

Landy Rally 2007

Thanks to Mark for the travel report.

LandyRally 14th - 22nd of September 2007

From the outset, with so much driving to do and long hours to be driven in the dark, the task for the day was to arrive safely and in daylight (if possible), which wasn't always to be the case.

But the stunning scenery more than made up for the long hours, unfortunately it made any travel log in the informative sense just impractical, some days we weren't arriving at our campsites until very late at night, and on one occasion, early morning.

But we made it, all the way down through 4 Countries, across the Swiss/Italian Alps, into the French Alps, then down through the France, into the Pyrenees, Andorra and then back up to Calais.

Many thanks goes to the "Pukka Posse" which were all in their Discos for staying with us up the long climbs, and of course Tango 1, haven't had so much fun in a long time, brilliant camaraderie, and great company!



14th Southampton – Calais

An uneventful drive to Dover to get to the Seafrance departure point in plenty of time. Boarded the ferry, and it felt like our journey had begun, sailed into Calais and arrived at the campsite (albeit after a couple of deviations) late afternoon.

Met up with a few of the other teams, and just knew then it was going to be a great, fun event.

160 miles

15th Calais – Luxembourg

We're off! Left Calais at Noon and headed for Belgium, travelled towards Hazebrouck, and around Lille before crossing the Belgian border near Tournai. Travelled along the A8 to Bruxelles, headed South-East towards Namur and followed the A4/E25 into Luxembourg.

Couldn't see a lot from a motorway, but on the lesser roads, both this part of France and Belgium seemed pretty, albeit flat. As for Luxembourg, pretty villages, virtually litter-free and the cheapest fuel yet. Camped at a lovely site, near Bettembourg.



266 miles

16th Luxembourg - Aosta, Italy

Our first, really, long day. After leaving Luxembourg, we briefly hopped into France, then into Germany and back into France before heading south to Switzerland. A very long drive down the A5 /E35 towards Basel then picked up the A2/E25 towards Lausanne. Again, not much to see on motorways, but there were some stunning sights along the way.

Unfortunately, it was about 21:00hrs and very dark when we arrived, but Lausanne still looked stunning, with the lights shimmering on the lake, and far up into the mountains. We took the E27 towards Grand St-Bernard, unfortunately by the time we arrived at the mountain pass it was dark, so for safety reasons we took the tunnel, then began the long descents in the dark, along with some fog and rain for good measure.

We arrived very late and tired at a basic campsite in Aosta, only to be shown friendliness and great hospitality, this turned out to be the best campsite on the entire trip for that. After being fed and watered, we relaxed with relief at the end of the long day.



446 miles

17th Asota, Italy - Val d'Iserre France

Leaving Aosta on the S26, through absolutely stunning scenery, beautiful little villages nestled into the rock faces; we started our long ascent into the French Alps. There were a huge amount of switchbacks, with sheer rock faces on one side, and awesome views around every corner.

We then carried onto Val d'Iserre along the D902, but before we set-up camp, there was some off-roading organised, and hosted by the Club Des Aigles Val d'Iserre, near Val Claret. www.4x4valdisere.com

Not being an experienced off-roader, nor wanting to do any damage halfway through the event, and this far from home. I chose not to drive too much off-road, unfortunately, ending up doing some due to the fact we got lost trying to leave the 200 hectare site. Such is Life!

Drove to the campsite nestled in Val d'Iserre, and set up camp surrounded by mountains.



91 Miles

18th Val d'Iserre France – Andorra

The longest day in terms of miles, and based on our experience on the last long day, decided to stick to motorways. Dropped out of the French Alps along the D902, among again stunning scenery, carried on along the N91 towards Grenoble, N85 towards Gap, and picked the A51/A54/A9 heading south.

This was a long, tedious, but necessary drive all the way down bottom end of France to Perpignan. Then we picked up the N116/N20 towards Andorra, and with it came back the stunning scenery, a different kind of ruggedness from the Alps, but still mountains, and the roads, twisting and turning though some very pretty villages.

Yet again we got to the mountain pass in the dark, and with the fog coming down, we decided to take the tunnel into Andorra. We arrived at the Campsite right in the heart of Andorra very late at night, and what turned out to be the best campsite on our trip.

But it wasn't until the morning; the beauty of the place became apparent.



486 miles

19th Andorra - Pamplona, Spain

We tried to do some shopping in the morning, not very successfully as it appeared Andorra was closed on Wednesdays, at least in the morning. So we fuelled up, and headed south out of Andorra on the CG2/N145/C14/C13 and picked up yet another motorway.

(I like to say at this point, we found ourselves from the beginning amongst a bunch of outstanding human beings, called the "Pukka Posse". In a 2.5 N/A engined LWB Series 111, we didn't have much in way of speed up the mountains, but the "Posse" stuck with us and made the journey. The banter on over the CB's broke up these long miles. All the very best of luck to you all!)

Into Spain now and heading West towards Zaragoza on the AP2, before heading north-west to Pamplona on the AP15, Spain at it's best, beautiful scenery, arrived at a beautiful campsite near Mendigorria, though it has to be said the after the food, you'd better have a cast-iron stomach.

As for the wine, I wouldn't even cook with it! Luckily we had a couple of bottles in the Landy.



324 miles

20th Pamplona, Spain - Poitiers, France

The long drive north, and yes more motorway, hopefully arriving in daylight, but wasn't to be. Taking the N121a north to Biarritz, and then into France, carried along on the A63/E5 towards Bordeaux, then all the way up on the N10 to Poitiers, and our campsite just off the motorway.

Another late night, but it made it easier to sleep, especially after a glass or two.



381 miles

21st Poitiers, France - Calais

This is it, our last day! We wanted to start as early as possible and take the toll routes, purely for speed (relative in a Series 111) to enable us to arrive in daylight in Calais.

Some of the "Posse" rightly wanted to see some of the countryside, so we left them, and hit the toll route north, rejoining the A10 towards Tours/Orleans and Paris. Thankfully a lot of this section was flat, and we made very good time.

Followed the sat nav through Paris, brilliant, carefully avoiding the lunatic, and sometimes suicidal locals, just saw the Eiffel tower amongst the smog, before heading North on the A1/E15 towards Arras, and finally heading northwest to Calais along the A26/E15.

Arrived at Calais not only in daylight at around 15:30, but were able to do some shopping and were the first team to arrive at the campsite, setup tent do repairs and relax!



391 miles

22nd Calais – Southampton

Caught a mid-morning ferry, and trundled home. 154 miles

Would I do it again?

2,699 miles - and apart from the engine and water temperature getting hot, going up mountains in the Alps and Pyrenees, and cruising at around 60 mph for very long periods on the motorways.

The only thing that happen, was a blown fuse! And that was a 12v socket adaptor brought for the extras; mobiles, sat nav, kettle, etc.

Absolutely, outstanding! Very, very pleased with the old girl! Many, many thanks again to the "Pukka Posse" for putting up with our uphill pace.

A very, long week, hard on the Landies, hard on the humans. Had a great time! Met great People! And, had a real holiday!

