

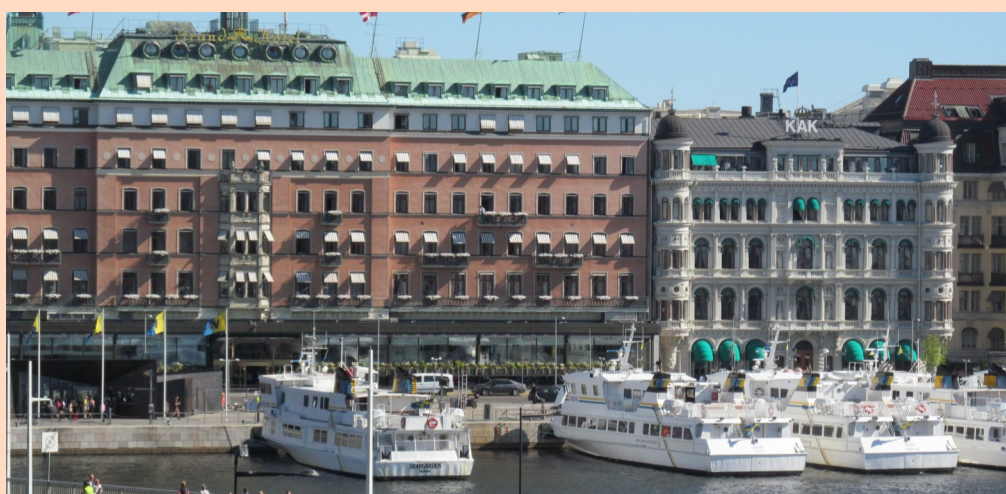


Newsletter September 2019

From the editor

In this month's edition:

- Summer in Scandinavia full tour review.



Outside the Grand Hotel, Stockholm

Welcome to the September edition of the newsletter with a particular 'hello' to everyone who signed up down at the Malvern Show with Dave and Sue earlier in August.

Thanks too to everyone who took the time to come to the Balloon Festival at Bristol (even though there were no balloons in the air).

We still have two

shows to go so please come and see us either at The South Western Show at Shepton Mallet in September, or the big one at the NEC in October.

Our main feature for this month is a full review of our Summer in Scandinavia Tour, from which we have just returned.

Summary—sunshine, coast, Vikings.

We have another great recipe from

Dave this month. In fact you could call it 'peachy'.

This month's motorhoming tips are all about sat navs and navigation systems.

Bob & Wendy, Dave & Sue, Colin & Sue, Gary & Eleanor.

Plus our regular features:

- Another great recipe from Dave.
- This month's motorhome tips.
- Keep in touch.

Summer in Scandinavia Tour Review



The Great Belt Bridge

“Regular readers will know that it is home what we call ‘Europe’s second most disappointing tourist attraction’.”

Our Scandinavia Tour is the longest running tour in our schedule. In fact we have been doing it since we started Crossings.

Our original motivation for putting on the tour was to avoid the summer crowds that flock south during August and head north instead.

Northern European countries run on a slightly different timetable with all the kids going back to school at the beginning of August, this freeing up the campsites and tourist attractions for us oldies.

Since they stopped the Esjberg ferry the only option really is to drive to Scandinavia and this is what we did. This meant overnight stops in Holland and Germany before arriving on a beautiful stretch of Danish Coast close to the city of Kolding.

From there we crossed the stunning Great Belt Bridge en route to (wonderful) Copenhagen.

We know a lovely little spot just after the bridge where you can get down onto the foreshore and visit a small museum

dedicated to the old ice breakers that used to work the strait here. You can also get right under the bridge and take photos (just like the one above).

Copenhagen was fantastic as always with its cosmopolitan outlook. Regular readers will know that it is home what we call ‘Europe’s second most disappointing tourist attraction’, the Little Mermaid. Apart from that Copenhagen is a beautiful city packed with fascinating buildings and waterways and the group really enjoyed the extended stay

Continued...

here.

The next journey was across the mighty Oresund Bridge that spans Denmark and Sweden. The weather was variable at this point. So much so that we left Denmark in the rain and emerged from the tunnel into Swedish sunshine!

We then drove around the whole of the south coast of Sweden taking in a few of the understated, yet interesting sights such as Smygehuk (Sweden's southerly most point) and the Ale's Stones (Sweden's Stonehenge).

Our campsite was located directly onto the beach and just a short walk from a beautiful little fishing/tourist town.

Next stop was further north after a lovely drive up the east coast of Sweden. Many people stopped off to see the distinctive red houses nestling on a rock just outside

Karlskrona, combining this with a visit to the Maritime Museum that boasts a full size nuclear sub that you can go into.

In fact there is a watery theme for much of this tour (as you might expect), with the next stop on the Gota Canal, Sweden's longest.

We stay near a pretty little town called Soderkoping famed for its wooden houses and its ice cream parlour. Apparently it is visited by Swedish Royalty and by that I mean the members of Abba and Bjorn Borg (but not necessarily at the same time).

From here we head to our favourite of the Scandinavian capitals, Stockholm. Made up of 14 islands, the city has a laid-back feel as you sit on the main harbour and watch the world go by.

Guests enjoyed such varied delights as the Vasa Museum

(intact 16th century warship), the Abba Museum (70's kitsch) and Skanen (the whole of Sweden in miniature).

We then embarked on a couple of longer driving days through the quiet, rolling countryside in the middle of Sweden and onto their two largest lakes, Vattern and Vanern. On the way we spent a night perched right on the lake where we were treated to a beautiful sunset.

It was time to dip a toe into Norway with a flying visit to the Oslofjord region in the south, around 30 miles south of Oslo itself.

Our campsite site sits right on the fjord and by that I mean you can actually park on the foreshore with the fjord a few metres from you van. Despite heavy rain on arrival we were rewarded with two stunning days of warm, sunny weather. Guests were

"Apparently it is visited by Swedish Royalty and by that I mean the members of Abba and Bjorn Borg".



The Turning Torso, Malmo

Continued...



"This is the tenth year that we have been to Scandinavia in August and we are already looking forward to next year"!

able to see the lights on Oslo at the top of the fjord, whilst sitting in their motorhomes!

Oslo itself is a lively, thriving city. Our two highlights are the Viking Ship Museum (full size ship pulled intact out of the fjord) and the Vigeland Sculpture Park, although the latter does divide opinion a bit as some of the sculptures are just plain weird.

Our brief stop on the fjord was followed by a couple of days of calm driving following the western side of Sweden's southern archipelago. We had time for a stop over in Gothenburg and a slightly longer stop in Malmo.

At Malmo our pitches all had views of the Oresund Bridge and the whole group ventured out by bike or bus into the city.

Malmo has had a bit of a renaissance since it became one end of the Oresund Bridge. Once a slight dodgy place, it is now a thriving university town with loads of new developments, including the geometric conundrum that is the 'Turning Torso'. This modern high-rise building dominates the landscape with its white, spiraling design.

Incidentally the weather was uncharacteristically hot at this point with temperatures into the 30s Celsius. Luckily we

were able to cool off the waters of the Oresund Strait after a busy day in the city.

It was now time for the drive home, back over the two bridges and then retracing our steps through Germany and Holland.

All in all this is an epic motorhome tour (the longest one we do) at nearly 3000 miles.

However there is so much to see and do on the trip and the roads in Scandinavia are so quiet, that the miles just seemed to disappear.

This is the tenth year that we have been to Scandinavia in August and we are already looking forward to next year!

Motorhoming Tips

The world of satellite navigation keeps changing and we are now moving away from the traditional satnav approach in favour of online systems.

There are a few online navigation websites and apps that you can use and we have not tried them all. However, we can highly recommend the use of Google Maps.

The way it works is that you Google where you want to go, click on the Google Map, click on directions and it will take you from where you are now to there without the need for addresses, grid references etc.

Here's what you need to know:

1. You need to have data roaming turned on your phone and it will use some of your data allowance.
2. It assumes that you have a phone signal all the time. Therefore if you lose signal you will lose your directions.

Therefore, it is worth having something as back up. We use an old satnav.

3. It will give you live updates (traffic jams, road closures etc) and suggest alternative routes while you are driving. Although some satnavs do this, we have found their data to be a bit slow coming through whereas Google Maps is live. We know that it has saved us hours compared to using a system that does not have live traffic updates.

4. You will need to mount your phone somewhere on your dashboard so that you can see it and perhaps link the audio to your radio system so that it is loud enough to hear whilst driving. You also need to put it on charge as it will zap your battery a bit.

5. If you want to use your phone for anything else while driving it can be a bit of a pain. For example we use ours to listen to music and the Google directions always seem to talk over the best bits.
6. Google Maps is free to use.



“We can highly recommend the use of Google Maps.”

Coq au Van: the amusingly titled recipe section

Peachy Pork Chops

Cooking Method:

Ingredients:

2 x 250g Pork chops with rind.

4 x cloves of Garlic.

2 sprigs of fresh rosemary.

4 x 410g tin of peach halves in juice.

50ml bourbon.

Pre heat the grill to high. Slice the rind off the chops, scour the fat side of it in a criss cross fashion and place skin side up in a tray. Pop under the grill for 5 minutes to crisp up into crackling-keeping an eye on it. Season the chops with sea salt and black pepper, score the

remaking fat in a criss cross fashion, then sit the chops together fat edges down in a large cold non-stick prying pan. Place on high heat for 3-4 minutes, or until golden and the fat has tended out, using tongues to ensure they are in good contact with the pan. Gently turn the chops onto their sides to cook for 5 minutes on each side.

Meanwhile, peel and finally slice the Garlic, drip the rosemary leaves off the sprigs. Remove the chops to a plate, drain 90% of the fat from the pan into a container to use for cooking another day, then sprinkle the garlic into the pan.



Stir regularly until golden, then add the rosemary and 4 drained peach halves, plat side down. Giggle over the heat until golden, then return the chops to the pan, add the bourbon and carefully set fire with a match (Stand Back), Once the flames begin to subside, Dish up with the crispy crackling. Enjoy.



Keep in touch

We are very happy to hear from newsletter readers throughout the year. If you have ideas for features, questions, motorhoming tips or questions about any of our tours, please feel free to get in touch at any time.

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