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TRANSCRIPT - EPISODE 61 UK TRAVEL PLANNING **PODCAST**

Tracy Collins [00:00:01]:

In this week's episode, I chat with Lisa Olney, who in June spent 14 days exploring London and traveling around England with husband Ken. Lisa has a particular interest in Tudor history and English literature, which is reflected in their itinerary, which included destinations such as the Globe Theatre, stratford upon Avon, Canterbury, Hattoncourt Palace, Hever Castle, York, and Windsor Castle. I began by asking Lisa to introduce herself and tell us where she's from and who she traveled with on this trip.

Lisa Olney [00:01:14]:

My name is Lisa Olney. I'm from New Hampshire, USA, and I went on the trip with my husband Ken for two weeks.

Tracy Collins [00:01:22]:

Yeah. So whereabouts did you go in the UK?

Lisa Olney [00:01:25]:

So we kind of did this circle around London in a way. We went and we stayed in London for a few days and then we went to York, stratford on Avon, down to I think is it, Kingston, where Hampton Court is. Down to Canterbury and then back up to London.

Tracy Collins [00:01:45]:

Oh, cool. So, like a circular route. So is this the first time that you'd been to the UK, Lisa?

Lisa Olney [00:01:51]:

Yes, it is. We had had a trip planned since 2020 for our ten year anniversary. And of course, 2020 happened in some ways. We'd been planning this for three years. We had our planes booked and I had gotten a show at the Globe, and then everything got shut down. And then the following year our basement flooded, so it just kept getting pushed, so but I had never been I'd never been to Europe at all.

Tracy Collins [00:02:26]:

Okay, that's exciting. This is your first. Oh, wow. Are you going to go back? Did you enjoy it?

Lisa Olney [00:02:34]:

Oh, 100%, yeah, 100%. And I've traveled. I've been to Alaska, I've been to Hawaii.

Tracy Collins [00:02:40]:

So obviously the first trip for your husband as well, to Europe.

Lisa Olney [00:02:43]:

Yes.

Tracy Collins [00:02:45]:

Okay, so both of you first sound fantastic. So, obviously, if we've gone to a place for the first time and you don't know anything about it, how did you decide what you wanted to see? How did you kind of go, Right, those are the things we really want to do.

Lisa Olney [00:02:58]:

Yeah. So I'm a big tutor fan and I am a literature major, or I was a literature major and I'm a writer. Love literature. I'm actually going to be starting teaching high school this, so I for me, it was tutor and literary landmarks.

Tracy Collins [00:03:18]:

Wow.

Lisa Olney [00:03:18]:

Was kind of what the heart was because I love all things England. I just love British history. I love British literature. So that was kind of always been my goal. So that's how I picked. Yep.

Tracy Collins [00:03:35]:

Have you got a favorite?

Lisa Olney [00:03:37]:

I actually so I love the sisters. Yep. A lot of people. So it's like Austin or are you more Austin or you're more Bronte? I'm kind of the Bronte sisters.

Tracy Collins [00:03:49]:

Yeah. I must admit I'm a big brother. And heights. I love that whole fabulous. Absolutely fabulous. I like Jane Austen as well. Nothing against Jane Austin. Yes. If I had to have won, it'd be heights would always kind of win for me, I think.

Lisa Olney [00:04:03]:

Yeah. And so that actually is one of the places that did have to get cut off, because it just was a little too far out of the loop, was I wanted to go to their parsonage, but next trip well, you're not.

Tracy Collins [00:04:14]:

The only one, because I had to cut it out of my trip this year, and I really want to go, too. So Doug went. So Doug actually went, howard, I didn't go. So I'm going to be going in December for sure because he bought a ticket for I think it's a twelve month ticket and he's like, and you absolutely have to go. And I was kept asking him all the photos he was taking the videos and it looked amazing. But I unfortunately had to come out of my trip this year. So at least he did it. But yeah, it's hard, isn't it? When you try to decide where to go, you have to take things out, otherwise it becomes a bit crazy. So once you decided on the different places, I guess you obviously did some research and had a look at where the different areas were located. That helps, isn't it? To kind of look, okay, where are they? How did you then decide how to get around to those places?

Lisa Olney [00:04:57]:

So a big part of that, we originally were going to rent a vehicle but then we decided we really didn't want to mess with that. So when I found your podcast and I was listening all about the train information, I kind of assigned that to my husband to look up all the train information and that's what we did. Everything was on a train. And so the way I kind of started was I knew I wanted to see something at the Globe Theater. That was my dream. I started with trying to find a date for the theater. And then another big thing in my research is I saw that Windsor had some real I made sure I checked what time they were open and what days. And Windsor had some real strange, um and for some reason, they were closed an extra couple days out of the week. So what I ended up doing was kind of like it started with, okay, I know I'm going to the Globe to know, we actually saw Midsummer Night's Dream. And so I know we're going here on this date. I've got to do Windsor on this date. And then from there, we just checked where we could get trains and kind of connected the dots to all the places. And that's how we did it. Just looking a lot at the train information and and how to do it. So that's kind of what we did.

Tracy Collins [00:06:28]:

Did you do a tour of the Globe Theater as well?

Lisa Olney [00:06:31]:

I did. So the funny part about that was originally when I booked the tickets in 2020, I had gotten the package where it was like we were getting the tour, we got dinner, and then you had the show. This time it looks like they changed things up a little bit. And because of know, the change or the way I had to do my itinerary actually did Windsor in the morning, and then we did the Globe at seven at yeah. So I wasn't able to do the tour during the day, but towards the end of the trip, when we were kind of wrapping up, when we came back to London, it was sort of a couple days of like, what else do we want to see while we're here? And I looked it up and we weren't leaving till 06:00 that night. So on the last day, I was able to go and do the tour at the Globe. I'm like, they got an opening at ten. I'm there. And it was incredible.

Tracy Collins [00:07:21]:

Oh, that's fantastic. That's great to hear.

Lisa Olney [00:07:23]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:07:24]:

How long obviously, things got canceled in 2020, so you had to kind of wait. So you kind of already had your itinerary then, so you just had to tweak it for this time then I guess it was just looking at things that had changed.

Lisa Olney [00:07:35]:

Yeah. So really, I ended up by the time we got the tickets in 2020, like I said, I only planned very little, and that just was the Globe, and that was pretty much it. But this time it was really starting with a clean slate. And so I started in about when I said, I'm not saying no again, I am going this year. It was around December, so we started planning around then to come in June. We were there the same time you were, and it was just like I would be in York. You were in London.

Tracy Collins [00:08:12]:

It was funny. And the weather was had you know what? We had great weather because the weather has not been that great since it's basically rained, from what I gather wow. Since I came back, because my mom was like, well, you were here at the right time this year again, because it's rained every day, and I was like because I wanted to stay an extra month but couldn't because my daughter was graduating, so I wasn't missing that. So I came back to Australia and I was like, oh, it would have been really good to have stayed, but obviously couldn't. But it's quite a long wait to come back to Australia. And then she was like, well, since you left, it's just

rained. So I'm like, oh, well, that's all right then. I feel sorry for everybody that's there now. So I would love to apologize for the UK weather, but I can't because it's so unpredictable. You just never know what you're going to get.

Lisa Olney [00:08:55]:

Yeah. I mean, we know the umbrellas, the raincoat, the long pants. And I never wore long pants. It was always shorts. We had one rain when we were in York, we were at a restaurant and it started pouring and we had to run back to the yeah. And then the next day it was a little kind of misty, which was fine because we were traveling on the train to Stratford on Avon. And that was it. That was the only and then at Heaver, we got a little drizzle, but that was it. The whole rest of the time it was above 75 degrees was pretty good.

Tracy Collins [00:09:29]:

It was pretty good. So let's talk about some of the destinations that we went to and how you found. So we'll talk about I'm going to start with heaver, because I got to Heaver castle this year, which is the first time that I'd been and I went out with John England, who is one of our partners, and had an absolutely fantastic day. You know, if you've got places that you've always wanted to see and then it was amazing. Loved it. So you went to Heaver. What did you yeah.

Lisa Olney [00:09:54]:

Oh, I absolutely loved it. It was fantastic. And it wasn't that, actually. And it was fun. I don't know how you got there, but we took the train from London and so we did the whole footpath. You can take the footpath and it goes through the back and through fields, and then you're like, hanging out with sheep in the field and we're like, Are we going in the right direction? We're in the middle of nowhere. But it was so much fun. And I just kept thinking, like, take it in, Lisa. This is great. And it's so beautiful. I love how you can go and you can bring your own mean. You can easily spend a whole day. Yeah, it was beautiful. They did have part of it was cordoned off because they were filming okay something, but I don't know what it was. And they weren't actively shooting anything at that time. But part of the gardens towards where there's like a lake or pond in the back, that part was shut off.

Tracy Collins [00:10:56]:

They do a lot of weddings down there as well.

Lisa Olney [00:10:58]:

Oh, I can imagine. It's beautiful. Oh, my gosh. But no, I loved it. And see, again, like I said, I'm the big Tutor fan, so it's like I wanted to read every painting, everything that was there, and we were lucky because we got to see the Thomas Cromwell, his book of ours.

Tracy Collins [00:11:21]:

Yes.

Lisa Olney [00:11:22]:

So I was just in there staring and staring. It was phenomenal. It was a phenomenal experience. I was so lucky to see that.

Tracy Collins [00:11:30]:

I think when I was there, they had Boleyn's prayer book, and I should remember who asked us.

Lisa Olney [00:11:36]:

Yes, catherine of Aragon's, because we just missed that.

Tracy Collins [00:11:40]:

I went out with Don Tehiva, which was just amazing. I had a fantastic day trip out with him. Yeah. So I didn't have to worry about kind of getting from the train station, because I know, yeah, I'd have to walk, organize a taxi. Another place that you went to which I wanted to ask you about was Stratford Ponhaven. So my mom lives not very far from Stratford.

Lisa Olney [00:11:57]:

That was actually my favorite. Like, I liked that better than loved. It wasn't as busy. It has a completely different feel, but it was absolutely beautiful. I loved how you had there's the tutor part, but then it feels like modern in other ways. And we did the whole bit. We started in the morning and we did his birthplace, and then we got on oh, hop on, hop off. Bus tour in Stratford on Avon was awesome. If you want to go out to the Anne Hathaway's cottage, unless you're an uber person, which we're not, like, we're not uber peoples. But when we found that there was that bus, it was great, took us out, and the narrator on there tells you all this fun folklore stuff and history of words. It was just so great. And we did that, and then we came back, we did New Place, which it was okay, I felt I had to go there, know, a literature major, but if you're not super into Shakespeare, I'd say you could skip the Guild. Then we did the Guild must. That was a must. And then we made it over to his grave. And then at night we sat and we had drinks upon Avon. It was one of my favorite places. And we stayed at the White Swan, and it was really cool because they have these character rooms, and we lucked out the room, if anybody goes there, ask for it. I think it was twelveTH night, and it was a huge room. They call it a character room, and that was its theme. And it was a really big room. It had a couch, it had one of those big tubs, and it had air conditioning, and it was weird because you knew it's this mix of modern convenience, but really cool, rustic, so it was a lot of fun. I liked that. I enjoyed that.

Tracy Collins [00:13:58]:

That sounds amazing. And Stratford. The first time actually, I ever visited Stratford. I had friends visiting, actually, from Botswana. They came to visit me in the UK. And I took them down to Stratford. It was before my mum moved down that way. And we did the Hop on hop off bus and it was brilliant because that's the best way to get out to Anne Hathaway's court. It was a bit further out, so it was a great way to do it. And I actually, for the first time, actually went in Anne Hathaway's house this time, because that time we just did the trip round to look at it, but I actually went this year and had a look inside. Oh, what a fantastic place to visit.

Lisa Olney [00:14:34]:

It is know, it was brilliant.

Tracy Collins [00:14:37]:

And also Stratford itself is just a lovely, lovely town to walk around. And I'm trying to think where we went into the actual theatre and you can go upstairs and get a fantastic view over Stratford itself. So that's also worth doing to get that kind of kind of view over the whole town or a city, I'm not quite sure. So you get that whole view and Stratford 20 OD, years ago, I think it's fairly recent. They just actually pedestrianized. That Main Street. Before that, cars used to come down, it was crazy. Now it's so much better because you can walk it.

Lisa Olney [00:15:11]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:15:12]:

And you were lucky to see Shakespeare's grave. I was there and there was a wedding on, so we couldn't get into.

Lisa Olney [00:15:17]:

The oh, no, actually, this is awful and embarrassing. You could edit this out if you want, but we were there, and I go in, I'm all excited and this guy's talking to me and he's telling me about there was an organist that was practicing and telling me all about it. And I'm letting him talk because I figure anybody must just love to tell you about stuff that isn't Shakespeare. You know what I mean? Like, everybody knows you're going there for Shakespeare. So I was trying to be super polite, and I happened to reach down, and I was like something, like, touched my leg. And I look well, I had gotten a bug bite or something. And I'm standing there, and I'm trying not to cover the bleeding. I'm, like, still talking to him. And I didn't know what to do. And so I said to my husband, I was like, I'm just letting the guy talk and I'm nodding and I looked at my husband and I'm like, can you take a picture of his grave, the bust or whatever? And he's like, yeah. And so I

finally kind of managed to get out of there and then I had to laugh because I'm out and I had like, blood on my hands. I'm like, oh, Lady Macbeth.

Tracy Collins [00:16:28]:

That'S brilliant. You got to be literary connection.

Lisa Olney [00:16:34]:

Yeah. Literally, I'm like, Jeez, you know, here I am, I'm bleeding at Shakespeare's grave. We laugh so hard and these ladies were so nice and they got me, I guess it's not a bandaid, it's a plastic. Yeah, she had one and I still have one of them and I'm going to put it in a little frame. It just cracks me up. But it was just so funny. So that was just a real funny.

Tracy Collins [00:16:57]:

But it's brilliant, because those are fantastic memories. That's what I'm saying. Not only did you go and you saw Shakespeare's grave, but you've got a great story to go with it, too.

Lisa Olney [00:17:05]:

Yeah, I do.

Tracy Collins [00:17:08]:

Traveling, isn't it? It's like, we go to see the places which we really want to see, and that's fabulous. But it's the stories that go around. And I would say it's a human interest when you meet other people and make those connections. And those things that you remember, I think, just are so special. So you talked about accommodation, the accommodation you had in Stratford. Obviously, you really liked that. Was there any other accommodation that you stayed in that you're kind of like, wow, this is amazing?

Lisa Olney [00:17:33]:

Yes, I highly recommend I wrote it down. The Cathedral Gate Hotel in where was I?

Tracy Collins [00:17:43]:

Canterbury.

Lisa Olney [00:17:44]:

Yes. Thank you. Thank you. It's right next to the gate. It's in a great location. And then there's a restaurant. You look out over the square, and if you're lucky, like we were, we actually had they gave us a room where there was a view. You could see the top of the cathedral.

Tracy Collins [00:18:06]:

Wow.

Lisa Olney [00:18:06]:

And even if you don't get that room, they have this patio, like, in between. Because one thing that I did learn, what was interesting about going to different inns and hotels in England, was how it was, like, always amazed to get to your room. It's not like the traditional hotel, where you go down and it's just door, door, door. It's like you go down the hall to the left, up half a stair to the left. It was everywhere we went.

Tracy Collins [00:18:33]:

That is so true.

Lisa Olney [00:18:35]:

Yeah. And this one, there's no elevator, there's no lift. Because we were there for two weeks. We didn't take a little bag. We did take a medium sized bag. But anyway so even if you don't get a room that has a view, they have a patio, like a rooftop patio, and that looks out up on the top of the cathedral. So we sat out and had wine. This was the first time it calls itself a hotel, but really it was an inn, and they were so nice. And the lady's son was like our bartender, but also checked us in. It's just the coolest experience. I'd never stayed at inns or guest houses until this trip, and I knew that was a must to experience it.

Tracy Collins [00:19:25]:

That's one thing I do recommend. Stay in the guest houses, inns, b B, meet the local people. It's the best way to do it. Get the local you know, I usually stay in hotels in London, but once I get out of Just, I try and stay in the B B's guest houses because you just get a taste of kind of the local environment. You can ask them as well, where's the best place for me to eat where's the tips? What are the things I need to know when I'm visiting this particular place? They'll tell you all of that because they know it all, they live there. What about, obviously, you visited Canterbury Cathedral. How was that?

Lisa Olney [00:20:03]:

Beautiful? It was absolutely beautiful. And I think that was one of the things that I put in my Facebook post about how I forget how many steps we said we were, and it was like we saw, I

think, total counting. I mean, what York's a minster? But I think total at least, like, four, five cathedrals I feel like we were in during the whole trip, but that one was just stunning. And I had to go. The connection with Canterbury Tales, and I know it's fictional, but still, it just has so much history and we just kept walking into these places like the Tower and Canterbury Cathedral and Hampton Court, and just going like these walls. You're touching a wall that's been there for years, hundreds of years, and it blows my mind. I mean, in New England, the oldest house we have is like, 200 years old, you know what I mean? And so that was one of the things that really was touching about Canterbury, was the history. Each place just had this real feeling of history and vibration to it, just like Westminster Abbey. I can't wait to go back and see. We decided we'd like to go back and go in, like, November, right?

Tracy Collins [00:21:27]:

Yeah.

Lisa Olney [00:21:28]:

And Westminster Abbey is going to be a must to re go to so that I can try and go. Not in so many crowds. It was rough and we were there right when it opened, but it just didn't matter. The second, like, that rush went through, it was so hard.

Tracy Collins [00:21:45]:

It's always very busy. I'll get there in December again, because I always go to west. It doesn't matter how many times I go to Westminster and I've done so many tours around there. Always learn something new and see something new and find out something. Oh, that's really interesting. And this time I actually did the Queen's Jubilee Galleries upstairs, which was fascinating. Absolutely fantastic. I wish you take photos, but you're not allowed to. But gosh, that was amazing up there.

Lisa Olney [00:22:08]:

Yes, we did that. And I was going to say highly recommend that. That was fantastic. Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:22:14]:

You know what? I don't think a lot of people go up there, but really, seriously, go to Westminster. You have to go up there. You absolutely have to go. Yeah.

Lisa Olney [00:22:20]:

I was shocked. It was not even busy up there, like, compared to what we left. When we went, I was like, Holy moly. Nobody wanted to spend was it like an extra ten pounds? It wasn't even that much more.

Tracy Collins [00:22:32]:

Exactly. And absolutely. You've got to add that to your Westminster Abbey experience. 100% I don't know how many abbeys and cathedrals and minister ministers, because I took my mom to Bath for her 80th birthday. And so I took her to the Roman Baths first, and we came out and she went, oh, have you got tickets to go to Bath Abbey? And I went, oh, I didn't know if you wanted to go into it. Oh, yes, let's queue up. So I went in. So that was another one. It was like, okay, brilliant. Add that to my list. I haven't actually climbed with the tower there, but I went in when I took some nice photos, so that was really good.

Lisa Olney [00:23:08]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:23:09]:

You know something? I think that's what specials when you go and you go into all these places and you know the history or you've learned about the history, you've studied about the history obviously you know the tutors and you go and you're, like walking in the same place that Anne Bolin walked in, know where Henry VI has been, know all these people that you read about, and, you know, I have a real thing about being able to just feel that presence in the past. You know what I mean? You can feel it there, exudes it from the walls, doesn't it?

Lisa Olney [00:23:39]:

Yes.

Tracy Collins [00:23:39]:

So if you really want to get kind of in touch with that history and feel what it's like, those are the places to go to 100%.

Lisa Olney [00:23:48]:

You said it. Exactly. And I feel that 100%, and especially that was one of the things I said about going to Shakespeare. These people you read about and you hear about, but they're still somewhere else in your head. They're in books, they're in your head. But then when you go and you see that where they're buried or where they've lived, and it just becomes so much real. Everything became so much real to me after seeing it, and it just makes me want to jump in even more. And I'm like, I want to go back and get my history degree. Um I loved it. And learning about all the history even opened it opened my mind in so many ways. Windsor was like that. Windsor? I just I couldn't wait. Well, the funny part about Windsor is that I made a beeline for St. George's Chapel, and not because it's where Harry and Meghan got married, but

because Henry VI is buried in had. I went right there because it said, sometimes it can close after one. So I was like, I'm not messing around. I'm going there. And we were so lucky. I had no idea that we were going to be able to pay our respects to the queen, the late queen. I had no idea. Because you see it on the TV and you literally I'm like, oh, I knew that underneath that's where Henry VI would be. I didn't realize they would actually have the know. I guess they're crypt.

Tracy Collins [00:25:28]:

Yes.

Lisa Olney [00:25:29]:

I had no idea. So that was a pleasant surprise that we got to do that, too.

Tracy Collins [00:25:33]:

So you obviously went to the Tower of London.

Lisa Olney [00:25:36]:

Yeah, we did that and we did one of the water tours. We should have got it sooner because by the time we got to, it was already like a hundred people per group going through. But that was another place we spent all day there. And one thing I am so thankful for is that originally some people had said, sure, you could probably do the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey in a day, but I'm glad that I didn't, because the way you got to worry about being there at 03:00 or whatever your time is in the afternoon, we would have felt rushed. And I'm just so grateful that we didn't do that because we spent just about all day at the Tower of London.

Tracy Collins [00:26:21]:

Sometimes it's good to give yourself that kind of flexibility. Say if you give yourself you've got something like the Tower of London booked in in the morning, and if you've got the time in your itinerary to not have anything that you have to have booked in, that you've got to be there specifically, it's easier because otherwise you're clock watching the whole time. And we can only spend such and such a length of time here because we need to leave. So it's good to have that you had that ability to stay because you can easily spend like three, 4 hours in the Tower of London. And I say that when people say, oh yeah, an hour, is that enough? No, it's not enough. Definitely not enough.

Lisa Olney [00:26:53]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:26:54]:

And I was really lucky this year that I did the Ceremony of the Keys. And honestly, honestly, if you get the opportunity to go back to London, I highly recommend you do. It really made such an impression on me. Having the time with the Yeoman water. Was just 14 of us with the Yeoman water for an hour and a half. He took us into the chapel and talked about all the different things in the chapel. Obviously you can see where Anne Berlin's buried, and he just told us so much of the history that I wouldn't have known. Like he said, it's difficult to do that when you've got 30,000 people through the Tower London in a day. Even when they do those in the morning, they can't give you that level of detail and we could ask them questions and then we got to see the actual ceremony of the Keys, which there's no video photography, nothing is allowed. It's been going on for 700, 800 years now, this ceremony. So every single night it's gone on. So you get to see something that is historic. Your name gets written in the book at Tower London. It really was the highlight of my trip to London this year, so I know definitely would recommend next time you go back that you do that. Really?

Lisa Olney [00:27:56]:

100%. Yeah. No, I would love that.

Tracy Collins [00:28:00]:

It was so special. So special. Really was. So it was good. So. We're going to swivel the topic away about food. Was there any particular did anywhere that you ate that you enjoyed? I don't know if you're foodies or not, but was there anything that you ate that you enjoyed? Places you went, you thought, oh, this is great.

Lisa Olney [00:28:19]:

Yeah. So we're not big foodies. We're very much pub people. And so what actually happened is when we went to Greenwich, so what we did end up doing is we did Westminster Abbey in the morning and then took a boat up to Greenwich to go. My husband was in the Coast Guard, so we went to the Naval Museum up there and we went into this pub and we went into one place. It was kind of like posh. And we were like, man, weren't feeling the vibe. And then we went down and we found something we were looking a little more for, and it was what they call the Green King Pub, I guess. And we started to realize, I think, that somebody had told us how breweries own a certain amount of pubs in and around anyway, so we loved it. My husband's favorite beer levelhead, he fell in love with that beer. And actually my favorite was there, too. I think it's the Abbott. And we had fish and chips and it was fantastic. And so we started noticing these other Green King pubs. So by the end of the day, a lot of times we just went into one that was Green King because we knew what we were going to get. We knew the quality was going to be great. We knew the service was going to be we were never disappointed. There was one that was in London that was a little and but other than that so we kind of did that. Yeah. But we actually were able to in to we did a was in it's a famous spot, the Guy Fox Inn.

Tracy Collins [00:30:10]:

Yes, we had a Sunday.

Lisa Olney [00:30:13]:

Yeah. So that was great. That was like a nice pub. And I just fell in love with okay, you're going to have to help me say it. Is it halumi fries?

Tracy Collins [00:30:22]:

Halloumi fries?

Lisa Olney [00:30:23]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:30:23]:

Halloumi fries.

Lisa Olney [00:30:24]:

Yeah. That was my favorite. Halloumi fries and steak pies. And I was a little bummed because I wanted to like Yorkshire pudding, but I didn't love it. And so I was bummed because it just looks so yummy.

Tracy Collins [00:30:42]:

It is yummy. Yorkshire pudding. I always have Yorkshire pudding on it. If I do a roast dinner, you have to have the need a lot of gravy. Lots of gravy, yes. Yorkshire pudding. It depends. I mean, I always think the smaller ones are better. Sometimes these places you go, they're trying to make these massive, huge Yorkshire puddings that are like half the size of the plate, and I think they're less tasty. So I don't know if you had really one of these huge ones, I always say go for the smaller Yorkshire puns. They're much right. They're really good.

Lisa Olney [00:31:12]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:31:13]:

But that's good that you did the whole pub culture and vibe and had your beer and enjoyed all of that. Because some of the places you go, you can go order at the bar, and then other places you have to go and sit down, and then you figure out what you want, then you can order at the go and order the bar. And there's a few more of these kind of, like scan apple things where you can kind of order on your phone.

Lisa Olney [00:31:32]:

Yes. In fact, one of the questions you had said was, there something that surprised us, and we were surprised that there were no seats at the bars, like, in our vision was like, oh, we just want to sit up in a bar, because they were all the go up order. Order your food, order your drinks. And then they find your table and we're like, oh, is this COVID? They're like, no, this is how we do it. And we loved it. We loved it because here in the States, they just want turnover tables. Turnover tables. And you never feel like you can just sit there and enjoy your drink. But there it was the best. Our food always came in a reasonable time frame. I think the funniest thing that happened was that our credit cards kept alerting that we got double charged, because you do, because you go up there and every time you go up, it's like 15 one, and then the next time, 15 one. So they kept seeing it because of all the things. But we loved that was one of our favorite favorite things, is the way the pubs are set up out there.

Tracy Collins [00:32:37]:

The train system obviously moving around quite a lot. How did you manage that?

Lisa Olney [00:32:40]:

Yeah, so that was when I made all the arrangements, or my husband actually made most of those. What I wasn't thinking about was that I would put in, like, oh, York to Stratford on Avon, and the train line app, and it's like, oh, yeah. But what I didn't realize is there were, know, three changes in, like so that we didn't quite plan for. The hardest one, actually, was York to Stratford on Avon, because we went to Birmingham and then actually had to change a yeah. Which we probably missed a sign that there was a walkway to it. So we kind of went a different around. The trains were had we didn't have the small carry on bags. We had, like, ones that were more medium. And it wasn't that bad. I think the most times we got a little nervous was when we knew we had to take it on the Tube. The Tube. Thank you. Yeah. The tube. That because sometimes those would go by and you're like, Where am I going to stand? That was the one time. And then the trains, there was one, and I'm trying to remember which one it was, but some like, only the one to York were we able to put our bags on the top. It didn't fit anywhere else on the other train. We had to have it right next to us. And I wasn't sure what the attitude was when your luggage basically takes up a know. But we tried to there was like I can't remember, maybe it was on the way I think it was on the way to Canterbury. And there was one, and I realized it was so busy because it passes by where the tunnel or where the Paris line goes through even further down. Like there's some tell you what, today.

Tracy Collins [00:34:35]:

My mind's got duguness.

Lisa Olney [00:34:37]:

Yeah, but it's on that way, towards it's only like Ashford. Yes. And I think that one we're like, wow. We weren't expecting it to be so busy, but that's why. So that one we were kind of, like, squished a little bit with our bags, but we did it, and we did it. And if we had gotten any bigger of a suitcase, it would not have been fun. And sometimes rolling over the cobblestones. That's another yeah, that can be one right there.

Tracy Collins [00:35:06]:

I think some European cities have actually banned wheelie suitcases because the cobblestones actually say that.

Lisa Olney [00:35:11]:

Oh, wow.

Tracy Collins [00:35:12]:

Yeah, I know. It's one of those things when you pack your stuff and you think, okay, I know I'm going to have to be traveling by train, and I'm going from A to B to CZ, so how can I minimize what I take to make it as easy as possible? But, yeah, it is hard. And we've done, obviously, a lot of traveling by train. And it's trying to find on some of the trains, you can't find the room to put it above or it doesn't fit, so you've got to leave at the end of the carriage. So I try to sit near it. And sometimes if it's not busy, I've put the luggage kind of beside my legs so it fits in. I know sometimes if it's a really busy train, they'll say, if you've got a bag on your seat, could you move it so other people can sit there? But generally they'll say that. But yeah, it can be a bit difficult if you've got a lot of luggage. I always say to people, try and minimize what you can if you're going to be doing that kind of that train travel aspect of it. But I'm glad you did it by train.

Lisa Olney [00:36:06]:

Yeah, no, 100%. And we studied, like I studied the Facebook group, the UK Travel Planning Facebook group all the time on really studied on what can you fit in a small case? What can you fit in a medium where it goes on the train? And ultimately, we just had to kind of do. There was just no way for 14 days. We're not the kind of traveler that can fit 14 days of stuff in the little carry on. So that wasn't happening.

Tracy Collins [00:36:34]:

It's all right. Me neither. I'm trying to and especially, I mean, I was there for three months. I could leave some stuff at Mom's, but I had to keep going back. But even still, it was hard. But it's like, sometimes you see people with massive, huge suitcases and I'm like, oh, no, that's not I wouldn't want to do that. Definitely not, no. So I know we kind of briefly touched on it before, but anything else that surprised you about? Because obviously it's the first visit to Europe, first visit to the UK. Was there anything that surprised you that you didn't expect?

Lisa Olney [00:37:05]:

I think one of the things that I wasn't prepared for were the crowds. Right. It was much busier than I had anticipated. And I've done the whole Disney World lines and Disney World crowds. I've been to Boston on the 4 July, and it is crazy, but it was really crazy in London. I know we're from up here in New Hampshire in the country, but I was a little overwhelmed at times. And actually, for 14 days straight together, my husband and I did fantastic. There were a couple of times where you could tell it was just hot. There were a lot of people and you're like, I don't know where you want me to go.

Tracy Collins [00:37:56]:

It was busy.

Lisa Olney [00:37:58]:

Yeah, it was busy.

Tracy Collins [00:37:59]:

It was busy in April. It was busy. I was in London in April and I'd never seen it as busy. I was a bit shocked. That was just before the Coronation. I was like, this is crazy. And it stayed busy. And I think it's just this people couldn't travel and now everybody's traveling. I think it's happened in lots of kind of popular places around the world, but it did feel at one point that everybody in the world was actually in London. I know, it felt actually like everybody in the world was in Westminster Abbey with me. I have to tell you.

Lisa Olney [00:38:24]:

Yes, I felt the same way now. And the day we went to Westminster Abbey, that was the busiest we'd seen it on the streets. Now, there was the day we were there for the trooping of the guard trooping of the trooping of the were there. That was the day we went to Westminster. So I don't know whether everybody got pushed out of that area and into closer to Westminster Abbey. I don't know what it was, but that one was like pure chaos.

Tracy Collins [00:38:53]:

I got out of London that day. In fact, Doug was going to go, because I said, oh, you could go and do the tribun of the collar. And I went to Paris for the day, but he said no, and he went off to Lila White for the day. I cannot imagine how busy it would have been around Westminster on the day of the troopin'of. The colour. Oh, my.

Lisa Olney [00:39:13]:

I mean, and we didn't, like we didn't know how big of a thing it would be. And it just happened to be something that I noticed when I did the itinerary, that it showed up some research. It showed up that it might have even been mentioned in one of your podcasts, too. And so I was like, oh, that's there. But the cool thing is, as soon as we were done with Westminster, that's when we made a beeline for the yeah. And while we were on the boat up the Thames, we got the air show.

Tracy Collins [00:39:42]:

Oh, perfect. Wow. There you yeah.

Lisa Olney [00:39:45]:

Yeah. So that was amazing. The poor guy on the boat, though, trying to do the tour. I don't know why he just didn't give up and be like, I'll just come back when it's done.

Tracy Collins [00:39:56]:

He kept going, oh, that's funny.

Lisa Olney [00:39:59]:

And that uber boat, we took the uber boat on the way back from Thing. That is awesome.

Tracy Collins [00:40:05]:

Yeah, the boat's excellent. I do say to people, because obviously everybody always thinks about the Tube or catching the London buses, but go down the Thames, you can see you get great views of the bridges and views of London skyline and London, the buildings that you're obviously not going to see when you're walking up close to them. And I'm glad you went down to Greenwich. That's always a favorite of mine. I did fit in a day in Greenwich again this trip. I always go down there. The Naval Hall is my particular favorite. The Painted Hall. It's fantastic. Oh, so, yeah, I'm glad that you managed to get down to that. That's really good.

Lisa Olney [00:40:39]:

Yeah. We didn't stand on the whole prime meridian because there was another line for that. By the time we made it up the hill, it was so hot and we were like, we must have walked over the Primeridian at some point around.

Tracy Collins [00:40:51]:

Absolutely. Absolutely. You definitely would have done. So is there anything, Lisa, next time that when you're planning trip that you would do differently?

Lisa Olney [00:41:01]:

I think maybe we would like to try trying to do a like as like a home kind of but we had never done that before, and we're like, I'm not picking my first trip to Europe to mess with that. I had never done it. I haven't done it in the States. We haven't done it there. So that was one thing. When I read that question to my husband, that's what he said. Maybe doing that, but even when we're already thinking of our next trip there, I don't even think that's going to work. Because there's so many things we want to see that I just don't think that's. So maybe the other piece of advice would be just make sure. Or one thing I would do differently is just making sure I planned my train trips just a little more in mind. Realizing that also means you're going to miss a half a that don't forget. So trying to do that and maybe extending it. We were lucky. Everywhere we went, we stayed two nights, except London was longer, but it was just enough to get there, do what you have to do and go.

Tracy Collins [00:42:06]:

Yeah, that's good. And you did plan a really the way you planned it was really good in terms of doing that circular route as well, so you got the best out of it. And also you get to see the countryside when you're on the train, which is yes, yes.

Lisa Olney [00:42:18]:

It was beautiful. Very beautiful.

Tracy Collins [00:42:20]:

Well, that's good. I always end with one question, so what is the one tip that you would give to anybody who's planning their visit to the UK for the first time?

Lisa Olney [00:42:30]:

Okay, so be prepared for crowds.

Tracy Collins [00:42:33]:

Can you tell?

Lisa Olney [00:42:33]:

I was a little thrown by the crowds and cues? Have patience, but book whatever you can early.

Tracy Collins [00:42:39]:

Yeah.

Lisa Olney [00:42:40]:

So I think the best thing was I was so grateful that Windsor Castle, the Tower and all of those places that we booked online ahead of time and didn't have to stand in the line where you didn't have tickets and pick your times. You can pick your time that you go in the timed entry. It's not necessarily a guarantee, I would kind of let everybody know that, but at least it gives you something to go by. But, yeah, I would say anything you can do online ahead of time, 100% do.

Tracy Collins [00:43:17]:

Thanks so much, Lisa, for coming on the podcast. It was great to talk to you.

Lisa Olney [00:43:21]:

Yes, no, it was great. Thanks for having me.

Tracy Collins [00:43:24]:

Thanks once again to Lisa for joining me on this week's episode. You can find information and links to all the places Lisa mentioned in this week's Show Notes@uktravelplanning.com episode 61. If you've enjoyed this episode and would like to support our work, you could become a podcast sponsor from as little as \$3 a month. You can find more information via the Show Notes and receive a shout out in a future podcast episode. That just leaves me to say for this week happy UK travel planning.