

Aristocrats & Manor Houses & a Grand Tour to the North

July 11 to 21, 2026 ♦ From \$6,950 per person*

Our unforgettable tour delves into the architectural grandeur and superb collections of some of Britain's finest estates and atmospheric time capsules, some still family homes to this day. From the world-famous Highclere Castle, the "real Downton Abbey", to Winston Churchill's birthplace of Blenheim Palace and beyond, we discover several historic treasures and their society stories and indulge in the quintessentially British tradition of afternoon tea at the exquisite Chatsworth House. We juxtapose these fine manor houses with the dramatic landscapes of the north of England, providing us with the perfect opportunity to explore Britain's rich heritage and diverse countryside.



Highclere Castle

What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow*
- ♦ 1 night at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ 3 nights at the Stapleford Park Country House Hotel, near Melton Mowbray
- ♦ 2 nights at the Wood Hall Hotel & Spa, Wetherby
- ♦ 2 nights at Jesmond Dene House, Newcastle
- ♦ 1 night at the Hartwell House & Spa, near Aylesbury
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 8 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ 1 dinner at a local restaurant
- ♦ Services of a tour director throughout your stay
- ♦ Travel to and from all excursions
- ♦ All excursion costs
- ♦ Porterage where available

*Supplement applies for transfers from all other airports and all other locations, including central London.



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Hardwick Hall

Itinerary

July 11: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

July 12: Arrival

On arrival at Heathrow Airport, a private transfer will take you to our overnight hotel, the Macdonald Windsor Hotel. In the evening, join the group for a welcome drink, followed by dinner.

Meals: Dinner

July 13: Highclere Castle

After breakfast, we journey to the world-famous Highclere Castle, residence of the Earl and Countess of Carnarvon and filming location for the much-loved *Downton Abbey* television series and movies. Entrance includes access to the Egyptian Exhibition in the cellars of the castle, which explores the achievements of the 5th Earl of Carnarvon who discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922.

From here, we travel to Leicestershire and the Stapleford Park Country House Hotel, where we stay for the next two nights.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

July 14: Chatsworth House

We start the day at Chatsworth House, where we're treated to a house tour followed by afternoon tea. This magnificent estate is home to the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire and has witnessed sixteen generations of the powerful Cavendish family and boasts grand interiors, wonderful grounds and a superlative art collection. Chatsworth also appeared as Pemberley in the 2005 movie adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Meals: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Dinner

July 15: Hardwick Hall & Fairfax House

Our first visit today is to the National Trust's Hardwick Hall. Ordered in the 16th century by Bess of Hardwick, England's richest woman after her Queen, Elizabeth I, Hardwick is a striking Elizabethan treasure. The lavish number of windows (at a time when glass was a luxury) inspired the neat phrase, "Hardwick Hall, more glass than wall".

We then travel north to the historic city of York. Here we take a guided tour of Fairfax House, a stunning Georgian town house that has been restored to its former glory, providing a perfect time capsule of life in Georgian times with a richly-decorated interior and a fine collection of English 18th-century furniture.

This evening we enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant in York. Afterward, we make our way to our hotel for the next two nights, the Wood Hall Hotel & Spa.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

July 16: Fountains Abbey and Harrogate

This morning we visit the largest monastic ruin in Britain, Fountains Abbey, for a fascinating guided tour. Nestled in the Skell Valley, the ruin is surrounded by some 800 acres of gorgeous



“We juxtapose fine manor houses with the dramatic landscapes of the north of England.”

countryside, including the Georgian Studley Royal Water Garden with its wonderful views, cascades, follies and statues, and a medieval deer park.

Our next stop is the elegant Victorian spa town of Harrogate, located in the heart of scenic Yorkshire. Notable sights include the Royal Pump Room and the Grade II listed Royal Hall, and don't miss the attractive Montpellier Quarter with its pedestrianized streets lined with 19th-century buildings.

After dinner at the hotel this evening, we enjoy a fascinating talk by a guest speaker.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

July 17: Castle Howard

We head to Castle Howard, home to the Howard family for over 300 years, where we enjoy a private guided tour and refreshments. Designed by Sir John Vanbrugh, Castle Howard has twice appeared as Brideshead in movie and television adaptations of Evelyn Waugh's classic novel, as well as providing the backdrop for various scenes in the hit Netflix series, *Bridgerton*. This magnificent 18th-century residence, surmounted with its iconic gilded dome, offers world-renowned collections and stunning architecture, all set within 1,000 acres of breathtaking scenery.

Later, we check in to the Jesmond Dene House, our base for the next two nights.

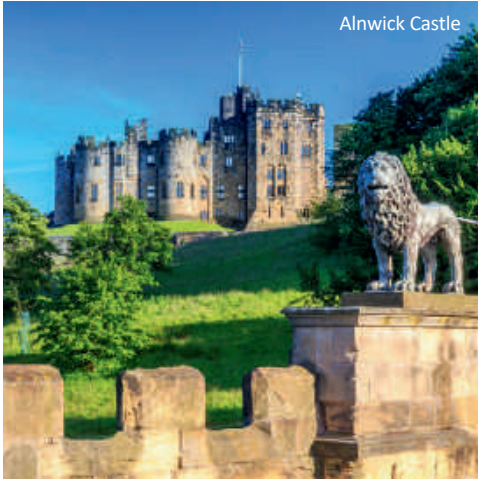
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

July 18: Alnwick Castle and Cragside

Still home to the Duke of Northumberland and his family, Alnwick Castle is the second largest inhabited castle in England and has featured in *Downton Abbey* and *Harry Potter*. Inside the medieval walls are lavish State Rooms filled with an eclectic array of furniture, ceramics and art collected by the Percy family over hundreds of years, which we discover on our guided State Rooms tour. There's also time to take a peek at the stunning gardens, bursting with different colors and scents.

We then enjoy a scenic drive to Cragside, built into the rock high above the clear waters of Debdon Burn. Once the home of Victorian inventor Lord Armstrong, this imposing house is packed to the rafters with fascinating gadgets from the era. It was also the first house in the world to be lit by hydro-electricity and in 2014, a fully-working Archimedes Screw was installed, once again producing enough energy to light the house.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



July 19: Nostell Priory

Today we visit Nostell Priory, an 18th-century architectural masterpiece which has been the home of the Winn family for 300 years. Set in landscaped parkland, Nostell is also home to England's best documented collection of Chippendale furniture, designed especially for the estate.

Later, we check back into the Stapleford Park Country House Hotel, where we stay overnight.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

July 20: Blenheim Palace

We head to Blenheim Palace, designed on an awe-inspiring scale by Vanbrugh and set in beautiful parkland landscaped by Capability Brown. As the seat of the Dukes of Marlborough, the palace is synonymous with the Churchill family and is the birthplace of Winston Churchill. A permanent exhibition commemorates the life of this famous wartime Prime Minister, while the magnificent State Rooms reveal a superb collection of tapestries, paintings, porcelain and furniture and we learn more on our audio-guided tour followed by a delicious afternoon tea.



Tour Highlights

- ◆ Guided house tour and afternoon tea at Chatsworth House
- ◆ Guided tour of Fairfax House
- ◆ Guided tour of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal Water Garden
- ◆ Private house tour and refreshments at Castle Howard
- ◆ Guided State Rooms tour at Alnwick Castle
- ◆ Audio-guided tour and afternoon tea at Blenheim Palace
- ◆ Themed evening talk by a guest speaker

**Please inform us at the time of booking of any special dietary requirements.*



From here we travel to Hartwell House & Spa, one of the National Trust's Historic House Hotels, where we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

Meals: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Dinner

July 21: Departure

A private transfer will take you back to Heathrow Airport for your return flight home.

Meals: Breakfast

Please note: as this tour travels from the Home Counties to the north of England and back, some days will involve fairly long journeys.

Please note: the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions. On July 7 departure, our itinerary will operate in reverse order.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I make a booking?

Call National Trust Tours at **888-484-8785** to register by phone (preferred method) **Monday - Friday from 9am to 5pm (EST)** or register online at **www.nationaltrusttours.com**.

***Please note: featured prices are inclusive of the National Trust membership discount. If you are not a National Trust Member, there is a \$150 increase on the prices shown.**

When are payments due?

When you confirm your booking with us, a non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to secure your place. The final balance payment must be paid to us no later than 90 days prior to the tour departure date. Of course, full payment can be made at the time of booking if you prefer and for bookings made less than 8 weeks before the tour departs this will be a requirement.

How can I pay?

We accept debit and credit cards (except American Express), for deposits and full payment.

What paperwork will I receive? When your booking is confirmed, we will email you a booking confirmation document along with a copy of our full Terms and Conditions and the reading list. Approximately 28 days prior to the tour, we will prepare and send you our Travel Pack with your finalized information and tour itinerary details.

Do I need travel insurance?

Yes, this is essential; we can only accept a booking on the basis that you have taken out a full and comprehensive travel insurance policy to cover the full duration of your trip. We will ask you to confirm this to us. If you choose not to take out travel insurance, this is done so against our advice and at your own risk; we will ask you to sign a declination form indemnifying us from any responsibility or cost in the event of medical emergency or repatriation. Information on travel insurance will be sent to you upon tour confirmation. USI Travel Insurance Services offers a plan designed specifically for National Trust Tours travelers. For details, please contact National Trust Tours at 888-484-8785.

Do I need a passport and visa?

It is your responsibility to ensure you have a passport which must be valid for 6 months after the return date of your trip. At the time of printing, tourist visas are not required for US citizens visiting the UK for under 90 days solely for the purpose of tourism. If you are not a US citizen or you are combining your visit with business, it is your responsibility to check the requirements for visiting the UK, you can do this by visiting the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website to determine whether you need a visa to enter the United Kingdom.

Are there single traveler room supplements?

We have a small number of rooms on each tour that are sold with no single supplement; once these are sold out we charge a supplement for any additional single rooms which varies for each tour. You can contact us to enquire about single supplement prices. Please book early as single rooms sell fast.

Are room upgrades available?

All of the hotels on these tours have been hand-picked for their high quality of accommodation and service. However, in some instances room upgrades are available and we would be happy to assist you to arrange these should you be interested. For more information on the hotels please visit our website.

Can you arrange extra hotel nights?

Yes, if you decide to arrive a few days before the start of the tour or leave a few days after the end of the tour, we are happy to arrange extra nights' accommodation. However, this service is only available at hotels that feature in the tour on which you are traveling and a \$35 administration fee is charged for this service.

Are meals included?

All breakfasts are included on all tours. Certain lunches and dinners are also included and you should study the tour itinerary in this brochure to determine what meals are included on your chosen tour. Meals not mentioned are not included and all beverages are at your own expense throughout the tour.

What do I do about any dietary requirements?

Please inform us at the time of booking, we will pass your information on to the hotel, property or restaurant who will do their best to accommodate your requirements.

How many passengers will be in the Albion Journeys tour group?

Typically, between 10 and 30.

What is the role of the Tour Director?

Our friendly Tour Director will meet you for a welcome dinner at the beginning of each tour. Their role is to facilitate the smooth organization of all operational aspects of the tour. If you have any queries or experience any issues during the tour, they are there to assist you.

Will the excursions change?

Please note that we plan our tours far in advance and the order and availability of excursions may be subject to change. In the event of a property not being available to visit, we will substitute with a similar visit, and you will be informed of the full details.

How much walking will there be on these tours?

As much or as little as you like. Any included guided tours will operate at a fairly relaxed pace, as with many historic houses and gardens, you may experience some uneven flooring and steps along the way. Of course, you will always have the option to explore any venue by yourself at your own pace. If you have any specific concerns, please contact us.

What are the arrangements for luggage?

The standard luggage allowance is one item of hand luggage and one suitcase per person restricted to a maximum weight of 20kgs (44 pounds). We do provide porterage at each of the hotels used on our tours, however, as with all things of a personal nature, it is your responsibility to ensure your suitcase is loaded onto the vehicles we use throughout the tour.

What clothing should I bring?

Comfortable leisurewear is recommended for the daytime. In the evening many participants prefer to wear smarter dress for dining. While gentlemen may choose to wear a jacket in the restaurant in the evening, at most hotels this is not obligatory, we will of course inform you if any hotel does have a dress code. It is advisable to bring layered clothing and a light waterproof jacket. We recommend sturdy footwear when visiting gardens as the ground may be soft underfoot. Many historic properties request ladies do not wear high heels which may damage flooring.

Can you arrange my flights to the UK?

Albion Journeys do not arrange your air travel for our tours; this is your responsibility and gives you the flexibility to decide on your own routing.

What should I budget for tipping?

While it is not compulsory, it is customary to tip the coach driver and Tour Director as well as offering a small gratuity to the transfer drivers to acknowledge the services they have provided. As a guideline we suggest a rate of £5 (about \$6.50 as of this printing) per day for your coach and transfer drivers and £10 (about \$13 as of this printing) per day for your Tour Director. Gratuities for hotel staff and the tour guides you may meet at properties are at your discretion.

For more information, please telephone the Tours Program at the National Trust at **(888) 484-8785**

- web: **www.nationaltrusttours.com**
- email: **info@nationaltrusttours.com**

All tours offered subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply. Errors and omissions excepted.



Windsor Castle



Nostell Priory



Sissinghurst Castle Garden



Hatfield House Gardens



Charlecote Park

Terms & Conditions Extract

It is important that you read the following booking conditions extract and the full booking conditions shown on our website at albionjourneys.com/terms-and-conditions. These online booking conditions form the basis of your contract with us. Please read them and the extract below carefully as they apply to all bookings you make with us unless otherwise specified.

1. VACATION PAYMENT: When you make a booking you must pay a deposit for every person named on the booking. Deposits per person and the balance due date (the period before the departure date on which your full balance normally becomes due) are:

| Deposit | Balance due date |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| \$1,000 (USD) | 90 days before departure |

If you cannot make a payment by card at the time of booking, please speak to one of our Reservations staff to discuss other options. You can make payments against your balance anytime between making the booking and the balance due date. If the balance is not paid on time we reserve the right to treat your booking as canceled by you and apply cancellation charges as set out in clause 3 below. For bookings made after the balance due date, the full amount is due at the time of booking.

2. OUR AGREEMENT: A contract is formed when we issue to you the booking confirmation document and terms and conditions. It is important you read through these and any other documents you receive and advise us of any inaccuracy within 14 days of the document date. By accepting the booking is correct you agree to our terms and conditions.

We regret we cannot accept any liability if we are not notified of any inaccuracy in any document within 14 days of our sending it out. This contract and all matters arising out of it will be governed by English law and will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

3. VACATION CANCELLATION BY YOU: If you want to cancel your booking after we have confirmed it with you either verbally, over the telephone or by email, you can do so over the phone or in writing. The following cancellation charges will apply:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| More than 91 days prior to departure | \$1,000 (USD) |
| 90 days or less before departure | 100% of the program cost is non-refundable |

If any member of your party is prevented from traveling, that person may transfer their place to someone else (introduced by you) providing we are notified no less than two weeks before departure.

Full terms and conditions will be provided with your booking confirmation. They are also available on request or via our website: albionjourneys.com/terms-and-conditions.

Bookings are accepted on the basis that you have read and understood them.

ALBION
Journeys Inspired By Heritage