

# NORTHERN BELLE EXPRESS

ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER

EDITION 1

CHAPEL COURT, HOSPITAL STREET, NANTWICH. CW5 5RP.

NORTHERNBELLE.CO.UK

**WITHOUT YOU  
NONE OF THIS  
WOULD HAVE  
BEEN POSSIBLE**

THERE have been times in all our lives where fear and uncertainty took control as our world was turned upside down, we dearly hope that you, your friends and family remain well. At the Northern Belle we presented the most exciting array of luxury rail journeys for 2020, and the popularity was evident as our guests snapped up seats.

All that of course was quickly brought to a halt, as the effect of the virus took a hold, like many other businesses we had to adapt and focus our attentions on rapidly unwinding our programme and handling the cancellations received from thousands of our guests, and re scheduling wherever possible.

We introduced our VIP gift voucher programme, offering guests the chance to transfer the full value of their booking to a credit voucher and receive an additional £100 in value free, this can then be redeemed within twelve months of issue. This was very well received and is still available for existing bookings.

We thank all our guests for their continued support, without you none of this would be possible



## A RIGHT ROYAL DAY OUT THAT'S FIT FOR A QUEEN

**NOW IS YOUR TIME TO LIVE IT UP IN A REGAL FASHION**

**TO celebrate a return to "new normality" after the COVID-19 lockdown, what better way of getting the majestic Northern Belle back on track than to call on the services of the crimson-painted steam locomotive that proudly bears the name PRINCESS ELIZABETH...**

This magnificent engine, which once hauled the Queen's Royal Train, takes us on a regal journey across Britain's green and pleasant land in pampered comfort while we dine like royalty on the most magnificent seven-course lunch, with the finest wines and champagne, and look forward to brighter days ahead.

Our trip not only embraces the Golden Age of Steam, but also heralds a nostalgic reunion between Princess Elizabeth and Duart - one of our Pullman-style carriages resplendent with its exquisite marquetry motif of the famous castle on the Isle of Mull - which Her Majesty used when it too used to form part of her Royal Train.

Your journey fit for a Queen, starts on the platform at Preston station, with a glass of the finest

Champagne, where no doubt the press and media will also gather to witness this royal celebration.

We head out on a circular route via Carlisle where we stop for around an hour, then we travel across the world acclaimed Settle to Carlisle line. You will be served a wonderful light breakfast on the outward journey, and on the return, you will be treated like royalty and relax in comfort with the first of seven courses prepared by executive chef Matthew Green with an abundance of fine wine and champagne.



## THE ART of TRAVEL



WE are proud to introduce you to some of our skilled artisans who help design, maintain and restore the beautiful interiors of our carriages. Their attention to detail, expertise and passion for their trade is unsurpassed. We have recently commissioned Aimee Harman to design, create and install five new mosaic floors for our cloakrooms.

Aimee said: "There is something very magical that happens when I mosaic ... it takes me to a place away from the world and any worries I may be having. It's like a meditation with your eyes open."

## THE ROYAL CARRIAGE



ONE of our most famous carriages, The Duart, served for many years on the Royal Train. It is self-sufficient and could be run alone as it has 24 seats, its own toilet facilities and a kitchen. This beautiful carriage is often privately chartered by guests celebrating a special occasion.

Call 01270 895156 to enquire.

## PRINCESS ELIZABETH LUNCH

19<sup>th</sup> Sept - 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct - 17<sup>th</sup> Oct

STEAM FROM PRESTON TO CARLISLE

EXPERIENCE THE EPITOME OF RAIL TRAVEL WITH THIS FANTASTIC JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME. A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVEL BEHIND ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS STEAM LOCOMOTIVES, PRINCESS ELIZABETH (NUMBER 6201).

**£395**  
Per passenger

Book online: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) or call: 01270 895156

## BOOK TODAY

CALL US: 01270 895156  
Monday to Friday 09:30 - 17:30  
[northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk)





# WIN 2 TICKETS!



## FREE TO ENTER

Visit [northernbelle.co.uk/express-competition](http://northernbelle.co.uk/express-competition)

SIMPLY visit our website to complete the online questionnaire, answering all six questions correctly. All correct submissions will be entered into a random draw and the winner will be notified by email and featured in the next edition.

Read through this newspaper to find clues and answers. [northernbelle.co.uk/express-competition](http://northernbelle.co.uk/express-competition)

# HEART OF NORTHERN BELLE

Team Photographer captures the very first outing for the Northern Belle in 2020. (Pre Covid-19)



IT was a cold, wet and windy morning at Carnforth when we pulled out at 6:30am on our way to collect the first passengers of the year for our Valentine's and Spirit of Travel Lunch.

After arriving at York station, following the 89-mile cross-country jaunt, we rolled out the red carpets on the platform and welcomed our guests on board.

Our friendly stewards wasted

no time in popping the champagne corks to serve up a glass of beautifully-chilled Laurent-Perrier to start the day.

The route took passengers on a scenic round trip, via the East Coast, passing Selby, Hull, Goole, Hatfield & Stainforth and Church Fenton.

With it being Valentine's, romance was most definitely on track.

## WORD SEARCH

S	P	I	R	T	P	R	O	M	A	N	T	I	C
E	X	P	E	R	I	E	N	C	E	D	R	N	D
A	G	R	S	M	T	A	G	N	I	N	I	D	A
A	C	R	S	A	R	P	E	R	R	E	A	A	R
R	R	A	L	E	A	E	U	Q	I	T	U	O	B
N	R	B	U	T	V	N	O	I	T	A	T	S	A
R	T	O	X	S	E	A	E	R	P	E	C	W	G
A	R	A	U	R	L	I	S	P	E	C	I	A	L
C	A	R	R	I	A	G	E	R	T	I	E	R	B
G	U	D	Y	N	L	R	S	P	T	S	R	W	E
W	D	N	A	M	L	L	U	P	R	N	T	I	L
P	A	S	S	E	N	G	E	R	A	Q	E	C	L
L	K	C	I	W	N	L	A	C	I	H	X	K	E
L	I	C	H	A	M	P	A	G	N	E	M	T	C

CARRIAGE - BOUTIQUE - TRAVEL - SPECIAL - ROMANTIC - TRAIN - BELLE  
DINING - EXPERIENCE - ALNWICK - DUART - ABOARD - PASSENGER  
WARWICK - CHAMPAGNE - STATION - PULLMAN - TRIPS - LUXURY - STEAM

# WHO DUNN IT?



Each carriage is unique with its own specially designed interior. One named Duart, decorated with beautiful marquetry motifs of the Royal Castle on the Isle of Mull in Scotland, was even used by the Queen as part of her Royal Train.

WHAT do Buckingham Palace, the Titanic and the Northern Belle have in common?

The answer: all featured exquisite marquetry by the expert craftsmen at Dunn & Son Essex, who use traditional methods that have barely changed since the 19th century.



Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
Swansea, Cardiff & Newport

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
Birmingham, Gloucester & Cheltenham

# TORQUAY AT LEISURE

JOURNEY TO THE JURASSIC COAST IN ULTIMATE STYLE AND GLAMOUR.

Your day of discovery begins as the train glides into the platform and liveried stewards show you to your plush armchair seats. Your table laid with pristine, crisp white linen and adorned with sparkling glassware and fine china is ready for your moving feast. Enjoy a Bellini brunch and the ever-changing views from your window as we travel to the English Riviera.

**£315**  
Per passenger

15 SEATS ONLY

Book online: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) or call: 01270 895156



## HEAD CHEF



**MATTHEW GREEN**

HEAD Chef Matthew Green says: “2020 is set to be Northern Belle’s most exciting year to date and my new menus, which started with a romantic Valentine’s Day lunch, will reflect that. I look forward to sharing my new recipes and old favourites throughout the year.”



FEATURING the finest seasonal ingredients from the British Isles, classic and innovative dishes are crafted by our Executive Head Chef Matthew Green.

Matt joined the train as Junior Sous Chef in 2006 and worked his way up the ranks to become Head Chef in January 2019.

“I love my job,” he says. “Every day while cooking I look out of the windows and see a different view of the beautiful countryside. It may be the rolling hills of the Lake District today, the mountainous Scottish Highlands tomorrow and then next week I’m off to London. That’s my inspiration.”



## NORTHERN BELLE TRIP IS ‘FIREWORKS’ FOR TWINS

**Lilian & Doris, 95, take a journey down Memory lane**

MEMORIES flooded back as Britain’s oldest identical twins Lilian Cox and Doris Hobday, 95, boarded the Northern Belle at Chester station one Saturday, last November.

The trip, organised by gift company ‘Red Letter Days’ as part of their #NoMoreSlippers campaign, took them to Morecambe Bay to watch an amazing fireworks display.



On the way, they tucked into a seven-course dinner and were reminded of how glamorous train travel used to be during the 1930s when they were young girls.

Excited Doris, reflecting on the trip later, said: “We thoroughly enjoyed reliving the excitement and glamour of making a journey by rail.”

The #NoMoreSlippers campaign aims to treat older people over the festive period and encourage them to make the most of their lives and not let age become a barrier.

#heartofnorthernbelle

## RAIL ALE



*“Just the ticket”*

GUESTS who enjoy a beer are in for a real treat. Our Northern Belle Rail Ale, brewed specially for us in Southport.

Refreshingly light and delightfully tasty, this is just the ticket for real ale lovers!

- 25<sup>th</sup> Sept - Shrewsbury, Chester & Crewe
- 26<sup>th</sup> Sept - Liverpool & Warrington
- 27<sup>th</sup> Sept - Manchester, Bolton & Preston
- 16<sup>th</sup> Oct - Coventry & Birmingham

## MURDER MYSTERY LUNCH

AGATHA CHRISTIE WOULD APPROVE OF THESE INTRIGUING JOURNEYS THROUGH THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE, WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO BRING OUT THE SUPER-SLEUTH IN YOU. LET THE PACE OF LIFE SLOW AS YOU GAZE AT THE SCENERY AND ENJOY THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

- Round-trip travel aboard the Northern Belle luxury train
  - Seven-course British seasonal table d’hôte lunch
- Bottle of wine per couple from a selection of fine wines
- Murder Mystery to solve hosted by costumed actors

**£275**  
Per passenger

Book online: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) or call: 01270 895156



## WE RETURN TO THE LINE ON A SCORCHING FRIDAY

MANCHESTER Victoria Station on a scorching first Friday in August, the champagne is flowing ... and after nearly five months waiting impatiently in a siding, the Northern Belle is finally back on track.

Milling around on the platform, dressed in their summer finery and excited at the prospect of a wonderful day out in Edinburgh after the long Covid-19 lockdown, are our first 165 passengers of the new season.

The trains 1930s-style Pullman carriages are gleaming in the dawn sunlight and the heritage locomotive, proudly bearing the name Windsor Castle, has been given an extra shine of polish. Then, bang on time at 6.40am, the guard waves his flag and we are on our way, picking up more passengers at Wakefield and York en-route for the Auld Reekie, the Scottish capital.



The scene at Wakefield Kirkgate station

Soon it's time to tuck into a delicious three-course brunch, followed by morning tea or coffee, before we're pulling into Waverley Station. We've five hours to wander round Edinburgh and see the sights before we're back on board for the return journey.

There's more champagne, of course, followed by a scrumptious five-course dinner washed down with some lovely wines as we head home after what, everybody agreed, was a glorious day out. Of course, the beautiful sunshine helped. But whatever the weather, a trip on the Northern Belle is always just the ticket.

We've some wonderful journeys planned for the rest of this year. Check them all out on our website – [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) – and we'll see you on board soon.



## CROWDS GATHER AS HISTORY IS MADE

### WHEN THE FLYING SCOTSMAN MET THE NORTHERN BELLE

**WELL, what an exciting year 2019 was for us all at Northern Belle – especially with Flying Scotsman pulling two of our special excursions during the summer.**

Newspapers and TV stations gave massive coverage, describing it as a “historic day” with “the world’s most famous steam engine hauling one of the world’s most luxurious trains”.

We are sure none of you who were fortunate enough to travel on those two sold-out services from Crewe and Manchester would argue.

Nor were the thousands of eager train-spotters and railway enthusiasts aged from eight to 80, who crowded station platforms, bridges and level crossings to wave at the train.

**So how on earth do we follow that in 2020?**

Well, we have pulled together another wonderful selection of journeys to historic cities, seaside resorts, stately homes, famous castles, race meetings and loads more.

As well as more steam journeys, a series of Murder Mystery trips and At Leisure excursions, we are also hoping to run theatre trips – if the Government allows them to reopen after Covid-19.

Then we have relaxing journeys which just meander through beautiful countryside while pampered passengers relax in our luxurious 1930s-style “Pullman” carriages and tuck into a sumptuous lunch or dinner.



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## FIREWORKS DINNER

Liverpool, Manchester & Preston



Join the Northern Belle luxury train for an exciting evening of fine cuisine and themed entertainment. A dazzling firework finale completes the fabulous evening.

### INCLUDES

- Welcome champagne reception on board
- Seven-course British seasonal table d'hôte dinner
  - Bottle of wine per couple
  - Tea, coffee and petits fours
  - Musical entertainment
  - Firework display

**£285**  
Per passenger

**24 SEATS ONLY**

Book online: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) or call: 01270 895156

## YOUR WELFARE IS OUR PRIORITY

LET'S address the issue...

The health and well being of our guests and crew is of paramount importance to us. In view of the Covid-19 outbreak we would like to take this opportunity to share with you the measures that are in place.

Our train undergoes a thorough clean before it departs our home depot by a team of experienced cleaners. Once out on the rails the on-board team follow comprehensive opening and closing down procedures which involve wiping down all surfaces including but not limited to tables, door handles and grab rails. A housekeeper travels on all of our trips to ensure that our cloakrooms are regularly replenished and public areas are kept clean and tidy. On our busier departures we plan to have an additional housekeeper to provide extra reassurance for our travellers.

Our Lead and Second stewards have accredited qualifications over and above the mandatory requirements and have recently received infection control awareness training in response to the recent outbreak. The on board crew are temperature tested before departing the home depot and understand that they must not report for duty if they have any symptoms or have been in contact with anybody that has been diagnosed or being tested for the virus or has recently returned from a restricted area. Crew members returning from overseas travel are not permitted to resume their duties without clearance by a Manager.

## VIP CREDIT VOUCHER

WE are allowing all passengers booked on the Northern Belle to convert their booking, for whatever reason, to a 'VIP Credit Voucher' for the full amount paid. This will allow you the flexibility to book any other journey without losing your deposit.

Visit: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk)  
Call: 01270 895156



# THERE'S ONLY ONE CHRISTMAS LUNCH

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS IN OPULENT STYLE ABOARD THE NORTHERN BELLE LUXURY TRAIN, THIS DECEMBER. 'TIS THE SEASON FOR FAMILY & FRIENDS.



Settle into a plush seat in your festively-decorated carriage and look forward to a magnificent seven-course lunch with all the trimmings. Your table is set in lavish style with crisp white linen, sparkling glassware and bespoke china.

Liveried stewards take care of all your needs as the train journeys through enchanting wintery landscapes. Admire the changing views through your picture window. Take in the sumptuous details of your vintage carriage, evoking the glamour of 1930s "Belle" trains.

Read about the trains history and imagine the famous faces that once passed through its corridors. A convivial atmosphere and entertainment from a table-top magician make this a journey to remember.

It's the perfect way to enter into the festive spirit, either as an indulgent treat for yourself or as a special gift for loved ones.

## INCLUDES

- Round-trip travel aboard the Northern Belle luxury train
  - Welcome champagne reception on board
- Seven-course lunch: British seasonal table d'hôte menu including Great British cheeseboard, biscuits and chutneys
  - Bottle of wine per couple
  - Tea, coffee and petits fours

**£265**  
Per passenger

DATES AND DEPARTURE POINTS ARE LISTED ON THE BACK PAGE

Book online: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) or call: 01270 895156

# HAVE A GREAT DAY THE SAFE WAY

Three simple words that mean so much "THE SAFE WAY" becomes part of our everyday vocabulary.

We have been working hard over the last two months to make absolutely sure that travelling on the Northern Belle is as safe as possible both for our guests, colleagues and local residents. At the same time not detracting from the enjoyment of the day.

Please see the following pages which set out the processes which we have put in place to ensure our guests have a safe and enjoyable journey.

Our guest are asked to wear face coverings whilst boarding and departing the train, also while moving around the train, face coverings are not required at your seat.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING



The safety of our guests, colleagues and local people is our priority at the same time not detracting from the most wonderful day ahead.



Tickets will be sent electronically to your mobile or tablet, anyone without that facility will receive a ticket via mail in a wipe clean pvc wallet.



Food and drink will be served covered and wine dispensed only by your steward wearing gloves. Cutlery will be sealed and crockery protected by a disposable top shield. Menus will be disposable and sanitised prior to them being displayed.

## ON-BOARD



If you have had contact with anyone infected with the virus please don't travel, contact us and we will change your booking without charge. Call 01270 907 010 or email [reservations@northernbelle.co.uk](mailto:reservations@northernbelle.co.uk).



At the station you will be greeted by our host and escorted to the platform keeping a safe distance. Groups of passengers will board separately and seated avoiding close contact with others.



Carriages are fitted with sanitised hand dispensers which we encourage guests to use frequently. Increased levels of sanitation will be visible throughout the journey, with vestibules treated every 30 minutes. Carriages have been fitted with air filtration systems.

## CLEANLINESS



On-board crew will be temperature checked prior to departure, and will not travel with a high reading. Crew will be wearing suitable PPE relevant to the day.



Seating on board will allow for social distancing, in effect on your date of travel. Your booking party will be seated together.



Please limit movement around the train. On the return you will disembark by invited order, please keep a safe distance on your return to the station. Face protection is advisable especially when moving around the train.



## IT'S ALL A BIT... ...CHEESY

LIFE is full of mysteries, unanswered questions and endless enigmas. Why do we dream? What is consciousness? What happened before the Big Bang? While we cannot shed any light on these we can answer one question that is regularly asked by our guests: "Why do you serve the cheese before the dessert?"



In culinary circles it's a hot debate that has divided opinion. Mary Berry is a cheese-first kinda girl, while Michael Roux Jr is a fan of finishing with the cheese. A remarkable dichotomy given their respective nationalities.

The French have traditionally served cheese before dessert – this way all the savoury dishes are kept together rather than switching the pallet from savoury to sweet and then back to savoury. Le fromage is taken extremely seriously in France from the order of service to the way it is sliced.

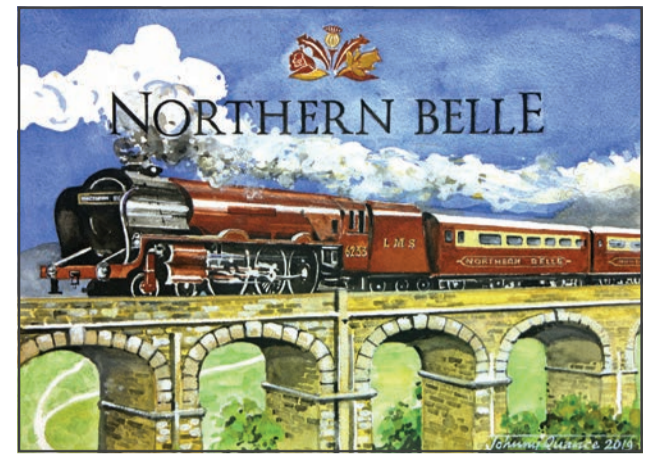
In modern times, Britain now *unbriely* produces almost twice as many cheese varieties as our French neighbours. France has around 400 compared with our 750. Indeed the International Cheese Awards are held in Nantwich, the home of our Travel Centre. An 80,000 square foot marquee is erected each year to house the 5,000 entrants from around the world.

So while the above provides a *gouda* explanation it still doesn't answer the *grate* question – why do we do it the French way?

In part it is to do with the history of our train. Originally we were part of the Orient-Express group taking people from the North to Folkstone to connect with the legendary Venice-Simplon-Orient-Express – the continental way for a continental journey.

Today we stick to this tradition for one very simple reason – we like to end on a sweet note.

#tasteofnorthernbelle



## IN CONVERSATION WITH... ANDREW OVERTON



THIS year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Northern Belle. Since the first trip in May 2000, we have welcomed more than half a million guests, served four million canapes and have travelled a distance equivalent to the moon and back.

The man in the driving seat at the start of this incredible journey was Andrew Overton – the Northern Belle's first General Manager, who was tasked with getting the carriages restored and ready for their inaugural journey. Andrew and his wife Nicola bobbed into our Travel Centre for a cuppa and a catch up.

**What do you remember about the Northern Belle's first ever journey?**

The first journey was a practice run for invited guests taking

them to Belvoir Castle in Leicestershire. It was eventful to say the least! We had arranged for the Duchess of Belvoir to do a welcome speech for our guests, but unfortunately she had fallen asleep upstairs and didn't make it down. We also had the Mayor of York and a brass band assembled on the platform at York but unfortunately the driver forgot to stop and the train whizzed through at 65mph. Fortunately, the day was saved by Jane McDonald, our very first on board entertainer, who dazzled guests.

**What's your favourite carriage?**

It has to be Alnwick. I was born and brought up in the North-East and have great childhood memories of the area.

**What was your favourite trip?**

That's easy – the coastal lines of Morpeth up to Berwick. The views are stunning. The Dawlish coastal line comes a close second.

**Proudest moment?**

Probably the Northern Belle being recognised as the most successful launch product in the Orient-Express group – repaying its capital investment in record time.

**Best memory?**

Gosh, very hard that one. Too many to choose from. OK, the very first time the Belle came into Manchester Victoria hauled by steam – the sound of the whistle echoing around the station was one I will never forget. Former Liverpool football star and TV pundit Alan Hansen dancing in the aisle with ex-Everton captain Dave Watson was pretty special too!

**What does the Northern Belle mean to you?**

It's all about delivering happiness and making friends.

Andrew is now enjoying his well-deserved retirement but will soon be taking up a new very important role – that of a Grandad!

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## WINCHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Manchester, Crewe & Birmingham

KICK START THE FESTIVE SEASON IN STYLE WITH AN INDULGENT DAY EXCURSION TO THE CITY OF WINCHESTER AND ITS PICTURESQUE CHRISTMAS MARKET

Winchester is often referred to as "England's Christmas Market Capital" and we are confident that you will enjoy your visit to this medieval city. The location of the market is stunning; set in the inner and outer close of the Cathedral. The stalls offer a wide selection of Christmas gifts, decorations and festive food making it one of the best markets in Europe.

£335  
Per passenger

Book online: [northernbelle.co.uk](http://northernbelle.co.uk) or call: 01270 895156





Vietnam.

**THE Dream Express ... that's the proud name of my train which over the next 36 hours will trundle the 1,000 miles from Vietnam's ancient capital Hanoi to sprawling, modern Ho Chi Minh City in the south.**

But there's not much Northern Belle-style luxury about the diesel-hauled train with its seemingly never-ending line of blue and red carriages snaking down the station platform, which now resembles a giant market stall selling food and drink to passengers.

Paint is peeling from the walls of my "soft four-berth" compartment, the air conditioning grille hangs at a precarious angle and the tattered curtains look like they haven't been washed since 1975 when the train began running again after the Vietnam War.



Everything but the kitchen sink ... stocking up on the station platform

Still, I note with gratitude, at least the sheets on my bunk are spotlessly clean.

Finally, just 15 minutes late at 8.25pm and with a long blast of the engine's klaxon, we start crawling out the station. And to my great delight I find I've got the compartment all to myself.

I'm not going all the way to HCMC, as everybody in Vietnam calls Ho Chi Minh City. Just as far as DaNang, from where I will take a cheap taxi to the nearby picturesque tourist town of HoiAn.

If all goes well, I'll be there in time for a late lunch.

I stare fascinated out the grubby windows as the Dream Express, its horn now blaring a constant warning signal, rattles slowly down the middle of Hanoi's famous Train Street.

The houses here on either side of the single track line are so close that you

feel you could lean out and touch.

After a couple cans of cold Saigon beer, I'm fast asleep when about 11.30 I wake to realise we have stopped at another station.

Then comes the sound of feet tramping down the corridor outside followed by loud, brash American voices.

Is there ever such a thing, despite what Graham Greene wrote in his book about Vietnam, as a Quiet American?

Suddenly the door opens and this rather large lass heaving a giant backpack gazes in at the three virgin berths.

"Hey, anybody using these?" she asks cheerily, quickly adding: "OK if I take one?"

"Guess so," I reply, without any great enthusiasm, as I'd been hoping to keep the compartment to myself. "Have you booked it?"

"Booked one down the corridor," she explains. "But somebody else is asleep in it. So this will do."

My heart sinks a little. Anarchy on the train. Three hours out of Hanoi and people are in each other's bunks already.

Just then a French couple appear. They have booked two berths in the compartment, including the one the large American is trying to misappropriate.

I'm glad to see them. Three rather than two might be a little more cramped, but better to share with two quiet French folk than one noisy American.

Then the door opens again. This time an English girl, rather distressed, with frizzy hair, peers hesitantly in through thick specs.

# DREAM EXPRESS

## "IT'S THE BEST HUE TO SEE VIETNAM"

In an occasional series, journalist Mal Tattersall samples some of the world's other great train journeys...

She has booked the fourth berth, numbered 24, and, misreading the numbers on the wall, initially looks accusingly at me as if I am lazing in it.



'Doi Moi'

"Where are you going?" the French lady asks her eventually. "Hughie," replies the English girl.

"Hughie?" repeats the French lady, looking puzzled.

"Yes, Hughie," says the English girl, a tad impatiently.

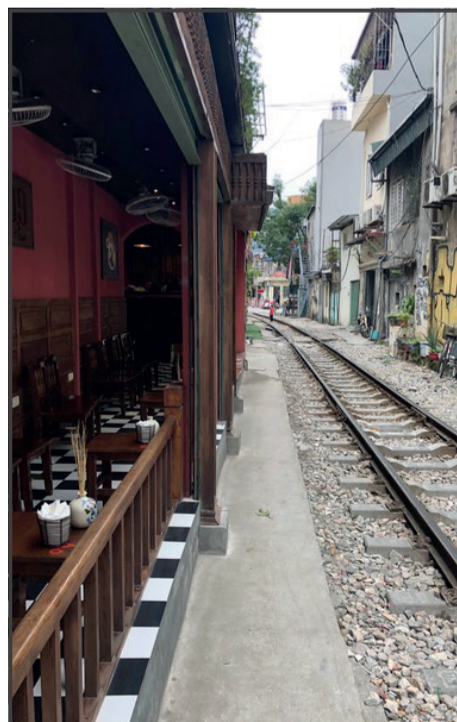
"Hughie Greene?" I, being of a certain age, ask mischievously.

"No," she replies, with a serious face. "I don't think it's Green, just Hughie."

"Ah, W-h-ey," explains the French lady, pronouncing it slowly and phonetically.

"I dunno which way," says the English girl. "But it's a long way. It's spelled H-U-E or something silly."

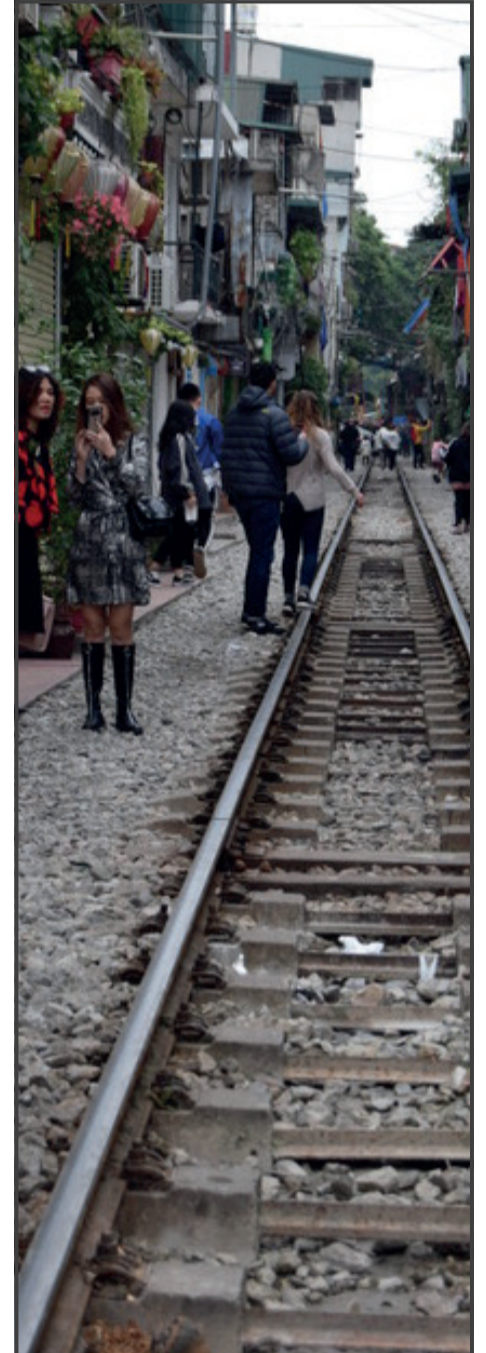
Then she dumps her backpack and scarpers.



A restaurant just inches from the line.



Mal, the Englishman abroad.



Houses are just feet from the track

Half an hour later I spot her again, giggling with a friend down the corridor. as I stroll to the none-too-inviting lavatory.

Eventually she shuffles back to the compartment and, after a bit of a struggle, heaves her way into the top bunk above me.

She snores slightly during the night. But not as loud, I suspect, as I do.

In the morning she gets off like at Hue and disappears. I hope she enjoys the historic city, now a UNESCO World Heritage site, with its ancient citadel on the banks of the legendary Perfume River.

Perhaps tonight, or at least so I like to think, she will end up in some karaoke bar, lustily singing "I did it my Hue".

- Mal Tattersall.

Journalist Mal travelled with specialists InsideAsia, who tailor travel to Vietnam to suit all interests and budgets and have a range of small group tours. A 12-night Classic Vietnam trip including all accommodation, transport and transfers, private guiding, breakfasts, domestic flights and a range of cultural experiences costs from £2,821pp including direct flights from London with Vietnam airlines. See [www.OutsideAsiaTours.com](http://www.OutsideAsiaTours.com) or phone 0117 244 3380



## A SELECTION OF THIS YEARS FEATURE TRIPS

### SEPTEMBER 2020

Fri 4 Sept	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Newport, Cardiff & Neath	
Sat 5 Sept	Torquay at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Swansea, Cardiff & Newport	
Sun 6 Sept	Torquay at Leisure <b>SOLD OUT</b>	£315
Departs:	Birmingham, Gloucester & Cheltenham	
Fri 18 Sept	Harrogate, Victorian Spa Town	£370
	York at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Birmingham, Derby & Nottingham	
Sat 19 Sept	Princess Elizabeth   Lunch	£395
Departs:	Preston	
Sun 20 Sept	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Wigan, Preston & Lancaster	
Fri 25 Sept	Murder Mystery Lunch	£275
Departs:	Shrewsbury, Chester & Crewe	
Sat 26 Sept	Murder Mystery Lunch	£275
Departs:	Liverpool & Warrington	
Sun 27 Sept	Murder Mystery Lunch	£275
Departs:	Manchester, Bolton & Preston	

### OCTOBER 2020

Fri 2 Oct	Edinburgh at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Manchester, Huddersfield & York	
Sat 3 Oct	Princess Elizabeth   Lunch	£395
Departs:	Preston	
Fri 16 Oct	Murder Mystery Lunch	£275
	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
Departs:	Coventry & Birmingham	
Sat 17 Oct	Princess Elizabeth   Lunch	£395
Departs:	Preston	
Sun 18 Oct	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Preston, Bolton & Manchester	

### NOVEMBER 2020

Sat 7 Nov	Fireworks Dinner	£285
Departs:	Liverpool, Manchester & Preston	
Sun 15 Nov	London Theatre Show	£405
	London at Leisure	£335
Departs:	Doncaster, Sheffield & Derby	
Fri 20 Nov	Winchester Christmas Markets	£335
Departs:	Manchester, Crewe & Birmingham	

Sat 21 Nov	London Theatre Show	£405
	London at Leisure	£335
Departs:	Chester, Liverpool & Crewe	
Fri 27 Nov	Chatsworth House at Christmas	£375
Departs:	Newcastle, Durham & Darlington	
Sat 28 Nov	Edinburgh Christmas Markets	£375
Departs:	Hull & York <b>SOLD OUT</b>	

### DECEMBER 2020 | CHRISTMAS LUNCHES

Wed 2 Dec	Doncaster, Leeds & York	£265
Thu 3 Dec	Darlington, Durham & Newcastle	£265
Fri 4 Dec	Glasgow & Edinburgh <b>SOLD OUT</b>	£265
Wed 9 Dec	Shrewsbury & Telford	£265
Thu 10 Dec	Cardiff, Bristol & Bath Spa	£265
Fri 11 Dec	Newport & Cardiff	£265
Sat 12 Dec	Crewe, Chester & Liverpool	£265
Tue 15 Dec	Chesterfield, Derby, Nottingham & Grantham	£265
Wed 16 Dec	Norwich & Ipswich	£265
Thu 17 Dec	London	£265
Fri 18 Dec	Coventry & Birmingham	£265
Sat 19 Dec	Liverpool, Manchester & Preston	£265

## 2021

### FEBRUARY 2021

Thu 11 Feb	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	York, Harrogate & Leeds	
Fri 12 Feb	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Chesterfield, Derby & Nottingham	
Sat 13 Feb	Valentine's Day Lunch	£265
	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
Departs:	Coventry & Birmingham	
Sun 14 Feb	Valentine's Day Lunch	£265
	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
Departs:	Crewe, Chester & Manchester	
Sun 28 Feb	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	London	

### MARCH 2021

Fri 12 Mar	Mother's Day Lunch	£265
	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
Departs:	York, Darlington, Durham & Newcastle	
Sat 13 Mar	Mother's Day Lunch	£265
	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
Departs:	Glasgow & Edinburgh	
Sat 27 Mar	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Crewe, Chester & Liverpool	
Sat 28 Mar	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Preston, Bolton & Manchester	

### APRIL 2021

Fri 16 Apr	Edinburgh & Royal Yacht Britannia	£370
	Edinburgh at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Manchester, Huddersfield & York	
Sat 17 Apr	RHS Cardiff Flower Show	£370
	Cardiff at Leisure	£315
	Hereford at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Preston, Wigan, Warrington & Chester	
Sat 24 Apr	Harrogate Spring Flower Show	£370
	York at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Birmingham, Derby & Sheffield	
Sun 25 Apr	Brief Encounter Lunch	£255
	Brief Encounter Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Chester & Liverpool	

### MAY 2021

Fri 7 May	Historic Roman Baths, Bath	£370
	Bristol Aerospace Museum	£370
	Historic Bath at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Liverpool, Warrington & Crewe	
Sat 8 May	Scarborough at Leisure	£315
	York at leisure	£315
Departs:	Chester & Warrington	
Fri 14 May	Glamis Castle	£370
	Scone Palace	£370
	Dundee at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Darlington, Durham & Newcastle	
Sat 15 May	Historic Roman Baths, Bath	£370
	Bristol Aerospace Museum	£370
	Historic Bath or Bristol at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Wakefield, Sheffield & Derby	
Sun 16 May	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	York, Leeds & Wakefield	
Thu 20 May	RHS Chelsea Flower Show	£410
Departs:	Manchester, Stoke & Birmingham	
Fri 21 May	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Wigan, Preston & Manchester	

### JUNE 2021

Fri 4 Jun	Edinburgh & Royal Yacht Britannia	£370
	Edinburgh at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Manchester, Huddersfield & York	
Sat 5 Jun	Historic Roman Baths, Bath	£370
	Bristol Aerospace Museum	£370
	Historic Bath or Bristol at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Manchester, Stoke-on-trent & Stafford	
Fri 11 Jun	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Sheffield, Chesterfield & Derby	
Sat 12 Jun	RHS Chatsworth Flower Show	£370
	Chatsworth House	£370
Departs:	Norwich & Ipswich	
Sun 13 Jun	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Norwich & Ipswich	
Thu 17 Jun	Ladies Day at Royal Ascot	£510
Departs:	Manchester, Crewe & Birmingham	

Fri 18 Jun	Brief Encounter Lunch	£255
	Brief Encounter Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Crewe & Manchester	
Sat 19 Jun	Alnwick Castle & Gardens	£370
	The Holy Island of Lindisfarne	£370
	Berwick Upon Tweed at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Derby, Chesterfield & Doncaster	

### JULY 2021

Sat 3 Jul	Longleat House & Safari Park	£255
Departs:	Derby, Birmingham & Coventry	
Sun 4 Jul	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Birmingham & Northampton	
Sat 10 Jul	Weymouth Harbour   Seafood Festival	£315
Departs:	Cardiff, Newport & Bath Spa	
Sun 11 Jul	Weymouth Harbour   Seafood Festival	£315
Departs:	Coventry & Birmingham	

### AUGUST 2021

Fri 13 Aug	Edinburgh Fringe Festival	£315
	Edinburgh & Royal Yacht Britannia	£370
Departs:	Manchester, Wakefield & York	
Sat 14 Aug	Edinburgh Fringe Festival	£315
	Edinburgh & Royal Yacht Britannia	£370
Departs:	Liverpool, Wigan, Preston & Lancaster	
Thu 26 Aug	Spirit of Travel Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Edinburgh, Perth & Stirling	
Sat 28 Aug	Inveraray Castle	£370
	West Highland Lunch	£255
Departs:	Edinburgh & Dumbarton	
Sun 29 Aug	Great British Sunday Lunch	£255
	Classic Afternoon Tea	£210
Departs:	Darlington, Durham & Newcastle	

### SEPTEMBER 2021

Fri 17 Sept	Harrogate Autumn Flower Show	£370
	Harrogate Victorian Spa Town	£370
	York at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Birmingham, Derby & Nottingham	
Sat 18 Sept	Harrogate Autumn Flower Show	£370
	Harrogate Victorian Spa Town	£370
	York at Leisure	£315
Departs:	Telford, Shrewsbury & Crewe	