

Colwyn Bay - North Wales

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Colwyn Bay, Wales, United Kingdom

Tuesday, May 10, 2016

Shortcuts make delays but inns make longer ones - J.R.R. Tolkien

Sunday 8th of May 2016

The sunny weather continues as we make our way north. A long part of this route is along narrow county roads with houses right on the edge of the bitumen with 60 mile per hour traffic one metre outside their front door. We did go part of the way on a motorway by mistake - with no exit or option to do a 'U' turn for about 15 miles. Luckily the nice lady in the GPS was able to re-calculate an alternative route and we found our way to Ironbridge, Shropshire. This is a beautiful place. It's hard to imagine it in its heyday with foundries, mines, quarries, factories and other industries lining the Severn River. Now it is just a picture of beauty. This place is definitely on our list of places needing further investigation in the future. The centerpiece is the iron bridge, the first constructed by a new method of smelted cast iron. It's said that this town was the birthplace of the industrial revolution. This area is also the former home of Coalport china. The old china factory has been renovated and is of a classic Victorian era design. We found a nice little bakery to get some lunch - and had the best pork pie and sausage roll we have ever had.

Onwards to Old South Wales. The countryside continues to be very pleasant. We make better time now as the roads are more like main roads - but there seems to be a round-a-bout to negotiate every couple of miles. Before too long we're in North Wales and spy the Irish Sea. We head along the coast on a motorway then diverge at Colwyn to head up the hill to our accommodation at Llanellian-yn-Rhos at the Old Post Office. This is a real village - only 18 houses and a pub. We had to wait a little while for the caretaker to arrive to let us in so we struck up a conversation with Paul from over the road - an ex-olympic and professional bicycle racer. We got his life story before Haley arrived with the keys. We are very pleased with this place. Small but comfortable and well appointed - and a steep, narrow staircase leading up to the bedroom and bathroom. It is indeed the old post office, with the official post office box in the front wall still in use. We had dinner at the White Lion pub over the road. 233 miles. Weather fine 25 degrees.

Monday 9th of May 2016

We are feeling the effects of being on the road and having very full days so far. Both of us are tired and we decided to have a quieter day today. Well that was the plan. We headed down to the seaside at Colwyn Bay and strolled along the pier at Llandudno. Anna purchased a nice doughnut from a friendly vendor on the pier, but only got to consume about one third before a vicious seagull swooped down and stole the rest out of the paper bag in her hand before flying off squawking triumphantly. We decided to have fish and chips on the beach for lunch, keeping a wary eye on the sky, monitoring the seagulls circling above. We got to eat all of our lunch without becoming victims of another crime.

After lunch we drove along the coast road then climbed up to the summit of the Great Orme. The view from the summit is spectacular, overlooking the Irish Sea and Llandudno below. Had a quiet meal at The Old Post Office and a relaxing evening at home. 20 miles. Weather fine 23 degrees.

Tuesday 10th of May 2016

The weather is a little overcast this morning as we headed off to tour the North Wales area including Snowdonia National Park. We drove along some very narrow hedge / stone wall lined roads - narrowly avoiding head-on collisions with crazy Audi drivers coming from the opposite direction. We stopped at Betwys-y-Coed to walk the path to Miners Bride. Magical scenery. This is the base for a lot of ramblers (bush walkers) and we saw a lot of people in pants with zip off legs and fancy walking sticks. We continued on via Blaenau Ffestiniog with its giant hills of discarded slate to Harlech to see our first Welsh castle. One had cause to hum "Men of Harlech in the hollow do ye hear like rushing billow... ...Loose the folds asunder, flag we conquer under", while eating a picnic lunch in a beachside carpark in the shadow of the castle.

We continued on our tour of North Wales via Porthmadog (intended to see Beddgelert but had an argument with the GPS - I was sure she was lost) to Caernarfon. Now that town has a castle. Puts the Harlech one to shame. We took a break here for a coffee and ice-cream and walked around the castle and wall next to Slate Quay. Just as we got back to the car, the rain started - the first since we've been in the UK. Back home for a home cooked meal while we still can - bed and breakfasts from here for a while. There's a jazz night at the White Lion tonight. I'm not really a fan of jazz, but as it's just over the road, we might visit for Anna to have half a pint and listen to the music. 124 miles. 18 degrees with rain starting in the afternoon.

Comments

Great photos!

— From Steph, on May 10, 2016 at 11:49PM

You're making me jealous, but I'm enjoying your adventure very much! xx

— From Jennie, on May 11, 2016 at 05:12AM

Ah, so the Melbourne High speech night's are not quite forgotten! 'Men of Harlech... etc'. Betws-y-coed is within beautiful country, pleased you saw it. Caernafon, agree, spectacular. Oh, so, so happy you're seeing why I have stayed in the UK. The history and the architecture are astounding. Enjoy, enjoy! 💎💎

— From Craig McArthur, on May 12, 2016 at 10:11PM

Looks beautiful - the grass seems greener over there - the little towns are so picturesque and have so much character - loving the photos and blog!

— From badminton65, on May 12, 2016 at 10:42PM

It's stunning scenery I am quite jealous...

— From Des, on May 15, 2016 at 12:15AM

Mark is keen to know how jazz at the White Lion went?

— From Anne H, on May 16, 2016 at 04:04AM

The jazz was quite good. Some older gents playing traditional jazz and some blues.

— From Brad McArthur, on May 18, 2016 at 07:57AM

Pictures & Video



The Iron Bridge
Comments!



Ironbridge Main Street
Story!



Ironbridge



The Old Post Office,
Llanelian
Story!



The house over the road
Story!



Anna at Llanelian



The Local Pub, Llanelian



Llandudno from the pier



Fish and chips on the
beach
Story and comments!



On the road to summit of
Great Orme



View of the Great Orme



Mountain climbing tram



Great Orme tram



Road to Betws-y-Coed



Betws-y-Coed



Betws-y-Coed



Betws-y-Coed walk



Harlech Castle



Caernafon Castle



The Iron Bridge

Comments:

We're delighted that you made it to Ironbridge. We loved that whole area - so interesting.

— From Anne H, on May 11, 2016 at 07:07AM

Anne, we feel this is a place to come back to and stay for a while. It's beautiful, and they have the best sausage rolls I have ever tasted!!

— From Anna, on May 15, 2016 at 02:44PM

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Ironbridge Main Street

The bakery in the middle of this photo sells the best pork pies and sausage rolls in the world.

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Ironbridge

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The Old Post Office, Llanelian

Our accomodation.

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The house over the road

Built in 1530 - owner Paul is very friendly.

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Anna at Llanelian

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The Local Pub, Llanellian

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Llandudno from the pier

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Fish and chips on the beach

Managed to prevent theft by seagull for this meal.

Comments:

What is the green stuff? Mushy peas??

— *From Carol, on May 10, 2016 at 11:05PM*

Yes - mushy peas indeed. Surprisingly tasty.

— *From Brad McArthur, on May 11, 2016 at 04:56PM*

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On the road to summit of Great Orme

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View of the Great Orme

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Mountain climbing tram

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Great Orme tram

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Road to Betws-y-Coed

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Betws-y-Coed

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Betws-y-Coed

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Betws-y-Coed walk

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Harlech Castle

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Caernafon Castle

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