

# Discover Britain's Glorious Heritage

## 2024 Departures



**No Single Supplements!\***

*\*limited availability*



# A Wonderful Opportunity to *Explore & Experience...*



## Dear National Trust Travelers,

I am delighted to share with you our brand-new catalog, produced in partnership with Albion, one of the leading heritage travel providers in Great Britain. These exclusive group tours allow you to discover the vast cultural and natural heritage of Great Britain first-hand, including many of the impressive places owned by the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the National Trust for Scotland. You can expect a host of varied architectural gems with fascinating stories, family narratives and unique collections enclosed within, as well as awe-inspiring landscapes, fragrant gardens and more.

Immerse yourself in the intriguing history and hidden wonders of these nations with behind-the-scenes tours, after-dinner lectures and insights from the owners of the properties themselves, letting you delve deeper into captivating, living examples of Britain's past. These journeys of discovery truly celebrate every corner of Great Britain, and there are plenty of memorable experiences on offer in 2024. Enjoy special member's day entrance to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, cheer on the emblematic Highland Games in Scotland, stay in a Tudor castle where Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn once slept, or how about a taste of rural life with traditional demonstrations on Irish and Welsh farms?

In addition to popular favorites returning, we are pleased to introduce some enthralling new tours. The last 18 months has been a significant time for Great Britain as they said goodbye to their longest-serving sovereign and joined with millions around the world to celebrate the coronation of their new monarch, King Charles III. *For Kings & Country – An Exclusive Royal Celebration of Past, Present & Future* delves into this regal changing of the guard, while *A Royal Summer in Scotland with the Edinburgh Tattoo* traces the footsteps of the British monarch in the country they have dearly loved for centuries. Britain's incomparable legacy is ingrained in its historic properties and each one offers us the rare chance to step back in time and envision its rich history.

To make the most out of your vacation, we are thrilled to offer a \$500pp discount when booking both *A Royal Summer in Scotland with the Edinburgh Tattoo* and *For Kings & Country – An Exclusive Royal Celebration of Past, Present & Future*.

By joining one of our fascinating trips, you will also have the unique chance to see the results of the important work taken on by our National Trust counterparts in preserving and protecting their nations' treasures.

**Meg Annacone-Poretz**  
Director, National Trust Tours



A guide shares stories of the house in the Turquoise Drawing Room at Castle Howard

© Andy Bulmer

## Delve Deeper into Britain's Heritage

It's the little extras that set Albion Journeys apart from the rest...

### Expertly planned itineraries

We work closely with our partner heritage organizations to create unique and insightful itineraries that truly unlock Britain's history and culture. Our tours are carefully researched to ensure that they provide a valuable and enriching experience and our knowledgeable in-house planners are always on hand should you have any questions before you travel with us.

### Special Albion experiences

We arrange tours by the house owners themselves wherever possible, to really bring these historic houses alive. We also offer behind-the-scenes or private tours with special access, and talks by curators at atmospheric properties, to ensure you get the full story and make the most of your visit. Other unique extras include private singing performances, immersive demonstrations, cultural experiences and more.

### Exclusive themed talks by experts

The majority of our tours include an after-dinner talk by an expert in their field that promises to be both informative and engaging. Whether it is a leading historian, fascinating writer or learned expert, we arrange guest speakers who will enhance the themes of your tour and provide some captivating background or intriguing insight. By allowing ample time for questions at the end of the talk, these interactive experiences are an opportunity not to be missed.

### Caring staff

If you have booked an Albion Journeys tour before, you will already be on first name terms with our customer service team! These professionals look after you from your first enquiry through to your arrival in the UK, and work hard to ensure that any special arrangements or requests are fulfilled. Our team work tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure your tour runs smoothly.

### Tailored reading lists

To give you a more thorough understanding and enjoyment of your tour's highlights, we provide a full reading list that will enable you to fully engage with the subject even before your tour begins. We ensure that our reading lists are entertaining as well as informative, and they often include a mix of fiction as well as factual tomes. It is up to you how much you want to use the reading list, but you can be sure that it will help spark lively conversation!



Middlethorpe Hall & Spa



Hartwell House & Spa



Bodysgallen Hall & Spa

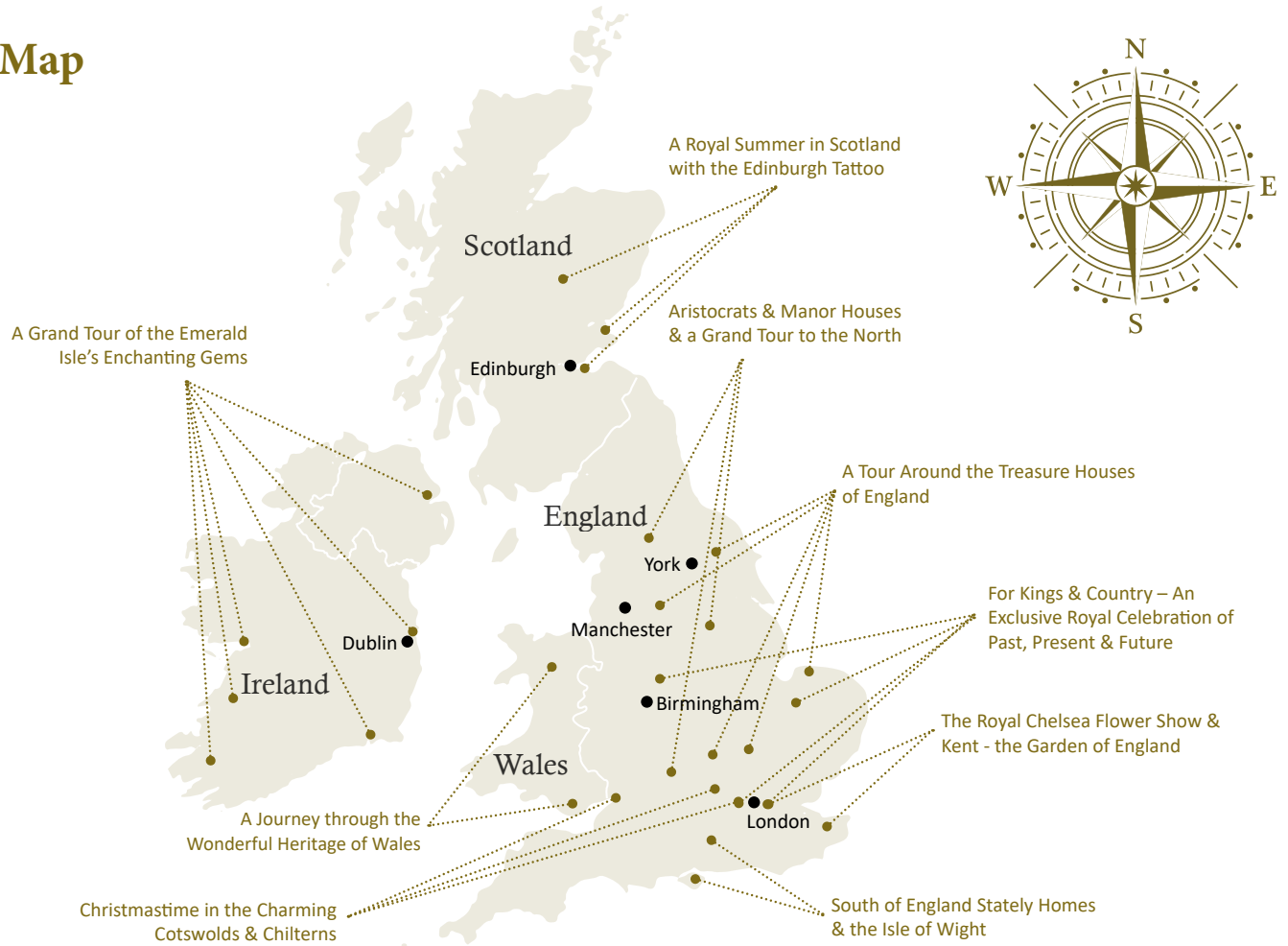
© National Trust Images/James Dobson

© National Trust Images/John Linton





## Tour Map



For a more detailed map for each tour, please see the tour pages

## Handpicked hotels

Your journey through Britain's colorful past won't end after a day of excursions. We've chosen your principal hotels for their character and history and full descriptions can be found on our website. These hotels are complemented by conveniently located overnight hotels at the beginning and end of your stay.

Three hotels featured on these tours that are of particular interest are Historic House Hotels of the National Trust, with all profits supporting the charity's conservation work. **Middlethorpe Hall** is a beautiful red brick country house which was built at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, while **Bodysgallen Hall** is believed to have begun life as a watchtower for Conwy Castle in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. **Hartwell House**'s most famous resident was Louis XVIII, exiled King of France, who lived there with his Court for five years.

*For more information on the hotels, please visit our website. We have a limited number of single places available with no supplement. These sell quickly.*





## Tour Directors

Here at Albion Journeys we are aware that in addition to an excellent itinerary and quality hotels, exceptional Tour Directors help make your vacation special. We use the most experienced and popular Tour Directors who look forward to welcoming you to the UK. They are there to ensure the smooth organization of all operational aspects of the tour. You will also be joined by expert guides and guest speakers throughout the tour.



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# \$500pp<sup>\*</sup> discount

when booking both *A Royal Summer in Scotland with the Edinburgh Tattoo* and *For Kings & Country – An Exclusive Royal Celebration of Past, Present & Future*.

\*Discount is only valid on new bookings made on or after January 1, 2024. Discount is per person and may only be used on the stated tours. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.



# South of England Stately Homes & the Isle of Wight

May 12 to 22, 2024 ♦ From \$5,845 per person

Renowned for its idyllic countryside and stunning coastline, the picturesque South of England is peppered with spectacular estates and unique homes. Here we uncover captivating stories and antique gems contained within properties such as the impressive Polesden Lacey and opulent Petworth House, which is home to the National Trust's finest collection of art and sculptures. We combine these fascinating discoveries with a trip to the delightful Isle of Wight, where we delve into the history of the "Garden Isle" with visits to some of the island's finest treasures including Osborne House, the Italianate seaside retreat of Queen Victoria.



Arundel Castle

## What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow\*
- ♦ Return ferry crossings to the Isle of Wight
- ♦ 2 nights at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ 3 nights at the Buxted Park Hotel, Uckfield
- ♦ 4 nights at the Royal Hotel, Ventnor (Isle of Wight)
- ♦ 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 lunch 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.



©NTPA/Annel de Serra

Petworth House

## Itinerary

May 12: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

May 13: 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*

May 14: Polesden Lacey and Standen

This morning we visit one of the National Trust's most popular properties, Polesden Lacey, described as a "delicious house" by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother on her honeymoon there. This peaceful countryside retreat is most closely connected to Dame Margaret Greville, who entertained royalty and the celebrities of her time with lavish parties at the manor, which remains home to her extensive collection of art and ceramics.

Next, we visit Standen, one of the finest examples of an Arts and Crafts property, where the light, airy rooms are decorated with William Morris wallpapers and textiles with William de Morgan pottery to create a warm atmosphere. As we explore the property, imagine you are a guest of James and Margaret Beale at their rural retreat, as the house is dressed for a weekend stay in 1925.

Later we check in to the Buxted Park Hotel, where we stay for the next three nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

May 15: Parham House and Petworth House

We begin the day with a guided tour of Parham House, an idyllic Elizabethan family home with award-winning gardens. During World War II, Parham became home to 30 evacuee children before being requisitioned for billeting Canadian officers. The family lived in part of the house during this time and their descendants still reside there today. Outside, the gardens consist of beautiful pleasure grounds, a four-acre walled garden, an orchard, a vegetable garden and a 1920s Wendy house.

Immortalized in the paintings of J.M.W. Turner, Petworth House is an impressive estate that combines a deer park landscaped by Capability Brown with a vast 17<sup>th</sup>-century mansion, which houses the National Trust's finest collection of art and sculptures. We discover masterpieces by the likes of Van Dyck, Reynolds, Blake and Turner himself.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*



©National Trust Images/Nick Meers

Polesden Lacey



# “Uncover captivating stories and antique gems of the South.”

## May 16: Brighton Pavilion

This morning we take a guided tour of Brighton Pavilion, a Grade I-listed former royal residence that served as a hospital during World War I. Built for George IV as a seaside palace, this architectural treasure combines Regency and Indo-Saracenic styles with its exotic domes and elegant minarets.

Afterward, we enjoy lunch together in a local restaurant followed by some free time, which affords you the perfect chance to explore Brighton's unique antique and boutique shopping area in the Lanes or stroll along the beach.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## May 17: Arundel Castle

This morning we make our way to Arundel Castle for a private guided tour. This imposing architectural gem is one of the longest inhabited country houses in England, having been the seat of the Dukes of Norfolk and their ancestors since 1067. Many of the original features remain such as the Norman keep and gatehouse.

We then head to Southampton to catch the ferry to the Isle of Wight and check in to the Royal Hotel, where we stay for the next four nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*



Osborne House

## May 18: Osborne House

Today we are treated to a guided tour and lunch or afternoon tea at Osborne House, purchased by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1845 as a seaside retreat. The Italianate palace reflects Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's tastes and passions, and boasts spectacular views across the Solent. Here we get an intimate glimpse into Royal Family life as we wander through the magnificent Royal Apartments as well as the walled gardens and grounds.

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

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch or Afternoon Tea, Dinner*

## May 19: Carisbrooke Castle & Museum and Isle of Wight Steam Railway

This morning we head to Carisbrooke Castle. Take the chance to explore the museum, walk around the award-winning Edwardian-style garden and admire the panoramic views from the castle walls.



Brighton Pavilion

The museum was founded by Princess Beatrice, Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, as a memorial to her husband, Prince Henry of Battenburg.

In the afternoon we journey back to a bygone era as we board the award-winning Isle of Wight Steam Railway at Havenstreet. Sit back and relax in beautifully restored Victorian and Edwardian carriages as we enjoy the rolling views of the glorious Isle of Wight countryside.

*Meals: Breakfast*

## May 20: Quarr Abbey and Isle of Wight Villages

Our first visit today is to Quarr Abbey, nestled in the beautiful countryside and home to a small group of Benedictine monks. Founded in 1132, the abbey was demolished during the reign of King Henry VIII. Today, we can see the ancient ruins and explore the newer buildings, lovely gardens and visitor center, which tells the turbulent story of the abbey.

In the afternoon we enjoy a scenic drive through some of the Isle of Wight's most picturesque and charming villages such as Godshell and Brighstone, as well as the beautiful Steephill Cove.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## May 21: Jane Austen's House Museum

This morning we catch the ferry back to Jane Austen's House Museum, the charming home where she spent the last eight years of her life. It was in this country cottage where Austen did the majority of her mature writing, including the timeless *Pride and Prejudice*. The museum tells the story of the author and her family through a host of treasures, including first editions of Austen's books, jewellery and furniture.

Later, we return to the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, where we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

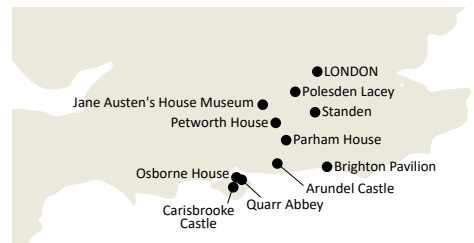
*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## May 22: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Buxted Park Hotel

## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Guided tour of Parham House
- ◆ Guided tour of Brighton Pavilion
- ◆ Private tour of Arundel Castle
- ◆ Guided tour and afternoon tea or lunch at Osborne House
- ◆ Heritage train journey on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway
- ◆ Themed evening talk by a guest speaker

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



Isle of Wight Steam Railway



LIMITED AVAILABILITY - BACK IN 2025

## NEW The RHS Chelsea Flower Show and Kent - the Garden of England

May 20 to 28, 2024 ♦ From \$4,845 per person

The prestigious Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show has come a long way since its humble single-marquee beginnings in 1913; the kaleidoscopic event is now a must-see annual highlight and is world famous for its stunning displays, vibrant colors and innovative designs. We visit on Member's Day, where RHS members, royals and celebrities take an exclusive first look at the floral extravaganza, set in the grounds of London's Royal Hospital Chelsea. The beautiful blooms continue with our exploration of Kent, often referred to as the "Garden of England", thanks to its rolling orchards, mild climate and fruitful allotments. There's time to stop and smell the flowers at a host of horticultural wonders, from the idyllic grounds of Winston Churchill's Chartwell and the juxtaposing masterpiece of Derek Jarman to the fragrant Sissinghurst Castle Garden and the striking Hole Park Estate, which we discover during a special guided tour led by the Head Gardener.



### What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow\*
- ♦ 2 nights at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ 2 nights at the Kimpton Fitzroy London Hotel, Bloomsbury
- ♦ 3 nights at the Falstaff Hotel, Canterbury
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner and two-course buffet dinner on 2 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ Services of a tour director throughout your stay
- ♦ Travel to and from all excursions
- ♦ All entrance costs
- ♦ Porterage where available

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



### Itinerary

May 20: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

May 21: 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

May 22: Royal Chelsea Flower Show

Today we enjoy Member's Day entry to the Royal Horticultural Society's most sought-after event, the Chelsea Flower Show, held in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Here we discover the finest in garden design, listen to expert advice and soak up the unique atmosphere of this world-famous floral extravaganza. The Great Pavilion is the centerpiece of the show, containing a wide-ranging mix of vibrant displays, while the Show Gardens illustrate the exceptional talent of a handful of carefully selected garden designers, delivering a broad range of design styles and themes.

Later we check into the Kimpton Fitzroy London Hotel, where we stay for the next two nights.

Meals: Breakfast

May 23: Kew Gardens and Sky Garden

A springtime stroll is the order of the morning with a visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Dating back to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century as a royal palace, Kew Gardens is now a globally renowned institution for plant-based research. Exploding with color, it features no less than 50,000 plants, and a range of different areas to explore including the Arboretum, the peaceful Japanese garden and the remarkable indoor rainforest climbing within the Palm House.

Later we have an early dinner at the very top of the Sky Garden, London's highest public garden affording spectacular views over the city. With stunning landscaped gardens, observation decks and delicious food, it's a lovely place to spend an evening as the sun sets over the bustling capital.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

May 24: RHS Garden Wisley and Chartwell

After checking out of the hotel we head to RHS Garden Wisley, the Royal Horticultural Society's flagship garden, gifted to the Society in 1903. Extending over 240 peaceful acres, from beautiful rose and demonstration gardens to tranquil tracts of woodland, Wisley offers a wealth of inspirational ideas on design, innovation and cultivation techniques. The state-of-the-art Glasshouse is divided into three main planting zones representing desert, tropical and temperate climates. We discover more during our exciting guided tour with one of the knowledgeable gardeners.

This afternoon we visit Chartwell, the beloved home of Winston Churchill from 1924 until his death.





Kew Gardens

## “Take an exclusive first look at the stunning floral extravaganza.”

The house contains many of the great statesman's personal and political mementos, including an amazing collection of gifts he received from other world leaders. We enjoy a guided tour of the property before discovering the idyllic gardens, which feature Churchill's personal painting studio hidden in the grounds, the romantic Golden Rose Avenue, the special walled garden, the lakes and the pretty water features.

We then check into the Falstaff Hotel, where we stay for the next three nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### May 25: Sissinghurst Castle Garden and Godinton House and Gardens

An exclusive out-of-hours tour awaits at the spectacular Sissinghurst Castle Garden. Created in the 1930s by novelist Vita Sackville-West and her husband Harold Nicolson around the ruins of an Elizabethan manor house, these world-famous gardens are laid out as a series of individually planted “rooms”, including a fragrant Herb Garden and Rose Garden.

Our next stop is Godinton House, a unique Jacobean property incorporating a medieval hall and ornate carvings, where we enjoy a Ploughman's lunch. This gem is a much-loved home where each room reflects the tastes of those who have lived here with an excellent collection of furniture, art, and curios. Outside, we take a guided tour of the tranquil gardens, surrounded by ancient parkland and sprinkled with herbaceous borders, ornamental trees and a lily pond plus enchanting Italian, Wild, Walled and Rose Gardens.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch*



Godinton House

### May 26: Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, Derek Jarman's Garden and Hole Park

Today we step back in time aboard the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, known as Kent's Mainline in Miniature. Attracting crowds since 1927, the railway operates the world's most complete collection of one-third full-sized steam locomotives and combines the sights and sounds of steam travel with the beautiful Kent countryside. We meander along from Hythe, through the famous and unique landscapes of Romney Marsh, to the otherworldly Dungeness, classified by the Met Office as the country's only desert.

Here we visit Derek Jarman's magical garden, featuring everything from clusters of sea kale to stone circles filled with poppies and more. The renowned movie director and artist created his horticultural wonder on the shingle shores of Dungeness in a postmodern style, once musing that “paradise haunts gardens and some gardens are paradises. Mine is one of them. Others are like bad children, spoilt by their parents, over-watered and covered with noxious chemicals.”

Afterward we continue to Hole Park, a private home situated in a picturesque parkland setting. For the past four generations, Hole Park has been owned by the Barham family and this afternoon we meet the current owner, are treated to lunch, explore the magnificent house and enjoy a guided tour of the garden with the Head Gardener. We admire the wide range of colors from beautiful blooms such as tulips, roses, clematis, wisteria, rhododendrons and azaleas, bursting with fragrance and set against the far-reaching views over the hills and woodland.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

### May 27: Lullingstone Castle & the World Garden and Savill Garden

After breakfast, we make our way to Lullingstone Castle for a guided tour. Recorded in the Domesday Book, it is one of the oldest family estates in England. The present manor house was built in 1497 and has been home to the same family ever since. Altered extensively in Queen Anne's time, the house boasts fine state rooms and beautiful grounds, including a stunning 15-acre lake. Its signature World Garden is home to thousands of rare plants collected from around the world by current heir Tom Hart Dyke, and planted in their respective continents of origin. Incredibly, the ideas and plans for this garden were started during Tom's nine-month kidnap ordeal in the early 2000s, a result of rare plant hunting in



## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Entry to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show on Member's Day
- ◆ Dinner at the Sky Garden
- ◆ Guided tour of RHS Garden Wisley with a Gardener
- ◆ Guided tour of Chartwell House
- ◆ Out-of-hours tour at Sissinghurst Castle Garden
- ◆ Guided tour and lunch at Godinton
- ◆ Heritage train journey on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
- ◆ Head Gardener tour and lunch with the owner at Hole Park

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



©National Trust Images/Dan Sallman

Chartwell

the Colombian jungle. There are plenty of unique species, including the world's most dangerous plant, the hottest chilli and the rarest gum tree.

For our last visit we head to The Savill Garden, Britain's finest ornamental garden in the heart of Windsor Great Park and an oasis of designed gardens and woodland. Created in the 1930s, acres upon acres of interconnected areas include the Hidden Gardens, Spring Wood, the Summer Gardens, the New Zealand Garden, Summer Wood and The Glades. The Rose Garden is an extra special addition, opened by Elizabeth II in 2010 and perfumed with the most beautiful rose-bed scents. Later, we check back into the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, where we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### May 28: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions. Entrance to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show may not be guaranteed for late bookings.



# A Tour Around the Treasure Houses of England

June 1 to 13, 2024 ♦ From \$6,845 per person

The Treasure Houses of England are a collection of the most magnificent palaces, houses and castles, each with their own unique charm, stunning architecture and beautiful gardens. Most are still homes to the great families who have owned them for generations and together, the houses display some of the most important art collections in the world, showcasing exquisite examples of fine furniture, porcelain, china and portraiture. On this captivating tour, we explore nine of these impressive places, alongside other historic gems, giving us a fascinating insight into life in England over the centuries.



## What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow\*
- ♦ 2 nights at the Audleys Wood Hotel, Basingstoke
- ♦ 1 night at the Chilton Park Hotel, Lenham
- ♦ 2 nights at the Ickworth Hotel, near Bury St Edmunds
- ♦ 3 nights at Middlethorpe Hall & Spa, near York
- ♦ 1 night at the Stapleford Park Country House Hotel, near Melton Mowbray
- ♦ 1 night at Hartwell House & Spa, near Aylesbury
- ♦ 1 night at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 10 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ 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.



## Itinerary

June 1: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

June 2: Arrival

On arrival at Heathrow Airport, a private transfer will take you to the Audleys Wood Hotel, our base for the next two nights. In the evening, join the group for a welcome drink, followed by dinner.

*Meals: Dinner*

June 3: Beaulieu

After breakfast, we make our way to the Beaulieu Estate, set in the heart of the New Forest National Park. Here we enjoy a guided tour of Palace House, once the gatehouse of the medieval Beaulieu Abbey, and the ancestral home of the Montagu family since 1538.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

June 4: RHS Garden Wisley and Leeds Castle

Today we travel first to RHS Garden Wisley, the Royal Horticultural Society's flagship garden where the 240 peaceful acres range from beautiful rose gardens to tranquil woodland.

Our next stop is Leeds Castle, a quintessential moated castle which was once home to Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. The castle's last private owner was Lady Baillie, an Anglo-American heiress who lovingly restored the castle to its former glory, and we discover more history during our audio-guided tour.

From here, we travel the short distance to the Chilton Park Hotel, where we stay overnight. After dinner at the hotel, we are treated to a fascinating talk by a guest speaker.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

June 5: Hatfield House

We travel northwards to Hatfield House, home of the 7<sup>th</sup> Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury and their family. The house was built in 1611 by Robert Cecil, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Salisbury, one of Elizabeth I's most important advisors. There are superb examples of Elizabethan craftsmanship, which we discover on our exclusive, guided tour complete with champagne.

Later we check in to the stunning Ickworth Hotel on the Ickworth Estate – a magnificent National Trust property, where we stay for the next two nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*







Castle Howard

## A collection of the most magnificent palaces, houses and castles.

### June 6: Holkham Hall and Ickworth House

This morning we enjoy a private guided tour led by one of the most experienced Hall Stewards, followed by refreshments at Holkham Hall, an elegant 18<sup>th</sup>-century country mansion and current home to the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Leicester and his family.

We return to the Ickworth Estate, where we explore Ickworth House itself. This Neo-classical mansion is most notable for its enormous Rotunda commissioned by the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Bristol to house his priceless treasures.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### June 7: Doddington Hall

Begun in 1595 by the great Elizabethan architect Robert Smythson, Doddington Hall was completed in 1600 and has never been sold or cleared out since. Still a much-loved family home, this fine Elizabethan mansion houses captivating collections that reflect 400 years of unbroken family occupancy. We learn more on our guided tour of the hall and gardens.

From here, we make our way to Middlethorpe Hall & Spa near York, where we stay for the next three nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### June 8: Chatsworth House

Today we visit Chatsworth House with its grand interiors and extensive art collection. This magnificent treasure is home to the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire and has witnessed 16 generations of the powerful Cavendish family. We also enjoy a light lunch here.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

### June 9: Castle Howard and York

Our first visit of the day is to Castle Howard, home to the Howard family for over 300 years, where we enjoy a private guided tour with refreshments and a complimentary guidebook. Designed by Sir John Vanbrugh, Castle Howard has twice appeared as

Brideshead in movie and television adaptations of Evelyn Waugh's classic novel.

We then return to York, a city steeped in history. There is plenty of evidence of this fascinating past left to admire, from the Roman city walls to the surviving medieval streets known as the Shambles. A must-see is York Minster, the largest Gothic cathedral in northern Europe and home to some of the most stunning stained glass windows which have led to the Minster being described as "the Sistine Chapel of England."

There is then free time to enjoy dinner on your own in York.

*Meals: Breakfast*

### June 10: Harewood House

When Edwin Lascelles started building Harewood House in 1759, he employed the finest craftsmen of the time: architect John Carr, interior designer Robert Adam, England's greatest furniture maker Thomas Chippendale and visionary landscape gardener Capability Brown. Harewood is still home to the Lascelles family and we learn more on our tour, followed by lunch.

Later we check in to the Stapleford Park Country House Hotel in Leicestershire, where we stay overnight.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

### June 11: Burghley House

This morning we start our journey south, stopping to enjoy a guided tour of Burghley House, cited as England's greatest Elizabethan-era house. Home to William Cecil, Lord High Treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I, Burghley offers a unique glimpse into the way great houses have evolved from the Elizabethan period to the present day.

We continue on to Hartwell House & Spa, one of the National Trust's Historic House Hotels, where we stay overnight.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### June 12: Blenheim Palace

Our last visit is to Blenheim Palace, designed on an awe-inspiring scale by Vanbrugh. As the birthplace of Winston Churchill, it houses a permanent exhibition that commemorates the life of this famous wartime Prime Minister. We learn more on our audio-guided tour followed by a delicious afternoon tea.



## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Guided Palace House tour at Beaulieu
- ◆ Audio-guided tour at Leeds Castle
- ◆ Exclusive out-of-hours Champagne guided tour of Hatfield House
- ◆ Private guided tour of Holkham Hall with refreshments
- ◆ Guided tour of Doddington Hall and Gardens
- ◆ Light lunch at Chatsworth House
- ◆ Private guided tour of Castle Howard, with refreshments and guidebook
- ◆ Guided tour and lunch at Harewood House
- ◆ Guided tour of Burghley House
- ◆ 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.*

We then check in to the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, where we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

*Meals: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Dinner*

### June 13: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Middlethorpe Hall & Spa



# A Journey through the Wonderful Heritage of Wales

June 20 to July 2, 2024 ♦ From \$7,345 per person

Meandering from the South of glorious *Cymru* to the North, our exciting journey through Welsh heritage encompasses the highlights of this rugged and beautiful country. We discover the “Land of Castles” with visits to five magnificent fortresses, step back in time aboard the preserved Welsh Highland Railway and delve into the nation’s mining past at the Rhondda Heritage Park, where we are also treated to a private Welsh choir performance. In a country where sheep outnumber people at a ratio of three to one, no visit here is complete without a trip to a working farm, and famous agriculturalist Gareth Wyn Jones welcomes us to his rural idyll for an unforgettable afternoon to round off our tour.



Cardiff Castle



Tintern Abbey

## What’s Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow\*
- ♦ 2 nights at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ 3 nights at the voco St David’s Hotel & Spa, Cardiff
- ♦ 4 nights at Bodysgallen Hall & Spa, near Llandudno
- ♦ 2 nights at the Rookery Hall Hotel & Spa, Nantwich
- ♦ 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)
- ♦ Services of a tour director throughout your stay
- ♦ Travel to and from all excursions
- ♦ All entrance costs
- ♦ Porterage where available

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



©National Trust Images/Paul Harris

Chirk Castle

## Itinerary

**June 20:** Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

**June 21:** Arrival

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

*Meals: Dinner*

**June 22:** Tintern Abbey and Chepstow Castle

We head first to Tintern Abbey in the beautiful Wye Valley, located on the border between England and Wales. Built by Walter de Clare, Lord of Chepstow in 1131, it was only the second Cistercian foundation in Britain, and the first in Wales. Falling into ruins after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, these atmospheric, romantic remains have inspired poets and painters ever since, including Wordsworth and Turner. There’s time to enjoy some lunch here (not included) before we continue.

Next is the beautifully preserved Chepstow Castle, which again sits on the border between Wales and Gloucestershire and overlooks the River Wye. The castle was built in 1067 by Earl William FitzOsbern, friend of William the Conqueror, to defend the Welsh Marches and was once known as Striguil (from the Welsh *ystraigl* for river bend). It evolved over time to cope with ever more destructive weaponry and is a fascinating place to discover more about medieval military architecture, the life of the border lords and the border disputes between the Welsh and English.

Afterward, we enjoy a photo stop at the England/Wales sign on the border before continuing to Cardiff. Here we check in to the voco St David’s Hotel, where we stay for the next three nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*





©National Trust Images/John Millar

Tredegar House

*“Our exciting journey through Welsh heritage encompasses the highlights of this rugged and beautiful country.”*

### June 23: Cardiff Castle, Cardiff and Llancaiach Fawr Manor

Today begins with a special guided tour of Cardiff Castle followed by refreshments. The castle's history spans over 2,000 years, although the Gothic Victorian fantasy castle we see today was created for the 3rd Marquess of Bute, one of the world's richest men. We discover the lavish and opulent interiors, rich with murals, stained glass, marble, gilding and elaborate wood carvings.

We then spend some free time in Cardiff, the capital of Wales since 1955, but with a fascinating history stretching back through the centuries. There are many restaurants and pubs to enjoy lunch (not included), and other highlights include the Cardiff National Museum & Art Gallery, home to one of Europe's finest art collections, and a wide range of shops.



Portmeirion

After driving through Pontypridd, the hometown of world-famous Welsh singer Tom Jones, our next visit is to Llancaiach Fawr Manor in the heart of the Rhymney Valley. Designed during the turbulent reigns of Tudor kings and queens on the site of an earlier medieval structure, it is one of the finest examples of a semi-fortified manor in Wales today. The manor is best known as the home of Colonel Edward Prichard, who hosted a visit by King Charles I of England in 1645 and has now been restored and furnished as it would have been during Prichard's tenure. We are treated to a guided tour and a Welsh-themed dinner here.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

### June 24: Tredegar House, The Royal Mint and Rhondda Heritage Park

Our first stop is Tredegar House, a late 17<sup>th</sup>-century restoration house surrounded by 90 acres of beautiful gardens and parkland. For more than 500 years it was home to one of the greatest Welsh families, the Morgans, later Lords Tredegar, and their intriguing narrative is told throughout the house.

Next, we visit The Royal Mint Experience on the outskirts of Cardiff, an interactive exhibition about coin production. During our guided tour, we watch as workers mint coins and discover fascinating facts about British coins, giving us a wonderful insight into one of the UK's oldest institutions. We also enjoy lunch here.



A memorable experience awaits at the Rhondda Heritage Park, where we follow in the footsteps of the coal miners who once worked in the valley and learn about the area's mining heritage. After our guided tour with a retired miner, we are treated to a traditional Welsh choir performance, complete with Welsh cakes and refreshments.

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

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

### June 25: Elan Valley Visitor Center and Rhug Estate

This morning we head to Elan Valley Visitor Center, set against a magnificent Victorian stone dam. The exhibition and audio-visual show provide an insight into the history and wildlife of the area, and we learn more during our Ranger coach tour. There's also the chance for a photo at Caban Coch Dam, once used for secret experiments during World War II in preparation for the famous Dambusters Raid, and the peaceful Pen Y Garreg Dam.

We break up our journey with a visit to the spectacular Rhug Estate, home to North Wales' most exclusive farm shop. Take the chance to enjoy the 30-minute farm walk here or head to the lovely café, popular for its range of artisan treats.

Later we check in to Bodysgallen Hall & Spa, one of the National Trust's Historic House Hotels, where we stay for the next four nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### June 26: Welsh Highland Railway and Portmeirion

This morning we head to Beddgelert and board the Welsh Highland Railway for a picturesque trip to the quaint coastal town of Porthmadog, admiring the awe-inspiring scenery of the Snowdonia National Park along the way. Stunning coastlines, ancient woodlands, towering mountains, sparkling rivers and historic castles create an enchanting and memorable journey.





©National Trust Images/Annapurna Mellor

Penrhyn Castle

We then continue to Portmeirion, an Italianate village created by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, inspired by his visits to the Mediterranean. Its unique atmosphere has been featured on camera many times, most famously in the iconic 1960s British TV series *The Prisoner*. After some time to explore, we are treated to afternoon tea here.

*Meals: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Dinner*

## June 27: Penrhyn Castle & Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens

Our first stop today is the magnificent Penrhyn Castle. Built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in a Neo-Norman style, Penrhyn was constructed on a massive scale over a period of 13 years and offers superb views of Snowdonia. There is so much to see here, from the outstanding collection of paintings to the restored Victorian kitchens and a railway museum.

We then make a brief photo stop at Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch. The longest town name in Europe, it translates to "St. Mary's Church in the hollow of white hazel near a rapid whirlpool and the Church of St. Tysilio near the red cave"!

Afterward we head to Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens for lunch and a private guided walk through the series of historic gardens which are gradually being restored to their former glory. Three different gardens have been discovered, including an unusual walled garden with curving walls, a secret valley garden with three waterfalls and a river, and an upper woodland garden with the remains of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century folly.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## June 28: Great Orme Victorian Tramway, Conwy Castle, The Smallest House in Great Britain and Ty'n Llwyfan Farm

This morning takes us to the traditional seaside resort of Llandudno, where we enjoy a trip on the Great Orme Victorian tramway. Delighting passengers since 1902, this is Britain's only cable-hauled tramway that travels on public roads and the tramcars have been carefully restored to provide a nostalgic experience. Beginning at Victoria Station, the tram meanders through stunning scenery to the summit of the Great Orme headland, offering lovely views of Llandudno below.

From here, we head to the medieval walled town of Conwy to visit the imposing Conwy Castle. Classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this imposing castle was built by Edward I during his conquest of Wales in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and is considered to be among the finest surviving medieval fortifications in Britain with soaring curtain walls, round towers and fortified gateways.

We also visit another of Conwy's highlights, The Smallest House in Great Britain. Standing at just 72 inches wide and 122 inches tall, this extraordinary house was lived in until May 1900 (the last occupant was a 6 foot 3 fisherman!) and has since become a popular national treasure.



Chirk Castle



This afternoon we visit Ty'n Llwyfan Farm for a truly immersive experience. Celebrity farmer Gareth Wyn Jones and his wife Rhian love sharing their passion and vision for sustainable farming with guests and they invite us to take a peek into their way of life. Nestled in stunning countryside and boasting views over to the Isle of Anglesey, Gareth's family has been working this land for over 370 years and we find out more during our visit. We enjoy a tractor pull, sheep shearing and sheepdog demonstrations, as well as a local Welsh lamb dinner and a private Welsh harpist performance. As Gareth and Rhian are Welsh speakers, we may like to practise some useful phrases too!

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*



Betws-y-Coed

## June 29: Betws-y-Coed and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

Sit back and relax as we drive through the spectacular Snowdonia National Park, making a short stop in the picturesque village of Betws-y-Coed. There are plenty of craft shops and cafés to enjoy, set against the backdrop of coniferous forests, which has earned this area the name "Little Switzerland".

We then enjoy a slice of traditional Bara Brith as part of our unique canal journey, which features a trip along the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Translated in English as "the bridge that connects", this incredible feat of Victorian engineering carries the Llangollen Canal across the River Dee and offers stunning views of the surrounding countryside.

Later, we check in to the Rookery Hall Hotel & Spa, where we stay for the next two nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## June 30: Chirk Castle and Erddig Hall

The day starts at Chirk Castle, the last of Edward Longshanks' magnificent fortresses still inhabited today and boasting over 700 years of history contained within its walls. The medieval dungeons and tower are relics of more brutal times, while the Long Gallery and State Rooms are sumptuous by comparison, with an eclectic collection reflecting the tastes of the castle's many occupants. The award-winning gardens contain manicured lawns, clipped yews, herbaceous borders, along with beautiful rose, shrub and rock gardens.

Next stop is Erddig Hall, an atmospheric early 18<sup>th</sup>-century house that reflects the "upstairs, downstairs" life of a gentry family, and offers a fascinating insight into the lives of the family and their servants. Outside, don't miss the superb walled garden, now restored to its former 18<sup>th</sup>-century formal design with rare fruit trees and a national collection of ivies.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## July 1: Charlecote Park

Today we head further south of England. While Stratford is synonymous with Shakespeare's theatrical success, nearby Charlecote Park boasts a far less respectable connection, as the famous playwright is rumoured to have been caught poaching deer here. Home to the Lucy family for 900 years, this lovely Tudor manor is a real treasure, and there's time for lunch here (not included).

Later, we check back into the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, where we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## July 2: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Bodysgallen Hall & Spa

## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Guided tour and refreshments at Cardiff Castle
- ◆ Guided tour and Welsh-themed dinner at Llanchaiaich Fawr Manor
- ◆ Guided tour and lunch at The Royal Mint
- ◆ Guided tour, Welsh choir performance, Welsh cakes and refreshments at Rhondda Heritage Park
- ◆ Ranger coach tour at Elan Valley
- ◆ Heritage train journey on the Welsh Highland Railway
- ◆ Afternoon tea in Portmeirion
- ◆ Private guided walk and lunch at Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens
- ◆ Journey on the Great Orme Victorian Tramway
- ◆ Sheep shearing and sheepdog demonstrations, tractor pull, dinner and Welsh harpist performance at Ty'n Llwyfan Farm
- ◆ Canal cruise on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct with refreshments
- ◆ Guided tour of Charlecote Park
- ◆ Themed evening talk by a guest speaker

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



Charlecote Park



# Aristocrats & Manor Houses & a Grand Tour to the North

July 13 to 23, 2024 ♦ From \$6,345 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.



Hardwick Hall

## Itinerary

July 13: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

July 14: 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 15: 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 16: 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 17: Hardwick Hall and Fairfax House

Our first visit today is to the National Trust's Hardwick Hall. Ordered in the 16<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup>-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 18: 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 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings.

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

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### July 19: 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 18<sup>th</sup>-century residence, surmounted by 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 20: 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 entire house.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*



### July 21: Nostell Priory

Today we visit Nostell Priory, an 18<sup>th</sup>-century architectural masterpiece that has been home to 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 22: 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 23: 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.



# NEW A Royal Summer in Scotland with the Edinburgh Tattoo

July 22 to August 3, 2024 ♦ From \$8,845 per person

You are cordially invited on a summertime tour of regal Scotland, a land of awe-inspiring scenery peppered with storied castles and beloved by royalty for centuries. We discover a treasure trove of sites which played a key role in Scotland's turbulent history, including Stirling Castle, Scone Palace and Edinburgh Castle. Then we follow in the footsteps of past kings and queens at Falkland Palace, adored by James V and Mary, Queen of Scots, as well as Glamis Castle, forever linked with Queen Elizabeth II's maternal lineage, and iconic Balmoral Castle, the cherished home of the British monarchy since the Victorian period. Along the way, we celebrate *Caledonian* culture with a behind-the-scenes peek at a *wee* whisky distillery, a trip to the emblematic St Andrews Highland Games and a truly remarkable evening at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, with an exclusive dining package and prime location seats. Set against the city's impressive fortress and a spectacle like no other, the Tattoo combines music, dance, lights and marching bands with daredevil displays of skill and military showmanship. It's the perfect way to experience a real flavor of bonnie Scotland!



Palace of Holyroodhouse

## What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from Edinburgh\*
- ♦ 6 nights at the Kimpton Charlotte Square Hotel, Edinburgh
- ♦ 3 nights at the Old Manse of Blair Hotel, Pitlochry
- ♦ 2 nights at the Fairmont Hotel, St Andrews
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full Scottish/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 4 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ 1 dinner at a local restaurant
- ♦ 2 lunches at local restaurants
- ♦ 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.



Edinburgh Castle



Dumfermline Abbey

## Itinerary

July 22: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in Edinburgh

July 23: Arrival

On arrival at Edinburgh Airport, a private transfer will take you to our overnight hotel, the Kimpton Charlotte Square in Edinburgh. In the evening, join the group for a welcome drink followed by dinner.

Meals: Dinner

July 24: Dumfermline Abbey and Scone Palace

This morning we head to the ancient capital of Scotland, Dumfermline, to discover the city's impressive abbey and monastic ruins. Dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, it once served as the burial site of Scottish monarchs and there are several reminders and relics of great past rulers to look out for, including the exquisite brass-covered tomb of King Robert the Bruce.

Our next stop is Scone Palace, the family home of the Earls of Mansfield and the crowning place of Scottish kings, from Robert the Bruce to Charles II. There are plenty of treasures enclosed within, with fine collections of furniture, porcelain, ivories, clocks, paintings and other *objets d'art*. Outside is a Victorian Pinetum, home to giant Hemlocks, Noble Firs and Sequoias, a specially designed maze, walled and kitchen gardens plus wonderful nature trails; look out for red squirrels, peacocks, roe deer and the rare hawfinch along the way.

Later we check into the Old Manse of Blair Hotel, an exquisite country house and our base for the next three nights.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

July 25: Blair Castle and Blair Athol Distillery

Today we head to Perthshire's Blair Castle. Home to the Atholl family for over seven centuries, the castle was besieged by Oliver Cromwell's army in 1650 and was later used as a hospital during World War I. Its opulent rooms boast collections of weapons, family souvenirs, paintings and furniture while in the grounds, you can find the second tallest tree in Britain, a Grand Fir measuring 206 ft.





Balmoral Castle

For a true flavor of Scotland, we then visit Blair Athol Distillery in the picturesque town of Pitlochry. On our guided tour we see how the *uisge beatha* whisky is made from golden malted barley, water and yeast, distilled in traditional copper pot stills and matured in oak casks.

This evening we enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## July 26: Braemar Castle, Balmoral Castle and Crathie Kirk

Our first visit is to Braemar Castle, which has recently undergone a restoration program thanks to community fundraising efforts. There is so much history to discover here; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Mar built the fortress in 1628 as a hunting base, it was set alight in the first Jacobite Uprising and later seized by the Crown. Government troops were stationed here following the Battle of Culloden and after they left, local landowners began transforming the castle into a family home. There have been a host of famous visitors too, from Queen Victoria to the current Royal Family.

The Royal Family didn't need to travel far from nearby Balmoral, a fine example of Scots Baronial architecture and the Scottish home of British monarchs since it was purchased for Queen Victoria by Prince Albert after they were both awestruck by the Highlands. The family have since enjoyed many happy summers here and it was particularly beloved by Elizabeth II, who peacefully passed away here in 2022. We enjoy access to the grounds and gardens of the estate as well as the Castle Ballroom where fascinating displays of art, china and artifacts are exhibited, complete with an audio-guided tour.

**Please note:** the other rooms of Balmoral are closed to the public.

There is also time to take a peek at Crathie Kirk, the charming place of worship for the Royal Family when in residence at Balmoral. In 1893, Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone of the present church and contributed two beautiful stained glass windows, with her daughter Princess Beatrice donating four bells.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*



*A land of awe-inspiring scenery peppered with storied castles and beloved by royalty for centuries.*

## July 27: JM Barrie's Birthplace and Glamis Castle

We pay a visit to the birthplace of JM Barrie, author and creator of the much-loved *Peter Pan*. The house is now a museum dedicated to telling his story, from growing up immersed in the traditions of a small weaving community to his route to literary success.

Next, we travel to the spectacular Glamis Castle, home to the Earls of Strathmore and Kinghorne. Childhood home of Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and the birthplace of Princess Margaret, the original 14<sup>th</sup>-century castle was extensively restored in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in an elaborate French chateau style, complete with turrets, towers and a crenelated roofline. The story of the evolution of the castle and its legendary tales are brought to life on our guided tour, and we also explore its gardens, home to yew hedges, wooden sculptures, herbaceous borders and the bubbling River Dean. This stunning Italian garden was lovingly laid out by Elizabeth II's grandmother, Countess Cecilia, and is a kaleidoscope of color during the warmer months.

*Meals: Breakfast*

## July 28: St Andrews and Highland Games

After checking out of the hotel, we follow in the footsteps of William and Kate, Prince and Princess of Wales with a guided coach and walking tour in St Andrews. The young royals met in this pretty town while studying art history at university here, living together as housemates before their romantic relationship blossomed. This is also where Lady Louise, Queen Elizabeth II's granddaughter, attends. As well as being a world-class golfing spot, there are plenty of other highlights, from stunning beaches and fascinating museums to a crumbling castle and an ancient cathedral. With such an extensive history, the ruins are fascinating to explore and provide clues about how our Scottish ancestors lived.



Glamis Castle

©Angus Forbes





Linlithgow Castle

We're in for a real Scottish treat this afternoon; St Andrews Highland Games, a tradition beloved by the Royal Family. A unique part of Scotland's heritage and a celebration of Celtic culture, the events range from running, cycling and weightlifting to tug-of-war, solo piping and traditional Highland dancing. You can expect plenty of kilts, bagpipes and whisky, all creating a distinct atmosphere and a highlight of the Fife calendar.

Later we check back into the Kimpton Charlotte Square Hotel, our base for the remainder of our tour.

*Meals: Breakfast*



Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

## July 29: Falkland Palace and Hopetoun House

Falkland Palace is our first stop today, a fairytale fortress built in a beautiful French Renaissance style, inspired by the country's grand châteaux. Our visit is a wonderful opportunity to tread the path of royalty and discover a true pleasure palace; Falkland was the Balmoral of its day and past monarchs were simply enchanted by the estate. Commissioned in 1501 by James IV as a base for country pursuits, it was beloved by Mary, Queen of Scots as a hunting lodge, with the tennis court built for James V, who died here at the young age of 30. Look out for the elaborate Falkland Bed, supposedly made for James VI, as well as the impressive panelling in the drawing room, the library's intricately painted wall and the recreated royal apartments. There is so much history entwined in the Chapel Royal too; the 17<sup>th</sup>-century ceiling was painted for Charles I, kings and queens once gathered here, and this is where James V lied in state for a month. Outside, there is a pretty orchard and wildflower meadow plus formal gardens designed by celebrated horticultural designer Percy Cane. After falling into disrepair, the palace was revitalized by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Bute in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and his great-grandson is the proud Keeper of the Palace today.

In the afternoon we enjoy a guided tour of the imposing Hopetoun House, widely recognized as Scotland's finest stately home and one of the finest examples of 18<sup>th</sup>-century architecture in Britain. Designed by William Bruce and

then extended and changed by Scottish architect William Adam, the magnificent interiors reflect the elegance of the Georgian era and are decorated with lovely period furniture, paintings, tapestries and clocks, with beautifully crafted finishes of carving, gilding and plasterwork.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## July 30: Edinburgh and Underground Vaults

After breakfast there is some time for you to spend at leisure – you may wish to explore the city and its renowned attractions or engage in some retail therapy in Edinburgh's stylish boutiques. We reconvene for famous *smørrebrød* open sandwiches at Canny Man's, "the best pub in the world" according to celebrity chef Rick Stein, which has been operated by the Kerr family since its humble beginnings in 1871.

We then take a trip beneath the bustle of Edinburgh's Old Town, to the dark, damp and eerie Underground Vaults. Largely unchanged since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, we discover more about the city's history on our tour as we explore an underground maze of streets, tunnels and vaults that were once the main thoroughfares of Edinburgh until they were built on top of. But be warned, this tour is not for the faint hearted with tales of ghosts, body snatchers and supernatural happenings to be heard as we explore this fascinating subterranean part of the city.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch*



## July 31: Linlithgow Castle and Stirling Castle

We begin our day at the ruins of Linlithgow Palace. Built by successive Stuart kings, Linlithgow was a royal rest stop between Edinburgh Castle and Stirling Castle and a country retreat visited by Charles Edward Stuart during his march south in 1745. In 1746, Linlithgow was ravaged by fire after British troops ransacked the house searching for retreating Jacobites. Today, it is maintained by Historic Environment Scotland and is allegedly haunted by Mary of Guise, the mother of Mary, Queen of Scots.

For lunch we are treated to some Scottish tapas at Christie's in Falkirk before a private guided tour of the impressive Stirling Castle. Originally built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with additions and renovations undertaken over the years, the castle has played a key role in Scottish history. Once home to the doomed Mary Queen of Scots, who is said to roam the castle to this day, it was also an important outpost during the Wars of Scottish Independence. The fortress looks as it might have in the 1540s and features the Great Hall, lavish chambers, the Great Kitchens and the Chapel Royal, with interactive exhibitions in the Palace Vaults.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch*

## August 1: Royal Yacht Britannia and Palace of Holyroodhouse

Today we step aboard the *Royal Yacht Britannia*, which was Elizabeth II's floating Royal residence for over 44 years, used not only for state visits and official receptions but also for family holidays and honeymoons. Our fascinating private tour includes the Bridge, the State Apartments, Royal Bedrooms, Crew's Quarters, the Engine Room and more.

This evening we enjoy a private guided tour of the Palace of Holyroodhouse, The King's official residence in Scotland. It was also previously home to Mary, Queen of Scots and used during filming of the 2019 movie of the same name. We learn about the dramatic events which occurred during her reign here, admire the State Apartments and take a peek where Bonnie Prince Charlie once held a glittering ball. Our tour also offers a unique opportunity to go behind the ropes in selected rooms and into the West Drawing Room, used by members of the Royal Family as a private sitting room and not normally open to the public.

*Meals: Breakfast*

## August 2: Edinburgh Castle and Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

We make our way to Edinburgh Castle, one of the most important strongholds in the Kingdom of Scotland, which has witnessed many of the defining events of Scottish history, including the unsuccessful Jacobite blockades during the 1715 and 1745 uprisings. Highlights here include the Crown Jewels of Scotland, the Royal Palace and the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Great Hall, which we discover on our audio-guided tour.

There is then some time at leisure before our special Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo experience begins. We start with a three-course celebratory Scottish meal with wine and a wee dram of single malt whisky, featuring a map of Scotland highlighting where our food has been sourced, followed by tea or coffee and traditional fudge.

Afterward we are escorted to the Castle Esplanade to take our seats in a prime location for the spectacular Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, set against the stunning backdrop of the Scottish capital's ancient fortress. This annual extravaganza brings together musicians and performers from every part of the world for a fabulous display of international culture. There is so much to marvel at, including the Massed Military Bands, the famous Lone Piper, daredevil displays, Highland dancers and a grand finale featuring fireworks and an emotive rendition of *Auld Lang Syne*. We also include an official souvenir program as a memento of this wonderful event.

**Please note:** we advise you to be prepared with waterproofs etc. in case of inclement weather during the Tattoo. It will go ahead whatever the weather.

*Meals: Breakfast, Pre-Show Meal*

## August 3: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Kimpton Charlotte Square Hotel

## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Guided tour of Blair Athol Distillery
- ◆ Audio-guided tour at Balmoral Castle
- ◆ Guided tour of Glamis Castle
- ◆ Guided tour of St Andrews
- ◆ Ticket to St Andrews Highland Games
- ◆ Guided tour of Hopetoun House
- ◆ Guided tour of Edinburgh Underground Vaults
- ◆ Private guided tour of Stirling Castle
- ◆ Private guided tour of Royal Yacht Britannia
- ◆ Private out-of-hours guided tour of the Palace of Holyroodhouse
- ◆ Audio-guided tour of Edinburgh Castle
- ◆ Hospitality package at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

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



Royal Yacht Britannia



# NEW For Kings & Country – An Exclusive Royal Celebration of Past, Present & Future

August 3 to 13, 2024 ♦ From \$6,845 per person

Following a defining period for Britain's monarchy, this enthralling tour celebrates various rulers throughout significant points of history, from medieval mysteries to the present day. We delve into the murderous story of Edward II, learn about Richard III, the "King Under the Carpark," and see how Henry VIII lived at Hampton Court Palace. Our commemoration of Elizabeth II includes a behind-the-scenes peek at her beloved Sandringham and Windsor Castle, and we also explore King Charles III's private estate of Highgrove, alongside world-famous Buckingham Palace. We additionally trace the ever-present ties to the Crown at Kensington Palace, where future sovereign, William, Prince of Wales, has spent so much time over the years. As we weave our way around these stately treasures, our guided tours and special extras illuminate their intriguing past residents.



## What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow\*
- ♦ 2 nights at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ 3 nights at the Kimpton Fitzroy London Hotel, Bloomsbury
- ♦ 2 nights at the Orton Hall Hotel & Spa, Peterborough
- ♦ 1 night at the New Hall Hotel, Sutton Coldfield
- ♦ 1 night at Thornbury Castle, Bristol
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 5 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ 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.



## Itinerary

August 3: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

### August 4: Arrival

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

*Meals: Dinner*

### August 5: Buckingham Palace

No trip to London is complete without a visit to the world-famous Buckingham Palace, the official London residence of the United Kingdom's sovereigns since 1837. We discover the stunning State Rooms; the public rooms where King Charles III and members of the Royal Family entertain their guests.

Our regal day out also includes entry to the Royal Mews, home to the Royal Family's state vehicles and horse-drawn carriages, plus The Queen's Gallery, showcasing historic paintings, rare furniture, unique photographs and more.

Later we indulge in afternoon tea at the historic Goring Hotel, a royal favorite, before checking into the Kimpton Fitzroy London Hotel, our base for the next three nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea*

### August 6: Kensington Palace, Kew Gardens and Place and River Thames Dinner Cruise

A private guided tour of Kensington Palace awaits this morning, now the official residence of HRH The Prince of Wales and his family. It boasts the impressively manicured Sunken Garden, a favorite of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, as well as Queen Victoria's re-imagined childhood rooms.

Afterward, we visit Kew's Royal Botanic Gardens, a globally-renowned institution for plant research. There is so much to discover, including Kew Palace, an enchanting royal retreat complete with an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Great Pagoda and well-preserved Georgian kitchens. This little regal residence was once home to Queen Charlotte and George III, who presided over the loss of the American Revolution during his 53-year reign.

This evening we enjoy a special dinner cruise on the River Thames, admiring the twinkling skyline along the way.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### August 7: Tower of London and Hampton Court Palace

We start the day with a visit to the Tower of London, where we are met by a Yeoman Warder before exploring at our leisure. The oldest building in London, it once housed a famous selection of prisoners, including a young Elizabeth I (prior to her coronation) and multiple wives and associates of Henry VIII. Don't miss the Crown Jewels, the dazzling symbols of British monarchy which are still used in ceremonies today.



***This enthralling tour celebrates various monarchs throughout significant points of history, from medieval mysteries to the present day.***

Onward to Hampton Court Palace for a dive into the fascinating world of the Tudor court during our guided tour. We experience the private life (and very public dramas) of Henry VIII at this sophisticated palace, where highlights include Henry's Great Hall, the Tudor kitchens and the riverside gardens here.

*Meals: Breakfast*

### August 8: Althorp

After checking out of our hotel, we head to Althorp with its fine private collection of furniture, paintings and ceramics. Althorp was also the childhood home of the future king's mother, Diana, Princess of Wales, and now serves as her final resting place.

Later we check into the Orton Hall Hotel & Spa, where we stay for the next two nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### August 9: Sandringham and Castle Rising

This morning we are treated to an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the ultimate country retreat, Sandringham. We learn all about its connections to Elizabeth II and other royals, discover the collection of cars in the Transport Museum and spend some time in the gardens.

We continue to the ruined medieval fortress of Castle Rising. The most notable period of its history was when it fell into the hands of Queen Isabella, following her role in the demise of her husband, Edward II. So much has happened throughout Rising's history and yet since 1544 it has remained in the Howard family.

*Meals: Breakfast*

### August 10: Richard III Visitor Center, Leicester Cathedral and Battle of Bosworth Heritage Center

Leaving Cambridgeshire, we make for the award-winning Richard III Visitor Center. Here we learn how the medieval king was killed in 1485 at the Battle of Bosworth and buried by the Grey Friars. Fast forward to 2012, when his remains were found buried underneath a car park in Leicester. Drawing on meticulous detective work, his discovery was one of the most remarkable finds of the century. We learn more during a fascinating talk entitled 'The King Under the Carpark' at the mighty Leicester Cathedral, where the monarch's tomb is now housed.

For our final stop today, we visit the Battle of Bosworth Heritage Center to examine the national importance of this medieval conflict. In August 1485, figurehead of the Lancastrians Henry Tudor raised a rebel army to attack the royal army of the Yorkist Richard III. The monarch was killed during the battle, thus conceding the throne to King Henry VII, a changing of the guard which ended the 300-year-long Plantagenet rule, established the Tudor dynasty and dramatically altered the course of British history.

Later we check into the New Hall Hotel, where we stay overnight.

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

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### August 11: Highgrove Gardens and Berkeley Castle

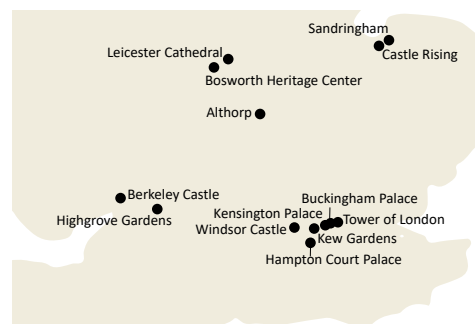
A royal treat is in store for us as we head to the private residence of King Charles III to discover Highgrove Gardens, the creatively inspired gardens of Their Majesties. After an expert-led guided tour we enjoy a delicious afternoon tea to round off our visit.



Berkeley Castle is our second visit of the day, built by Robert Fitzharding in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and ordered by Henry II to defend the Severn estuary and the Welsh border. Berkeley is a real jewel, an almost complete medieval survival that allows us to imagine how its inhabitants lived during that era. Reigning monarch Edward II was sent here as a prisoner after his wife Isabella and Roger Mortimer usurped his power, and we can even see the room where he is supposed to have been murdered in 1327.

This evening we journey back in time with our overnight stay at Thornbury Castle, the only Tudor Castle to be opened as a hotel. Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn spent ten nights here in 1535 and the beautiful Tudor castle was once owned by Henry. We are treated to a fascinating talk about their visit before retiring to our lavish bedchambers, boasting distinctive castle features and traditional décor.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*



## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Afternoon tea at the Goring Hotel
- ◆ Private tour of Kensington Palace
- ◆ Dinner cruise on the River Thames
- ◆ Meet and greet with a Tower of London Yeoman Warder
- ◆ Guided tour of Hampton Court Palace
- ◆ Exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of Sandringham
- ◆ "The King Under the Carpark" talk at Leicester Cathedral
- ◆ Themed evening talk by a guest speaker
- ◆ Guided tour of Highgrove Gardens
- ◆ Long Walk horse-drawn carriage ride at Windsor Castle
- ◆ Private guided tour of Windsor Castle

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

### August 12: Long Walk Horse-drawn Carriage and Windsor Castle

Those who watched the scenes of Elizabeth II's funeral or the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, will no doubt recognize Windsor's Long Walk, a tree-flanked avenue which is lined with people on state occasions. Today we follow in the footsteps of royalty and enjoy a special horse-drawn carriage ride along the 2.5-mile boulevard.

Upon reaching Windsor Castle, we take a Blue Badge guided tour of this ancient fortress, which stands proudly as the oldest and largest inhabited castle in the world. Established in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by William the Conqueror, it has been remodeled by successive kings and queens and is regularly used for ceremonial and State occasions.

There's also time to explore St George's Chapel, the site of many significant weddings in British history and the final resting place of a host of famous royals, including Elizabeth II.

Later we check back into our overnight hotel, the Macdonald Windsor, and enjoy a farewell dinner together.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### August 13: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



# NEW A Grand Tour of the Emerald Isle's Enchanting Gems

September 14 to 28, 2024 ♦ From \$9,845 per person

Join us on an unforgettable grand tour of magical Ireland, steeped in folklore and sprinkled with mystical castles, atmospheric houses and charming cities. We saunter through breathtaking landscapes and natural wonders, including the Wild Atlantic Way, Achill Island, the Cliffs of Moher, the Ring of Kerry and the Giant's Causeway, all while exploring a host of historic gems and delving into Irish cultural heritage. Fascinating experiences illuminate the fabric of this enchanting little isle; we get a taste of rural life at Glen Keen Farm, journey back in time aboard the Dunbrody Famine Ship, sample a perfect pint of Guinness atop a Dublin rooftop, kiss the iconic Blarney Stone of Eloquence, enjoy the *craic* at a traditional Celtic show and so much more – *sláinte!*



Giant's Causeway

## What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from Dublin\*
- ♦ 3 nights at the Dylan Hotel, Dublin
- ♦ 3 nights at the Merchant Hotel, Belfast
- ♦ 3 nights at the Delphi Resort Hotel, Galway
- ♦ 2 nights at the Muckross Park Hotel & Spa, Killarney
- ♦ 1 night at the Cashel Palace Hotel, Tipperary
- ♦ 1 night at the Faithlegg Hotel, Waterford
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 9 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ 2 dinners at local restaurants
- ♦ 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.



Dunluce Castle



Mount Stewart House

## Itinerary

**September 14:** Depart your home city and arrive the next day in Dublin

### September 15: Arrival

On arrival at Dublin Airport, a private transfer will take you to the Dylan Hotel, where we stay overnight. In the evening, join the group for a welcome drink, followed by dinner.

*Meals: Dinner*

### September 16: Titanic Belfast and Hillsborough Castle

This morning we cross the border into Northern Ireland and head straight to the vibrant capital of Belfast. We first visit Titanic Belfast, a fantastic interactive exhibition located on the site of the original shipyard where the famous ocean liner was built. We hear the heart-breaking tales of the vessel's passengers, discover the detail behind the mammoth task of building the ill-fated ship and dive into the depths with an immersive video exploring the wreckage on the ocean floor.

We are then treated to a private evening guided tour of Hillsborough Castle, a beautiful late Georgian mansion created in the 1770s by Wills Hill, first Marquis of Downshire. Surrounded by 100 acres of glorious gardens, Hillsborough boasts elegant State Rooms filled with wonderful paintings, furnishings and curiosities. Generations of the Hill family lived at Hillsborough until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the castle began to develop the political and royal associations for which it is famous today. Elizabeth II, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and Princess Margaret spent many holidays at Hillsborough and since the 1970s, it has been the official residence of both the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the British monarch.

Later we check into the Merchant Hotel, our base for the next three nights, and enjoy dinner at the Cloth Ear, nestled in the oldest quarter of Belfast.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

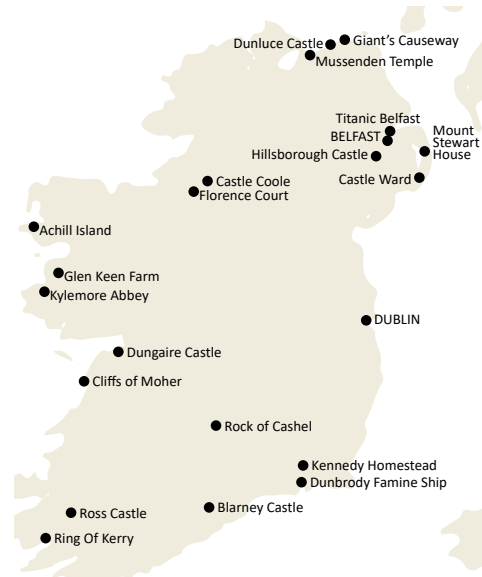


# Ireland

© National Trust Images/Matthew Antrabus



Florence Court



## September 17: Castle Ward, Strangford Lough and Mount Stewart House and Garden

We head to Castle Ward, an eccentric 18<sup>th</sup>-century house that features a curious mixture of architectural styles, including classical Palladian and elaborate Gothic. Set in 820 picturesque acres of demesne with superb views over Strangford Lough, the estate also has a stable yard that houses a tea room and second-hand bookshop.

To get to our next stop, we take the picturesque Strangford Lough ferry before continuing to the magnificent Mount Stewart House and Garden, located on the shores of the lough. This recently restored and much-loved family home offers a wealth of treasures, which we discover on our intriguing guided tour. The wonderfully atmospheric garden, with its series of formal-themed compartments full of rare and tender plants from across the globe, has been voted one of the top ten gardens in the world.

This evening we sample a delicious Irish stew at the traditional Crown Liquor Saloon in Belfast, one of North Ireland's best-known pubs and owned by the National Trust.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## September 18: North Coast Scenic Drive, Dunluce Castle, Mussenden Temple and Giant's Causeway

Today we head out on a scenic drive along the north coast, known as the Causeway Coastal Route, winding between picturesque villages and admiring the spectacular sea and cliff views. Dunluce Castle is our first stop, a ruined medieval fortress which sits atop a striking basalt outcrop. Once home to both the feuding McQuillan and MacDonnell clans, we find out more with the exhibits on display here.

Next is the Italian-inspired Mussenden Temple, built in 1785 as a summer library and precariously poised above the Atlantic. Make sure your camera is on hand, as it's now one of the most photographed spots in the country.

*“An unforgettable grand tour of magical Ireland, steeped in folklore and sprinkled with mystical castles, atmospheric houses and charming cities.”*

We meander along to the Giant's Causeway, so-named for the enormous basalt columns produced by volcanic eruptions some sixty million years ago, and now a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Interactive displays, exhibitions and audio guides in the state-of-the-art visitor center unveil the stories and science that surround this natural phenomenon.

*Meals: Breakfast*



© National Trust Images/David Armstrong

Mount Stewart House

## September 19: Castle Coole and Florence Court

After checking out of our hotel, we make our way to Castle Coole, one of Ireland's first Neo-classical houses where the grandeur of its sumptuous Regency interior is matched by the stunning wooded landscape park. There is plenty to discover during our visit, including a state bedroom fit for royalty and the vast servants' quarters below stairs, one of the most impressive in the entire National Trust collection.

We continue to 18<sup>th</sup>-century Florence Court, an idyllic Irish mansion featuring exquisite Rococo decoration and fine furniture, surrounded by lush parkland, peaceful woodland, stunning gardens and an apple orchard. It's even home to one of Ireland's most famous trees, the 250-year-old mother plant of every Irish yew tree across the globe.

Later we check into the Delphi Hotel in Galway, where we stay for the next three nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*





Kylemore Abbey

### September 20: Achill Island

Today we enjoy a scenic drive around the enchanting Achill Island, the largest of Ireland's offshore isles. The island's striking natural beauty and rugged landscapes has it all; spectacular mountains, remote lakes, soaring cliffs and secluded beaches. First inhabited 5,000 years ago, the island is peppered with ancient forts, historic churches and megalithic tombs, and was used as a filming location for the award-winning 2022 period tragicomedy, *The Banshees of Inisherin*.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### September 21: Glen Keen Farm and Kylemore Abbey

This morning we get an authentic taste of rural life with a visit to Glen Keen Sheep Farm, one of Ireland's largest sheep farms located on the Wild Atlantic Way and with a spectacular backdrop of picture-perfect mountains. Here we enjoy a sheep herding and wood spinning demonstrations plus delicious homemade Irish scones.

We take a drive past the stunning Killary Fjord en-route to our next destination, Kylemore Abbey, where we can wander through the restored rooms of the beautiful Gothic Abbey, home to a monastic community of nuns since 1920. Outside, the six-acre Victorian Walled Garden is a delight to explore, showcasing only flower and vegetable varieties from that era. This was one of the last walled gardens built in Ireland during the Victorian period, and its magnificence at the time was compared to London's Kew Gardens.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### September 22: Quiet Man Museum, Dungaire Castle and Cliffs of Moher

We head to The Quiet Man Museum after checking out of our hotel this morning. Perfect for fans of the 1952 American cinema classic, the museum is an exact replica of White O'Morn cottage from the movie. Complete with all of the iconic furnishings and artifacts, you can just imagine John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara on set here!

The next stop is Dungaire Castle, an atmospheric 16<sup>th</sup>-century town house nestled on the shores of Galway Bay. Legend has it, if you stand at the front gate and ask a question, you will be given an answer by the end of the day. Steeped in folklore, it was built by descendants of Guaire, the ancient king of Connacht, and was later a meeting place for literary giants such as George Bernard Shaw, Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats.

We continue to the magnificent Cliffs of Moher, stretching for eight miles along County Clare's Atlantic Coast and 214m at their highest. The cliffs offer stunning views towards the Aran Islands and Galway Bay from three different viewing platforms, while the fascinating visitor center brings the different aspects of the cliffs to life. They are also home to one of the major colonies of cliff nesting seabirds in Ireland.

Later we check into the Muckross Park Hotel & Spa in Killarney, our base for the next two nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### September 23: Ross Castle, Jaunting Car and the Ring of Kerry

Located on the shores of Lough Leane, Ross Castle is a 15<sup>th</sup>-century tower house built by Irish chieftain O'Donoghue Mór (who still slumbers under the gentle waters according to local legend)! It was one of the last strongholds to surrender to Oliver Cromwell's army during the Irish Confederate Wars and is shrouded in folklore today. Here we enjoy a jaunting car ride, horse-drawn carts operated by the local *jarvies*, as well as a tranquil boat trip on the lake.



Ring of Kerry



We then take a scenic drive through the Ring of Kerry, journeying across an untouched landscape of tranquil lakes and a skyline of dozing mountainous peaks.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## September 24: Blarney Castle and Rock of Cashel

The medieval Blarney Castle awaits, built nearly 600 years ago by a powerful Irish magnate and now one of the country's most famous visitor attractions. Millions have flocked here to kiss the legendary Stone of Eloquence and never again be lost for words, but there is so much more to see, including the atmospheric dungeons, a poison garden and the lovely countryside views from the battlements.

The iconic sites continue with a trip to the Rock of Cashel, one of Ireland's top archaeological spots, set on a rocky outcrop. The prominent hill is dotted with a range of ancient fortifications, including a storied 12<sup>th</sup>-century round tower, 13<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic cathedral and 15<sup>th</sup>-century castle.

This afternoon we check into the Cashel Palace Hotel in Tipperary, where we stay overnight.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## September 25: Kennedy Homestead and Dunbrody Famine Ship

We explore America's connections with Ireland today, beginning with The Kennedy Homestead in Dunganstown, the birthplace of John F. Kennedy's great-grandfather, Patrick Kennedy. Through a state-of-the-art exhibition, memorabilia and more, the unique museum celebrates the tale of this famous Irish-American family, from Patrick leaving as a famine emigrant to his great grandson's homecoming as President of the United States.

Ireland's history is brought to life at the Dunbrody Famine Ship, our next stop. We learn about the bravery of Irish people onboard an authentic replica of an 1840s emigrant boat, complete with costumed performers, insightful displays and details of their harrowing journey. After weeks spent dangerously crossing the Atlantic, the emigrants arrived in North America and made up a quarter of the population in Boston, New York City, Philadelphia and Baltimore by 1850.

This evening we stay overnight at the Faithlegg Hotel in Waterford.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## September 26: Abbey Theatre and Guinness Storehouse

Today we take a backstage tour of the Abbey Theatre, also known as the National Theatre of Ireland, where Irish creativity is celebrated. We discover behind-the-scenes secrets and learn about the history of this cultural institution, founded in 1904 by W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, who wanted 'to bring upon the stage the deeper emotions of Ireland.'

We continue our dive into Irish heritage with a visit to Guinness Storehouse, where we uncover the history of the world-famous drink through a seven-storey interactive experience. There's also a chance to sample the 'Black Stuff' in the rooftop Gravity Bar, complete with panoramic views over Dublin.

Later we check back into the Dylan Hotel in Dublin, where we stay for the remaining two nights of our tour. There's time to freshen up before we are treated to dinner at Celtic Nights, a traditional Irish Dance show known for its great *craic*!

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## September 27: Trinity College, Book of Kells and The Old Library

We start the day with a guided tour of Trinity College, Ireland's oldest university, founded in 1592. The college's magnificent Old Library displays Ireland's greatest cultural treasure, the Book of Kells. Written around 800AD and celebrated for its lavish decoration, the manuscript contains the four Gospels in Latin based on a Vulgate text, written on vellum (prepared calfskin).

There is then some free time in Dublin, with its historic attractions, shopping streets, abundance of convivial pubs and fascinating landmarks, from the ancient Dublin Castle to the modern Spire of Dublin.

This evening we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

## September 28: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Muckross Park Hotel & Spa

## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Private evening tour of Hillsborough Castle
- ◆ Boat trip on Strangford Lough
- ◆ Guided tour of Mount Stewart House and Garden
- ◆ Scenic drive along the North Coast
- ◆ Guided tour of Achill Island
- ◆ Sheep dog and wood spinning demonstrations and Irish scones at Glen Keen Farm
- ◆ Jaunting car (horse and carriage) ride and cruise at Ross Castle
- ◆ Backstage tour at the Abbey Theatre
- ◆ Ticket to Celtic Nights Dinner & Show
- ◆ Guided tour of Trinity College and The Old Library

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



Rock of Cashel



# NEW Christmastime in the Charming Cotswolds & Chilterns

November 30 to 7, 2024 ♦ From \$4,845 per person

With sleepy villages dotted throughout rolling hills, honey-hued buildings embellished with fairy lights, roaring fires in cozy pubs and sparkling trees adorning picture-perfect towns, the Cotswolds is a magical place to spend the run-up to the holidays. Our memorable tour meanders through a stunning cluster of Cotswolds favorites to the southern tip of this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the UNESCO World Heritage city of Bath, where the delightful Christmas Market and twinkling Georgian streets await. We also weave our way across the lovely landscapes of another AONB, the Chilterns, to explore the stunning Tudor mansion of Grey's Court and château-inspired Waddesdon Manor, both sumptuously dressed for a classic country house Christmas. We enjoy plenty more seasonal delights, from the enchanting illuminations trail at Kew Gardens to a Victorian-style carol singing performance in celebration of enduring yuletide traditions.



## What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from London Heathrow\*
- ♦ 3 nights at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, Windsor
- ♦ 1 night at the Queens Hotel Cheltenham – MGallery, Cheltenham
- ♦ 2 nights at Hartwell House & Spa, near Aylesbury
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 4 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.

Bath



## Itinerary

**November 30:** Depart your home city and arrive the next day in London

**December 1:** Arrival

On arrival at Heathrow Airport, a private transfer will take you to the Macdonald Windsor Hotel, where we stay for the next two nights. In the evening, join the group for a welcome drink, followed by dinner.

*Meals: Dinner*

**December 2:** Windsor Castle and Kew Gardens

We start our day with a visit to Windsor Castle, the oldest and largest inhabited castle in the world and the final resting place of Elizabeth II. Established in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by William the Conqueror, it has been remodeled by successive kings and queens and is regularly used for ceremonial and state occasions. The magnificent State Apartments are furnished with some of the finest works of art for you to admire, beautifully decorated at this time of year. We find out more of the castle's history on our audio-guided tour.

Later, a festive treat awaits us at the world-famous Kew Gardens, where the iconic architecture and tree canopies are brought to life, enriched with Christmas color and sparkling with seasonal decorations. Discover an enchanting festive trail of lights that winds its way through the botanic gardens, before enjoying some tasty treats from one of the many enticing stalls.

This evening we enjoy a late dinner at a local restaurant.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

**December 3:** Bath Assembly Rooms and Bath Christmas Market

After checking out of the hotel we head to Bath, an elegant Regency city graced with wonderfully well-preserved Georgian architecture. Nestled among the picturesque streets is our first stop, Bath Assembly Rooms\*, once a playground for the Georgian elite and the recognizable backdrop of the lavish Ballroom scenes from the popular TV series *Bridgerton*. Designed by John Wood the Younger and finished in 1771, they provided a place for polite society (including Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and Thomas Gainsborough) to enjoy concerts, teas, balls and gambling.



*“Roaring fires in cozy pubs and sparkling trees adorning picture-perfect towns, the Cotswolds is a magical place to spend the run-up to the holidays.”*

*\*Bath Assembly Rooms are currently undergoing restoration. If not complete, we take a guided walking tour of Bath.*

We then explore the enchanting Bath Christmas Market, bursting with traditional chalet-style stalls selling a variety of handmade items. Whether you'd like to start your Christmas shopping early, treat yourself to a tempting seasonal offering or simply browse the high-quality Christmas gifts, homewares, jewelry and more, there's plenty to get you into the festive spirit.

Later we check into the Queens Hotel Cheltenham – MGallery, where we stay overnight.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

#### December 4: Cotswolds Villages

Leaving Regency Cheltenham, we take a scenic drive through the Cotswolds, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where quintessentially English villages are peppered throughout rolling hills. We first stop in picturesque Lechlade to visit the unique Cotswold Christmas Shop, established in 1985 but open all year round for lovers of charming ornaments and decorations.

Our other stops include famous Bibury and Bourton-on-the-Water, where you can expect a lovely mix of honey-hued buildings, cozy traditional pubs, independent boutiques, tempting cafés and some of the area's most iconic landscapes.

We end the day with a festive afternoon tea at Hartwell House, one of the National Trust's Historic House Hotels, where we also stay for the next two nights.

*Meals: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea*

#### December 5: Henley-on-Thames, Grey's Court and Blenheim Palace

This morning we make a brief stop in Henley-on-Thames, one of the most picturesque towns in the country and set on the River Thames against the idyllic backdrop of the Chiltern Hills. It's a lovely spot for a riverside stroll, and there are also plenty of historic buildings to admire.

We continue to Greys Court, a filming location of the hugely popular *Downton Abbey* TV series and movies. Set in the rolling hills of the Chilterns, this



Bourton-on-the-Water

picturesque Tudor mansion has a rich patchwork of styles, including 18<sup>th</sup>-century additions and 20<sup>th</sup>-century interiors. The house is still furnished as an intimate family home, having been occupied until 2003, and is beautifully decorated during the countdown to Christmas.

Our last visit today is Blenheim Palace, set in over 2,000 acres of 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 are sumptuously dressed for Christmas and reveal a superb collection of tapestries, paintings, porcelain and furniture. In the courtyard outside, there are plenty of tempting goodies on offer at the enchanting Christmas Market.

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

#### December 6: Waddesdon Manor

Checking out of the hotel, we head to Waddesdon Manor, built by the wealthy Rothschild family in the style of a Renaissance château and filled with royal treasures. We have time to explore the interiors, given an extra sparkle around Christmas with lavish festive decorations, before enjoying a private seasonal lunch at the Five Arrows, located at the gates of the manor.

Afterward, we check back into the Macdonald Windsor Hotel where we toast the festive season with a farewell dinner this evening and enjoy a private, Victorian-style carol singing performance, highlighting some of the traditions and customs during this special time of year.

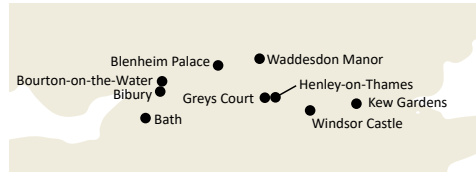
*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

#### December 7: Departure

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

*Meals: Breakfast*

**Please note:** the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Queen's Hotel Cheltenham – MGallery

#### Tour Highlights

- ◆ Audio-guided tour of Windsor Castle
- ◆ Scenic drive through the Cotswolds
- ◆ Afternoon tea at Hartwell House
- ◆ Festive lunch\* at the Five Arrows, Waddesdon Estate
- ◆ Private carol singing performance at the Macdonald Windsor Hotel

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



Blenheim Palace



# 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](http://www.nationaltrusttours.com)**.

## 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 declaration 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 full passport and we recommend that it is valid for 6 months after the return date of your trip. At the time of printing, tourist visas are not required for US or Canadian citizens visiting the UK for under 90 days solely for the purpose of tourism. If you are not a US or Canadian 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?

Yes, 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 portage at each of the hotels used on our tours where available, 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.

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





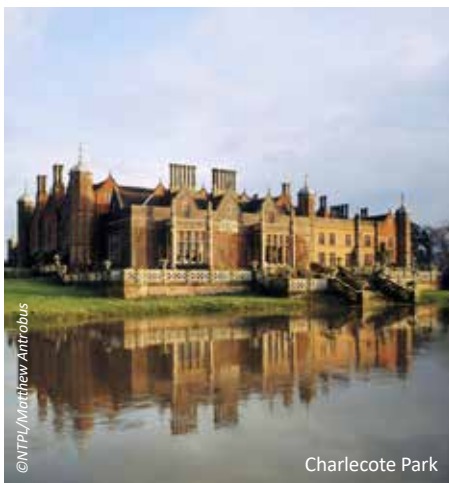
Windsor Castle



Nostell Priory



Hatfield House Gardens



Charlecote Park



Sissinghurst Castle Garden

## 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](http://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](http://albionjourneys.com/terms-and-conditions).*

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

**ALBION**  
Journeys Inspired By Heritage





National Trust *for* Historic Preservation

## National Trust Tours

1155 15th Street, NW Suite 300

Washington D.C. 20005

888-484-8785

[www.nationaltrusttours.com](http://www.nationaltrusttours.com)

[info@nationaltrusttours.com](mailto:info@nationaltrusttours.com)

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Front Cover Image: Hatfield House