



EUROPE 2023



4 months | 6 countries | 8 house swaps | 10 journey legs

Harlech

A two and a half trip north, firstly through the national park and then along the coast, took us to Harlech. The drive started in drizzle and ended in some broad patches of sunlight when we eventually reached the coast.

Barmouth is a substantial town at the mouth of a large estuary. What a fascinating place! Its old stone buildings have been squeezed into the area between the steep cliffs and the shoreline. A number continued up the rocky escarpment above. Most of the buildings were narrow fronted terraced houses. At one point we stopped in a deserted car park on the beach to snap some photos - a pleasant scene with a number of stranded boats.

Harlech Castle was a 20 minute drive further north. It is one of the massive castles built by Edward 1 to subdue the Welsh people. It was started in 1293 after the English had managed to kill the then Prince of Wales - Llewellyn. The castle stood in its full glory until 1648 when the English civil war saw it partly destroyed. Interestingly, at that time, the castle was being held for the crown against the parliamentarians.

Upon arrival, we rugged up and walked around the ramparts and turrets of this very impressive fortress. It is quite fascinating to note that when the castle was built the ocean was lapping at its foot, but today the coast is about a kilometre away.

After taking our fill of the views we had lunch at the castle cafe. It turned out to be an extremely delicious pork and apple stew. Satiated, and warm in our little car, we made the return journey through the beautiful countryside of the Snowdonia National Park.





