

Wales - April 2021

Sunday 18 April

We originally booked this cosy little fisherman's cottage on Airbnb for last October but because of Covid restrictions moved it to now. Who would have thought that you wouldn't be allowed to go into Wales. Even now was not a definite as we are just coming out of lockdown and each country has different rules, all very confusing. The lockdown seems to have worked as our Covid stats are back to September levels and also the vaccination programme has reduced the deaths.



Wow, it's a long way to Wales, we left home at 9.15 and arrived in Llwyngwrl at 16.50 with just two very short stops and a short detour through the medieval town of Ludlow. We are in Southern Snowdonia, lots of slate and sheep.

Such a quaint cottage with a 3 - 4 minute walk alongside a babbling brook with little waterfalls down to the sea.



Monday 19 April



Sore bottom day, did 25 miles on the bike. Checked out Fairbourne, a seaside village with loads of caravans and sheep. Then got on the bikes to do the Mawddach Trail which runs along an old disused railway line between Barmouth and Dolgellau. The scenery was stunning especially alongside the Mawddach estuary. Lots of moody mountains and forests, it was a bit disappointing that we didn't see many birds, perhaps we should have taken some binoculars with us. We saved over 14 miles by cycling over the bridge to Barmouth instead of driving. Mussels and frites at The Lobster Pot and a cycle ride along the prom, what a fantastic sandy beach.



Tuesday 20 April



Took the hour long train ride to Minffordd from the station that is literally 2 minutes walk from the cottage. It was quite an uphill, one and a half mile walk into Portmeirion . We were getting a bit nervous as there didn't seem to be any traffic about and then got more worried when it said the castle was closed and there was an entrance fee of £13 to to go into the village. We didn't have any idea of what to expect only that everyone we had spoken to about Wales said it was a must to visit. Phew, it was open and a few tourists about, but we must have been the only ones to slog uphill on foot to reach it.



Portmeirion was built between 1925 and 1975 and designed by Welsh architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis . It's built in an Italian style and based on the beautiful village of Portofino. It's used as the inspiration for many films and stories, most famous of all for the 1960's television show, The Prisoner. Most of the buildings are either self catering cottages or hotel rooms.



Only found out yesterday that outside catering doesn't resume again in Wales until 26 April so it takeaways only. The bottle of red with our lunch help speed up the walk back to the station. We enjoyed the scenic rail trip back that runs along the coast. The weather has been very kind to us, bright but with a chilly wind and no rain. Our evenings are being spent in front of the woodburner.

Wednesday 21 April

Challenging walk up the Dolgoch Falls but well worth the effort and picnic reward at the top. Sheep everywhere you look and unfortunately cafe not open, in fact very few tourist attractions open. We are a week too early and seem to be the only English tourists about.





Thursday 22 April

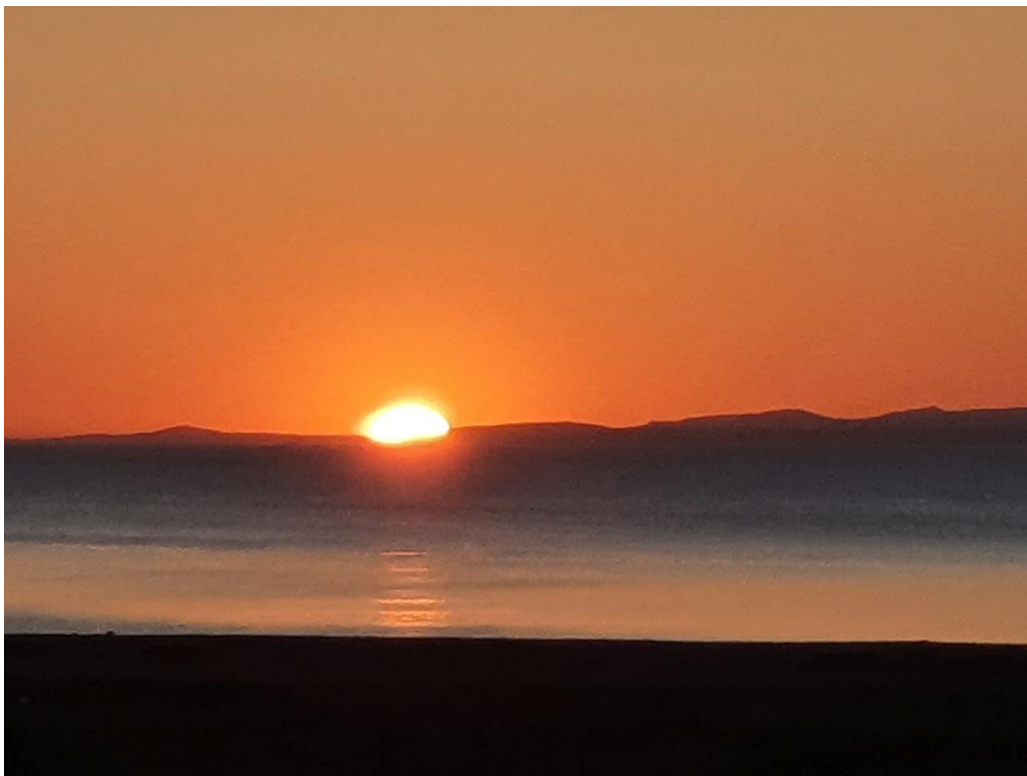
We thought we would have a look at Plas Tan y Bwlch Gardens that are on the site of the Snowdonia National Park Study Centre. Everywhere was deserted and the gardens very overgrown and neglected. We met a lady in her 70's wearing dungarees who was as I imagine the Nomadland star to be like. She was just moving into what was built as a holiday chalet in the gardens after having lived in her van for a while. She was full of enthusiasm, not a bit perturbed about the big project she was about to undertake on her own. Lovely lady.



A visit to Wales wouldn't be complete without trip up to Snowdon but unfortunately they wouldn't let us into the car park as you have to book in advance. Never mind it was lovely scenery and we were totally amazed by the slate quarries,



Fantastic sunset by the beach.



Took the scenic route home the next day. Loved Wales. When we visit again it will be much more exciting when everything is open and no masks or social distancing.