



What Travel Writers Say Newsletter

www.whattravelwriterssay.com

Outward Bound: Mike Keenan

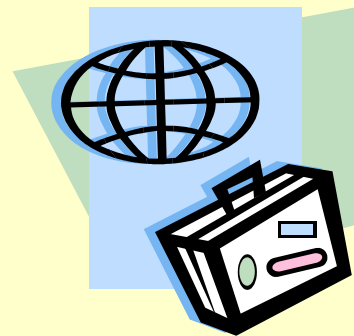
In November I spent three impressive days in Cardiff, capital of Wales

During my stay in Cardiff, the highlight was the rugby game in Millennium Stadium featuring Wales national team versus the famed New Zealand All Blacks who had not lost to Wales in the past 55 years.

100,000 fans including Prince William descended upon Cardiff from northern Wales, nearby Swansea, the next biggest Welsh city and London, only two hours away. The tickets sold out long ago; 30,000 surplus fans jam every available pub and restaurant.

All Blacks perform a menacing, pre-game Maori chant accompanied by nasty body language. The Welsh are unimpressed, and at the end of the first 40 minutes, the score is tied 6-6. More talented New Zealand is relentless in the second half, and despite heroic goal-line stands by Wales accompanied by screams of delight in the pub, NZ lead 19-12, controlling the ball deep in Welsh territory with two minutes left.

Please see *Outward Bound* on page 2



No amount of travel on the wrong road will bring you to the right destination.

Ben Gave

Focus: Cardiff is a must-see capital

In the last decade, Cardiff has been transformed into one of the top European capitals to visit. Many iconic structures characterize Cardiff's dramatic makeover. The Senedd or Parliament Building's wave-like roof juts into the sky, its glass walls affording a clear view yet reflecting the waters of Cardiff Bay. Security is tight, the guards patient and friendly, and once inside, the cocoon-like, intricate wooden structure makes the wait worthwhile.

Next door, The Millennium Centre is shaped like a bronze armadillo, all glass and slate, dominated by a huge dome coated in copper oxide. Two poetic lines are inscribed above the front door: "Creating truth like glass from the furnace of creation" and "In these stones, horizons sing." The letters form the windows of the upper floors and are lit up at night to celebrate the performing arts. I sneak a peek at the large theatre as workmen prepare sets for an opera.

Outside, there is a silver tower featured in BBC's *Dr Who*, filmed and produced here, and later, I serendipitously encounter their camera crew at work in the Temple of Peace,

Please see Focus on page 3

Featured Tip

Worried about deep-vein thrombosis on long plane flights? For the latest information, check: <http://www.whattravelwriterssay.com/tipsthrombosis.html>

Also, regarding travel tips, do you wish to:

Our battered suitcases were piled on the sidewalk again; we had longer ways to go. But no matter, the road is life.

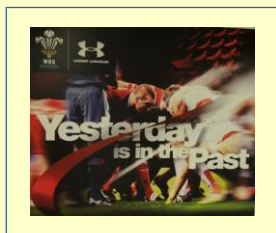
Jack Kerouac

- Go on safari in Kenya?
- Learn about the world's largest lakes?
- Find out what language is spoken in a particular country?
- Know how to deal with lost wallets?
- Find a lighthouse in a particular country?
- Understand lightening strikes and their effects on airplanes?
- Engage in luxury travel?
- Access the literacy rate or longevity rate of any country?
- Find map collections?
- Try medical tourism?
- Find an American or Canadian memorial?
- Understand motion sickness?
- Locate a mosque?
- Find Information on motorcycles?
- Locate a museum?
- Access information on mountain biking?
- Discover the highest mountain peaks?
- Find the minimum wage per country?

That's just the "K-M" list of travel tips located at www.whattravelwriterssay.com where there are 400 more links to every conceivable travel related question that you might have, including access to the cheapest flights and accommodations. Be sure to bookmark the site to assist you in the future.

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Outward Bound from page 1



*Wales dressing room,
Millennium Stadium*

Unexpectedly, fervent Welsh hymns and prayers to patron, St. David are answered by an apparent miracle. Stunned fans suck in their collective breath as huge forward, Alun Wyn Jones, intercepts a pass and lumbers towards the All Blacks' goal line, no one close behind. A try and a convert ties the game; ten metres from success but more accustomed to scrums, Jones is ultimately run down, the All Blacks prevail and the famine endures.

The fans empty the stadium and fill the pubs until the wee hours of the morning. Rugby is treated here as a religion I learn, and the Welsh are proud of their team. Later, I tour the massive £121 million stadium, dutifully sit in Her Majesty, the Queen's royal chair, am allowed to clutch the silver Invesco Rugby Trophy and watch two resident Harris hawks chase intruding birds from the rafters. Unlike rugby, it's bloodless; the hawks are slower, yet get the job done.

Website of the month: The Food Network

Find out what's cooking on The Food Network: <http://www.foodnetwork.com/Recipes>, healthy eating, seasonal dishes, videos & chefs are featured.



"Daffodils" rugby fans

Focus on Cardiff cont'd.

located near the Civic Centre and University.

A massive barrage system has altered the bay. It used to be all mud flats and coal docks; now, sailboats and spawning salmon get in and out through a short canal and elevator connected to the Taff River. You can bike or walk completely around Cardiff Bay. Everything is surprisingly accessible in this compact city of 320,000 people, the largest city in Wales.

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Since opening in June 1999, Millennium Stadium averages 1.3 million visitors yearly. I watch grass literally grow as half of the natural turf is systematically heated by a large series of bright lamps that promote growth. Incredibly, the pitch is laid on top of 7,412 inter-connected pallets which can be moved for storage to allow the stadium to be used for concerts, exhibitions and other events.

*Travel is fatal to
prejudice, bigotry, and
narrow-mindedness.*

Mark Twain

Featured Tip from page 2

If you have additional travel tips that you would like to share with others, please send them to us for inclusion on our site. *Send suggestions to www.whattravelwriterssay@cogeco.net*



Harbour sculpture

Industry News

For the latest travel industry news, visit: <http://www.whattravelwriterssay.com/indexnews.html>

Cardiff Access: Trains from London Paddington Station to Cardiff are 15 and 45 minutes past each hour; the journey is 2 hours. Take the Heathrow Express to Paddington. If you have BritRail tickets, take pass and passport into the rail station ticket office to have the validity period inserted. A first Class 4 Day **BritRail FlexiPass** allows unlimited first class rail travel on any 4 days during a 2-month period. *This includes access to the Heathrow Express trains between Heathrow and London's Paddington Station, where you can pick up your train to Cardiff.*

Cardiff accommodations: Radisson BLU Hotel, Meridian Gate, Bute Terrace, Cardiff, Tel: 44-2920 454 777; this is a brand new hotel and is within easy walking distance (5 minutes) from the train station.

Visit Cardiff Castle, www.cardiffcastle.com: best place to get your bearings, in the city centre. Originally a Roman fort. The interior is stunning. Climb to the top of the 12th century Norman keep (the little castle in the middle) for great views of the city.

Shopping: Queen Street: main shopping thoroughfare. One of the finest shopping centres outside London; all high

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street chain stores. Explore the Victorian Arcades. (6) stuffed full of quirky and unusual and the just completed **St. David's Phase II** mall.

Sport: Visit Millennium Stadium Civic Centre (directly opposite the Hilton hotel) finest in the British Isles & the magnificently domed, snarling dragon topped City Hall. Nearby buildings which make up the Civic Centre include Cardiff University, the Temple of Peace and the Welsh National War Memorial.

National Museum of Wales:

www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/cardiff Highlights include the Davies Collection, largest collection of Impressionist and Post Impressionist paintings outside Paris. Cezanne sits next to Renoir and Rodin, opposite Monet, near Pissarro, over by Manet. Look out for Van Gogh's stunning *Rain at Anvers* – angry slashes of rain run right across what is otherwise a beautiful landscape, painted weeks before his suicide. The museum is free.

Cardiff Bay: the former docks area of the city used to be the largest port in the world. It was once better known as Tiger Bay, immortalized by locally born singer Shirley Bassey. Now, one of the world's largest regeneration projects, central to the whole idea is the Cardiff Bay Barrage, which transformed the bay from mud flats to a massive freshwater lake. Marinas, apartments, water taxis, opera houses and even a parliament building all vie for a waterfront location.

Wales Millennium Centre: www.wmc.org.uk: The building is all glass and slate and looking very much like a Welsh armadillo. Its home to 7 of Wales' major cultural institutions, including the Welsh National Opera.

Visit Wales: www.visitwales.com/