



IN SEARCH OF THE CORN WALL

ADVENTURES IN THE WEST COUNTRY

SEPTEMBER 3RD - 13TH 2021

Back in the sixties, every July, my mum and dad would make up two beds on the back seat of their Ford Zephyr for my sister and me to ‘sleep’ on, and, in the dead of night, we would drive across London and head off down through Hampshire, Wiltshire and Devon to glorious Cornwall for our annual summer holiday. The excitement was unbearable!

The idea was that Michèle and I would sleep soundly for at least seven hours, by which time we would be comfortably near our destination, the little cove of Millendreath, and, although tired, my parents would not have had to endure the daytime traffic and the interminable calls of, “Are we there yet?” from the back seat.

Well, as always, the parental plans were only half successful! We knew that we were supposed to be asleep but with our hearts pounding and our imaginations racing with thoughts of golden beaches to play on, endless scary two foot waves to surf in, treacherous cliffs to climb, rock pools to go crabbing in and a constant supply of scones with strawberry jam and clotted cream, sleep was well nigh impossible!

For me, part of the problem was my fascination with, and eagerness to see, the great ‘Corn Wall’ (in England corn is wheat) which we somehow had to get across in order to reach the cornucopia of pleasures that awaited us. In my small boy’s mind, the ‘Corn Wall’ had taken on mythical status.....as long as the Great Wall and as much a barrier between the grim world and the world of fun as the Berlin Wall, both of which my dad had informed me of from his travels abroad. What did this strange wall made of wheat look like? Perhaps, an endless line of enormous haystacks or a mountain of loose wheat, piled like gravel in the builder’s yard, or maybe just a line of wheatsheafs, like on the pub sign back home.

Inevitably, after several hours of trying not to make a sound - while sneaking furtive glances through the car’s side windows, like an intrepid soldier peering over the trenches - I would finally succumb to sleep and never got to see that mysterious ‘Corn Wall’ or show my handmade passport to the border police, who, by the way, only allowed the very best behaved children to cross over to their land of an infinity of fun! So, when Discover Europe suggested that I lead a tour there next April, a child’s voice called out, “Hooray, another chance to hunt down that pesky wall”!

We are going to need all the help we can get! So why not join us on the hunt for the great Corn Wall this spring? There’s no guarantee that we will find it but the fun will be in the searching! There are only two conditions, your eyes must be peeled at all times and no shouting out, “Are we there yet?”

Gavin



ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT

THE COST OF THIS ITINERARY, PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY IS:

LAND ONLY (NO AIRFARE INCLUDED):	\$4480
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:	\$ 990

Airfares are available from many U.S. departure cities. Please call for details.

The following services are included:

- HOTELS:** 9 nights’ accommodation in first-class hotels, including all hotel taxes and service charges
- COACHING:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- MEALS:** Breakfast daily, 6 dinners
- GUIDES:** Discover Europe tour guide, Gavin Miller, throughout
- BAGGAGE:** Porterage of one large suitcase per person
- ENTRANCES:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registration on receipt of deposit.





FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD - Departure from your chosen US gateway city for your overnight flight to London Heathrow. **OVERNIGHT: PLANE**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH - Upon arrival at London's Heathrow airport, you will be met and transported to our hotel in nearby Windsor. After time to unpack and relax, the rest of the day is free to unwind and explore your surroundings. This evening we gather for a welcome dinner. **(D) OVERNIGHT: WINDSOR**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH - Leaving Windsor, we start our day with a stop at Highclere Castle, the setting for *Downton Abbey* (subject to availability). We'll visit the castle and gardens and continue to Stourhead Garden - flagship garden of the National Trust. Continuing southwest, we'll arrive at our hotel in the county of Devon, just on the edge of Dartmoor National Park. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: DARTMOOR**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH - Our visit this morning is to Castle Drogo, set high above the Teign gorge. The collaboration between, the margarine magnate Julius Drewe and the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens resulted in this extraordinary castle home which fuses the grandest of medieval gothic with all the ease of modern (Victorian) living. After we return to our hotel, the rest of the afternoon and evening are free. The adventurous can explore the heather strewn vastness of Dartmoor, known for the granite 'Tors' sitting atop the rugged hilltops. This evening, perhaps you'll choose to stroll to a local pub for dinner. **(B) OVERNIGHT: DARTMOOR**



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH - Heading up to the north Devon coast, we will stop at the charming Cherubeer hamlet, set in quintessential rolling Devon farmland, where the owners open their gardens to private viewing under the National Garden Scheme. There will be time to wander the gardens and talk to the owners. Next stop is the charming fishing village of Clovelly. Battered and bruised by the sea, its fourteenth-century jetty still provides shelter for the fishing boats which ply the turbulent Atlantic waters for crab and mackerel. After time for a fisherman's lunch, we will head out towards Hartland Point and take a walk along the cliff tops with views of saw-toothed rocks, and spectacular waterfalls tumbling over the cliffs. We reward ourselves at Wick Farm where we can sample the delights of a "cream tea" - scones laden with clotted cream and strawberry jam. Tonight you have a free evening. **(B) OVERNIGHT: DARTMOOR**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH - Today we head towards Cornwall to the picturesque fishing village, Port Isaac (also known as Portwenn from the TV series *Doc Martin*). On our way there, we will visit Tintagel Castle, birthplace of King Arthur. Set proud on a rocky headland, detached from the mainland, Tintagel instantly inspires images of knights, magicians and phantoms shrouded in mist. Lunch in a smuggler's inn will prepare us for our afternoon journey south to the 'toe' of Britain and the heartland of toothless pirates and heartless wreckers! Remember, eyes peeled for that great Corn Wall! Dinner tonight will be at our hotel, in the charming little port of Mousehole. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: MOUSEHOLE**

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH - This morning we visit St Michael's Mount, a rocky island, set a few hundred yards off the coast in Marazion Bay. The first chapel here was built in the fifth century, later expanded to accommodate an abbey, and eventually transformed into a home for the local St. Aubyn family. This afternoon, we will cross the Cornish peninsula to St. Ives, once a center of the pilchard fishing industry - they say the stench was so powerful it could stop the church clock! During the second half of the 20th century, St. Ives became a recognized artists' colony. We will walk the promenade and visit the home of Barbara Hepworth, England's most celebrated female sculptor. We will also visit the Minack theatre, created by the very private eccentric, Rowena Cade. This spectacular open-air summer theatre is perched above the rocks with a jaw dropping backdrop of Porthcurno bay. Free evening. **(B) OVERNIGHT: MOUSEHOLE**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH - Today is a free day. Time to enjoy the tiny village of Mousehole or take an optional trip by helicopter to the Isles of Scilly (supplement). The Scilly Isles are one of the sunniest spots of the British Isles. Known for their temperate climate, they are an ideal region for growing plants and flowers, indeed there is an abundance of wild flowers along every hedgerow and down every pathway. Landing on St Mary's, you will have time to stroll out to Porthcressa bay, visit the museum in Hugh Town and have lunch. Dinner is included this evening. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: MOUSEHOLE**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH - This morning, we begin our journey home, with plenty of stops along the way. First, will be at the Mayflower Steps in Plymouth. Next, we will pay a visit to Montacute House. With its walls of glowing, honey coloured stone and elaborate gardens, Montacute is a masterpiece of Elizabethan Renaissance architecture. We will continue to wend our way through the lovely Somerset and Wiltshire countryside, to our hotel, where dinner awaits. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: SALISBURY**



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH - We'll pay a morning visit to beautiful Salisbury cathedral, generally considered to be one of England's finest, with the tallest spire (404 feet) of any cathedral in the country. Our afternoon drive takes us to the majestic and mysterious World Heritage site of Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, where we'll spend some time before driving the short distance to our last stop, Chawton, home to Jane Austen between 1809 and 1817. Here, she wrote or revised all her six books, including *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Returning to Windsor, we will enjoy our farewell dinner at our hotel. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: WINDSOR**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH - Morning transfers to Heathrow Airport for return flights to the US. **(B) Overnight: HOME**

Key to included meals: **B** - breakfast, **L** - lunch, **D** - dinner