

The Story of Holidays with Heart

Abridged Version

Welcome! I'm Jane Bayley the founder and director of Holidays with Heart at La Maison Anglaise Garden Ecolodge. I am excited to have this opportunity to tell you our unusual story and what is so special about our offerings.

It happens that it revolves around the letter P: passion, pioneers with a purpose, perseverance (how we got there), pleasure for you and us and our promise.

Passion my passion started I went to Morocco as a researcher in the early 1990s, researching, of all things, tortoise conservation & habitat decline. I had no idea what it would lead to.

I fell in very much in love with the **non-touristy Taroudant** area of Morocco – the culture, the people, the fresh food, the scenery, the wildlife & most importantly climate. We soon discovered the proof – tortoises don't hibernate in our part of Morocco – so you **can bask in the sun all year long**.

Pioneers – I started to take my students to Morocco & talked about the potential for sustainable/ethical/responsible tourism with them. So, I asked myself "Why not do it?"

Luckily, the Moroccan government at local & national level were highly supportive of the pioneering project – this was 1997. Morocco continues to be pioneering too – ranked 3rd in the world for sustainability in 2020. I am lucky to live in Wales (where our booking office is & where we are filming now).

We too have pioneering government which places regenerative and sustainable practice at its heart. So, the 2 countries where I spend my time are an inspiration to me to continue **my longstanding purpose – to promote regenerative and sustainable practice**.

So, in 1997 I took a second mortgage to purchase the guest house, the first to be owned by a foreigner in town. And the locals quickly decided its name for us "**La Maison Anglaise**".

Purpose – to make a difference to your life (and possibly its purpose) and to make a difference to the lives of people in “our” area including through our charitable work. It earned us the name “**Holidays with Heart**”.

Perseverance – it has taken us 25 years to be able to add the words “**Garden Ecolodge**” to our name.

After 10 years I managed to buy an accessible large plot of land directly by the town walls with marvellous views of the mountains and close to the local landmarks.

Eventually 14 years later I got **permission** to build a highly innovative beautiful building based on traditional architecture and materials with added clever sustainable design features, the latter thanks to the help of friends in Wales and our marvellous staff and building team who did virtually everything by hand. And we opened in 2020.

Pleasure – it’s our **privilege** to care for our guests as though they had joined a large happy family – we have an amazing team built up over the years who are such fun too. Guests feel their 5 senses stimulated by choosing from a wide range of authentic activities – and we are always adding new ones.

Promise – to care for you from the minute you enquire until the minute you leave Morocco. You will have **plenty** of choice of holidays, of food (we do special diets) & of fascinating activities (just ask if it’s not on our list!)

Final P for Poem

Proudly preparing from our productive permaculture plot..

Podded peas, pumpkins, pomegranate and papaya.

Passionately preparing porridge and pancakes..

Pounding (s)pices.

Proud of the place we’ve prepared for you precious people. Prepare yourselves for these pleasures in person.

We’re practically out of Ps! So, we politely invite you please to promptly plan to pay us a visit (or phone us or visit our web site to find out more – there is lots to tell).

Finally, another irresistible 4 Ps. I arrived by pedal power to do this video from Poppit in Pembrokeshire*

With huge thanks from 2 friends who improved the poem, one of whom has the initials PP and the second a first name starting with P!

*filmed in Wales during the Covid-19 pandemic which prevented me from filming in Morocco