, most of them free!



One of the most impressive places we visited in Spain was the Gorafe Desert in the province of Granada. This semi-arid landscape, though not a true desert, captivated us with its rugged terrain and striking geological formations. We camped under the clear night sky, surrounded by countless stars, and enjoyed the company of fellow travellers, truly immersing ourselves in the raw beauty of the desert. As we drove through, we couldn't help but be drawn to the distant white peaks of the Sierra Nevada, a stunning contrast against the desert landscape.



After 6 weeks exploring Portugal, we headed back to Spain, this time to explore the spectacular Picos de Europa mountain range in the northern part of Spain. During the drive through Picos, we were positively surprised at how strong the electric van is! We went high in the mountains where only 4x4 all-terrain vehicles usually drive. On the steep downhill roads, we made grateful use of the bus's regenerative braking, this kept our brakes from overheating and recharged the battery, and once we reached the bottom, the battery was 15% fuller than at the top!



The last part of our journey started in August when we drove from the Netherlands to Austria in one and a half days, a journey of about 800 km. This was something we didn't expect to be possible without fast charging!



From Austria, we travelled through Slovenia with family which was a nice change from just the two of us! We thought that Triglav National Park was overwhelmingly stunning with the clear blue (but very cold!) rivers and lakes surrounded by mountains.



Entering Croatia, we drove along the coast, stopping at the iconic Krka National Park known for its waterfalls. We also explored Dubrovnik which we thought was one of the cosiest cities in this country. There were charging points in most places along the coast, so while the van was charging we could explore one of the many beautiful coastal villages or relax at the beach.



Our first destination in Montenegro (our first country outside the EU with the electric T3) was Lovcen National Park where we spent the night. We drove up a beautiful mountain pass from Kotor and arrived just in time to witness a stunning sunset.



We camped in a beautiful spot next to a mountain lake (about 15 km from The Black Lake, Vražje Jezero) where we did a lot of mountain biking and hiking to explore our surroundings.



At this point of our journey, Robin had planned a 10-day hike with a friend on The Peaks Of The Balkan trail which goes through Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo.



Meanwhile, Jeroen and his friends, who had flown in from the Netherlands, enjoyed exploring and camping in the rural beauty of Montenegro some more.



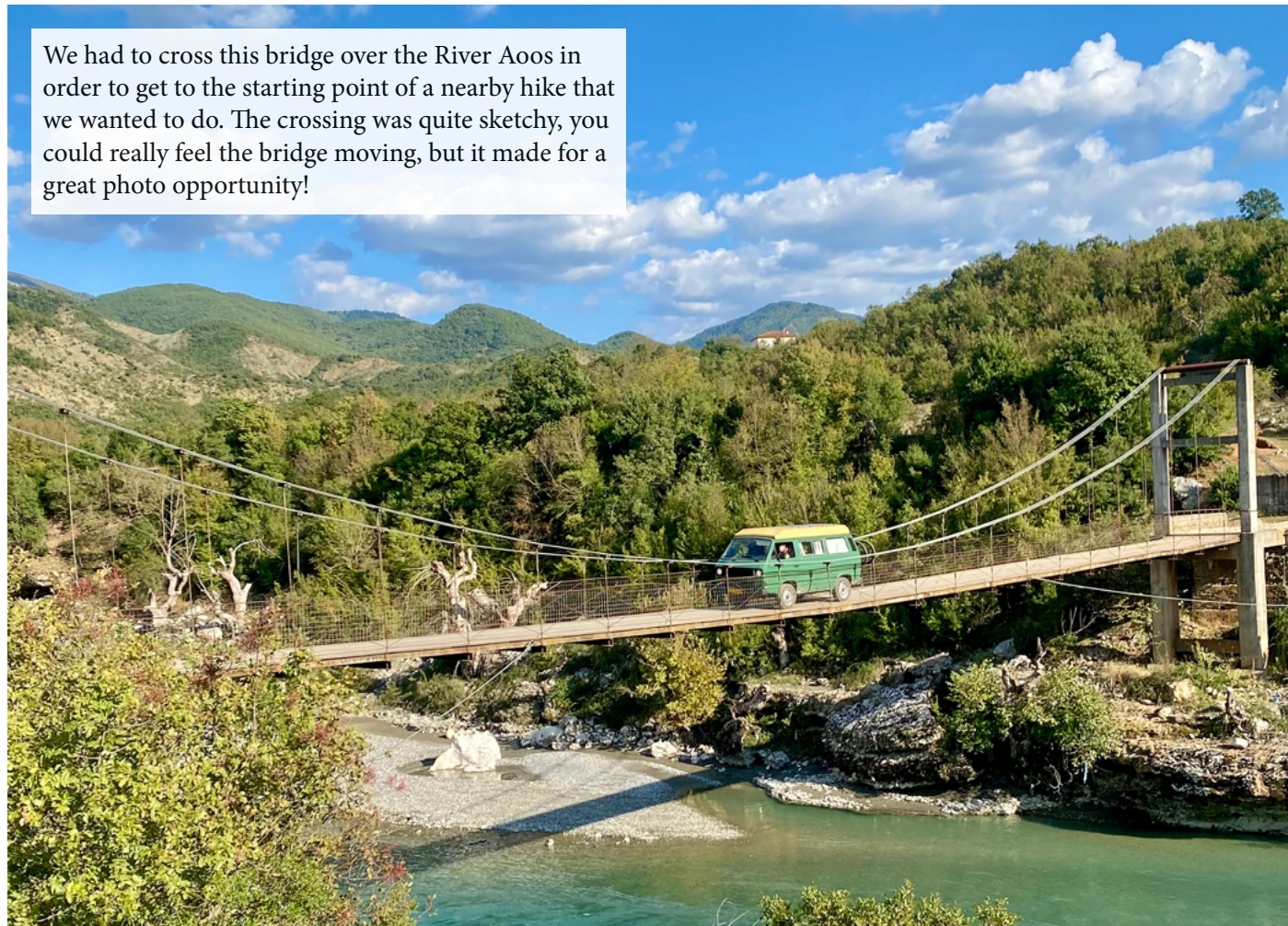
Driving from the coastal town of Budva, Jeroen headed 170km inland to Plav to reach the Grebaje Valley, definitely one of the most beautiful places in Montenegro to camp, and somewhere that Robin was also getting to enjoy.



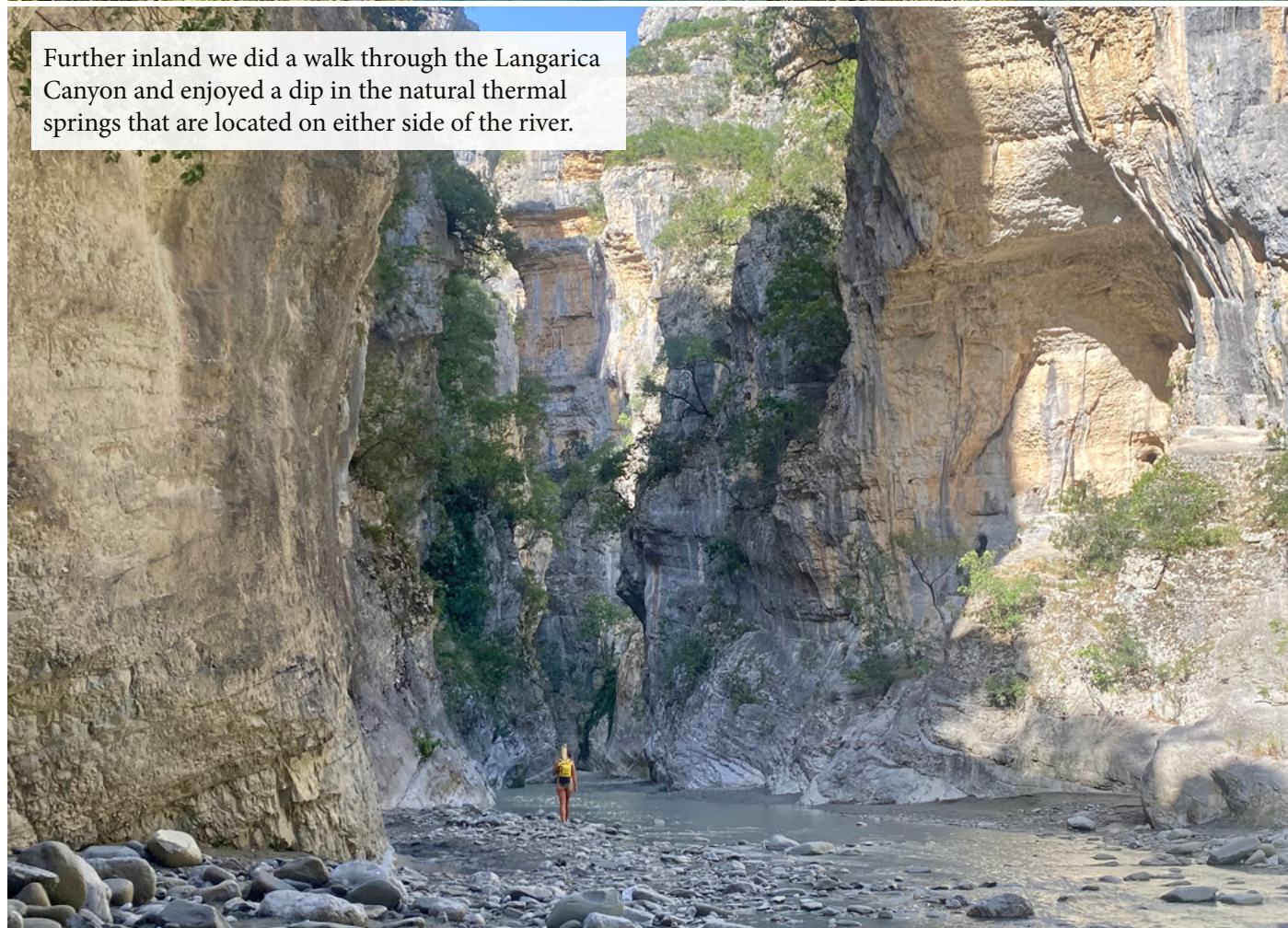
After Robin's hike, we dropped our friends back off in the capital - Podgorica, waved them goodbye and headed to the next country on our list, Albania. We loved spending time at Dalan Beach, a long sandy beach where we could park and sleep right on the beach, listening to the waves.



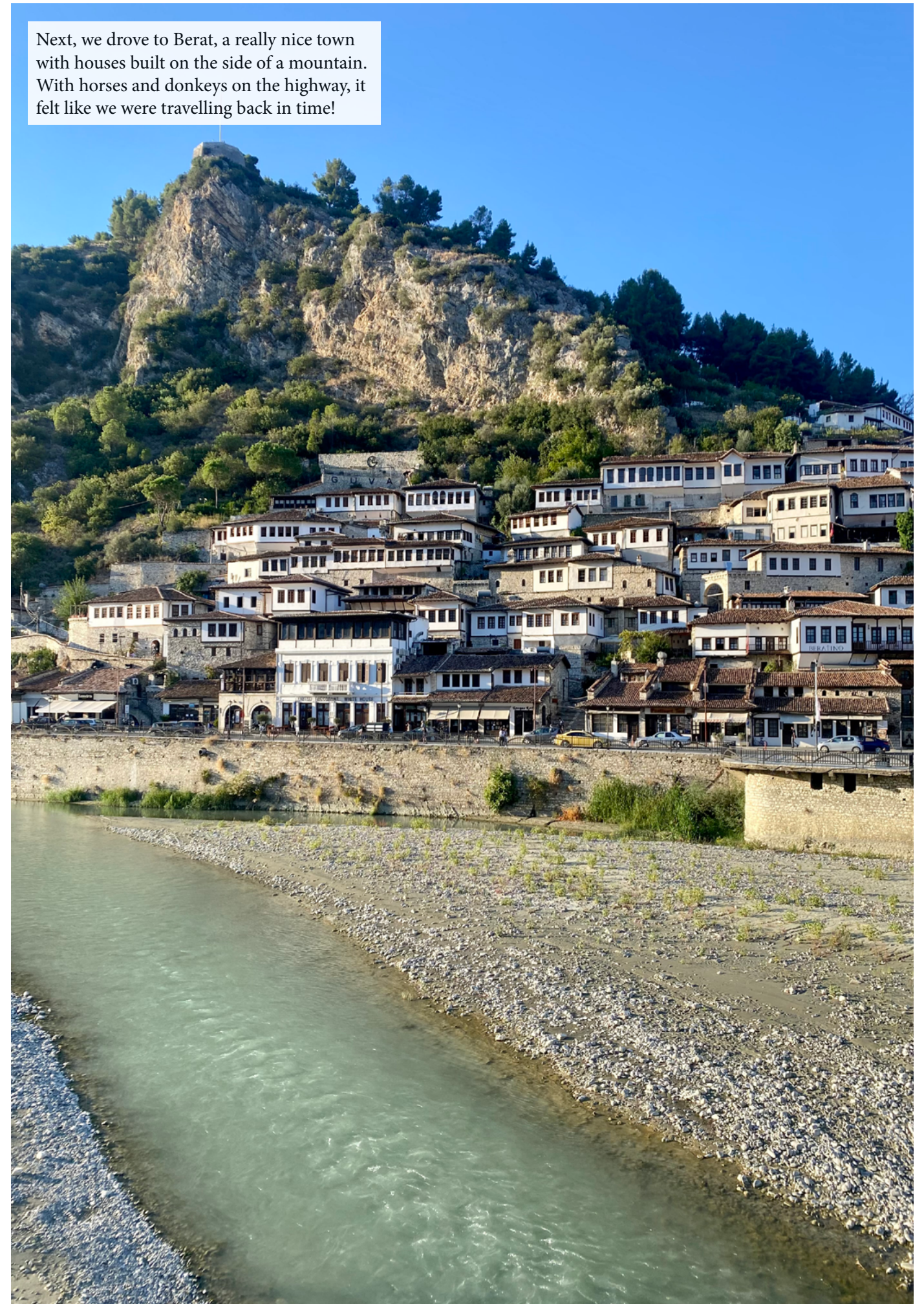
We had to cross this bridge over the River Aoos in order to get to the starting point of a nearby hike that we wanted to do. The crossing was quite sketchy, you could really feel the bridge moving, but it made for a great photo opportunity!



Further inland we did a walk through the Langerica Canyon and enjoyed a dip in the natural thermal springs that are located on either side of the river.



Next, we drove to Berat, a really nice town with houses built on the side of a mountain. With horses and donkeys on the highway, it felt like we were travelling back in time!



After a few weeks in Albania, we took the ferry to Italy, exploring Sardinia, Sicily, and the charming Amalfi Coast.



We then drove North to go snowboarding in Livigno. Winter camping was quite a challenge, we woke up to temperatures of -12c and everything in the van was frozen! It took a long time to warm up the batteries to be able to charge and drive but the views made it all worthwhile.





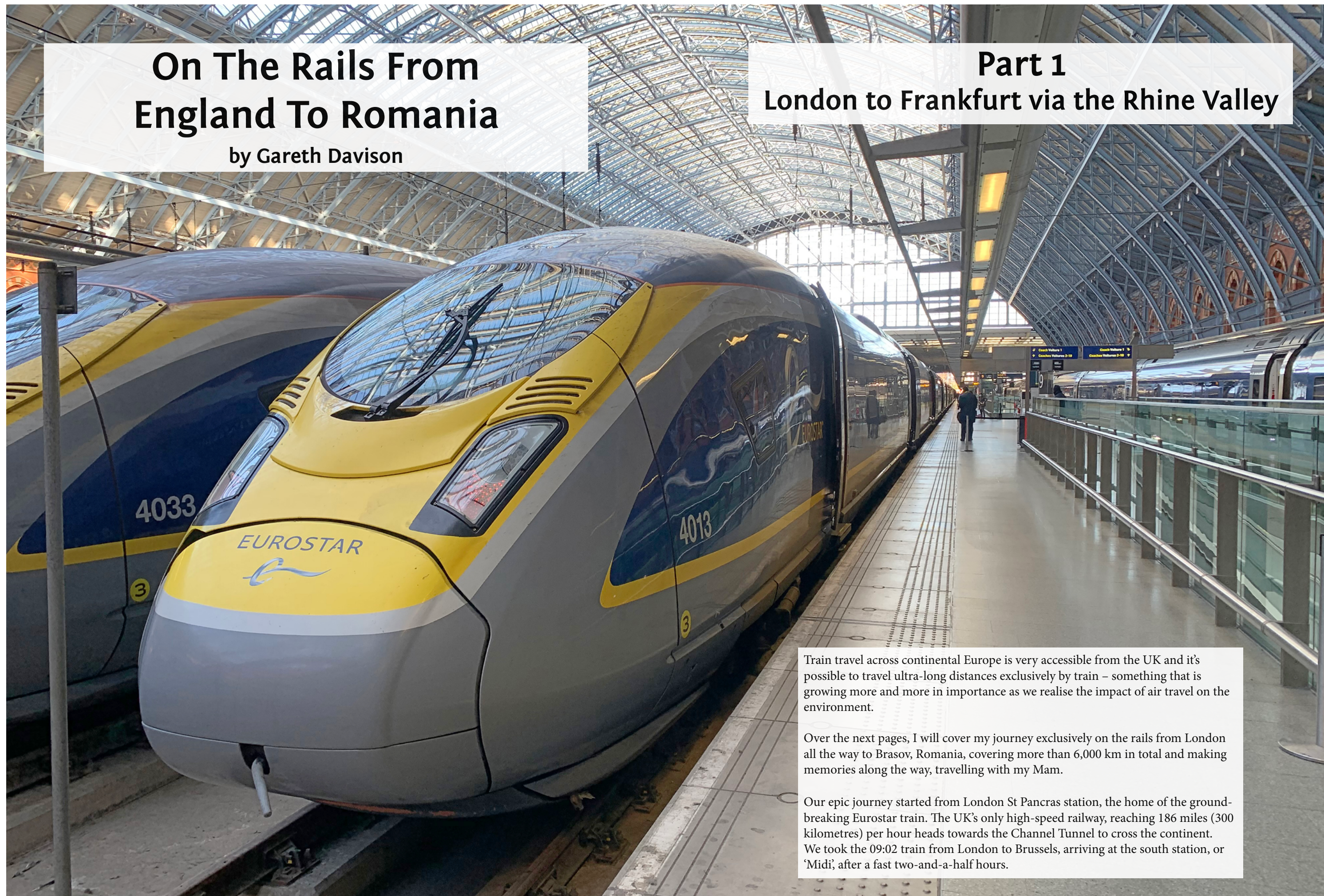
By the end of the year, we were slowly heading north through Switzerland and Germany back home, our journey over... until the next time!

If you want to see more of our journey and our electric T3 check out our Instagram [@greentravelvan](#).

# On The Rails From England To Romania

by Gareth Davison

## Part 1 London to Frankfurt via the Rhine Valley



Train travel across continental Europe is very accessible from the UK and it's possible to travel ultra-long distances exclusively by train – something that is growing more and more in importance as we realise the impact of air travel on the environment.

Over the next pages, I will cover my journey exclusively on the rails from London all the way to Brasov, Romania, covering more than 6,000 km in total and making memories along the way, travelling with my Mam.

Our epic journey started from London St Pancras station, the home of the ground-breaking Eurostar train. The UK's only high-speed railway, reaching 186 miles (300 kilometres) per hour heads towards the Channel Tunnel to cross the continent. We took the 09:02 train from London to Brussels, arriving at the south station, or 'Midi', after a fast two-and-a-half hours.



Having visited Brussels before, we originally planned to depart on the next flagship German high-speed train across the border, called the InterCity Express (or ICE for short), to Cologne. Unfortunately, our train was cancelled which is why, for such long-distance trips, it's important to allow for contingency time. With our tickets valid on the following ICE departure two hours later, we had some time in Brussels – just enough time for a wander and a light lunch adjacent to the picturesque Grand Place!

Once onboard the ICE, we headed straight for the Bordrestaurant. For me, it's tradition to grab a Weissbier and Currywurst on these German trains run by the national operator, Deutsche Bahn. An attractive feature of this particular cross-border ICE train is the 'Panoramawagen' – seats at the front and rear of the train, which look out over the driver's shoulder and can be reserved for a unique view.

Once we had arrived in Cologne, after a quick look at the cathedral by the main station, it was time to board another ICE train towards Frankfurt. There are fast ICE trains towards Frankfurt that take the unexciting high-speed line, however, there is a much better alternative – the slow train via Koblenz. Think endless river views with longboats and hilltop fortresses, it's well worth the extra hour or so in my opinion.

After a quick change at Mannheim, it was direct to Frankfurt where we arrived at 20:05 and stopped for the night. It was a long day, having been on the move for ten hours, but highly enjoyable.



## Part 2

### Frankfurt to Vienna via the Arlberg Pass



The next morning, we set off early on an Italian train bound for Basel, Switzerland (the train ultimately terminating in Milan). It was to be another full day of travel before reaching our first destination of the trip; the Austrian capital, Vienna.

There are direct ICE trains between Frankfurt and Vienna if you're in a rush, however, (as you've probably guessed) we wouldn't be taking this option! The route I lined up would take a longer, more interesting route via Zürich and the scenic Arlberg Pass.

From Basel, we took a Swiss InterCity train to Zurich. These two trains were all in preparation for our next journey that became a scenic highlight of the whole trip – Zurich to Vienna via the Arlberg Pass on the RailJet.

In the middle of April, snow was still plentiful for much of this wonderful, mountainous route and once again we made good use of the facilities onboard the train.

Treating ourselves to First Class, we had comfortable, reclining seats and an at-seat restaurant service provided by a friendly onboard host while taking in the two lakes of Lake Zurich and Lake Walensee and climbing up to 1,310 metres above sea level.





## Part 3 Vienna to Brasov

This was a journey of contrasts, leaving the ultra-modern Vienna Hauptbahnhof for Budapest's 'Keleti', or 'eastern' station onboard another RailJet train, the journey taking two and a half hours.



Keleti station is a majestic 19th-century building boasting lots of charm with sounds to match – the Hungarian Railways have their own set of jingles to notify announcements which emit a fantastic retro vibe that echoes across the station. Magical.

Budapest itself oozes much history, offering a range of activities for tourists. I would even go as far as to say that this is my favourite capital city in Europe! I always try to find some free time to explore here. Whether it's relaxing with locals in the historical baths, cooling down from the warmth of the city in cafés, or visiting the copious monuments that the city has to offer - there's something here for everyone.

On this occasion, it was my Mam's first time in the city, so I gave her a tour of the key sights. We hiked up to Fisherman's Bastion for a panorama of the city taking in the famous Danube river and parliament, whilst enjoying a Kürtőskalács, or Chimney Cake. We then headed back down to see the Chain Bridge, wandered alongside the Buda and Pest sides of the river and visited the parliament grounds.

All worn out, it was time to set off back to the Keleti station for our next train – the InterCity Corona.

The InterCity Corona is a Hungarian night train that departs Budapest Keleti bound for Brasov, offering a choice of sleeping, couchette, and seated compartments.

This train is quite unique, not so much because of its name (there is no relevance to the pandemic!) but because there is a restaurant carriage, unusual for a sleeper train, and some of the carriages date back to the 1980s. Like the station itself, taking a trip on this train is like taking a step back in time in a wonderful way.

The train departed at tea time (just after 17:00), and soon after departure, we made for the restaurant carriage. Hungarian restaurant carriages are known for their inexpensive, vast menus, all freshly cooked with a Hungarian twist, including stews and soups.

After our meal, we returned to the sleeping car to find there was no power! Not sharing a common language with the friendly sleeping car attendant, he tried to explain with hand actions what the problem was, but, we were oblivious – and just accepted it as part of the adventure!

At the time of travel, Romania was not part of the Schengen border-free travel area, therefore, since leaving London, we came across our second, of two, manned border stations on the Hungarian-Romanian border – one on the Hungarian side at Biharkeresztes and the other on the Romanian side at Episcoplia Bihor.

Funnily enough, power was restored at the border stations, but soon disappeared again once we started moving. I doubt this was a move to reduce the electricity bill, however, the thought had briefly crossed my mind.

In the morning, the carriage was still without power and so despite sleeping well, it was a chilly start. Thankfully we had the complimentary breakfast (included in the ticket price) to look forward to in the restaurant carriage and found refuge (and working sockets) in the couchette car before our arrival in Brasov.

The landscapes east of Budapest (prior to the Hungary-Romania border) were mostly flat and open, nothing special. In contrast, the scenery waking up in the heart of Transylvania featured remote hills and forests.

Despite the inconvenience of the lack of power, the explorer in me really enjoyed the experience of the InterCity Corona. The interiors were cosy and clean and the beds comfortable. Plus any train that offers a high-quality restaurant experience onboard surely can't be beaten as a travel experience, right?



# Exploring Brasov

The main appeal of visiting Brasov was to explore its charming medieval old town and this didn't disappoint, especially with the majestic Tâmpa mountain peak towering over the city's old buildings.



A real benefit of travelling by sleeper train is waking up in a new place and gaining a full day ahead to explore!

We visited the Black Church first (seen bottom left), so named for its smoke-blackened walls resulting from a 1689 fire. While we were in the church, we actually encountered sirens followed by an influx of firefighters so wondered if another fire had broken out but it turned out it was only a practice run!

We continued our tour, taking in the 3km long and 12m high Saxon walls, the Şchei Gate, and Catherine's Gate (bottom right) which was built in 1526 and is the only original city gate to have survived from medieval times.

Next, we headed to Council Square (top left) for a sit down and bite to eat! The square is at the heart of the medieval old town and features The Council's House with iconic clocktower which is now a museum, fountains, plus shops and cafes making it the ideal place to sit and do a spot of people-watching whilst resting those legs!

## The Return Journey

After a couple of nights exploring Brasov, we started our three-day journey back to the UK, all by train going via Cluj Napoca, Budapest, Vienna and Amsterdam.



When I'm not travelling on trains or blogging about them, I'm working on the railway in the UK. I caught the bug for slow travel during my first InterRail trip in 2013 as a recently graduated 21-year-old excited to tick off some European cities. Whether it's the changing landscapes from one country to the next, the people I meet en route, or dining in a train restaurant car, long-distance rail travel is truly my happy place.

You can follow my overland trips on my blog at <https://rail-away.com> or find me on Instagram @rail\_away. I hope my journeys will inspire you to travel Europe by train!

# Exploring Austria

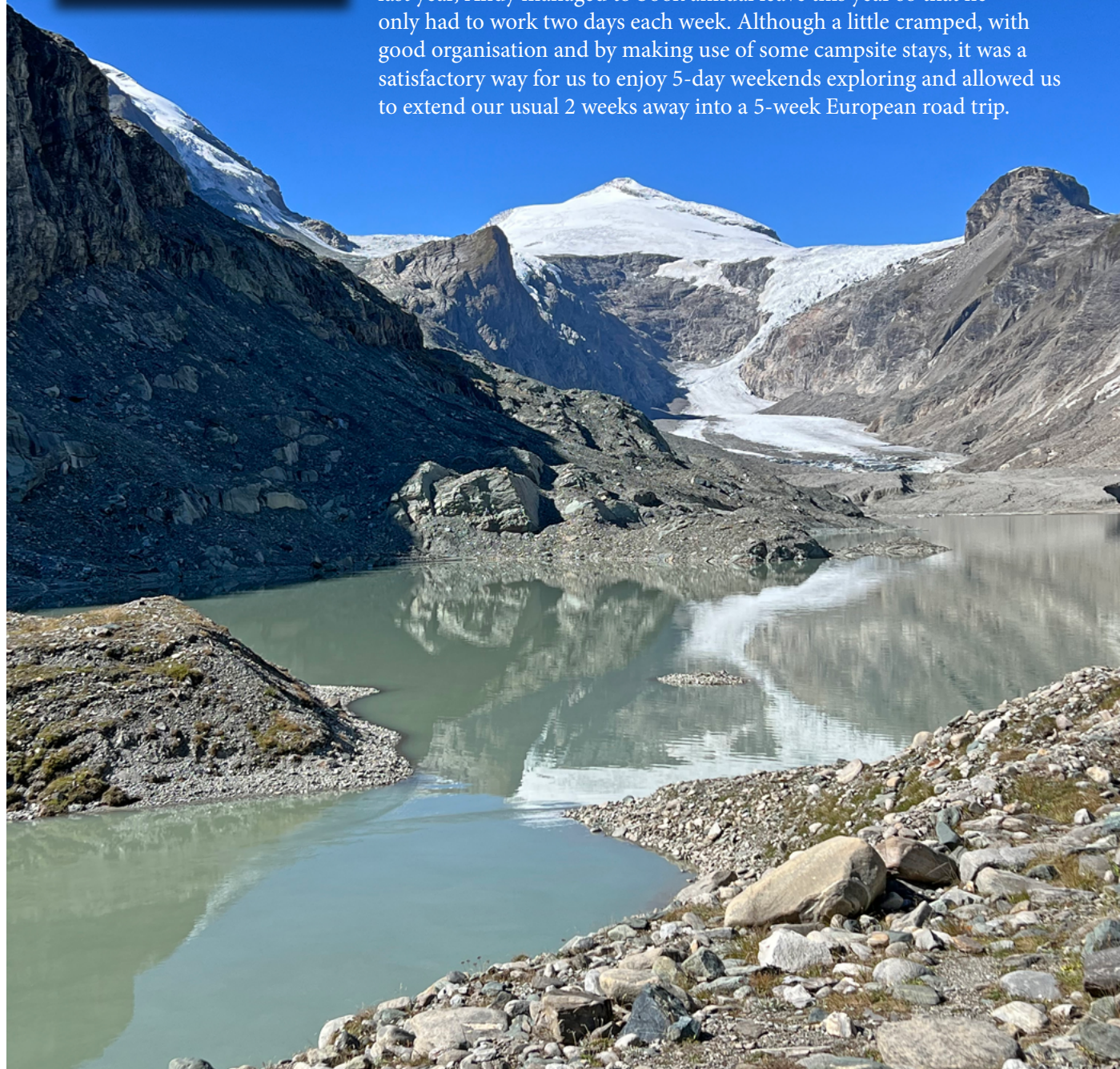
by Annie Brailsford



Over the years, we've travelled extensively in Europe; tenting when it was just myself and my husband Andy, a caravan when the kids came along, a bigger tent when they were older, and now back to us two in our VW camper together with our dog, Rudi.

Exploring every country we visit on foot has always been a big part of our travels, especially hiking in the mountains. With Rudi as our companion nowadays, we have no excuse not to walk, so our holidays are still planned with hikes in mind.

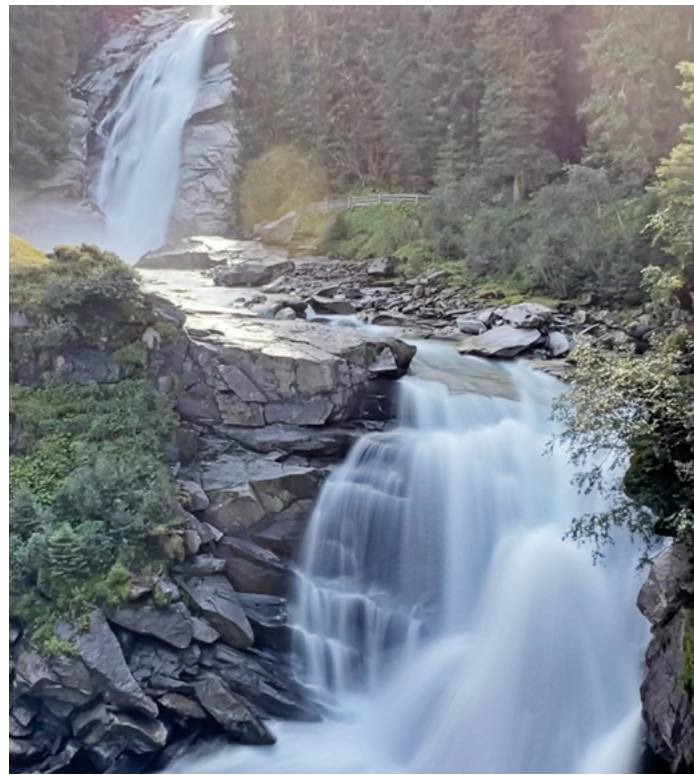
Having successfully trialled working remotely from our campervan last year, Andy managed to book annual leave this year so that he only had to work two days each week. Although a little cramped, with good organisation and by making use of some campsite stays, it was a satisfactory way for us to enjoy 5-day weekends exploring and allowed us to extend our usual 2 weeks away into a 5-week European road trip.



## Eben am Achensee & Astenau Alpe, Tyrol

Crossing the Austrian border from Germany, we had intended to spend time beside Achensee, a popular lake often referred to as the Fjord of the Alps but we somehow managed to miss the turn-off from the main road and found ourselves at the picturesque village of Eben am Achensee instead.

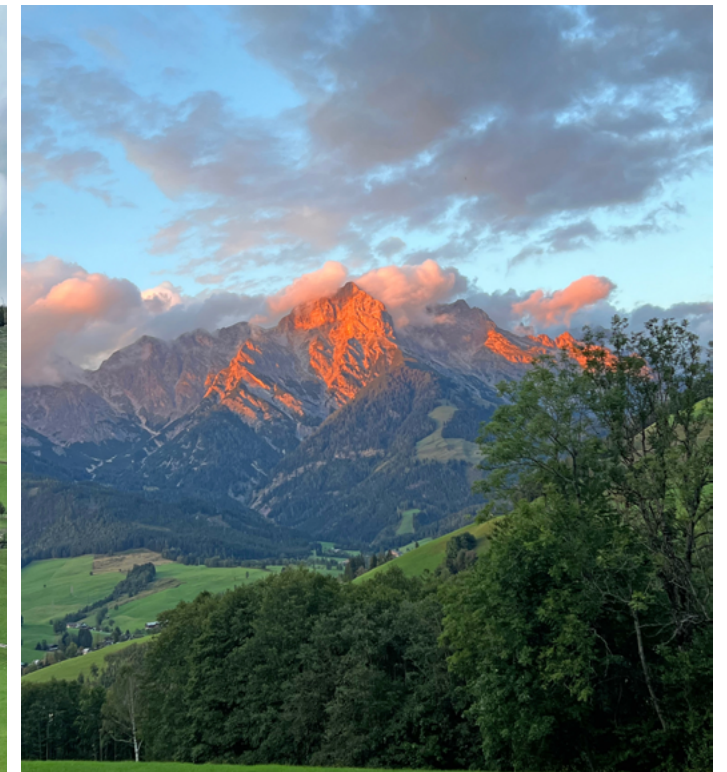
After a quick Google search, a local hike was found. We climbed up, up, and up some more (over 500 metre elevation gain) through the woods on zig-zag paths. Every now and then, gaps in the trees revealed views down to lush green meadows below and allowed us to see just how quickly we were climbing. Eventually, we arrived at our destination in a grassy meadow, the cosy alpine hut Astenau Alpe. After a delicious lunch of goulash, we explored the area surrounding the hut, taking in the spectacular mountain scenery before returning back the way we had come. A great start to our Austrian adventure and the beauty of not having a strict plan for the day.



## Krimmler Wasserfälle, Salzburg

At 380 metres high, Krimml Waterfalls are the world's 5th highest waterfalls and Europe's highest, and are really worth seeing. Located within High Tauern National Park, the 4 km trail past the falls is fairly steep, but with plenty of observation platforms and dozens of photo vantage points, you can easily catch your breath. Watching the water thundering down and the sunlight catching its spray is an amazing experience.

When we reached the top waterfall, it being divided into three tiers, we could see the crowds slowly coming uphill behind us; so, thankful that we started out early that Sunday, we decided to take an alternative trail back down through the woods, following the red and white trail signs painted at regular intervals on tree trunks. We returned to the van tired but exhilarated, pleased that we had picked an ideal camping spot the previous night that included the entrance fee and was within walking distance so we didn't have to pay for the car park!



## Maria Alm am Steinernen Meer, Salzburg

We booked into a highly recommended farm campsite in the idyllic village of Maria Alm am Steinernen Meer for 3 nights so that Andy could settle down to do some work. A superb location within the Hochkönig ski area, we enjoyed magnificent views of the surrounding mountains and lush green meadows; very peaceful and so quiet that we could even hear our neighbours (cows) munching on the grass.

Whilst Andy worked, Rudi and I explored the nearby paths and relaxed in our lovely surroundings, enjoying the time to just sit and watch how the light changed our mountain scenery. One evening we all walked high up onto the meadow and were treated to a spectacular sunset, the mountain tops taking on varying shades of red and orange - a truly memorable moment.



## Gondola Natrun Maria Alm

We'd been hoping to get Rudi on a cable car during our trip but the prices had put us off a little as he's quite anxious in some situations (open-sided bridges, 'see-through' stairs) and we had visions of him refusing to get on, if not at the bottom, then on the return journey! Staying at the farm campsite entitled us to the Hochkoning Card, meaning we could use the local cable cars for free. Andy finished work on Wednesday and the card expired on Thursday, the day of our departure, so we made the most of this opportunity.

As we climbed swiftly above the village, Rudi was obviously out of his comfort zone, but with copious treats, we successfully completed the 4-minute ride in which we ascended 358k metres. We spent several hours walking on the mountain and enjoyed sitting beside a little lake, feeling at peace amongst nature, eventually dragging ourselves away to continue on our Austrian meander but not before stopping off in the village for a yummy Apfelstrudel ice cream!



## Langbathseen, Salzkammergut, Upper Austria

For many days, we'd been so lucky with the weather, enjoying temperatures in the mid-20s. However, a couple of dull and wet days followed. Not ones to let the rain stop us, we toggled up in waterproof coats and trousers and headed to a 'must do' hike around two small alpine mountain lakes close to the town of Ebensee.

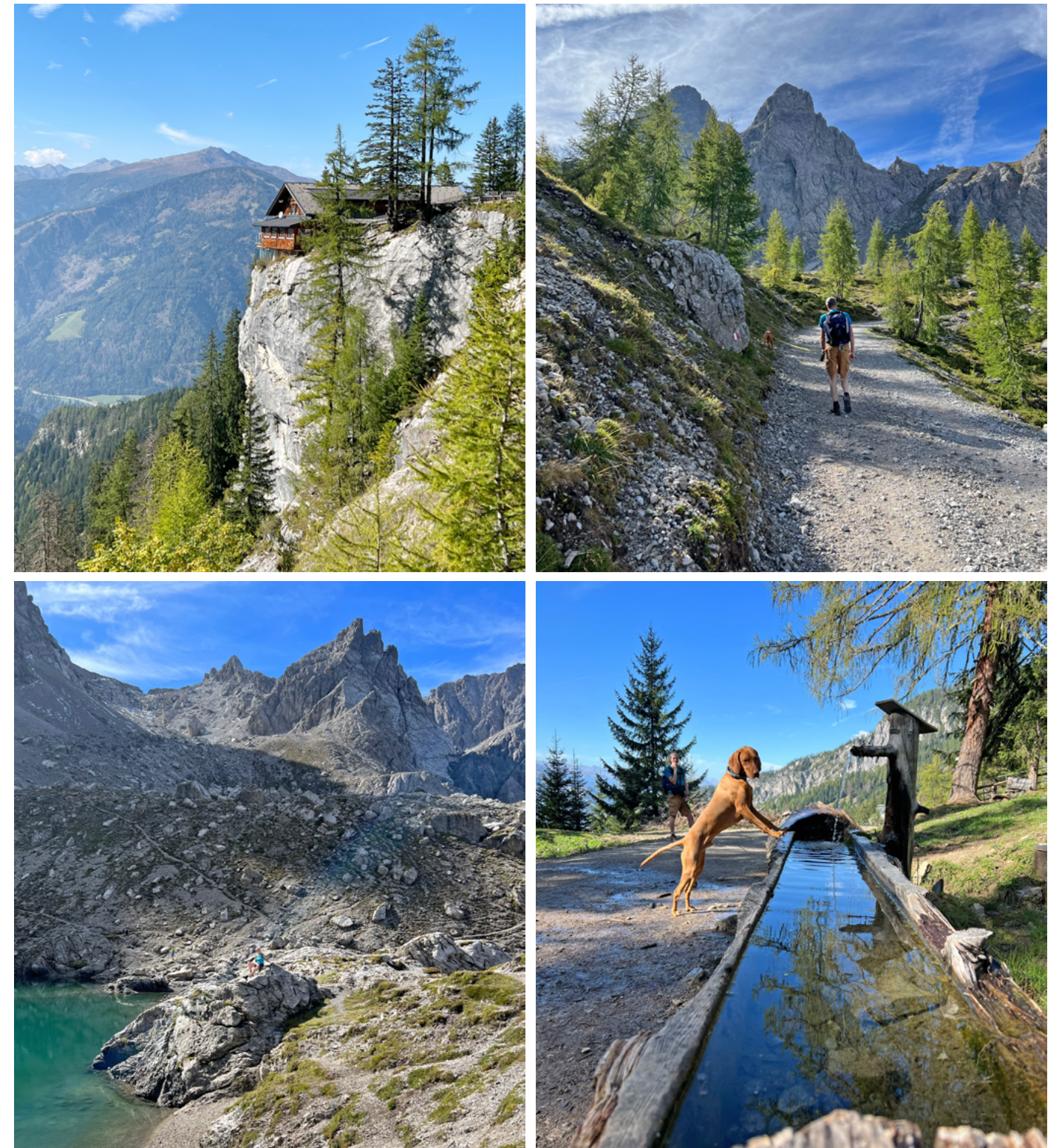
Unfortunately, the path around the second of the two lakes, Hinterer Langbathsee, was temporarily closed but we still enjoyed our time there. The rain and chilly air made the place very atmospheric; the water a beautiful colour even before the mist started to clear. As it did, we were treated to some wonderful views of the surrounding mountains and their reflections in the clear water. We could imagine just how busy the place would be in the height of summer so we were actually thankful to visit on a wet day.



## The Grossglockner High Alpine Road, Carinthia

We set off early on a clear, crisp morning and paid the toll to travel part of this amazing road through the mountains. Hairpin bend after hairpin bend had us climbing higher and higher until we were above the treeline. We stopped at every opportunity to appreciate the surrounding snow-capped peaks. However, we wanted to immerse ourselves in the incredible landscape and what better way to do that than by donning our walking boots!

Finding a circular route online from the parking area of the Glocknerhaus mountain cabin, we walked beside a turquoise reservoir, across a fast-flowing, icy cold stream and close to the Pasterze glacier before taking the steep wooden steps towards the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Hohe lookout point on the High Alpine Road. The hike took just over 4 hours, with a maximum elevation of 2379 metres. The mountain air, wildlife (we saw marmots for the first time) and jaw-dropping scenery made for an unforgettable, if exhausting day.



## Dolomitenhütte & Lake Laserzsee, East Tyrol

After another 3-night campsite stay whilst Andy worked, our last day in Austria was our first day in the Dolomites - the Lienz Dolomites - and what an introduction to this alpine mountain range it was. Perched on a cliff edge, this mountain hut has magnificent panoramic views. Following the gravel path, we soon started the steeper climb up through forests coming out above the treeline and on towards the turquoise waters of Lake Laserzsee at 2260 metres. Much quieter than the more famous Italian Dolomites, we were bowled over by the sheer beauty of the scenery and just how peaceful it was - you could almost hear the silence. It was the perfect end to our short time in Austria.

We would have travelled further east into Austria but the weather forecast was for rain and we also wanted to see more of the Italian Dolomites on this trip, another walkers' paradise so we decided to head back across the border, a journey that you can see on our Instagram [@slowtravels.miniadventures](#).

# Cruising The South Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal

by Richard Briggs

A keen photographer, I'm continuously exploring the UK canals and rivers on my brightly painted Narrowboat 'Florence'. Earlier this Spring, I set myself a mission to photograph the barrel roofed cottages on the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal. Each of these cottages was lived in by a "Lengthsman" who would manage a particular section of the canal. They are particularly interesting as the roofs are made of brick, constructed the same way as a canal bridge.

## Kingswood Junction, Lock 20

The Stratford-upon-Avon Canal first started being built in 1793 as a way to connect the River Avon to the Grand Union Canal. As the build progressed, there was a real shortage of money to complete it, especially the South Stratford stretch, between Kingswood and Wooten Wawen which was cut between 1813-1816. Therefore, we see a number of cost-cutting ideas used in its construction.





**Junction Cottage, Kingswood Junction, Lapworth**

One of these cost-cutting measures was the construction of single-storey barrel roofed cottages. The canal builders were not skilled at building houses, but they were skilled at building bridges, so using the skills the workforce already had, 'Lengthsman' cottages were made with a simple and inexpensive barrel roof. The barrel roofs were made using wooden forms - a type of frame upon which bricks are laid to form a curve - as we see in the canal bridges, and this design is said to have brought construction costs down from £150 to £80.

Junction Cottage is the first of six rare barrel roofed lengthsman's cottages that exist on the South Stratford-upon-Avon Canal. This cottage was built around 1816 and sits at Kingswood Junction in the village of Lapworth where the Stratford-on-Avon Canal meets the Grand Union Canal.



**Bridge 36, Kingswood Junction**

Another cost-cutting measure was the construction of cast iron split cantilever bridges which the canal company had to build at their own expense to maintain the existing rights of way. To keep costs down, the bridges were built with a gap in the middle so that a horse's rope could be passed through - this meant they did not need to build a towpath under the bridge, instead, the horse could walk around whilst a crew member carefully fed the tow rope through the gap in the bridge. Thus the bridge, which was only used as access across the canal, could be made much narrower and was, therefore, a lot cheaper to build with the bonus of the horse not needing to be unhitched from the boat.



**Lengthsman's Cottage at Lock 28, Lowsonford**



**Kingswood Cottage at Dick's Lane Bridge No. 39**



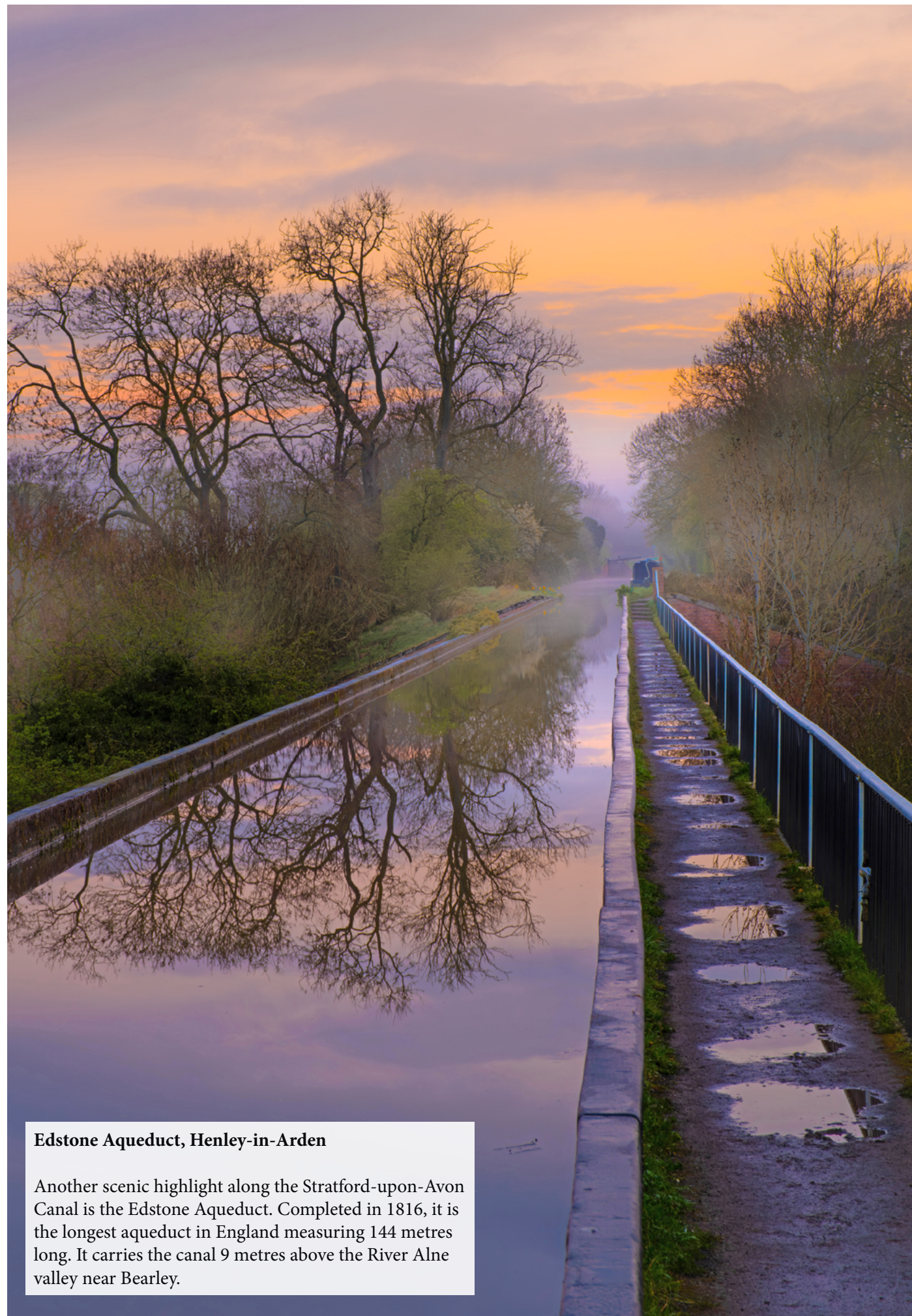
**The Lock House, Lock 31 (Ned's Lock)**

Now owned by the Landmark Trust and available as a holiday rental, this cottage was the home of Ned Taylor for some 8 decades! Built around 1812, the building has no foundations, it's set upon puddled clay and was originally a simple oblong with a brick barrel roof.

### Cottage at Lock 37

This is the last barrel roof cottage on the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal located beside Preston Bagot middle lock 37. The original barrel roofed building was built in 1810 and was the main toll cottage for the Stratford canal system. The extension to the left dates from the 1980s and features an internal spiral staircase going to a roof terrace garden. In 2013 this property was selling at a guide price of £640,000 so for anyone without a narrowboat looking to set up home beside the canal...





#### Edstone Aqueduct, Henley-in-Arden

Another scenic highlight along the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal is the Edstone Aqueduct. Completed in 1816, it is the longest aqueduct in England measuring 144 metres long. It carries the canal 9 metres above the River Alne valley near Bearley.



I had a go at getting up at 4 am each day for a while whilst exploring this stretch of the canal, with the hope of capturing atmospheric light. The light wasn't so great on this morning hence Florence had her indoor light on but there's still something in this shot that pleases the eye!

The early mornings paid off! This photo was taken at about 6 am with a view approximately Southwards.





**Top Lock 40, Wilmcote Flight**

Continuing south, the last flight of locks on the South Stratford-upon-Avon canal, the 'Wilmcote Flight' of 11 were another cost-cutting innovation! Leading into Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace and home town of William Shakespeare, these locks are unique because they are all single-leaf gates rather than the usual two-leaf gates which most locks will have, at minimum, at one or both ends.



### Stratford Upon Avon

After a few days exploring the historic town (and taking lots of photos!) I was back on the boat heading along the River Avon followed by the River Severn to Tewkesbury and Gloucester.

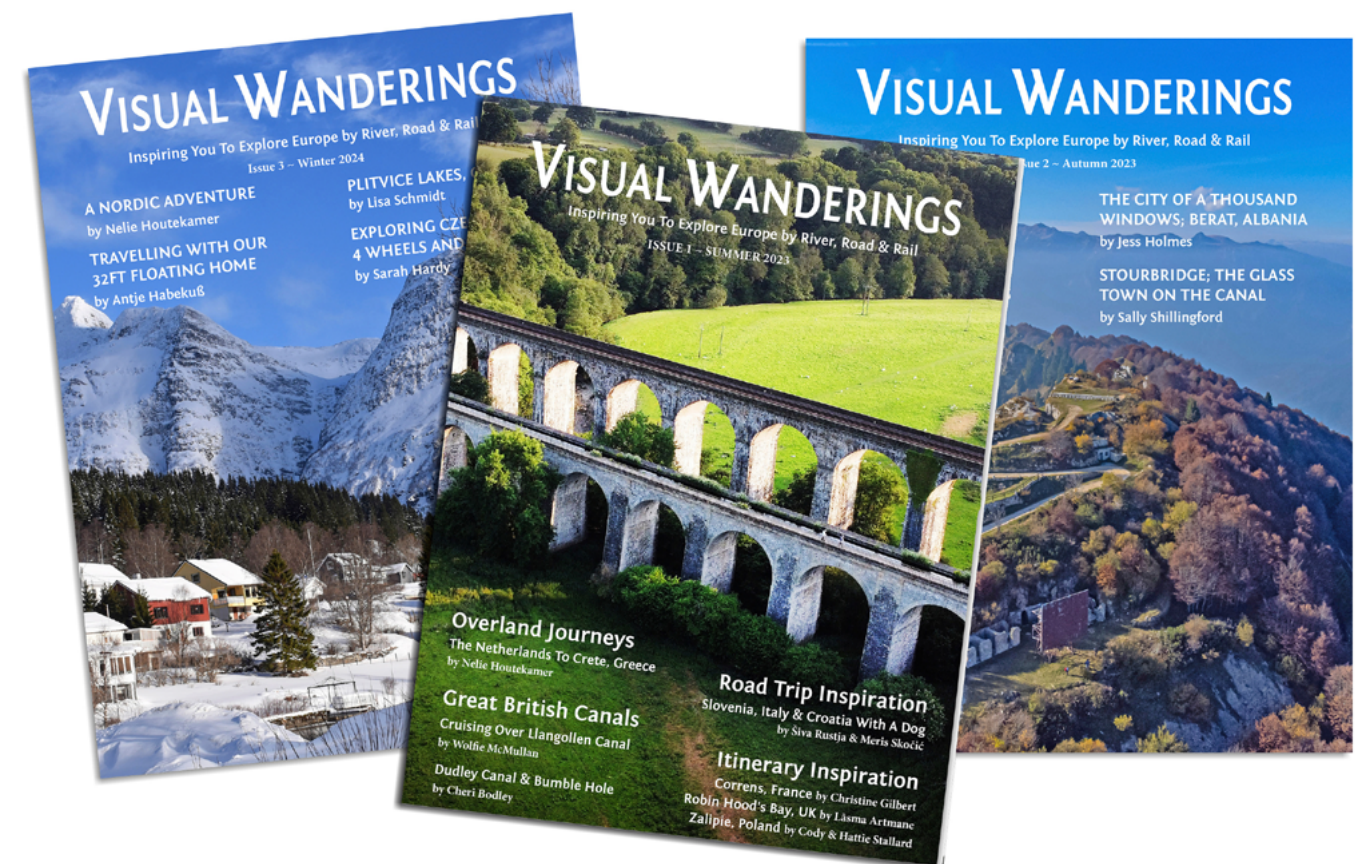


Having already explored most of the canals and rivers in the North of England over the last four years, this year I am exploring the South Stratford-upon-Avon Canal, the river Avon, the river Severn, the Bristol Channel and the Kennet and Avon Canal. Be sure to check out these journeys on my social media accounts!

I am posting to Facebook at **Floatography.ART** and Instagram **@Floatography.ART**. My work is also available to purchase as a downloadable super high-definition print file at my website <https://floatography.art>.

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"Blessed are the  
curious, for they shall  
have adventures."

~

*Lovelle Drachman*

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