

**ADVENTUROUS:** Tom and Heather Verity and their daughters.



# All roads lead to roam

**W**hile others spend the new year resolving to make changes in their lives, one family from East Yorkshire have started an adventure others only dream about.

Tom and Heather Verity and their two children are spending a year travelling Europe in a converted camper van.

Setting off in December, their journey will take them through the Channel Tunnel and into France where they will spend Christmas



By  
**Natalie  
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A family are taking to the road in a converted **camper van** as they travel around Europe for a year-long trip of a lifetime

in the Chamonix valley. "Hopefully, Tom and I will get to ski a lot and the children will learn a bit of French and ski a bit," said

Heather, 46.

"Then we will go into Italy, the Balkans and just keep going.

"We don't have a set route and we don't want one, we

spend our lives planning."

A good deal of planning has certainly gone into the trip, with Tom, who runs his own food and farming business, arranging for the company to continue in his absence, for example.

He and Heather, a security consultant, have also liaised with their daughters' school to organise leave for them.

"The school has been really good," said Heather.

"The headteacher was brilliant about it. They don't have any concerns at all and they have been really supportive and that's really helpful because otherwise you can very easily be made to feel guilty if you have got somebody frowning at you.

"The girls are very excited. They almost wrecked the van when they first came to see it."

The vehicle, equipped with beds, a kitchen area and wardrobe space, even has solar panels, which they hope will allow them to seek out more remote places for wild camping spots where they will be self-sufficient.

It was fitted by 8 Ball VW Camper Conversions in Little Weighton.

"We've used a motor home before two or three times, so we are not completely unfamiliar," said Tom, 43.

"But the reason why we wanted to go for a camper van is it's just going to be more versatile. If we want to go into a city for example

and parking, if we want to go down country roads, there are lots of reasons why."

It was the London Olympics that provided the inspiration for their marathon journey.

"The idea came about in 2012 when we were talking about doing the Rio Olympics, that's how the conversation started and how we landed on 2016 really," said Heather.

Initially planning to tour South America and be in Brazil for the games, the family eventually decided to remain in Europe.

"You can think about what you are planning to do and you can think about it and think about and 80 per cent of the planning is actually the thinking about it and then it's when you start telling people that that's what you are going to do that's when your commitment is made," said Heather.

"It's what I call bricking up the back door," added Tom.

"You'd feel a complete fraud if you didn't go and do it.

"I think in this day and age with our working lives, you do have to plan it quite far out, so for us, the point in time where we knew we would be able to do it was 2016 because of the children's ages."

They plan to supplement nights in the camper van with home and chalet hire, particularly in the winter, and are determined to go with the flow.

"You go and it's an adventure, but you hope that you are going to come back having had a really good time with some good memories that we will have forever as a family and be a really close unit," said Heather.

Air B&B for a week somewhere.

"You are going off into the unknown, but it is also exciting and I know that as soon as we hit the motorway and we leave our house and all four of us are packed in our van and we are going it will be really exciting.

"We're novices, but we'll be experts by the time we get back."

Both are encouraging of others who have the urge to travel.

"Lots of people say, 'Oh, I'd love to do it' but they never would," said Heather.

"If you were employed by somebody, it wouldn't be so difficult.

"If you have a nice house in London and you are employed in a job you don't really like you can rent your house out for an absolute mint and disappear and live a very nice life and it doesn't take much planning."

The family is expecting to return home by October half-term, with Heather citing Yorkshire Tea as one of the things she will miss during their break.

"There probably is plenty we will miss," said Tom.

"Heather has travelled more than I have, but we have travelled a bit and we've spend time outside the UK quite a bit in the past and we're just really very excited.

"There's so much to see and being able to say actually do you know what, let's move on, or we love it here, let's stick around and spend some time here is what we want."

It's what many others would want too but the difference is, the Veritys are taking their chance to fulfil it.

"There are dreamers and doers and we are dreamers and doers," said Heather.

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