



MY BUMBLE MOTORHOME ALONE

BY CRAIG & PEANUT



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BILLY NO MATES AGAIN.

Well Joanne has gone and left me again, she's nipped back to the UK for some more tests and to give the worlds largest urine sample apparently. The last night before here flight home we stayed just outside of Malaga Airport, actually it was on the border between Torremolinos & Malaga and with the amount of cars doing drive buys in the morning it was probably Spain's answer to a dogging site.

VINS HOME FOR A FEW DAYS.



Joanne flight was delayed by about an hour so i parked up on an Ikea car park of all places until she got off. Joannes gone, motorhome alone again, Peanuts not much company these days, all he does is sleep, eat and 1&2's so I headed back towards Nerja were we stayed earlier. It has everything I need i.e. water and a Lidl. about 15km before getting there I drove into a town called Torrox Costa, this will do for a couple of days, so I asked a policeman if it was OK to park up as all the towns I passed through that morning all had signs saying no campers are allowed overnight. The Policeman didn't speak English but he said no problema so I parked up next the Iberostar Hotel and sat there bored for two days watching Top Gear and drinking expensive Rosé wine at €0.59 a litre. (Joanne wouldn't approve)

The Police drove passed a few times but never said anything, I started to feel that I had maybe overstayed my welcome, time to get off my arse and find a new spot. I walked down the promenade and at one end were a few campers parked up but a sign saying "no camping allowed" directly behind



them, You could park on the street though but the spot wasn't floating my boat so I walked to the other end of the promenade.

A lighthouse, in fact a lighthouse with parking behind it right on the beach, not the best beach in town but beggars can't be choosers. This will do nicely, I even found a water supply that's meant to water the plants but it can water me for a few days too.

The town itself is OK, nice front, average beaches, a few shops but more supermarkets than soft mick and it's seems quite popular with the Spanish and Germans with the odd Brit thrown in.

Now it's time for the glorious task of doing the bedding and turn the dashboard into a what looks like an Arabs Harem as it all dries out, still at least I can top up my water tanks once the Geraniums have had a drink.

NEW BEACH TO LOOK AT, NO IT'S NOT I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE!



Well it's now Saturday, I decided to leave Torrox Costa last night, A few too many vans appeared and spoiled the view, I am now back in Nerja just up the coast, parked in exactly the same spot as when we were here last week, I'm still bored out of my tree though but at least this town is nicer than Torrox Costa.

No doubt Joanne has mentioned my complete inability to stop, sit down and relax. I have spent all morning walking up and down the dusty road next to the beach, stoping at each end to wash the dust off my feet then start again, nipping back to the van every couple of trips to let Peanut out for a pee. Plus the vans getting a good coat of dust now so I can at least waste half a day washing the thing. Everyone else is relaxing in the sunshine and getting a tan whilst I am

scratching my head needing something to do. If am am lucky something might break so I can then pass the time fixing the thing again.

There is a boat yard about 300m away and a very loud English voice every so often coming from it, I decided to kill 10 minutes and investigate. I walking into the yard to see lots of dogs with there owners, all of them engrossed watching an English woman power walking around yelling into a headset at the poor dog she was dragging around, her voice amplified and pumped out of a large speaker. It was a very sorry sight, I shook my head and just walked off, something the dog looked like it would rather do too.

The spot i'm parked in very good, the seas only 50m away, I have the mountains directly behind me, lots of showers on the beach, nice

little town centre five minutes walk away, but Jesus it's dusty, I washed the van as i'd planned but the following morning however guess what? the damn thing looked like it had been through a sand storm, that and the fact I had very little sleep for no good reason has made me go back to Torrox Costa again, Joanne will be back in less than a week so it's time to move back towards Malaga again. Sadly this place has nothing ancient, historic, or anything else for that matter not a great deal to tell you and even less to photograph.

The vans current parking spot, right next door to the Hotel Ferrara of the Iberostar chain, oh and dust free.

It's now Wednesday and i'm still at Torrox Costa, nothings has happened of interest to tell you as I now amuse myself by walking up and down still but at least it's a nicer beach here and NO DUST, The highlight of the day is watching old people eat ice cream cornets, It always makes me laugh, they all revert to young





Peanut anxiously awaiting his slap up evening meal.

He's staring at the shower wall as usual. He is blind though so he probably thinks he's looking at the beach.

Now everybody say Awwww.

children and lick it to the extreme and then get it all over their faces just like five year olds.

There is a Mercado supermarket around the corner from me which is even a little cheaper than Lidl for most things, You can buy an eight litre bottle of water for just €0.67 and cans of beer for just €0.22, The extra matured sirloin steaks good value too at less than €11.00 a kilo, So I bought them all and Peanut and I will have a nice tea tonight, I've not had steak for a while so i'm looking forward to it, wash it down with a few tinies (the waters for Peanut) whilst watching one of the James Bond movies we have stashed on a hard drive.

Now it's Friday, I spoke to Joanne yesterday and she's had some good news from the doctors finally, she's had a few injections and apparently we need a juicing machine plus she needs to eat lots of red meat for the next few weeks. (yippie, more steak if we can find it) I've done sod all again but walk up and down, so still nothing to say to you lovely people other than Joannes flight back on Sunday cannot come soon enough.



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TIPS, IDEAS AND A BUCKET.

Well apparently some of you out there liked the tips section I did so here are a couple more.

Disclaimer, all the following are only tested or made by an idiot and his dog, No liabilities accepted.

First off one of the last tips was to park facing the sun, it heats the van up very quickly and is great for drying your clothes, the down side is if

it's really hot then so is the van, in fact it will get 5-10°C hotter in than out and even more on the dashboard, sounds great, but when it's starts to get about 25°C and higher it gets a little too warm, in Italy last year we got up to about 50°C inside the van on some days.

Cooling down, well open the door on one side, then open the window on the other, this is better than opening the roof windows as it lets the breeze flow through the van much better.

Park in a position where the door will be in the shade in the afternoon heat, again this keeps the air coming in a little cooler. Our fridge is

on the same side as the door so by keeping the fridges vents in the shade too means it doesn't have to work as hard to keep cool and saves a little gas.

Air conditioning units, well don't bother, they only work when on electric hookups and only when that electric has got plenty of amps, unlike most Aires and campsites throughout Europe that only offer six amps, some as little as just three amps, so don't bother buying one, plus they create air drag on the roof of the van. Whilst on air conditioning, some vans have it in the cab area just like a cars, sadly although great whilst your driving they are no good once your static, plus they too use large amounts of electricity and would soon kill your engines battery. Running the engine isn't an option either, engines don't like running on tick over, no oil gets splashed inside to keep it lubricated so it will shorten it's life considerably. We have seen many people running there vans periodically to either heat it up or cool it down which is just silly, diesel is more expensive than gas, which in turn is massively more expensive than solar, it eventually kills the engine and is noisy to boot.

Ahh generators, well to be honest I did consider getting one, some of the new ones are quite quiet and economical, especially the smaller ones from Honda, but they are still expensive, bulky, smelly and still too noisy. Just imagine, your sat at the beach or by a mountain lake, maybe enjoying the views of the green rolling valleys in Austria sipping a G&T, then all of a sudden some toss pot gets



a noisy genny out just to put the kettle on, doesn't quite work for me, so ultimately I didn't buy one.



Fans, well yes and no, forget the little USB powered types as they have no air flow, 12v ones are available that plug into your cigarette lighter socket but they have very little air flow plus I have read many reports that they burn out quickly and are a potential fire risk. I looked at many 240v fans before we set off on our travels, I considered exciting things like the amount of watts they consume, size, looks, build quality, weight and air flow. The best one I came across was from Argos, It's made by a company called Honeywell, uses a maximum of 30 watts, it has three speeds, it's black, it's quite smallish, it's very well made, but most importantly it's like having an aircraft jet engine in your face, it really does move tons of air and is extremely

quiet, unlike most other fans on the market and only cost £20. I cannot recommend it enough. Currently it's mounted under a shelf above our bed so Joanne can stay Cooooool at night. In our old van it was under a cabinet mid van, sadly the fan doesn't oscillate so I mounted it upside down on a tripod ball and socket head, this allowed it to be pointed at any angle or direction very easily and made it look integrated rather than some ugly big bolt on afterthought.

The other option is a Dyson, yes the man who makes vacuum cleaners also makes fans, They look cool, they are cool, they're very efficient and very quiet but just like his cleaners they are ridiculously expensive so as I'm as tight as fish's arse it was a no from me.

Tools and other goodies, well I do have a smallish tool kit, various size screwdrivers are always useful, a rubber mallet, wood saw (sadly not used yet), junior hacksaw, I wish I had a proper one now though as sawing those chair legs down was a pain, Stanley knives etc, mastic gun and silicone sealant, Gaffer tape, glue gun, selection of nuts, bolt and screws most of which are stainless steel plus a roll of bungee cord that Joanne laughed at when I bought it but it's unbelievably useful stuff.

We have one dog but three leads, one is a bungee strap we got from the El-Cheapo China shop (Proper leads are expensive for what they are), I cut the ends off and made a small loop at each end as handles and for the dog clip so when we put him outside, if he

has a mad minute and tries too run in some random direction (he's blind, no sense of direction and a little frail these days), he doesn't yank himself to pieces because his lead stretches. Actually just had a thought, I should leave the clip on the dog, that way the lead is always the right way up when you attach it to him.

The other two leads are the retractable type, which I personally hate, they are very good though for instant clothes lines that are adjustable in length to about 30 feet and easily attach to trees, poles or whatever because of the dog clip on the end. I wouldn't recommend using it with the dog at the same

time though, dirty washing just waiting to happen.

What do you attached the dog too you may ask? well rather than tie him too one of those large corkscrew type things that pet shops sell (which only work in grass) attach a couple of stainless steel eyelet's to your van, that way it's a doddle to clip him on as soon as you open the door. We have four at various points around the van, none are visible so don't look funny apart from the one on the side of the vans retractable step.

Those same eyelets are also a great way to clip any doors open, motorhomes and



caravans usually have a door clip to keep them open, sadly they're useless in windy conditions. Just attached a length of thin rope to the inside of the door and then clip the door open on the eyelet, no more trapped fingers or legs when the door slams closed, Or as Joanne demonstrated, a busted door clip (which was brand new as the original broke the same way) because she forgot to use my eyelets and the door slammed open.

The same type of eyelets also hold our washing line that surrounds our dash.

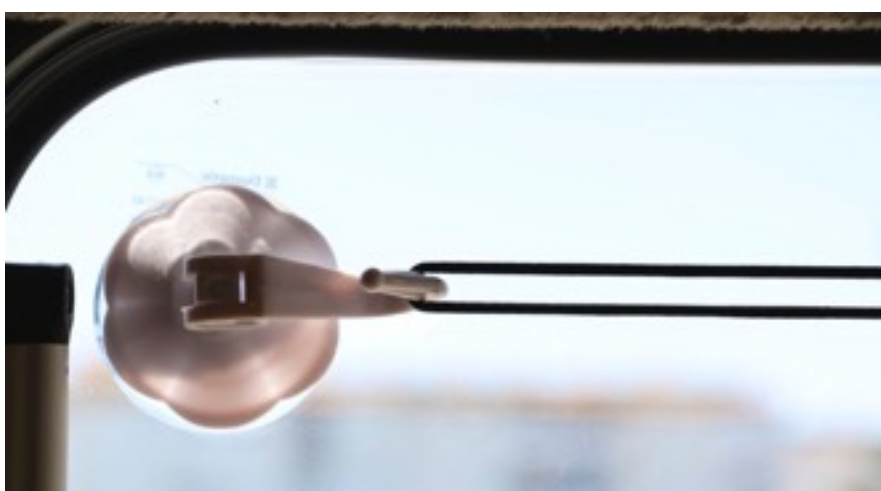
A length around the bin lip stops your rubbish bag from closing then always falling in.



Tying small things up in the garage (or in my case a boogie board to the back wall) More bungee holds any spare water containers out of the way but are easily accessible.



That bungee I mentioned, well its great for small washing lines on windows when using with those suction cups hooks (about 50p each in Wilkinsons/Wilkos.)



It also clips Peanut to his basket so its nice and short BUT stretches enough so he can still move enough without risking him falling out.



Many motorhomes and caravans also have full time air vents in the ceiling which you cannot close, Great! they let lots of fresh air in when its in storage, they let certain potential fumes out. Oh yeah they also let lots of cold damp air into the van when you don't want it like in the mountains and loads of your lovely heated air out when it's cold outside. Simply remove the interior part, they only clip on, stuff it full of sponges (B&Q car sponges at 30p each fit nicely or maybe a stash of spare microfibre cloths) push it back on, and keep your warm air in or cold air out as you see fit.



The last time Joanne went home I bought a box of cheap red wine, I promptly drank it all..... Errr, hicup. oh yes I then decided to cut out the pouring gizmo from the bag inside, cut a hole in one of my spare water container tops, (found it in Italy, on the floor, shhh) bonded them together and ended up with a self sealing water dispenser that's easily filled, fits on any of our water containers and is better than the ones sold in the shops. Screw it to a smaller bottle, keep it in the fridge and you have nice ice cold water on tap, just like those posh American fridges. (It

also tasted very nice to make, but did make my vision blurred for an hour or two afterwards.)



It was hygiene grade silicone I used and the cap I found was sterilized before I butchered it. Come on I'm not that bad.

.....Well that's it for now, Bye all, normal service will resume when Joanne gets back at the keyboard and hopefully some nice new adventures to share.