



OUR BUMBLE

EXPLORING EUROPE IN OUR MOTORHOME.

BY JOANNE & CRAIG.





PALAIS DE JUSTICE

THIS WEEK...

This week's been a strange and disjointed one. The priority this week's has been to get some repairs sorted, so sight seeing took second place and so did Our Bumble write up. So apologies in advance if it feels a little limp.

Despite the repairs we've seen some fantastic places with a total of 237 kilometres but average spend went up slightly because of a dreaded repair bill.

We forgot last week but a new top ten destination slides in at number eight.





BEZIERS TO BALERUC LES BAINS

Above: Vin parked up at the
Aire in Baleruc Les Bains.
Access to water means it's
time to wash everything.

SATURDAY 1 AUGUST

Craig got up reasonably early and starting messing around with a new idea. Before he knew it, it was 11am and before he'd stopped chatting about it, it was well passed lunchtime. By the time we had a bite to eat and more discussions on what now might be our latest bumble project (Top Secret), it was nearly tea time.

What day is it?

I don't know, eeerrrrr...Saturday

Shit, we best go to the supermarket today, they are closed tomorrow. The joys of not knowing the day of the week!

With that we packed up Vin and headed off to Lidl. As usual the French Lidl wasn't great and Craig was seriously miffed. We grabbed the essentials and headed off towards the coast. The Languedoc coastline isn't renowned for its great beaches but it is meant to have some undeveloped sections and a few nice lagoon sections. Hopefully, we will find a nice wild camping spot.

The journey to the coast wasn't particularly exciting but flat plains after the dramatic Pyrenees is a bit of a come down.

As we hit the coast we headed towards the Bassin de Thau, a thin stretch of land with the sea on one side and a lagoon on the other. It's only a narrow stretch so you could see both bodies of water. Hardly any development just large sections of car park for immediate access to the beach. Unfortunately all the car parks had height barriers, so no overnight parking for us. About half way down we found the free aire. We pulled in and had a toot around but it was jammed packed. The campers were blocking each other in and parking on any inch of space. It really wasn't our scene. An friendly Aussie with just one wiggly tooth came tootling over "just stick it in anywhere mate they don't care". We had a quick chat, thank him and then turned around and hit the road.

Five minutes later and we were in Sete stuck in a traffic jam. It feels really weird being stuck in

traffic after a pretty much traffic free Portugal or Spain. France on the other hand does seem to have a lot more traffic especially early evening. We crawled for nearly an hour until we managed to cross the main bridge at Sete. By now the vibrant cafe bars and restaurants were buzzing with hungry crowds.

We stayed on the main road and eventually turned off at Baleruc les Bains. We drove around the little lagoon town, it was quite pretty. Then we spotted a few motorhomes on the edge of the town. A quick shuffle around and off we trot to discover a free little aire. Yippee, we will have some of this. It was basically, a car park with half a dozen motorhome parking spaces with standard camper services. Unfortunately all the parking spaces were full, so we just parked at the side and took up two car spaces. Being night time the car park was nearly empty.

We checked the night running lights again but still not working. Last week, we forgot to mention we noticed the night running lights weren't working, so another thing to add to our repair list.

Ignoring the repairs for a while, we put our feet up and continued on chatting about our secret project!



Craig's little goodies boxes. It's just junk to me but all the fixes have come out of this little magic box.



BALERUC LES BAINS

Above and below: Locals and holiday makers rub shoulders at a street concert.



SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

After finishing this weeks Bumble we did our weekly Vin scrub. Craig cleaned Vin outside and I did the inside including the windows. There are somethings in life you just cant escape and cleaning is one of them. Craig had his 'I am bored head on" and rather than help me finish inside he went outside for a tinker. I could hear his brain going in to overdrive as he built his latest fad...an outside power shower made from odds and ends in his goodies box. It is still a prototype, so no doubt you'll have to wait for the final version.

Our neighbours were impressed and Craig was chuffed with his power shower BUT, and its a big BUT, he discovered the tyre pump is not working. Most new motorhomes now come with a pump and foam filler rather than spare tyre. Well it's this pump that's not working, so it's something that needs sorting sooner rather than later.

A motorhome spot came free in the designated area, so we shuffled Vin over a few feet. As we did you could see him give a



Photos Clockwise:-

Joanne enjoying the alfresco lifestyle, even if it is a painted one.

The shoreline at Baleruc les Bains.

Joanne in the hot air.



quick wink to the French lady on our right. We were the only Brit amongst the French line up but they all made us welcome.

In the afternoon, we had a cycle around the town. Its like one big retirement village with chunks of residential buildings on one side, a park in the middle and cafes and bars on the other side. Being on a headland, it is surrounded by a cool and calm lagoon waters. All around the perimeter, a walk way with lots of opportunity to sit and watch the world go by. Certainly a nice place to retire with lots of activities for the elder...like tea in the park! This Sunday, is no exception and today they had a local jazz competition. Lots of bands playing classic French tunes, which the crowd rocked to and fro, quietly humming along. Tip tapping flip flops clearly the rage today. At the back of the park a large spit roast and BBQ selling all sorts of feed me quick foods. The concert went on in to the night and ended with a huge firework display....the only way to end a great day in the park.



BALERUC LES BAINS TO MONTPELLIER

Above: Baleruc's other
shoreline, a lagoon no less.

MONDAY 3 AUGUST

Knock, knock.

Craig, there is someone at the door

Eh, are you sure?

Yes, I am

Knock, knock

Well, who the hell is knocking at our door?

We jumped up and Craig went to the door. It was a ticket collector asking for our aire fees. Half a sleep we didn't argue and gave him €7 for the day. In return, he gave us a token for the window and a token for electricity and water. We didn't mind paying for the aire but we did think it was unfair to not display the price. It also turns out the guy who collected the cash only collected it for half the motorhomes?

Our solar input looked a little low, so we cleaned the solar panels and removed the layer of dust. You wouldn't think it makes a

difference but it sure does and later that day, we were back up to optimum charge.

We spent most of the day trying to sort out a dealer to help with the repairs. On the phone, researching on the internet etc. We telephoned Edgehill Motors (the place we bought the motorhome from) to see if they could suggest anyone or offer any advice. As usual, they were super helpful and gave us some good pointers. One of which, phone Dometic as the fridge is under manufacturers warranty. So we called them and a really helpful lady gave us a few dealers in the area. So our new plan of action...shoot over to Montpellier, as there are multiple dealers in the area and see if they can help. If we set off today we can see them tomorrow as well as take a look at Montpellier.

Our Bumble Verdict: OK if you fancy a game of bingo.

The drive to Montpellier was eventful, if not scenic. First we took a bum turn and ended up on a quad track. Not sure Vin was too happy. Then we took a wrong turn on the dual carriage way and ended up going around in circles for half an hour only to end up back where we began! CONFUSED.COM! Once in Montpellier, we headed for a car park that permits overnight camping. It wasn't the best and despite driving around to find a better alternative, we still ended up back on the original car park. Located just after the Crown Plaza Hotel the car park charged €1.30 per hour but if you park near the rear of the car park, it is free. We are not sure if it is because the spaces belong to a company or if they have forgotten to paint 'payant' when they have resurfaced the car park. But not bothered, it is free. It even comes with free dog security

guard (which we later nick named Chubb). Poor dog looked lost and needed a bed for the night. Craig wouldn't entertain it (frightened I would get attached) but I couldn't resist. I gave him a drink of water and a few biscuits.

By the time we'd had our sausage butty, it was pitch black outside,. After about half an hour, I could hear Chubb crying. I couldn't resist. I sneaked outside and gave Chubb a few left over sausages, which he accepted with pleasure.

We then went to bed knowing we could sleep safely in our bed. Chubb sat at the foot of Vin's steps guarding us like his life depended on it. Good job really because just as we were about to nod off a couple of kids decided to do car donuts in the car park, whilst playing their stereo on max volume. Boom, Boom and screeetch. It made me jump out of my skin but not half as much as they did when Chubb came to the rescue. He shot over like grease lightening and told them under no circumstances could they do donuts near Vin. The kids laughed a little until Chubb got serious and politely gave them a doggy grin. As a reward and thank you, I gave Chubb a couple more sausages, which he gratefully received.

Back to bed although it is very hot and sticky so nothing for it, we will have to put the fan on...high! Craig grunted, as usual he'd rather stay hot.



MONTPELLIER TO SAINT AUNES

Above: Montpellier, most of the population are students under the age of 25.

TUESDAY 4 AUGUST

Little droplets of cool water just splashing our face. Then a gentle breeze from the fan and a sprinkling of fine mist over our bodies....holly moses its bloody raining in through the skylights. Wakey Wakey! I jumped up and quickly shut all the skylights before everything got soaked. Craig didn't budge...

Craig, are you awake?

No.

Are you sure?

Well I wasn't until you bellowed in my ear

Its raining, can you hear it

And you've woke me to tell me its raining?

We both struggled to get back to sleep, so we got up and once the rain backed off, we headed off in to Montpellier. By 10am we'd seen most of city and wasn't impressed. Now we know it is only early morning but this vibrant city doesn't feel so vibrant. The city certainly had a mix of cultures and a lot of student activity but it didn't have the attraction like most great cities.



Photos Clockwise:-

- ❖ Arch de Triomphe.
- ❖ Promenade de Peryou
- ❖ Arch de Triomphe stonework.



There are quite a lot of road works in and around the city, which is usually a good sign of infrastructure investment but shame about the historic monuments. We were astounded at how run down and unloved the rest of the town looked. Montpellier has some great attractions but they are neglected and as such, you get that feeling when you are walking around that no one cares.

In the centre of the city, Place de la Comedie a massive oval shaped square with a fountain in the middle and shops around the perimeter. At one end, a tree lined avenue with little parks and fountains. At the other end, little lanes shooting off in every direction, some with attractive shops and others with dingy digs. We did manage to find a shop that sold cards, so we managed to get our nephew and niece birthday cards. Last year they had Austrian cards and this year, French! We like to find nice cards for family but sometimes it is difficult because Europe just doesn't do card shops like the UK.

We walked around the cathedral, the churches, the museum, the arch and the gardens. We left Montpellier feeling quite



Photos Clockwise:-

- ❖ Joanne shops for birthday cards.
- ❖ Typical vino shop sign.
- ❖ Traditionally styled cards at one of the many Artisan stores.



disheartened because we feel it has all the right ingredients for being a brilliant city just missing a heart and a bit of TLC.

By lunchtime, we were at our 1st dealer Loiserio. Very pleasant chap who had a quick look at the fridge and said he would need to book it in and check it out but they didn't have any availability until end of October. As he said October Craig and I looked at each other with a 'shit, thats a long wait'. We can't manage without a fridge for that long. The chap also had a look at the garage hinges and door spring but same old story, need to order from Hymer but Hymer closed for August etc etc.

On to the next...CT autos...and yes you got it, same old story. This is getting silly. We really are surprised at the timeframes for looking at things but also the lack of stock. France has a big motorhome market, so you'd expect a find stock at some, if not most of the dealers just because of the sheer volume of customers.

On to the next, Narbonne Accessories in Vendergues. This time we approached them slightly different. We told them we had phoned Dometic in the UK and they directed us to this service



Photos Clockwise:

- ❖ Cathedral.
- ❖ Fountain.
- ❖ Clock above the Comedie Theatre.
- ❖ Chateaux d'eau and reflection.
- ❖ Stone relief above the cathedrals door.

centre. With that we were booked in tomorrow at 3pm. Wow, finally we have one step forward. We couldn't believe our luck.

With time to waste and nothing to do, we headed back a few kilometres to a large retail unit. We filled up with reasonably low priced diesel at €1.10 from L'ectrec. Then we went in to the supermarket and Craig nearly had kittens at some of the prices for example chicken is the same price as steak! I agree with Craig on the prices, it is outrageous and doesn't feel right when the rest of Europe is a lot cheaper but its at this point we then differ...we like chicken, we can

afford it, so buy it and enjoy it. Complaining about it won't change things apart from you more angry at the price. Craig's view is find an alternative cheaper product or do without. Needless to say we came out the supermarket with an empty basket and tense atmosphere.

The retail park was a little too busy to stay on for the night, so we moved a few kilometres to the village of Saint Aunes. Nice, well to do area with detached properties and tree lined avenues...perfect shade for Vin.



Joanne splashes herself to stay cool and keep the itching down in Montpellier.



SAINT AUNES TO NÎMES

Above: Craig outside yet another camping shop, will they be able to fix the fridge?

Below: He spared no expense and bought two new glasses from the clearance section. How much? well €1 obviously.



WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST

Most of the morning we sat and chatted about our secret project - do we, don't we, the pros the cons etc

By 2pm we were at Narbonne Accessories ready and waiting then we didn't lose our slot. The young shop assistant took some basic details and then drove Vin around the back in to the workshop. It felt really weird watching our home go in to the garage. As much as you want your home fixed you don't want people to actually go in to your home without you being there. Trampling their boots over your floor, prying at your stuff, moving things that have a place...you know what we mean...its our home. As Adam the service engineer located the fridge problem we had a gander in the shop. Craig scoured the isles for over an hour whilst I found a comfortable display chair and had a bit of a read. However, Craig's scouring paid dividend as he managed to find two really nice plastic cups for €1, nice one!

After 2 hours Vin emerged on to the forecourt of Narbonne Accessories. I could see Craig and Adam tinkering and talking and I thought they were sorting the door spring. Brilliant, I

thought. Fridge and door sorted. I was well chuffed but my enthusiasm soon wained when I later found out it wasn't the spring they were fixing, it was the internal mechanism. At some point the door completely stopped working and no one could get in or out, so Adam took off the panel and reassembled the latch.

We paid the bill €186 - €1 glasses, €75 door and €110 for the fridge. ouch. Technically the fridge is covered under warranty, so won't cost us anything once the warranty claim is paid. How easy they pay out...we will keep you posted.

With the fridge sorted that means we only have five more issues to sort

- Garage Hinge - we will phone Hymer when they reopen
- Habitation door spring - we will phone Hymer when they reopen
- Night running lights - don't travel at night until we get sorted.
- Tyre pump - maybe call in Mercedes dealers?

The dining table mechanism broke months ago and Craig fixed with balls and aluminium strip, so that will hold until we get home. Same with the rear panel damage, we will our mate 'Bog' to bog it up and spray it.

With a sort of plan to fix the rest of the repairs we set off to pastures new. Half an hour in to the journey and...

Look over there

Oh yeah, it a Netto.

Not seen a Netto for ages, didn't they sell out to Walmart?

Ummm, shall we have a look in and see if a Netto is any better than Lidl

Okey Dokey

As we clambered out of Vin, the town drunk decided to park his arse with his bag of booze at the side of Vin. It made us feel a little uneasy but the fact the alcohol intake no longer allowed his legs to function provided some relief.

We walked in Netto with excitement of finding new goodies but left with a small jar of tabasco sauce. Our Netto experience is one to be forgotten and we wont be rushing back in a hurry, which should at least please the bubble gum chewing assistant.

Depressed at Netto we ventured in to another B&Q store but this time a Mr Bricolage. Just like Netto we left empty handed. And just for reference Mr Bricolage is twice as expensive as Bricoman.

As we were leaving the retail park we spotted a GPL station...third time lucky? Nah not in this town, no GPL!

On route to Nimes we passed the Perrier bottling plant as well as lots of gypsy camps. Once in Nimes we drove down the main avenue to work out the parking situation. Basically, its all on road parking meters within about 1km of the city, which isn't any good for overnight. Before it got too dark, we headed back to a spot we'd pinged on the way in and parked up for the night. Only a small car park but within walking distance of the city.

Little did we know we'd parked right next to a busy railway line...it was a noisy night folks.



NIMES

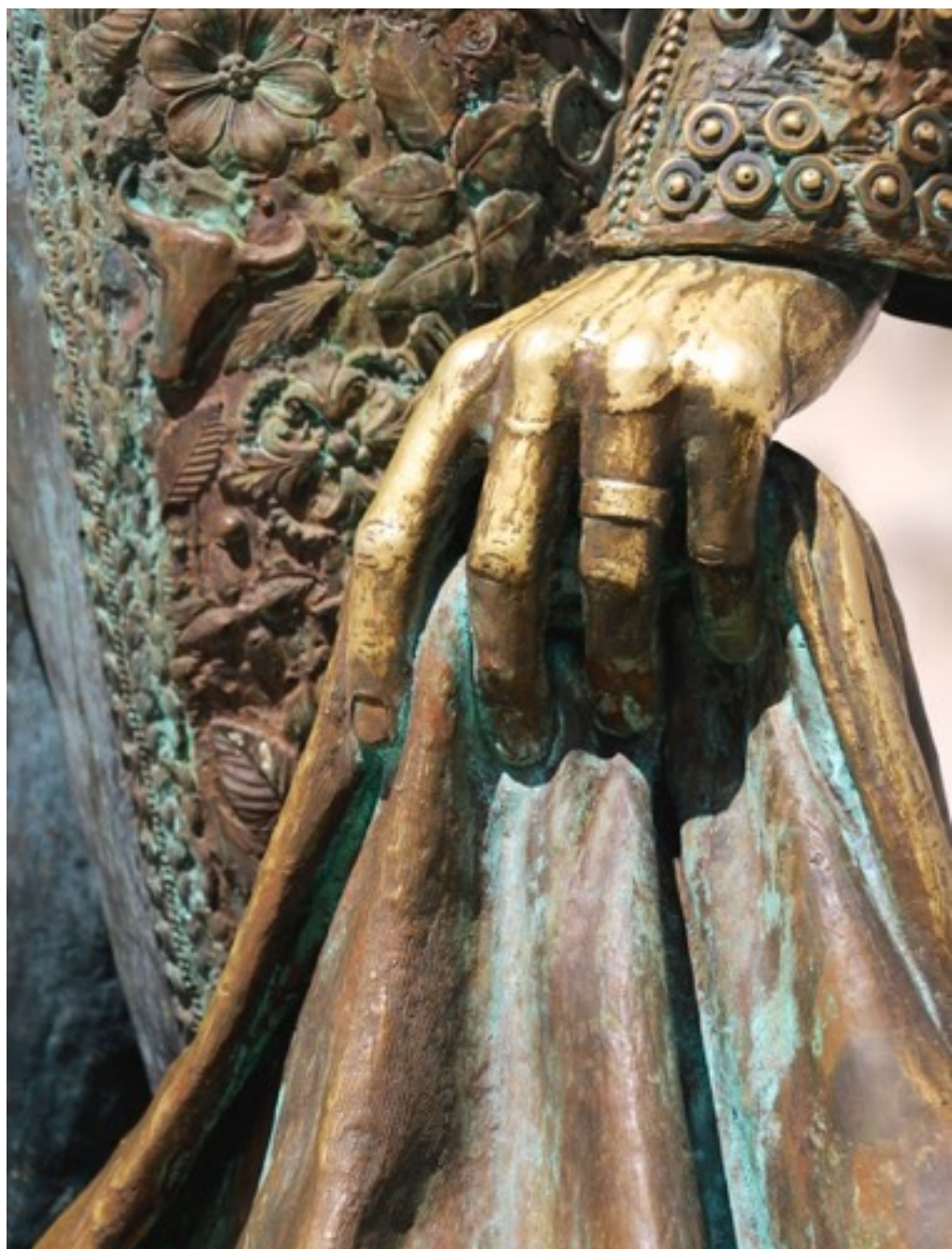
Above: Fountain near the colosseum.

Below: Children playing in the cool fountain water.



THURSDAY 6 AUGUST

Last night was pretty noisy with passing traffic and the haulage trains, so this morning we moved Vin to a quieter parking spot just around the corner. Once settled in we set off to explore Nîmes and what a brilliant city it turned out to be. We did our usual of cycling here there and everywhere looking at not just the main sites but the back streets and city life. Nîmes certainly had a good feel and buzz about the place. You basically have a few main avenues and everything is pretty much on or just off them. Off down Victor Hugo avenue first towards the train station and then down a beautiful tree lined walkway with fountains and water canals. Great for dunking your feet in this hot weather. Then off to the bull ring or Les Arenes. It was pretty impressive with two storey facade and one supposedly one of the best preserved Roman arenas in the world. With a holding capacity of 20,000 spectators, can you imagine the atmosphere at one of the gladiator combats! During its time the arena has served many a purpose from fortress to slum. However, the impressive bronze statue of a matador, a great passion of the city.



Photos Clockwise:

- ❖ Fountain figurines.
- ❖ Charles du Gaulle Square.
- ❖ The Palais De Justice.
- ❖ Bull fighter statue details.
- ❖ Bull fighter statue in front of the colosseum.



Photos Clockwise:

- ❖ Tour Magne
- ❖ Temple of Diane
- ❖ The view from Jardin de la Fontaine towards the city



Next to the arena, the court of justice. An impressive white, stone building stood facing the Charles de Gaulle square. Next a meander in and around the city streets to soak up the lively atmosphere. Cobbled streets, tiny alleys, shops here and cafes there, it was lovely. To reach Mont Cavalier we took the car route. Cycling up and around to the top, the long way. Yip, I was shattered when we got there. This heat is too much and I don't do hills Good job the Castellum provided a nice break for 5 minutes. You couldn't access the Castellum but you could see where the water arrived in the city from Pont du Gard. Once at the top we entered through the gates and there at the pinnacle, the octagonal Tour Magne offering stunning views over the city. After a good glug of water from the parks tap we slowly and surely wandered all the way down through Jardin de la Fontaine. The formal 18th century gardens creating a network of pools and stone terraces, which are still maintained today. Half way down and a little detour around the ruins of Temple de Diane before releasing the brake cable and free wheeling all the way back home.



Photos Clockwise:

- ❖ Night market selling crafts.
- ❖ Roman temple, Maison Caree.
- ❖ The famous bull fighter illuminated for the evening.



One thing I didn't know was that Denim was invented here. Cloth de Nîmes. Exported to USA in 19th century as slave cloth by Austrian Levi Strauss...well the rest is history, so they say.

Just before sunset we headed off back in to the city for a second look. It was buzzing. The place was alive with street stalls, food vendors and local artists singing their hearts out. What a brilliant vibe. The cafes and restaurants were chock a block with diners and food was flying around all over the show. The smells were mouth watering. At the hub of the activity, Maison Caree standing loud and proud. The roman temple built around 2AD didn't look ancient one bit. It seemed to blend in but that's probably something to do with folk sat in and around the building. The cathedral doors were open, so we nipped in but it felt rather bazaar. The cathedral had opened its doors and placed all its chairs facing the entrance, so people off the streets could sit and watch the world go by. What a good idea. Everywhere you went you could hear music and particularly remember humming away to La Vie On Rose whilst admiring the floodlit Les Arenes. With another city tour under our belt we headed back to Vin and called it quits...shattered.

Our Bumble Verdict: Blinking brilliant.



NÎMES TO PONT DU GARD

The Pont Du Gard or Aqueduct of Gard ran for 50km providing water to the area. A true feat of Roman engineering and power.



FRIDAY 7 AUGUST

Only a short drive from Nimes to Pont du Gard and with a quick GPL fix for Vin and a quick SuperU supermarket fix for Craig, we were there in no time. We drove straight to the Pont du Gard with the intention of parking up, having a look at the aqueduct as well as spend the day on the river. As we pulled up the car park signs weren't clear and we couldn't actually work out how much it would cost and / or if we could overnight park. To be honest the layout completely caught us off guard as we didn't expect a dead end with massive commercial set up. We did expect a car park with alternatives...not here. The entrance fee structure and car parking prices were not easy to follow, so we turned around and drove back to an open piece of land we'd spotted.

Tucked in the shade under the trees we had lunch and an afternoon of keeping cool and looking at 'what next'.

Around 5pm we decided to go and check out the Pont du Gard and see what's what. It only took around 5 minutes on the bikes and a good job too because the sun is bearing no prisoners today. At the car park entrance, a guard explained the fees....€18



Photos Clockwise:

- ❖ Holes in the arches interior where timbers may have once been
- ❖ Craig is not easily pleased.
- ❖ The famous 3 tiered archways.



for car with up to 5 adults. Entrance in to the cinema, museum and exhibitions €7, plus lots of other variations, overnight parking was an extra €10 too. So how much to just see the aqueduct? A complicated question! Process of elimination would suggest it is €0. The fees are for all the extras like parking and museum, which we are not really bothered about. With that we headed off towards the actual entrance and guess what, we just strolled in along with everyone else. No ticket machine or attendants anywhere. You could see people queuing for the museum and such forth but for the aqueduct they were just walking in...and so we followed.

Once out of the modern reception complex the site was quite simple, as you'd expect. An elevated dirt track running along side the river. Within a few minutes the 2000 year old roman aqueduct reared above the hedges and stood proud over the river Gardon. You could clearly see the three tiers of arches, with the water conduit on top. Originally the aqueduct stretched 50km from Uzes to Nimes carrying fresh water to the city. Today, only elements of the aqueduct remain and here at Pont du Gard is the best preserved example. Craig shot off to take some pictures


whilst I stayed with the bikes and watched folk splash around in the river. The site is extremely popular with visitors just wishing to splash around in the river and have a picnic for the day. There is also kayaking in the area so you can paddle underneath and along the winding river if thats your thing too. Time ticked on and the mosquitoes came out to play so with that we decided to leave the ancient site and headed back to our free little shaded spot 1km down the road. We picked some fresh rosemary from the roadside to go with our meal of the day, Craig knocked up some pan fried duck in an orange jus with roasted potatoes (cooked in duck fat with rosemary) savoy cabbage, carrots, and sweet potatoes. Craig just had steamed Thai rice and duck with “none of that other crap” as he calls it. What a fool!

Our bumble verdict - A great piece of engineering and well worth a visit for the historic value & splash in the river, but be prepared to pay a small fortune too enter and stay on the site.

That’s it from me for this week, hopefully a bit more for you next time.

Joanne waves goodbye until next week and dodges the mosquitoes that came out to play.



A man in a yellow t-shirt and light blue trousers is seen from the back, holding a camera and taking a photo of a large, ornate bronze statue. The statue is of a person in historical attire, possibly a knight or nobleman. In the background, there are stone buildings and other people walking in a city square.

I told him
he was
going on
the cover
but he still
wouldn't
smile.

Bonjour!

HOT, COLD AND FOREVER WET.

Hello everyone again, not a great deal this week, firstly a quick update on a couple of things, the garage doors still on and working fine, the dining room table modification is also fine. The outside waste grey tap.... Bloody brilliant and I should have done it sooner and the fridge/freezer appears now to be fixed after it's service so fingers crossed and watch this space.

As Joanne stated earlier and I have also mentioned before the idea I had about a portable outside power shower. Well it's not quite finished yet but the principle is sound and working, Oh and after making it (My prototype No1) I found one for sale in one of the accessory shops we visited for the sum of €42 but it only had a tiny pump and pathetic shower head and I wanted a little bit more.



The busted tyre pump needs replacing.

It started off with me wanting to blow up the push bikes tyres. The vehicles tyre pump plugs into a reserved 25 amp cig lighter socket in the dashboard but i thought I'd add a temporary 12v socket near the leisure batteries located in the floor by the entrance to Vin. After wiring the thing up I then found out the vehicles air pump was broken, It got put back away and I was then left with the wiring in one hand and nothing in the other so my brain jumped back to the outside shower idea.

The idea was to have a shower for when your at the beach, maybe to wash the dog (Peanut is sadly missed) or for Joanne to cool here itchy arms. I didn't want to use the water from the vans fresh water tank and if possible only use a small amount of water but still have a very long shower.

The parts used so far include, but will be revised as time goes on.

- A large bucket/box of water to stand in.
- A spare 12v water pump.
- 5 cm piece of small bore hosepipe.
- 1.5cm piece of normal sized hosepipe.
- 1 Garden hose spray gun and hose.
- A couple of hosepipe quick connects.
- I spare cig lighter and adapter and some suitable wire.

I used the short piece of small hose to go onto the spare water pump, the very short piece of normal hose goes over the top so the screw down bit on top of the pump makes a perfect seal (see pic). Just fit a quick release connector on the end and then a regular hosepipe on the



Green hose makes it 100% watertight.

end of that. The hosepipe head we have can be altered so the type of shower it gives will vary from a dribble to a mini jet wash.

The wiring is dead easy, only two wires, one is positive, the other is negative. Connect these to the batteries via a cig lighter adapter and away it goes. Future upgrades include an inline switch to start and stop the pump (it'll be waterproof for safety) and fit a cig lighter in the garage of the van.

Q. Why bother when you could have an proper outside water point fitted?

A. Well that requires a bit more cash than I'm willing to spend on something that will hardly ever get used.

A. I wanted the ability to use any old water over and over again and not waste the vans internal fresh water.

A. The whole thing is made of spare parts or bits for other things so I don't have to carry anything else that takes up of space.



Prototype No1's bits and pieces.

Red and green should not be seen except used by a fool, OK it looks a little odd but it works a treat and like a Duracell bunny goes on and on and on.

The bucket was used for testing purposes, It's better to stand in one of our 35L water containers we use as a washing machine.

A. I'm a sad individual and I was bored at the time.

Q. How does the water last so long?

A. If you stand in the same container that the water pump is in it will essentially fill itself up again as the water runs off you.

Q. Does it work and is any good?

A. Well it's a lot better than I thought to be honest, the pump shifts about 19 litres of water a minute and it's got a bit more pressure than the van's own internal shower. It's miles better than those camping crap "hang a black plastic bag of water up with a tube attached type showers."

Points to note are that the pump must be submerged while it's on or it'll burn itself out, an inline fuse is a good idea and obviously a waterproof electrical connection must be made.

Well that's it this week folks, maybe another cowboy idea next week or maybe something truly useful will come your way.

As Forest Gump's Ma used to say, "Life's like a box of chocolates" so see ya'll soon.

OUR TOP 10 DESTINATIONS THIS TRIP



1. SEVILLE

Not just oranges! A fantastic atmosphere in an ancient and charming city.



2. EL CHORRO

A pathway carved out of a sheer cliff for the King of Spain. Just brilliant



3. MORRELA

Hilltop village with stunning castle and views with loads of charm.



4. SALAMANCA

The pink Spanish city full of old charm and character. Like going back in time



5. EL ROCIO

Enter the wild west in this town where everyone still rides on horseback.

6. BELEM, LISBON

A borough of Portugal's capital, blessed with tradition and monuments.



7. RODA DE ISABINA

Home to Spain's smallest Cathedral, some stunning views and a great little village.



8. CARCASSONNE

Great little walled town with loads of character and a lovely river along side.



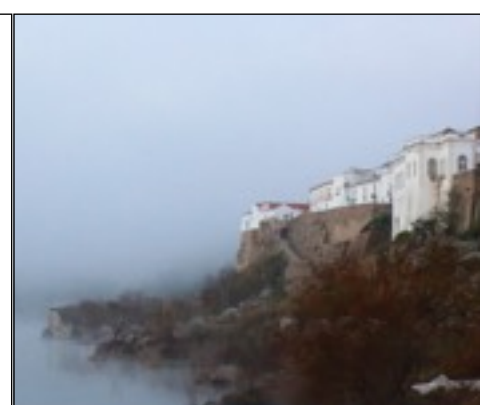
9. EVORA

Lovely, old, cobbled streets steeped in history. The bone chapel is amazing



10. MERTOLA

Quaint hill top village with stunning countryside views.

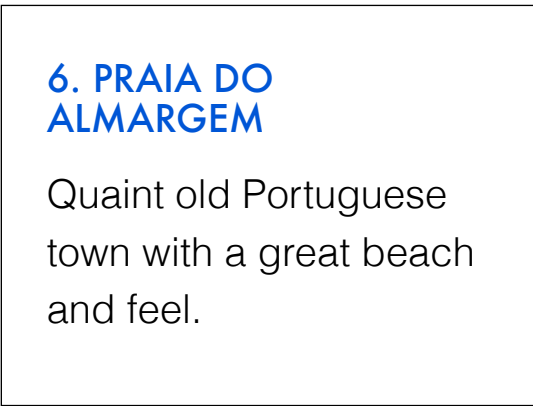


OUR TOP 10 HIDDEN GEMS THIS TRIP



1. PRAIA DO MARINAH

Mini coastal garden right on the headland with stunning views



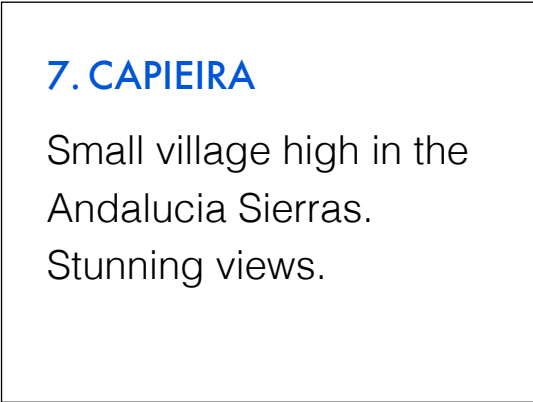
6. PRAIA DO ALMARGEM

Quaint old Portuguese town with a great beach and feel.



2. PRAIA DO ARRIFES

Perched on the edge of a cliff with stunning views across the coast



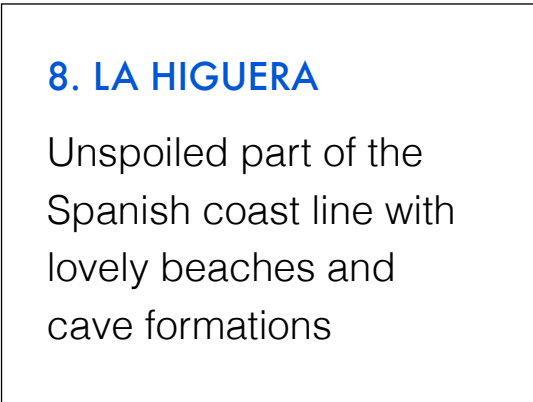
7. CAPIEIRA

Small village high in the Andalusia Sierras. Stunning views.



3. CALA CORTINA

Most spectacular bay with crystal clear waters surrounded by WW2 shelters



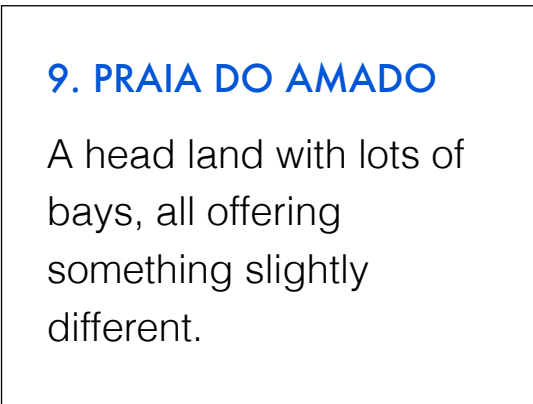
8. LA HIGUERA

Unspoiled part of the Spanish coast line with lovely beaches and cave formations



4. LA AZOHIA

Authentic and simple fishing village in undeveloped pa



9. PRAIA DO AMADO

A head land with lots of bays, all offering something slightly different.



5. PRAIA DO CARVELHO

Amazing cliff garden with your own beach and rock caves



10. ISLA DE FARO

Very small slither of land with beach on both side. Relaxing and simple.

