



TIM SAUNDERS & FAMILY

Holiday in Jersey

"It's the best day of my life and I never want it to end."

Henry (6) reveals this as he throws himself at yet another frothing wave at the seaside, not 10 minutes from The Merton Hotel where we're staying in Jersey. It's very rewarding to watch him enjoying himself. On this hot summer's day the cold sea is really welcome. Harriett (11) hones her map reading skills by getting us here via some agapanthus lined roads. We mess about on the sandy beach and build a castle with moat that Henry fills. He is drenched - we're all pretty wet - and covered in sand, too.

We swim in the hotel's indoor and outdoor pool complex. It's not long before Henry swims with his float, too; he's so determined. "Oh there's William from the Condor ferry," he beams. Henry and Heidi (9) make friends with him on the crossing from Poole. The whole process goes with military precision and it's easy to drive the car with all our luggage onto the ferry. We feel it's a much more environmentally friendly way of travelling compared to flying and we don't need any passports. We board and sit round a table with some bacon baps and soft drinks. It's a smooth, trouble free crossing and four hours later we arrive at St Helier.

The Merton Hotel with its comfortable rooms is 15 minutes from the port. We dine in the hotel's Belvedere restaurant. This is a wonderful, unhurried self-service buffet experience. The food is exemplary

as is the service. Caroline, Heidi and I opt for salmon and new potatoes while Harriett has ratatouille. Henry, a law unto himself, has fruit. Each morning there's full English, continental, American or cereal for breakfast. Every night there is entertainment and a pianist, we enjoy watching. Really, what else could you want?

We visit Jersey Zoo, home of the Durrell Conservation Wildlife Trust. It's a delightful 20 minute drive from the hotel. International best selling author Gerald Durrell established it in 1959. The trust has actually helped to save some species. There are some magnificent fruit bats, butterflies, lemurs, rare colourful birds and flamingos.

At The Boat House, St Aubin we enjoy some scrumptious locally caught and battered cod fish and Jersey chips followed by Jersey ice cream, all savoured while admiring a picturesque view of the sea. "Look at that crane searching for his dinner," says Heidi, pointing out of the window.

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