

Below is the proposed itinerary 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

Arrive in Plymouth, Introductions, Welcome Dinner

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: Invicta Hotel, Plymouth (or similar). (D)

DAY 2

Walk from Mount Edgecomb Estate to Rame Head, Drive across Bodmin Moor to North Cornwall

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 Edgecombe estate and onwards to the picturesque fishing village of Kingsands. As we walk through the historic landscaped grounds of the Earls of Edgumbe, 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: Camelot Castle Hotel, Tintagel (or similar). Hiking: About 7 miles total, broken into 2 hikes. (B, L, D)

DAY 3

Hike South West Coast path from Boscastle to Trebarwith Strand, visit Tintagel Castle

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: Camelot Castle Hotel, Tintagel (or similar). Hiking: 6.5 miles. (B, L, D)

Overnight: Camelot Castle Hotel, Tintagel (or similar). Hiking: 8.5 miles. (B, L, D)

DAY 4

Visit Museum of Witchcraft and Magic, Walk on Southwest Coast Path from Port Isaac to Lundy Bay or Polzeath, Dinner in Port Isaac

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: Camelot Castle Hotel, Tintagel (or similar). Hiking: 6 - 9.5 miles. (B, L, D)

DAY 5

Hike Section of the South West Coast Path from Saint Just to Zennor

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 "Poldarks 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 before transferring to Penzance for your overnight stay.

Overnight: Queens Hotel, Penzance (or similar). Hiking: 6 - 8 miles. (B, L, D)

DAY 6

Visit Minack Open Air Theater, Hike the South West Coast path from Porth Curno to Land's End

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

Channel and the Outer 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 Penzance.

Overnight: Queens Hotel, Penzance (or similar). Hiking: 7 miles (B, L, D)

DAY 7

Visit Saint Michael's Mount and Saint Ives

Today will be an easy day for the feet! We'll take a short drive to Marazion where we will explore the famous rocky island of St. Michaels 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. We will enjoy a lunch nearby before heading to artsy Saint Ives for some independent exploration before returning to Penzance for the night for a dinner on your own at one of the local restaurants.

Overnight: Queens Hotel, Penzance (or similar). Hiking: 3 miles max. (B, L)

DAY 8

Drive to South Coast of Cornwall, Hike along River Helford

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.

Overnight: The Cornwall Hotel and Spa, Tregorrick (or similar). Hiking: 6.5 miles (B, L, D)

DAY 9

Hike along South West Coast Path from Polkerris Harbour to Fowey, Farewell dinner

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.

Overnight: The Cornwall Hotel and Spa, Tregorrick (or similar). Hiking: 5 miles (B, L, D)

DAY 10

Departure for Train Station or Newquay Airport

Can it really be the end of our exploration of Cornwall? After breakfast we'll transport you to the railway station in Saint Austell by 9 AM. 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 AM. where you can find frequent flights to Heathrow. (B)