



OUTLINES TRAVEL NEWS

HOTEL BARGING, BOATING, NARROWBOATS, CYCLING OR WALKING

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ABOARD THE ANJODI

Cruising the Canal du Midi in France



With her sweeping sides and rustic, cosy interior, the Anjodi is a beautiful boat. She lies shallow enough in the water to navigate the Canal du Midi, and it was for this reason, as well as her stunning profile and unparalleled sense of character, that she was chosen as the ship to carry legendary chef Rick Stein on his seminal culinary expedition, the French Odyssey, 10 years ago this year.

If you've not watched French Odyssey or read the companion books, they come highly recommended for all fans of food and cooking. If you have, then you won't need to be told about the mouth-watering food photography and the diary section that so beautifully captures the thoughts and feelings of Stein as he travelled the canal, sampling the best food the region had to offer along the way.

The programme involved months of research during which the team was careful to seek out inspiration from excellent regional specialities, local produce and the people who made it all possible, from farmers to butchers to chefs, culminating in a superlative exploration of the area's intricate and world-renowned cuisine.

Step into Stein's shoes and experience the magic for yourself as you echo his voyage of epicurean discovery. On a barge cruise with European Waterways, you can enjoy the craft of your personal on-board chef, who works with fresh, seasonal ingredients to produce a menu worthy of the Anjodi's gastronomic heritage. When you're not savouring the local ingredients, dishes and wineries made so famous by Stein's adventure, you can enjoy a peerless view of the landscape itself, all from a truly magnificent boat. The Anjodi still bears the panelling and the refitted kitchen, all refurbished especially for Stein's voyage, so you can see through the eyes of a true master of his craft while enjoying a spectacular barging holiday.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



CRUISING THE CANAL DU MIDI IN FRANCE IN STYLE

By Barry Matheson

Who doesn't want to slow down these days, forget about the hectic pace we all seem to lead and just chill out for a week, or so? Well, you don't have much choice other than to slow down when you take a 6-night cruise on European Waterways Enchanté,

She's a magnificently restored former Belgian grain barge that gently cruises along at just 3 kilometres an hour on the famous Canal du Midi in southern France. You can walk faster than that, but who wants to when you can sit back and be pampered while enjoying 'life in the slow lane'.

My fellow travellers, there's only six of us on board, and that's all she takes, spend a lot of time relaxing out on the deck sipping cocktails and admiring the incredible rural scenery, replete with rolling vineyards, ancient towns and castles, and the snow-capped Pyrenees in the distance. We all agree that this is the best way to go cruising, and you're soon on a first-name basis with everyone, passengers and crew.

The 75km cruise begins in the old Mediterranean town of Narbonne, a quick 4-hr journey from Paris by TGV. We're met at the station and taken to our boat for a champagne welcome. Enchanté has had a \$1 million refit which we quickly notice as we tour the vessel – she's the last word in luxury. The four twin cabins are spacious and have deep, plush-pile carpet, big comfy beds and a bathroom with luxurious soaps and shampoos from Marseilles. The cabins are painted white, reflecting the water through the portholes and creating dancing shadows on the walls and ceiling. The interior is light and bright, and there's a large seating area inside with big windows so you can always see the scenery, even if the weather is bad.

The bar is open all day, simply help yourself to a glass of wine or a coffee from the espresso machine, and there's free Wi-Fi too. On deck, there's a bubbling Jacuzzi and bikes to pedal between the villages and the 25 locks that we pass through on the Canal du Midi. The Midi is the oldest working canal in the world, a green ribbon of water, its banks lined with towering plane trees making for a beautiful tree-lined avenue, their foliage forming a canopy of olive-green shade. They were used by Napoleon to rest his troops from the hot summer sun. Even UNESCO calls the canal a 'work of art'.

Being France, our cruise focuses on food and wine, all of which is sourced locally from the surrounding Languedoc region, France's red-wine heartland. At dinner, our two lovely hostesses, Daphne and Cheryl, surprise us with a different wine each night. We try a cool Rose, hearty reds from Bordeaux and Burgundy, even a 2012 crisp, smooth white Sancerre from the Loire Valley. Daphne quotes Henry 1V who said: "If everyone drank Sancerre, there'd be no more religious wars".

From his open kitchen, our chef Silvain creates amazing beef, veal and Norwegian salmon dishes, capped off with delectable desserts. He'll also show you how to make some of the meals and hand out his recipes. Breakfast is always a treat; with Anthony our guide ducking into the nearest village to pick up freshly baked croissants and bread before taking us on a tour of the region by minivan.

We stop at Narbonne and explore the covered markets of Les Halles and its 70 colourful food stalls, tasting the incredible array of cheeses, wine, pastries, pizzas and olives. Nearby is the 8th century capital of Minerve and its 12th Century fort, from there we wander the narrow lanes listening to tales of fearless knights and mysterious castles.

A must see highlight is the walled fairy tale city of Carcassonne built by the Romans 2500 years ago. It's the most complete fortified medieval citadel in existence today with its 56 watchtowers and drawbridges. No wonder it's the second-most visited attraction in France after the Eiffel Tower. You can't miss a walk through its cobblestone streets lined with charming boutiques and souvenir shops selling everything from bows and arrows, helmets and other weapons from days gone by. On the way back to our boat, we're treated to lunch in an 1884 chateau, then a visit to another vineyard to try yet more fine wine.

At the end of the cruise, we all agree we're 'Enchanted'.

For a free brochure or information about Hotel Barge holidays call Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd on 1800 331 582

To see the **European Waterways 2016 brochure** click-on here: <http://bit.ly/1MfPLka>

For **2016 Hotel Barging Dates / Prices, booking and conditions form:** <http://bit.ly/20e1e1q>

View a short video on canal barging: <http://bit.ly/1BB05N2>

BARGING IN SCOTLAND – A HOLIDAY FOR ALL THE FAMILY

7-day / 6-night cruises along the Great Glen and Caledonian Canal from Inverness



Gliding gently over the water, some of your party below deck enjoying the elegant, yet comfortable interior of the Scottish Highlander, while others sit above the deck sipping a cool drink and idly watching the purple-hued hills go by, it's no surprise that many adults find a barge cruise one of the most memorable ways to experience Scotland.

Many parents love the idea of this type of holiday but assume wrongly that it's not practical to take their children along. We have always insisted that these anxieties are entirely unfounded and that children can enjoy a Scottish cruise every bit as much as the adults who care for them. Children over the age of 12 are welcome on our hotel barge cruises. Families with younger children are very welcome to bring them when they charter the entire barge for a Family and Friends Cruise.

First and foremost, the children who have the opportunity to experience the Scottish Highlander usually forge friendships with the staff who are handpicked for their approachable and knowledgeable manner. Our stringent recruiting standards mean that parents can relax knowing that their children are meeting crew members who are welcoming and happy to engage with younger guests.

The Scottish cruise holiday makes frequent stops on its itinerary that offer plenty of activities that are popular with children. On a typical trip, a child will have the chance to go bowling, try out some fishing, explore castles, have a picnic, go swimming, and even join the chef in preparing a barbecue.

While in Scotland, we suggest that parents take their children to ride the steam train that was used in the Harry Potter films, suitable for anyone of any age with an interest in steam locomotives, Harry Potter, or both! On top of this, the novelty and adventure of living on a boat for a few days is one that many children share.



We have an exemplary customer safety record and the families who join the Scottish cruise can be sure that their children will experience a holiday on water in a safe environment. In addition, the surface area of a barge cruise is relatively contained so little rascals can be supervised by their parents with ease.

HOTEL BARGE DISCOUNTS

Further Hotel Barge discounts – saving of up to 20% off the published prices:

The European spring is an ideal time to explore the sunny Canal du Midi in the south of France, charming Gascony, or the Venice Lagoon in Italy. Travel in a comfortable cabin, stateroom or suite onboard a luxury hotel barge, or charter a barge for exclusive use of your party.

Book by **4th January 2016** to take advantage of these **GO BARGING – EUROPEAN WATERWAYS** offers:

Barge	Region	Select offer dates in 2016
<i>L'Art de Vivre</i> 10% off per cabin 10% off per charter	Burgundy	10 th & 17 th April 1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd May, 10 th & 17 th April
<i>Anjodi</i> 10% off per cabin 10% off per charter 5% off per charter	Canal du Midi	20 th & 27 th March 20 th & 27 th March 14 th , 21 st & 28 th August
<i>Enchanté</i> 10% off per cabin 10% off per charter	Canal du Midi	20 th & 27 th March, 3 rd April 20 th & 27 th March, 3 rd April
<i>Clair de Lune</i> 10% off per cabin 10% off per charter 5% off per charter	Canal du Midi	27 th March, 3 rd & 10 th April 27 th March, 3 rd April 7 th , 14 th , 21 st & 28 th August
<i>Rosa</i> 10% off per cabin 10% off per charter	Gascony & Bordeaux	17 th & 24 th April 17 th April, 1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd & 29 th May
<i>La Bella Vita</i> 10% off per cabin 10% off per charter	Venice / Po Valley	27 th March, 3 rd & 10 th April 27 th March, 3 rd & 10 th April, 5 th , 12 th , 19 th & 26 th June

To see the European Waterways 2016 brochure click-on here: <http://bit.ly/1MfPLka>

For the latest Hotel Barging Dates / Prices, booking and conditions form: <http://bit.ly/20e1e1q>

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UK NARROWBOAT CANAL BOAT HOLIDAYS

Explore the canals and rivers of England, Scotland and Wales and **SAVE UP TO 15%**



Booking Early
Discount

15%

Get 15% Off selected holidays for 2016 if you book before December 31st 2015

The canals and rivers of England, Scotland and Wales stretch for over 2000 miles through some of the finest countryside imaginable. With a choice of 14 start locations throughout the waterway network, from Falkirk in Scotland to the north, through Alvechurch, Worcester and Gayton in the Midlands to Hilperton in Wiltshire, Outdoor Travel offers the widest choice of self-drive boat hire and narrowboat holidays – contact us now for 15% discount offers on all self-skipped narrowboat holidays in 2016.

For UK Self-skipped Narrowboat holiday e-brochure: <http://bit.ly/1x0svkY>

For UK self-skipped AND crewed Canal Boat holiday details: <http://bit.ly/18gY5iK>

For those who would prefer a crew to navigate a narrowboat for you and a cook to prepare meals – we do have a boat with just 3 cabins available at remarkably good value for short 3 or 4 day cruises in England and Wales with regular departure dates. You can charter the boat for a group or just a cabin for one or two passengers:

England & Wales - CREWED Narrowboat holidays 2016: <http://bit.ly/1IToGto>

WALKING HOLIDAYS

Easy to challenging guided walking holidays in Australia, New Zealand, Europe or North America

Outdoor Travel based in Bright in N.E. Victoria offer many easy, moderate or challenging one-hotel or centre-based guided walks in numerous countries around the world.

In Australia our favourites are in Tasmania, the Great Ocean Walk in Victoria or walks in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia. Walks in Britain include the Cotswolds, Dartmoor or St Ives in Cornwall, Glencoe in Scotland, Snowdonia in Wales or in the beautiful English Lake District. The west of Ireland offers classic Atlantic coastline views. In America the Grand Canyon or New England in autumn are always popular.

Our guided Classic Walking holidays are perfect for beginners and serious walkers alike, allowing you to discover these classic landscapes in rural parks or wilderness areas. There are village-to-village walks as well as delightful paths through woodlands, beside farm pastures and grazing meadows and across the hills and dales. Walk through lush green fields, past rolling hills along ancient trails, see stately homes, traditional and unique ancient villages and country market towns.

Tours usually include: 7-nights in a comfortable hotel room with ensuite bathrooms, full board, an experienced walks leader, 5-guided walks, local transport associated with the walks and free-day activity.

A typical Classic Walking day will offer you a choice of two or three guided walks, each of varying length and ascent. All our different graded walks use a combination of riverside, field and woodland paths, with some stiles and kissing gates, to reach picturesque towns and villages.

Here is a selection from some of our favourites – just click-on these links:

Australia - Tasmania's Freycinet Peninsula lodge-based GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1DdoueU>

Australia - Explore the art & nature of Hobart & the Freycinet Peninsula 2016: <http://bit.ly/1TmnZnk>

Australia - Flinders Rangers & Wilpena GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1jsCcSQ>

Australia - The Great Ocean centre-based GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1b6VoSD>

NZ - Abel Tasman walk lodge-based GUIDED tours 2016: <http://bit.ly/1Pmw0dx>

England – Cotswolds based at Bourton on Water One-hotel GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1Tfyybo>

England - Dartmoor One-hotel GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1PmwqJE>

England - Lake District based at Conistonwater One-hotel GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1Q7tCpw>

Ireland – Celtic Kerry GUIDED walking sightseeing & traditional highlights 2016: <http://bit.ly/1LHMJJ>

Ireland - Hidden Gems of Kerry centre-based GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1OpfI28>

USA – Grand Canyon & Monument Valley GUIDED walking holiday 2016: <http://bit.ly/1LHMPI8>



New for October 2016 we offer a QUALITY guided walk in the Highlands of Scotland in autumn. Autumn is perhaps the best time of year to explore the glens and lochs of the central Scottish Highlands. Crisp, fresh autumn air, the roar of rutting stags, and vibrant shades of red, orange, amber and gold in the forests fringing the glens and the faded purple hews of the heather in the hillsides create a remarkable and unforgettable highlands walking experience. This small group tour, in the company of like-minded walkers, is created and timed to seek out the bold autumnal colours in the Great Glen, Glen Affric and beside Loch Ness.

This is an easy walking holiday, based in a comfortable, quality hotel in the historic village of Fort Augustus at the southern end of Loch Ness. An ideal location for walkers, with easy access to a variety of scenic walks:

Scotland - Autumn in the highlands QUALITY One-hotel GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1Srghb4>

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT OUR HOLIDAYS



FRANCE: *We had a fabulous time, everything worked like clockwork, ie trains etc. The canal boat trip was a highlight with Steve and Jo, and we are already thinking of going again, if not next year then the year after. We decorated the boat with Aussie flags so everyone knew where we were from (Much to Gary and Steve's embarrassment). Scenery was magic. Thanks again for all your organising, it was perfect. Tania*

For details of our self-skipped motor cruiser holidays in Europe:

To view our **EUROPEAN BOATING HOLIDAYS** brochure: <http://bit.ly/1NfZBnc>

To see our **2016 Prices, Dates, Booking and Booking Conditions** form: <http://bit.ly/1liSFF0>

SCOTLAND: *We have not long returned from 7 nights at this wonderful property. Our walking holiday was beyond our expectations, brilliant. Bridget, Andrew and all the wonderful staff are so hard working and very welcoming. We found the leaders for the walks had excellent knowledge of the area. The walks were challenging, taking us out of our comfort zone (which we wanted) and very enjoyable. What a stunning part of Scotland to have the opportunity to walk in. Hope to head back to Alltshellach again. We will certainly share this great experience with our walking friends. Lynsay Hutchinson & Gordon.*

Scotland – Western Highlands based at Glencoe One-hotel GUIDED walks 2016: <http://bit.ly/1NhE48R>

HAWAII: *We both wanted to thank you for a job well done. The Hawaiian Island Hopping holiday was wonderful and all the bookings and flights worked out well. We had a great time.*

If you haven't been to Hawaii we can recommend it as a great destination. We didn't get much time to laze around the pool but loved the walking and that's what we wanted. Plenty of laughs with a great group from the U.K. We won't forget that holiday - it was outstanding. Jill and Richard

USA - Hawaii SELF-GUIDED cycling 2016: <http://bit.ly/1Ynj7H>

FRANCE: *I just wanted to let you know that everything went smoothly. All the arrangements worked very well and we loved the walk from le Puy to Conques. The hotels are lovely and the meals are great. The only problem was a very grumpy host at La Vielle Auberge in St. Privat d'Allier - he didn't like travellers or foreigners or people in general and was quite unhelpful. Luckily his wife was charming.*

We may do the next stage in a few years. We will see. Thanks again. Bev

Spain & France – Way of St James SELF-GUIDED walk Le Puy to Santiago 2016: <http://bit.ly/1NCZy6r>

USA: *The Grand Canyon and Monument Valley walking trip. Three members of our Walking Club, with two friends, flew out to Las Vegas via Los Angeles, on Thursday 17th September. We were joined by fifteen English folk the following day, and our guide Freddy. He had conducted this tour a number of times before so we had the advantage of knowledge gained from his previous walks. Rod was our American driver for our entire tour. This trip was booked through Outdoor Travel in Brighton who were very helpful.*

The walking tour lasted 15 days and we stayed at 7 different locations. Las Vegas is rather drab during the day, but comes alive at night when the lights are turned on and people come out to have a good time, unless they are in the Casino. Just like a trip to Disneyland! Whilst we were there Olivia Newton John, Donny and Marie Osmond and the Illusionist David Copperfield were performing, along with many others.

One day was spent in Zion National Park in Utah, another day at Capitol Reef National Park, two days were spent at the Bryce Canyon National Park, and three days at Canyonlands National Park, and two other National Parks were included in our travels.

Four days were spent at the Grand Canyon. The highlight of our trip was certainly the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley. Since 9/11 the helicopters are unable to go down into the Canyon, for preservation of the Canyon for future generations is an important safety concern, so they fly along the rim. A bomb exploding on board a helicopter would be devastating. It costs approximately \$250 per person and lasts about 45 minutes – great way to get photos. Around fifteen of our group walked down to the bottom of the Canyon which took three and a half hours and four and a half hours to walk back up. Eight of them made it to the bottom as it was approximately 100 degrees F at the bottom that day. The Grand Canyon is a magnificent nature made spectacle. The sunrise at Monument Valley was breathtaking. The red sandstone monoliths and buttes have been made famous by a number of Westerns – thanks to John Wayne.

We finished the tour back at Las Vegas and the English people departed two days before us. We certainly enjoyed their company for the holiday. A holiday to remember! I would certainly recommend a visit to the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley. John.

USA – Grand Canyon & Monument Valley GUIDED walking holiday 2016: <http://bit.ly/1XCohav>

ITALY: *Thank you for the welcome home. We arrived home last Friday and have recovered from the jet lag which hit us for a few days. The trip went very well and we had a fantastic time. This is the first time that we*

have done a trip with a walking format and travel by train. Here are a couple of comments that you might find interesting and helpful:

- Intercity trains in Italy are fast and efficient and leave and arrive on time. Australia could definitely learn from Italy and Europe in this regard. Local trains (our experience mainly from Rome north) are again very effective and cheap. I would not use a Eurail pass if only going on a local train for the day. Our tickets were checked on most occasions and if traveling locally you really needed a validated ticket and some local stations the machine did not work so you go to carriage 1 and see the Inspector. Overall train staff are very willing to help and make an effort.

- Your advice about staying in Venice rather than commuting in from Treviso each day was good. Also about staying in Lucca.

- Warning for those with asthma - Italy has a high level of smokers - like going back 30 years in Australia - and Janice found it difficult with her asthma when in the cities.

- The weather was changeable at that time of the year - probably had 2.5 weeks of rain out of 7.

Highlights:

1. A surprise birthday present - opera Romeo and Juliette in a Roman arena in Verona. A lovely city, we should have spent a couple of more days there.

2. Walking in the Dolomites - so spectacular.

3. An orchestral concert in a basilica in Lucca. Half an orchestra, 50 piece choir and 4 solo singers. Brilliant. We really liked Lucca and again should have spent a couple of more nights here.

Overall Italy is an easy place to get around and the people friendly and will to help lost visitors. We will do more walking trips in the future as it allows a more genuine experience and you get closer to the culture rather than just the key tourist spots in the main cities. Thank you for all your help in connecting this together for us. Greg and Janice

Italy - The Dolomites based at Selva One-hotel GUIDED walk 2016: <http://bit.ly/1Q7yBq5>

Italy - Tuscany based at San Quirico One-hotel GUIDED walks 2016: <http://bit.ly/1NX9wK6>

OUTDOOR TRAVEL IS ON FACEBOOK:



If you enjoy our newsletters we also have a Facebook page where you can see our latest offers, photos, news stories more frequently and can make comments or ask questions about our many active holidays. Why not join today click and 'like' this link: <http://on.fb.me/1YzgDzX>

Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd has operated in Victoria as a travel agent for over 25 years. Our multi-talented team includes qualified and experienced travel industry professionals.

If we can help with flights, travel insurance, accommodation and any other travel arrangements please call Yvette or Kristen at our Fares Desk on (03) 57501 044 or email fares@outdoortravel.com.au

For our latest airfares to Europe see this link: <http://bit.ly/1NTMRhQ>

Call us directly on (03) 57501 441 if you want to discuss more detailed itinerary planning.

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