



THE WEST COUNTRY

ON THE TRAIL OF KING ARTHUR

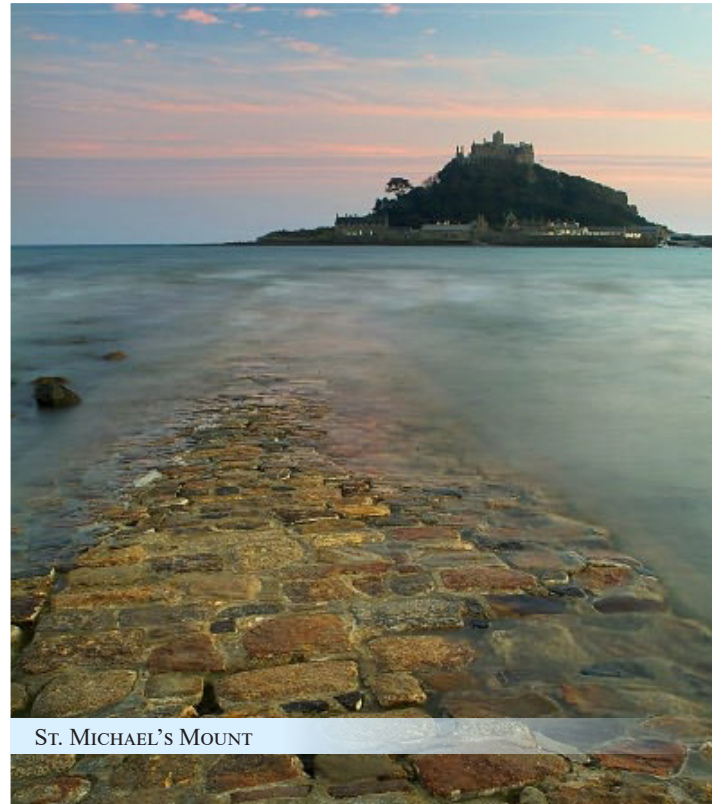
SEPTEMBER 24TH - OCTOBER 3RD 2020

The southwest peninsula of England, made up of the counties of Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset, is known as “The West Country.” It is an ancient land, rife with myth and legend, and staunchly independent from the “mainland” of England. This journey through the mists of the Celtic past brings to life many of those ancient legends.

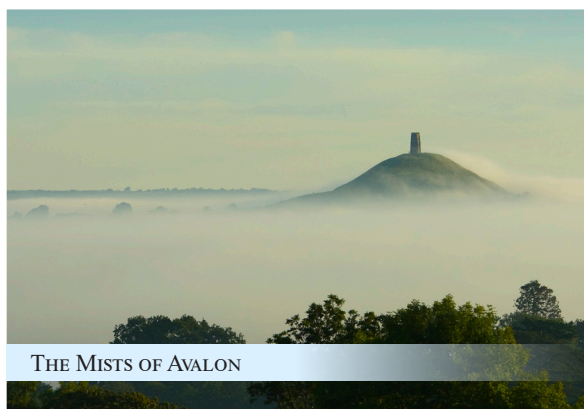
Part of the region’s uniqueness comes from its climate, one that attracts English holiday makers during the summer season. Washed by the warming currents of the Gulf Stream, the peninsula enjoys its own microclimate that allows palm trees to grow along the coast at a latitude equivalent to that of Nova Scotia on the North American continent!

We’ll cover the longest distance, down to Land’s End in speed and comfort on the intercity train and then wend a leisurely route back by private motor coach. We’ll visit gardens, castles, cathedrals, and ancient unspoiled towns and villages, exploring areas of unparalleled natural beauty.

And through it all will run the theme of the Arthurian legends. From Arthur’s birthplace at Tintagel, through the lost land of Lyonesse, and on to Avalon and Arthur’s (alleged) grave site in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, this ancient tale will keep cropping up on our travels through this beautiful part of England. Why not join us in *THE WEST COUNTRY*?



ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT



THE MISTS OF AVALON

THE COST OF THIS ITINERARY, PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY IS:

LAND ONLY (NO AIRFARE INCLUDED): **\$4360**
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: **\$ 880**

Airfares are available from most U.S. departure cities. Please call for details.

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE INCLUDED:

- HOTELS:** 8 nights’ accommodation in first-class hotels, including all hotel taxes and service charges
- TRAINS:** First-class rail from London to Penzance
- COACHING:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- MEALS:** Breakfast daily, 5 dinners
- GUIDES:** Discover Europe tour guide throughout
- EXPENSES:** Portorage of one large suitcase per person
- ENTRANCES:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registrant on receipt of deposit.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH - Evening departure from your US gateway city. **OVERNIGHT: PLANE**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH - Upon arrival at London's Heathrow Airport, you will be met and transported to our hotel in Royal Windsor. After time to unpack and relax, the rest of the day is free to unwind and recover from the overnight flight. In the afternoon your guide will conduct an orientation meeting and lead a short optional tour to points of local interest. This evening we gather for a welcome dinner at our hotel. **(D) OVERNIGHT: WINDSOR**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH - Transfer via coach to nearby Reading Station for a first-class train ride to the ancient market town of Penzance, "capital" of West Cornwall and the Land's End Peninsula. Set in beautiful Mount's Bay, a body of water dominated by St. Michael's Mount, Penzance is surrounded by majestic cliffs, wild moors, and secluded beaches, with a history of smugglers that inspired Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*. On arrival, we'll check in to our hotel and have free time to explore the lively town center, stroll the attractive seaside promenade, and admire the subtropical flowers and palms that abound. In the evening we'll gather again for dinner at our hotel. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: PENZANCE**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH - Our excursion today to Land's End takes us through an area of ancient Celtic culture and outstanding natural beauty. Crystal-clear seas vie with the heather of the moors, and prehistoric stone circles are scattered over the Peninsula. We return to Penzance for a visit to the jewel in the crown of Mount's Bay: the island castle of St. Michael's Mount, possibly part of King Arthur's lost land of Lyonesse, with its 11th-century monastery and 15th-century fort. The evening is free to sample the restaurant of your choice. **(B) OVERNIGHT: PENZANCE**



PORT ISAAC AKA PORTWENN

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH - This morning we have a full day's excursion to the highly acclaimed millennial Eden Project—a "gateway into the world of plants and people." Giant, bubble-like conservatories simulate tropical and temperate climate zones, and are planted with species from around the world. Then we visit the Lost Gardens of Heligan—termed "the garden restoration of the century" by *The Times*. At the end of the 19th century, the 1,000 acres of this mysterious estate were at their zenith; a few years later, bramble and ivy were drawing a veil over this "Sleeping Beauty." Today the award-winning restoration is internationally praised. Dinner is included this evening at a local restaurant. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: PENZANCE**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH - Leaving Penzance, we first stop in the fishing village of Port Isaac, better known as Portwenn from the series, "Doc Martin." Then we journey back in time to Tintagel Castle, legendary birthplace of King Arthur. Set on a wild and windswept headland, the ruins of this 13th-century castle were preceded by an Iron Age castle and settlement. From here we strike deep into the West Country moors—Bodmin, steeped in Arthurian legend, and Dartmoor, one of the last true wildernesses in England. On to Exeter, where much remains of the city's Roman and medieval walls, for a visit to the stunning Exeter Cathedral, England's finest example of decorated Gothic architecture, with its magnificent nave and the longest Gothic vault in Europe. In the evening we dine in Taunton at the Castle Hotel, our home for the next three nights. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: TAUNTON**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH - Today we head up the North Devon coast, where we will make stops in Minehead, Porlock, and Lynmouth. The picturesque harbor in the seaside resort of Minehead lies below the old village, where steep lanes lead up to a 14th-century church. The quaint villages of Porlock and Lynmouth fall within the confines of Exmoor, some of the finest countryside in Britain. We'll end our day back in Taunton, where the evening is free. **(B) OVERNIGHT: TAUNTON**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1ST - A day in Somerset. We stop first in Glastonbury, to tour the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, said to be the burial place of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere, and see the Glastonbury Thorn, rumored to have sprung from the staff of Joseph of Arimathea when he brought the Holy Grail here after the crucifixion. Next we visit Wells, a magnificent cathedral city sheltered beneath the beauty of Mendip Hills. We'll return to Taunton via Montacute House. This fabulous Elizabethan mansion is also home to a part of the collection of the National Portrait Gallery. The evening is free to try a local restaurant or pub for dinner. **(B) OVERNIGHT: TAUNTON**



DARTMOOR

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2ND - We'll break our journey back to Windsor today with a stop in Bath. The whole city is an outstanding architectural showpiece with its mix of ancient remains (including extensive Roman Baths) and elegant Georgian buildings. On arrival in Windsor, we'll check in and have time to relax before we gather for our farewell dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: WINDSOR**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3RD - Airport transfers this morning to London's Heathrow Airport for your return flight to the US. **(B)**

Key to included meals: **B** - breakfast, **D** - dinner