

Living in Guernsey - An islanders view...

The Islands are our playground - The sea between them our routes.

Living in Guernsey as far as I am concerned cannot be beaten anywhere in the world. Every morning of my life here I walk along the cliff path with my dog, in awe of the natural beauty surrounding me.

As a schoolchild I would walk to school alone and safe along the wild flower bordered cliff path, from Jerbourg to Blancheland which was then above Moulin Huet - where the famous Renoir chose to paint. On these daily walks I would notice even as a young child, the changing landscape and rock formation according to the level of the tide. To me the best beaches on the island today are Petit Port in the afternoons at low tide and Divette, a tiny sandy cove in the mornings at high tide.

To go crabbing, canoeing, snorkelling, surfing and rock climbing were all our natural activities while growing up and nothing has changed. My grandmother left black and white photos of the family doing just that and last Sunday I went surfing with my grandchildren too. Mind you the knitted swimsuits have now been replaced!

As a family we always went to La Vallette swimming pools for a picnic lunch on schooldays all summer. My father joined us daily from his work. We still use those wonderful sea pools. A group of friends have swum there in the mornings all of their lives - come rain or shine - their camaraderie is set in stone. I still join them sometimes.

We buy fresh organic vegetables and flowers from the local hedge stalls and put the money in honesty boxes. My father left his pot of money on a hedge by mistake once after a similar purchase and when he went back to look for it someone had mistaken it for an honesty box and put another £10 into it - where else can you live in such a trusting environment!

The islands are our playground - the sea between them our routes. We use the ferries as mainland people use trains - we know the timetables off by heart or hop on friends yachts and nip over to Herm, Sark, Alderney, Jersey and often France just for a meal!

I live in the original hut (upgraded a bit!) that my grandfather built as his summer home. He would come up to Jerbourg Point with my Gran (who was the girl

Renouf) in their horse and carriage for weekends away, then go back 3 miles to St Peter Port to work all week.

Having travelled the world many times with my job in tourism, the best part for me is always arriving back either by ferry into our picturesque old harbour with St Peter Port overlooking us from the hill, or flying in over Herm and the south coast cliffs .

Nowhere I have been is as beautiful as Guernsey is to me... I hope visitors to our Islands experience their magic too.

Written by Maggie Talbot-Cull

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