

TRAVEL FEATURE

Sit back, relax and watch the world go by!

BY AIDAN SAWLEY

IT'S A phrase we've all heard before and it's a phrase that so very aptly applies to coach travel, whether in the UK, Europe or further afield.

Some of you will already know and enjoy the benefits of coach travel; others among you may have done so – but many years ago; some of you may never have been on a coach holiday at all. You might even think it's not for me for a myriad of reasons.

But if you are in that latter category I would strongly urge you to think again and consider what exactly a holiday is for. If your view of a good holiday is having a relaxing time, seeing lovely countryside and not having to make too many decisions then a coach holiday could be just what you need.

No worries

Just think – no need to map read or follow a malfunctioning Sat Nav to get you to some out of the way tourist spot, no queuing for flights at a busy airport, or having to make sure that you stay under that stingy 20 or 15kg baggage allowance. No having to fill the car up with petrol every two or three days and no planning where you are to stay or eat each night. In fact once you have decided to go on a coaching holiday all you really have to do is turn up, enjoy the ride, see the sights, relax and take in what is on offer in that day's itinerary.



You should have no worries about comfort. Most modern coaches cost in excess of a quarter of a million pounds, have on board facilities such as toilets, air conditioning, refreshments, and reclining seats with plenty of leg room. And you don't have to spend time carting your bags around – in most cases they will all be

taken care of.

So have I convinced you yet – or do you need some more persuasion? Well, just consider the wide range of tours that are available – whether in the UK, Ireland or further afield into Europe. Why not try a short break of two or three days to start off with, and if you like what you get then go

a bit further or for a longer period?

It is estimated that the UK coaching industry is worth some £2.35bn to the UK economy alone. In fact drill down into these numbers a little more and you will find that around seven million people take a coaching holiday in the UK each year with a further two million venturing overseas – now all

those people spending all that money can't all be wrong can they!

This year, the 100th Anniversary of the start of the First World War, is going to be very popular with battlefield tours featuring heavily for operators. As we show you on the next page, destinations that you might never have thought of, such as Luxembourg, are on offer. We should never forget too, that there are so many beautiful places within our own country that are served by the coaching trade. In essence, with the range and variety on offer there truly is a trip for everyone.

Sceptic

I must say that I was sceptical about coaching at first, but having been on a couple of coach tours now, the benefits are really evident. You get to see a lot, you don't have to drive yourself, you get to travel with, and meet like-minded people, and of course you choose a tour that appeals to your interests and hobbies, or may just be on your travel 'bucket list'. In fact the friendship and camaraderie on these tours is one of the reasons people go back year after year.

So why not find out more – the best way to start is online by visiting the website of the industry body: the Coach Tourism Council, which you can find at www.findacoachholiday.com. This has a very easy to use search facility to get you started on your journey. Happy coaching!

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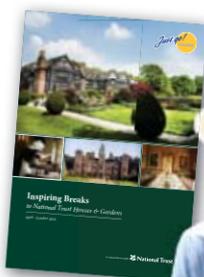
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