



Terry's Travels

TT27-1 Dales/Brands/Nurburgring Aug 20th 2008

Just 13 days back in Yorkshire, it was a rush to see family, friends and service Mercie. There was time for a sunny early Sunday am ride into the Yorkshire Dales with my mate Bob - fantastic as ever. We ate breakfast with 'our age' cyclists who were doing a 65 mile spin in the hills and dales. Four and a half quid fuels your body for the day.....Bob chose to ride his BMW R1150 and I used the Yamaha that travels on Mercie.

My grandsons have a new hobby - its how quick can they slim Gramps' wallet?, an overnight in Blackpool doing it all and it was super effective, in fact I would have to go back to work (that's a dirty word after 18 years) to keep up with them. We were so lucky with weather that allowed us to cruise there and back with the hood down. A family room overnight in the Hilton with breakfast is to be recommended. A day by the river with just ice creams to buy was fun too.

With Mercie serviced and provisioned next was World Superbikes at Brands Hatch. Di's great nephew Thomas was delivered to us on the campsite and enjoyed all the fun of the fair, wall climbing and quad bike riding before the main race day on Sunday. One of his highlights was to get a T shirt and best of all a sit on the new Ducati, not just any old bike but the 1098 that is proving so successful in this seasons racing.

He and Di were collected Sunday evening to head to London and I headed alone South to Chandlers Ford near Southampton for my annual reunion with pals I knew from being a hifi dealer. In appalling rain the M25 was just awful and the journey took double the usual time at 3 hours with traffic crawling. David welcomed me to celebrate his 69th birthday - he has a 19 year old Malaysian girlfriend and plans to marry when she is 21 - should he live that long!

Di rejoined me and we caught the night ferry from nearby Portsmouth to Caen in France, our theory was to get a long sleep but the ship was late loading us - bugger. We found a free Aire in Reims next to the new football stadium and then a wonderful site in Mesche in Luxembourg - the town itself isn't much but the scenery was at its very best. We picked up minor N257 and N410 and caught some of the Old Timer car event at the splendid Nurburgring circuit. I didn't enter the circuit but the buzz & sound was fantastic.



Breakfast in Dales BMW & Serow



Dan & James at Blackpool



Thomas tries the Ducati 1098



Nurburg looks quiet but LOUD

Mid July: back in UK. Brands Hatch & S of UK , Nurburgring, Brno - then Czech Republic, Germany and Dusseldorf show
Oct : NZ via Dubai/Malaysia/Thailand/Brisbane.
May'09 back in UK via Tonga/Mexico/Cuba



Terry's Travels

TT27-2 Danube and Czech Republic Aug 21st 2008

We camped at the Campingplatz Nurburg which is massive and alongside the large circuit. Riding the bike I was able to look all around the village of Nurburg and the beautiful setting of this road circuit. The Old Timer event was huge and varied and we plan to return for an event in the future. The sound of the old racing machines was amazing and the many bars for all the petrolheads look tempting. I enjoyed watching the crowds leaving with all the exotic cars both old and new. My choice by sound alone would be the Maserati saloons - sheer music.....

We headed further into Germany as our motorhome friends from Wales texted us. We chose a site right alongside the Danube at Camping Bingen with all the river traffic sailing by. It started to rain but it was so nice when Robin & Norrie arrived and we were soon in a local bistro wining, dining and catching up from seeing them earlier in the year.

They hadn't been to the Czech Republic before and I planned a route avoiding toll roads and headed to Camping Romantik near Detwang a short days driving in the rain but all scenic roads. Crossing into the Czech R was easy and we bought vignettes that lasted 10 days. Camping Hajovna at Kdyne was a good find with a large sunny field and nearby restaurant. We were now using Kuna to pay our way. We changed more at the village ATM and a helpful and VERY pretty car park attendant let us park free for a few minutes. We headed East on the best scenic route I have had in the CR and joined the 23 towards Trebic stopping at another excellent site with its own lake, Camping Vidlak near Opatov is Dutch owned.

Sadie (our GPS) screwed up big time taking us to the Brno circuit and added an hour to our journey, at least we got to see many more very minor roads before reaching J178 and camping at the campsite fairly close to the circuit for 3 nights. We suffered more rain but it came good for the racing which again was interesting. I met members of the James Toseland (British) Fan Club who were having a great and noisy time.

R&N left for their further travels to Austria and Misano. Di and I returned to Camping Vidlak about an hour W of the circuit for me to motorcycle around Moravia for a couple of days. Terry - CZ Rep



Nurburgring (S of Cologne)



Marvellous River Danube



Coffee stop in Czech Rep



Robin by one of many lakes

Mid July: back in UK. Brands Hatch & S of UK , Nurburgring, Brno - then Czech Republic, Germany and Dusseldorf show
Oct : NZ via Dubai/Malaysia/Thailand/Brisbane.
May'09 back in UK via Tonga/Mexico/Cuba



Terry's Travels

TT27-3 Camping Vidlak around Moravia Aug 22nd 2008

Back at Camping Vidlak we got a spacious site right by the lake, it even had a campfire. You can see just how idyllic it is. The site is Dutch owned and is the owners dream (his own) after running the infrastructure of another and before that a P.E. Instructor with the army. I took full advantage of the sunny weather and enjoyed the local small and quiet roads on the motorcycle.

Trebic has a cathedral and is quite a large city. It was no problem to find ATMs in English to get some Kuna. There are lots of petrol stations in the larger towns and with Aldis, Lidl (our preferred one) and even a Tesco Hypermarket or two with spit chickens - life is very civilised. We walked a couple of kilometres into the local village of Opatov. The bar looked closed, in fact the whole scene looked like a war movie and we even saw a scout car painted in camouflage. Bicycles and a Jawa motorcycle and sidecar gave the clue that there was life inside. It was packed with the click of snooker balls from the next room the customers obviously wanted to be indoors after working outdoors. Di and I sat outside in the evening sun and 21C and watched the world go by, two buses came and went and the local children were hanging out together. We just love to be close to the locals and especially when an excellent pint and glass of wine is about £1.40 total.

A friendly insect seemed very nosy and came back several times even when we moved it back to the edge of the lake. Wasps have been abundant everywhere but we don't like these.

I took Sadie on my days out on the bike and at low speeds can hear her telling me the turns to make. There are surprisingly large churches even in small villages - I have squeezed in the photo>

There are also some massive very new wind generators and my bike was just like a dot at the bottom of these. The Czech Republic is changing quickly with road improvements and better campsites but you still see many reminders of the drab iron curtain country. The people are pleasant and friendly but its mainly the younger ones that speak English - other than in tourist areas. We are meeting Dutch, Belgians, Italians, Danish and occasionally Hungarians, Polish and the odd Slovak - not many Brits.



Camping Vidlak



Nearby station - few trains



Friendly insect visited



One of many churches

Mid July: back in UK. Brands Hatch & S of UK , Nurburgring, Brno - then Czech Republic, Germany and Dusseldorf show
Oct : NZ via Dubai/Malaysia/Thailand/Brisbane.
May'09 back in UK via Tonga/Mexico/Cuba



Terry's Travels

TT27-4 Karkonoski National Park Aug 23rd 2008

We had heard that an area in the North was where the Czechs liked to take their holidays. The NP is near to Vrchlabi in the Giant Mountains and the Camping Euro-Air was listed with free WiFi. My first impression was seeing huts that looked a bit like Stalag 13, I was wrong, this has been a really good location, the internet has been great and a restaurant with a big TV and Bowling Alley backed up with a lively bar to say nothing about extremely pretty waitresses. It was our first chance of seeing the Olympics and we were rewarded with seeing the attractively sturdy Czech lady Stopanova win the GOLD in the Javelin - very exciting.

The drive here on the 35 and 16 was superb and we avoided Ripov! As we travelled North it gave a feeling of greater affluence. The whole area is based on tourism and is quite busy in the ski areas, the many walkers have the use of some of the ski lifts and whoever sells the walking sticks (the hitec ones) has been doing good business. Motorcyclists are enjoying this area and waving. The mountains are around 5/6000 feet and yesterday the temperature near the top was a pleasant 17C.

A cup of "ILLY" Capuchino was the best coffee I have had in the Czech R, most of the coffee is not great, the people watching was good - lots of cyclists wearing the latest gear. The Budweiser lorry (the original) delivered some kegs. The riding was really good on small quiet roads - it reminded me of New Zealand. Right at the very top I unexpectedly came to a toll road to Poland. Most vehicles did not go further, I didn't have my passport so watched for a while and saw the odd tour bus returning, it looked as if it had taken mountain cyclists to the very top of the mountain to enjoy riding trails back down.

We have heard very mixed reports of Poland with bad comments on security and road conditions. We are, however going to have a timid look for ourselves. This will be quite exciting as it will be the 56th country I have visited. (I have plans to visit two more new countries next year and two more States in the USA).

We are starting to have a carpet of leaves which heralds the onset of autumn. Of all the excellent Czech-draft beers tried Staropramen is my choice, it was good visiting the Czech Republic.....



We didn't go!



Ski run with no snow



Great coffee



A toll road to Poland

Mid July: back in UK. Brands Hatch & S of UK , Nurburgring, Brno - then Czech Republic, Poland Germany and Dusseldorf show.
Oct : NZ via Dubai/Malaysia/Thailand/Brisbane.
May'09 back in UK via Tonga/Mexico/Cuba



Terry's Travels

TT27-5 Polish Loop Aug 29th 2008

We prepared to loop through Poland but awful weather changed our minds and we spent another day in the Giant mountains with the fan heater! out of the rain....then it was a beautiful day to drive into Poland - visiting my 59th country. A minor road was an adventurous way to head for Jelenia Gora in Poland to have a look. The route was terrific touring but our feelings were of a more unkempt country - with fewer flowers except for an invasive tall yellow weed. Di bought a couple of small crystal vases and we re-crossed into the Czech R at Harrochov being somewhat surprised that skiing was possible here in Poland. Our wonderful touring day continued on the 13 then 14 and I chose Decin as a destination (on a river) for a campsite. Sadie took us there but a new motorway feed road had replaced the site! More great driving took us down the river to Usti but we still didn't find a site. Getting the books out told us of two sites at Litomerice, one good one bad. After yet another deviation (there are many in the CR) we came via narrow cobbled streets under a railway bridge to the river, Autocamp Litomerice was excellent - see the first two photos.

There was train noise but we slept well, after breakfast I knabbed the best site on the camp and we walked into this most interesting city. We especially liked Peace Square with the various architecture and many pavement cafes. Having returned we were enjoying the peace of the river when a battalion of Germans arrived in motorhomes, they were noisy and inconsiderate. When we left the following morning it was fun to watch them jostling for the best site that I had vacated. Germans putting towels on the sunbeds had nothing on this - but we were sorry to leave this lovely site with WiFi.

We had more really perfect touring on good quiet roads to near Most, Chomutov before crossing into the Saxony area of Germany. Annaburg-Bucholtz was one place visited on a minor road but its more difficult on minor roads in Germany with the increased traffic. We travelled W via Zwickau into Northern Bavaria and asked Sadie to look for a site. She suggested one at a place called Blankenhain and we headed there. Again the campsite seemed to have disappeared but we found what seemed just like a French Aire - that's a place where camping is permitted and FREE - very rare in Germany.....



Early morning Litomerice



From our actual campsite



Beautiful city Litomerice



N of Prague near Germany

Mid July: back in UK. Brands Hatch & S of UK , Nurburgring, Brno - then Czech Republic, Poland Germany and Dusseldorf show.
 Oct : NZ via Dubai/Malaysia/Thailand/Brisbane.
 May'09 back in UK via Tonga/Mexico/Cuba



Terry's Travels

TT27-6 Motorway to the Rhine August 31st 2008

Our find proved an excellent place to stay and we needed the awning out as shade from the powerful sun. It was so quiet and with a healthy smell from the nearby farmyard. In fact it is a car park for the Schloss Blankenhain.)

We chose to run on motorways A4/A5/A66 before the scenic 42 alongside the E bank of the mighty Rhine. The whole journey was easy until we looked for a campsite. A scary narrow track took us amongst the steep vineyard to the campsite. It was a bit rural (no chemical WCs) so we left and slowly went down cobbles towards the river. It was a miracle we stayed in control and didn't lose our fillings with the cobbles.

We drove a bit further N alongside the river, this is touring at its very best and turned to follow the signs to Camping Platz Auf der Loreley. This was a good choice owned by a German with a sense of humour and no paperwork. He had Di speak German and then explained that she had said she wished to spend one night with him! I encouraged him to live dangerously!

It is a perfect centre to motorcycle from and has a spectacular river view of this famous stretch of the Rhine. Motorhomes started pouring in and jamming up the site. A concert in the adjacent Loreley Centre was expected so I suppose we are all "Geriatric Boppers". The bar enjoyed the best view and when a plane with 4 propellers came over low I imagined it was the Dambusters and started whistling the theme tune of the Dambusters March but Di soon shut me up.

This stretch of the Middle Rhine has World Heritage status and of course the mythology of the Loreley is catered for at a Heritage Centre.

The concert was very "Oompah" and fun to hear but best of all was a weekend ride up and down the river finishing in a biker bar and marvelling at the amount of convertible cars and exotic motorcycles passing by. Most machines were immaculately presented and there were many trikes also looking good that went cruising by. We were most impressed with the whole feeling of fun. It has also been the hottest day of the trip after very mixed weather.....



Early morning at Blankenhain



A winch pulls plough



Steep cobbled exit from site



Power and distribution

Mid July: back in UK. Brands Hatch & S of UK , Nurburgring, Brno - then Czech Republic, Poland Germany and Dusseldorf show.
Oct : NZ via Dubai/Malaysia/Thailand/Brisbane.
May'09 back in UK via Tonga/Mexico/Cuba