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EUROPEAN SUMMER 2014

WALKABOUT GOURMET NEWSLETTER

Dear Walkabout Walkers and Friends,

The end of summer is near and this newsletter has been long in coming.

All of us at Walkabout have had a busy summer season with many wonderful walks and great groups.

NORWAY, HIDDEN GEM



Norway is one of the hidden gems and has to be one of the most beautiful corners this world has to offer!

A special highlight this year was our stay at the historic Øye Hotel near the Geiranger Fjord and to be able to swim in one of the most picture perfect Fjords in the world.

After a magical start, this tour continued through the Geirangerfjord, driving along the panoramic Trollstigen serpentine mountain road to the Dovrefjell National Park. A complete contrast to the first location. Here nature was ruled by bright lichen and Musk Oxen.

Another highlight to experience this region was our stay in the authentic hotel: Kongsvold Fjelstue. Everything



about this place made us feel a part of the traditional Norwegian way of life, and the gourmet food that came to our plates every evening, encouraged us only to want more of the taste sensations that the chef was creating every evening.

On our last morning, before our travel day, we stopped and walked up to Sno-



hetta Viewpoint, and were blown away by one of the most incredible pieces of architecture we have ever seen!

The walks were all so very different and at a pace that all could enjoy. It was overwhelming to view the Fjords looking down...

RAY, CANUNGRA, QLD, AUSTRALIA

- Peer Gynt's Trail | July 2015

ROMANTIC ADVENTURE IN AUSTRIA



Waking up in the middle of nature, with views and food to die for, was all it took to fall for the Seevilla's charm. Every-

thing about our stay at this romantic hotel made us feel extra special.

Our days were spent hiking up to the Loser Mountain or from the Grundlsee



to the Toplitzsee, all while enjoying the stillness and sounds of the birds and the quaint babbling streams.

The highlights must have been coming back from a long day of walking and cooling off in the Altaussee!

Oh and last but not least, exploring one of the largest salt mines in the world was an experience in itself and must be tried at least once in a lifetime.

I loved every minute. Gabriela and Gilles were wonderful guides, the walks chosen were varied and ranged from simply beautiful to spectacular...

ANNE, BRISBANE, QLD, AUSTRALIA

- The Romantic Path | July 2015

SUMMER TIME IN PROVENCE

There are no words to describe it and I always knew there must have been a reason why we have chosen it - out of all the many beautiful places - as our base and home in Europe!

These photos were shot while driving back through the Valensole Plateau.

We couldn't help but stop at every single Lavender and sunflower field and catch these precious moments, which almost seem unreal...

But surely this is one of the the Magics of Provence!

We saw so many wonderful places and shared experiences that highlighted the gourmet delights of Provence...

RHONDA, PAYNESVILLE, VIC, AUSTRALIA

- Pagnol's Provence | June 2015
- On the Snail Trail | June 2015
- Flavours of Provence | August 2015

PYRENEES' WONDERS



Another highlight this summer for me personally was returning and leading the Discover the Pyrenees tour in Spain and France, which I hadn't done for many years.

I have been greatly supported by Gilles who helped making this tour a big success. Spain is definitely a country full of hidden gems with seaside fishing villages like Cadaqués.

No wonder Dali decided to spend most of his days getting inspired by this little bundle of light. Despite the beauty of Cadaqués, next year's Pyrenees walk will begin in Collioure, a small fishing village, known as the jewel of the Cote Vermeille.

Higher and higher into the Pyrenees, I had forgotten the beauty of the small town of Gavarnie in the Pyrenees National Park.

In our small friendly hotel we enjoyed the typical cuisine of the region which our host, Bernard, prepared to perfection.

Gavarnie is an ideal location for walks into the surrounding mountains and of course to discover the amazing amphitheatres of the Cirque de Gavarnie and the Cirque de Troumouse. It can only be described as one of nature's wonders.

There are over 1500 species of wildflowers native to the Pyrenees and wildlife is abundant i.e. Lynx, lizard, marmot, ptarmigan, bearded vultures and golden

eagles - There are even approximately 15 Brown bears in the National Park!

Absolutely loved and enjoyed every minute of this fantastic part of the world! Scenery, post card perfect...

ROBYN, NORFOLK ISLAND

- Discover the Pyrenees | July 2015

ENCHANTING LAKES



It's always a sad feeling leaving the warmer months of summer for autumn as one knows that winter is just around the corner, but then again... nothing ever stays the same! A final summer highlight was to end up at the Italian Lakes.

With its Mediterranean climate and fantastic food, it is an ideal region to end the summer. In the Ticino and at Lago Maggiore we explored the narrow gorges of the Verzasca and the Centovalli.

At the enchanting Lago di Como we were surrounded by wooded hills below the majestic mountains. The lake consists of three long narrow arms and has a total length of 50 kms.

We walked on old mule tracks through varied and lush Mediterranean vegetation with splendid views across the lake. A special highlight was the delicious dinner at the Sogliana Hotel in Soglio after walking along the Via Panoramica.

Our path took us through the lush ro-

mantic wilderness on the right side of the Bergell from Casaccia to Soglio. We have now arrived at Lake Garda, the largest and perhaps the most beautiful of the northern Italian lakes. Sheltered by the Dolomites, it has a temperate climate and historically was the most northern locality in the world where citrus fruits could be grown commercially.

We have enjoyed the walk at Monte Baldo, the Sentiero Angelini and today is the free day, desperately needed to finish this newsletter. Our tour will end with a walk to the fairytale castle of Drena and a ride to Gargnano on a steamer, which regularly ply the lake.

We came home feeling very fit. The food on this trip was also excellent and accommodation comfortable...

HEATHER, TEMPLESTOWE, VIC, AUSTRALIA

- Italian Lakes | July 2015

VENICE, PURE MAGIC



I always love going back to Venice and look forward to the 1 ½ free days in this fascinating city before starting the next walk. It is a peculiar kind of atmosphere, to know that you are strolling the streets of a city, which is built on water. Everything about Venice is pure magic and I am excited to share with you some of my favourite things from my various visits.

- Getting lost in Venice... It is always intentional and leaves me every time more charmed by this incredible city.
- Venice Doge's Palace: A must see

and do if you are a Lover of Art, History and Architecture.

- Soaking in the views over the Grand Canal and Venice and a lunch at La Piscina restaurant - also a boutique hotel.
- The Rialto Market.
- Leisurely breakfast at one of Italy's oldest Cafe and sipping a Bellini at Harry's Bar
- A performance at the glorious Fenice Theatre
- Palazzo Grassi. As soon as you enter this place, you just cannot help but pinch yourself. Is it real or just an illusion? The building is more than just a work of Art and has magnificent views overlooking the Grand Canal. But the highlights are not just the Contemporary Art which is exhibited not on a wall but on the entire surface. The red toned carpets are spread all over the building making it seem like a paradise for any crazy minded Artist.
- The colourful little island of Burano. The boat ride was slightly claustrophobic to say the least, but it all payed off once we arrived in this rainbow village. The buildings were in every possible shade and the atmosphere was electrifying.
- To finish off on good terms... We were lucky enough to be surprised by an extraordinary sunset; slowly making our way back to beautiful Venice.

THIS WEEK: CROATIA & SLOVENIA RETURN



Two of the remaining autumn tours will take us from Venice to Slovenia and Croatia and due to the popularity, we have introduced a second tour from Dubrovnik back to Venice.



One of the many highlights is always our stay on Mljet where we hike the spectacular coastline of this sun-splashed island, which is almost entirely a National Park.

We loved the walks. They were invigorating, sometimes quite challenging and always rewarding...

JANE, BRISBANE, QLD, AUSTRALIA

- Explore Croatia & Slovenia | Sept. 2015

AUTUMN SPECIALS -10%

CYCLADES ISLANDS, GREECE

One of my favourite times in Greece is when the busy summer months have come to an end and everybody is relaxed and enjoying the last weeks to the end of the season.

We start in Santorini, one of the famous 39 islands in the Cyclades and truly one of the most beautiful places in Greece. This old volcano - the most active in the Aegean Sea - has the greatest Caldera in the world. We base ourselves in Oia, often considered the prettiest village in Greece.

Our walks take us along the edge of the stunning caldera or even more breathtaking are our walks through the other cliff top villages of Santorini - they seem to defy gravity as the white washed houses cling to the rim of the crater.

Crete is the most southerly and largest Greek Island and provides an inexhaustible array of vivid impressions. A cradle of European civilisation, it has an unrivalled history and culture and is a paradise for the amateur archae-

ologists. The island was the seat of the great Minoan civilization, whose fascinating remains are one of the most impressive sights in the entire Mediterranean region.

The walks were stunning and the time of year, perfect for exploring these wonderful islands. Thank you for a memorable trip...

DENISE, WAKEHURST PARKWAY, NSW, AUST.

- Walk on Wild Side | Oct. 11 2014
- There are still some places available on this great tour and for the last minute traveller we offer a 10% discount.

AFRICAN WALKABOUT



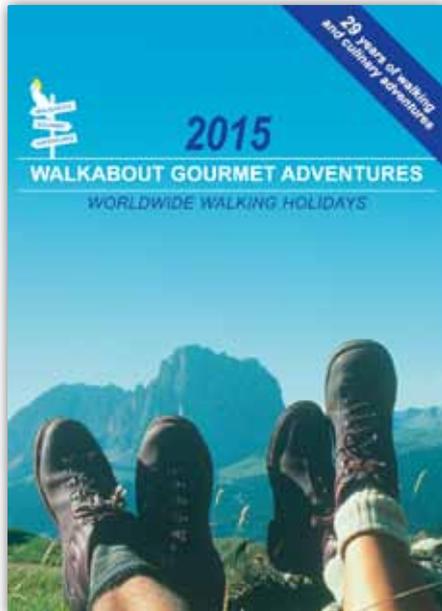
To fill up the last remaining places we can also offer a 10% discount on our African Walkabout, which allows us to experience the West Coast of South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Victoria Falls.

Highlights are the Fish River Canyon, Sossusvlei, Swakopmund, Himba Tribes, Etosha National Park, Okavango Delta, Western Caprivi, Chobe National Park & Victoria Falls.

- African Walkabout | Oct. 15 2014

THE WALKABOUT BROCHURE 2015

At last it is done and ready to access on our website! The hard copy is on the press at the moment and will soon be ready for mail out.



Also this year it will feature some of our favourite destinations, including Andalusia and Morocco, Sicily, Slovenia and Croatia, Greece Africa and Wilson's Promontory in Australia.

New tours include Eastern Turkey, A Culinary Snail Trail through France and a new Flavours of Italy cooking and walking tour in the Piedmont in Italy. With plenty of new ideas, the 2016 brochure is already on the way!

UPCOMING FOOD AND WINE FESTIVALS

There are plenty of events in Australia from regional Food and Fine Wine Festivals to Gastronomy Expos throughout the year.

These Events bring together Australian and world-renowned winemakers, chefs and industry insiders to entertain, educate and inspire, you may also visit farm gates and cellar doors, meet with local producers, attend degustation dinners, taste regional products or even attend cooking classes!



We have put a list of local and overseas gourmet events together, here is what's coming near you between now and Christmas:

AUSTRALIA

- 01/10 Good Food Month Sydney
- 17/10 Brisbane Good Food & Wine Show
- 01/11 Good Food Month Melbourne
- 08/11 Brisbane Good Food & Wine Month
- 13/11 Taste of Melbourne Albert Park, VIC
- 15/11 La Dolce Vita in the King Valley, Warragatta, VIC
- 21/11 Margaret River Gourmet Escape, WA
- 28/12 The Taste of Tasmania Hobart, TAS



OVERSEAS

- 27/09 Feast of Gastronomy France [3 days] Country wide
- 07/10 Gisborne Wine & Food Festival [2 days] New Zealand
- 12/10 The White Truffle Festival Alba Italy
- 29/10 Le Salon du Chocolat Paris France
- 31/10 Salon Vins et Terroirs Toulouse France
- 13/11 Taste of Auckland New Zealand
- 17/11 San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival, California USA
- 19/11 Salon Saveurs des Plaisirs Gourmands, Paris France

A CHARMING PLACE IN PROVENCE

it has been another busy year with our holiday apartments in Forcalquier (Alpes de Haute Provence region) with guests coming from all over the world.

There are already many bookings for 2015 but we still have availability - so don't forget about our lovely apartments when planning your European holiday next year.



My fiancée and I were looking for a quiet town in Provence to spend a relaxing couple of days. Graeme's apartment turned out to be the ideal place for us, and we were just so happy being there. Graeme is a professional host and has all the information you'd want about the area, including maps. He gave us some great recommendations on where to eat and hike during our stay. We even spent one evening chatting/drinking with Graeme and he was so gracious to invite us into his home. The apartment itself is ideal - we felt right at home...

JULIE FROM HAWAII, USA - 08/2014

Happy and safe travelling - we look forward to welcoming you on one of our holidays soon.

Kind Regards,

GABRIELA, GRAEME AND THE WGA TEAM



CHESTNUT GNOCCHI

Recipe from Soglio, Bregalia, Switzerland

INGREDIENTS

- 250 g plain white flour
- 200 g chestnut flour
- 1 kg waxy potatoes, peeled
- 3 eggs
- Butter
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Fresh cream for the sauce
- A little bit of chestnut puree
- Cooked fresh or dried chestnuts if available
- Rosemary and juniper berries

METHOD

- Spread the flour out into a rectangle on your work surface.
- Steam the potatoes for about 15 minutes until cooked through.
- While hot, pass each potato through a potato ricer so that it falls evenly over the flour on the bench. Sprinkle the potato with salt.
- Melt 50 g of butter and drizzle it evenly over the potato. Using a pastry scraper, work the flour into the potato little by little until you have firm dough.
- Knead the dough gently for 5 – 6 minutes (the timing is very important). Divide the dough into quarters and roll each piece to make a long, thin sausage about 1 cm in diameter.
- Cut each sausage into 2.5cm lengths. Put a buttered serving dish into an oven set at about 150C.
- A large, heavy based, 6 cm deep baking tray is perfect for poaching gnocchi.
- Fill the tray with water, then salt it and bring it to a boil.
- When the water is boiling, raise the heat and quickly slip in all the gnocchi at once (if the tray is large enough to take the gnocchi in a single layer), then reduce the heat so the water isn't too turbulent.
- Allow the gnocchi to cook for 1 minute after they have risen to the surface, then skim them out and put them into the warm serving dish and season.
- Cook the rosemary and juniper berries in some butter and add the cream and chestnut puree.
- At the end add the cooked fresh or dried chestnuts if desired. Serves 8.