

The Lakes District

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Portinscale, England, United Kingdom
Tuesday, May 17, 2016

Little by little, one travels far. J.R.R Tolkien

Saturday 14th of May, 2016

Our time at Harrogate has come to an end. Time to move on. We travelled through the beautiful Yorkshire Dales to Thirsk - and it was market day. Thirsk was the setting for James Herriott's *All Creatures Great and Small*, as the town of Darrowby. We took the scenic route through further Yorkshire Dales and had lunch on a little side road overlooking a verdant valley. As we drove north the geography changed from rolling hills to craggy rounded mountains. We came over a rise that revealed the lakes below in a breathtaking view. We had afternoon tea in Windermere, which is next to the southern most lake with the same name. The nice GPS lady then took us on the scenic route to Keswick, the base for the northern Lakes District, via Kirkstone Pass. This drive had been featured on a video we had found on Youtube a couple of months ago and it was purely by accident we drove up the mountain to the pass where that road, known as The Struggle joined on to the road we were on. Of course, there's a pub on this corner, but nothing else but a fantastic view to both sides of the pass. We travelled down the other side to Keswick then on to Portinscale which is a village only a couple of kilometres further on next to another lake known as Derwentwater. Met Sue and Steve at our accommodation, Skiddaw Croft. Our room is very small but well appointed and clean. Dinner at the Farmer's Arms Hotel. 131miles for the day. Weather mostly fine - 14 degrees.

Sunday 15th of May, 2016

We woke to a fine and sunny day. Once again had the full English breakfast as it is included in the price. The plan is to skip lunch - but as they say, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We spent the day walking around Keswick and took a boat cruise of Derwentwater. The name is probably familiar. This is the home of Derwent, Cumberland and Lakeland pencils. The derelict factory is still there, but has not manufactured pencils for quite some time. This area was also the birthplace of Beatrix Potter's books based on Peter Rabbit. Beatrix came here for her summer holidays and used various locations here as inspiration for her animal characters in these books. Other books based on this area were Swallows and Amazons by Arthur Ransome, which were enjoyed by my mother when she was a child. The poet William Wordsworth also frequented the area, and a lookout over the lake is dedicated to him. There was a Jazz festival in town so it was fairly busy - it took us 3 attempts to find a place to have tea as most were sold out of food. Another fine sunny day - about 15 degrees.

Monday 16th of May, 2016

The Lakes District is famous for its walking tracks around the lakes and "fells". Brad took the opportunity to do a hike up a nearby mountain with a summit at 450 metres, known as Catbells. The walk started out gently enough but before long, it was a challenging climb and in some sections hands and feet up short rocky sections. The climb was worth it for the view of the entire area. A 70 odd year old gentleman in a white linen suit welcomed me to the summit and pointed out and named the surrounding peaks. He suggested I descend and return by walking around the lake instead of heading straight home - so I did. The weather was perfect - sunny and cool. The entire walk was about 19 kilometres - so the full English breakfast was justified this morning. Anna had come part of the way before the steep climb, then she walked back to town for a restful day - doing the washing at the laundromat. Both of us had a little snooze in the late afternoon before heading of to the Pheasant Inn for dinner - where we sat next to couple from Hobart. Another fine day about 15 degrees.

Some observations about this national park: it has farms, towns and villages in it. Dogs are welcome. In fact, all of UK is very dog friendly. Dogs are allowed in pubs, some restaurants, most B&Bs and public transport. In the national park, people are careful to clean up after their dog, but tend to leave the full plastic bags next to the track. Maybe someone comes along to pick them up later - what are they thinking! British people love hiking and seem to take it very seriously. All have the right gear - sturdy boots, zip off pants and hiking sticks (or poles). They come in ALL shapes and sizes and it's good to see very old, very large and all those in between getting out and walking for miles.

Comments

Great description - I will always remember driving through the Lakes District - just beautiful. So glad you are loving everything - keep up the blogs - enjoy every moment and see every sight. Cheers

— From badminton65, on May 17, 2016 at 10:08PM

Oh, yep! Walking is good, we like that! Brits are way good at walking. Tis fun time to us.

— From Craig McArthur, on May 19, 2016 at 10:22PM

Pictures & Video



Lunch stop between Thirsk and Windermere



North Yorkshire country road



On the road to Portingscale



Kirkstone Pass view north



View from Kirkstone Pass down "The Struggle"



Skiddaw House - our accommodation in Portingscale



Walking from Portingscale to Keswick.



The launch on Derwent Water



View across Derwent Water



Doing what the locals do - hiking



Catbells view



The view from the summit at Catbells



More scenery from Catbells



Derwent Water, Keswick



Portingscale Sailing Club



Lunch stop between Thirsk and Windermere

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North Yorkshire country road

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On the road to Portingscale

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Kirkstone Pass view north

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View from Kirkstone Pass down "The Struggle"

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Skiddaw House - our accommodation in Portinscale

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Walking from Portinscale to Keswick.

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The launch on Derwent Water

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View across Derwent Water

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Doing what the locals do - hiking

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Catbells view

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The view from the summit at Catbells

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More scenery from Catbells

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Derwent Water, Keswick

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