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Williams's – Au Revoir

The following is not so much a travelogue as a quick introduction followed by a few observations, some good and some not so good. We did no dancing whatsoever during our 100 days away so stop now if you want dancing dialogue.

In 2024 we said goodbye to the motorhome that we bought in 2016 after almost sixty-thousand kilometres on the road; of course it would have been a lot more if we hadn't had those Covid lockdowns!
Overall, in our motorhome 'lives' we have driven across the USA and Canada and all over Western Europe, as far south as The Algarve in Portugal and the Peloponnese in Greece to the Lofoten Islands way north of the Arctic Circle. Close to 170,000 kms, with most of the driving being on the wrong side of the road! Truly the end of an era.

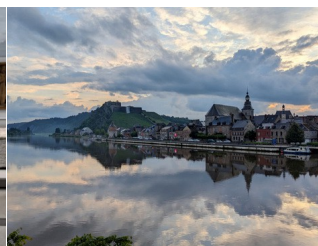
This year we did seven countries, covering lots of our old favourites and some new places. We started by crossing The Channel and stopping close to Calais at Gravelines where in the morning we realised we were close to one of the biggest nuclear reactors in France. The users of the bathing huts probably benefitted from the cooling water outlets! How 'hot' was the water?!



Bathing Huts & Nuclear Power-yum



Bad Hair do at the Louvre in Lens



Reflections in the Meuse at Givet



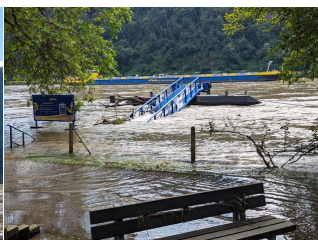
Luxembourg – The Skyliner

From there we crossed through Béthun to the Louvre – not the one in Paris but the new regional one in Lens – the centre of what used to be a coal mining area and on into Belgium and Sedan to Luxembourg. We were there in 2023 in the rain. This time it was sunny and we rode the new SkyLiner for 80metre-high superb views over the city.

Last year we missed all the hot weather – this year we missed all the rain – but we did see the results of it; so many swollen rivers – so many floods, burst banks and more water birds than people on the river banks. The Rhine Fall at Schaffhausen was so impressive!



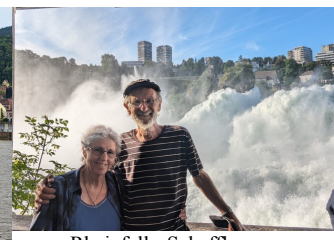
Rhine - Pfalzgrafenstein



Rhine – near Koblenz



Heidelberg



Rheinfall - Schaffhausen

Yes we did some castles including Echternach, Beaufort, Chateau Rocher and Cochem.



Echternach - Luxembourg



Beaufort - Luxembourg



Chateau Rocher - Puy-de-Dôme



Cochem and the Mosel

There were some bad habits on view – or was it art?! In Waldkirch – Black Forest – we spotted some large rolling pins and at Lake Iseo in Italy there were great rainbows.



Cigarette machines



Artistic fag ends!



Impressive rolling pins?!



Great rainbow – Lake Iseo in Italy

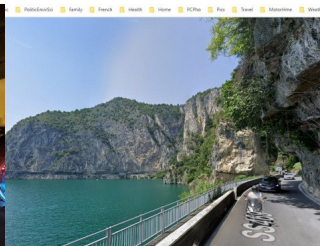
Some roads are good and some not so good! Of course when you drive 6,000 km, as we did in 2024, you get a wide variety of roads and road conditions. This year they ranged from high-speed motorways, through to really tricky narrow roads with lots of overhanging rock and nets to catch falling rocks!! And, of course there are always the road works and the traffic lights – lots of red ones! Time out to watch the superb, if a little damp, scenery!



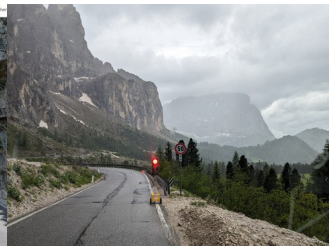
German Autobahn – near Mainz



Tunnel in Bolzano -



SS469-Iseo - Overhangs & Galleries



Treviso Prpvnce - Italy

There are several things that I miss about living in Australia – things like castles, churches and stained glass windows. There are so many churches in Europe, over 100,000 in [France alone](#) – and there are so many different types – the architecture and the stained glass are, to me, a revelation. Some are so simple, others are just obscenely ornate.



Luxembourg - Cathedral



Church simplicity - Wagenhausen



OTT Baroque - Einsiedeln



Bioude - Cathedral

We witnessed wooden motorbikes and rubber ducks – made of old tyres!! Good recycling!
 We watched snails trying to work out who had the right of way and we spotted a gorilla in the Black Forest!



Misurina - Dolomites



Tyres at Loches



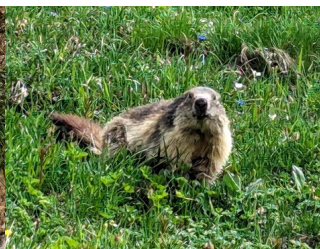
Le Villaron



We did see other wild things and many wild places – superb flowers – and we understood why the marmots looked so worried and were always hiding!



Prariond – Val d'Isère



Marmot posing before



The infusion



Les Chapieux - Alps

We did see lots of other things including mountains, lakes, towns, villages, tromp l'oeil, lots and lots of shops and the all important European elections.

So after France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, England and Wales we advertised the van on Gumtree. Pleased to say that we sold it to a private buyer – there were so many dealers circling like sharks. They were still phoning to see if we'd sold it as we sat in the departure lounge on the flight back home!

Truely, the end of an era for us.

Martin Williams

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