

## **England – Devon, Cornwall & London Tour**

### **Day 1**

**(Meals in flight)**

Board your wide-bodied jet for departure from USA for an overnight flight to London

### **Day 2 – Barnstaple**

**(Lunch, Dinner)**

**3 nights**

Arrive into Heathrow Airport today and meet your assistant outside the customs area. They will direct you to your awaiting coach for your drive to Barnstaple

Mid-morning arrive into the village of Avebury. The Wiltshire village of Avebury is home to the largest prehistoric stone circle in Britain and the most popular megalithic site after Stonehenge. The Stone Circle complex consists of a large hedge, several stone circles, stone avenues and barrows.

Depart Avebury and continue to Salisbury for lunch. Superbly situated in southern England's rural heartland, few destinations can match the amazing diversity of Salisbury - with a history dating back over 5,000 years. After lunch visit one of the best medieval Cathedrals in Britain – Salisbury Cathedral. The awesome sight of Salisbury Cathedral spire never fails to impress: soaring a breathtaking 404 feet into the sky, it is visible from every direction, dominating the landscape for many miles around. Salisbury is unique for medieval English cathedrals, built within one century with no substantial later additions. It is arguably the finest example of the Early English Gothic style of architecture in Britain.

Before arriving into Barnstaple for the evening stop at the Montacute House and Gardens for a guided tour. This is a magnificent Elizabethan mansion built in the late 16th century for Sir Edward Phelips. The Long Gallery – the longest of its kind in England, displays more than 60 of the finest Tudor and Elizabethan portraits from the National Portrait Gallery collection.

Arrive into Barnstaple and check into your hotel. Welcome dinner at the hotel.

### **Day 3 – Brauton**

**(Breakfast, Dinner)**

Spend the day visiting Brauton, one of the largest villages in the West of England and reputedly the largest in England. The village of Brauton is the gateway to North Devon's Golden Coast. The excellent shopping facilities and good selection of cafes, pubs and restaurants make Brauton an Ideal base from which to explore the varied attractions of North Devon. The dramatic coastline and spectacular beaches of Saunton, Croyde and Putsborough with their golden sands, safe bathing and excellent surfing are all within a short drive. So too is the magnificent scenery of the North Devon Area of Natural Beauty. The oldest resort town in Devon, Ilfracombe - with its picturesque harbor and regular passenger ferry to Lundy Island, lies 9 miles north.

### **Day 4 – Clovelly Village**

**(Breakfast)**

Enjoy a day trip to Clovelly Village and the surrounding area. The cobbled, traffic-free, high street of this world famous fishing village, built into a cleft in a 400 foot high cliff, tumbles its way down past whitewashed cottages festooned with flowers to the tiny working port. It is famous for its donkeys, which traditionally carry goods up the hill; sledges bring things down. There are links with Charles Kingsley, Turner, Dickens and the Spanish Armada. What everyone remarks upon is the maritime atmosphere, stunning views and the peaceful tranquility of the village. It is privately owned and has been by the same family since 1738. Their policy is to care for Clovelly and keep it in the style of mid 19th century, which involves much quality maintenance using traditional materials and craftsmanship.

Make a special trip to Bird of Prey Handling Experience. This is an opportunity for all ages to handle a Bird of Prey and ask questions of a Master Falconer.

Lunch on your own in Clovelly.

National Trust Carriage Museum is an unexpected jewel: a complete family estate. The intimate Regency house contains treasures for all tastes, from model ships to shells, all collected by the Chichesters. The 19th-century picturesque garden is a perfect place to explore, picnic or play. The walled kitchen garden provides fruit and vegetables for the tea-room and flowers for the house. The tranquil estate, abundant with wildlife, includes an ancient heronry. The Carriage Museum, in the stables, has a vehicle for every occasion from cradle to grave.

Challacombe is a traditional rural "dispersed settlement" (a settlement of scattered farmsteads rather than a nucleated village) with a population of about 150 people located within the Exmoor National Park. There are lots of interesting walks and places to visit in Challacombe. Take an easy walk before dinner on your own in Challacombe.

### **Day 5 – Falmouth (Breakfast) 3 nights**

After breakfast depart Barnstaple for Falmouth in Cornwall. Our first stop is Tintagel. Tintagel Castle is steeped in legend and mystery; said to be the birthplace of King Arthur, you can still visit nearby Merlin's Cave. The castle also features in the tale of Tristan and Isolde. With a history stretching as far back as the Romans, Tintagel Castle is one of the most iconic visitor attractions in the south west. Also see the Tintagel Post Office - Nestling among the modern buildings of Tintagel high street, this unusual and atmospheric 14th-century yeoman's farmhouse, with a famously wavy roof, beckons the curious to explore. The name dates from the Victorian period when it briefly held a license to be the letter-receiving station for the district.

Stop in the small, picturesque fishing village of Port Isaac for lunch on your own.

After lunch make our way to Pencarrow House and Gardens for a guided tour of the house. For nearly 500 years, Pencarrow has been the much-loved home of the Molesworth-St Aubyns, ever since John Molesworth arrived from Northamptonshire to become the Auditor for the Duchy of Cornwall and Queen Elizabeth I. Still owned by his descendants, Pencarrow is anything but a museum. Family photos, children's toys, hats on classical busts and pet dogs Oscar and Sambo bring this Cornish mansion alive and allow you a glimpse of what it's like to live surrounded by so much history. The gardens that are on view were originally laid out by Sir William Molesworth between 1831 and 1855 including a beautifully proportioned sunken Italian Garden and grounds landscaped with almost every species of Conifer known to man.

Upon arrival into Falmouth, check into your hotel. Dinner on your own.

### **Day 6 – Pendennis Castle (Breakfast, Dinner)**

This morning visit Pendennis Castle one of the finest of the mighty fortresses built by Henry VIII to defend the country against invasion. The castle has seen action in many conflicts and was one of the last royalist strongholds to fall during the English Civil War. You can witness a Tudor gun deck in action here and see how the Guardhouse was equipped during the First World War. This award-winning site boasts an exciting interactive exhibition where you can experience the sights and sounds of battle and relive an enemy attack on a Second World War observation post. Balance of the day free to enjoy Falmouth on your own.

This evening enjoy a special seafood dinner at a local restaurant.

### **Day 7 – St. Michaels Mount (Breakfast, Lunch)**

Set out today for St. Michaels Mount and St. Ives.

Explore the amazing island world of St Michael's Mount and discover legend, myth and over a thousand years of incredible history. The castle has been passed down through generations of the St Aubyn family and is still home to James and Mary St Aubyn today. Gather for lunch at the castle after our visit.

Continue on our way to the Minack Theater. The Minack Theatre is an open-air theatre, constructed above a gully with a rocky granite outcrop jutting into the sea. The theatre was the brainchild of Rowena Cade, who

lived at Minack House overlooking Porthcurno Bay in 1929. Today the theatre is used from June to September for a full summer season of 17 plays, produced by companies from all over the UK and visiting companies from the USA. The theatre is open for visitors throughout the rest of the year.

Arrive late this afternoon in St. Ives. St Ives was isolated for much of its existence except by sea. However, the town really began to open up to the outside world in 1877 when the Great Western Railway began running its Broad Gauge trains on the new branch line. Not only did this increase accessibility to the rest of Cornwall for the town's residents but the railway quickly enabled St Ives to establish itself as a popular holiday destination by rail - a popularity which continues to this day. In 2007 St Ives was awarded the accolade of "Seaside Town of the Year" as voted for by Guardian readers.

Today St Ives is easy to reach and there's a wealth of ancient culture to be explored in the landscape, the stones, the wells and even ceremonies. Dinner on your own in St. Ives.

### **Day 8 – Lustleigh and Glastonbury (Breakfast, Lunch) 1 night**

Begin the day at the conservation area of Lustleigh. Lustleigh is a picture postcard Devon village with a pretty collection of thatched cottages. Walk to Wreyland to see the Manor House. Enjoy cream tea and a light lunch in Lustleigh.

Continue to Glastonbury. Glastonbury is full of myth and legend. The town is known for its history, including Glastonbury Lake Village, Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset Rural Life Museum, and Glastonbury Tor.

Glastonbury Abbey was a rich and powerful monastery in Glastonbury, Somerset, England. Since at least the 12th century the Glastonbury area was frequently associated with the legend of King Arthur, a connection promoted by medieval monks who asserted that Glastonbury was Avalon. The abbey was suppressed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries under King Henry VIII of England. The ruins and associated buildings are open today as a visitor attraction.

Chalice Well is a holy well situated at the foot of Glastonbury Tor. Archaeological evidence suggests that the well has been in almost constant use for at least two thousand years. Water issues from the spring at a rate of 25,000 gallons per day and has never failed, even during drought. Like the hot springs in nearby Bath, the water is believed to possess healing qualities.

Arrive into Bristol this evening for dinner before continuing to the hotel in Wotton-under-Edge.

### **Day 9 – Bath (Breakfast) 1 night**

Set off today for Bath. Upon arrival into Bath take a comprehensive tour of this World Heritage Site city including the Roman Baths and Royal Crescent No.1.

The Roman Baths are a well-preserved Roman sacred site in the English city of Bath. The site includes the remains of the Temple of Aquae Sulis, the Roman baths fed by the sacred hot spring, and a well-presented museum of artifacts found at the site.

No.1 Royal Crescent Museum was the first town house of the Royal Crescent to be completed, and is an excellent example of Palladian architecture. Decorated with handsome hand-painted marbled wallpaper, the rooms of the house contain period furniture and the artifacts of 18th century daily life. On the ground floor there is a dining room with a sumptuously spread table, and a study where the men took their port and card games. On the first floor, a drawing room and a bedroom are carefully preserved. The basement kitchen, with its many utensils and long wooden bench table, seems still alive and working, right down to the old-fashioned mousetraps. Don't miss the period sedan chair in the corridor under the stairwell.

Lunch on your own. After lunch check into your hotel

Balance of the day free to enjoy Bath and have dinner on your own.

**Day 10 – London****(Breakfast)****2 nights**

Depart Bath for Windsor en-route to London.

Stop for a visit at Windsor Castle and the State Apartments. Windsor Castle is one of three official residences of The Queen and has been home to the Sovereign for over 900 years.

The Castle is the largest inhabited castle in the world and the oldest in continuous occupation. The imposing towers and battlements of the Castle loom large from every approach to the town, creating one of the world's most spectacular skylines. The State Apartments is a sequence of rooms created for Charles II and Catherine of Braganza between 1675 and 1678 and reflects the baroque tastes of the times. They are always open to the public and display some of the greatest treasures of the Royal Collection.

After visiting Windsor continue onto London and check into your hotel.

This evening enjoy an evening panoramic sightseeing tour of the city at with a flight on the London Eye. It took seven years and the skills of hundreds of people from five countries to make the London Eye a reality. You can see about 25 miles from the top of the wheel, each rotation takes about 30 minutes and can carry 800 people. Sip champagne as you see London in the most interesting way possible!

We will return to the hotel with dinner on your own this evening

**Day 11 – London****(Breakfast, Dinner)**

Today you will have the full day free to explore all that London has to offer. Visit one of the many free museums, take in a matinee play, shop at one of the famous department stores, or take an optional guided tour.

Tonight we will have our Farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

**Day 12****(Breakfast)**

This morning we transfer to the airport with ample time to check your luggage and board your flight back to the USA