

Holiday: Emerald Coast Walk

Rating:  level Holiday type: Independent Walking

- Beautifully varied and unspoiled scenery; hardly touched by tourism
- Deserted coastal paths, shaded forest trails, magnificent white beaches; kingfishers, otters and a huge variety of nesting seabirds
- Traditional Breton fishing ports; superb seafood specialities
- Pink granite boulders above stunning turquoise seas; spectacular views
- Wealth of historical sites: Dinan, Fort de la Latte, Château de Hunaudaye
- Exceptional value for money holiday



An outright winner from the outset, this walk is simply stunning. The dramatic scenery, wealth of colours and mediaeval influences distinguish it from all other holidays in our programme.

During the first few days of your holiday, you will be walking along the magnificent paths that hug the northern coast. It's a landscape of pinky-gold cliffs, secret coves, deserted, heather-backed beaches and traditional Breton fishing villages untouched by tourism. It is perfect for exploring on foot and, at every turn, you're rewarded with fabulous panoramic views of the entire Emerald Coast.



“Visitors to Brittany have long since been seduced by its wonderfully contrasting landscapes – pink cliffs, red rocks, and jagged granite peaks – fabulous food and warm, friendly people.”



Heading inland, the route takes you along the banks of the river Rance and on through the majestic Hunaudaye Forest. Highlights include the feudal Fort de la Latte and the beautiful stone-crafted town of Dinan. In the Middle Ages, Dinan served as one of the main strategic strongholds of the Duchy of Brittany and much of her mediaeval charm remains today.

The hotels you stay in are full of contrasts too and include a lovely seaside hotel in Sables d'Or-Les-Pins and a superbly located 3-star hotel built into the ramparts in the heart of historic Dinan.



Emerald Coast Walk: Day by day



Day 1 Arrive at Lamballe

M and Mme Laval's friendly hotel in the centre of this charming little market town is a great starting point for your holiday. It's worth making time before dinner to wander up to the Gothic Collégiate Church of Notre Dame which dominates the town.

Day 2 Lamballe to Sables d'Or-Les-Pins 18km/12mi/5hr

A short transfer to the tiny Breton fishing port of Dahouët. From here, it's coastal walking at its best: extensive views, aquamarine seas, white sandy beaches and rocky coves - don't forget your swimming things! Lunch on the beach at Caroual then inland and on to our lovely hotel at Sables d'Or-Les-Pins.

Day 3 At Sables d'Or-Les-Pins

Sables d'Or-Les-Pins is a lovely seaside resort with magnificent golden sand beaches. Spend the day here - there are some outstanding seafood restaurants for lunch - or, if feeling more energetic, follow our suggested circular walk (on the GR34) around nearby Cap d'Erquy, a delightful fishing village famous for *coquilles St Jacques*.

Day 4 Sables d'Or-Les-Pins to Dinard 15km/9mi/4hr

Deserted beaches and heather-topped cliffs provide the colourful artists backdrop for today's walk which leads you via the Cap Fréhel lighthouse (look out for nesting seabirds) to the famous C14 feudal stronghold of Fort de la Latte. Perched on a rocky promontory over the ocean, this castle occupies one of the finest sites in Brittany - climb up the tower for magnificent coastal views, out as far as Jersey on a clear day. We meet you here and take you on to your hotel in Dinard where you'll spend the next two nights.

Day 5 At Dinard

Once a sleepy fishing village on the estuary of the Rance, the English transformed the town into one of the most famous and upmarket resorts in Europe. Many of the "Belle Époque" villas, overlooking the fabulous white sandy beaches, have become historic monuments, and the Marine Centre and National History Museum are both worth a visit. Walk out to the Pointe des Étrêtes for views of the off-shore islands, or take a 10-minute ferry across the bay to St Malo and loose yourself in the narrow cobbled streets within the *Intra Muros* (fortified walls) of the ancient mediaeval city.

Day 6 Dinard to Dinan 21km/13mi/6hr

Starting from the picturesque Breton village of Langrolay-sur-Rance (lift provided), today's route takes you inland, mostly following the course of the river. It's wonderfully tranquil walking through shady forests, fruit orchards, and along peaceful riverside paths. Our 3-star hotel in Dinan is superbly located within the ramparts of the mediaeval old town and boasts a lovely rooftop garden with great views.

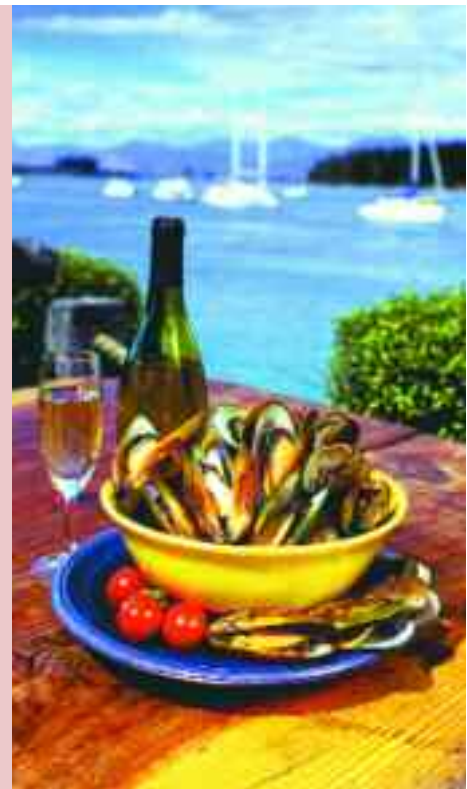
Day 7 At Dinan

This beautifully preserved ancient walled town, with riverfront port and picturesque half-timbered buildings, is an absolute gem. Wander round the marvellously restored ancient squares, visit the imposing C13 castle, admire the flamboyant Gothic basilica and stroll the lovely cobbled streets packed with authentic artisan workshops.

Day 8 Dinan to Lamballe 22km/14mi/6hr

A short transfer (provided) then off along the Pays du Tour du Penthièvre where shady woodland paths skirt the river as far as the impressive 13C Château de la Hunaudaye whose ruins date back over 800 years. Broad forest tracks take you back to Lamballe for your final evening.

Day 9 Leave Lamballe



For departure dates, prices and travel options, please visit our website at:
www.headwater.com

Walking Details

Varied walking following well marked GR routes along coastal paths, river banks, country lanes and shady forest tracks. Some steep, but short, ascents and descents, but a good head for heights is not necessary.

