

## **The Basics of Canal Boat Hire**

### **Know nothing about canal boats? No idea about canals? Haven't a clue what to expect?**

Don't worry, here's the absolute basics laid out for you. We welcome absolute beginners - we know that you can have a great holiday on a canal boat even if it's a totally new concept for you.

### **What's the difference between a canal and a river?**

Canals are manmade waterways, built in Britain during the industrial revolution some 200 years ago. Therefore they do not have a current like a river does, making them much easier for navigating a boat! Some canals do join up with rivers but first timers should stick to the canals.

### **What is a canal lock?**

A lock allows you to go up or down hills on the canal. It's a simple piece of engineering that sometimes scares first time boaters... but they're easy to get the hang of. You cruise into the lock, close the gates behind you so that you're in a sealed area of water.

You then open 'paddles' which let water trickle into the lock, raising the water (and your boat) to the higher level. Only then can you open the top gates and cruise out. Still confused? Don't worry, We give thorough training on locks when you arrive and will make sure you fully understand before you cruise.

### **Is there a steering wheel on a canal boat?**

There's no steering wheel on a canal boat - instead you steer from the rear of the boat using a 'tiller'. It's a pole-like handle that is attached to the rudder. Push it to the right and the boat will slowly turn to the left, push it to the left and you'll turn to the right. Again, you'll be trained on how to handle the boat when you arrive at your holiday marina.

### **Does someone come with us?**

No, the boat is all yours for the duration of your holiday. We train you when you arrive so that you are confident you can handle the boat. We can advise you of good routes to take and what to expect. Then you'll cruise away to explore the canals at your own pace.

### **Can we sleep on our canal boat?**

Absolutely! Our boats have luxurious interiors and sleep up to 6 people. Everything you need is on board- beds, a toilet and shower, a kitchen, central heating, the lot. Your canal boat is both your transport and your hotel! For some hints on packing, see what to bring on a canal boat holiday.

### **Where can we go on the canals?**

The rules of the canal are simple and few. You can go anywhere on the canals and our experts at the marinas will take you through the maps and advise you of the options. You can stop nearly anywhere- prohibited moorings will have clear signs, just make sure you don't moor (park) on sharp bends or very close to bridges and locks.

The only other rule is to cruise on the right of the canal and slow down as you pass other boats.