

European Road Trip – Part 1

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True Mother will be arriving in Europe on 9th May, which is a little over a month away now. As well as celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Unification movement in Europe during the morning programme of 10th May in Vienna, she will also spend some time on the same afternoon launching the European chapter of an international professional network for 2nd generation or other young adult members of the Unification community. Last Wednesday I extended an invitation to the members of the young men home group I lead to participate in this Cranes Club European kick-off. Since many of us haven't booked flights, and for various reasons are somewhat reluctant to do so, the idea was proposed (perhaps half-heartedly) to drive across Europe in order to attend. This idea proved remarkably popular, to the extent that I'm pretty much committed to the proposal. What better way to prepare to attend the messiah's wife than a transformational spiritual journey in the company of close(ly squeezed together in a van group of) friends?



Not my van, but doesn't it look pretty!

I own a 9-seater VW Transporter. I wouldn't be too confident about driving the entire journey from London to Vienna all by myself, so as long as I have one other driver (covered by comprehensive insurance) joining the journey, we could share the miles between us. Without the need to rent a separate vehicle, the cost of the trip will go down. Fuel will be the biggest expense, naturally. My 2 litre diesel engine can cruise on the motorways and autobahns comfortably doing 30 mpg. Factoring in varying fuel prices and the 1800-mile round trip, we'd need to reserve a budget of £400 to cover the fuel costs. The ferry across the English Channel would cost up to £200, depending on how flexible

we can afford to be and how early we book the tickets.



Not quite as romantic, but practical

So in total we're looking at roughly £600 for the return journey. If one seat in the van remains vacant (which would make life a little bit more comfortable on the road) the 8 people in the van would have to fork out £75 each for the return journey. This is already a significant saving on the cost of a flight. Or course an aeroplane would be much faster, but then an aeroplane can't compete with the romance of travelling in a VW van.

If we left on Friday evening, we could do most of the travelling during the night and especially avoid the traffic nightmare that usually is found in/around Brussels. We could arrive in Vienna on Saturday afternoon or evening and have the rest of the day to be tourists or relax in preparation for the programme the next day. There's uncertainty about when the programme on Sunday afternoon will end, so at the moment we're flexible about when exactly to begin the return journey, perhaps on Sunday night or early on Monday morning. Either way, this expedition will require 3 solid days booked off in our calendars.

Of course the matter of overnight accommodation still needs to be addressed. Will we sleep in the van? Many Unificationists who have been involved in mobile fundraising teams may share my nostalgia over such an arrangement. Or perhaps I'm forgetting how uncomfortable sleeping in a van actually is. Perhaps I should investigate hotel rooms that can accommodate 8-9 people. And then there's the question of who's joining me. At the moment one brother who can drive has signed up, which is important as without him I'd hesitate to commit to this project. I'm hoping that within a week we'll have found our travelling companions and I'm hoping to post just a few updates on how we're preparing for, and eventually executing, this exotic dream of travelling half-way across the continent for a magical moment with Mother Moon.

Who wants to join us?

Image Credits

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Europe_relief_laea_location_map.jpg

<http://www.tbd.com/blogs/tbd-on-foot/2011/09/the-iconic-vw-bus-rolls-to-life-in-a-new-documentary-film-12923.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volkswagen_Transporter_\(T5\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volkswagen_Transporter_(T5))