



Walkabout Gourmet Adventures

Worldwide Walking Holidays since 1986



EUROPE 2024

WALKABOUT GOURMET ADVENTURES NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2024

Dear Walkabout Friends,

WINTER IN SICILY

After a very long season in 2023, I am still catching up on administration and communication. It's a very stormy and rainy day here in Sicily, but in our cosy home, filled with

candle lights, cookies and classical music, this seems to be the perfect moment to reflect on the many wonderful experiences, adventures and memories which come to my mind... and to give you an update on what is in store for the 2024 season.



Sunset Capo d'Orlando, Sicily



Feria Sevilla, Spain

FROM ANDALUSIA TO PORTUGAL

Always in favour of the Andalusia and Morocco combination on our Journey back in Time, it was a nice change returning for the first time after 13 years to Portugal. Obviously many of you must have liked this combination, as the first tour is fully booked.

Due to popular demand, we have added a second tour, starting in Porto on the 20th April - limited spots available and if you are interested, contact us.



Bérchules Alpujarras Andalusia, Spain



Duoro River Cruise, Portugal

"We wanted to slow down and enjoy some exercise, good food and accommodation without having to plan it all. Bingo on all counts! It was a fab time with highlights including a wonderful guided tour of the Alhambra, a great stay in Ronda and the Sagres wildflowers. Gabriella's experience, local knowledge and contacts were excellent - we had memorable meals including at a water mill near Ronda, on the beach near Tarifa and at a winery in the Douro Valley. The walks were through quiet countryside, sometimes more challenging than anticipated. The very small group was great company and the guides were enthusiastic and committed."

Cathy from Sydney Australia

📅 **A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME (18 DAYS)** | 20 APRIL
PORTO, PORTUGAL / ENDS 7 MAY 2024 | GRANADA, SPAIN

A YEAR WITHOUT SICILY

Regrettably, our Sicily tour in 2024 coincides with our second Journey back in Time tour, therefore will not be in the programme for this year!

However, we invite you to join our exquisite Dolce Vita walk in April 2025, promising a balanced itinerary filled with history, nature walks, art, and most certainly delectable cuisine.

Other highlights are our 4 days in the enchanting Aeolian Islands, where our walks take us up to the volcano crater, as well as exploring the islands of Panarea and Stromboli.

"Annie & I want to thank You & Helmut for a great walk. We really covered the "hotspots" of Sicily very well plus the walks were great. We were remarkably lucky with the weather as well. We thought the group was wonderful as well. Now we have to decide on walk No. 11!"

John & Annie, Adelaide, South Australia

📅 **LA DOLCE VITA (15 DAYS)** | BEGINS 28 APRIL 2025
PALERMO, SICILY, ITALY / ENDS 12 MAY 2025 | PALERMO, SICILY, ITALY



Kappa Bridge, Azusa River, Kamikochi, Japan

THE SPIRIT OF JAPAN

In May, I had the privilege of accompanying our first tour in Japan, an extraordinary journey led by our wonderful guide Pepijn.

Diverting from the typical Walkabout experience, this journey was unique as we predominantly traversed the country by train. Pepijn introduced us to Japan's vibrant life, unravelling its modern and ancient traditions, exploring facets of religion, history, culture, art and cuisine. October took me back to Japan and I can only join the chorus praising this autumnal spectacle - just stunning to see it again in this beautiful autumn light.

Getting more familiar with our walks and daily life in Japan, we have fine-tuned this year's itinerary. We spend our first night in Tokyo and then make our way north to Nikko for two nights.

We also have the opportunity to visit one of Japan's tea plantations on our way to Nara. Due to these changes, we have one extra night in Matsumoto and hopefully some more time to visit the city museum. Its main attraction is the collection of works from the world-famous Matsumoto-born artist Kusama Yayoi.

We are offering again 2 departures this year! While limited spots remain on our tour in May, the October tour is currently fully booked.

Excitingly, our 2025 spring tour will embrace the cherry blossom season, commencing in late March. Exact dates will be shared once all hotel confirmations are secured.

"Kimi, our Japanese guide, was sensational. He was forever considerate, alert and looked out for our welfare, safety and enjoyment. A real treasure! Our group was always on time for our daily journeys and the energy was fun. Japan's countryside did not disappoint as it was magical with its autumn colours which only enhanced the adventure. Many thanks."

Marie from Willow Vale QLD, Australia

📅 **THE SPIRIT OF JAPAN (18 DAYS)**
 BEGINS 10 MAY FROM TOKYO / ENDS 27 MAY 2024 TO
 HIROSHIMA + BEGINS 19 OCTOBER FROM TOKYO / ENDS 5
 NOVEMBER 2024 | HIROSHIMA (CURRENTLY FULLY BOOKED)

WALKING WITH GILLES

We are very happy to have Gilles still in the Walkabout team and as in most years, he took a small group to Corsica and Sardinia.

Here dramatic mountains are never far away from the sea, which certainly makes for a dramatic landscape.

While this tour is on hold for 2024, instead Gilles will guide our On the Celtic Way tour twice. The first tour on the 7th June is fully booked, however, there are two spots available for the second departure later in June.



Miyajima Temple, Japan



Alpe de Siusi Dolomites, Italy

Gilles will also be leading the Romantic Path walk in Austria and Italy (14-27 September) and the Gastronomic Trail in France (2-15 October).

Both walks still have some vacancies.

"I'm very glad I took the chance to travel with a friend and do a trip a bit out of my usual comfort zone. I was one of the few 'non-repeaters' in the group of 14 - and the oldest - but it was a great group, and Gilles and Pascal looked after everyone beautifully. The accommodation was excellent; varied in character and location and never bland-international-hotel style. The food in our Cornwall hotels was tops; superior to the cuisine in Brittany (but, as the French friends we stayed with after the tour pointed out, Brittany has never been one of the gastronomic high spots of France, so no surprises there. And they're very good at galettes!). The coastal walks in both countries were magnificent, with the moors and the standing stones as counterpoints. We were lucky with the weather, too - only one wet day, really

- and escaped the heat wave that's currently tormenting Europe. Salut to Gilles and Pascal - they did a wonderful job."

Judy from Exeter, England

📅 **ON THE CELTIC WAY (14 DAYS)** | BEGINS 25 JUNE
FROM EXETER, ENGLAND / ENDS 8 JULY 2024 | VANNES, FRANCE

THE BEST OF ITALY

We can't wait to return to the Amalfi Coast on our Epicurean walk in Italy, beginning 8th June in Sorrento and concluding on the 23rd June in Florence. From here we continue with our Gems of the Riviera, showcasing



Piano Grande, Monti Sibillini National Park, Italy



Rock tombs in Myra, Demre, Turkey

the beautiful Ligurian Coast, Cinque Terre and the Côte d'Azur.

Join us on this fantastic walk with new highlights: a new trail in the Cinque Terre, Imperia, walking from Menton to Monaco.

After much contemplation, we felt it was also time to change the title – so no more Walk to the Stars!

"We really enjoyed this tour. It offered a delightful balance between walking and sightseeing. The walks with coastal views were a real highlight for us. We had some exceptional meals in very special locations, many with a view of the Mediterranean. We appreciated the high-end accommodation at Sestri Levante, with sufficient time to explore the region. We loved the opportunity to settle into a relaxed Mediterranean lifestyle, and staying in the middle of St Tropez in a cute hotel was a special opportunity."

Ellen from Brisbane, Australia

📅 **GEMS OF THE RIVIERA** [14 DAYS] | BEGINS 25 JUNE, FLORENCE, ITALY / ENDS 8 JULY | AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FR.

GO TÜRKIYE!

Unfortunately, our Mediterranean Odyssey journey is still on hold due to regulations, making it impossible to cross from Turkey into Greece on a commercial gullet and we can't see any green light in the near future.

In addition to our tour through Cappadocia and Eastern Turkey in May, starting in Kayseri, we have reintroduced one of our favourite journeys - Discover Asia Minor in Western Turkey, starting in Istanbul and ending in Antalya. Two captivating programs starting in May and September, led by our knowledgeable and popular guide Fatih.

"At long last I stepped inside the pages of my ancient history books to explore sites created and/or conquered by the Hittites, ancient Greeks, Persians, Romans and Ottomans. Glorious walks, some by the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas and through the unique Cappadocian landscape kept us well away from the hordes on board tourist buses and offered a variety of panoramic and scenic views. From

cooking lessons in a village kitchen to sharing morning tea with our guide's family we sampled local hospitality as well as outstanding restaurants, simple local fare and different types of accommodation. A terrific itinerary delivered by guide Fatih and driver Umit for our little tour group of three. It was everything I had hoped for."

Helen from Adelaide SA, Australia

📅 **TREASURES OF CAPPADOCIA** [17 DAYS] | BEGINS 18 MAY, KAYSERI / ENDS 3 JUNE 2024 | TRABZON, TURKEY

📅 **DISCOVER ASIA MINOR** [14 DAYS] | BEGINS 15 SEPT. ISTANBUL / ENDS 28 SEPT. 2024 | ANTALYA, TURKEY



Pamukkale, Turkey



Llanos De La Larri Pyrenees, Spain

INTO THE MOUNTAINS WITH OLIVIER

A new team member is Olivier who was initially recommended by Pascal, one of our former guides. Pascal has become a professional globetrotter and together with his wife they are roaming the planet for adventures in fascinating places! We miss them and wish them safe travels. Olivier, a very experienced mountain guide, is the leader on the Pilgrim's Way and the Pyrenees walks. This year he will join me on our first Journey back in Time walk, starting on the 1st April. Olivier is also the guide on our Journey through the Holy Land tour but obviously this tour is on hold until further notice. He also guides a lot of mountain trekking tours for other companies but is also a specialist in leading tours through Oman. We have asked him for suggestions to temporarily replace our Journey through the Holy Land tour with Oman and shall keep you posted with some dates and news about this exciting new tour.

"A truly fantastic experience. Clearly much research had gone into selecting the various walks, accommodation and restaurants. The two vehicles were perfect for carrying the relatively small group (15) and Graeme & Pascal were there to help in every way possible. My wife and I appreciated the fact that the tour saw no pressure on those unable to complete all the walking. I suffered from blisters and yet wasn't made to feel excluded even though I missed some of the walking. The gastronomic experiences, notably in Ainhoa, were outstanding and the pre-dinner gatherings for drinks really bonded a group of likeminded "adventurers". The Pilgrim's Way has my strongest endorsement. It was a truly wonderful and unique experience."

Peter from Perth WA, Australia

☐ **THE PILGRIM'S WAY (14 DAYS)** | BEGINS 2 MAY 2024 BIARRITZ, FRANCE / ENDS 15 MAY 2024 | SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA, SPAIN (ONE VACANCY)

☐ **DISCOVER THE PYRENEES (14 DAYS)** | BEGINS 10 JULY MONTPELLIER / ENDS 23 JULY 2024 BIARRITZ, FRANCE

THE CHARMS OF PROVENCE

July is the month when we like to stay at home and savour the charm of Provence with the scent of lavender in the air, overflowing markets with delicious locally grown produce and balmy nights for al fresco dining. We recommend the Flavours of Provence or Rejuvenate in Provence journeys or a combination of both of them.



Citadel of Forcalquier, Provence



Walking to the Arctic sea, Northern Iceland

"I particularly loved the olive farm, the Potager and Vineyard, lunch at Alain Ducasse, the lavender fields, and both restaurants in Forcalquier, Salagon, the goat farm and cooking with Joyce. Thank you for making Provence all that I've read about and more!"

Liz from Nungurner Victoria, Australia

📅 **THE FLAVOURS OF PROVENCE** (7 days) | BEGINS 13 JULY / ENDS 19 JULY AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

📅 **A REJUNENATING RETREAT IN PROVENCE** (7 days) | 105 - 19 JULY AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

If you prefer you can also choose just a holiday and prepare your own itinerary staying in one of our 3 holiday apartments (see our website).

INTO THE LAND OF ICE & FIRE

Iceland is one of my favourite countries and somehow it is always overwhelming to return and see the rough beauty of this amazing island! Our walk takes us into an untamed world of fire and ice, of spouting geysers, blue lagoons, massive glaciers and multi-coloured valleys stretching to the sea. Our spectacular adventure immerses you in the full realm of Iceland's extraordinary landscapes, with fantastic coastal and mountain walks. Last year I caught up with a

former guest and friend to hike up to the currently active volcano, which was an awesome experience. Join us on our next Icelandic adventure.

"We really enjoyed this tour. It offered a delightful balance between walking and sightseeing. The walks with coastal views were a real highlight for us. We had some exceptional meals in very special locations, many with a view of the Mediterranean. We appreciated the high-end accommodation at Sestri Levante, with sufficient time to explore the region. We loved the opportunity to settle into a relaxed Mediterranean lifestyle, and staying in the middle of St Tropez in a cute hotel was a special opportunity."

Ellen from Brisbane, Australia

📅 **ICELAND EXPLORER** (14 days) | BEGINS 27 JULY 2024 IN REYKJAVIK / ENDS 9 AUGUST 2024 IN REYKJAVIK

LAKES OF ITALY

Our Italian Lakes tour continues to be very popular and is filling up. There are many great walks and one of them takes us into the Val Bregaglia. It is, without a doubt, one of the hardest but always the most rewarding walks. The mountain scenery is at its best in this region and our dinner at Hotel Sogolina in Soglio is always a great end after a fabulous day in the mountains.

"Fabulous scenery, great walks, lovely hotels and meals. Each lake had a different feel about it, and each walk was different too. Thank you Gabriela and Catherine for guiding and driving us through this beautiful part of the world. (It's clear a lot of thought (and experience) has gone into planning this trip - the hotels, the restaurants, the walks, the route taken and the days off exploring the local area all contributed to an excellent trip)."

Anne from Perth WA, Australia

📅 **ITALIAN LAKES** (14 days) | BEGINS 26 SEPT. FROM LUZERN, SWITZERLAND / ENDS 9 OCT. 2024 | VERONA, ITALY



Monte Baldo Lake Garda, Italy



Julian Alps, Slovenia

FROM TURQUOISE WATERS TO THE JULIAN ALPS

Helmut concludes our European season with our walk in Croatia and Slovenia. This very popular tour has the right balance between coastal walks while on the dreamy island of Mljet, history and culture as well as spectacular mountain walks in the Julian Alps in Slovenia.

October is the perfect time as we can still enjoy swimming in the turquoise waters of the Adriatic in Mljet but by the time we arrive in the Julian Alps the autumn colours have kicked in and the mellow autumn light has a golden hue.

A wonderful surprise awaits us in Bohinjska Bistrica where we meet Jože. He is a very creative chef with a dedication and love for cooking and tradition, which he found right here in his hometown. He will spoil us with top-notch cuisine and excellent local wines.

"We have joined a number of Walkabout Gourmet Adventures over the years and once again we thoroughly enjoyed the Croatia/ Slovenia experience. it is a beautiful part of the world and certainly not one to be missed in a lifetime. Travelling with like minded people in a relatively small group with two wonderful guides

as in Gabriela and Helmut, you simply cannot go wrong. Every day was an adventure in so many ways, whether it was experiencing the walking trails getting close to nature or as we call it 'earthing', the history, the culture, the local cuisine or simply enjoying getting to know the other guests in the group. We would highly recommend WGA to anyone seeking a small group adventure where you can simply 'go with the flow' and enjoy each day where there is an element of surprise each day!"

Stuart & Davina from Brisbane QLD, Australia

📅 **EXPLORE CROATIA AND SLOVENIA (14 DAYS)** | 11-24 OCT. FROM DUBROVNIK, CROATIA / ENDS VENICE, ITALY

IN THE LAND OF COCONUTS & SPICES

After Japan I will happily return to Kerala where I end my season with our Flavours of South India. 12 days of cultural discovery, mountain walks and culinary delights.

In the cool mountain region of Munnar our walks are amongst the cool tea, coffee and lush spice plantations. Here we are going to meet Nimi and spend some time cooking and creating some of these delicious Keralan dishes.

Meanwhile she is quite a famous chef and acclaimed writer who has won



Cooking with Nimi Munnar



Houseboat Kerala Backwaters, India

many prizes. It is a privilege spending an afternoon with her. We will also spend some time in Thekkady and the name conjures up images of elephants, unending chains of hills and spice-scented plantations.

In the Periyar forest of Thekkady we walk in one of the finest wildlife reserves in India and spread across the entire district are picturesque plantations and hill towns with great mountain walks. It must have been serendipity to meet Sreejith, our wise holistic yoga/meditation and reflexology teacher.



Hindu Festival, Kerala

A true yogi, he transmits everything, which is so often missing in our modern ways of teaching yoga. Our days usually begin with yoga or meditation, which of course is always optional. Once one has experienced a first practice with Sreejith, we can assure you that you will never want to miss out on this transformative experience.

We end our journey with 2 tranquil days on a houseboat in the Kerala Backwaters. It is a fabulous way to explore the fascinating beauty of the backwaters, watching the ducks being called to their night shelter, children going to school and village life passes by.

All meals will be served on the boat, freshly prepared by the crew, while you relax and take in the views. In the evening the boat will anchor by the lush paddy fields to enjoy the tranquillity of the water around (so that the local fishermen are not disturbed). To stretch our legs, we walk around the rice fields at sunset. These fields are below sea level.

"My cousin and I had an absolutely wonderful time touring South India. We loved the adventure walks and really enjoyed the cooking classes - they were

a highlight. Accommodation was first class and the Aleppy houseboat trip was fantastic. Such a brilliant way to see life in Kerala up close and personal. We were so lucky to enjoy the company of the other tour guests - such a great bunch of people and so much fun."

Victoria from Sydney, NSW, Australia

📅 **FLAVOURS OF SOUTH INDIA (12 DAYS)** | BEGINS/
ENDS 15 - 26 Nov. 2024 FROM/TO COCHIN, KERALA, INDIA



Munnar tea plantations, Kerala



Mallacoota Inlet, East Gippsland, Victoria

AUSTRALIAN HOLIDAYS

Don't forget if you aren't able to join us on one of our exciting overseas holidays, you can join Graeme on one of our local Australian walking holidays this year - we still have availability on the following:

- ❑ **MALLACOOTA & CROAJINGOLONG** » FEBRUARY 17 2024
6-DAY WALKING TOUR IN MALLACOOTA AND CROAJINGOLONG NATIONAL PARKS, VICTORIA
- ❑ **SYDNEY COASTAL GEMS** » MARCH 17 2024
9-DAY WALKING TOUR IN PALM BEACH, KU-RING-GAI, BRISBANE WATER & BOUDDI NPs, NSW
- ❑ **BEST OF THE WEST** » APRIL 29 2024
13-DAY WALKING TOUR IN ALBANY, BIBBULMUN TRACK, CAPE TO CAPE, MARGARET RIVER, WA
- ❑ **FLINDERS ISLAND** » MAY 27 2024
7-DAY - JEWELS OF BASS STRAIT ISLANDS, TASMANIA
- ❑ **LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK** » JUNE 23 2024
5-DAY WALKING TOUR IN THE RAINFOREST OF LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK, QUEENSLAND

"A most enjoyable trip! Lovely accommodation and food; spectacular views from our room. Our leader, Graeme, was very experienced and well informed about the Lamington region. He had a gentle manner that allowed him to engage easily with all members of the group, providing support and guidance when required to ensure that all went smoothly."

Cheryl from Melbourne, Australia

We wish you all an exciting and adventurous 2024, filled with joy and happiness throughout the year,

Gabriela, Graeme and the Walkabout Team



Walkabout Gourmet Adventures

ABOUT US

Walkabout Gourmet Adventures has been operating personalised walking holidays in Australia, Africa, Middle East and Europe since 1986. We realise how precious holidays are to you and we want to ensure that your holiday with us will remain a special time in your life. Our aim is to transmit our enthusiasm to you as our guest and to offer you a safe and comfortable environment in which to experience these fascinating destinations.

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