

EUROPE 2023

4 months | 6 countries | 8 house swaps | 10 journey legs | 2 grand-boys

British Motor Museum

Today we went to the large British motor museum in Gaydon. In its collection some of the cars that stood out were a few MG Metros with rally spec, a 24 Hours Le Mans Sprite, and an MG EX135 which was piloted by a certain Goldie Gardner whom is related to me and Deakin.

However, a certain car that stood out to me (Blayze) was The Longbridge Tunnel Mini. During the events of World War 2, tunnels were built underneath the Longbridge car factory to make a temporary factory that's safe from Bombs. After the war the underground factory had no use so they used it as a place to put scrap metal and other things they didn't need, but the tunnels were pretty lengthy and therefore they had to get a car to travel around the tunnels and what better car to get through tunnels than a Mini. Specifically a Mini 1275 GT but after servicing the workers of Longbridge Car Factory for many years it was unfortunately left to rot in the tunnels for years. The reason why is unknown but some say a storage container was accidentally dropped on it and then was just left there. Longbridge Factory closed in 2005 after the bankruptcy of Rover, a British Auto company who owned the factory. When they locked up the factory and the tunnels, it seemed the Mini would stay in there and cease to be anything more than an automotive engineer's story to tell to their grandkids. That was until 2012 when a group of urban explorers got permission to look through the factory and the tunnels that hadn't been used for years. They explored the tunnels and found a Mini 1275 GT with 11 miles on the clock and in a very sad shape. It was eventually taken out of the tunnels and put into the British motor museum making it the last mini to leave Longbridge although officially that credit goes to a 2000 Mini Cooper S.



Cars and Coaches

The younger generation went to the British Motor Museum today. It is approximately a three hour drive south of Chipping. We are on our way down to London and decided on this side trip so that the boys could enjoy one of their passions.

We decided upon a National Trust location nearby called Charlescote. This property was built in the 1500s by a family who came over to England with William the Conqueror. We hoped to have a leisurely stroll around the house and then the gardens. However, being a "bank" holiday here it seems a good proportion of Britons had the same idea. We stood in line for a cup of tea and pasty for about three quarters of an hour and also found that there was no availability to tour the house. We had a pleasant sit eventually and then strolled for the short time before going back to get the "kids".

Our evening stop is in Stratford-upon-Avon. It is a little surreal being here today. It is 40 years since we were last in this place. At that time we had a four year old Chad. Now we have his 20 and 13 year old sons! The place is nothing like we remember it. Beautiful buildings but massively commercial. Upon arrival we went for a walk to the canal and promenaded amongst the hordes of "bank" holiday makers. A lovely evening meal with Blayze followed. We went downstairs to our pub's eatery. Maddi and Deakin took themselves out to explore the night life. We three settled for a comfortable seat and our computers.

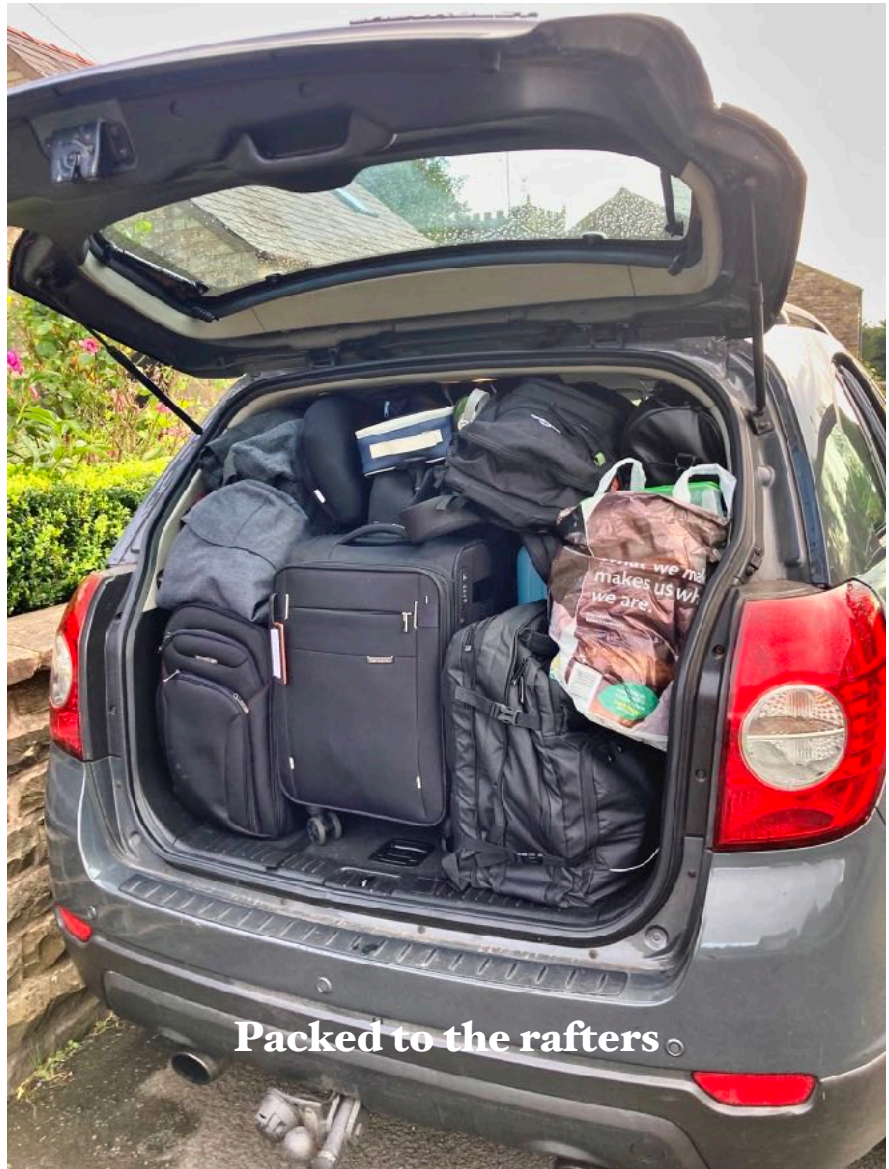








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