

# Bywater

Hotel Boat Cruises



**Hotel Boating Guide**



# HOW DOES IT ALL WORK?

We run our boats as a hotel. Both boats travel together at all times and we welcome up to eight guests per cruise. We have a twin cabin, and two single cabins on our motor boat and a double cabin and two single cabins on our butty boat. All cabins have en suite facilities.

Guests come as single travellers, in couples or in groups, booking as many cabins they need. Other cabins on the same cruise will be booked by guest outside of your group. All our guests travel together on our boats, alongside the four person crew. Guests can



enjoy working the boats through the locks, walking the towpaths, sitting in our lounges or on the well decks as they wish. Guests have access to their own cabins at all times.

We have a chef who provides three cooked meals a day, and our guests eat together. All meals are included in the

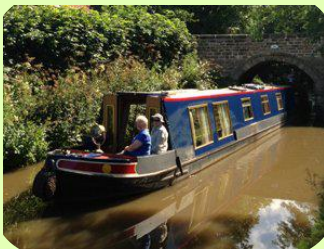
cost of your cruise. The guests are given a free glass of wine, or soft drink, with their meal. Homemade biscuits, cakes, tea and coffee is served during the day too.

The cost shown is per person and is the same regardless of the cabin chosen, unless a guest wants sole use of the double or twin cabin, when there is a surcharge. Previous guests may be eligible for a 5% loyalty discount. If a group of four or more people come together, they may be eligible for a 5% group discount.

# OUR HOTELBOATS

Both boats have been designed and built to a high standard. They are 71ft long and have a beam width of 6'11". They are as long and wide as they can be and still travel the majority of canals. The internal fitting was done in such a way as to maximize the internal width, and both boats have a spacious 6'6" saloon, which with large windows, give a fresh and airy feel inside. Both boats sleep up to four guests and two crew in what we feel is the greatest comfort the dimensions allow.

## THE WELL DECKS



Each boat has an open well deck at the fore end, with views ahead as we travel. There is room for four guests to sit comfortably and there are cushions available to sit on.

## THE LOUNGES

Both boats have lounges with large viewing windows, which finish just above the waterline, designed to allow guests to see the views whilst sitting indoors. The seating has thick cushions and angled backs for greater comfort and there is ample seating on each boat for all guests.



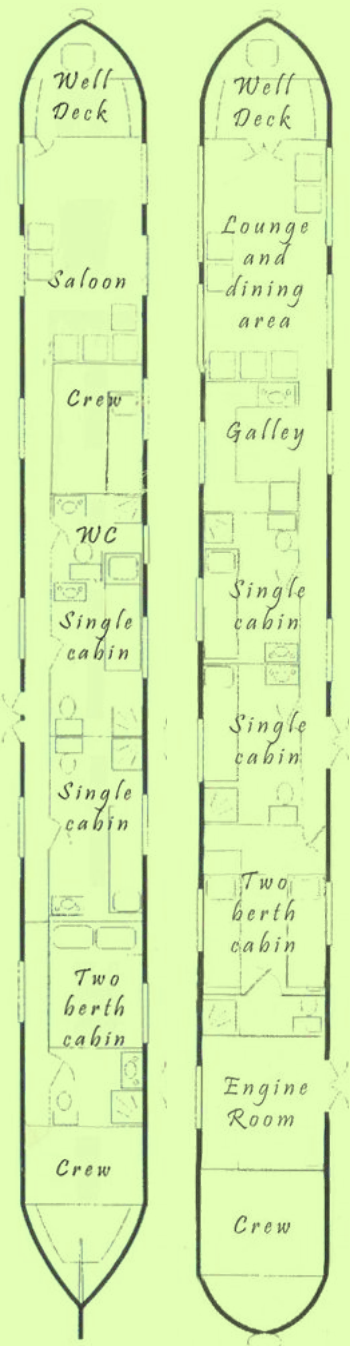
## DINING



Kerala's lounge has a removable table which is taken up and down for meals, or if guests would like to use it. It can seat up to eight guests with ample elbow room. Where there are no fixed seats, we have folding dining chairs with comfortable cushion pads. These stow out of the way when they are not in use.

## THE BAR

On Karnataka there is a bar and fridge with a varied range of refreshments to whet your appetite. You will find English bottled ales, continental lagers and a wide selection of spirits, some more unusual than others. There is also, usually, a bottle Damson or Sloe gin. If you have a particular tippie, please just let us know and we will happily ensure we have some in stock.



## YOUR CABIN

Each boat has two single cabins. These are fitted in a high/low arrangement, where the foot of one person's bunk reaches under the foot of the other, whilst retaining a completely separate cabin. The "low" bunks are at normal seat height, about 16" from the floor and are especially suited to people with limited mobility. The "high" bunks are 3 feet high and allow you to see the view out of the window whilst you lie in bed, making those afternoon siestas all the more enjoyable.

Karnataka has a full width double cabin with cross way king size bed. Kerala has a full width cabin which sleeps two in a twin bed arrangement, providing two bunks of 2'3' width, which run length ways at a low level.

All our cabins have full ensuite facilities with your own shower, toilet and wash basin, with hot and cold water, mirrored cabinet and large sliding window.



Each cabin has carpet underfoot and there are drawers for clothing, as well as hanging space and hooks in useful places, for coats or bags. Each cabin has a 240v socket for charging small items like phones or camera batteries (however this supply is limited and we regret the use of higher wattage items such as hairdryers is not possible). Cabins are chambermaided daily.

We are proud to say that our cabins are spacious by hotelboat standards and offer ample storage for your belongings. They are, however still bijou, so a collapsible case or bag will leave you more room than a large suitcase, (although there is space for bags up to 12" deep under the beds).



## YOUR BED

All our single beds are a very comfortable 2'5" wide (compared to the usual 2' of a narrowboat bunk) and our king size bed is of domestic standard sizes. All the beds are 6'6" long. We use thick foam mattresses with memory foam toppers on all the beds (except the king size, which is a high quality pocket sprung mattress with cotton padding) and have received many comments from guests on how comfortable the beds are. We provide down and feather duvets with one feather pillow and one hollowfibre, so you can choose which you prefer. We do have hollowfibre duvets and pillows on board should you be allergic to feathers. All our linen and sheets are 100% cotton, as are the hand and bath towels we provide. We regret we are unable to offer a change of towels or bed linen mid cruise as standard, due to limited space on board.

## HEATING

Both boats have central heating, with a radiator in each cabin for those chillier mornings. Both lounges have wood burning stoves which are lit, should the weather take a cooler turn.

# CHOOSING YOUR CRUISE

There is so much to see and so many possible routes on the inland waterways, that it is understandably difficult to decide which cruise you think you would enjoy the most. On our website we try and outline the character of each route, its highlights and points of interest. It is impossible to cover everything, but we hope that combined with your own personal criteria (time of year, heritage, towns and cities etc) you will be able to pick the one for you.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of the holiday please call, and we will try and advise in any way we can.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FOR YOUR CRUISE

In designing our schedules, we endeavour to include locations which have good travel connections as much as we can, although this is not always possible on some canals. We also avoid weekend arrivals in locations where we feel there may be disturbance from town centres on first or last evenings. This also helps our guests to avoid engineering works on rail lines and to enable them to take advantage of cheaper weekday travel on public transport whenever possible.

For those arriving by car we make every effort to try and arrange secure car parking facilities at many of our locations. If we do not have a current secure location there are now websites which offer private spaces on driveways, such as [www.parkopedia.com](http://www.parkopedia.com) and [www.justpark.com](http://www.justpark.com).

We hope that, with these things in mind your travel to or from your hotelboat cruise will be as easy and convenient as we can make it. Should you require any assistance in planning your travel, please don't hesitate to get in touch..

## SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS

There is no single supplement for a guest in a single cabin. Voluntary single occupancy of a twin/double cabin usually carries a supplement of 50%, although this may be reduced to 25% closer to the date of a cruise. Please see the booking form for details and ensure you select this option if you'd like to be contacted about the opportunity to upgrade for this reduced supplement.

## PRIVATE CHARTER

Kerala and Karnataka are available for charter, offering full and exclusive use of the boats, services of the crew and full-board catering. With the advantage of a sizeable reduction in price, this represents excellent value.

As well as the scheduled cruises given in this booklet we can provide tailor made itineraries at either end of the season to suit your individual needs or preferences.

# WHO ARE WE?

Bywater Holidays was established in 2002 by Stephen Rees-Jones to introduce the canals to those who had never before considered them an option.

In 2006, Stephen's daughter, Hanna, and her partner, John, with the help of ex-hotelboat operator and good friend, Dave Dare, set up Bywater Hotelboat Cruises. Dave's boat Rose served as motor for three seasons



and was joined by newly commissioned butty, Karnataka, for 2008, and eventually replaced by a new motor, Kerala, for 2010. John and Hanna ran the company successfully for ten years, until they decided to settle down with their children for a less nomadic lifestyle. They sold the boats to Rosie Cannon and Brian Skelton, who, with their son, Rufus, worked alongside Hanna and John for the 2017 season, to learn all about running a hotel boating business.

Rosie and Brian met at university in Kent, where they became friends and Brian offered to babysit Rosie's son, Alex. Chatting long into the night, after Alex finally went to sleep, the friendship deepened into something more and they married in 1992. In 2017, they celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary by setting off together on a new adventure.

They had often wished they could live on a narrowboat, but when considering the possibility in Oxford in 1995, seven year old Alex looked into the canal a bit too closely and had to be fished out! That and the imminent arrival of Rufus, meant the boat idea was shelved.

Many years later, with both children grown up, the dream was revived when they saw the beautiful traditional pair, Kerala and Karnataka, up for sale. A few nervous years passed whilst they got their house in order and sold it, always expecting to be pipped at the post in the purchase of the business, but luck was with them and the boats became theirs, just in time for the 2017 season.



Leaving their jobs as teacher (Rosie), and computer programmer (Brian) they jumped in at the deep end (and once or twice into the canal!) and worked a full season under the expert guidance of the previous owners. They learnt a lot, very quickly, about the ins and outs of the business and are still learning about the rhythms of the cut and those who love the canals, and welcoming more guests into the charming way of life they have chosen.



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