

News Letter  
READER **HOLIDAYS**

## The Algarve & Historic Cities of Portugal

Fly Direct from Belfast

28 May, 27 Sep,  
1 & 10 Oct 2009

7 nights from **£629**

A taste of the different flavours that make up the unique Portuguese cocktail. Staying on the sunny Algarve, in picturesque Tavira, our holiday also embraces real Portugal and allows you to discover Pederneira, the oldest and prettiest quarter of Nazare on the Costa da Prata. With included visits to Lisbon, Obidos, Porto, the ancient university town of Coimbra and the historic city of Evora, there is the chance to visit, Fatima basilica, and the unspoilt eastern Algarve coast.

### PRICE INCLUDES

- Return direct flights from Belfast
- 7 nights 4★ HB hotel accommodation (3 on the eastern Algarve, 4 in Nazare-Pederneira)
- Excursions visiting Lisbon, Porto, Obidos, Coimbra and Alcacer do Sal
- Services of a tour representative

Optional excursions at an additional cost, Vilareal de Santo Antonio, Fatima & Batalha

To book or for a brochure call:

**0116 279 3929** quoting NLET

or email: [sales@preferredts.com](mailto:sales@preferredts.com)

Prices are person based on two sharing and subject to availability.  
Operated by Preferred Travel Services ABTA W3692, ATOL 5537

# A hidden gem



**IDYLLIC:** Villa Estelle, which is owned by Clare Geddis and Stephen Hill from Belfast

With its pebble-paved walls, maze of narrow cobbled streets, vaulted passageways and steep meandering incline, the medieval village of Haut-de-Cagnes is a magical place to simply get away from it all says **KATE CHAMBRÉ.**

THE large wooden door opens, and I am invited into a beautiful oasis situated in a small 14th century medieval village, in the heart of the French Riviera.

Minutes later, I am reclining on a chair in the glorious sun, glass of rosé in hand, with a platter of cured hams and cheeses before me. Meanwhile, Pudsey, the resident cat is sprawled out on a nearby window sill, occasionally glancing down at the new arrivals on the terrace. He hasn't a care in the world, nor should he, as he couldn't have chosen a better place to live if he'd tried.

Villa Estelle, purchased under a year ago by Claire Geddis and Stephen Hill from Belfast, is just a 10 to 15 minute drive from Nice Airport and is situated along the Côte d'Azur, in the heart of one of the most historic and picture perfect villages of the region.

Over the years the medieval village of Haut-de-Cagnes, classed as a "Monument of France", has attracted a host of artists who were drawn to the place because of its captivating Mediterranean light. In fact, the village earned itself the nickname "the Montmartre of the French Riviera" and attracted celebrities from the world of arts and show business particularly up until the 1960s.

Among the most famous people to spend time in Haut-de-Cagnes were the painter Renoir, the writer Jean Cocteau and legendary film star Brigitte Bardot.

Nowadays the village, with its panoramic views, monuments and sites, and exquisite restaurants is less glitz and glam, and more gentle. It is also the perfect base from which to explore the surrounding region, which takes in Nice, Cannes, Monte Carlo, Eze, and many other tourist destinations.

While visiting Haut-de-Cagnes, there is no better place to stay than Villa Estelle, situated on montée de la Bourgade, a street, which every August plays host to the World Square Boules Championships no less.

The child and dog-friendly guesthouse, which could also be classed as a boutique hotel, is warm and inviting, with an interior décor, that oozes a feeling of relaxation. Its wonderful blend of historic and contemporary furniture – mock

bookcase and secret room included – add to the wonder of the place.

The guesthouse's five en-suite rooms are exceptionally cosy, offering visitors an ideal haven to chill out and totally relax and unwind. While staying at Villa Estelle, I slept in the honeymoon suite, which included a luxurious marble bath and separate shower, a huge bed, TV and DVD, mini bar and private balcony. Heaven! Part of the reason why the guesthouse is so inviting is down to the warm and bubbly personality of Fiona Kennedy, originally from Hollywood, who manages the place. Since taking on the job eight months ago Fiona, who is a fluent French speaker, has clearly put her heart and soul into making guests feel very much at home during their stay.

The three-star guesthouse, formally owned by the renowned interior designer Estelle Réale, has gone from strength to strength since it was taken over by its new owners, and has proved a particularly popular destination among holidaymakers from Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Plans are now in the pipe-line to build a swimming pool at Villa Estelle, which will undoubtedly enhance what it already has to offer. However, for the time-being if visitors feel like a dip in the water, the sea is a stone's throw away, in nearby Cagnes-sur-Mer.

If you're feeling really energetic, why not pack your running shoes, and jog down to Cagnes-sur-Mer and along the promenade. Just try not to get lost like I did! I found that the exercise, alongside walking up and down the steep hills of Haut-de-Cagnes steep hills, was not only a great way to explore the surrounding area but burn off that delicious meal I had the night before at Le Village, a busy brasserie next to the chateau.

■ Rates at Villa Estelle range from €130 to €260 per night in the high season. For further information visit: [www.villa-estelle.com](http://www.villa-estelle.com), e-mail [info@villa-estelle.com](mailto:info@villa-estelle.com) or telephone +33 (0) 4 92 02 89 83. To find out more about what to do in the area, visit [www.cagnes-tourisme.com](http://www.cagnes-tourisme.com) Economy flights from Belfast to Nice are available with Easyjet ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)). You can also hire a car from this website.

## News Letter Competition

# WIN



## SPORTS COURSES



Chewits, the much loved kids chewy sweet, is providing children's sports courses to help get your little angels active this school holiday and the News Letter has 10 pairs of places to give away.

Chewits Sports Courses, brought to you by Premier Sport, are a super fun and energetic way of entertaining kids during the half term break. Fully qualified coaches supervise and run the courses where boys and girls of all abilities between ages 5 & 12 can get stuck-in to up to 21 different sports including: athletics, hockey, football, netball, dance, cricket, tag rugby, basketball and multi-sports. Chewits Sports Courses will be taking place on 25th May at Waterwork Multipurpose Facility & Nettlefield Primary School in Belfast.

To sign up for the courses or for more information visit [www.chewitspremiersports.org](http://www.chewitspremiersports.org). More information on Chewits can be found at [www.chewitspremiersport.org](http://www.chewitspremiersport.org)

### How to Enter

Simply answer the following question and text **NLCHEW** followed by your answer, name and address to **81800** or Tel: **0901 293 3143**

Q. Chewits Sports Courses are being run in association with which company?  
a) Sport Fit b) Premier Sport c) Kids in Sport

- All winning places must be claimed during the May half term period.
- Children require permission from a parent or guardian to attend a course.
- Who can attend- Boys and Girls aged 5-12 years
- You will need shin pads for football and hockey. For ease these can be purchased online and picked up on the day to collect.
- Every child must be signed in and out each day by an appropriate adult.
- You need to arrive between 9.15am and 9.30am for registration.

By supplying your telephone number you're happy to receive SMS/MMS messages from Johnston Press plc, publishers of the News Letter. Johnston Press (or via its agents) and its business partners may contact you about new promotions, products & services. Please add the word STOP at the end of your message if you do not wish to receive these. For quality and training purposes we may monitor communications.

Rules: Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. This will be charged to your mobile phone bill. Calls cost £1 at all times. Lines close at midnight on Saturday 16th May. Usual Johnston Press rules apply for a copy contact the Promotions team at 2 Esky Drive, Carn Industrial Estate, Portadown BT63 5YY. Service is provided by g8wave London N7 9AH. Each prize will provide 2 children with a free day course on a Chewits Sports Course. Children require permission from a parent or guardian to attend a course. Every child must be signed in and out each day by an appropriate adult.