

By: ig

Home is where you pitch it

When it comes to the British tradition of holiday breaks, some opt for as simple, and comfortable as possible - yet, many of us ditch the civilities of more sensible lodgings, heading into the wilds instead. Are we all just mad... or, do we have the secret formula to the purest form of holiday?

Though affordable air travel has made the world 'smaller', exploring our home turf remains a prime holiday choice. You can even take a day trip to certain European destinations by air for less than visiting many UK attractions. And, we've all found that campsite that's more per night than some hotels. So, it says more about human holiday habits than mere budgeting that keeps camping as popular as it ever was...

Then, there's that friend who shudders at the very thought of camping, be it in a tent/ awning, camper or caravan. And, when they lay out the non-appeal of braving the ever guessable British weather, trudging across to communal toilet blocks, queuing to wash up - even washing up at all on holiday... well, they make good argument.

Okay, battling to get a tent or awning up in a gale, or take it down again in the rain may not be highlights of the camping experience; and the 'walk of shame' to the chemical disposal point, full tank sloshing in hand whilst trying not to make eye contact with anyone, may indeed have us questioning our getaway choices. But, despite all this, we still come back for more. So, what is it exactly that compels us to park up in a field to sleep in close quarters under canvas, tin or fibreglass?

Scholars of human behaviour, might say camping's appeal tracks back to some primal instinct instilled from prehistoric times, leading nomadic lives or tribal communities living under animal skin shelters. Or, as the seaside holds top spot for camping, science types might add the pull of the ocean harks to evolving from marine animals. Well, dunno' about the 'in our DNA' stuff... but, as fun experiences go, you're hard pressed to beat a good splash about or lazing on a brilliant beach... before sleeping under a giant star bejewelled sky listening to the waves. As the saying goes; *'you can't buy happiness, but you can buy a surfboard...'* - add to that; a 'camper' or 'tent'.



the 'walk of shame' to the chemical disposal point, may indeed have us questioning our getaway choices

Spoiled for choice

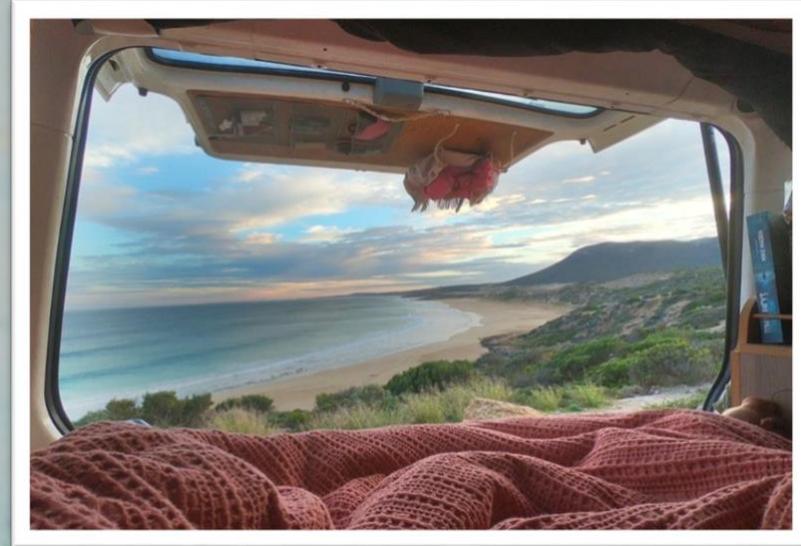


Another clear bonus is that here in the UK, you're seldom more than about 70 miles from the coast. And, what a coast we have; this is where it gets a bit weird, but bear with... out of more than 200 countries measured, good ol' Blighty has the ninth longest coastline in the world! Let's put that into perspective - India, with a land mass of well over 200 million sq' miles, has a coastline of about 4'800 miles - by comparison, the tiny rock pushing defiantly up out of the North Sea that we call home, i.e. Great Britain, despite only having a land mass of little more than 150'000 sq' miles, boasts a whopping coastline of over 7'700 miles...

Hold on; tiny landmass, massive coastline... how? Well, aside from benefiting from sea on all sides, being an island an' all, the main reason is, in a word; 'wiggly'. That's to say our very jagged coastline dips in and out most of the way round. Hence, when it comes to good seaside camping

spots, we not only have a disproportionately long coastline to explore, but never have to go far to find one.

Also, let's not forget the many beautiful inland locations too - just be prepared for resistance if you got kids though. Amazing coastline aside, with a huge array of stunning rivers, waterfalls, valleys, forests and even a few mountains... just like loading up the boot for a weekend away, Britain has packed lots into a small space! And, nature's grand vistas never looked quite so good as when framed by the doorway of a campervan, awning or tent... So, location sorted, camp set up, something tasty on the grill and beverage of choice in hand - the question isn't 'why go camping?' but rather, 'why on Earth wouldn't you?'



Sharing the love

With getaways of the camping kind still so much in favour then, who exactly are populating the pitches these days? Well, there are those of us, who grew up knowing that every summer holiday would include at least a couple of weeks under canvas. And, joyful childhood memoirs still fuel the desire to continue the family tradition. Then, there are those who grew up having seldom or even never experienced the novelty of the holiday nomadic... and now they want in.

New-found free spirits shed the shackles of carrying hair dryers, curling tongs and seven separate sensible suits, or expecting a full English each morning... in a restaurant. They've traded all that for the curiosity and adventure of a different, more grounded (literally) holiday break experience. And, the outdoor leisure industry has responded in kind to the mushrooming popularity of the outdoor lifestyle. We've seen the phrase '*roughing it*' replaced with '*glamping*' as higher standards of comfort spearhead ever developing products, taking just enough of the work out of things to tip the balance toward higher comfort, whilst still keeping close to nature.

So, if hauling heavy aluminium poles or grappling a spiderweb of carbon fibre legs ain't your thing, then you can just pump up an air frame tent or awning now... and in a fraction of the time. But, with the plethora of improved materials and new tech hitting the market, a bigger pocket is also pulled into the outdoors scene.

A broad canvas

Once, camping was the prime domain of solid outdoorsy types (bobble hats, compass and Ordnance Survey map in hand) or budget savvy families that couldn't fork out on airfares or hotels. You could just pick your location on the day, drive about to find a site you liked, then pitch up wherever you wanted - it was all a pretty laid back.



Equally, the loos and showers were basic - and for on-site supplies, the reception hut might've kept bread, milk and loo roll... if you were lucky. Things are somewhat different nowadays of course. Going from cheap to chic means pitch price hikes and an imperative to book well ahead, reflecting the popularity or, dare we say 'trending' paradigm of getting out to enjoy nature in modern times...



A couple of summers back, I opened the door of my 'classic' camper one morning, to see a brand new Range Rover in the next pitch, its owners wrestling a large high-end igloo tent (a North Face I think). And... there was a Bentley in the next field! I admit, I mused over my coffee; '*So this is why prices are so high!*' But, in truth, it's good to see camping broaden its appeal - plus, the big Rangy owners kindly gave me a jump start when 'Helmut' the high-top T4 got a flat battery.

Anyway, though camping may not be the budget holiday option it once was, neither does it have to be expensive; either way, there's way more variety of gear available now, from main items like tents and awnings to all the accessories you could ever wish for - and thankfully prices vary as much as the ranges on offer... just remember to leave enough in the kitty to pay for your pitch!

Once, camping was the prime domain of solid outdoorsy types or budget savvy families...

I opened the door, to see a brand new Range Rover in the next pitch... and there was a Bentley in the next field!



35

Breaking

101

Mad



When it comes to breaks... many ditch the civilities of more sensible lodgings, heading to the wilds instead. Are we all just mad... or, do we have the secret formula to the purest form of holiday?

Scholars, might say camping tracks back from prehistoric times... dunno about the 'DNA' stuff, but you're hard pressed to beat a good splash about on a beach



**Designed BY Camper owners
FOR Camper owners**

Majestic Wood Design was set up about a decade ago by Pete Matyjasik, a veteran of the VW camper scene who can still be found in 'Ted' the T4, 'N-zo' the T6.1... or even 'Gus' the T25 on a campsite somewhere with his family most summer weekends.

Pete and crew design and build premium quality complete campervan interior solutions, from bespoke cabinet kits as well as supplying all related appliances and ancillaries for just about any van platform... VW and beyond.

We are also the go-to-guys for many of the professional camper conversion companies and installers, plus we ship fully assembled kits across the UK for competent self-build converters. And, all staff at Majestic likewise have a similar dedicated pedigree established in the outdoor lifestyle and VW scene.

We also supply awnings, pop-tops, roof tents and all accessories you may need to complete your full camping setup.

You can even come and view our awnings and camper interior displays in situ at our large showroom... **just off M5 J20.**



Location sorted, camp set up,
something tasty on the grill -
the question isn't 'why go camping?'
but 'why on Earth wouldn't you?'



Get in Touch...

Call us on: **01934 313 868**, email:

info@majesticwooddesign.co.uk

or contact us through Facebook - just

search: **Majestic Wood Design**