

Train journeys

Tuesday, 06 June 2017

My favourite train journey in the world is along the South of France, north shore of the Mediterranean, from Marseille through St Raphael to Nice.

It's probably about 2 hours on the TGV and I've done it hundreds of times in my life. I've also done it hundreds by car, which is great but I need to concentrate on the road so as to avoid tragic accidents, so can't see the glorious scenery. Likewise by plane, dozens of trips; spectacular but miniature and so fast.

I know and love every inch of the journey; the mountain drops; the coves and crannies; the little houses and luxury mock castles.

The dangerous bends; the white sands and blue sea; the swimmers and yachts; the restaurants (many of which I've eaten in); the palm trees, flowers (red poppies in May and June), golfing greens and wild tangles of woods.

I've watched children grow old and octogenarians disappear. It's how I start my summers.

Fifty years ago you could sleep overnight on the train, waking for fresh coffee and fragrant croissants at 6.00. Now the trains are so fast it's a mere 5-6 hours, Paris to Nice.

I first did the journey as a teenager with marvellous Mother and family. Then as a young pop star. Now as an old queen.

And I still adore it as much as ever. My favourite journey.