

*Full Itinerary*

## ENGLISH HERITAGE TOUR



TALK TO OUR WELL  
TRAVELLED TEAM OF  
EXPERTS

0844 3350 197

Monday - Thursday 9:00am -  
8:00pm, Friday 9:00am - 5:30pm  
(London time)



### JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 2

DESTINATION:

English Heritage Tour

DURATION:

10 days / 9 nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Flights not included

PICKUP LOCATION:

London Hotel

## OVERVIEW

30 Jul - 08 Aug, 2024

Palaces, Castles, Stonehenge, Roman baths, Shakespeare and Downton Abbey....not forgetting English afternoon tea!

Join us to explore the highlights and big sights of England's capital city, London and to tour some of the iconic history and heritage of Southern England. This tour takes in many of the palaces and castles making up the official residences of the British Royal family. A two-night stay and three course meals at Thornbury Castle is just the thing to give you a taste of what it might be like to live in a castle of your own. This Best of Britain tour also takes in Oxford 'the dreaming city spires', pre-historic Stonehenge and the Roman city of Bath, a famous as a spa town for nearly two thousand years. Spend time soaking up the atmosphere and history in Stratford, the birthplace of William Shakespeare. His work has now been entertaining audiences for 400 years!

## ITINERARY SUMMARY

**DAY 1** - Welcome to London

**DAY 2** - London & Windsor Castle & Thornbury Castle

**DAY 3** - Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey) & Thornbury Castle

**DAY 4** - Bath and Stonehenge

**DAY 5** - Oxford Tour and Blenheim Palace

**DAY 6** - Stratford, Shakespeare's birthplace

**DAY 7** - Sandringham Estate & Audley End House

**DAY 8** - Buckingham Palace & Kensington Palace

**DAY 9** - Clarence House, London

**DAY 10** - Goodbye to London and home

## FULL ITINERARY

### DAY 1 - WELCOME TO LONDON

You will be met on arrival in London and transferred to your hotel.

For those who arrive in time on the day, there will be the opportunity to drop off your bags and meet up with your tour guide in the hotel lobby to enjoy an orientation tour of the capital (mix of coach & walking tour). You will get to see some of the famous and iconic sights that London has to offer.

Afterwards you can relax and get settled at the hotel before enjoying a three course welcome dinner this evening with the rest of the group.

**Included meals:** Dinner

**Accommodation:** Richmond Hill Hotel, London

### DAY 2 - LONDON & WINDSOR CASTLE & THORNBURY CASTLE

Following breakfast, depart the hotel and travel to Windsor Castle for your visit. Windsor Castle is the oldest and largest occupied castle in the world and one of the official residences of the British Royal Family. Founded by William the Conqueror in the 11th century, it has since been the home of 39 monarchs. We recommend you wear comfortable shoes in order to be able to make the most of your visit today- there is lots to explore.

Mid-afternoon we will travel from one castle to another, to Thornbury Castle where a spectacular treat awaits. This magnificent 10th Century Tudor castle, once owned by Henry VIII, fell into ruin in the 1850s and is now fully restored as a luxurious hotel, nestled in the Gloucestershire countryside. Every individual room oozes historical charm that will ensure you never forget your stay here. Tudor style meets modern excellence, with comfortable four-poster beds, magnificent open fireplaces, a dungeon dining room and a grand hall for balls, feasts and parties. We'll have our dinner together at the castle this evening.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**Accommodation:** Thornbury Castle

### DAY 3 - HIGHCLERE CASTLE (DOWNTON ABBEY) & THORNBURY CASTLE

After breakfast, we head out for the day. First, we travel to Highclere Castle for a mansion visit which includes admission to the Castle, Gardens and Egyptian Exhibition. The Castle was the seat of the 5th Earl of Carnarvon. 100 years ago he famously discovered the Tomb of the Egyptian Boy King, Pharaoh Tutankhamun. We travel back to Thornbury and enjoy our dinner and second night in the castle

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**Accommodation:** Thornbury Castle

### DAY 4 - BATH AND STONEHENGE

After breakfast, we say a fond farewell to Thornbury and travel on to the historic town of Bath. Here you will visit the Roman Baths and the hot springs that were once believed to be the work of the Gods and which attracted visitors from across the Roman Empire. Costumed characters, known from archaeological evidence, tell their stories daily to bring the history to life.

We then travel to Stonehenge for the opportunity to explore the ancient landscape of this iconic World Heritage Site. It is likely that no one will ever know the real purpose of Stonehenge, whether it was a healing site, a temple for worship, a burial site or even how the huge ancient stone structures came to be when only the most primitive tools were available. We'll dine at the hotel in Oxford this evening.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**Accommodation:** Doubletree by Hilton Oxford Belfry Hotel

### DAY 5 - OXFORD TOUR AND BLENHEIM PALACE

Today we'll explore the University city of Oxford. Meet your local city guide outside the Ashmolean Museum on Beaumont Street to share in a real locals knowledge of this historic city. Sitting in the heart of Oxford, Christ Church College is architecturally stunning. Christopher Wren's

Tom Tower is the college's most famous feature and an Oxford landmark, Church was also the setting for scenes at 'Hogwarts' in the Harry Potter films – see if you can spot some familiar locations!

After enjoying some free time to explore Oxford you will rejoin the coach to travel to Blenheim Palace for you to visit to the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. Created a World Heritage Site in 1987, the 2,100 acres of beautiful parkland were landscaped by 'Capability Brown', and the exquisite Baroque Palace is surrounded by sweeping lawns, formal garden and magnificent lake. After your visit, your coach driver will take you on a scenic drive through the beautiful Cotswolds countryside on your journey to your hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon for your dinner and overnight stay.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**Accommodation:** Mercure Walton Hall Hotel & Spa, Walton

## DAY 6 - STRATFORD, SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE

After breakfast, we check out and will travel to the centre of Stratford-upon-Avon to visit Shakespeare's Birthplace. Explore the house where he was born and grew up. Captivating costumed guides will show you around the house to talk about the family's colourful history. In Stratford-upon-Avon you will get chance to visit some of the other attractions directly related to Shakespeare, as well as a museum, library and archives in reference to the famous poet & play writer at leisure for yourselves. Why not visit the Holy Trinity Church where Shakespeare is supposedly buried, or The Guild Chapel and School Room where Shakespeare went to school, amongst other attractions.

In the afternoon we will join the coach in and travel across beautiful East Anglia to Norwich for your Dinner and one night stay at Dunston Hall. Built in 1859 this Victorian manor is set amidst 150 acres of parkland and boasts its own spa and health club.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**Accommodation:** Dunston Hall Hotel

## DAY 7 - SANDRINGHAM ESTATE & AUDLEY END HOUSE

Following breakfast, check out of your room and travel to Sandringham. Sandringham House has been a privately owned home of the British Royal Family for four generations and before her death, was a much loved country retreat for the late, Queen Elizabeth II and her family. The house is surrounded by 60 acres of breathtakingly beautiful gardens, which have been open to the public since 1908 and you will find plenty to explore here.

You will depart Sandringham in the afternoon and travel south to Essex to visit Audley End House and Gardens. Owned by English Heritage, this Jacobean mansion house provides the opportunity for you to wander the impressive great hall, magnificent state apartments, intimate dressing rooms, libraries and 18th century gothic-style chapel. Look out for the royal bed, commissioned in anticipation of a royal visit in 1794 and one of the most historic beds in England. Mid-afternoon you will travel back into London to the hotel for your final three night stay. You will have an evening at leisure to explore.

**Included meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** Richmond Hill Hotel, London

## DAY 8 - BUCKINGHAM PALACE & KENSINGTON PALACE

First item on the itinerary today is one of England's grandest buildings and the official residence of King Charles III - Buckingham Palace. Buckingham Palace serves as both the office and London home of His Majesty The King, as well as the administrative headquarters of the Royal Household. It is one of the few working royal palaces remaining in the world today. After a fascinating tour here, there will be time to explore some of the Royal Mile before the coach comes back to pick you up to take you to Kensington Palace for your next stop.

Kensington Palace is another royal residence set in Kensington Gardens, and has been a residence of the British Royal Family since the 17th century. Highlights of your visit will include touring the State Apartments, the Sunken Garden, the 'Diana's Fashion Story' and the 'Victoria Revealed' exhibitions, all inclusive and accessible in your admission. We will depart in the late afternoon to return you to the hotel and you can enjoy an evening at leisure.

If you don't want to return to the hotel at this time you can make your own way back- ask your Big Journey Representative for travel advice.

**Included meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** Richmond Hill Hotel, London

## DAY 9 - CLARENCE HOUSE, LONDON

Enjoy breakfast and depart by coach to Clarence House for your visit today. Clarence House is attached to St. James's Palace and shares the palace's garden. For nearly 50 years, from 1953 to 2002, it was home to Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. It has since been the official residence of King Charles III & Queen Consort, Camilla prior to the passing of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022. The tour starts in the gardens where there is a formal planting by King Charles III in memory of his Grandmother, the Queen Mother and continues on to the ground floor rooms which exhibit the extensive collection of paintings, silverware and porcelain. You'll have the afternoon at your leisure in London before making your own way back to the hotel for a farewell dinner together at the hotel.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**Accommodation:** Richmond Hill Hotel, London

## DAY 10 - GOODBYE TO LONDON AND HOME

Sadly, it is time to check out and say goodbye to London. Transfers will be arranged back to Heathrow Airport in time for your flight's departure.

**Included meals:** Breakfast

**Accommodation:** none

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Meet & Greet on arrival at London Heathrow Airport
- Transfers as detailed in the itinerary
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary.
- All meals detailed as detailed in the itinerary
- Excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- Transport in an air-conditioned deluxe vehicle
- A qualified and experienced English speaking guide
- Big Journey Tour Director (subject to minimum group size)

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to & from London Heathrow Airport
- Transfers on arrival or departure, to/from the airport(s), outside of the tour dates
- Drinks
- Gratuities
- Visas, travel and medical insurance
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned under included in price above
- Any meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Any optional activities offered
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- If you wish to join us for the afternoon City Tour on Day 1 you must arrive at the hotel by 1pm.
- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant tour.
- Check in is after 2-3pm and check out is before 10am unless otherwise specified in the itinerary.
- Cancellation 90 - 0 days prior to departure cancellation fee is 100%. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct travel insurance in place to protect you against the need to cancel your holiday. Deposits are non-refundable.
- A non-refundable deposit is due at the time of booking. Full balance will be due 14 weeks prior to departure. Full cost of any flights purchased from us is required at the time of booking.
- Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking. The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation request. This does not affect your statutory rights.



## BOOK YOUR JOURNEY

*Choose from the list of dates below*

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