

# C001-ECO The Capes of the Opal Coast



The Opal Coast stretches from the Belgian border to the Somme Bay and is named after the milky color of its waters. It offers the visitor a varied landscape of vast sandy beaches disappearing into the distance, dunes with beach grass and ragged cliffs fighting a losing battle against the endless wave erosion. All this creates beautiful panoramic views set against England's hazy coast. During this walk you will discover different aspects of this still little known coast: the principle ports of Calais and Boulogne, the fishing villages, and the bathing stations where you can take



*advantage of the wide range of water sports and beach activities.*

## Itinerary

**Day 1** – Arrival at CALAIS. Visit of the city. Calais was severely devastated during the Second World War. In walking through the city, you will discover la Tour du Guet, built in the 13th century, the English styled church of Notre Dame, and just before the doors of the hotel de ville (town hall), Auguste Rodin's statue immortalizing the sacrifice of the six bourgeois of Calais who, bare foot and wearing nothing more than their shirts and a rope around their necks, presented to their vanquisher, Edward III, King of England, the key to the city.

*Lodging and breakfast in a 2-star hotel in the town centre*

**Day 2** – CALAIS – WISSANT (20 km). Your exit from Calais will take you across the port to the beach, which will be your guide to Blérot-Plage. Continue along la Dune de Fort Mahon. This will bring you to Sangatte where you will cross above "le Tunnel Sous la Manche". Once you have arrived at le Cap-Gris-Nez you will climb 134 meters up the chalk cliffs. From this height and with clear skies you will see before you an inspiring view of the English coast across the channel, and the magnificent bay of Wissant, which stretches to the rocks of Cap-Gris-Nez -



*Half-board in a 1-star hotel with all facilities in the room in the centre of the village*

**Day 3 – WISSANT – WIMEREUX (23 km).** From Wissant you will set out again for le Cap-Gris-Nez, this time by way of la Dune du Chatelet. Remember to take time to admire the view from the Cap. The descent from the Cap crosses dry, rocky valleys and brings you to the family seaside resort of Audresselles and Ambleteuse. You will next cross the Slack river, once a harbour protected by Fort Mahon and walk across the dunes of Slack with their typical vegetation, today a protected ecosystem. You will next arrive at la Pointe aux Oies and continue on to the seaside resort of Wimereux.

*Half-board in a 2-star hotel near the sea*

**Day 4 - WIMEREUX – BOULOGNE (8 km).** This journey is short, but it offers gorgeous views of the harbor of Boulogne, France's first fishing harbor. You will have the opportunity to visit Nausicaa, the largest aquarium in Europe, and the old city of Boulogne. The city was built on a hill which, at the time, was inhabited by Romans. Its narrow streets and beautiful old homes are still protected by the ramparts that encircle the city.

*Lodging and breakfast in a 2-star hotel.*

**Day 5 - BOULOGNE SUR MER.** The tour ends after breakfast.



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## Season

From mid-April to end of October. Be careful this area is very crowded in summer time and we recommend you (if you can) to come outside this period. Nevertheless this area attracts a lot of tourists and you have to reserve earlier to get the best rooms.

## What's included?

- 2 overnight stops on B&B basis in 2-star hotel at Calais and Boulogne. On these nights an evening meal can be obtained close by.
- 2 overnight stops on a half-board basis at Wissant and Wimereux.
- Hotel to hotel luggage transfer along the trail.
- A set of maps (1/25 000 scale) with the route marked on and detailed route notes describing the trail.
- A daily itinerary together with information about facilities and places of interest along the trail.
- Emergency assistance.

Visa fees - transportation fees to and from the walk area – Entrance fees - Insurance (strongly recommended on all trips) - Transfers except those mentioned above – Drinks - Additional meals - Spending of personal nature e.g. laundry, souvenirs, phone calls,... are not included



## Getting there and away

By sea- many ferries link UK to Calais. Bus from the ferry arrival to Calais centre.

By rail - TGV links between London and the the Eurotunnel Terminal at Coquelles to the West of Calais. Local bus service links the terminal to Calais centre. Many fast trains between Calais or Boulogne and Paris-gare du Nord

By car - Calais is easily accessible by the A1 and A24 motorways from Paris.

Where to park - pay guarded parking available in Calais. Trains from Boulogne to Calais to get your car

## Walk difficulty

Grade 2 - walks of 4 to 6 hours a day. Some stages could be more 20 km (13/15 miles) and rolling uplands, ascents mainly gradual than steep of up to 500 m. Ground is flat at sea level and ascents about 100m at the capes . In some places you walk in sand. An average level of fitness or some experience with walking is recommended.