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A note from the editor: *Our monthly newsletter continues to encourage you to bolder and more exciting active holidays. And I have just returned from fact finding at two of the prettiest and most enthralling regions of France; Rocamadour in the Dordogne and Brittany on the Northwest coast. As always my travels are condensed into grabs of ideas, images and strategic conversations but this trip was honestly the most interesting and rewarding I have ever taken in France.*

Self-skipped cruising on La Vilaine in the land of Celtic legend – including Merlin and King Arthur (Merlins tomb is reputed to be near Dinard in Brittany) is a definite must and will soon become as popular as the famous Canal du Midi. Relaxing, evocative and truly majestic coastal scenery. Combine with a walk or cycle trip to Mont St Michel.

How many ducks does it take to turn a standard Footloose walk into a 'gourmet' superior self-guided walk in the Dordogne? Well my guess is 16 based on the amount of foie gras on the menus I saw. And how many chateaux? Well at least one the splendid Chateau Rouemegouse (I slept in the tower) near Rocamadour.

A note too from Angela who has just completed two of our newer and more active trips in Italy – horse riding in Chianti and cycle training on the Adriatic Coast near Rimini – but you don't need to be a triathlete to do MOST of our trips: "A quick email to say thankyou for the recommendations for the cycling and horse riding. Both activities were wonderful. Ernesto and family at Hotel Perla were absolutely wonderful. Their kindness and hospitality was amazing. The location and tour is fantastic and I would highly recommend Riccione and this hotel to any interested parties, particularly triathletes."

JUST FLIGHTS? - A reminder that if you are looking for the best airfares to any destination then with access to the latest information and up to the minute fare deals through our Smartfares Computer Reservations System, click-on to our website www.outdoortravel.com.au and to: [Outdoor Travel fares](#) for an up to date quote on your travel plans - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

4-DAY WALKING HOLIDAYS - NEWQUAY, CORNWALL



Holiday Base: Porth Veor Manor in Porth, Cornwall

Standing in its own grounds of almost three acres overlooking the quiet coastal village of Porth, this charming, and mid-19th century manor house commands spectacular views and offers traditional Cornish hospitality in a peaceful and tranquil setting. Porth itself lies to the north of Newquay, on the rugged Atlantic coast famed for its charming coves sheltered by impressive cliffs.

Scenic Walking - Coastal/Rugged – Moderate walking - ascents and descents will be mainly on defined paths, the routes will be rocky at times, and many follow cliff-tops.

Moderate walks offering less strenuous walking on easier slopes, tracks and paths which may be rough underfoot at times. Some experience of country walking and a reasonable level of fitness are advisable. Walks are normally 6 - 10 miles (9 - 16 km) and include ascents generally between 800 and 2000ft (250 - 600m).

Walks from Porth explore Newquay's coast and the beautifully wooded Vale of Lanherne, both steeped in history, and the traditional Cornish countryside that inspired Winston Graham to write his Poldark novels.

The program of walks includes explorations of the coastal path around Perranporth past ivy-clad engine houses; remnants of Cornwall's tin mines and along the picturesque Jericho Valley. A walk out to the lighthouse on Trevoze Head allows us to enjoy the excellent coastal views before continuing to reach the stepping-stones of the famous Cornish giant Bedruthan.

On our Moderate walks we join the ancient tracks of the Saint's Way into Padstow with superb views of the Camel estuary. Leisurely walks take in the beautiful Church of St Columb Minor and the cliffs above Watergate Bay.

Tour cost: \$690 for 3 nights (No single supplement applicable)

Included in your Holiday Price - accommodation in twin or single rooms with en-suite facilities, half board arrangements from dinner on the day of arrival to breakfast on the day of departure, packed lunches on all guided walk days unless otherwise stated in the holiday description, any necessary transportation to and from the start and finish of the walks (except where otherwise stated), services of an experienced walks leader & a holiday Fact Sheet on the walking areas.

SHERPA WALKER'S BRITAIN:

The Cornish Coastal Path – self-guided with daily departures on demand

This holiday includes a wonderful variety of coastal scenery ranging from sheltered tidal creeks to the wooded Fal estuary, and the brooding cliffs of the Lizard, England's most southerly point. The whole area is designated an area of outstanding natural beauty. 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 dark deeds in 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 scenery is as spectacular and picturesque as the tiny fishing villages.

There are superb beaches, marvelous bird watching and botanical spots, and sunsets that will stay in your memory long after you leave. There are those who have completed the whole five hundred miles of this wonderful long distance trail, who's after dinner conversation touches on little else. Our moderate little week's walk can have just as powerful side effects.

Request a 2005 Sherpa Walker's Britain brochure – 1800 331 582

SHERPA INN-TO-INN WALKS: NORWAY

Self-guided with daily departures on demand

This trip is the ideal introduction into the magic of Norwegian walking; it is undertaken from several centers using easy transportation on trains and boats in between. From Oslo, you travel by rail to some of the wildest, most spectacular, classic "picture postcard" settings within the realms of Norwegian mountain and fjordland. Many people enjoy taking a leisurely cruise up the coast to see the beauty of the country from below, but on this tour you can be looking down and walking amongst the highlands, a much more engaging experience.

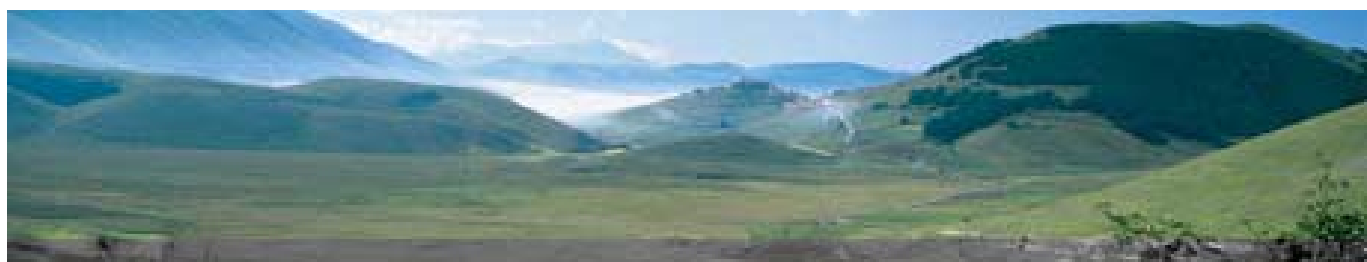
The route, so to speak, embraces the famous Hardangervidda area of western Norway where there is the potential for a heady mix of highland walking through the manifestations of the last Ice Age. The retreating glaciers once overwhelmed and molded this landscape; gouging out the great coastal grooves which, with postglacial rising sea levels, have become the fjords. Of these the beautiful Sognefjord is the longest and deepest in the country. There is a wide range of walks to take in the highlands, which lead you right up onto the glaciers edge; it is even possible to go out onto the ice to take an excursion.

There are also the lush walks down into the pastoral settings of the Flam and Aurland Valleys. These are furnished with forests, farmsteads, cascades and churches. All in all an unforgettable experience, especially if the Nordic Gods favor you with good weather and that you read your Sherpa Runes wisely!

Also available – Ireland, Germany, Austria, Cyprus or Greece. Request a 2005 Sherpa brochure – 1800 331 582

NORCIA, UMBRIA

Centre-based walking In the foothills of the Apennines



The region of Umbria, in central Italy, offers excellent walking in the green rolling foothills of the Apennines and a relaxing way of life. Soon you'll be absorbed into this tranquil rural lifestyle of beautiful scenery and excellent cuisine. Our guided walks in the Monte Sibillini National Park include rambles through the stunning Piano Grande, a vast open plain full of wild flowers, to the sleepy village of Castelluccio.

The enchanting walled town of Norcia, set in a green bowl below the tranquil green Apennines, is surrounded by excellent walking country and retains the charm and warm hospitality of another age. Appreciate rural Italian life by wandering around the narrow cobbled streets to explore the medieval buildings and churches.

Our hotel base dates from the 15th century, this three-star, family-run hotel with 46 en-suite bedrooms is full of character and located right at the heart of the medieval walled town of Norcia. The hotel's excellent restaurant serves many local specialities.

Departure dates: 7, 14, 21, 28 May; 4, 11*, 18, 25 June; 3, 10, 17, 24 Sep; 1, 8 Oct 2005

* Note: Week of 11 June offers Mountain Walking

Costs per person: AU\$1050 Single Supplement AU\$200

MILFORD TRACK NEW ZEALAND – NEW SEASON BOOKINGS NOW OPEN

Traversing the heart of New Zealand's wild fiord country, the Milford Track has long been described as "the finest walk in the world". Since Quintin Mackinnon pioneered the route in 1888, everyone from hardened trekkers to novices sporting their first pair of boots has taken up the challenge of the Milford Track.

The Fiordland National Park is the cornerstone of the Te Wahipounamu Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area. Enjoy close encounters with the native birdlife: the Robin; Kea; Weka; Fantail; Parakeet; Bellbird; even Kiwi have been spotted! Walkers on the track to Milford Sound encounter Fiordland at its most spectacular: deep lakes; silent fiords; luxuriant forest and sheer canyons carved out of imposing granite define

this landscape. On fine days there is a postcard shot around every corner, but only when it rains and torrents of water cascade down the mountainsides have you truly experienced the magic of the Milford Track.

The Milford Track Guided Walk is a 5-day / 4-night Queenstown to Queenstown all-inclusive guided walk through the heart of Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound. The package includes all transport, accommodation, meals, snacks, backpacks and rain jackets. Accommodation is in our luxury lodges and our expert guides will lead you.

Group guided departures are daily from 1st November 2005 to 30th April 2006 – call 1800 331 582 for brochure.

FRENCH CYCLING HOLIDAYS

8-day small group – inn-to-inn cycling tours guaranteed running with availability in 2005.

May 22 Bordeaux or Dordogne
May 29 Provence (very limited)

June 5 Provence or Classic Cols
June 12 Provence (very limited)
June 19 Dordogne
June 26 Bordeaux (very limited)

July 24 Loire (very limited)
July 31 Loire

August 7 Dordogne (limited)
August 14 Dordogne or Bordeaux
August 21 Loire
August 28 Loire

September 11 Dordogne
September 18 Provence
September 25 Provence

October 18 Languedoc

Request a brochure – 1800 331 582 or info@outdoortravel.com.au

AUSTRALIAN CYCLING HOLIDAYS 2005 DEPARTURE DATES

Ask for a detailed itinerary

The Great Victoria Desert Ride

Perth to Uluru (Ayers Rock) - 6 days/5 nights: \$880 (inc GST)
Departing 5th May, 23rd June, 11th Aug, 29th Sept

MacDonnell Ranges Cycling Adventure

Uluru (Ayers Rock) to Alice Springs - 5 days/4 nights: \$790 (inc GST)
Departing 12th May, 30th June, 18th Aug, 6th Oct

Katherine & Kakadu Explorer

Alice Springs to Darwin - 6 days/5 nights: \$790 (inc GST)
Departing 19th May, 7th July, 25th Aug

Litchfield & Kakadu Explorer

Darwin (return to) Darwin - 4 days/3 nights: \$549 (inc GST)
Departing 28th May, 16th July, 3rd Sept

Gibb River Road Cycling Experience

Darwin to Broome - 11 days/10 nights: \$1695
Departing 3rd June, 22nd July, 9th Sept

Oodnadatta Track to Clare Vineyards

Alice Springs to Adelaide - 7 days/6 nights: \$895 (inc GST)
Departing 13th October

Nullarbor to Margaret River Wine Region
Adelaide to Perth - 11 days/10 nights: \$1550
Departing 22nd October

Munda Biddi Cycling Adventure
Perth to Perth - 4 days/3 nights: \$440
Departing 9th Sept, 14th Oct, 11th Nov.

EUROPE CRUISE PLACES STILL AVAILABLE

CHAMPAGNE BIKE & BARGE TOUR IN FRANCE

Cabins still available for 1-week cycling tours from Paris with comfortable hotel barge accommodation:

Departs: June 25 - July 2 & July 9 - July 16 2005

Cost: AU\$1675 per person (single supplements available on request)

Includes: All meals (picnic lunches with drinks) as shown, 21-speed hybrid bike hire, twin cabins with ensembles, easy to moderate guided sightseeing with English speaking guides

Itinerary: Paris – Meaux – La Ferte sous Jouarre – Château Thierry – Epernay - Reims

Highlights: Paris – Brie de Meaux – champagne wine cellars in Epernay – Reims Cathedral



Combining an easy-to-moderate guided cycling route, this fully inclusive cruise offers a high standard of meals and ensuite cabin accommodation plus the opportunity to explore this beautiful countryside sampling the champagne wines and local cheeses that makes this part of France so famous. The cruise, aboard the MS Fleur begins in the heart of Paris, not far from Notre-Dame Cathedral. From there, the cruise follows the valley of the Marne upstream to the city of Meaux, famous for its Brie cheeses.

With a carefully selected cruising and a cycling route of approximately 40 - 50 kilometres per day we visit the immense champagne cellars in Epernay, capital of the Champagne region, and also many small champagne growers where you can taste the very best champagne wines. We spend the last nights at Château-Thierry, scene of the American battles in World War I and in Reims with its beautiful gothic cathedral before returning to central Paris by bus.

For more information see www.outdoortravel.com.au under 'What's New'

DISCOUNT OFFERS – PLACES STILL AVAILABLE – SAVE UP TO AU\$2725

TWO CRUISE FOR THE PRICE OF ONE - MV ANACOLUTHE – PARIS & BEYOND

See Monet's Garden, Van Gough's home & the village of Chablis & SAVE AU\$2725 PER PERSON

Operated by Canal & Co the hotel barge **Anacoluthé** offers comfortable twin-deck onboard accommodation with ensuite cabins and a wonderful schedule of leisurely cruising, gourmet meals and guided sightseeing by air-conditioned bus in the Champagne – Upper Loire region. Cruises depart every Saturday - in season - from central Paris from just AU\$2725 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 4th or 25th June or 2nd, 16th, 30th July or 6th August 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering new bookings a **discount of \$2725** per person off the price of the Anacoluthé cruise – now two people sharing a cabin can travel for the price of one on these dates.

MV LITOTE – BURGUNDY - See the wines of Burgundy, Beaune and Dijon, charming medieval villages & SAVE \$1000 per person

Operated this season by Canal & Co, run by the former Manager and staff in France of Continental Waterways the Litote cruises the Burgundy Canal through the famous wine-growing region of Beaune. Taste the wines in Meursault, see the covered markets and Ducal Palace of Dijon, the Abbey of La Bussiere and 15th century Chateau de Commarin. Cruises depart every Saturday - in season – with transfers from central Paris from just AU\$3135 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 2nd or 23rd July 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering new clients a **discount of \$1000** per person off the price of this cruise – now at AU\$2135 on these dates.

MV LORRAINE – ALSACE - See Colmar, Saverne, Stasbourg & Petit France, wine & beer tasting & SAVE \$1000 per person

Also operated by Canal & Co the Lorraine cruises the Canal de la Marne au Rhin. Taste the wines of medieval Ricquewihr and the beer at Hochfelden where beer has been made since 870 AD. See the European Parliament at Strasbourg and the Gothic cathedral of Notre Dame. Drive the 'Route des Vins' at the base of the Vosges Mountains and see the inclined hydraulic lift lock at Arzwiller. Cruises depart every Saturday - in season – with transfers from central Paris from just AU\$3180 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing 2nd, 16th, 23rd or 30th July 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering new clients a **discount of \$1000** per person off the price of this cruise – now at \$2180 on these dates. (* The 30th July departure is designated a family cruise – families with children are welcome for this modified cruise itinerary).

MV L'ESPRIT d'EUROPE – NORMANDY - See Monet's Garden, Empress Josephine's Home & Normandy & SAVE up to \$750 per person

Also operated by Canal & Co, the L'Esprit d'Europe cruises the River Seine from Paris to the heart of Normandy. Highlights include a night in central Paris, Chateau Malmaison – home of Empress Josephine, Claude Monet home and gardens at Giverny, Rouen and the Abbaye of Jumiege.

Cruises depart every Saturday - in season - from central Paris from just AU\$2725 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 24th September or 01st October 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering new clients a **discount of \$750** per person off the price of this cruise.

MV LIBELLULE – BURGUNDY - See River Saône & Lower Burgundy, Beaujolais Vineyards, Beaune & Dijon & SAVE \$1000 per person

Also operated by Canal & Co the Libellule cruises the River Saône with its picturesque riverside towns, Taste the wines of Beaujolais and the Abbey of Cluny. Cruises depart every Saturday - in season - from central Paris from just AU\$3180 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 30th April, 21st May, 4th or 25th June, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th July 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering new clients a **discount of \$1000** per person off the price of this cruise – now at \$2180 on these dates.

Call 1800 331 582 to secure a brochure or a reservation

GO BARGING - EUROPEAN WATERWAYS - NEWS

Da Vinci Code meets Canal du Midi

For fans of the book "The Da Vinci Code" the Anjodi is an ideal base from which to investigate first-hand the book's links with the Cathars and to soak up the countryside and atmosphere of this mystical place. To complement the Cathar theme, we also visit cultural sites of a different nature, such as the local wineries – not forgetting doing a bit of wine tasting to accompany the gourmet food on board the Anjodi! So if you are looking for something different to do during the winter months, look no further than Go Barging!

The rowing season in Venice has already begun – in the Venetian lagoon every year; there are more than 120 regattas! The regattas typically take the form of rowing races, with the participants rowing one-oared gondolas up to six-oared "caorlines" on various waterways within the Venetian lagoon. You can imagine that the locals are quite fit! Some of the regattas originated in the 14th century and participants are very proud to be part of such a long-standing tradition. The Mestre Regatta opens the rowing season, fairly swiftly followed by the St Erasmus Regatta, which is reserved for women only who race in two-oared "mascareta" boats around the town of Fusina. And many a pound of macaroni is bound to be consumed thereafter!

The Saints John and Paul Regatta is open to young people under 25 who are tested out in one-oared gondolas. This one starts at the island of Murano, which is one of the stops on the itinerary of La Dolce Vita. Murano has become famous over the years as a glass-making centre and not only do they manufacture beautiful chandeliers, but amazing jewellery creations.

There are many other regattas besides, but just to be in Venice during these times is very exciting, and to have the possibility of a ring-side seat on our barge La Dolce Vita (which means, The Sweet Life) is a unique opportunity.

For a copy of the new CO BARGING – EUROPEAN WATERWAYS brochure call 1800 331 582

VIRGIN BLUE ANNOUNCES DIRECT HAMILTON ISLAND FLIGHTS

Virgin Blue has announced it will launch direct daily flights between Brisbane and the Great Barrier Reef Airport on Hamilton Island from 15 June following overwhelming regional support for the airline to introduce its award winning service to the Whitsunday Islands.

The direct service into Hamilton Island will expand Virgin Blue's existing routes giving passengers a convenient gateway to the Whitsunday Islands, from all over Australia via connections from Brisbane.

This announcement is in response to lobbying from the Whitsunday Islands business and tourism community seeking access to competing airline services. To celebrate the announcement, Virgin Blue is offering everyday low fares starting from \$79* (plus taxes, fees and surcharges from \$65) one-way on the net. Convenient flight connections will be available between Hamilton Island and Canberra, Darwin, Melbourne, New Zealand, Perth and Sydney.

OUTDOOR TRAVEL - SUNSAIL YACHT CHARTER DISCOUNTS FOR MAY 2005:

Boats listed as available from Hamilton Island this month

Monohulls 32 to 39 feet:

Jeanneau 32:	15-17 May; 25-27 May; 29 May-4 June	\$288 per night
Gibsea 33:	20 May - 20 June	\$304 per night
Jeanneau 35:	28 May - 20 June	\$384 per night
Jeanneau 37:	25-30 May	\$416 per night
Beneteau 39:	18-31 May	\$480 per night

Monohulls 40 to 50 feet:

Beneteau 423:	16-20 May; 27 May - 20 June	\$512 per night
Jeanneau 45:	26 May - 20 June	\$556 per night
Jeanneau 45 (classic):	11-21 May; 28 May - 20 June	\$512 per night
Beneteau 473:	15-31 May	\$584
Beneteau 50:	1-31 May	\$672 per night

Catamarans:

Athena 38:	15-20 May	\$552 per night
Lagoon 410:	16-22 May; 28 May - 20 June	\$728 per night
Belize 43:	15-27 May; 31 May - 20 June	\$748 per night

- Notes**
- * All prices are per yacht per night
 - * No minimum nights booking required!
 - * Valid on new bookings only taken after 22 April 2005
 - * Not valid in conjunction with any other special

For more details or a brochure call or email Outdoor Travel today

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- () **CAMINO DE SANTIAGO** – Walking or cycling the Way of St James (France or Spain)
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- () **CANAL & CO** – Hotel Barges in most regions of France and Holland
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- () **SUNSAIL** – Yacht Charter in Queensland

OTHER – Please specify:

NEW ZEALAND WALKING / CYCLING

- () Milford Track Guided or Freedom Walk or the 8-day Ultimate Hike
- () Grand Traverse
- () Abel Tasman
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- () Tongariro Trek
- () Stewart Island Kiwi Trek
- () Routeburn Walk
- () NZ Cycling Tours

AIRFARES – Please quote for flights as follows: From: To: Class:
Departing: One-way / Return (please indicate)

NAME: **DAYTIME CONTACT:**

ADDRESS: **P'CODE:** **EMAIL ADDRESS:**

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