



ADVENTURES
in good company



DISCOVERING CORNWALL

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking different section of the [South West Coast Path](#), the UK's longest footpath
- Visiting [Tintagel Castle](#), the Museum of Witchcraft, Saint Michael's Mount, Saint Ives, and [The Trebah Garden](#)
- Visiting the hometown of Doc Martin and the landscape of [Poldark](#)
- Sampling Cornish food including Cornish pasties and fish pies

Phone: 877-439-4042

Outside the US: 970-833-3132

Email: info@goodadventure.com

TRIP AT A GLANCE

Location:	Plymouth, UK
Activities:	Hiking
Arrive:	Arrive at our hotel in Plymouth, UK by 5 p.m. on Day 1
Depart:	We'll have you to the Saint Austell train station by 9:00 a.m. or the Newquay airport by 10:00 a.m. on the last day.

Trip Overview

Discover the essence of Cornwall on our hiking trip along different sections of the [South West Coast Path](#). At 630 miles, it's England's longest waymarked foot path, following the entire coastline of Cornwall. We'll hike a variety of sections, from the extremely rugged North Coast to the more sedate South Coast, to give us a taste of the Path's diversity. Cornwall is also a place of myth and legend: [Tintagel Castle](#) is known as the birthplace of King Arthur and ancient monuments attest to its long settlement. It still retains a distinct cultural identity that reflects its history, and, along with Wales and Brittany, is recognized as one of the Celtic nations. Tin mining has also played an important role here. Most recently Cornwall is the setting of two of the BBC's most popular shows: *Doc Martin* and *Poldark*, as well as the landscape portrayed in Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca*. We'll explore it all during our time here and leave with a feeling of knowing this area in a new way.

Maximum group size: 14

Rating

This trip is for women who have some experience hiking and want to combine hiking with immersion in the history and culture of the area. We spend 3-6 hours hiking on most days. Coastal hiking is by no means flat, often with steep ascents and descents, sometimes on very rocky paths.

Rating: 1 [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) . We recommend you prepare with aerobic conditioning for a minimum of 30 - 45 minutes 4 days a week with some hikes of two to four hours.

What's Included

- A local UK guide and an AGC guide (If there are fewer than 8 on the trip, there will not be an AGC guide)
- Nine nights double occupancy lodging
- All meals including beverages from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on the last day except for one dinner
- Ground transportation in Cornwall, including train station or airport transfer on the last day
- Gratuities for the driver and local day guides
- All activities on the itinerary

Not included: Travel to Plymouth and from St Austell, transportation to the hotel on day 1, one dinner, alcoholic beverages, guide gratuities, optional activities, and travel insurance.

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

The easiest way to get to Plymouth, England is to fly into London and then take the train to Plymouth, a 2 to 3-hour journey depending on which train you get. Our hotel for the night is only a 10-minute walk or short cab ride from the train station. We'll gather in the lobby at 5:30 p.m. for welcome and introductions, followed by a trip orientation and then a Welcome Dinner. Those of us who just arrived will undoubtedly be jetlagged, so we'll make sure we get to bed early. Overnight Jurys Inn or similar.

DAY 2

Undoubtedly, we will all be feeling more refreshed after a good night's sleep and hearty breakfast, and ready to embark on our adventure to the westernmost county of England. We start with a short trip by bus to board the Cremyll ferry across the River Tamar to Cornwall. Our first walk in Cornwall is through the Mount Edgcombe estate and onwards to the picturesque fishing village of Kingsands. As we walk through the historic landscaped grounds of the Earls of Edgcombe, we are rewarded with spectacular views of Plymouth Sound. A final climb and we arrive at Rame Head Heritage Coast with its tiny 14th Century chapel for a hike of 6 miles.

Leaving the coast for now, we'll be met by our bus here and transported across the peninsula to North Cornwall. En route we'll cross Bodmin Moor, a familiar name to any fans of the PBS show [Doc Martin](#). Along the way we'll stop for a break at Minions. Not to be confused with the cartoon characters of the same name, the village is rich in history, heritage and legend. We'll visit the Hurlers, a unique Bronze Age (c. 1500 BC) monument of three standing stone circles. If we're still up for more of a hike, we'll continue on to the Cheesewring. The origins of this distinctively shaped rock on the edge of the Cheesewring Quarry has elicited hot debate for years. Tonight, and for the next two nights, we'll once again be by the sea.

Overnight: Riverside of Boscastle (or similar). Hiking: 6 - 7 miles total, broken into 2 hikes.

DAY 3

Today we step out of our accommodation and into what has got to be one of the most picturesque harbor villages anywhere. Following the River Valency towards the harbor, we'll stop to pick up a picnic lunch at the Boscastle Bakery before starting out on our hike. And what a hike! This is Cornwall's rugged North coast, unprotected by Ireland and battered by the open Atlantic breakers. In spring the headland is ablaze with sea pinks, campions, and pale blue squill.

Our trail along this dramatic stretch of the South West Coast Path passes the legendary [Tintagel Castle](#) (a thirteenth century castle purported to be the birthplace of King Arthur of the Britons) on the way to Trebarwith Strand. Our path climbs steeply up away from the safe haven of the harbor and, if the sea is rough enough, we will stop to watch the Meachard blowhole fling sea spray into the air. History abounds on this hike: the Forrabury Stitches, ancient Celtic fields that are still being farmed today; the Rocky Valley spiral carvings, mysterious and over 3500 years old; and more recently the slate quarrying industry dating back to the 13th Century. We will break our hike to explore [Tintagel Castle](#), dramatically located on Tintagel Head. And if the tide is right, we'll explore Merlin's cave. Our bus will meet us at Trebarwith and return us to our lodging. Tonight, we'll enjoy dinner in town.

Overnight: The Riverside or similar. Hiking 8.5 miles

DAY 4

After a leisurely breakfast we'll saunter back down to the harbor and visit the absolutely fascinating Museum of Witchcraft and Magic. While it might sound like something designed for kids, it's actually rather serious in its attempt to inform and educate about British magical practice and European witchcraft in a lively and engaging way - definitely worth a visit even if witchcraft is not something you have any interest in.

Following our visit we will board our bus for the short drive to Port Isaac. Again, fans of Doc Martin will find it quite familiar as this is the town where it's filmed. In addition, the Fisherman's Friends, legendary sea shanty singers, hail from here. Port Isaac is as delightful as it looks on TV. The village is enclosed on both sides by steep cliffs and the tiny cottages are crammed into every available nook and cranny. We are going to explore the "drangs", the tiny passageways between houses, with charming names like "Squeeze-ee- Belly Alley" and "Shuggys Ope" before setting off on today's hike.

We'll return to a different section of the South West Coast trail, this one also the site of a race called the Big Dipper. No, it's not named after birds, it's descriptive of the ups and downs and another name for it is the Rollercoaster. We'll walk to the sheltered inlet of Port Quin and then possibly continue along the rugged coast around the headlands of the Rumps and Pentire Point to the sandy beaches of Polzeath. For dinner we'll return to Port Isaac and eat at The Mote, a lovely restaurant specializing in Seafood with award winning fish pie or try the Fowey mussels.

Overnight: The Riverside. Hiking 6 - 9.5 miles.

DAY 5

We'll pack up our bags this morning and head west to Cornwall's [Tin Coast](#). We arrive in Saint Just, once the heart of Cornish tin mining and still dominated by its handsome granite church. After we take a peek inside, we'll buy a picnic lunch from Warrens Bakery. This is definitely the day to try a real Cornish pasty, a pocket meal of meat and vegetables in a pastry crust that fit perfectly in the lunch box of tin miners.

This coast is part of the [UNESCO-designated Cornish Mining World Heritage Site](#). Our hike, another section of the South West Coast Path, is through a fascinating post-industrial landscape, photogenic and stunning today but once a place that changed the world. For watchers of the BBC series [Poldark](#), you may recognize these landscapes as "Poldark country". Much of the BBC TV series was filmed here and we'll hike past Ross Poldark's Farm "Nanpara" and "Poldark's Wheal Leisure" mine. Our hike continues along the treacherous coast the Romans called "Belerion" which means "Seat of Storms" - no explanation required for that one! We will finish our hike with a celebratory beer at The Tinnars Arms in Zennor, also home of the legendary Zennor mermaid.

Overnight at The Commercial Inn in St Just or similar. Hiking: 6 - 8 miles

DAY 6

After a hearty breakfast we will take a short drive to Porth Curno to begin our hike to Land's End. Porthcurno will take your breath away with its white shell sand beaches enclosed by golden granite cliffs. We start with climbing the steep steps up from the beach to the famous Minack Open Air Theatre. The Minack was a labor of love created by Rowenna Cade whose family bought this rocky headland in the 1920s. If possible, we will call in and marvel further at its location. We then continue along the headland to Gwennap Head, also known as "Fisherman's Land's End". This is where the Atlantic tidal flow divides, with one flow running East in the English Channel and the other North into Saint George's Channel. Among birdwatchers Gwennap Head is famous as a stopping off point for migrant birds. Some have been blown way off course right across the Atlantic.

Finally, we arrive at the most westerly point of Great Britain, Land's End. This may be the end of our walk or we might take the option to walk a little further over to the beautiful Sennen Cove. We'll have dinner in a local restaurant and spend another night in The Commercial Inn or similar.

Hiking: 7 miles

DAY 7

Today will be an easy day for the feet! We'll take a short drive to Marazion where we will meet our local guide who is going to show us around the famous rocky island of St. Michael's Mount. If the tide is out, we will walk across the ancient cobbled Causeway. If the tide is high, we will hop on a boat. Either way the approach is exhilarating.

The Saint Aubyn family's connections with Saint Michael's Mount started in the 14th century and the present family, James and Mary Saint Aubyn, moved to the castle with their four children in 2003. Thirty-five people live on the island, all working together and contributing to make this a very special place. Our guide will show us around the village, gardens, and castle and then there will be time for you to wander around at your leisure. Lunch is in the Sail Loft in the village, known for their exquisite cream teas. In the afternoon we'll head to artsy Saint Ives for some independent exploration before returning to Saint Just for the night.

Hiking: 3 miles max

DAY 8

Today we move over to the very different South Coast of Cornwall. In contrast to the North Coast, this coastline is sheltered from the harsh Atlantic storms. Hidden creeks (or rias, to be geologically correct) weave their way inland. During the Elizabethan era, these creeks were a haven for pirates and smugglers. During the second world War, secret missions against a German-occupied France were planned here.

Today there is a sense of peace and calm as we follow the trail through the wooded banks of the tidal River Helford, towards Daphne Du Maurier's Frenchman's Creek. In early May, bluebells and wood anemones carpet the woodland floor, and songbirds busy themselves with nest-building. By mid-afternoon it's time to summon the ferry and cross the Helford to [Trebah Garden](#). Trebah is a sub-tropical garden, created on this sheltered coast by the Victorian Charles Fox, and crammed with plants from all over the world.

Overnight: Trevalsa or similar. Hiking: 6.5 miles

DAY 9

We set off this morning with a short transfer towards St. Austell Bay. Strange conical hills, known locally as the "Cornish Alps", hint at the once lucrative china clay industry that boomed here in the 19th Century.

Our walk, a very different section of the South West Coast Trail, begins at Polkerris harbor, historically a thriving pilchard fishing community. This is a landscape that captured the imagination of the 20th Century novelist Daphne Du Maurier. Du Maurier moved to Menabilly house in the 1960s; it is said that Mandalay, the setting in her classic novel Rebecca, was based on Menabilly. At Polridmouth beach we might see the remains of Romanie the three-mast sailing ship that went aground here. It was this ship that inspired Du Maurier to make this the setting for Rebecca's murder. Rebecca fans or not, you will love the landscape and the approach to Fowey. As we round the headland to the mouth of the river Fowey, we admire the view from St. Catherine's castle and descend through the wild garlic to Readymoney Cove and Fowey itself. Fowey is an historical harbor town, set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and a fitting end for our Cornish exploration.

Tonight, we'll go out for our Farewell Dinner, bidding farewell to Cornwall and each other. Hiking: 5 miles

DAY 10

Can it really be the end of our exploration of Cornwall? Unfortunately, the answer is yes and after breakfast we'll transport you to the railway station in Saint Austell by 9 a.m. There are frequent trains between London and Saint Austell that take about 5 hours, depending on the specific train.

If you prefer to fly, we can drop you off at the Newquay (NQY) airport by 10 a.m. where Flybe has frequent flights to Heathrow.

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

Our trip starts in Plymouth, UK. The easiest way to get there is to fly into London and then take one of the many trains (2 - 3 hours) to Plymouth. Detailed information on how to make those connections will be included in the Pre-Departure Document, sent 5 months before the trip. Getting Home: After breakfast on Day 10, we'll transport you to the railway station in Saint Austell by 9 a.m. There are frequent trains between London and Saint Austell that take about 5 hours, depending on the specific train. If you prefer to fly, we can drop you off at the Newquay (NQY) airport by 10 a.m. where Flybe has frequent flights to Heathrow.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Most of the international airlines are in-network for Exito, so they do not charge extra for their services (and often have access to discounted rates). When necessary, processing fees out-of-network carriers are minimal at around \$35-\$50 per ticket.

Accommodations

We'll be staying in locally owned inns and lodges, in double occupancy rooms with en suite bathrooms. Please note: Not all lodgings will have elevators (lifts). It is essential that you are following the packing list closely, pack light and be able to handle your own luggage - including carrying up multiple stairs.

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

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