

## ENGLAND - CORNWALL NORTH COAST

8-days / 7-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn walking holiday – North coast from Padstow to St Ives



Cornwall is one of the most loved holiday destinations in England. With a dramatic and often windswept coastline the scenery is rugged and spectacular with picturesque fishing villages, superb beaches, marvelous opportunities for bird watching and sunsets that will stay in your memory long after you leave.

This northern section of the South West Coastal Path makes for a beautiful walking holiday as it undulates along the coast between the popular resorts of Padstow and St Ives, visiting the surfer's paradise of Newquay. These are of course popular epicentres for tourism in the summer months, but dotted along the coast are also tiny thatched roofed villages, old tin and silver mining towns and harbours, once bustling with the business of shipping minerals and landing literally millions of fish.

There are impressive cliffs and treacherous off shore reefs that have claimed many victims over the years. Its mild climate permits even palm trees to flourish and Cornwall is the home of some of England's finest gardens. Cornwall historically is the land of smugglers, shipwrecks and secret hidden coves, many of which you will pass through on your walk. It has literary associations with the poet John Betjeman (who was tongue-tied by the spectacular cliffs), Virginia Woolfe and of course, the novels of Daphne du Maurier. The whole five hundred miles of this trail is wonderful and this walk can be easily combined with the South Coastal Path from Marazion to Mevagissey – ask for details.

**Cost from:** \$1595 twin share per person. Single room supplement from \$635

**Departs:** Daily from late March to mid-October.

**Starts:** Padstow **Ends:** St Ives

**Grade:** Moderate. Some steep ascents and descents and occasional walking over soft sand. The path is well waymarked but sometimes you will need maps when crossing fields or National Trust properties.

**Includes:** 7 nights' bed & breakfast accommodation with ensuite facilities (where available); luggage transfers from inn to inn (one piece per person not exceeding 20kg); information pack including route notes and maps (one set per room); emergency hotline.

**Accommodation & Meals:** The accommodation described is our usual choice on this tour. If not available, then we use alternatives, sometimes with a supplement, and you will be informed at the time of booking. Easter and UK bank holiday weekends (May and August) are very busy and should be requested well in advance. Most accommodation in St Ives has a 2-night minimum stay on weekends; please bear this in mind when setting a start date or consider an extra night here. Accommodation is on a bed & breakfast basis. Lunches and dinners are not included.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details & reservations**



## **Suggested itinerary:**

### **Day 1: Arrive in Padstow**

Cornwall is well-served by rail and bus services from London and other centres. The town is named after St Petroc who came here circa 500AD. The large church of St Petroc is said to have been founded by the Saint, although most of the structure dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The old harbour has an ensemble of boats including old pilot vessels. Nice pub food and a Rick Stein restaurant. Stay either in a 14<sup>th</sup> Century inn with an open fire and parquet flooring; or in a 4-star guesthouse just outside of Padstow, easily reached by local bus.

### **Day 2: Padstow to Porthcothan**

**walking @ 13 miles (21km)**

Leaving Padstow's busy little tourist harbour, follow the shores of the picturesque Camel Estuary to Stepper Point, with views perhaps to Bodmin Moor inland and to the 'Doom Bar', an offshore sand bar which has wrecked hundreds of ships over the centuries. In fact it became so notorious that many vessels would risk shipwreck on the coast rather than negotiate the entrance to Padstow in poor weather. More coves until the limestone and slate Porthmissen Bridge natural arch with its colonies of Razorbills and Guillemots.

Continue on to Trevone Bay, a beautiful sandy beach, popular with surfers when the conditions are right, and onwards to Harlyn, now another surfer's paradise but once famed for fishing pilchards until fish stocks diminished, then reach Trevoise Head with its lighthouse, where on clear days you can see both St Ives and Newquay. Turn southward and cross more sandy beaches, passing Trethias Island nature reserve, threading your way through coves to descend to Porthcothan Bay. In Porthcothan your bed & breakfast accommodation is a short walk from the stunning Porthcothan Bay and the path. All rooms are ensuite and have sea views.

### **Day 3: Porthcothan to Newquay**

**walking @ 11 miles (18km)**

From the bay the path climbs up to Park Head, which provides wonderful views of Bedruthan Steps, a set of rock stacks that have been a popular tourist feature since the railway reached Newquay in 1875. Passing the village of Mawgan Porth the route follows the cliff top above Watergate Bay. Approaching Newquay, you arrive at Trevelgue Head and the largest Iron Age fort remains in the county. Continue over Barrowfields, with its three Bronze Age barrows, then descend to Newquay. This bustling town can be a shock after the day's peaceful walk. It overlooks fine golden sands, which cushion the Atlantic rollers which make this Britain's surfing capital. Newquay was once a famous fishing port as well as a silver and lead mining centre. Stay overnight in a farm stay bed & breakfast with lovely sea views.

### **Day 4: Newquay to Perranporth**

**walking @ 11.5 miles (19km)**

Leaving the harbour, climb up Towan Head past the whitewashed Huer's Hut, where lookouts would shout the arrival of the pilchard shoals to waiting fishermen, and then follow the cliffs around Pentire Point to take the ferry across the Gannel River. Wind around headlands and coves to Kelsey Head, the site of an Iron Age promontory fort, and then descend to the village of Holywell, named after an ancient well. Following golden sands along Perran Beach, pass the tiny ruin of St Piran's Oratory, said to be the oldest church in Cornwall (8<sup>th</sup> Century). Depending upon the tide, you reach the village of Perranporth either by the beach or the cliff and your 4-star country house accommodation overlooking Perranporth just minutes from the footpaths.

### **Day 5: Perranporth to Portreath**

**walking @ 12.5 miles (20km)**

The coast path follows the cliffs around Cligga Head past mineshafts and tin mines, with dramatic views of the mine buildings and chimneys further on around St Agnes. Drop into Trevellas Porth and then Trevaunance Cove with its waterside pub. It's a pleasant ascent to St Agnes Head to the little village St Agnes with its terraces of miners' cottages. Then a roller-coaster section follows, walking along the clifftops, descending past old mines, passing beaches and sandy inlets, then back up atop the cliffs. Follow the cliff top path to the harbour at Portreath, from where minerals were exported from the mines at Redruth. In Portreath you stay at a small and friendly bed & breakfast, 2 minutes' walk from a sandy beach and situated on the coast path.

### Day 6: Portreath to Hayle

walking @ 12.5 miles (20km)

Leaving Portreath, climb up Tregea Hill then walk over National Trust land, and continue high above the sea along Carvannel and Reskajeage Downs, reaching a rather sensational breach in the cliffs called Hell's Mouth. At Navax Point, you might be lucky enough to see grey seals. Walking on to Godrevy Point see the lighthouse perched on Godrevy Island, probably the inspiration for Virginia Wolf's 'To the Lighthouse'. It marks the landward end of a treacherous line of reefs, called The Stones; many of their victims are buried in the churchyard at Gwithian, a sleepy thatched cottage village with an interesting old pub, The Pendarves Arms. The path then offers challenging walking through the Towans sand dunes to the busy port of Hayle. In Hayle stay at an elegant 1838 hotel, the oldest in town. All rooms are tastefully furnished and ensuite.

### Day 7: Hayle to St Ives

walking @ 5.5 miles (9km)

A short day which should allow you time to have a look round beautiful St Ives. Skirting the Hayle Estuary, noted for its seabirds and waders, the path passes along the dunes above Porth Kidney and then passes beautiful Carbis Bay to reach the town. St Ives dates back to 460AD, when the missionary Saint Ia, daughter of an Irish chieftain, landed here and gave her name to the settlement. Protected from Atlantic storms, St Ives was once the most important fishing port in Cornwall, but like elsewhere on the surrounding coast, by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the fish stocks were depleted and the fishing fleet largely disappeared. As early as 1811 Turner visited to paint seascapes; by the late 1880s several artists lived here and the town became famous for its vibrant artists' colony. Today their work can be seen in the St Ives Tate Gallery, the Barbara Hepworth Museum and the Bernard Leach Gallery. We use a number of B&Bs and inns in this busy town; our first choice is a 4-star guesthouse set in the quieter part of the town.

### Day 8: Departure day.

Tour ends after breakfast. There are several daily train services from St Ives to London, taking 5½ to 6 hours.



**Outdoor Travel walking holidays**, guided in small groups or self-guided with inn-to-inn luggage transfers and meals, are available in many parts of the UK and Europe through **Outdoor Travel** including scenic areas of England such as the **Coast to Coast** route, the **Lake District** or **Cotswolds**. Longer walks include the **Way of St James** from Le Puy in France to Santiago in northern Spain, and the pilgrimage *Road to Rome* – the **Via Francigena** – walking over several weekly sections from the Alps to the Vatican.

### Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations

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