

## European Road Trip – Part 3

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My van was built for long journeys. When I bought it last September it was only 7 years old but had done more than 100,000 miles. I wouldn't be surprised if this VW diesel engine did more than 300,000 miles. I've been doing a few long journeys recently and the van always feels really comfortable when it's cruising along the motorway at between 60 and 70 mph. I'm not worried about the journey to Vienna and back – I think it's the kind of journey the van was built for – but I do want to get my vehicle serviced just in case.

Today I dropped off the van to replace the front brake pads and investigate why the rear washer isn't working. There wasn't time to do all the work I wanted so I'll drop it off again next week to do a full service. Also there are some parts that need to be ordered, like replacing the absent spare tyre, so I anticipate that by the middle of next week my van will be in great shape for the journey to Vienna.



We'll be driving around 2000 miles in total next weekend. Tomorrow evening the secondary driver is paying me a visit to test drive the van. He's never driven a van before, nor has he driven in continental Europe, so it will be an exciting new experience. The high driving position of the van should be surprisingly comfortable, but driving on the other side of the road will require a moment to readjust. Having driven around Europe a bit myself, albeit in smaller vehicles (Vauxhall/Opel Zafira and VW Sharan), I would argue that driving on the autobahns and motorways of Europe is so much easier than the roundabouts of Paris. Since our journey is virtually all motorways, it should

be a doddle.

Today I discovered that one of the passengers I was expecting to join us has pulled out of the journey. It's no big disappointment, but I certainly hope no others pull out!

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