

'An XIX Waterloo Weekend'

*A Tour to the Waterloo Battlefield
7th-9th September 2012*

... At about nine o'clock in the evening the battlefield was almost cleared of the French army. It was an evening no pen is able to picture: the surrounding villages yet in flames, the lamentations of the wounded of both armies, the singing for joy; no one is able to describe nor find a name to give to those horrible scenes.'

Henri Nieman - 6th Uhlans



The Plancenoit Re-enactment

Waterloo is a story of such magnitude, not only of the leaders, but also of the men themselves. It is a story of their lives, their families, their fears, and their heroism and, for many, their ultimate sacrifice on that fateful June Sunday in 1815.

From its dishevelled start to its electrifying end, the Waterloo campaign fascinates in its intensity. It endured four great battles in as many days, the climax of which, dramatic by any standard, saw the defeat of an Empire and ended the dreams and ambitions of the greatest soldier of modern times. The feat of arms at Waterloo changed the entire course of European history when Bonaparte pitted his military brilliance and charisma against the tactical skill and stamina of Wellington, in an effort to decide the fate of Europe.

This great military gamble unfolded 197 years ago in a small valley 11 miles south of Brussels. With five gross errors of judgement and two incredible chance decisions, amid 115,000 casualties, we discover that at the campaign's unbelievable end, soldiers in multicoloured coats, amidst the fog of war, did not know whether they had won or lost. We visit the very ground where Napoleon met his Waterloo and where the 19th Regiment of Foot were not! That gallant unit were in Ceylon at the time.

Tour Itinerary

Day 1: Friday 7th Sep - The Waterloo Campaign

- 1500 Hrs Onwards: Rendezvous Grand Hotel Waterloo.
- **1600 Hrs Depart for the Royal Chapel Waterloo:** To place the importance of remembrance.
- **1645 Hrs Wellington's Headquarters and Museum** - Impressive and detailed.
- **The 1815 Campaign.**
- Dinner

Day 2: Saturday 8th Sep – The Battle and the 'Way of the Prussian'

- **The Panorama:** The largest mural in Europe. It depicts the almost surreal but courageous series of French cavalry charges against the Allied squares of infantry resisting them.
- **The Lion Mound** – In one's lifetime this is surely a 'must visit' location. You view the entire hallowed acres where British heritage and history has set modern military standards. A very easy pace is assured and you will be rewarded with a memorable experience.



The Lion Mound - 300,000 cubic meters of earth

- **Le Caillou:** Napoleon's Headquarters and contemplate the demise of the greatest soldier of modern time. We understand the Waterloo Campaign of 1815.

At Le Caillou in the room where it happened, we hear how Napoleon overruled his commanders and advisors. We look at how a very serious battle conference went horribly wrong. Confusion, bad feeling and loss of trust resulted.



Napoleon's statue at Le Caillou

- Lunch

- **La Belle Alliance:** Ney's second argument with Kellerman and the latter's almost vision of France riding to her demise. The Way of the Garde: Napoleon's Imperial Columns.
- **Papelite:** The importance of the Allied left flank and why little is known of the events in this part of the battlefield are revealed.
- **Zieten's Crossroads:** That great chance decision.



Zeithen's Crossroads

Here on Wellington's left flank, General Zeithen, a Prussian commander, was about to execute the strategic intent of his superior when he is ordered to do the seemingly opposite. He knew his boss's mind, and his organizational culture but would he trust in his own judgment?

- **Bois de Paris:** Hake's Brigade as they emerged to confront the French reserves of Domon and Subervie reveal a secret. Chateau Frischermont: The secrets of this place are surprising and educational.
- Dinner

Day 3: Sunday 9th Sep – Wellington's Line

- **Wellington's Crossroads and Picton's Line:** Where the rough sharpened sabres of the Union Brigade devastated the best part of two French Divisions, the story of a General, a Sergeant and what hit the Essex boys from the rear. Battlefield births on that day.
- **La Haie Sainte:** Scene of the desperate struggle between the King's German Legion and d'Erlon's French.



The 27th Regt 'Advance at Plancenoit'



The British 'In Square'

- **Hougoumont Farm and Chapel:** The ground Wellington deemed most important. Scene of 'The Battle within the Battle'.



Hougoumont's Infamous Southern Wall

- **Mercer's Ridge:** Ney's gallant cavalry charges, the final attack of the Imperial Guard, the tales from the ridge and the aftermath.
- 1530 Hrs Depart.

Included in cost:

- 4 Star Grand Hotel Waterloo B&B 3 Star Accom = €90 per double room per night
- 2 Dinners with Wine
- All museum entry fees €8 per pers
- Coach Transport around the battlefield if numbers make it practical to do so.

Can you please let me by **20 Jan** please if you are interested going. I will come up with the lowest cost per person Sharing / Single supplement possible. Booking details and costs will follow on **30 Jan**.



Lady Butler's 'The Charge of the Greys'

The troopers charged with 'rough sharpened sabres' a fact only made public Circa 1850

For Booking and Further Details Please Contact:

Cooper's Waterloo Tours

Cooper's Court
Moreton
Ongar
Essex
CM5 0LE

Graeme Cooper - Qualified Guide
Guild of Battlefield Guides
Badge No 7

~
Tel: 0044 (0)1277 890470

Mob: 07968 984347

E-mail: cooper@waterlootours.co.uk

Website: www.waterlootours.co.uk

