

# OUR BUMBLE

## EXPLORING EUROPE IN OUR MOTORHOME.

BY JOANNE & CRAIG.





# This Week Bavaria

The last two weeks, we have driven a total of 641km through the wonderfully enchanting landscape of the Bavarian Alps. Excellent scenery, quaint villages, vivid lakes, fairy tale castles and all topped off with sunshine and blue skies. A pleasant surprise, what more could we ask for!







## Austria To Ramsau

Above: Rolling hills and  
autumn colour as we leave  
Austria

Below: Large water cross  
(notice the size of the watering  
can)



## TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER

Welcome to Germany, for the next two weeks we are off to explore and drive the 460km Bavarian Alpine Road. The Bavarian Alps are much smaller (in height) than the alps in Austria and Switzerland; and sit amongst lush green meadows, lakes, rivers and historic buildings including Eagles Nest, which has been on our bucket list for a while.

We crossed the border and the first thing we saw was an onion domed church. We do like our onion domes and this one was rather special, it was a shallot shape. We pulled over and trundled over to the little church. Inside, the detail on the pews was beautiful and all decorated with tiny sacks of fresh flowers. Craig was more impressed with the timber roof both inside and out. A walk through the small graveyard with simple but very effective wrought iron head stones and petite alpine rockeries. In the middle a huge stone cross with a water fountain.

We really need to keep to schedule otherwise we will never reach Bad Waldsee by 9th for our repairs. With that we hopped back in





Above: Our first little German Kirsche (Church)

Right: Stone bridge at the enchanted forest.



and set off but it wasn't long and we were stopping again to have another toot. We had arrived at the enchanted forest where the wild animals of the forest are fed during winter months. It was beautiful and as the name suggests, enchanting!

To make up for time Craig opted for a short cut. He drove us down a steep, narrow lane straight through all the cow fields. Vin was rattling and rolling over all the bumps and the cows were scared shitless. We had moo's and boo's from

every direction. At the end of the lane we bumped in to Hintersee lake before taking a left turn to Ramsau.

We parked up on the tourist information car park. It was getting quite dark, so we decided to close shop and called it quits for the day. We then noticed we had free wifi. Yeah, that means we can catch up with a few people back home. Our 3 mobile hasn't really been used for the last 2 weeks but fingers crossed it soon picks up connection.





## Ramsau To Königssee

Above: Ramsau an der Ache  
set amongst the mountains and  
streams

Below: Fire Station Oriel



## WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER

Craig was up and out before I could say good morning. Wonder what he is up to? Five minutes later and he was back all excited like a giddy kipper. He had nipped over to the bakers and bought 4 massive pastries. I was up like a shot, but Craig was non too happy. He was going to make me breakfast in bed. A lovely thought but all them crumbs in bed...better not. With a hot, frothy cappuccino we tucked in and thoroughly enjoyed our breakfast although we did only manage 1 each. Stuffed or wot!

Ramsau is a lovely, traditional mountain village with wooden houses, guided streams, all set-off against the Alps. We walked along the main street towards the church admiring the oriels (house paintings), the pumpkin displays, flower pots and water features. A quick look in the church before crossing the river and strolling through lanes of large alpine houses with stacks of logs all ready for winter. A walk through the park to discover a band stand type building with a fountain feature which doubled up as an outside shower. Craig was might impressed with set up and spent time eyeing up the details. On the way back I nipped in the





#### Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Selection of pumpkins and squashes
- ❖ Craig strolling across the park.
- ❖ Joanne taking it easy



bakers for some bread. It is the best bakers we have been in to for a long time. A brilliant selection of breads and cakes all baked fresh on the premises.

#### Our Bumble Verdict: Simply lovely

Loaded up with bread and pastries we set off to our next place via two LPG stations. The first was an automated credit card set up, which is fine except we don't like to use our credit card abroad. We only use cash then no problems with exchange rates, fraud, theft, errors or the machine chewing up your card. The second station had a human, now that is better, so we filled up at €0.68 per litre.

We pulled up on the enormous Königssee car park and lined up alongside half a dozen other motorhomes. First job lunch. Craig cooked a chicken to go with our fresh bread but it didn't need it, the bread was just yum on its own. Sometimes you just can't whack chunks of freshly baked bread. We walked across the massive car park to be greeted by a lane of souvenir shops. Tat emporiums galore, selling die-cast models of the church, woolly bob hats with yellow pig tails, fridge magnets, postcards and



plastic stein tankards. Seems no matter where you go in the world we have the ability to ruin spectacular places with endless tat. Once passed the kiss me quick pigtail hats we arrived at the lakes edge. The whole place just transformed. It was beautiful. The kings lake is just over 6 miles long, half a mile wide and 600ft deep. What makes it more impressive is the fjord feeling with surrounding mountains and the Watzmann rising 5,904 ft straight up from the lake to form a wall of sheer rock. The vertical cliffs make it impossible to walk around the lake but you can take a boat ride to the other end for €13 per person. The weather had started to change, so we ditched the boat and opted to take a walk alongside the lake edge for as far as we could. To the east, a massive bob sleigh run sponsored by the post office. From here we got the best view of the small island and boat sheds in the back ground. To the west, a lovely forest trail where we spend hours mooching amongst

the moss, mushrooms and mulch. Following the waters edge as far as we could in order to peer down the lake as far as possible. About half way down the lake, Bartholomä church with 3 impressive domes. On the way back we stopped at the boat sheds to watch a few tradesmen whittle wood for the boat repairs.

*Joanne look up there*

*Where?*

*There just there.*

*Oh yeah, its Eagles Nest, brilliant.*

We could just make out the building right on top of the peak. Unfortunately not for long, as the whole mountain was soon covered in cloud. The cloud descended in no time and with it horrid drizzle. Time to seek cover in our little mobile home, Vincenzo.

**Our Bumble Verdict: Fit for a king!**





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ The boat sheds with Eagles Nest in the distance
- ❖ Selfie at the lakeside
- ❖ The traditional boat sheds
- ❖ Little mushroom on fallen forest tree
- ❖ Joanne admiring the lake view







## Königssee To Obersalzberg

Above: Vins spot for the night at Obersalzberg parked on top of the clouds, oh yes and right on top of Hitlers bunker.

### THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER

We woke in blanket of grey cloud. Oh dear, doesn't look like we will be going up the Jenner cable car today. What shall we do, chuck? We um'd and ar'd and after breakfast, we set off to Berchtesgaden and called at the Lidl. Over the last few weeks we have managed to empty the freezer and defrost it, so time for a big shop. What better place than Berchtesgaden Lidl, a small but well stocked store, what a nice surprise. All sorts of goodies and all reasonably priced, too. We filled our trolley and departed €70 lighter. We emptied our bags, Vin was a happy chap and





## DER FÜHRER:

Feierlich bekunden in diesen Tagen das italienische und das deutsche Volk, die durch den Faschismus und den Nationalsozialismus zu gleicher Willenskraft erstarkt sind und die tiefe Freundschaft verbindet, ihre Gemeinschaft zum Schutze der europäischen Kultur und des Friedens.

*Adolf Hitler*

### Images Clockwise:

♣ Above: Hitler moved to Obersalzberg before WWII

♣ Below: View from where he lived.



bursting at his cupboard seams. But something wasn't right. When we stepped in Vin I could smell a funny smell. A musty / smelly feet smell and it was horrid. Like a woman possessed I sniffed every surface, sticking my snout here and there but nothing. It was driving me mad, Craig told me It was in my head and getting too obsessed with smells, so I did a quick spray with the air freshener and quietly eyed up un-sniffed places.

With a dry but grey day we opted to visit Obersalzberg. The ascent drive to the documentation centre was not for the faint hearted. Jeez, you would think they would warn you before you embark on such a steep climb. Muscle van Vin flexed his torque and strutted his rubber all the way to the top. At the top we pulled on to a large car park with just a handful of cars and one coach. A quick look around for the best level spot and the best viewing point. Such as shame we are covered in cloud, I bet it is a cracking view from up here. Even half covered in cloud this place is mighty impressive and you can see why Hitler fell in love with the place.





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ The fuel bunker.
- ❖ Platterhof bunker.
- ❖ A display in one of the tunnels.
- ❖ The informative & graphic documentation centre.



A bite to eat and then a walk over to the documentation centre, entrance fee €3 and open 9-5. Inside the modern two storey building they explained the role of Hitler and the Nazi's in Obersalzberg. The information was all in German but the detailed photographs, maps and English leaflets were presented in such a way that it is easy to follow. Several rooms show documentaries with English subtitles. After Hitler was released from prison in 1920's he settled in Obersalzberg, stopping in a small alpine lodge with great views of the valley below. In 1933, he was appointed in power and Obersalzberg became the second seat of government. Hitler extended his little alpine lodge in to a massive pad named, Berghof. Many of his leaders and high ranking officials moved to the area, forcing locals out of their homes and in some cases





Above: The tunnel system is extensive.



Right: Hitler's political propaganda.

destroying their livelihood. Eventually, Obersalzberg became an exclusive hilltop for Hitler and his high ranking officers. As a 50th birthday present the Nazi party built Hitler the Kehlsteinhaus (referred to Eagles Nest in English). A diplomatic house on top of Kehlstein peak at 6,000ft (now a private restaurant, closed last week for winter, sigh), with stunning views of the Alps. The road from Obersalzberg to Kehlstein climbs 2,296 feet over a distance of 39 miles, making only a single turn in the process, an engineering achievement even in this day.

The museum covered topics such as:

- Racial policy

- Terror apparatus (some graphic images)
- National community
- Resistance
- Second World War
- Obersalzberg

At the end of the museum a massive bunker complex with a detailed map showing how the network connected to all the key buildings. Storage rooms, fuel stations, a large elevator, escape path, are just some of the elements of the bunker network. It was a cold and eerie place with endless concrete tunnels, which helped put in to context the extreme of how the





Nazis prepared for war. During the war the majority of the buildings were destroyed with the exception of the bunkers and Eagle's Nest. Feels weird to think this is where Hitler and the Nazis hid during the war. Shame we can't visit Eagle's Nest just for the view and to see Obersalzberg from above. Maybe next time.

The car park emptied and we shuffled to the edge of the car park, which happened to be right on top of Hitler's bunker. Now that's a first parked on top of a bunker but guess if you are going to park on a bunker, you might as well park on a historic one! Not long and the sun dipped behind the mountains leaving us in the dark and covered in drifting cloud. We were 933m high and the temperature soon dropped to nearly freezing. All alone up here, it suddenly it felt rather spooky especially as I couldn't get the museum audio of marching soldiers out my head.

#### Above: A map of the bunker complex.

We had a cracking tea, fine piece of ribeye with tons of fresh vegetable. Finished off with a slice of German marzipan cake and a cup of coffee. Craig cracked open his Lidl special Rotwien and merrily sipped away until his chin flopped on his chest and his eyelids welded shut. Eventually he sloped off the bed, shedding an item of clothing with each footstep. Falling onto the bed, where he dropped more or less immediately into a deep, contented and blubbery sleep. Me on the other hand, allowed my imagination to run in to 'scare myself stupid' mode. Thoughts of sleeping on hill potentially haunted by Hitler and the Nazis dominated the night!

**Our Bumble verdict:** Interesting place to visit with great views. Sadly the Eagles nest is only open in the summer months though.





## Obersalzberg To Rohpolding

Above: Vin parked above the clouds.

Below: Wooden toy.



### FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER

The sun popped over the horizon and we appeared to be floating on thick clouds, way above civilisation. No green meadows this morning just the Watzmann mountain (8900 ft) and jagged peaks. Legend has it that each peak is a bad royal punished by God and turned in to stone. The royal peaks appear as quick as they disappear, as the morning cloud floats up and down like a yoyo. It felt cold and eerie albeit very beautiful.

On the way down to Berchtesgaden we passed a frosty golf course and several large hotels. One in town, we managed to park on a small car park right at the side of the Schloss looking out to Eagles nest and the peaks. What a view for Vin whilst we toured the town.

We followed the cobbled road under an archway and in to the Schloss square. A simple fountain surround by colourful archways and painted walls. The Schloss originally an Augustinian monastery before becoming a palace in 1809 was closed until the afternoon. However, we did get to see the cloister





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ View over the town and up to Eagles Nest
- ❖ The Schloss (Palace)
- ❖ Religious painting
- ❖ Café with colourful oriels.
- ❖ Painted facades showing locals dislike of the Nazi's

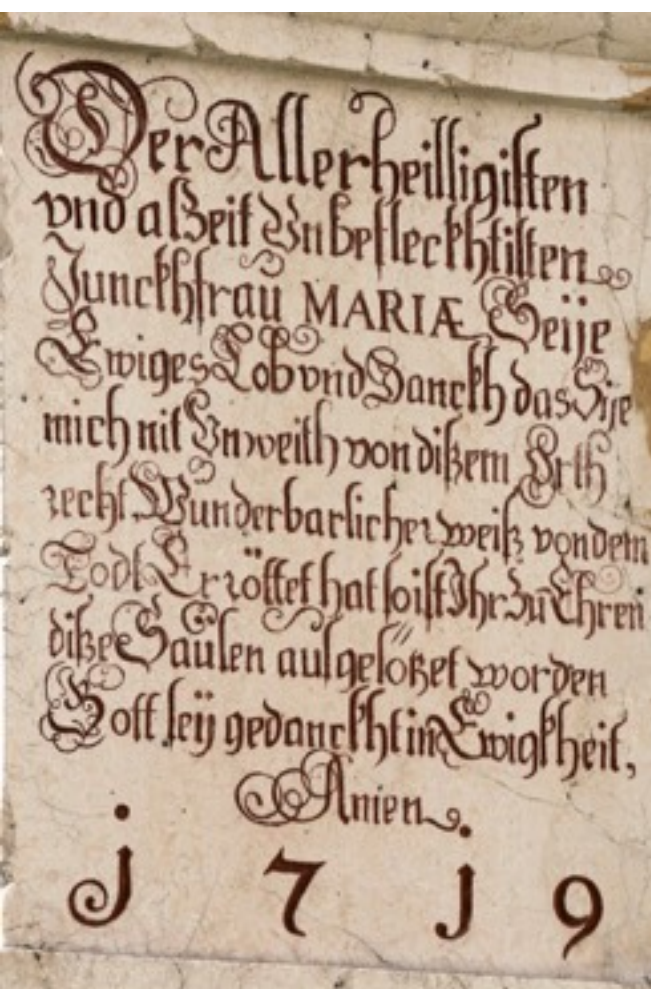






Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Maria Gern Kirsche.
- ❖ Views from the church.
- ❖ Stone sign at the church entrance.



and the abbey. Then a walk through the charming, medieval town with endless quirky shops, cafes and flower shops. Alpine houses covered in bright red flowers and old inns offering traditional beers and tasty nibbles. Bavarian bakers got the thumbs up, as the aroma of freshly baked bread filled the streets. Despite being on the tourist route this town has managed to retain its character and appeal. But set in a valley surrounded by mountain peaks, it is pretty hard to not fall in love with this place.

On the way back we decide to walk up the hill and over the back of the town. The tiny path took us up to the alpine cows and over to a small chapel on a hill. The elevated views over the town and hazy blue cast mountains all around was something special.

Time up on the parking ticket, so we headed back to Vin and punched Maria Gern Church in to the GPS but... not before I had another sniff around Vin, I could still smell something weird. I wonder if Craig has left a sock to fester, you know what men are like! Despite by best efforts to find the source of the smell, I failed miserably and gave Craig the nod to set off.



The single track round wound up and over the hills to plonk up amidst a lush, green valley. We parked Vin on a steep incline and quickly had a gander around the small church dating back to 1709. Simple, pretty but not necessarily worth the effort especially given the lack of parking space. We had hoped to spend lunch here followed by a walk around the hills but don't fancy eating lunch on a steep incline.

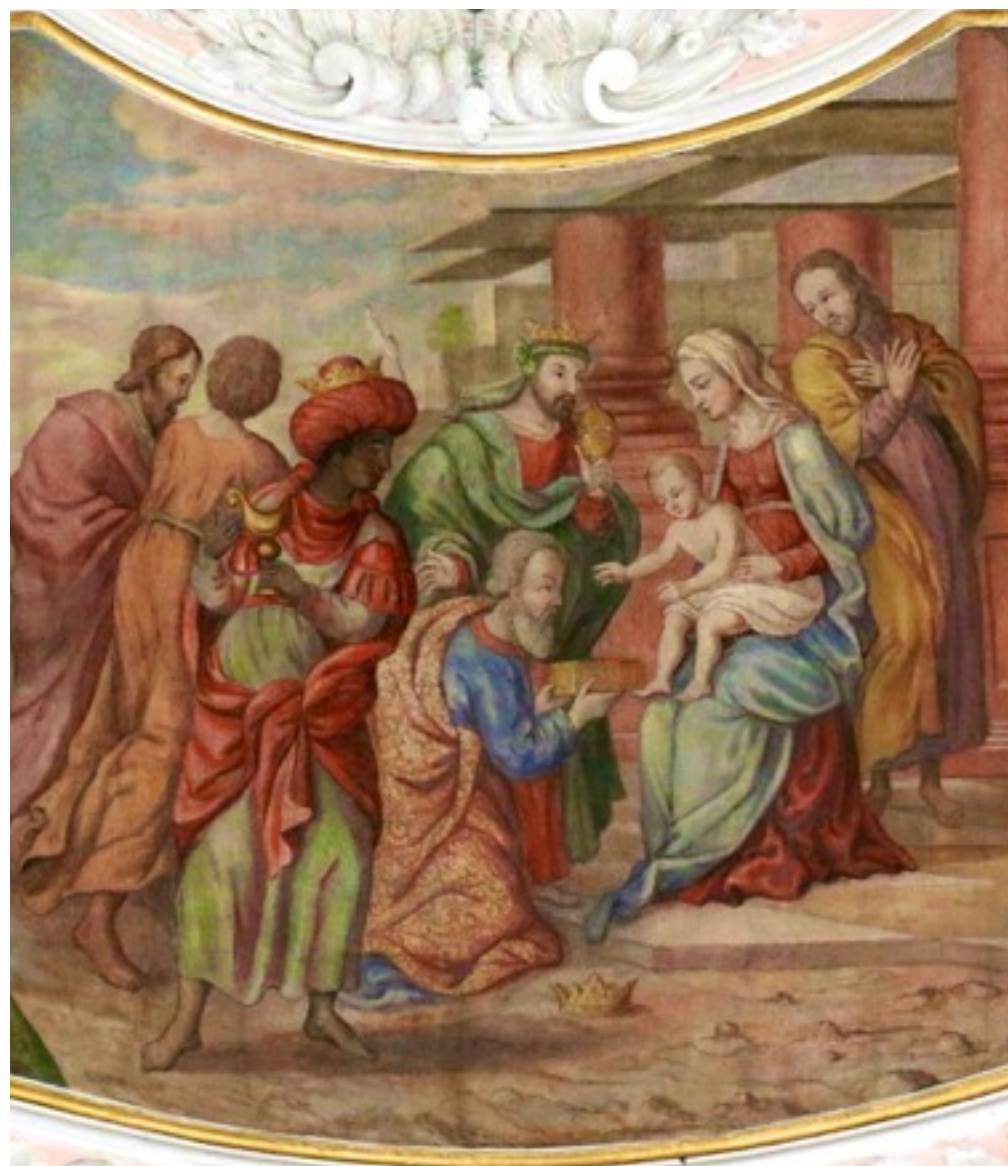
We stopped at a 'shut for winter' spa for lunch before making our way along the alpine road. Progress seemed positively jaunty for a few miles. Then the walls of the alps close in and the grind of Vin begins as we plod along, clinging to the roller coaster track as we approach Bad Reichenhall. The spa town is not what we expected, commercial, ugly apartment blocks and generally unappealing, we quickly did a u turn. It was not until we reached the outskirts of Bad Reichenhall that Bavaria came back to life.

We struggled to find a lakeside retreat or a idillic meadow spot but eventually, we found ourselves a nice little patch beside the lumberjack museum. Amidst the forest we snuggled in before the night air cooled our tootsies. We have no idea where we are but Tom Tom reveals we are at a place called Ruhpolding.

**Top: Maria Gern interior.**

**Bottom: Ceiling detail.**

**Our Bumble verdict: The Berchtesgaden area is a very pretty area, lots of towns all within 5 mins drive so whats not to like, definitely worth your time.**







## Ruhpholding To Reit Im Winkl

**Above: Our parking spot in  
Ruhpholding. Beggars can't be  
choosers.**

### SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER

In the morning, we got up very early along with the lumberjacks. We peered out of our tin home window to a soft pink dawn across the sky. We dressed quickly and hit the road before the Lumberjacks had time to kick start their chainsaws. A few miles down the road and we crossed the river. At first the mountains were jagged and bare but as we travelled up stream, the hills became fat and soft, like huge jelly moulds. The scattered farms looked prosperous and the meadows climbed high up the rolling hillsides, giving the valleys an alpine air. The sun was soon high





and sending nice warm beams of heat through Vin's screen. We were merrily tootling along when Craig noticed a motorhome symbol. He pulled in for a look. A camperplatz right on the river but was it open or closed? In the distance another motorhome, so we drove over and along the way passed the boarded up reception. It was closed for winter but looks like you can park up for free. We parked beside the other motorhome and got out to have a look around. There was no one about. Craig quite fancied the idea of doing the chores, going for a cycle and having a BBQ whilst the weather is still good. So that's what we did, scrub, wash, rinse until Vin was as good as new. I never found the musty smell but with Vin disinfected it should hopefully disappear. Then all of a sudden a lady appeared with a pair of shears in her hand. She was trimming the hedges. Language barriers aside, we discovered the site is open but the facilities are closed with the exception of the water tap.

Originally she wanted €25 for the night, which finally dropped to €14. With washing swinging from the trees and a BBQ ready to smoke we had little choice but to accept. The lady explained she would be back in the morning at 9am to collect the fee. We don't mind paying but it did seem rather steep for a closed facility. Nevertheless we had a good day in a beautiful location.

**Above: The washings all done, time to light the BBQ while we have the chance.**





## Reit Im Winkl To Schliersee

Above: A quick detour to an  
Austrian lake.

### SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER

Jeez it was a bitter cold night and this morning we had frost on the ground and a few ice crystals on Vin's bonnet. Good job we left the heating on low during the night otherwise we'd wake up in an icebox.

We waited until 10am but the lady never arrived, so we prepared Vin and set off. Then just as we were about to exit the grounds we could see her running towards us. She apologised for being late, we handed over our €14, said goodbye and set off.

Today, is a driving day and it is time to sit back, plonk my feet on the dash and enjoy the ride. The mountains were dark and jagged and the valleys looked rich. It was a beautiful day and the light seemed softer, sleepier, more autumnal. There was colour everywhere. Trees the colour of mustard and rust, meadows of gold and green, old wooden barns and aquamarine lakes. Here and there along the roadside, carts brimmed with pumpkins and squash and other autumn fruits. Crates of bobbing apples, baskets of eggs and milk churns all equipped with a little honesty





Above: Roadside milk churn with honesty box.

Right: En-route we passed a reservoir.



box. We bumbled along the sleepy lanes and lost ourselves in the tranquil wilderness of Bavaria.

On route, we had the option to nip in to Austria for 5 minutes, so we did. Not for anything other than cheaper fuel and a look at a rather pretty lake. Out of the blue, my chair started to squeak quite badly, so we pulled over for a cuppa and Craig got on all fours to have a look. The damn chair would not squeak unless I sat in it, so I sat and wriggled about. Craig wrapped himself

around the base of the chair and stuck his head under the seat. Squeak, squeak, squeak. For half an hour all I heard was "keeping wriggling, don't stop". Squeak, squeak, squeak. In the end, I just wanted to chuck the blasted chair out the window with Craig on it. I felt physically sick with all the wriggling and to top it, a damn headache from the repetitive squeak noise. I'd had enough.

We stopped at Oberaudorf to discover we were parked right next a small but picture perfect lake. A couple of guest houses and pub offering





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Hidden waterfall.
- ❖ Lakeside restaurant.
- ❖ More waterfalls.



soup, blond sausage and bread. Have to say the blond sausages look rather weird. We carried on walking up a forest trail kicking the crispy leaves and no doubt the odd dog turd. We crossed a little bridge and there it was, a perfect little waterfall. To get a better view we headed down stream and watched the water bash against the boulders and spurt water high in to the sky.

We rejoined the windy country lane much to the disappointment of the Sunday bikers. This was marked on my map as a scenic route and it sure was. It really was beautiful countryside, better than we expected, with rolling hills of wine bottle green, prosperous-looking farms and deep woods of oak and beech. More lush pale green hills but this time with patches of dull orange carpet from the fallen leaves.

As we approached Schliersee the traffic started to slow. First we crawled along at a nice steady pace but by the time we reached Schliersee we were at a stand still. After half an hour the traffic hardly moved, so we did a bit of a shuffle and pulled in next to the waters edge. We had a cuppa and waited a while but the traffic hardly moved. With fading light we decided to stop here for





Above: Joanne checking our coordinates.

Right: Freestyle motor-homing at its best.

Below: Our lakeside sunset



the night. I had a quick cycle around the lake to get some fresh air, whilst Craig chilled. Not sure exactly when the traffic started moving but it was around 9 o'clock, so glad we pulled over when we did.

**Our Bumble verdict: A fantastic area to drive through.**







## Schliersee To Germisch Partkirchen

Above: The lake of Schliersee.

### MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER

Up bright and early with the farm animals. Dam cow bells are so loud especially when you have a few hundred docile cows wandering passed your motorhome. I lay in bed admiring the cow hair do's whilst Craig turned in to a headless chicken. Running around getting Vin ready to move. After our close encounter with a cow brawl several months ago he has always been rather weary of getting too close.

The lake of Schliersee is very pretty and so to is the town albeit rather commercial and purpose built to attract hoards of tourists.





Above: Ice cold and crystal clear waters beside our expensive tole road.

Right: Yes that's Vin is hiding in the trees.



As we drove through the town, we noticed a large gathering of refugees in and around the town hall square. Everything seemed organised and under control but that is Germany. They are very good at sorting problems and deal with issues in an efficient and controlled manner. No chaos and no mayhem.

Not long and we arrived at a small toll road. Craig was in two minds whether to drive around the mountain or to use the low valley toll road. In the end he opted for the toll and whilst it cost €7

for a very short journey it was certainly worth it. As we continued with our drive across rolling fields and dense forest. As we turned and entered the valley floor, the sudden wilderness of the countryside was breath taking. As if on cue, the sun emerged from the clouds and turned on the 'big light'. A swift band of golden light swept over the fields and made everything instantly warm and autumn like. With not a soul around we parked up, had a bit of breakfast and went for a walk. The mountain stream was crystal clear and the tiny white pebbles looked more like sand. For





miles upon miles the trees lined the river with not a building in sight. As we walked along the river in search of waterfalls, Vin played hide and seek in the trees.

Back on the open road and the endless meadows continued. Every farm looked tidy and fruitful. Every little village looked clean and friendly. Every house looked loved and well maintained. Every cow, sheep, deer or chicken looked plump and happy. This is how the countryside should look and feel. There was nothing much to see but it was nature and man at its best, simple and working in harmony. The more we looked the more the colours came alive, deep and vivid: the blue sky, the white clouds, the timber barns, the fertilised soil. We had no idea Germany could be so beautiful.

We headed to Mittenwald but didn't stop. After the glorious countryside it just didn't seem right.

It was in a pretty setting with the odd nice alpine home but overall the houses seemed more cardboard box and pre packed. It was almost like this pretty village had become overtaken by retired people or cheaper holiday homes.

Feet back on the dash and we bumbled on until the daylight started to fade. We arrived in Garmisch Partenkirchen just in time and managed to park up just along side the 1936 olympic sky jump stadium. Mighty impressive just hope Vin doesn't get any wild ideas tonight!

**Our Bumble verdict: The German Alpine road is truly spectacular, even the €7 bit that's only 6 miles long.**







## Garmisch Partkirchen

Paintings on buildings in Germany usually depict the owners trade. Above is a farmer bringing his grain to sell.

### TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER

We have been travelling since December 2014 and after 331 days of living together 24/7 in a tin box we have finally had enough of each other. Everything Craig does winds me up and everything I do drives him potty. I want to scream and he wants to sigh. At times like this you really miss your space. Living in a motorhome, you have no room to go and chill, no garden to pace around or no friends just around the corner. Just three strides in which to live or die. A colourful morning, exchanging words, raising eyebrows and giving each other daggers before a 'cooling down' cycle ride in to Garmisch Partkirchen. Its life folks! We have bad days just like everyone else!

The town became famous after hosting the 1936 winter olympic games. Originally two towns united as one by Hitler but they couldn't be more different if you tried. Garmisch, Germanic origins with a large, modern and up market feel about the place. Whilst Partkirchen is Roman in origin with a quaint village feel. Either way both places are nice and well worth a visit. We cycled through Partkirchen admiring all the oriels and quaint village





#### Images Clockwise:

- ❖ A church in Partkirchen.
- ❖ The interior.
- ❖ The carpenters sign.



details when all of a sudden we spotted a carpenter sign. We cycled over and stood looking at the detail when the owner came outside. He was lovely. He explained that it is a family business passed down through many generations. The carpenter in the picture is his great grand father and the little boy is his father. The oriel was painted 20 years ago and it costs around €25,000 to repaint.

Then we crossed over the rail tracks and headed in to Garmisch. Not quite the same feel as the other but still pretty. More open air cafes and bistros with people buzzing around doing their shopping. In the middle of the designer shops we spotted a Woolworths and a Euro shop. Talk about tacky. The main square offers free wifi spot and as our 3 mobile doesn't work in Germany we quickly logged on. We managed to check our emails before the band width died. This part of the town has taken in several thousand refugees and the free wifi spot is hotspot and a meeting point. What is meant to be a wifi gesture is certainly feeling the strain. We closed the iPad and moved on to...the animal home! How the heck did that happen I hear you say? Well, we spotted a dog basket shop and called in to ask about potential local





#### Images Clockwise:

- ❖ A church in Garmisch.
- ❖ The painted interior.
- ❖ Stained glass windows.



dachshund breeders. The lovely lady ended up telling us about the rescue centre 'just up the road', so we thought we would have a look. Several hours later, half way up a bloody mountain and in the middle of a forest we finally found the centre. We were shattered, what happened to 'just up the road'? We rang the door bell several times but no reply, so we went around to the side. Then all of a sudden a man appeared shouting halt. He bellowed no visiting today, go away and before he had finished, he turned his back and stomped off. I said, sorry to bother you but may I ask a question. He shouted no, I don't speak English, we are closed. He was the rudest person we have met in a long time and if I knew where or how to complain then I would do so. Clearly he did speak a little English and how hard would it be to spend a few minutes explaining the opening times. Then a young assistant appeared with a dog and informed us we could go inside and look at the dogs but if we want one then we must come back tomorrow. How confusing is that? We could not get our heads around the set up. Surely to god, a rescue centre of all places should be open every day to the public. Their purpose is to help find homes for rescue animals. If they close then surely they are reducing the chance of rehoming the animal. When



people are rude or appear to hide things then it says something isn't right. I don't know what but we didn't stay to find out. I just hope they treat the animals better than the humans otherwise the poor creatures will be suffering in silence. Grrr time to head home.

By early evening we were back to normal, talking about the days adventures and planning our next jaunt. Normal except that bloody smell. It was haunting me. I could smell it stronger than ever but as usual Craig couldn't smell a thing. It is definitely near the cab area. After a sniff around, I gave up and resigned myself to tomorrows plans. Cant wait we are going up the glacier, excited.com.

**Our Bumble Verdict: 2 for 1 & both excellent.**

**More painted buildings in Garmisch Partkirchen.**







# Zugspitze

## TOP OF GERMANY

### Germisch Partkirchen To Ettal

Above: Sign for the mountain.

Below: Spot the giddy kipper!



### WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER

Up at the crack of dawn and after a quick cuppa we both swung in to action. After a quick shower and shampoo we were off towards the train station.

We managed to park just a couple of streets away and after a visit to the bank we sniffed out a local baker for our morning munch. Then off to the train station to board the 08.15 Bayerische Zugspitzbahn. We were going to climb Germany's highest mountain, the traditional way and via the original 1930 old cog track system. The cog wheel train slowly chugged along the track through endless meadows and valleys until we reached Eibsee where we encountered the mountain face. The cogs kicked in! The little train clung to the side of the mountain just like a fairground roller coaster and slowly but surely the cogs wound us up the mountain. Click, click, click and then someone turned the lights off. We had entered a long but very narrow mountain tunnel and we did not see daylight until we reached 8,500 ft at the Schneefirn Glacier. We disembarked the train and wandered around the glacier admiring views for miles upon miles. It was a





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Cog train up the mountain.
- ❖ Ski advert at the station.
- ❖ Cable car down the mountain.



crisp, blue morning and just perfect for a panoramic view. With only a handful of people around it felt spookily quiet. We had a walk or should I say shuffle (very slippy) across to a tiny chapel. In front, a young Japanese couple who constantly dashed around only to find they ended up with a sore and wet bums. After a walk across the suspended bridge and a good look around we shuffled back to the Glacier Station to embark on our final leg of the journey to the Bergstation. So early and so quiet meant we had the 70 person cable car to ourselves, yippee. Within 4 minutes we were at the summit 9,676 ft and official on top of Germany. No matter what expectations you have when reaching the top, they are soon surpassed. Mountain sunshine, spectacular panoramic views stretching 250km in to the distance. It was such a clear day and we could see endless mountain and alpine peaks across 4 nations - Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland. Wow. We crossed the little concrete bridge to the Austrian passport control but it was closed along with the quaint but scrappy, wooden Münchner house built in 1897 and the daredevil climb up a steel stepladder up to the gold cross peak. Jeez people must have nerves of do that climb, made my stomach churn just looking at the climb. Closed because the





Images Clockwise: To Stage 1, Glacier Station

- ❖ View from the train window of Zugspitze.
- ❖ Craig casually walks to the end of the pier.
- ❖ Joanne traverses a ravine... 5m across and 1m down. She's not good with heights.
- ❖ Small church near the top.
- ❖ Well it's just a shed really.







Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Time to go higher via a cable car.
- ❖ The view up towards the summit.
- ❖ Communications centre (T Mobile) at the top.
- ❖ Joanne could almost reach the very top, didn't she do well.
- ❖ Repairs and upgrades are underway.











Above: Craig attempts a smile, he wanted to clamber over and touch the top.

Below: The view in towards Salzburg.







Above: The cable car station at the top.

Below: Joanne wants a closer look behind it.











Zügspitze is having a bit of a facelift and the peak is riddled with construction workers, diggers and cranes. New buildings, viewing platforms plus the worlds highest cable car to be completed by 2017. For our descent we chose the Eibseeseilbahn, a pretty fast cable car that zipped down to Eibsee lake in about 10 minutes before we caught our little train back to Vin. All in all a wonderful round trip at €52 per person.

**Our Bumble verdict: Zugspitze is simply superb.**

By mid afternoon we were parked outside Ettal cemetery filling Vin up with fresh water. Once full we parked up and paid €2 for our 24 hour ticket and got Vin settled in on his chocs. Then to top the day off nicely, we had a wander over to Ettal monastery. In 1330, King Ludwig founded the Benedictine monastery and although its had a few facelifts, it is a fine example of Bavarian baroque extravaganza . After a walk around the boarding school and cloister gardens we wandered in to the basilica Inside, one word,





#### Images Clockwise:

- ❖ The basilica dome
- ❖ Ettal Monastery
- ❖ Confession booth



wow. Elaborate and excessive but beautiful non the less. Pink and gold with wonderful cupola frescos. From the centre of the dome, a large, shiny chandelier. A large group of people were captivated by a monks guided tour. He pointed out all the tiny detail and the endless stories built up over the 700 years. The monk then escorted the group through a door to the rear section of the basilica. We carried in taking photos in the main section before tagging on to the tails of the tour group. When they left a room, we entered. We wandered around the hallways, in to little rooms and finally in to what we think is the main chapel for the monks. Very low ceilings, fan shaped columns and wonderful frescos. We were having a right good toot when a polite German gentleman informed us this was an unofficial tour and we needed to leave quickly. We had only tagged on to a group of mayors and town officials from across Germany! The monk was showing them a few extra bits given their position within the community. We left along with the officials and counted our lucky stars.

Outside we had a brief walk over to the brewery where the monks still brew a range of beers as well as a selection of liqueurs. We managed to get a sneak preview of the beer yard but didn't





Ettal Basilica ceiling detail.







Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Joanne outside the Basilica.
- ❖ Basilica interior.
- ❖ Brewery.
- ❖ Monks room.
- ❖ Strange painting

venture any further for fear of pushing our luck. After a gander in the gift shop and a walk to the cheese factory we called it quits and shut shop for the day. By the way, that reminds me, I can still smell that weird smell in Vin and it is driving me nuts.

**Our Bumble verdict: Nice little detour, plus it makes blessed Holy booze :-)**







## Ettal To Halblech

Above: Shop selling religious wooden carvings, some are very detailed like below.



## THURSDAY 5 NOVEMBER

By 8am we were ready to rock and roll. We rolled Vin off his chocs, tickled his throttle and off we set. The Basilica monastery stood proud against the mountain side and as we bumbled by the bells started to chime. What a great start to the day.

We slowly meandered along the 'S' shaped valley road but not for long. Within 15 minutes of setting off we had arrived at our first port of call. We parked up on an 'all purpose' car park next to the Ammer river and under the shadow of Kofel peak then walked in to the village of Oberammergau. As we approached the village we saw a traffic warden dishing out tickets to cars parked in non parking areas. It then dawned on us, maybe you are only permitted to park in areas cleared marked with a 'P'. In England, we can park on the street as long as it doesn't have double yellow lines but in Germany looks like you can only park in clearly marked areas.

The village is only small but it is packed with character and style. The majority of buildings have elaborated oriels and fairy tale





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Wooden carved outside light.
- ❖ Property sign.
- ❖ Another property painting.
- ❖ Shop Sign
- ❖ Pubs brew beer in house.

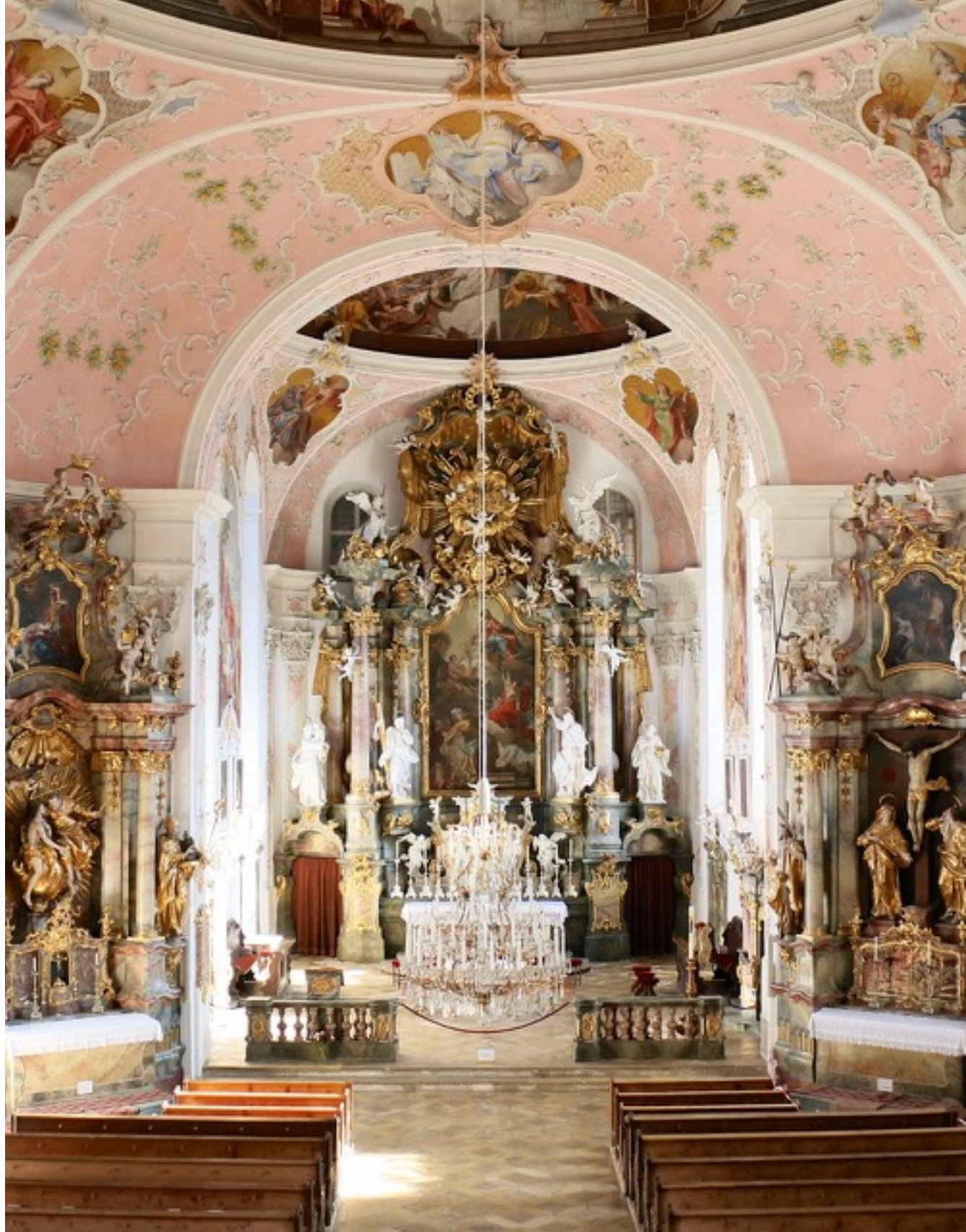






Above: Memorial beside the church.

Right: Inside the church.



facades, some of the best we have seen. The shops varied but wooden carvings were the main attraction. Every other shop contained hundred of intricate and beautifully carved wooden objects. Everything from religious figures to huge 8ft bears, it was fascinating. Towards the rear of the village we spotted a huge church like building. On closer inspection we realised it was the theatre where they hold the passion play. In 1632 the plague wiped out the village. The following year they prayed for the plague to pass and they vowed to perform the passion of Christ.

In 1964 the first play was held, the plague passed, so since this point in time they have performed the passion of Christ every 10 years.

On the way back to Vin we called in the Church of Peter and Paul. Inside it was beautiful with pink and white walls, gold decoration and frescos everywhere. We climbed up to the balcony for a spectacular elevated view before taking a stroll to the alter via the detailed wooden pews. We then noticed a skeleton in a glass coffin. We debated if it was real because we





**Above: Balconies and organ pipes.**

**Below: A ceiling cupola.**



have never seen a skeleton on display in a church but the more we studied the more real it got. This skeleton was draped in jewels and precious stones, clearly someone very special. We tried to find out a little more but no one around, no info boards and no wifi we didn't manage to find out.

As we passed the foresters house, we noticed a brass beer sign. We walked up some steps to the building to discover it was a guest house and cafe which brewed its own beer. Inside, a young gentleman preparing for lunchtime trade. He opened the door and let us in. Showing us the copper vats, the hops, the serving area and the rest of their little establishment. It was brilliant. Even an indoor tree house for the kids whilst mum and dad got pickled.

**Our Bumble verdict: Great little colourful town with superb wood carvings for sale, if expensive.**

Just after lunch we set off on a short journey to Wieskirche. As we approached the landscape felt very different. Flat, green meadows and no mountains. It was nice and different but i have to admit, I do like big rocks.





Images Clockwise all Wieskirche:

- ❖ Outside of the church.
- ❖ Decorative naïve.
- ❖ Painted ceiling.
- ❖ Corner painting.
- ❖ Opposite side of the church.







Images Clockwise all Wieskirche:

- ❖ Organ and ceiling.
- ❖ Ceiling painting.
- ❖ Side painting of the crucifixion.
- ❖ Organ detail.
- ❖ Detailed archway tops.





We parked up on the car park and walked over to the church in the middle of the meadow. Only a couple of wood hut tat shops before reaching the church gate. This UNESCO church is seen as one of the best Rococo church in the world. In 1738, a farmers wife named Maria saw tears in the eyes of a statue of Jesus. The statue, the Scourged Saviour now attracts pilgrims from around the globe. Simple outside but inside totally extravagant. One huge oval painted ceiling with images depicting the scenes of the bible. Around the sides, white saintly statues with various gilded objects. The alter nave completely covered in paintings, columns, statues and gilded decoration. It was stunning even with dozens of Japanese and American tourist.

**Our Bumble verdict: One of the best**

No overnight parking in the church car park, so headed off to find a tranquil spot for the night. Steep green wooded hills with alpine meadows clinging to their sides stretched away for as far as the eye could see. Eventually, they were consumed by a distant and colourful sun, a bright red blinding orb. Before us a sinuous road led steeply down to a valley of rolling farms dotted between pea green lakes. It was a picture postcard setting. We drove through the soft light of dusk and pulled over on to a small meadow car park. We admired the last of the evening light before sinking in to our seats to munch on a hearty lasagna.

**Below: Skeleton wrapped in cloths dressed with jewels inside the Oberammergau church.**







# Halblech To Hausern.

Above: Neuschwanstein gate.

Below: Neuschwanstein  
entrance.



## FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER

Last night, we went to bed surrounded in fog but this morning it is crystal clear. We set off passing a large lake before taking a right turn on to a flat meadow. Wow. What a view. I knew it was meant to be good but that is just fabulous. Schloss Neuschwanstein is just like they say, a disney castle, perched high on a hill surrounded by pea green meadows and rugged mountains to the rear. King Ludwig's might have been mad but he sure had a great imagination for building a fairy tale castle.

We drove straight to the lake and parked up on the empty car park. At 7am in the morning we had the pick of spots but not for long as the castles attract an average of 25,000 visitors per day. After a shower we set off to ticket office to find a long immobile queue curled around the entrance like an abandoned garden hose. Oh dear, the Japanese have landed! Fortunately moments later the booths opened and the queue busters swung in to action. Germany efficiency at its best. We queued for half an hour before purchasing a ticket for €12 pp. There are two castles within an hours walk of each other. Hohenschwangau castle is





Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Fairy tail towers.
- ❖ Doorway details.
- ❖ The castles rear.



Ludwig's childhood home and very plain in comparison to Neuschwansrein castle. Ludwig commenced the build in 1868 but never actually completed the castle. We opted to just view the inside of Neuschwansrein. We were booked on the first English audio guide. With plenty time before our 10.20 tour we slowly sauntered up the hill to the castle stopping along the way to admire the views. At the entrance, a large screen displaying the permitted ticket number. We avidly watched until 428 appeared and then we entered the castle along with 50 other people for the English audio guide. We were handed our little audio sets and the 40 minute tour began (no photos). The audio guide was packed with information and it told you where to look, where to walk and how to lose touch with all your senses. Along with 50 other people we did a synchronised shuffle conga around the Schloss. A guide made sure we didn't wander and tentatively locked each room door behind us. The interior was stunning and far more opulent than we ever imagined. It reminded me of when I watched Charlie and the Chocolate Factory as a child, vivid colours and captivating scenes. We saw around 20 rooms (as the castle was never finished) including his bedroom, study, singers room, chapel, servant quarters, dressing room and dining room,



Every wall, ceiling and floor was covered in elaborate decoration. Paintings, mosaics, marble, wood or fabric covered the rooms from head to toe. Scenes from Wagnerian opera to candy striped panels adorned the rooms. By the end of the tour we had certainly had our fill of gold. We just wish we could wander around at our pace, so we could stop and appreciate the detail but understand

Outside, we made our way to the Marienbrücke (Mary Bridge), so we could get the best view of the castle. As expected, the bridge was under repair, so closed until further notice. But we did not let that stop us. We carried on passed the bridge and dropped down the valley floor to the river. Craig took huge strides to descend down the steep embankment, whilst I took little trots, big slides and a few bum skids to arrive at the river. Craig was determined to get a picture from the best vantage point despite an out of order bridge. Off he went scrambling up the river through the forest and over the bog to return with one cheesy grin...he got his photo. Climbing back up the slippery wet embankment was a challenge but Craig managed to find his inner strength and pull both of us to the safety of solid tarmac.

On the way down, we went off the beaten track and down through the forest via Pöllatschlucht gorge with little waterfalls and tricking streams.

**Top: Towering walls.**

**Bottom: The castles interior walls.**

**Next page: View of the castle from below the Marienbrücke.**











### Above: Hohenschwangau castle

Dinner in Vin before round 2. Oh, I nearly forgot. A Chinese/Japanese couple came over to Vin for a toot. The door was open, so we smiled and said hello. Next minute, she was in kicking off her shoes and make herself at home, closely followed by hubby. We were a taken back. We couldn't do anything but laugh especially when she just kept smiling, giving us the thumbs up and saying aaawwww. We showed them a few of our facilities including the pull down kingsize bed (that we never use). As we pulled the bed down we both gasped in horror. I quickly slammed the bed back in embarrassment. Oh my god, that is gross, I hope they didn't see it. We smiled and shuffled them out the door. Once out of sight we quickly pulled the bed down and there it was, that bloody smell, that horrid haunting smell thats been driving me crazy! Two spare pillows covered in bright green mould. Once more the mould had just started to spread on to the ceiling. We immediately binned the pillows and disinfected the ceiling. I couldn't believe the pillows had gone green mouldy? Maybe they had trapped all the moisture when drying our clothes on the dash probably just condensation from the heating and no air circulation? No idea but they got slung straight in to the bin. Hopefully the ceiling will be OK.

With Vin's ceiling left to air and dry, we set off, again. First a walk around the Alpsee lake before heading up to Schloss Hohenschwangau. This yellow castle is much simpler in design, originally built in the 12th century by the knights of Schwangau. We didn't go inside (the other is better) the Neo Gothic building that was Ludwigs childhood home but we did wander around the outside, the gardens and admire the views.





### Images Clockwise:

- ❖ Lion fountain, 1 of 4 in the castle grounds.
- ❖ Water feature with symbolic swans.
- ❖ A stone knight, guards the entrance.



We set off before the mad rush of tour buses and 1000's of people. We headed in to the nearby town of Fussen. We had hoped to find a place to park, stay the night and then visit tomorrow but but the 'no motorhomes permitted' sign every few meters made us feel slightly unwelcome. After a quick stop at Lidl we headed a few miles out of town and found a nice spot at a village church in Hausern.

**Our Bumble verdict:** Stunning place to visit, just get there early to avoid the queues. Walt Disney may have copied it, but he certainly didn't beat it.





## Hausern To Brigzell Via Kempten

Above: Kempten centre.

Below: A water feature.



## SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER

Not a great nights sleep. The little road turned out to be quite a busy highway and all night long...zooooom, zooooom, zooooom and if a truck went by, Vin even got the odd shiver or two.

For the first part of our drive we went on the motorway. We have not been on a motorway or autobahn in a long time, it felt strange and FAST. Vin did a little shudder as he blew his cobwebs off, then purred away as we hit 80kph. You could tell Vin wanted to go faster but Captain Craig held him back, making sure Vin kept to optimum fuel consumption. Poor Vin, and the motorway was dead, an ideal time for him to reach his top speed.

Motorways are boring though, the best bit is when you leave to find yourself in a network of unrecorded back roads, radiating out across the countryside like cracks in a pane of broken glass. Which road, that one or that one? Its like being back in a sweet shop, so many cracks to choose from. We chose the quietest one and wiggled our way to Kempten.





Images Clockwise:

❖ St Lorenz church.

❖ The lamb is symbolic of Jesus's sacrifice.

❖ Statue inside.



The town of Kempten is not somewhere we would normally visit but it is on route to Bad Waldsee, where we are booked in for repair on Monday. Initially, we struggled to find a parking place but managed to find something just out of the town with a two hour limit. It was a glorious sunny day, so the stroll in to the town was pleasant. The town is steeped in history but it is kept so clean and tidy, it looks new. You would never guess this is a medieval town.

First we went in to the church of St Lorenz, which is based around the benedictine abbey established in 752. It was stunning and the octagonal cupola was not only unusual but beautifully painted. Outside the former abbots residence was simple but massive. Guided tours of the residency were on offer every few hours but much to our disappointment, we had just missed the start.

It was getting on for midday and people were sitting out in the sunny church square having lunch, sipping water and eating ice-creams. If you didn't know any better you would think it was the middle of spring, it was delightful with a joyous atmosphere.

Almost without exception everyone looked healthy and prosperous. As we walked toward the Rathaus, the market commenced and the atmosphere started to change.





The food market was crowded and full of people laughing and filling their bellies. As we walked around the market watching people gorge themselves on piles of sausages and potatoes and gulping with full mouths from litre tankards of golden beer. It was so nice to see everyone enjoying the weekend and taking time to spend a few hours relaxing with friends and family. What ever happened to our English markets? Like here, they too were once the heart of the community but demolished and replaced with a supermarket.

We walked around and around the town of Kempten looking at the architecture, the busy and vibrant high street as we nibbled our way through several loafs and baps. The German bread is so good.

Time for off and to find somewhere to sleep tonight. We headed out of Kempten and almost immediately, the landscape spread out into a broad, inviting plain. The sun was sinking in the sky. To the left hills rose up, flecked with trees

that were just hanging on to their blush of autumn colour. To the right the land was as flat as a table-top. Teams of tractors laboured in the fields, kicking up dust, working late to bring in the last of the autumn crop. Somewhere out there, unseen, was the river. As we turned the corner, Craig slammed on the breaks and pulled over. We had found the little river and behind, meadows stretching as far as the eye could see with the faint pale grey alps right on the horizon. Within half an hour the sky was blood red and we were blessed with the most amazing sunset.

We had reached the end of our Bavarian Alpine drive and tomorrow, we need to do some admin before heading to Bad Waldsee. We have a week of fixing the garage door, the frame, the rear lights and body work repairs to the side/back panel. Next week Our Bumble will be very different, we are sure!

**Our Bumble verdict: Kempten makes a nice little detour from the magnificent German Alpine road.**





# OUR ROUTE SO FAR THIS YEAR

