

Stuck in LA

By: Pontiac Mace

My name is Pontiac and I'm going to tell about our year off (my mom, dad, brother, sister and I).

Unfortunately 3 days before we left I broke my arm doing a cartwheel. So our first stop was Trail Hospital to get a cast! Well we drove and we drove and we drove... but my mom said that we had only been driving for 10 minutes (groan)!

We stayed in so many hotels. Some with pools and really nice continentals with bacon, eggs, cereal, and smoothies and yogurt and every breakfast thing you can think of. It was really great.

One night we stayed at a campground where it was super windy and our tent kept blowing down. We managed anyway though. In the morning we found out that great uncle Bill was dead. To make it back in time for the funeral, we had to drive 9 hours a day. Finally we arrived in Kapuskasing only an 11 hour drive to the funeral. My dad drove there with his mom (Fanny). My mom and brother and sister and I stayed at Fanny's house eating donuts, cream puffs and delicious monkey bread.

When my dad got back we drove to Blackrock campground close to Ottawa. We went swimming every day at the beach, caught frogs, lit fires and visited my grandma who lived ½ hour away. We were soon the only ones at the campground because it was already October. So we packed up and went to our friend Janer's in Ottawa. We stayed there for a while homeschooling, reading and playing with our cousins.

The night of Halloween my dad was puking and feeling sick. In the morning, my grandpa was there. He told us that my mom had taken my dad to the hospital because his appendix had exploded. So grandpa stayed home with us while my dad was in the hospital for 5 days. A few weeks later we were supposed to go to a resort in Pennsylvania but my dad was feeling too sick to go (even though he was recovering) so we deserted him in Ottawa while we went to Pennsylvania with my grandpa.

All day we played mermaids in the pool but if you walked through a waterfall you would suddenly be outside. It was so fun. The parents would try to pull us through the waterfall and try to capture us. Before we knew it we had to go because it was time to leave. We packed up and went back to Ottawa.

A few days after Christmas we packed up our stuff in Ottawa and started driving. Everyday we stayed in a different hotel and stopped at a different brew pub. My mom would yell at my dad 'DRIVE FAST so we can make it to the happy hour'! There was delicious food specials (and beer specials for my mom and dad).

When we drove through Colorado we went to many different hot springs. We even went to the biggest hot springs in the world! Above the water it was so foggy you could barely see your hand in front of your face. Below the water, you could see everything with goggles. It was so cool and hot! We also went hiking at many different National Parks. We went to the Grand Canyon. It was super colourful, big and pretty.

After a few weeks of driving we decided to stay in a small town in Colorado called Grand Junction. We made lots of delicious crepes (our first time making them). We also went to an awesome science museum with a miniature river and you could build mazes and manoeuver your boat through it.

Then we drove to a place called Eagle Point in Utah. We rented a little apartment at the ski hill and stayed there for 2 months skiing on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays (the hill was closed Tuesday to Thursday).

One week we decided to go to Vegas. We stayed in a fancy hotel and when we went to the restaurant inside the hotel for dinner, we had to pretend that my little sister was 8 (she was only 5) because they wouldn't let anyone under 8 in! For breakfast we had donuts. My mom went out and bought them before we woke up. They were delicious!

When the 2 months were up we drove to LA and booked a flight to Mexico. My dad found a woman on facebook who said she would keep our car while we were in Mexico and after a few months we would go back to LA, pick up our car along the coast of California and Canada and eventually end up in Yellowknife.

When my dad got to the building there was bars and then a door. The woman seemed nice enough but when she opened her door to her apartment, her place was a wreck. Empty cans and bottles everywhere. My dad said that he didn't need to come in, she could just show him the parking spot. She said that he had to come in to see the parking spot. So he went in. The worst decision of his life. Just kidding. She closed the door and then the bars...she showed him the parking spot but also her son's car! Apparently, it wasn't her spot that my dad's car would be parked in but another man's spot. My dad was going to say no but he knew he would not find another spot before the flight left. So he said yes and ran out the door. Then she started sending him LOVE LETTERS (by e-mail)!

When we got on the flight to Mexico, I managed to spill a cup of boiling hot coffee all over myself. It hurt.

We met our friends Christina, Jay and Kazy at the hotel. The next day we met our cousins, aunts and uncles at a taco stand. We then took a bus to Sayulita and stayed by the beach in a giant yellow house with a ping pong table on the roof. We went swimming and had mangos on a stick and the best popsicles. We went swimming in waves big enough to knock you over. It was awesome.

Three days later, we drove back to Puerto Vallarta and stayed at a nice resort with seven pools. We saw a lot of weird looking Iguanas and a crocodile that the people that worked at KFC fed french fries and KFC to. One day we went snorkeling and we saw a lot of colourful fish and eels. We even saw some whales when we were riding in the boat!

For our original plan we were going to get the car and drive home along the coast but since COVID struck while we were in Mexico, we had to fly straight to Vancouver.

When we landed in Vancouver, we drove straight to Kelowna and quarantined for 6 weeks at Lake Okanagan resort. We then drove to Grand Forks, where we used to live to pick up our other car that was filled with stuff and started driving to Yellowknife.

We stayed in fancy hotels with towels folded in to birds and Jacuzzis because my mom's work was paying! One hotel when you looked out the window, there was a stream about a foot wide. We had stick races and splash contests.

When we finally got to Yellowknife, we stayed in houses that we rented and suites until we found a house that we liked. To this day (Jan 31, 2021), our car is still stuck in LA. So this is what the lesson is: don't leave your car in LA with a crazy woman who is in love with you (when you have a family)!