

THE TRAVEL REVIEW

ADRIAN CAFFERY enjoys a TV and wi-fi-free family break in Brittany

YOU can't beat palming your kids off on another family while on a camping holiday!

Our two children were quick to make new friends and every day after tea they would go to neighbouring caravans to play.

Which meant Mum and Dad could relax in the setting sun, glass of wine in hand, gathering our strength for the bedtime routine.

The trick, we learned, is to not bring many toys on holiday, so your kids are more likely to decamp to their new friends' caravans.

My conscience was clear, though. There's not much room for toys in a Ford Fiesta when you're packing for a week in France.

Our new neighbours had much bigger vehicles.

On arrival at Eurocamp's La Pointe St-Gilles in western Brittany, it seemed like the caravan and camping pitches were a little too cosy.

But we soon learned that this created a real community feel with kids playing in the narrow 'streets' as grown-ups manned barbecues.

There was no language barrier because the camp – in the outdoorsy town of Benodet – is very popular with both British and Irish holidaymakers.

We were staying in a comfortable and nearly new, two-bedroom Azure caravan which had a covered decking area.

Happily, there was no TV set, so the kids were more prone to head next door for some entertainment (yea!).

Best of all, there were very effective blackout blinds in their bedroom so they never woke up at silly o'clock.

On the downside, there was no toaster and the wi-fi was pricey so we went without for the whole week (it nearly killed us!).

There's plenty to keep kids entertained, so much so that it matters not whether they make any friends.

The star attraction is the large, landscaped indoor / outdoor pool complex with lagoons and waterslides for all ages.

Unlike at other Brittany resorts, it was OK to eat and drink around the pool, and kids were allowed to use reasonably sized inflatables.

The lifeguards also seemed totally relaxed about the 'no swimming shorts' rule (nobody wants to see British men in Speedos!)

Eurocamp's kids' clubs are another

La Pointe St-Gilles, Benodet

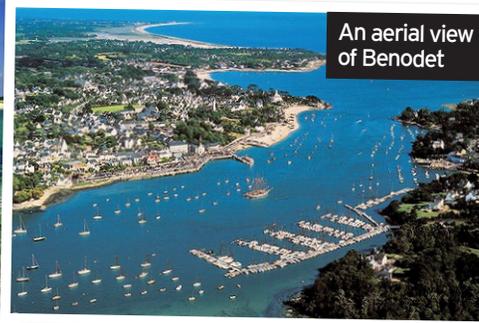


GET TO LA POINTE

Beach and sand bar at Benodet



An aerial view of Benodet



big draw for families. They are split into four age groups with up to three 90-minute sessions six days a week.

Activities take place in gazebos or on the massive playing field La Pointe St-Gilles is blessed with.

They range from messy play and teddy bears' picnics for little ones to archery and hoverboarding for older children.

If your kids are over six you can leave them there while you enjoy a treatment at the spa wellness centre.

As well as the kids' clubs, there are good sporting facilities – football, volleyball, tennis, table tennis and boules.

La Pointe St-Gilles also benefits from a nice playground, a games room, evening entertainment and a reasonably priced minimarket.

During our stay, cycle and scooter hire was also very popular with children, which forced cars to slow down to a safe, snail's pace around camp.

Across from the entrance to the park is a nice sandy beach where our kids found lots of crabs and even a large starfish.

A three-minute walk from there brought us to a stunning beach that faces the tip of a giant sand bar.

You can wade out to it at low tide

but head back as soon as the tide turns – it's a very long walk round.

There's also a very lovely coastal walk from the camp to Benodet's main beach and promenade.

Here, we found several cafés and takeaways and I was told by a fellow camper that the crepes at one place were to die for.

Unfortunately, I could only take his word on that because whenever I visited the queue was out of the shop and down the road.

There are more sweet treats at the town's Breton Biscuit Factory where visitors can discover how local specialities are made.

The promenade is at the mouth of the River Odet, and the coastal path continues up stream to Benodet's port.

From here, we crossed the river by boat to visit the charming village of Sainte-Marine, where there is an attractive fishermen's chapel.

You can cruise up the Odet to Quimper, with its half-timbered merchants' houses, museums and a splendid cathedral.

You can catch the 'Benodet Little Train' to the port from outside the camp, although the tickets seemed a bit steep to me.

We travelled to France with Brittany Ferries, crossing the Channel between Portsmouth and the pretty town of Roscoff.

Taking an overnight ferry seemed to cut our journey time in half and we were at the camp – under two hours away – by 10am.

But time also flies on daytime crossings because during peak season the on-board entertainment can rival cruise ships.

The magic shows, cinema, play area, games room, free wi-fi and swimming pool all help to keep children occupied.

Meaning even more time for Mum and Dad to chill.

TRAVEL FILE

■ **ADRIAN CAFFERY** and family were guests of with Eurocamp, the largest operator of premium outdoor holidays in Europe, with more than 180 parcs across 13 countries. Parcs are situated near the beach or lakes, in the countryside, by the mountains or in city locations. Accommodation options include lodges, bungalows and safari tents. You can

arrive and depart any day of the week. They stayed at La Pointe St-Gilles, where seven nights in a three-bed Azure caravan costs £280 for arrivals on May 4, 2019. Visit eurocamp.co.uk for more information.

■ Brittany Ferries operates the longer routes from Portsmouth, Poole and Plymouth to Brittany and



Normandy, saving miles of costly driving. You can travel overnight by luxury cruise-ferry or be whisked across the Channel in as little as three hours. Summer 2019 fares from Plymouth to Roscoff

start from £469 return for a car and family of four, including an en suite cabin on the outward overnight sailing. Book online at brittany-ferries.co.uk or call 0330 159 7000.



Azure caravan