

Wessex Continental Travel 2020





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Introduction

We are pleased to present our programme for 2020

We look forward to our 46th year of arranging travel for our discerning clientele. As we've always done, our aim is to arrange relaxing, value-for-money holidays with nice company, interesting excursions, good food and accommodation and above all, with no-hassle. As simple as that!

ABOUT US

We have been operating holidays since 1974 and we are totally independent, don't belong to any associations or have any connection with any other company or organisation. We have no debt. We don't borrow and have neither the need nor the intention to do so in future.

THE COACHES

Our tours will be in modern vehicles fitted with reclining seats, toilet and drinks machines. The coaches have seat belts and most are air conditioned. The coach travels all the way (unless otherwise stated). We operate a non smoking policy on board the coach.

SEAT ALLOCATION

This is made at the time of booking. We will try and satisfy specific requests but ordinarily you will be seated in order of acceptance of booking from front to rear. We never place anyone in the back seats unless they have requested them or without notifying you that they are all that remain.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Sadly we have no control over this and usually we subsidise the rate charged to us. If you pay the single supplement you will always have a room to yourself and where applicable, a cabin to yourself. You will never be required to share.

TOUR ESCORT

On some tours we will have a Tour Escort but increasing costs have caused us to limit this aspect these days.

Their prime function is to ensure that the trip runs smoothly, they are not employed as local historical experts.

PAYMENT

We take a deposit of £50 per person for tours of at least 5 days' duration and £20 for short breaks. The balance is normally requested a month before departure. We charge 2% of the balance cost for the use of credit or debit cards.

THE SAILING TO SANTANDER

Our crossings to Spain are based on sailings on the flagship cruise-ferry "Pont Aven" and a 2-berth cabin with shower and WC is provided. On board this excellent 40,000 tonne vessel are many facilities to enhance your journey – swimming pool, live music, live cabaret, fine dining, self-service restaurant, coffee shop, two cinemas showing the latest films, shops, piano bar and sun deck.

Alternative cabin options:

A 4-berth cabin for exclusive use of 2 persons costs an extra £90 per cabin, return. If you'd like an outside 4-berth cabin it can be arranged for an extra £50 per cabin return (i.e. a total of £140 return). There are NO 2-bedded cabins on the ship i.e. cabins with 2 ground berths. If you need ground berths you have to request a 4-berth cabin for 2 persons and pay the supplement shown above. All Single Supplements include sole use of a 2-berth cabin. There are NO 2-berth outside cabins available. We cannot obtain Club Class, De Luxe or Commodore Class cabins.

THE HOTELS AND CATERING

All rooms will have private facilities i.e. toilet and bath/shower. Generally, buffet breakfast is always provided and on tours with half board, dinner is also provided usually with wine included. The wine is not unlimited and usually follows the convention of a quarter bottle of wine per person. You can purchase more if you wish.

On the vast majority of coach holidays dinner is normally a set meal for the group but dietary variations can usually be accommodated within reason. You should note that in countries bordered by the Atlantic, fish is commonly served. We limit any fish dinners to a maximum of two per tour.

Other dinners reflect the country in which we travel and we ensure that no bizarre local tastes (snails, razor shells etc etc) are served.

THE EXCURSIONS

All the excursions described in the brochure are completely free of charge.

BOARDING THE SHIPS

We have no control whatsoever of this process. We are obliged to follow the instructions of the ferry company. Usually passengers have to walk on and off the ships but sometimes this is changed without prior notice.

If you have walking difficulties you must notify us at the time of booking and we will be able to ensure that you go on board in the coach.

France Brittany Breaks

Christmas Brittany Break

This is a good opportunity for a relaxing break after all the Christmas shopping has been done and before the arduous Christmas festivities begin. It's also a chance to stock up with some keenly priced French goodies, wines, cheeses, etc and enjoy a typical French dinner before departing. We are often asked why we follow the same programme each year. It's simple - it works!

Given the time frame in which we operate, it enables us to do everything we want without rushing around and spending any more time in the coach than necessary especially at this time of year. We've been very lucky in the past few years as the weather has been kind to us allowing us to have an open air picnic. We can't bank on that! Remember too that this is not a holiday, it's just a break in the hectic business of preparing for Christmas, an opportunity to relax and let the world go by for a while and watch someone else do the work!

Friday - We pick up as indicated below and proceed to Millbay Docks where we board the "Armorique" for the overnight sailing to France. A Reclining seat is provided for everyone (though cabin upgrades are available). The ship sails at 2200.

Saturday - We land at Roscoff at 0800 (French time) and after everyone is aboard our coach we set off the short drive to Morlaix. It's market day in the town and we'll give you plenty of time to search out the bargains or just take in the atmosphere. Late morning, we'll board the coach and set off the little resort of Carantec where we'll park by the beach and we'll serve some nibbles and drinks (if the weather is poor we'll go inland to the lake at Huelgoat.

After this interlude we now return to Morlaix and we visit the Hypermarket in the mid-afternoon. Our next port of call is Red Cash where there is a better variety of International drinks and good prices. From here we will drive to Taulé and Relais des Primeurs where we will have our dinner. This will be a typically French dinner with wine but not Christmas-oriented as you'll no doubt see enough of those in the coming weeks! The final leg of our journey is back to Roscoff to catch the overnight sailing to Plymouth.

Sunday - We arrive in England at 0800 and after disembarkation the coach returns to the original pick up points.

The cost includes: travel by executive coach; return ferry crossing with reclining seat; excursion in Brittany; drinks and nibbles on the coach; dinner with wine at a local restaurant.

Departure date: (subject to confirmation of ferry schedule) December 11th 2020 £109

Optional supplements: (Return price for the cabin, not per person)

2-berth cabin - £60; 4-berth cabin - £80

Pick up points: Exeter - Newton Abbot - Torquay - Ivybridge - Plymouth Home Park (Free car parking) - Millbay Docks



France Brittany Breaks

St Valentine's Day Concarneau 4 days

It is always good to have a theme and in 2020 this special day falls conveniently for us to offer a visit to Concarneau somewhat similar to the last one about 6 years ago.

Thursday - We set off and sail overnight from Plymouth to Roscoff. A 2-berth cabin is provided.

Friday - On arrival in France we drive southwards to Concarneau where it is market day. We'll spend the morning in the port area and make our way to the Hotel de l'Océan in the early afternoon. After checking in, the rest of the day is yours to do as you wish. There is an indoor pool and jacuzzi for your pleasure. In the evening we'll have a special St Valentine's dinner.

Saturday - We leave the hotel and spend some time in Quimper where it is market day. In the early afternoon we resume our drive stopping en route at picturesque Huelgoat (bearing in mind it is February!) for refreshment before continuing to the outskirts of Morlaix and the Hypermarket. From here we proceed to Taulé where we have dinner at the Relais des Primeurs. We now continue to Roscoff and the overnight sailing to England. Once again, a 2-berth cabin is included.

Sunday - We reach Plymouth at 0800 and the coach returns to the original pick up points.

(The cost includes travel by executive coach; two overnight sailings with a 2-berth cabin(4-berth cabin is available for £25 extra); one night breakfast and dinner with wine; another dinner with wine).

Departure date: February 13th Cost £249

Single Supplement £75

Pick up points; Exeter-Newton Abbot-Torquay-Paignton-Ivybridge-Plymouth



Lannion and the Steam Train 4 days

This short break will take you to the North East of Finistere and to the gateway of the Cotes d'Armor region. The rugged coastline is interspersed by sandy beaches and rocky outcrops. The highlight will be a ride along the banks of the River Trieux by old fashioned steam train. We stay in Lannion near the town centre in a 3 Hotel Ibis where we have a buffet breakfast and dinner with wine.*

Thursday - We set off and sail overnight from Plymouth to Roscoff. A 2-berth cabin is provided.

Friday - On arrival in France we drive eastwards to Morlaix where we will stop and you can take some refreshment and do some sightseeing in this old market town. We continue in the early afternoon and make our way to Lannion where we'll check into the hotel for 2 nights. The rest of the day is free to explore this pleasant market town which is home to NASA's satellite tracking operation. Dinner and overnight at the Ibis.

Saturday - We leave the hotel and drive to Paimpol, a fishing port and popular resort. Here we'll board "La Vapeur du Trieux" for our train trip. The ride takes an hour and 20 minutes which includes a stop in the woods where you'll disembark to enjoy a glass of cider and a crepe whilst listening to some live Breton folk music. The train continues to Pontrieux, a pretty little village on the river. Here we'll meet the coach again and there will be time for sightseeing before we return to Lannion. Our last event of the day will be a visit to the local Hypermarket.

Dinner and overnight at the hotel

Sunday - We leave the hotel and en route we make a short stop at Plestin les Greves for a stroll on the sands and some refreshment before continuing to Roscoff where we catch the 1500 sailing to England. We reach Plymouth at 2010 and the coach returns to the original pick up points.

(The cost includes travel by executive coach; one overnight sailing with a 2-berth cabin(4-berth cabin is available for £25 extra); two nights' breakfast and dinner with wine; train ride; Tour Escort).

Departure date: April 30th Cost £285

Single £95

Pick up points; Exeter-Newton Abbot-Torquay-Paignton-Ivybridge-Plymouth



France Brittany Breaks

Quiberon Brittany Breaks

Located on the Bay of Morbihan, Quiberon is a small fishing port and popular resort.

Thursday - We set off on and sail overnight from Plymouth to Roscoff. A 2-berth cabin is provided.

Friday - We reach France at 0800 and when we are all aboard the coach we'll set off south-westwards to Quimper to spend the morning. In the early afternoon we resume our drive to Quiberon where we check into the Hotel Europa by the beach for two nights. Dinner at the hotel.

Saturday - After breakfast we drive to Vannes for sightseeing. We return to Quiberon to spend the rest of the afternoon. We return to the hotel for dinner.

Sunday - We leave after breakfast and make our way back to Roscoff where we spend the remaining time. We catch the 1500 sailing to Plymouth.

(The cost includes travel by executive coach; one overnight sailing with a 2-berth cabin; two nights' breakfast and dinner with wine; excursion as detailed Tour Escort).

Departure date: September 24th **Cost £285**

Single £95

Pick up points; Exeter-Newton Abbot-Torquay-Paignton-Ivybridge-Plymouth

Brittany Weekend Concarneau

Our nearest Continental neighbours are just across the Channel in Brittany and our no-hassle weekend break is an ideal opportunity to get to know this pleasant part of France. We say no-hassle because there's no queueing, no waiting around, your break starts as soon as you board the ship. Everything is taken care of, you just sit back, take in the local scene, relax and make the most of your brief holiday!

We plan a series of breaks which will take in some of the destinations in the Province which we have visited over the past 45 years. The sailing programme is the same for each break unless otherwise indicated. Meet coach on Thursday for the 2045 sailing to Roscoff. On arrival, we proceed leisurely to the hotel where we stay for 2 nights, breakfast and dinner with wine included, all rooms have private facilities. During the Friday and Saturday we'll be on excursion. On Sunday we drive to Roscoff and then catch the 1500(or 1600) sailing to Plymouth.

A free Reclining seat is provided on the overnight sailing but cabins are available at a supplement. Concarneau Our 3* Hotel de l'Océan overlooks a sandy beach on the Baie de la Forêt. There's a covered, heated swimming pool and jacuzzi for your indulgence. All rooms have private facilities, breakfast and dinner with wine included. There is a lift.

Friday - We reach France at 0800 and when we are all aboard the coach we'll set off to Concarneau where it is market day. In the early afternoon we check in to the hotel for two nights. The rest of the day is free to take a stroll along the promenade or go into the town centre. Dinner at the hotel.

Saturday - After a buffet breakfast we drive to Quimper, the ancient capital of Cornouaille, where it is market day. Stroll amongst the stalls, have some refreshment and absorb the unique atmosphere. There's plenty of time to visit the impressive cathedral or take a walk by the river. We depart in the late morning and make a shopping / lunch halt at the Carrefour Hypermarket before we continue to the small resort of Bénodet. Dinner at the hotel.

Sunday - We leave after breakfast and make our way back to Roscoff where we spend the remaining time. We catch the 1500 sailing to Plymouth.

Departure date: October 22nd **£249**

Single supplement £40

The cost includes; travel by executive coach; ferry crossing with reclining seat on overnight crossing; 2 nights dinner(with wine), bed and breakfast; all travel in Brittany.

Cabins are extra and cost as follows:- Overnight sailing 2-berth cabin: £30 ; 4-berth cabin: £40 ; 4-berth outside cabin: £50; Day sailing 2-berth £13 ; 4-berth - £15 ;These prices are per cabin not per person.

Pick up points :Exeter-Newton Abbot-Torquay-Paignton-Totnes-Plymouth Home Park – Plymouth Millbay Docks

France Wine Tour

Wine Tour Beaujolais & Macon, France 9 days

Our previous visits to this area have been very successful and we feel a return with some adjustments to the programme would be perfect for this year. Our zone of interest is quite compact and the driving will be minimal and, as ever, we are aiming for quality and some outstanding culinary experiences.

Saturday - We set off on Saturday and travel to Portsmouth to catch the 1445 ferry to Caen. On arrival in France we stop for our overnight (B & B) at Ouistreham.

Sunday - We continue eastwards and then southwards to Macon and the Mercure Hotel on the banks of the River Saône where we will stay for six nights. The town centre is within fairly easy walking distance. We have dinner at the hotel this evening.

Monday - In the morning we head off to Romaneche-Thorins to visit Le Hameau du Vin, Georges Dubouef's famous and unique wine village, the first Theme Park about Viticulture and Wine. This will serve as an introduction to the region and will give you an insight into what is ahead. In the late morning we set off for Morgon and lunch at Restaurant Le Morgon. Our afternoon visit and tasting will be at Domaine Montangeron at Moulin à Vent. Free evening.

Tuesday - Our first visit on Tuesday will be to Chateau Thiven, the oldest vineyard in the Côte de Brouilly. At lunchtime you'll have free time in Morgon to sightsee and take refreshment. In the afternoon we travel to Domaine Piron at Villié-Morgon. We return to the hotel for dinner at the nearby Restaurant Le Poisson d'Or.

Wednesday - We begin on Wednesday with a visit to Julienas and the Domaine du Clos du Fief. Time for lunch in Julienas at Restaurant Chez la Rose. In the afternoon we have a visit and tasting at Vergisson with Domaine Daniel Barraud. We then return to the hotel for a free evening.

Thursday - We make a scenic drive to Chiroubles via the Col du Fut d'Avenas and a visit and tasting at Domaine Cheysson Chiroubles le Farges. Our lunch will be at Restaurant Auberge du Cep at Fleurie. In the afternoon our final visit will be to Cave de Fleurie which offers selections from various growers in the region. We return to the hotel for a free evening.

Friday - Our journey takes us northwards to the Pouilly-Fuissé district where our first visit will be to Le Cave des Grands Crus. At lunchtime there'll be time for sightseeing and refreshment in Fuissé before our final visit today to Chateau Bearegard. We return to the hotel for our last dinner in the Maconnais.

Saturday - We leave Macon and head northwards back to Epernay where we will have a refreshment stop at Champagne Castellane. We now continue to Ouistreham and have dinner and overnight at the Ibis Styles Hotel.

Sunday - We catch the 0830 crossing to Portsmouth. On arrival in England at 1315 we make our way back West.

(Cost includes: all travel by executive coach ;ferry crossing ; one night B & B hotel; seven nights 3* hotel accommodation with breakfast and lunch or dinner each day; all excursions as detailed; all entrances; Tour Escort)

Departure date: June 20th Cost £1245

Single supplement £195

Pick up points: Plymouth-Newton Abbot-Exeter-Bridport-Portsmouth



Spain Jazz Tour Asturias

Jazz in Spain 5 days

Our visit to Brittany last year was intended to be our final jazz tour but the response was so positive ,and we were turning travellers away , that we have decided to retrospectively rename that trip “Farewell Tour to France” and make another tour in 2020, this time “Farewell Tour to Spain”. Well, why not??

Accordingly we are going to return to the popular Hotel Mirador de la Franca in Asturias where we had our first Spanish jazz tour in the 90's.

Sunday - We'll depart Plymouth on Sunday and sail to Santander. A 2-berth cabin will be provided for the overnight crossing. The ship has many diversions for your pleasure- swimming pool; two cinemas; fine dining; live entertainment; bingo; quizzes ; piano bar and a large observation deck. The Band will play on board.

Monday - On arrival at Santander in mid-afternoon on Monday, we disembark and travel westwards to the small port and resort of San Vicente de la Barquera where we stop for a while. When we resume the drive we have about 20 minutes before we reach the 4* Hotel Mirador de la Franca which sits on a secluded, sandy beach overlooking the Atlantic. We stay for two nights with buffet breakfast and dinner with wine. Each evening, the Band plays after dinner for your entertainment.

Tuesday - We make a drive into the Picos de Europa mountain range along the spectacular Hermida Gorge to Fuente Dé where there is a cable car. We'll have some time here before visiting the little mountain town of Potes. Returning to the hotel for dinner, the Band will play for your entertainment until late.

Wednesday -We leave the hotel in the late morning and drive to the little port of Llanes where we'll do some sightseeing and maybe have lunch before travelling eastwards to Santillana del Mar, one of Spain's major heritage sites. We continue to Santander where you'll have some time for sightseeing before we board the ferry for the 2015 sailing to England. Once again the Band will play at some time during the crossing.

Thursday - We reach Plymouth in the later afternoon on Thursday and after disembarkation the coach returns to the original pick up points.

Departure date: April 26th £460.00

(The cost includes ; all travel by executive coach; ferry sailing with cabin(upgrades available); two nights with half-board at a 4 hotel; entertainment by the Panama Jazz Band and excursions as detailed.)
Single supplement (cabin & hotel room) £90*

Pick up points: Bath-Bristol-Gordano-Exeter-Newton Abbot-Plymouth

The Panama Jazz Band

The band's motto is “Happy Jazz” and this certainly reflects the members attitude to their music. They excel in playing the jazz classics but are not averse to playing old music hall songs etc. if that brings happiness to the audience.

Don't be misled by their fun attitude for they are also deadly serious exponents of fine jazz. We've been taking them abroad for over 25 years and they have consistently delivered the goods to their dedicated followers and won over new fans each trip.



Spain Beach Break

Asturias Beach Break 5 days

This break is run in conjunction with our Wildlife tour to the same destination. By sharing the transport costs we are able to create a viable holiday. (Except July 5th). Our hotel is the 4* Mirador de la Franca which sits on a secluded beach at Ribadedeva in the Province of Asturias. The main feature of this region is its magnificent scenery ranging from sandy beaches and rugged coves on its superb coastline to rolling fields of maize and apple orchards which stretch into the Picos de Europa, the western end of the Pyrenees mountain chain. Woods and forests compete with tumbling streams and larger rivers for your attention and the absence of crowds enhances the experience. You'll travel with the Wildlife group throughout though you will part with them at certain stages as they go off to search for the local wildlife. If you prefer, you can stay at the hotel and enjoy the beach and the local area and miss the excursions entirely.

Sunday - Meet our local Escort at Plymouth Ferryport where he'll assist the boarding process. A 2-berth cabin is provided but upgrades are available as detailed below. The ship sails at 1630 and there is a wide range of diversions on board such as – swimming pool; two cinemas; piano bar; live entertainment; quizzes; bingo; observation deck. There is a fine dining restaurant, a self-service restaurant and a coffee shop.

Monday - We arrive in Santander at 1500 and meet the Spanish coach outside the Terminal. Our initial drive takes us to the fishing port and resort of San Vicente de la Barquera where we'll halt for a while. From here it is a short ride to the Hotel Mirador de la Franca where we stay for two nights. Buffet breakfast and dinner with wine are provided during your stay.

Tuesday - The excursion travels to Covadonga, one of Spain's most visited tourist attractions. Here the Wildlifers separate and go off to do their thing whilst the rest of the group continue to the old Roman town of Cangas de Onis. Later in the afternoon, the groups join up and return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Wednesday - We set off on a spectacular drive through the foothills of the Picos de Europa and along the Hermida Gorge to Potes and then Fuente Dé where an almost vertical cable car ride is available to the plateau above. (If you prefer to remain at the hotel to enjoy the beach and relax, the rest of the group will rejoin en route to Santander.) In the late afternoon we descend to the coast and Santander where we catch the 2100 sailing to England. The ship sails at 2115 and once again, make the most of the voyage home.

Thursday - We arrive in Plymouth at 1700.

The cost includes – ferry crossing with cabin; coach travel in Spain as detailed; two nights accommodation in a 4* hotel with breakfast and dinners with wine; excursions as detailed.

Departure dates: July 5th Cost £369 and September 13th Cost £349

Single supplement £90 (cabin and hotel room)

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Joining point : Millbay Docks, Plymouth



Spain Wildlife Tours

Wildlife Asturias Spain

Our wildlife programmes offer some of the best wildlife watching from the open ocean to the mountain tops in the best birding areas of Northern Spain, renowned for its birding diversity and the opportunity to experience the splendour of the ocean. The sea element offers both cetaceans and Pelagic birds and details of sightings within the programmes will be provided within each of our 5 or 8 day holidays. Your voyage will be with Paul Burley, an experienced Guide who will look after you all the way and once in Spain our local Guide, Javier Gil Vaquero, will take over. These two experts will make your visit a memorable experience as you join them in observing some of the best wildlife in these incredibly spectacular places. Nice hotels and good food and wine will enhance your visit!

Asturias 5 days

This visit to the Picos de Europa will be of interest to those who wish to see not only the migration of the many Pelagic seabirds that cross our open ocean but also the most iconic birds of the Picos mountains in Northern Spain.

Sunday - Meet at the Plymouth Ferryport where we catch the 1630 sailing to Spain. A 2-berth cabin is provided and upgrades are available as detailed below. Once on board, our marine Guide, Paul Burley, will have a chat with you about the crossing and the possible sightings. Enjoy the cruise, it's very much part of the holiday. The first leg of the trip often produces sightings of Skuas and Shearwaters with sightings of Common dolphins and maybe a Minke whale. On Monday - Morning we awake in the Bay of Biscay where we look forward to more sightings of Pelagic seabirds and cetaceans before reaching Santander in the early afternoon. Bird and Cetacean highlights for our first leg as follows, Great Skua, Pomarine Skua, Arctic Skua, Great Shearwater, Cory's Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater, Manx Shearwater, Balearic Shearwater, Storm Petrel, Sabine's Gull and more. Fin Whale, Cuviers Beaked whale, Pilot whale, Common dolphin, Bottlenose dolphin, Striped dolphin, Harbour porpoise, Minke whale and more. Upon our arrival in Santander on **Monday** - We pick up our coach outside the terminal and proceed to our 4* hotel, the Mirador de la Franca. The hotel is situated in a quiet cove on the Atlantic coast and it is from here we will be setting off each day on our birding trips in to the Picos de Europa. In the evening our local guide, Javier Gil Vaquero, will join us at the hotel to discuss the following days' birding before our evening meal.

Tuesday - After breakfast we set off to our first destination to explore the high mountain peaks in search of Alpine birds. We drive to Fuente de and take the Cable car from the base of the mountain to the high peak where we will walk slowly through the mountain pass in search of our target birds. The scenery at the top of the mountain is truly spectacular and the mountain birds will only serve to enhance the beauty of this incredible place. Target birds, Wall creeper, Alpine accentor, Water pipit, Black redstart, Northern wheatear, Red billed chough, Yellow billed chough, Griffon vulture, Short toed eagle, Golden eagle, Lammergeier. After our days birding we return to our hotel for our evening meal.

Wednesday - We set off to the Covadonga lakes where we will stop at our first destination, the vulture feeding station where Griffon vultures can be seen flying in to feed on food laid as part of the Lammergeier reintroduction programme that is working towards reintroducing Lammergeier to the Picos de Europa. This attracts high numbers of Griffon vultures to the area and often draws in Lammergeier and Egyptian vultures. We then set off to the Cavadonga lakes to once more look for Griffon vultures, Lammergeier, Egyptian vulture, Golden eagle, Short toed eagle and Booted eagle. After our days birding we set off towards Santander to once more board the ship and start our return voyage to England.

Thursday - We find ourselves over the Northern shelf of the Bay of Biscay and around 100 miles south of the western tip of France. It is in this area that we often see most of our pelagic seabirds and often in the presence of high numbers of Common dolphins. The spectacle of Gannets diving among feeding dolphins and Shearwaters shearing amongst them is an opportunity not to be missed. We then proceed in to the English Channel for more sightings of sea birds and cetaceans before reaching Plymouth and the end of our holiday in the late afternoon.

(The cost includes : ferry crossing with 2-berth cabin; two nights 4* hotel accommodation with buffet breakfast, dinner with wine; two packed lunches; all transportation whilst in Spain; British and Spanish expert Guides

Departure date: September 13th Cost £460

Single supplement £90 (Room and cabin)

Meeting point : Plymouth Ferryport

Spain Wildlife Tours

Wildlife Tour Navarre 5 days

Meet at the Plymouth Ferryport where we catch the 1630 sailing to Spain. A 2-berth cabin is provided and upgrades are available as detailed below. Once on board, our marine Guide, Paul Burley, will have a chat with you about the crossing and the possible sightings. Enjoy the cruise, it's very much part of the holiday.

We reach Spain at 1500 next day and meet the coach which will be our transport for the next 3 days. We'll also meet our Spanish Guides, Javier Gil Vaquero and Angel Herrero Calva.

We will be crossing the English channel and on to the Bay of Biscay where we will be looking out for some of the Pelagic seabirds such as Manx shearwater and possible Great skua among the more regular seabirds that can be seen at this time of the year. It is at this time in the Bay of Biscay that we often see good numbers of Fin whales and Common dolphins and possibly the Cuvier's beaked whale. Striped dolphins, Pilot whales and Bottlenose dolphins are regularly seen along with the possibility of Sperm whales and Sowerby's beaked whales.

On arrival in Santander we will be met by our Local Guide who will be joining us as we board our coach and set off to Navarre and the Bardenas Reales national park. We will be staying at a 3* hotel in the town of Alfaro for two nights and from here we will be visiting our two areas of interest, the Bardenas national park and the Pitillas lagoon. The Bardenas Reales national park is renowned for its birding and especially during the early summer when all the birds are most active and the same can be said of the Pitillas lagoon where this beautiful area supports many birds both on the lagoon and in the surrounding countryside.

The following list is of the birds we can look forward to seeing on our visit. Cattle Egret, White Stork, Griffon vulture, Marsh Harrier, Hen Harrier, Black Kite, Egyptian Vulture, Short toed Eagle, Montagu's Harrier, Booted Eagle, Golden Eagle, Stone Curlew, Little Bustard, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Calandra Lark, Crested Lark, Short-Toed Lark, Dupont's Lark, Thekla's Lark, Cettis Warbler, Zitting Cisticola, Dartford Warbler, Sardinian Warbler, Spectacled Warbler, Firecrest, Bearded Reedling, Penduline Tit, Iberian Grey Shrike, Red Billed Cough, Rock Sparrow, Cirl Bunting, Black Wheatear, Rock Thrush, Little Bittern, Purple Heron, Black Winged Stilt, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Bee Eater, Tawny Pipit, Black Eared Wheatear, Great Reed Warbler, Eastern Subalpine Warbler, Woodchat Shrike, Lesser Kestrel, Alpine Swift, Western Orphean Warbler, Western Bonellis Warbler, Iberian Chifchaff.

After our visit to Navarre we once more board the ship at Santander and spend our last day sailing through the waters west of the French coast and on to the English channel where we will be looking for more Pelagic seabirds, Common dolphins, Harbour porpoise and Minke whale before arriving in Plymouth in the late afternoon.

Your Itinerary as follows.

Sunday 17th May. - Board the Brittany Ferries ship the Pont-Aven and across the English Channel.

Monday 18th May. - Birding across the Bay of Biscay in search of the wealth of wildlife that is found here at this time of the year. Arrive in Santander around midday and set off to Navarre for a short birdwatch before arriving at our hotel for our evening meal.

Tuesday 19th May. - Today we set off after breakfast for our first full day of birding. During the morning we will be visiting the Bardenas Reales national park for a full morning of birding and then on to the Patillas lagoon for the afternoon. A packed lunch will be provided to ensure that we can continue birding throughout the day. We then return to our hotel for our evening meal.

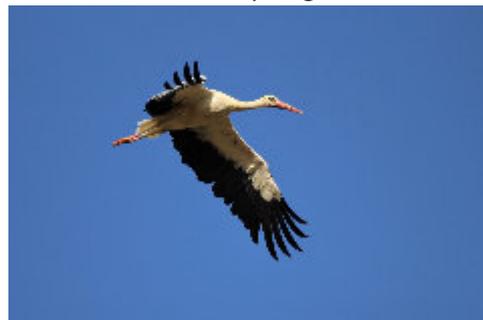
Wednesday 20th May. - After breakfast we set off on our final day birding. We will be returning to the Bardenas Reales national park to target more species before setting off to Santander in the middle of the afternoon where we once more board the Pont-Aven for our last sailing to England.

Thursday 21st May. - Today we enjoy a full day at sea as we once more search for more pelagic seabirds and cetaceans before arriving at Plymouth in the late afternoon.

Departure date: May 17th Cost £490

Single supplement £100 (Room and cabin)

Meeting point : Plymouth Ferryport



Spain Wildlife Tours

Picos de Europa and Spanish Steppes. 8days

This visit to Spain incorporates two areas of major birding interest, over the last five years we have been visiting the Picos de Europa to search for its most iconic alpine birds and so this year we have decided to offer an extended trip to take you across the open ocean, to the high mountain peaks and into the Spanish steppes. We will be visiting in early June to maximise our chances of seeing our main target birds. As the snows recede in the high mountains we hope to have good views of the Snowfinch and the Wallcreeper and also the many bird species on the Steppes that will be active at this time of the year.

Tuesday - Our holiday begins at Portsmouth where we board the "Pont Aven" and set out across the English Channel in search of pelagic seabirds and cetaceans.

Wednesday - In the morning we will be in the Bay of Biscay where once more we will be looking for seabirds and cetaceans. Our targets for the Ocean element will be, Great Skua, Manx shearwater, Common dolphins, Bottlenose dolphins, Cuvier's beaked whale, Fin whale, Striped dolphins and more.

On arrival in Spain we meet the local coach and drive westwards and into Asturias and Ribadedeva where the 4* Hotel Mirador de la Franca sits on a secluded beach overlooking the ocean. Our local Guide arrives at the hotel this evening for a chat about the days to follow.

Thursday - Our first destination will be Fuente Dé where we will take the cable car to the high mountain peaks to look for Wallcreeper, Snowfinch, Alpine accentor, Red billed chough, Yellow billed chough, Water pipit, Black redstart, Northern wheatear, Griffon vulture, Egyptian vulture, Golden eagle and Lammergeier. The view from the mountain is amazing and represents the real beauty of the Picos de Europa. We return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Friday - We head for a beautiful valley close to the Cares gorge where we will be looking for subalpine birds and raptors. and butterflies and perfectly displays the splendour of the Picos in the summer months. Target birds, Griffon vulture, Golden eagle, Short toed eagle, Red billed chough, Blue rock thrush, Rock thrush, Rock bunting.

In the late afternoon we leave the area and drive southwards into Castile and travel to the village of Ampudia where we check in to the Hotel Posada Real de la Casa del Abad for three nights.

Saturday and Sunday - We will be exploring the surrounding area of Palencia which is an amazing place to spot Little Bustard, Crested Lark, Woodlark, Short-toed Lark, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Calandra Lark, Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, Marsh Harrier, Hen harrier, Lesser Kestrel, Red and Black Kite, Booted eagle, Storks and one of our main target birds the Great Bustard. We will also be visiting the La Nava Lagoon where we will be searching for many species of Duck, Rails, Waders and Passerines like the Penduline tit, Bearded Reedling, Iberian Chiffchaff, Zitting Cisticola, Cettis Warbler, Cirl Bunting, Reed Warbler, Great Reed Warbler, Rock Sparrow, Spanish Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Bee-eater and other birds such as Purple Heron and Cattle Egret.

Monday - We drive to Santander where we take the afternoon sailing to England and where we will be once again looking for Cetaceans and Pelagic birds.

Tuesday - We reach Portsmouth at 1415 .

(The cost includes; ferry with 2-berth cabin; 5 nights hotel accommodation in Spain with buffet breakfasts and dinners with wine ; packed lunches; cable car ride; British and Spanish expert Guides; local transportation in Spain.)

Departure date: June 9th Cost: £790

Single supplement £155

Meeting point : Portsmouth Ferryport



Spain Wildlife Tours

Wildlife to Montana Palentina

The Montana Palentina is since some years, one of the most demanded and attractive ornithological destinations in the Iberian Peninsula. A new and fascinated ornithological world. Its declaration as a Natural Park, the presence of amazing mountain and forest landscapes and the possibility of fantastic birds and mammal sightings are enough motivation for all kind of wildlife watchers. It is also one of the best places in Spain to observe wolf and brown bear and a real paradise for butterfly lovers.

Bird Target. The Montana Palentina is absolutely amazing to enjoy a great and varied number of birds: Passerines like Bluethroat, Rock Bunting, Cirl Bunting, Citril Finch, Tree Sparrow, Rock Sparrow, Woodchat Shrike, Red-Backed Shrike, Southern Grey Shrike, Golden Oriol, Firecrest, Iberian Chiffchaff, Bonelli's Warbler, Spectacled Warbler, Subalpine Warbler, Dartford Warbler, and all kind of larks. Raptors like Griffon Vulture, Golden Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, short-Toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, all kind of Harriers, Black Kite, Hobby, and some Forestal Birds like Middle-Spotted Woodpecker and Wryneck.

All of them through easy walking paths indicated for all kind of people.

Sunday - Meet at the Plymouth Ferryport where we catch the 1630 sailing to Spain. A 2-berth cabin is provided and upgrades are available as detailed below.

Once on board, our marine Guide, Paul Burley, will have a chat with you about the crossing and the possible sightings. We will be looking for Manx shearwater and Great skua and possibly Balearic shearwater along with cetaceans such as Fin Whales, Cuviers beaked whales, Common dolphins, Striped dolphins, Bottlenose dolphins and more.

Enjoy the cruise, it's very much part of the holiday.

Monday - We reach Spain at 1500 next day and meet the coach which will be our transport for the next 3 days. We'll also meet our Spanish Guides, Javier Gil Vaquero and Angel Herrero Calvo. We now drive south to Montana Palentina and one of the most attractive ornithological destinations in the Iberian Peninsula. Its declaration as a natural park, the presence of amazing mountain and forest landscapes and the possibility of fantastic bird and mammal sightings are enough motivation to bring all kinds of wildlife watchers to this area of Spain.

Not only is this one of the best places in Spain to observe Wolf and Brown bear it is also a paradise for Butterfly lovers and of course fantastic for birdwatching. We anticipate that one of the local Rangers will join us to talk about the wild bears that inhabit this region.

This trip will be targeting all the wildlife in this beautiful place with the aim to explore all that is representative of the beauty of the mountains at this time of the year and is for those who appreciate the diversity of wildlife that this amazing mountain range has to offer and is an opportunity not to be missed.

Montana Palentina is an amazing place to enjoy a great and varied number of birds like Bluethroat, Rock Bunting, Cirl Bunting, Citril Finch, Tree Sparrow, Rock Sparrow, Woodchat Shrike, Red-backed Shrike, Southern Grey Shrike, Golden Oriole, Firecrest, Iberian Chiffchaff, Bonelli's Warbler, Spectacled Warbler, Subalpine Warbler, Dartford Warbler, and many species of Larks. There are good numbers of Raptors such as Griffon Vulture, Golden Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Short-toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, all kinds of Harriers, Black Kite, Hobby and forest birds such as Middle spotted woodpecker and Wryneck.

Our destination is the small village of Cervera de Pisuera in the region of Palencia and our hotel, the modest Hotel Rural Peñalabra.

We stay for two nights and breakfast, dinner with wine and a packed lunch is included. After two days of wildlife watching in Montana Palentina we return to Santander for our return sailing where we once again look for Pelagic seabirds and cetaceans as we cross the bay of Biscay.

Thursday - We arrive at Plymouth on the Thursday at 1630.

(The cost includes: ferry crossings with 2-berth cabin; two nights 2/3* hotel accommodation with breakfast and dinner with wine; two packed lunches; expert English and Spanish Guides throughout; coach transport in Spain)

Departure date: July 5th Cost £490

Single supplement £80

Meeting point : Plymouth Ferryport

Spain Wine Tours

We were not sure whether to head this section as “Mini Wine Tours “or Holidays with Wine” but felt that they would not be taken seriously if we did that! We are accustomed to thinking La Rioja, Ribera del Duero or Catalonia when we think of Wine from Spain but up and coming vineyards abound all over the country and none more so than in the Northern Provinces such as Cantabria and Euskadi (Basque Country). This year we are arranging a couple of short visits (for those who are time-poor or who will book a longer tour as well) to these regions and we feel sure that not only will your wine knowledge be enhanced but you’ll enjoy an interesting break. The format is the same for both tours-overnight crossings from Plymouth to Santander starting on a Sunday and returning overnight Wednesday back to Plymouth. A 2-berth cabin is provided and breakfast and dinner on board on both sailings are included.

Cantabria

Sunday - We have an overnight crossing from Plymouth to Santander. A 2-berth cabin is provided and breakfast and dinner on board on both sailings are included.

Monday - We reach Santander at 1500 and after disembarkation, meet the Spanish Coach and we set off eastwards and just out of town we make our first visit to Bodegas Igarra at Heras. After our tasting here we continue to Santoña where Christopher Columbus’ Navigator, Juan de la Cosa was born. Many of the ships of the Spanish Armada were built here. We stay at the 4* Hotel Juan de la Cosa which sits on a long sandy beach on the outskirts of the town, famous these days for its fishing prowess especially anchovies.

We stay for two nights on full board terms.

Tuesday - This morning we travel to Bodegas Vidular for a tasting. We return to the hotel for lunch. In the afternoon our tasting will be at Nieto Maximum Bolado. We return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Wednesday - We leave the hotel and drive westwards and south of Santander to Ruiloba where we will visit and taste at Bodegas Miradorio de Ruiloba. There’ll now be free time to have lunch in Los Corrales, a small town at the start of the ascent to the foothills of the Picos de Europa where in times gone by the hauliers changed their horses for the drag up the mountain.

Our final visit and tasting will be at Bodegas Sel d’Aiz at Castillo. After this visit we travel to Santander for the cruise back to England.

Thursday - After breakfast on make the most of the cruise and we reach Plymouth at 1630 .

The cost includes: ferry crossing with 2-berth cabin; two breakfasts and dinner on board; two nights 4* hotel accommodation in Spain with breakfast and dinner with wine and one lunch with wine; all transportation by Spanish coach; visits and tastings as described; Tour Escort.

Departure date: May 10th Cost £475

Single supplement (Cabin & Room) £95

Joining point : Plymouth Ferryport



Spain Wine Tours

Euskadi BasqueCountry

Sunday - We have an overnight crossing from Plymouth to Santander. A 2-berth cabin is provided and breakfast and dinner on board on both sailings are included.

Monday - We reach Santander at 1500 and after disembarkation, meet the Spanish Coach and we set off eastwards and just out of town we make our first visit to Bodegas Igarri at Heras. After our tasting here we continue to San Sebastian, one of the most elegant seaside resorts in Europe. Our hotel is about 300m from Ondareta Beach which is next to the more well known La Concha. We stay for two nights, with dinner on the first night only.

Tuesday - We drive the short distance to Getaria. Our first visit and tasting will be at the most famous vineyard in the area, Bodegas Txomin Etxaniz. Afterwards we'll drive into the small town itself. You'll have time for sightseeing and the opportunity to take lunch in one of its many restaurants where fish is a principal ingredient. In the mid-afternoon we drive to Bodegas Gaintxa for visit and tasting before returning to San Sebastian. You'll have a free evening and we suggest a visit to the harbour area where there are many restaurants and tapas bars.

Wednesday - We leave the hotel and our first visit and tasting is at Larrabetzu with Bodegas Gorka Izagirre followed by what could be the highlight of the trip for gastronomes, lunch at Restaurant Elkano, a Michelin starred establishment. We resume our drive to Santander in the afternoon and there'll be time for sightseeing before we take the overnight ferry to England. We are not laying on dinner tonight as it may be a little over the top after a memorable lunch!

Thursday - Breakfast is included as you enjoy the sea airs across the Bay of Biscay and into the English Channel. We arrive in Plymouth at 1630.

The cost includes: ferry crossing with 2-berth cabin; two breakfasts and one dinner on board; two nights 4* hotel accommodation in Spain with breakfast and dinner with wine on one night and B & B on the other; lunch at the vineyard on one day; all transportation by Spanish coach; visits and tastings as described; Tour Escort.

Departure Date : September 6th Cost £565

Single supplement (Cabin & Room) £125

Joining point : Plymouth Ferryport



Spain Wine Tours

Ribera del Duero 8 days

This popular tour has been part of our programme for several years but we haven't operated it since 2013. The same principles apply but we have tweaked it a little to bring in new visits.

Tuesday - We sail from Portsmouth at 1745 and will have dinner on board in Le Flora restaurant.

Wednesday - In morning after breakfast you can enjoy our sailing to Santander. We reach Santander at 1815 and drive southwards into Castile and thence to Valladolid where we check into the central, Hotel Olid for five nights.

Thursday - We are travelling eastwards following the River Duero towards the principal town of the region, Aranda de Duero. Just outside the town we head for our first visit to the historic Real Sitio de Ventosilla where we will enjoy a visit and tasting. After this visit we will now drive to Condado de Haza home of the legendary Alejandro Fernandez of Pesquera wine fame for a lengthy, gourmet tasting lunch at their very fine establishment. We return to the hotel in the late afternoon.

Friday - We travel towards Rueda home of excellent white wines. Our first visit at 1030 will be with the ultra – modern Bodegas Agricola Castellana in La Seca for a glimpse of just how this district is embracing the request for fresh, modern wines throughout Europe. We then go to Serrada, where we will visit and taste at the extremely friendly Bodegas Alberto Gutierrez. After the tasting we stroll across the road for a typical regional lunch at a small restaurant opposite the establishment.

Saturday - We head northwards to Valoria la Buena and the welcoming Bodegas Pilcar. We'll return to Valladolid to give you an afternoon shopping and sightseeing in this historic city. Dinner will be at the restaurant "Los Zagales" near the hotel this evening.

Sunday - This morning we drive along the River Duero to Aranda de Duero and thence to Bodegas Torremilanos where , after our visit, we have lunch on the estate. In the afternoon, on our way back to Valladolid, we stop to visit the castle at Penafiel. Free time in the evening.

Monday - We set off from the hotel after breakfast and make our way back to the coast. We should now have a few minutes to wander around the port/city area before boarding the ferry for the 1515 sailing to England.

Meet Andy outside Le Flora Restaurant at 1825 for dinner at 1830

Tuesday - We reach Portsmouth at 1745 and the coach will then return to the original pick up points.

(The cost includes : all travel by executive coach ;ferry crossings with 2-berth cabin; breakfast and dinner aboard; 5 nights 4* hotel accommodation with breakfast; meals as described; visits as described; Tour Escort)

Departure date: October 6th Cost £1050

Single supplement(Room and cabin) £135

Pick up points: Plymouth-Newton Abbot-Exeter-Bridport-Portsmouth



Wessex Continental Booking Form & Conditions

1. Reservations

A contract exists between you and Wessex Continental Travel Company Ltd. when we receive your completed booking form and deposit. You will then be sent a confirmation and the balance of your holiday costs will be requested 4 weeks prior to departure. All bookings are made and accepted under the terms set out below.

2. Changes

In the unlikely event that we have to **make** a major alteration to the planned itinerary we will notify you immediately. By a major alteration we mean change of resort, departure time by more than 12 hours or an enforced change of hotel to one of lower official category or without all the advertised amenities. If such a change occurs you will have the following options: - Transfer to an alternative holiday or departure date - Cancel your holiday and receive a full refund - Continue with the revised arrangements and receive compensation in accordance with the following scale: If notified within 14 days of departure - £40 pp. If notified 14-28 days before departure - £20pp. If more than 4 weeks notice - no compensation.

3. Cancellation

It does happen from time to time that we receive insufficient support to run a holiday. When this occurs we will give a minimum of 4 weeks notice and offer an alternative holiday. On short breaks the notice of cancellation is 2 weeks with an offer of an alternative departure date. If this alternative is not acceptable you will receive a full and prompt refund of all monies paid. **THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THE COMPENSATION IN 3 & 4 ABOVE IS FOR MATTERS BEYOND OUR CONTROL SUCH AS FERRY BREAKDOWN, WAR, STRIKES, CIVIL DISORDER, NATURAL DISASTER AND OTHER EVENTS WHICH AMOUNT TO FORCE MAJEURE.**

4. Our Liability

Our undertaking is to provide the holiday as described in this brochure and to a reasonable standard, take full responsibility for any loss, injury, illness or death as a result of negligence on the part of our staff whilst carrying out their duties. All claims however shall be subject to English Law and all proceedings shall be under the exclusive domain of the English Courts. We accept no responsibility however for the actions of the sea carriers whose liabilities are in any event, governed by International Convention. Furthermore, all bookings are subject to the conditions of carriage of the relevant ferry companies.

5. Booking and Payment

Your reservation will be confirmed upon receipt of a deposit of £50.00 per person plus any applicable insurance premium. The balance of the holiday will be requested 4 weeks prior to departure. If the balance has not been received by us 7 days before departure we will assume the reservation is cancelled.

6. Changes by You

If you wish to amend your booking you must do so in writing. No charge will be made. If you wish to transfer from one holiday to another a written request must be made and an administration charge of £20 per booking form will be added to your final balance.

7. If you Cancel

If you cancel your holiday it must be done in writing. If the cancellation is received at least 5 weeks prior to departure it will result in the loss of your deposit. If you cancel between 28-42 days before departure the charge will be 30% of the cost of your holiday. Between 14-27 days it is 45%, 7-13 days in 60% and 1-6 days it will be 100%. Some of these charges may be recoverable if you have taken out insurance but will be refunded by the Insurance company and not Wessex Continental. The contract is governed by English Law. This programme was produced in October 2019.

Wessex Continental Booking Form

Your Non refundable deposit of £50 per person should accompany this form or £20 deposit for weekend trips.

Tour Title No of Days Departure date

From 2013 it will be necessary to supply us with more detailed personal information to gain entry to France and Spain. We will need to know your full name; date of birth and nationality in order to pass this on to the Border authorities in each country. We regret this intrusion and despair at the extra work entailed but we have no choice in the matter.

Mr/Mrs/Miss First name Surname DOB Nationality Type of Room Joining Point

Special Requests:

Please note the request cannot be guaranteed but will be forwarded to the Hotels etc concerned. (i.e. Cabin Upgrade; Dietary constraints)

Address to which all correspondence and travel documents will be sent:
Address:-

Post code:

REMITTANCE ENCLOSED

Deposit / Full amount _____ @ £ _____ TOTAL=

On behalf of the above named persons I confirm that I have read the booking terms & conditions detailed in the current brochure. **(Please print name)**

Signed:

Telephone No:

Emergency No:

Signature _____

A £50 deposit is required per person and a Confirmation will be sent as soon as it is received. Thank you.
PAYMENT PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND US A CHEQUE OR PHONE US WITH YOUR CREDIT CARD OR DEBIT CARD DETAILS

Wessex Continental Booking Form

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