

VANLIFEZONE



Issue 2
10/2020

ENJOY THE TRIP

Discovering the Americas:
4 Years, 17 countries &
56.000km

FINDING MYSELF AT 52

Shaun's story of setbacks and the
kindness of strangers

A LITTLE BIT OF SUNSHINE

Adventure couple Line & Thomas about
their path to vanlife and where it lead
them

VAN-WEDDING FAIRY TALE

Lea & Philip and their fairy tale
wedding in the woods with their
gorgeous Mercedes-Benz van

RECIPE

Toffee Apple Upside
Down Cake
by Van Life Eats

A PASSION PROJECT DEDICATED TO SHARING VANLIFE STORIES AND ADVENTURES





Vanlifezone

ENJOY THE TRIP	4
MARGARIDA & KOA	8
THE HAPPY CAMPER	12
VAN BAKE OFF	14
TOFFEE APPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE	16
FINDING MYSELF AT 52	18
A LITTLE BIT OF SUNSHINE	23
GRACIE & DYLAN'S BUS CONVERSION	28
VAN-WEDDING FAIRY TALE	30
WHY VANLIFE?	34

ABOUT US...

Vanlifezone is a passion project dedicated to sharing vanlife stories and adventures.

It began in early 2020 as a small page on Instagram but soon gained a lot of momentum and is currently on the verge of hitting 12.000 subscribers. After the release of the first digital issue of our magazine we got a lot of positive feedback and more stories to share which enabled us to produce the second issue a lot faster.

We proudly present the second issue: Nine inspiring stories about very different topics related to living in a van and a delicious recipe await you in this issue.

The best thing about the stories is that they are your stories! You – our friends, our Vanlifezone-family – had total creative freedom to send in whatever you wanted with whatever images you wanted to accompany the text... And it turned out amazing!

Thank you so much and we cannot wait to read, see, hear and share more of your impressive stories!

Vanlifezone

ENJOY THE TRIP

Discovering the Americas



We are Diego, Roana and our dog Zed. We left Blumenau in Santa Catarina, Brazil, in January 2017 on board our classic 90's VW Bus that we transformed into our home, with the objective of getting to know the Americas.

We passed through 17 countries and covered a distance of 56.0000 kilometers. The Countries were Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador,

Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico and the United States.

There are many challenges for those who live on the road, but with a lot of work and joy dedicated to embracing this life, we are able to face them daily. We have already made many dreams come true by living this lifestyle. We are heading for

another one right now: arriving in Alaska and getting to know the Aurora Borealis. Little by little we walk day by day to experience it.

The road teaches us a lot every day: It is very intense with a lot of emotions; you meet many people, cultures and customs that leave their marks, you experience rich foods and charming places. A lot has changed within us. We have learned a new language. We communicate very well speaking Spanish but English is still a very big challenge. Each day we learn new words and we can manage with the language, at least we are not starving.

We live looking for a balance between our mind and our body. We have more time to take care of ourselves, we do physical activities, we eat well and healthy and we learn many new things every day. All this has made our life much lighter, without that exaggerated stress of everyday life. Life at our pace is much more peaceful.





Of course, we don't live in a bed of roses every day, but we learn to be calm in this storm when the world has turned.

We like to get to know the essence of each country, talk to the locals and learn more about their stories. Nature is also impressive. We can't even believe that we know such incredible places. We live a crazy mixture of feelings every day. There were tons of new experiences along the way. We have already walked through glaciers, climbed snowy mountains and seen ruins of all kinds. We got to know two of the 7 wonders of the world. We have walked to Macchu Picchu, climbed volcanoes and walked 32 km in just 1 day on the trail. We have seen an active volcano erupting and throwing lava. We also saw condors, whales, guanacos, llamas, foxes and many other animals. We got to know the Pacific Ocean and also the Caribbean and we collect sunsets along the way.

We crossed from Colombia to Panama with our van in a container. We entered caves, swam in Mexican Cenotes and swam with bioluminescent phytoplankton. We crossed the Andes mountain range, travel along the Carretera Austral and

@enjoytripbr
@andersonstrutz
@roanapetri
Youtube: Enjoy Trip br

went down the road of death. We walked infinite kilometers through the largest salt flats in the world and crossed deserts and many other things.

We are happy to share our story with you.
We're sure you all like it.



MARGARIDA & KOA

I'm Margarida, a Portuguese solo traveler who decided to leave everything behind to travel in my self-converted van with my dog Koa.

After working in an office as an architect in Lisbon for 2 years I realized something was missing. I just couldn't believe that life was just „that“. Working 9-5 (or more) in a job that wasn't fulfilling, go home, walk the dog, eat and rush to bed, because the next day would be just the same.

The routine was killing me and my mind, heart and soul were asking me to find a way out. I wanted to be outdoors more, be closer to nature, spend more time with my dog and eventually find a meaningful job that not only has a purpose to serve this world we are living in, but also gives me the flexibility to travel and enjoy the days of my life to the fullest.

As I had a lot of curiosity for the northern part of Europe, I started to think how I could just travel there without putting my dog on airplanes.

AND THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED VANLIFE WAS THE WAY!

EXPLORING NORTHERN EUROPE



For 1 year and a half I worked like crazy to save some money so I could leave my job when I felt ready to completely change my life. I found a job in a hostel at the weekends, I worked as a babysitter after work in the office when the parents needed it and I also did a project as an architect outside the office on my spare time.

I had only one weekend off per month to rest that I used to build the van at a slow pace. It took me a while but because I was still saving money and I didn't have a set date to leave, there was no rush. I just knew that I wanted to change my life sooner than later, that I would need a home on wheels and some extra money to get started.

Eventually the day to leave everything behind came in the beginning of August 2019. I didn't feel super ready, but somehow I knew it was the right time. So at that moment, I quit my job, sold almost everything I had, gave

a huge hug to all my friends and family and took the road towards the north.

Since then Koa and I have been traveling through Europe and we are currently in northern Sweden waiting to experience a winter like we never experienced before, under lots of snow and the northern lights.

Because I decided to travel to the north of Europe where the winters are very extreme and because I have a very small van without a heater, I need to settle in a warm house every winter, so I would say that so far, I'm a seasonal vanlifer.



Last winter we stayed in the Danish countryside to collaborate with an eco-village, where in exchange for food and accommodation I worked as an architect for them. They were buying a land to settle and my job was to design their future houses and facilities. It was such a nice project to work on!

This winter in Sweden we rented a little gorgeous cottage to keep us warm and it is now time to find a job to save some more money for future adventures. Even though I have been working on amazing little projects on the way as a freelancer, and I'm trying to build my own business for the future, it's still not enough to keep me going.

I'm growing a lot, learning tons of new things and it has been great to have this time to see life from another perspective. I'll definitely never be the same after this experience and I'm so curious to see what life has prepared for me in the future!

For now I'll just keep searching, growing and looking for clarity, connection and freedom knowing that everything is harder and easier than we think. We just need to gain momentum with the easiest things to battle the hardest things. And in the end, everything will be fine and it will unfold as it should.

@myworldonwheels
Youtube: My World On Wheels



THE HAPPY CAMPER A VANLIFE FAMILY



We are Rhiannon, Luke, Mollie and Daisy, a vanlife family from South Wales, UK.

The Happy Camper is exactly what it says on the tin. A T5 which holds a special place in our hearts and has brought us some of the happiest times of our lives. It may not be the newest or shiniest van out there, but to us it holds so much sentimental value that nothing could compare.

Vanlife is something that has always been close to our hearts as a couple, ever since owning a T2 early bay around 8 years ago. After a reluctant sale, we carried

on life in the 'normal' fashion: bought our first home, got a puppy, got married and had our baby girl. All amazing milestones and memories but, adventure was always calling!

When Mollie was just two months old, after searching for the right camper for a while, we came across our beautiful blue T5. Whilst vanlife with a two month old baby, might sound daunting to some, and maybe even to us initially, we knew that we would make it work. We feel so strongly about letting children be young and keeping them off digital devices for as long as possible, which we know can be incredibly difficult in the world we live in. Mollie is now twenty months old and has the most wonderful respect and admiration for the outdoors which fills us with so much pride as parents, and we hope this continues for many years to come.

We couldn't possibly forget our van dog Daisy Duke. She is our 7 year old Labrador/Boarder Collie cross, with the most docile and loving temperament. Vanlife with a dog is fantastic and in our eyes, they are an essential travel

@thehappycamper2020

companion. As soon as we pick up the van keys and her seatbelt, she's practically sat there waiting for us to open the sliding door to let her in.

With Mollie in the backpack carrier and Daisy running free (where she's allowed), you will usually find us in the mountains, by the lakes, at the coast or our favourite - the waterfalls. We live in such a beautiful part of the world and being able to exploit its surroundings in our little home on wheels is such a pleasure. We are sharing our story as we

want people know that there really is, nothing holding you back. There will be obstacles and we have had different barriers to overcome - especially with the transition from baby to toddler. You make it work for you and your family, and I can promise you that the good times will ALWAYS outweigh the bad.

Here's to making memories that last a lifetime, whilst leaving only our footprints behind.





VAN BAKE OFF



Each star baker gets their recipe featured on vanlifeeats.com and are then in with a chance of winning an Omnia courtesy of Brown Bird.

It isn't too late to enter, head to our Instagram page to see the weekly theme and rules for entering.

Baking is a passion of mine, with a 2 burner hob and a miniscule oven in our van it certainly results in some creativity. Our Omnia oven has proved invaluable when it has come to baking in the van. It gives you the freedom to cook and bake the majority of things you can in a conventional oven but on a hob!

We would like to share with you our own Van Bake off creation. This was our cake week bake, it was fairly easy to make in the van with the Omnia. This cake kept well in an airtight container,

we enjoyed some with a cup of tea and the next day with some custard - delicious!

The toffee apple topping makes it an ideal choice for Halloween.

You may have heard of Bake Off. Amateur bakers in a tent creating scrumptious creations. We have decided to go one better, by asking vanlifters to create extraordinary bakes in their homes on wheels.

Each week has the same theme as the tv show and contestants enter a photo of their bake on Instagram for it to be judged.

Here at Vanlife Eats, we have teamed up with Brown Bird and Company, UK stockists of the infamous Omnia stove top oven.

As a team effort the entries are assessed and a star baker selected each week.

vanlifeeats.com
[@vanlife_eats](https://www.instagram.com/vanlife_eats)

TOFFEE APPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE BY VAN LIFE EATS

Ingredients

For the cake

1 cup Salted Butter
1 ¼ cups Golden caster sugar
1 ¾ cups Self- raising flour
½ tsp Bicarbonate of soda
4 Eggs
4 tbsp Milk
½ tsp Vanilla Extract

For the toffee apples

1 cup Caster Sugar
3 tbsp Water
3 Apples peeled, cored and sliced



Method

1. Start with the topping. Peel and slice the apples. Place the water and sugar in a pan, begin with a low heat until it begins to bubble and then turn the heat up until it turns amber. Make sure not to stir it, as tempting as it is!

2. Put the silicone mold in the Omnia and carefully pour the sauce into it. Very carefully place the sliced apples in the sauce.

3. For the cake, beat the butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy. Sift the flour with the bicarbonate of soda.

4. Add 2 tbsp of the flour mixture to the butter mixture along with 1 of the eggs.

5. Repeat this process until the flour and eggs are gone.

6. Stir in the milk and vanilla.

7. Pour the mixture into the Omnia and smooth with a metal spoon.

8. Bake over a medium flame for 50-55 mins.

9. Turn out when baked being careful of any hot caramel. Leave to cool.

This can also be created in a regular cake tin and oven. If using a standard cake tin you may need to use an extra apple to ensure enough topping.

The recipe and many more can be found on our website at vanlifeeats.com.



vanlifeeats.com
[@vanlife_eats](https://www.instagram.com/vanlife_eats)

FINDING MYSELF AT 52

A STORY OF SETBACKS AND THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

My name is Shaun Elmstrom, I'm a 52 year old guy and in May this year I decided to take a year out and travel.

First things first. I had come out of a terrible marriage, then met the woman of my dreams but ruined that due to unresolved issues in myself.

Fast forward 4 months, living on my own, some therapy, lots of reading and thinking and the decision was made for me to buy an old left-hand-drive VW T4 and convert it into a basic camper van.

MY PLAN

what plan!!! I decided that, by the 30th of July, I needed to have the van ready, all my worldly possessions packed up, and a ferry booked.

The day before leaving, my battery packed up so there was a mad rush to get the RAC out as it was late evening, could this be happening, was fate trying to tell me something? Ok, battery replaced, the next day was the 30th and I was ready to go.

Massive tick list at hand, and I thought I was fully prepared for my trip, boy, was I wrong! My journey would take me to; France, then Italy, down to Malta, back to the Alps and a winter in a Ski resort, then the rest of Europe would follow, in 2021, easypeasy.

DAY 1

Dover port waiting in the queue to embark. The Marshall came out and waved my queue to move, 'click click', nothing, battery dead again, "nooooo", I screamed out loud,



what could have gone wrong now? The port guys were amazing, they tried to jump start the van, and then tried to tow me, but to no avail. What the hell is going on, it's fully serviced, all worn items replaced, my only option was to call my old friends the RAC.

Enter RAC – “the alternator is gone mate” said Tim the RAC guy, “I’ll nip into town and get you a new one”. 3 hours later, RAC man returns, “sorry but this particular alternator needs ordering, as nobody seems to have one in all of Dover and surrounding towns”.

Was this really the start to my new start, my life changing journey, all I could do was laugh. We, Tim and I set about ordering a new alternator on Ebay. And what an amazing guy Tim was, he let me send the parcel to his own home address. “I’ll come back tomorrow. Once it arrives and I’ll fit it for you”.

Humanity is amazing sometimes, I could never have expected the help from the port workers, who not only tried to get me going, but offered me tea and their facilities whilst I was waiting, and now from the RAC guy, who stayed with me, got the van started so I could get into town to park up for the night.

DAY 2

Dover town where I was parked to. I now had to wait all day for the part to turn up, not only that, the belt was also a part that needed ordering and nobody had one in town. I was parked near a Travel Lodge and decided to pop in and ask if I could use their loos to freshen up, clean my teeth and change clothes.



The lady behind the counter did a wry look around and handed me a room key, “go and get yourself a shower my love”. Yet again I feel humbled by the kindness of strangers.

A bit of back story, I was due to stay with a chap who I was going to be doing some volunteer work for in France in exchange for food and lodgings. I called him up, I informed him of my predicament and by some miracle, he started making calls around Dover from his home in France and he found a belt in an obscure motor factors in Dover, wait, what!!!! Later that day Tim turns up and fits my new alternator and says he will follow my journey on my YouTube channel with interest, cheers Tim for everything.

So, day 2 and my journey could start again, back to the port and on to the ferry. My new start had really begun.

I chose the VWT4 for its reliability, and cheap available parts throughout Europe. I was now heading south. First stop Le Havre for an overnight. A beautiful town was laid out before me and my decision to just go away was affirmed right in that moment.

Over the next few days, I steadily headed south east. Staying in Municipal camp sites ranging in price from 0€ to 12€ a night, all were really well equipped and welcoming to this old Brit who was starting to relax for the first time in many years. I highly recommend Municipal camp sites throughout France and also the Aires on all motorways, they are well equipped and safe.

BOURESSE

my first job was for an old age pensioner who needed help with some gardening, and some trips to the dump and garden clearances. I stayed with him for three days and helped him do loads of jobs. During one of these jobs I met an English couple, Tony who was a builder who had moved to France to live and work and Justine his wife who pretty much spoke French, and they lived in a Hamlet called Entrebrault near Civray in central France. They said that if I wanted work, they could offer me some paid work and I was welcome anytime. A week later I was sitting with Tony and drinking in his home made bar and I ended up staying for 6 weeks. These were two of the kindest people I've met along my way and are now lifelong friends.

During my stay with Tony the van broke down again and it seemed to be the same issue, battery draining, and even with a meter attached to the battery we could see the power draining from it. Lots of scratching of heads and charging the battery happened for almost a week. I eventually found a local mechanic who told me that VW T4's have an issue with the starter relay overheating and the large fuses get very corroded, he then gave me a new fuse for nothing and told me what I needed to do without charge. After a few French lessons in the car parts shop, a new relay, the problem is now solved.

@52traveller
Youtube: Shaun Elmstrom

A LITTLE BIT OF SUNSHINE LINE & THOMAS

Sometimes our lives take surprising turns, in directions we never saw coming, and the 1st of November was exactly a day like that for us. Thomas invited Line out for a coffee, and less than 24 hours later and without us knowing, we „randomly“ bumped into each other during a shelter trip to the woods - and we've been together ever since that night. It was as if the universe listened to us, and knew that we'd already accepted to spend a little informal time together, and just skipped the whole human calendar-planning part, and brought us to the same place ASAP! Pure magic!

It didn't take long before both of us knew that what we found and the energy we shared, was something very special.



We have both lived our lives partly nomadic, travelling all over the world through the past 10 years, both professionally and privately, both in exotic and frozen places. No need to say that we instantly connected over the dreams of endless travels, life on the road, living in different and beautiful foreign countries and we quickly learned that we had a shared dream of living in a van, cruising the never-ending roads.

In April we both had to cancel an ongoing travel in Central America due to Covid-19. When we got back home to Denmark, like everyone else in most of

the world, all of our plans got canceled, both professionally and socially.

Line is a self taught jewelry designer, and had designer markets lined up from June through September, while she planned to hit a good bunch of the bigger and smaller music festivals in Denmark over the summer. Thomas is a trained carpenter but was planning to go to Ilulissat, Greenland, for a two month contract for the second time in a row working as an adventure guide, trekking, guiding and kayaking with travelers from all over the world but all of that obviously fell to the ground!

We needed an adventure!

Something to soothe our bleeding nomadic hearts. Something to look forward to, and work towards, together, side by side!

We bought our golden sun wagon in April, and instantly feel in love with her. Even before we met her, we knew that we were going to bring her home, and no way she could be named anything else than Sunshine.



We had our first road trip the very next day - an old wood framed mattress on top of four old rusty wheels, some fairy lights in the ceiling, and off we went - and oh, it was glorious!

Our dreams and ideas grew day by day, mainly focused on smaller and bigger everyday adventures, but most of all a grand one in September - a full month on the roads of southern Europe.

Paperwork, registration and of course the actual build needed to be done first. Humble and excited, knowing our privilege even to be able to travel, if the world situation allowed us, we crossed our fingers!

Sunshine was a semi-rusty elderly lady, a VW T4 from 2001 with some cracks and flaws that just needed some undivided love and attention - which she got.

With no plans at all and the world



in an ever-changing state where events and jobs were getting cancelled we were able to focus almost full time on Sunshine. She became our main focus - and what a ride it has been!

Insulation, rust- and metalwork, floor, walls, ceiling, electrical installations got finished during the summer while we were waiting for the right paperwork to land in our hands.



Laws and registration is often a bit tricky in Denmark especially when it comes to sleeping in cars and actual van conversions. Nearly 5 months later, we pulled through! The final car inspection got approved and the actual build of our four-wheeled home started.

Less than two weeks later we were ready! Our dream home on wheels was done! The solar panel and the brand new roof top terrace were in place and it had a bedroom, kitchen, lights and all necessary equipment and a beautiful interior. The GPS was set for Italy. GO!

It felt SOO good! We were ON the road!

We were actually living this dream! Our hearts were overflowing with joy and gratefulness. We found our way to turn things around, reschedule our lives and extend the summer for another month - and it all turned out in a glorious way!

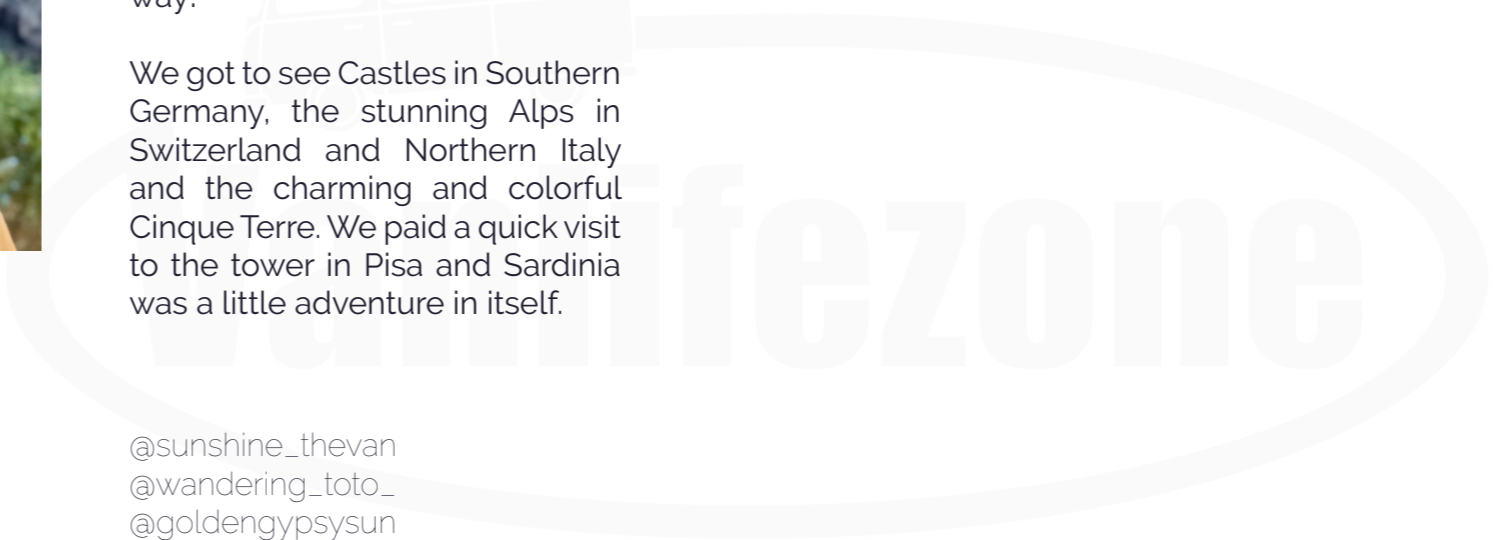
We got to see Castles in Southern Germany, the stunning Alps in Switzerland and Northern Italy and the charming and colorful Cinque Terre. We paid a quick visit to the tower in Pisa and Sardinia was a little adventure in itself.

@sunshine_thevan
@wandering_toto_
@goldengypsysun
@uttedesign

We're already planning to go back to Italy and Sardinia, we dream about cruising Spain, Portugal, France and all of Eastern Europe. We're also thinking about a trip that's going to take us to Great Britain, with a ferry towards The Faroe Islands and further on to Iceland and Norway!

Our vanlife has been a dream for quite a while, more than 4 years - even before we met each other - and now it's happening. That's the beautiful part about it. We believe that life and dreams actually can come true if you set the right focus and intentions and give your dreams the loving attention and action they deserve. We have once again experienced that the amount of wonders we are able to manifest is beyond our wildest dreams!

Thank you for reading along. We hope you keep your hearts warm and your dreams alive!





we've spent every weekend building our dream home on wheels. It's fit out with a 115l fridge, a shower/toilet cubicle, kitchen with a gas top stove and sink. We've also got a dinette that converts into a sitting couch and our double bed up the back. It was quite challenging throughout since we had absolutely no skills relating to building a home on wheels but we did a lot of research and trialled a lot of things that sometimes failed. We are happy to say that we have minimal

belongings and our hearts are full of happiness, we are hoping that our journey will inspire others who wish to live differently that anything is possible if you put your mind to it.



GRACIE & DYLAN'S BUS CONVERSION

My name is Gracie and my partner Dylan and I have a bus we've converted ourselves that we now travel Australia in full time!

We bought a 2006 Toyota Coaster with all its seats still in it, and over the course of a year

@drive_onthewildside



VAN-WEDDING FAIRY TALE

THE BEST GIFT YOU COULD HAVE GIVEN TO ME IS A LIFETIME OF ADVENTURES

That is how we would answer the question about our perfect gift... in fact our perfect wedding gift. We are Lea and Philip two open-minded souls, vanlife couple, and traveller at heart. –And this is our van-wedding story.

We met many years ago when we both were still in school and started our life-journey together. Our journey as travellers however began with a classic: A South East Asia backpacking trip with some work and travel jobs. That we would leave our nine-to-five jobs a couple of years later, give up our small flat in the Thuringian Forest in Germany and start travelling

the world was far from clear at that time.

In the following years, things have changed. We have changed and became clear about what life we wanted to create: everytime we came home from a trip, we consistently felt like having seen many places, but failed to get a real understanding of them. We wanted to explore the world – not for a 3-week-holiday a year but we aimed to create a life of travel. We started dreaming about moving freely from place to place in our own pace, immersing ourselves in local cultures and getting a deeper understanding of the places we visit, and we aimed at spending most of our time outdoors. We dreamt about soaking up the far nature apart from traffic noises, met with the silence of the forest, slow down and enjoy the simple life. We dreamt about being at home everywhere in the world.



So, we decided to buy an old caravan and started travelling Europe. What we didn't know, the caravan was kind of a prototype for our van conversion of a 1987 Mercedes 310 fire truck in 2018. But when we started to plan our journey to Central Asia, we soon came to realize that the caravan does not suit this way of travelling and exploring.

What we needed was a more robust car for some off-road adventures in the Caucasus, Altai Mountains and the Gobi Desert. Our van the redcamper has been a real heart project over the last two years – and still is! Not only

did we build a place to sleep, chill, work and cook, but we built a home for us.

Philips marriage proposal was somewhat the cherry on the cake! Since we always shared a passion for being in nature and had created this cosy home on wheels we loved the idea of getting married in the forest when we started planning our wedding.

Easier said than done. But it happened that – on a Sunday evening run we stumbled across a hut located under some gnarled old trees in the middle of the forest. By pure coincident we

found the perfect place for us and our van-wedding in the woods.

Six months of planning, organizing us and our family and friends, collecting and refurbishing chairs, building tables, creating natural decoration, and tasting cakes until the wedding day was there. As wedding theme, we chose “at home outdoors” and the decoration was in a natural bohemian style. Our van was decorated with handmade macramé, hundreds of candles, big natural stones, wooden boxes, oriental carpets, dry flowers, white wool blankets and feather pillows.

We had a perfect day with our family and friends and celebrated our wedding until late night dancing under the stars. It was a full moon night when we went to bed in our camper. In that night, we surely dreamt of a lifetime full of adventures.



WHY VANLIFE?



If you'd have asked us this question a year and a half ago, we'd have given you a very different answer.

We're Hayley and Jake. Along with our pup Finnley, we've decided that we wanted to work less, live more, and see the world. Welcome to our adventure!

We met in January 2019 and immediately started planning our life of adventure together. Six

months later, we were ready.

It was the summer of 2019. Jake had just left his engineering job, and Hayley was about to start a two-week-on two-week-off position as an engineer at a remote site. On short notice, we discovered that we were going to have two weeks of glorious freedom. But where could we plan a trip to in July with only two weeks' notice?

Our chosen destination? Iceland!

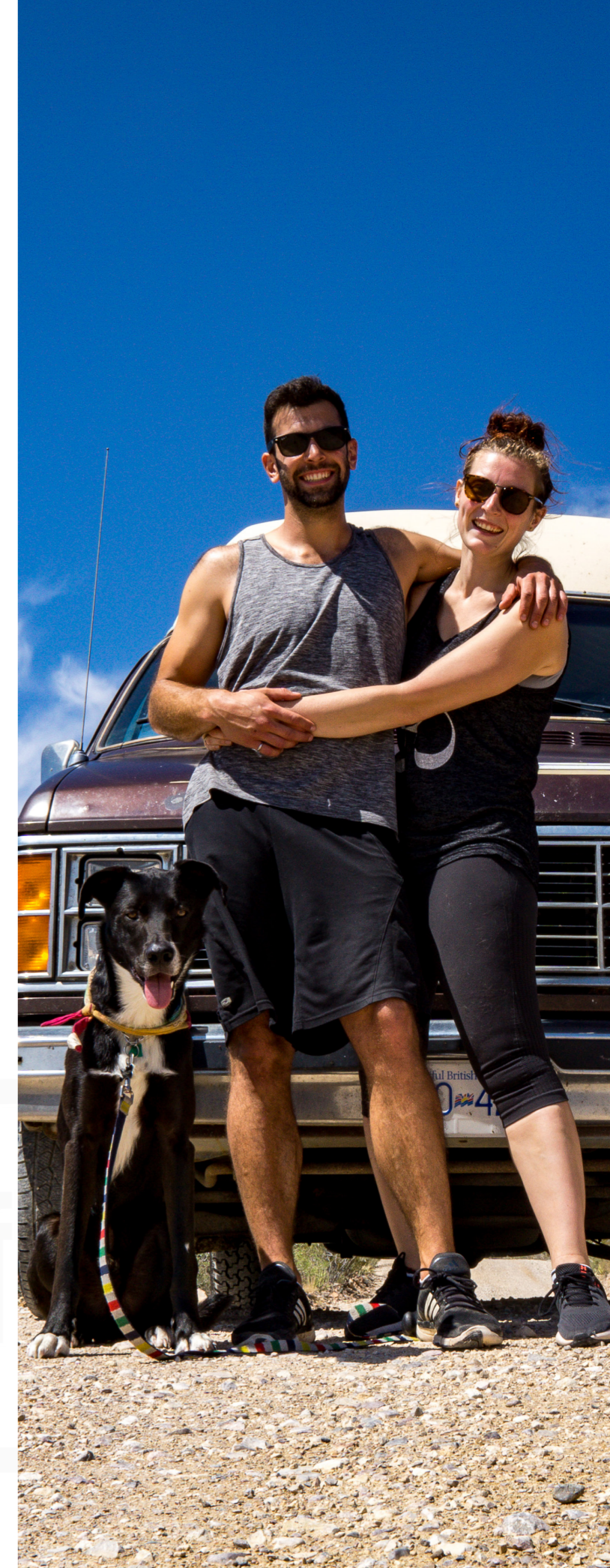
We put our pup Finnley in a dog sitter, rented a small camper van, and flew to Iceland to begin our first vanlife adventure. The van was very bare bones: two front seats, a bed, a water jug, and a small camp stove. We loved it. The ability to explore new places at our own pace, and to have everything we needed under one roof was a game changer for us.

We came back to Canada and a few months later bought a van of our own. Meet Vincent VanGo, a 1985 Dodge B250. With his age, quiriness, and one cracked mirror, we felt that the name was a perfect fit.

In late September we decided that we wanted to see the world-famous fall colours of New England. That's why, for our first trip, we drove 4,740 km from Vancouver (on the West Coast of Canada) to Vermont (near the East Coast of the USA).

Talk about easing into it.

After Vermont we had planned on returning to Vancouver, but an early onset of winter changed our plans for us. Jake and Finnley headed down through South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee,





and Georgia, with Hayley flying back and forth between work and each destination. We eventually reached Florida and spent a sun-filled month exploring the state all the way from Pensacola to Key West (the southernmost point of the continental US). From there we went to Louisiana and Texas. It was in Big Bend National Park, in the Texan desert on the Mexican border, where the pandemic forced us back to Canada; six months and nearly 20,000 km from where we started.

We came back to Vancouver in the spring, sold Vincent, and bought

and empty Ram Promaster 159 Extended. Meet Rambo VanGo!

We love this lifestyle, and we've been working hard to make it our full-time reality. We are in the middle of building our van, renting out our house, and downsizing all of our belongings to begin the migration towards full time tiny living in Canada.

Even though we have a long way to go in our conversion, we've already begun to make short trips and hit the road. With international travel currently closed, we cannot wait to explore this beautiful country.

Did you know that Canada has 38 national parks, 10 national park reserves, and 14 national marine conservation areas? We didn't, but we've now made it our goal to see every one of them.

So, some may ask "Why vanlife"? Because traveling is our passion. We travel to see and experience and to feel alive. To enjoy each day and live our lives to the fullest. Whether you're a vanlifer, a backpacker, a weekend road tripper, or anything in between, we hope to see you on your next adventure.

See you on the open road.



@hayleyandjake
hayleyandjake.com

SHARE YOUR VANLIFE STORY WITH US!

Vanlifezone

Send an article about your vanlife adventure to **OFFICE@VANLIFEZONE.COM**


You have total creative freedom and can share any aspect or story about your experience of living in a van.

Make sure that you have no more than **1000 WORDS**

and that you include **MANY** high resolution **IMAGES**

By sending us the text and the images you confirm that we are allowed to use and alter them in any way necessary for our magazine. Since we value authenticity and want to share **YOUR STORY** we will try to modify as little as possible.

Use **#VANLIFEZONE** and tag and follow us **@Vanlifezone** on Instagram



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