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SPRING HIKES RECOMMENDED BY THE WAYFARERS WALKING VACATIONS

The Wayfarers' founder and hiking specialist Michael West has picked his top five European spring hikes for 2017. They include exploring ancient cave churches and a bespoke visit with an expert guide in the historic home of UK fossil collecting.

Michael West says: 'I always say that a Wayfarers Walking Vacation is a feast of experiences. Our Walks are unique because our guests will see sights and meet people they would never come across on other tours.

'Imagine hiking to the 'edge of the world' in Portugal. That's just one day on our new Walk on the Algarve coast.

'Or see millions of years of the earth's history appearing before you on England's Dorset Jurassic coast in the company of a top geologist who helped achieve its World Heritage Site status. That's what you get with a Wayfarers Walking Vacation.'

Michael West's top five spring walking experiences:

Croatia's Dalmatian Coast.

Descend on foot down a dramatic gorge to a remote monastery. Continue to an isolated bay to be met by a private boat, which takes us to a secluded, sheltered terrace for lunch overlooking the sea.

England, Dorset

Explore the breathtaking Jurassic Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site in Lyme Regis, where fossil collecting began, accompanied by one of the UK's leading geologists.

Scotland, Outer Hebrides.

Take the Coffin Way on the Isle of Lewis to the eerie and remote cemetery where more than 10,000 island folk are buried. Learn about the age-old guga (gannet) hunt and end the day able to speak a few phrases in Gaelic at the home of a local family.

Italy, Puglia.

Walk among extraordinary painted Rupestrian Rock Churches set amid an incredible panoply of spring wildflowers. Then visit the town of Sassi di Matera in Basilicata, famous for its subterranean houses where we stay in luxury hotel rooms hewn deep into the rock.

Portugal's Algarve.

Hike to Cape St Vincent, the most southwesterly point in Europe, or as early travelers called it the End of the World, offering spectacular views out over the Atlantic Ocean.

Portugal - The Algarve

Cape St Vincent, Beaches and Coves. 7-13 May 2017. Walk Level 4. 7-12 miles of walking per day with some steep inclines and descents. Price per person for 6 nights, based on two sharing from US\$4,495.

Croatia - The Dalmatian Coast.

13-20 May 2017. Walk Level 3. 6-10 miles of walking per day. Price per person for 7 nights, based on two sharing, from US\$4,595.

England

Thomas Hardy's Dorset. 7-13 May 2017. Walk Level 3. 7-12 miles walking per day. Price per person for 6 nights, based on two sharing from US\$4,495.

Scotland

Outer Hebrides. 28 May – 3 June 2017. Walk Level 2. 8-10 miles walking per day. Waterproof boots and wet weather gear essential. Price per person for 6 nights based on two sharing from US\$4,395.

Italy

Puglia. 7-13 May 2017. Walk Level 3. 8-12 miles of walking per day. Price per person for 6 nights, based on two sharing, from US\$4,395.



Photo captions: 1. Dorset, England's Jurassic Coast.

2. Heading to Portugal's Cape St Vincent

For more information on any of our Walks and destination images, please contact Anne King at Watershed PR on 0044 1308 420785 or email anne@watershedpr.co.uk

NOTE TO EDITORS:

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About The Wayfarers Walking Vacations:

Founded 33 years ago, The Wayfarers Walking Vacations are the leading independent walking tour specialists. They were named by National Geographic Traveler as purveyor of one of the '50 Tours of a Lifetime,' and by National Geographic Adventure as one of the 'Best Hiking Companies,' The Wayfarers offer eco-sensitive hiking vacations in 18 countries with 40+ itineraries. Seeing local cultures and place on foot and up-close, they provide the ultimate in Slow Travel.

Walks cover England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Germany, Austria, Norway, New Zealand, Patagonia, Colorado and Southwest USA.

Wayfarers' Walks offer exclusive entrees into homes and gardens otherwise closed to the public, graceful accommodations, outstanding cuisine, and meetings with local residents. Walks are from 6-13 days and are rated on a five-level challenge scale. Price per person is all-inclusive from Day One: including all transfers, hotel accommodation, full board plus twice daily snacks, wine with dinner, tips, and entrance tickets.

The Wayfarers are a member of Trusted Adventures, www.trustedadventures.com, dedicated to the highest standards of small-group travel and supporting local economies.

The Wayfarers Walk Away Guide explains the benefits and practicalities of walking vacations and is guaranteed to inspire new walkers. Available free of charge at <http://www.thewayfarers.com/walkawayguide>