



SPRING SAVER OFFER
SAVE UP TO £200pp*
LAST CHANCE TO BOOK

SPRING IS IN THE AIR



Ephrussi de Rothschild

Spring Saver Offer

Save up to £200pp*

If you book selected holidays featured in this brochure, you can save up to £200pp. This offer has limited places and expires on the 31st March 2024 but may be withdrawn at any time.

Spring is upon us at last

As snowdrops give way to daffodils, as the days lengthen and the sun climbs ever so slightly higher in the sky, it's lovely to think that spring may finally be here. And with it thoughts turn to holidays, for what better way to enjoy a glorious spring day than on a relaxing break in a beautiful part of the world, with good food and good company to boot.

In this short selection of departures in March, April and May, you will find our popular Scottish holidays such as the Classic Scottish Steam Break and Grand Tour of the Outer Hebrides as well as more recent additions such as Glasgow's Art Treasures and our spectacular Rhododendron tour in Galloway. Travelling south we have Somerset's Secret Gardens, the wonderful Stately Homes of Norfolk and that undisputed queen of the gardening calendar, the Chelsea Flower Show. Further afield, why not make this the year you finally treat yourself to the sight of the millions of bulbs in bloom at Keukenhof in the Netherlands, the masses of camellias in Galicia or the turquoise bays of Grenada.

Wherever you choose to go, may I take this opportunity to wish you sunny days and happy travels this spring.

Best wishes,

Alison Wilson

Managing Director

PLEASE NOTE THAT IN ADDITION TO THE DATES FEATURED IN THIS BROCHURE THERE ARE MANY OTHER DEPARTURES AVAILABLE – PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR FULL DETAILS.

Our Awards



How to book

Once you've finished browsing these pages at your leisure and you're ready to treat yourself to a place on one of our holidays, just get in touch and we'll do the rest!

Give our Specialist Sales Executives a call from Monday to Friday between 9am and 6pm, on:

01334 658 007

Alternatively, send us an email to:

info@brightwaterholidays.com

For further details on any of the trips mentioned, including information on our day-by-day itineraries or full booking conditions, please visit our website:

www.brightwaterholidays.com

*Terms and Conditions apply. The discounts shown are based on per person prices.



The Jacobite steam train

4 DAYS FROM
£725

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

NO/LOW SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

A Classic Scottish Steam Break

Steam locomotion has an enduring fascination for many of us and combined with the wonderful scenery of Scotland it becomes utterly irresistible. The Jacobite steam train, from Fort William to Mallaig, is one of the longest steam-hauled rail journeys available in Britain today, an 84-mile round trip through some spectacular scenery that also includes the 21-arch Glenfinnan Viaduct. A gentler pace is set as we sail 'Doon ra Watter' on the world's last seagoing paddle steamer, the PS Waverley*, still elegantly plying her trade on the Clyde. There can be no better way to enjoy the gentle beauty of the Argyll hills and the Kyles of Bute than from the deck of this grand old lady. We also enjoy a taste of steam as we cruise aboard the newly restored SS Sir Walter Scott on the calm waters of Loch Katrine amid the spectacular scenery of the Trossachs, and take a boat trip on the Falkirk Wheel, the world's first rotating boat lift and a modern engineering marvel. We offer two different packages for this tour following the same itinerary: one staying at the Arrochar Hotel and one staying at the Stirling Highland Hotel.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Edinburgh) and travel to the **Falkirk Wheel**, the world's first rotating boat lift. We enjoy spectacular scenery as the wheel makes its ascent to join the **Union Canal** 35m above. We sail along the canal and under the Antonine Wall, the Romans' most northern frontier, and explore the visitor centre. We continue to our hotel for dinner. (D)

Day 2 Today is long but rewarding as we journey back in time aboard the **Jacobite steam train** and experience one of the most spectacular railway journeys in the world, the **Fort William to Mallaig line**. From the slopes of Ben Nevis, the line runs through rugged mountains, past sea and inland lochs and on to the shores of the Atlantic at Mallaig. The route also takes us over the **Glenfinnan Viaduct** overlooking Loch Shiel, where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised his standard in 1745. Enjoy some free time in **Mallaig**. (B, D)

Day 3 Today we sail on the world's last seagoing paddle steamer, **The Waverley***, built in 1946 to replace the 1899 Waverley, which was sunk at Dunkirk. We leave the ship at Tighnabruaich and

our coach will take us back to the hotel, travelling by the "Rest and Be Thankful". (B, D)

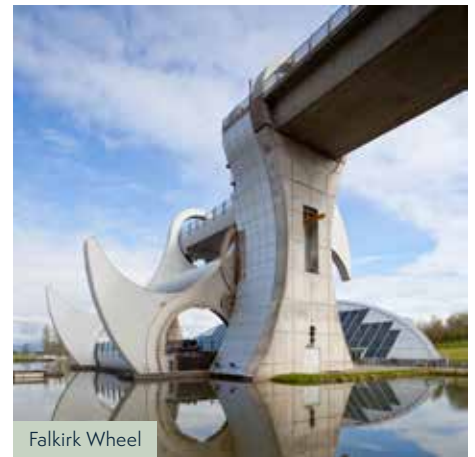
Day 4 Following breakfast we cruise on **Loch Katrine**, aboard the recently restored steam launch **Sir Walter Scott**. We continue by Aberfoyle, the Duke's Pass and Loch Venachar to **Callander**, where free time awaits before we return to our original pick-up points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

*Please note that the itinerary is subject to confirmation of the Waverley's sailing schedule.



Loch Katrine



Falkirk Wheel

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the Arrochar Hotel, Loch Long or the Stirling Highland Hotel
- ▶ Comfortable coach and standard class rail travel on the Jacobite steam train
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

ARROCHAR HOTEL

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

18 - 21 Apr **£775** **£725**

9 - 12 May **£775** **£725**

Single Supplement **£90**

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IN APR

Tour code: **BSTB**

STIRLING HIGHLAND HOTEL

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

17 - 20 May **£845** **£795**

Single Supplement **£135**

Tour code: **BSTH**



Watersay Beach

5 DAYS FROM
£1,095

6 DAYS FROM
£1,295

SAVE PER PERSON UP TO
£100

A Grand Tour of the Outer Hebrides

Whether you choose our five or six day itinerary, our best-selling grand tour takes in all the beauty and diversity of this very special environment with ten different islands and four ferry trips included. Two comfortable hotels ensure that this holiday is as relaxing as possible while at the same time offering great variety and the sense of a true journey of discovery which will live long in the memory. Our odyssey begins as we travel via Glencoe, Fort William and Glenfinnan to Mallaig. From here we take the ferry to Lochboisdale in South Uist and cross the causeway to Benbecula, the 'stepping stone' between the Uists, before visiting the islands of Eriskay, Watersay and Barra.

A captivating journey follows as we travel by ferry from North Uist and on through the magnificent mountain scenery of Harris, the rolling moorland of Lewis, and on to Stornoway. We continue with visits to the Standing Stones of Callanish, the tranquil little Norse Mill and the distinctive Black Houses at Gearranan.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow) for Mallaig, where we take the ferry to Lochboisdale, with dinner served on board. On arrival we continue to our hotel in **Benbecula**. (D)

Day 2 We drive south to the island of **Eriskay** and continue by ferry to **Barra**. We will visit **Castlebay** with views of **Kisimul Castle**; watch as the plane lands on the beach which serves as the island's runway, and visit **Watersay** with its amazing beaches of white sand and turquoise sea. (B, D)

Day 3 We travel north today as we take the ferry from Berneray to Leverburgh on the isle of **Harris**, visiting **St Clement's Church** at Rodal before continuing through the mountains to **Lewis** and our hotel in Stornoway. (B, D)

Day 4 The 5,000-year-old **Standing Stones of Callanish**, **Black Houses of Gearranan** and **Norse Mill** at Shawbost await us today. (B, D)

Day 5 We visit **Lewis Castle and Museum** and **St. Columba's Ui Church**, one of the most important archaeological sites in the area. We then see the **Port of Ness** and the **Butt of Lewis**. (B, D)

Day 6 We take an early ferry to **Ullapool** and return to our original pick-up points. (B)

Our Stornoway to Benbecula itinerary operates in reverse, with two nights in Stornoway and three nights in Benbecula.

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Kisimul Castle

WHAT'S INCLUDED - 6-DAY ITINERARY

- Five nights' dinner, bed & breakfast: two nights at the Dark Island / Isle of Benbecula Hotel and three nights at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway (one dinner and one breakfast served on board the ferry)
- Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON BENBECULA TO STORNOWAY

2024		
21 - 26 Apr	£1,395	£1,295
26 - 31 May	£1,495	£1,395

STORNOWAY TO BENBECULA

2024		
14 - 19 May	£1,575	£1,525
Single Supplement		£250

Tour code: **BGTS / BGTB**

5-DAY ITINERARY

We also offer a five-day itinerary exploring the delights of these charming islands. Highlights include: Cockleshell Beach, the Standing Stones of Callanish, the Norse Mill at Shawbost and much more.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Four nights' dinner, bed & breakfast: two nights at the Dark Island Hotel, Benbecula and two nights at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway (one dinner and one breakfast served aboard the ferry)
- Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
15 - 19 Apr	£1,145	£1,095
Single Supplement		£200

Tour code: **BGTO**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,295

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

Scenic Journeys of Argyll and Bute

The West Highland Line from Glasgow to Oban is one of the most scenic in Scotland, and unjustly receives less attention than the more famous routes. Here there are many visual delights to enjoy, such as the views over Loch Long and Loch Lomond, the remote Glen Douglas, and the dramatic ruins of Kilchurn Castle. Enjoy the two island gems of little Gigha, home to Achamore Gardens, and the isle of Bute, where we find one of the most extravagant stately homes in the British Isles.

Day 1 Travel independently to Glasgow and assemble at Queen Street Station where we board the lunchtime train to Oban. The **West Highland Line** takes us along the shores of the Firth of Clyde, through Glen Falloch before joining the former Callander and Oban line and on to Dalmally, where we will leave the train and continue by coach to our hotel in **Inveraray** on the shores of Loch Fyne. (D)

Day 2 We depart on an excursion to the beautiful little Hebridean island of **Gigha** and explore **Achamore Gardens**, the former home of the Horlick family. (B, D)

Day 3 We take the ferry to the Isle of Bute. Here we visit the spectacular house and gardens of **Mount Stuart**, which is one of the largest, most spectacular High Victorian Gothic houses in Britain and yet one of the least known. These 300 acres of woodlands

and gardens are a real treasure trove for the garden enthusiast. (B, D)

Day 4 We begin at **Ardringlas**, considered to be one of architect Sir Robert Lorimer's masterpieces. Following a **private tour** of the house there will be time to look around the Woodland Gardens. This afternoon we have a **guided tour** of **Inveraray Castle**, the seat of the Duke of Argyll since the 17th century. (B, D)

Day 5 Today we visit **Arduaine**, full of the most magnificent plants. After a **farewell lunch** at the adjacent Loch Melfort Hotel, we drive north to Oban and take the afternoon train along the full length of the West Highland Line back to Glasgow Queen Street. (B, L)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Mount Stuart

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Inveraray Inn, Loch Fyne
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel, ferry crossings and standard class rail travel
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
7 - 11 May	£1,345	£1,295
Single Supplement		£195

Tour code: **BSAB**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,195

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

**NO SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT**

Ancient Stones of the Outer Hebrides

In about 1800 BC, at around the time that the Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt was flourishing, an equally vigorous civilisation was leaving its mark on the far flung islands of the Outer Hebrides. In the company of a specialist guide we will tour a succession of sites, from Lewis in the north to Harris in the south. Highlights include the Bosta Iron Age Village, the Standing Stones and St Clement's Church at Rodel.

Day 1 Depart from our designated pick-up points (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Inverness) and head north to **Ullapool** to catch the early evening ferry to Stornoway and our centrally located hotel.

Day 2 We cross to the island of Great Bernera, where we visit **Bosta Iron Age Village** and the nearby **museum**. From here we travel to the 5,000 year old **Standing Stones of Callanish**, undoubtedly the most remarkable antiquity in the Western Isles. In the afternoon we visit **St Columba's Ui Church**, one of the most important archaeological sites on the Isle of Lewis. (B)

Day 3 Following breakfast we travel south to **Harris**, which in contrast to the rolling moorland of Lewis is more mountainous and fringed by superb white sandy beaches. Here we visit **St Clement's Church** at Rodel, whose tombs are among the

most spectacular in Scotland, followed by the **Genealogy Centre** at Northton, a chance to learn how island communities have evolved over the centuries. We continue to the ancient standing stone known as **Clach Mhic Leoid**, which overlooks the island of Taransay. Finally, we return to Stornoway and visit **Lewis Castle**. (B)

Day 4 Today we discover the stunning scenery of **Lewis** as we take a journey through time from the Bronze and Iron Ages to the days of Norse settlement and the more recent past. Visits include **Carloway Broch**, **Black Houses**, **Norse Mill** and the standing stone **Clach an Trushal**. (B)

Day 5 We take the ferry from Stornoway to **Ullapool** then continue our journey back to our original pick-up points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast



Dun Carloway Broch

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' bed & breakfast at the 3-star Royal Hotel, Stornoway
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout and all ferry crossings
- ▶ Services of an archaeological expert as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
21 - 25 Apr	£1,295	£1,195
NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT		

Tour code: **BAOH**



Jacobite train

4 DAYS FROM
£795

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

LOW SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

Scenic Scottish Railways

The north of Scotland is blessed with some wonderfully scenic railway lines. The challenge of building railways through difficult terrain was taken up by the great engineers of the Victorian age. Their legacy is in the sweeping curves and majestic viaducts of the single track lines which cross wild moors and lonely glens. Highlights on this short break include a visit to the much-photographed Eilean Donan Castle, a ride aboard the Jacobite steam train that takes us over the iconic Glenfinnan Viaduct and a visit to Boat of Garten on the Strathspey Line, which you may recognise from the BBC series, *Monarch of the Glen*.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (*Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth*) and travel by coach to Aviemore and the **Strathspey Railway**. We will board the maroon liveried coaches which will evoke memories of train journeys in the 1950s and 60s and the train will be hauled by a lovingly restored steam locomotive. The line crosses heather covered moorland with the **Cairngorm Mountains** beyond and the train stops at Boat of Garten and Broomhill, which doubled as 'Glenbogle' in the popular BBC TV series, *Monarch of the Glen*. The train will then return to Aviemore, from where we continue our journey by coach to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 We transfer to **Inverness** and board the morning diesel train service to **Wick**. The line takes us along the shores of the **Cromarty** and **Dornoch Firths**, looping round by Lairg and back to the coast, passing the former junction with the Dornoch branch at The Mound. From Golspie the line follows the spectacular coastline as far as **Helmsdale**, where it turns inland, pausing at remote stations such as Forsinard and Altnabreac, before reaching **Georgemas Junction**, the most northerly railway junction in Britain. The driver changes ends here to take the train to Thurso before we continue to the terminus at Wick. On arrival here we will re-join our coach and return to our hotel by the more direct but equally scenic coastal route. (B, D)

Day 3 We depart once again by diesel train from Inverness, this time diverging at Dingwall and heading for **Kyle of Lochalsh**, travelling over what is often considered to be the most scenic of all Scotland's railway lines. In the afternoon we explore the iconic 13th century castle of **Eilean Donan**. This must be one of the most photographed castles in Scotland, with its impossibly romantic setting on Loch Duich. (B, D)

Day 4 After an early breakfast we check out of the hotel and travel via Loch Laggan to Fort William, where we join **'The Jacobite'** steam train and experience one of the most memorable and spectacular railway journeys in the world – to **Mallaig** on the famous 'Road to the Isles'. 'The Jacobite' combines the romance of the steam era with the opportunity to drink in the stunning views of this wild and historic part of Scotland. From the slopes of **Ben Nevis** the line runs through rugged mountains, past sea and inland lochs and onto the shores of the Atlantic at Mallaig. The route takes us over the massive **Glenfinnan viaduct** overlooking Loch Shiel, where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised his standard in 1745. After some free time in Mallaig we rejoin the train and return to Fort William. Thereafter we continue by coach to our original departure points where we expect to arrive late evening. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Eilean Donan Castle



Strathspey Steam Railway

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Craiglynne Hotel, Speyside (or similar)
- ▶ Comfortable coach and standard class rail travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DATES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

3 - 6 May	£845	£795
Single Supplement		£90

Tour code: **BSSR**



St Magnus Cathedral

6 DAYS FROM
£1,525

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

Highlights of Orkney & Shetland

Sail away to lands steeped in history, wildlife and stunning scenery – the Orkney and Shetland isles. Many people have landed there before us, some as early as 3000 BC. Most famous of all were the Vikings, but they were not alone and all around you historical treasures can be found. Both Orkney and Shetland have their own identities - Orkney is green and fertile, while Shetland has rugged cliff and sea loch landscapes. However, both share a colourful history of Picts, Norsemen, ancient antiquities and seafaring legends – bound together with an independent spirit that sets them apart from the rest of Scotland. We sail with Serco Northlink Ferries aboard their modern, purpose-built vessels overnight from Aberdeen to Lerwick, and then there are two full days to tour Shetland. After rejoining the ship for an evening sailing to Kirkwall, we have two days to explore Orkney.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (*Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth*) and head for Aberdeen and take the overnight ferry to Lerwick. (*D*)

Day 2 We leave the ship after breakfast and start our Shetland tour. Our first stop is in **Scalloway**, the former capital of Shetland, where we visit the ruined castle. We then continue north towards the spectacular cliffs of **Eshaness**, and the narrow isthmus known as **Mavis Grind**. (*B, D*)

Day 3 Our day starts at the Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of **Jarlshof**. Over three acres of remains are here, spanning 3,000 years since the days of the Stone Age, including Bronze Age houses, Iron Age broch and wheel houses, Viking long houses and medieval farmhouses. We also visit **Sumburgh Head** with its RSPB reserve and enjoy free time in Lerwick. Later we re-join our ship for the evening sailing to Kirkwall, with dinner served on board. On arrival we transfer to the Kirkwall Hotel. (*B, D*)

Day 4 This morning we have an all day excursion of west mainland Orkney visiting the **Heart of Neolithic Orkney – World Heritage Sites**. We begin at **Maeshowe**, the finest chambered tomb in Western Europe. Built before 2700 BC Maeshowe was raided by Vikings in the 12th

Century. It thus houses the largest collection of runic inscriptions to be found in any one place in the world. We shall also visit the **Standing Stones of Stenness**, with the adjacent Neolithic village of **Barnhouse**, before continuing to **Skara Brae**, with its new visitor centre depicting the history of this world famous monument and **Skaill House**, a fascinating architectural medley to the side of Skara Brae. (*B, D*)

Day 5 This morning, we have free time to explore **Kirkwall** at leisure. Later, we tour the south end of Orkney, crossing the **Churchill Barriers** and visiting the charming **Italian Chapel**, which was built on a former prisoner of war camp. (*B, D*)

Day 6 After breakfast we catch the ferry from Stromness back to the mainland. From here, we return to our original pick-up points. (*B*)

Inc. meals: *B: Breakfast, D: Dinner*



St Ninian's Isle

THERE IS AN AIR VERSION OF THIS TOUR ON 25 MAY FROM £1,945PP (£1,895PP IF BOOKED BY 31 MARCH). SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ One night dinner, bed and breakfast at the Brae or Busta House Hotel, Shetland and three nights' bed and breakfast (plus two dinners) at the Kirkwall Hotel, Orkney
- ▶ All ferry crossings, including one night's accommodation in two-berth inside cabins on Serco Northlink Ferries MV Hrossey/Hjaltland on the outward sailing
- ▶ One breakfast and two dinners on board ship
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
11 - 16 May	£1,645	£1,595
18 - 23 May	£1,575	£1,525
Single Supplement		£425
Outside Cabin Supplement		£55

Tour code: **BOSH**

4 DAYS FROM

£695

SAVE PER PERSON

£50NO SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

Glasgow's Art Treasures featuring the Burrell Collection

Re-opened in March 2022 after an ambitious refurbishment, Glasgow's Burrell Collection allows visitors for the first time to explore all three floors in the building, set out as galleries, visible stores and special exhibition spaces. This incredible collection holds treasures from all over the world, including 5,000-year-old porcelain from China, paintings by renowned French artists including Manet, Cézanne and Degas, and medieval artefacts such as stained glass, armour and tapestries. Our tour includes visits to the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, where notable works of art from across Britain and Europe are featured alongside a diverse collection of exhibits; the Hunterian, Scotland's oldest public museum, the Gallery of Modern Art located in the centre of Glasgow, Holmwood House and the House for an Art Lover, built in the 1990s to a design by Charles Rennie Mackintosh from 1901.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (*Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow*) to visit the **Gallery of Modern Art** housed in an impressive neo-classical building in Royal Exchange Square. Outside is one of Glasgow's iconic landmarks, the cheekily crowned equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington. (*D*)

Day 2 Today we explore the **Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum** and the **Hunterian Museum**, part of the University of Glasgow, which was founded in 1807, making it Scotland's oldest public museum. You may be interested in viewing the **Mackintosh Collection** here. (*B, D*)

Day 3 We start our day at the **Burrell Collection** which, following an ambitious and far-reaching refurbishment programme, was voted **Art Fund Museum of the Year** in 2023. This afternoon we head to **Holmwood House**, the finest and most elaborate residential villa designed by Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. (*B, D*)

Day 4 Today we visit the **House for an Art Lover**, whose origins lie in drawings prepared by Charles Rennie Mackintosh in 1901 as his entry to a competition. We later return to our original pick-up points. (*B*)

Inc. meals: *B: Breakfast, D: Dinner*



Gallery of Modern Art

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the Garfield House Hotel, Glasgow
- ▶ Comfortable coaching throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

22 - 25 Mar **£745** **£695**

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Tour code: **BGAT**



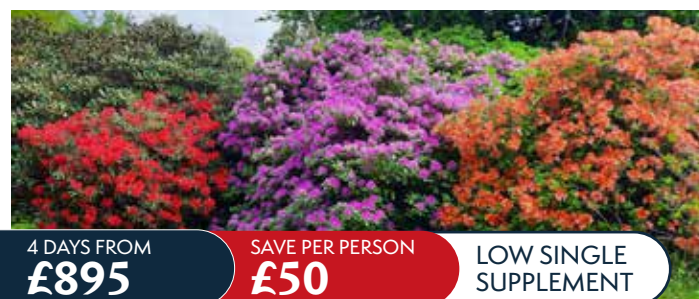
5 DAYS FROM
£1,045

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

LOW SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

Scotland's Northern Edge featuring the North Coast 500

On the northern edge of Scotland, where ancient rock meets restless sea, the views are among the most spectacular to be found in the British Isles. Dunnet Head in particular, the most northerly point on the mainland and the cliffs at Duncansby Head. Following much of the North Coast 500 route, our tour also takes in John O'Groats, the late Queen Mother's Castle of Mey and the impressive smoo cave.



4 DAYS FROM
£895

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

LOW SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

The Best Rhododendron Gardens in the World?

Visit the gardens of Galloway in May and one plant species catches the eye ahead of all others – the Rhododendron. Though of course native to eastern Asia and the Himalayas, rhododendrons seem to thrive particularly well in the mild climate of south-western Scotland, and we can expect an extravagant show of blossom in myriad shades of red, pink and purple.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed & breakfast: two nights at the 3-star Station Hotel, Thurso and two nights at the 3-star Kinlochbervie Hotel
- ▶ Comfortable coaching and all visits as outlined in the itinerary

- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

6 - 10 May **£1,095** **£1,045**

Single Supplement **£90**

Tour code: **BSNE**

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed, and breakfast at the 3-star Fernhill Hotel, Portpatrick
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout

- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Colin Crosbie as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

15 - 18 May **£945** **£895**

Single Supplement **£90**

Tour code: **BRHO**

6 DAYS FROM
£1,595

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

NO SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

TOUR MANAGER
CLIVE WARSOP

An Archaeologist's View of Orkney and Shetland

The islands of Orkney and Shetland are littered with archaeological remains. People first came here over 5,000 years ago and many of their remains survive. Research is ongoing here and excavations by archaeologists continue to uncover new information. The islands are therefore of enormous interest to anyone who enjoys first-hand contact with ancient settlements and buildings as well as the people who once lived here. Highlights on Shetland include the Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of Jarlshof, St. Ninian's Isle with its 6th century church and the ruined castle of Scalloway. On Orkney these include Maeshowe, the finest chambered tomb in Western Europe, and the famous site at Skara Brae.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (*Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth*) for Aberdeen and the overnight ferry to **Lerwick**. (D)

Day 2 We begin our exploration of **Shetland** with a visit to the Iron Age broch on the little island of **Mousa**. Later we tour the outstanding Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of **Jarlshof**, spanning 3,000 years of human habitation. (B, D)

Day 3 Visit the 6th century church at **St Ninian's Isle**, **Scalloway Castle** and **Tingwall Valley**, then take the evening sailing to **Kirkwall**. (B, D)

Day 4 We tour the southern end of Orkney Mainland with visits to the **Churchill Barriers** and the **Italian Chapel** from World War II. Later we

return to Kirkwall for some free time and a chance to visit the architectural masterpiece of **St Magnus Cathedral**. (B, D)

Day 5 Today we head west into the **Heart of Neolithic Orkney**, where we find some of the most impressive and important archaeological sites in Europe, including the mysterious stone circles at **Stenness** and **Brodgar**, the chambered tomb at **Maeshowe** and the famous stone age village at **Skara Brae**. (B, D)

Day 6 We take the ferry back to the mainland and after breakfast on board continue to our original departure points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Jarlshof

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ One night dinner, bed and breakfast at the Brae or Busta House Hotel, Shetland and three nights' bed and breakfast (plus two dinners) at the Kirkwall Hotel, Orkney
- ▶ All ferry crossings, including two dinners and one night's accommodation in two berth inside cabins on Serco Northlink Ferries MV Hrossey/Hjaltdland on the outward sailing
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of archaeological expert Clive Warsop as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
22 - 27 Apr	£1,695	£1,595
NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT		
Outside cabin supplement		£55

Tour code: **BOSA**

4 DAYS FROM
£745

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

TOUR MANAGER
TONY RUSSELL

Grand Gardens of Anglesey and Snowdonia

Set among glorious scenery that includes the mountains of Snowdonia, dramatic seascapes and ancient castles, North Wales is home to some outstanding gardens. One of the best is Plas Cadnant, whose new owner brought it back to life and it has since emerged as a gem of a garden full of interest. Further highlights include Plas Newydd on Anglesey, the magnificent Bodnant Garden and the eccentric Italianate village of Portmeirion.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (*London, Luton, Northampton, Birmingham*) and head to the gardens of **Powis Castle**. This amazing garden is cared for by the National Trust and has some of the most flamboyant and stylish herbaceous planting of any garden in the British Isles. From here, we continue to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 We visit the gardens at **Plas Brondanw**, followed by the village of **Portmeirion** – both created in a unique Italianate style by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis. Much work has been carried out in recent years to improve the gardens here, enhancing the architecture's beauty. (B, D)

Day 3 Today we begin with a visit to **Plas Newydd**. Set amidst breathtakingly beautiful scenery on the Menai Strait, this elegant house was redesigned by James Wyatt in the 18th century. There is a fine spring garden and Australasian arboretum, with an

understorey of shrubs and wildflowers, a summer terrace, and massed hydrangeas. We then visit the gardens at **Penrhyn Castle**, built between 1820 and 1845 for the wealthy Pennant family. Our final visit today is **Plas Cadnant**, a historic hidden garden which is slowly being uncovered and restored to its former glory. (B, D)

Day 4 Today we travel to the privately owned garden of **Maenan Hall**, a beautiful property set among mature hardwoods on the slopes of the Conwy Valley. In the afternoon we visit **Bodnant Garden**, an outstanding garden which is divided into two parts, the upper garden with terraces and informal lawns and the lower wild garden known as the Dell, all filled with a range of beautiful plants from around the world. Later, we return to our original pick-up points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Bodnant Garden

YOUR TOUR MANAGER TONY RUSSELL

As a resident of Snowdonia, Tony is intimately acquainted with the wonderful gardens in this particularly scenic corner of Wales.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Celtic Royal Hotel, Caernarfon
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Tony Russell as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
10 - 13 May	£795	£745
Single Supplement		
		£195

Tour code: **BNWA**



RHS Chelsea Flower Show

7 DAYS FROM
£1,795

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show and Classic English Gardens

This tour combines the colour and excitement of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show with some of the south of England's finest gardens, affording the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of horticultural excellence.

We begin at the classic English gardens of Sissinghurst and Great Dixter before enjoying a full day at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show followed by a visit to the unmissable RHS Garden Wisley. Heading west, we call in at the beautiful gardens of Wilton House near Salisbury then have some free time to explore the historic city of Bath. Next comes the ancient Bishop's Palace in Wells, followed by Hestercombe, one of Gertrude Jekyll and Sir Edwin Lutyens' greatest masterpieces. We take a stroll through the arboretum at The Courts and explore Henry Hoare's celebrated landscape garden at Stourhead before our tour concludes at the Harold Peto designed garden at Iford Manor.

Day 1 We depart from our pick-up points (*London*) and transfer to the famous gardens of **Sissinghurst**. The history here is rich and fascinating and the gardens are simply stunning, as close to gardening perfection as you can get. In the afternoon we head for **Great Dixter**, where we are treated to an exclusive guided tour. We continue to our hotel. (*D*)

Day 2 This morning we depart for our full-day visit to the **RHS Chelsea Flower Show**, which holds a rare position as a great British tradition and an exciting source of inspiration and advice. One of the highlights of the show is the collection of over 20 full-sized show gardens. (*B, D*)

Day 3 We travel to **RHS Garden Wisley**, which is where the Royal Horticultural Society shows the gardening public how it should be done. Here the highest standards of practical horticulture are deployed in the setting of a splendid old site, rich in fine trees against a backdrop of other plants, all impeccably labelled. An informative guided tour is included here. (*B, D*)

Day 4 We make our way to the gardens of **Wilton House**, an impressive Palladian mansion near Salisbury.

In the afternoon we transfer to the historic city of **Bath** for some free time. (*B, D*)

Day 5 This morning we visit the **Bishop's Palace** in Wells, a stunning medieval palace which has been home to the Bishops of Bath and Wells for 800 years. Here we will enjoy a special 'Horticulture at the Palace' tour. In the afternoon we visit **Hestercombe**, one of Gertrude Jekyll and Sir Edwin Lutyens' greatest masterpieces. (*B, D*)

Day 6 This morning we head to **The Courts**, a charming garden showing English style. Peaceful water gardens and herbaceous borders with topiary exhibit creative use of colour and planting. There is also an arboretum filled with wonderful species of tree and naturally planted spring bulbs, the perfect backdrop for a relaxing stroll. Later we visit the garden at **Stourhead**. Temples, urns, a grotto and a wealth of trees all contribute to the special atmosphere of this celebrated landscape garden. (*B, D*)

Day 7 We conclude at the gardens of **Iford Manor**, where we have an exclusive private visit. Following this we return to our original pick-up points. (*B*)

Inc. meals: *B: Breakfast, D: Dinner*



RHS Garden Wisley



Sissinghurst

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner bed and breakfast at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Felbridge and three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Walnut Tree, North Petherton (or similar)
- ▶ Full-day ticket for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

23 - 29 May

£1,895

£1,795

Single Supplement

£395

Tour code: **BCHB**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,895

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

TOUR MANAGER
MIKE NELHAMS

PREMIUM

Great Gardens of Cornwall in the Company of Mike Nelhams

With the help of Mike Nelhams, Curator of Tresco's Abbey Gardens we have put together this very special tour of Cornwall, featuring not only the gardens but the personalities behind them. At our base in the comfortable Alverton Hotel, Truro, our tour begins with a presentation from Mike Nelhams on the great Gardens of Cornwall. Over the following three days we meet Sir Tim Smit (co-founder of the Eden Project) and Head of Gardens Alasdair Moore at the Lost Gardens of Heligan, owner Charles Williams at the wonderful gardens of Caerhays Castle and Lord Falmouth at the Tregothnan Tea Plantation, as well as enjoying a guided tour of the Abbey Gardens on Tresco, personally led by Mike Nelhams.

Day 1 We depart by train from London Paddington for Truro. Before dinner, our guide **Mike Nelhams** will give a presentation on his favourite Cornish gardens. (D)

Day 2 We visit the **Lost Gardens of Heligan**, where we will be welcomed by Sir Tim Smit who restored the gardens to their former glory and are joined by Alasdair Moore for a tour of the gardens. Later we transfer to **Caerhays Castle**, where we will be welcomed by Charles Williams, and after **lunch in the castle** we will enjoy a guided tour of the garden with a member of the family. (B, L, D)

Day 3 We transfer to Penzance and take a helicopter flight to **Tresco**, where Mike will take us on a personal guided tour of the **Abbey Garden**,

without doubt one of the most stunning gardens in the British Isles. (B, D)

Day 4 We depart for a visit to the privately-owned garden of **Lamorrhan House**, which has been designed by the owner in an Italianate style, although there are also Japanese influences here. We continue to **Tregothnan Estate**, where we hope to be welcomed by the owner Lord Falmouth before a tour of the unique **Tregothnan Tea Plantation**, which has expanded greatly since the first bushes were planted in 1999. (B, L, D)

Day 5 Following breakfast, the morning is free to explore **Truro** and perhaps visit the Cathedral. Later, we return by train to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Tregothnan

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Alverton Hotel, Truro
- ▶ Two lunches
- ▶ Return standard class rail travel between London and Truro (regional rail connections and upgrades can also be arranged at a supplement; (£100pp discount for no rail travel))
- ▶ Return helicopter flight to the Scilly Isles
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of Mike Nelhams as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
25 - 29 Mar	£1,995	£1,895
15 - 19 Apr	£2,045	£1,945
Single Supplement		£295

Tour code: **BCMN**

4 DAYS FROM
£695

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

Spring Gardens of Cornwall

Spring comes early in Cornwall, as trees, shrubs and bulbs bring life and colour back to the gardens. The near neighbours of Trebah and Glendurgan illustrate this perfectly, with the great Asiatic shrubs of rhododendron, magnolia and camellia all featuring, rich with blossom. The award-winning Lost Gardens of Heligan continue to fascinate, while over at the Eden Project things have come a long way since that disused chalk pit was transformed into a futuristic microcosm of botanical diversity. Our tour is bookended with visits to two top-class National Trust properties at Knightshayes Court and Killerton.

Day 1 We depart from our pick-up points (London, Reading, Swindon, Bristol) and travel to **Knightshayes Court**, whose celebrated garden features a water lily pool, topiary, specimen trees, rare shrubs, seasonal colour and an impressive Victorian kitchen garden. Continue to our hotel in Newquay with views over the Atlantic. (D)

Day 2 We visit the **Eden Project**, which since its opening in 2001 has become one of Cornwall's star attractions, with its huge controlled-environment plant conservatories. Our next visit is to the **Lost Gardens of Heligan**, the scene of the largest garden restoration project in Europe. This time of year sees the reawakening of Heligan's fabulous collection of historic shrubs, including their notable camellias and rhododendrons. (B, D)

Day 3 Following breakfast we depart for a visit to **Trebah**, a wild and colourful Cornish garden with something for everyone. We then continue to **Glendurgan**, a place of great beauty and tranquillity. At this time of year we can expect outstanding spring displays of magnolias and camellias. Look out too for the hedge maze, originally built by the owners in the 1830s to entertain their 12 children. (B, D)

Day 4 We head for home and call in at the house and gardens of **Killerton**, set on a steep wooded hillside with the remains of an Iron Age Hill fort on top of it. Countless trees and shrubs thrive in the gardens including rhododendrons and magnolias which should be coming into full bloom. We later return to our original pick-up points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Lost Gardens of Heligan

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the comfortable Pentire Hotel, Newquay
- ▶ Comfortable coaching throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
18 - 21 Mar	£745	£695
Single Supplement		£150

Tour code: **BSGC**



5 DAYS FROM
£1,495

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Gardens of Jersey

Situated within touching distance of France, the island of Jersey is blessed with wonderfully mild and sunny weather, making it the perfect destination for an early summer holiday. It is also home to some splendid gardens which make the most of this favourable climate to produce stunning displays, not to mention the profusion of wildflowers that thrive in the lush green meadows.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the Pomme d'Or Hotel, St. Helier (or similar)
- ▶ Return flights from London to Jersey
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout

- ▶ Services of Sue Pomeroy as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
15 - 19 May	£1,595	£1,495
Single Supplement		£295

Tour code: **BJER**



5 DAYS FROM
£1,095

SAVE PER PERSON UP TO
£100

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT*

Arran, Scotland in Miniature

Often described as "Scotland in Miniature", Arran has a blend of Highland and Island scenery with granite peaks and deep glens to the north of the island, contrasting with its rolling and lush farmlands to the south. We visit Brodick Castle, the Isle of Arran Distillery and enjoy a circular tour of the island.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Best Western Kinloch Hotel, Blackwaterfoot
- ▶ Return ferry crossings
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout

- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
22 - 26 Apr*	£1,195	£1,095
20 - 24 May	£1,195	£1,145
Single Supplement		£180
*NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT		

Tour code: **BARR**



4 DAYS FROM
£795

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

TOUR MANAGER
ROY CHEEK

Somerset's Secret Gardens

One of England's most scenic counties is Somerset, whose lush green pastures, orchards and little villages provide a wonderful backdrop to a most colourful and varied collection of private gardens. Highlights include Coldharbour Cottage, an idyllic rural garden with a sublime mix of thoughtful planting, and Batcombe House, an outstanding plantswoman's garden. We conclude at the Walled Gardens of Cannington, which our guide, RHS judge and vastly experienced horticulturalist Roy Cheek, helped to create.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Holiday Inn Taunton
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all visits
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Roy Cheek as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
9 - 12 May	£845	£795
Single Supplement		£195

Tour code: **BSSG**



4 DAYS FROM
£945

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Historic Houses of the Scottish Borders

The Scottish Borders are often overlooked in comparison with the Highlands and Islands, but they have a quiet, understated beauty of their own. During this short break, we will explore the Georgian masterpieces at Mellerstain and Manderston, visit Traquair House and admire Sir Walter Scott's personal collections at Abbotsford.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Peebles Hydro Hotel
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout

- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2023		
28 Apr - 1 May	£995	£945
NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT		

Tour code: **BHSB**



Laugharne

5 DAYS FROM
£1,115

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

TOUR MANAGER
TONY RUSSELL

Gardens of South and West Wales

Tucked away in the rolling countryside of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire are some fine parks and gardens, both large and small; ancient and modern. The centrepiece of our tour is the National Botanic Garden of Wales, the first garden of its type to be created in the United Kingdom for 200 years. This spectacular re-interpretation of the historical garden blends the careful restoration of the historic, double-walled garden with Norman Foster's Great Greenhouse, the largest single span glasshouse in the world, where mere panes of glass separate the familiar green hills of Wales from a panoramic sweep of warm, Mediterranean scenery. By contrast Aberglasney is a superb 16th/17th century garden, which was discovered after 50 years of neglect and has been restored to produce a garden with immense appeal. We visit superb woodland gardens at Upton and Picton Castle along with some interesting private gardens, including Dyffryn Fernant, built from scratch.

Day 1 We depart from our pick-up points (*London, Reading, Swindon, Bristol*) and travel to Cardiff, near which lies the magnificent **Dyffryn Botanic Gardens**, a Grade 1 listed Edwardian garden designed by landscape architect Thomas Mawson, displaying a series of garden 'rooms' enclosed within clipped Yew hedges. Our tour manager **Tony Russell** will join us here and conduct a guided tour of the garden. We continue our journey to Pembrokeshire and our accommodation at the **Beggars Reach Hotel**, Burton. Prior to dinner, Tony will give us an introductory talk on the gardens of the region. (D)

Day 2 Following breakfast we will travel to the **National Botanic Garden of Wales** in the exquisite location of a 568 acre estate in the heart of Carmarthenshire. Among the innovative and informative features here are the Great Greenhouses, the oval walled garden and the herbaceous boardwalk. We continue to **Aberglasney**, set in the beautiful Towy valley. This is a superb 16th/17th century garden, which was rediscovered after 50 years of neglect and has been restored to produce a garden with immense appeal. Set within nine acres are six different spaces with a rich and diverse collection of plants,

including three walled gardens and the unique Elizabethan/Jacobean cloister. (B, D)

Day 3 We depart for **Dyffryn Fernant Garden**, a plantsman's garden, created from scratch by the owners, with a number of 'rooms' including an azalea bank, a bog garden and a fernery and camellia walk. This afternoon we will visit **Picton Castle**, home to some of the most beautiful woodland gardens in West Wales. (B, D)

Day 4 This morning we visit the gardens of **Upton Castle**, 35 acres of listed historic gardens, surrounded by ancient woodlands. We then transfer to the village of **Laugharne** where the poet **Dylan Thomas** lived and worked in his later years. Our final visit today is to the private garden of **Llwyngarreg**, which makes the most of the local climate. (B, D)

Day 5 We travel to **Dewstow Gardens**, a garden of tunnels and underground grottoes that was buried underneath thousands of tons of soil for over 50 years until 2000 when the gardens were rediscovered and renovated. We then return to our original pick-up points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Aberglasney

YOUR TOUR MANAGER TONY RUSSELL

As 'Our Man in Wales' Tony has designed this new itinerary which features some of the best gardens in the south and west of the Principality.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Beggars Reach Hotel, Burton
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Tony Russell as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

12 - 16 Apr	£1,165	£1,115
Single Supplement £275		

Tour code: **BGSW**



Italian Gardens, Trentham Estate

4 DAYS FROM
£645

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

RHS Garden Bridgewater and Gardens of the North West

Currently the largest gardening project in Europe, RHS Garden Bridgewater opened to the public in 2021 and we are delighted to be able to visit it as it develops and matures. This once-in-a-generation project saw the Royal Horticultural Society take inspiration from the heritage of the site and transform it into a world-class garden, while also delivering a programme of community outreach and education activities, volunteering and training.

Based on an overall design by leading landscape architect and Chelsea Gold Medal winner Tom Stuart-Smith, highlights include one of the largest walled gardens in the UK, beautifully landscaped grounds, living plant collections and horticultural trials. We also take the opportunity to visit some of the best gardens in the North West, beginning at Trentham Estate in Staffordshire, where the contemporary revival of the famous Italian Gardens was also led by Tom Stuart-Smith. At Dunham Massey we discover a great plantsman's garden full of native favourites and exotic treasures. Tatton Park's gardens have developed over 200 years yet retain much of their Edwardian character whilst Arley Hall showcases a pair of herbaceous borders that is one of the greatest garden sights of England.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (*London, Luton, Northampton, Birmingham, Stoke*) and head to the gardens of **Trentham Estate** in Staffordshire, where the contemporary revival of the famous Italian Gardens was led by renowned designer and serial Chelsea gold-medal winner Tom Stuart-Smith. We continue to our hotel in Cheshire. (*D*)

Day 2 This morning we travel to the **RHS Garden Bridgewater**. Based on an overall design by leading landscape architect Tom Stuart-Smith, highlights include one of the largest walled gardens in the UK, beautifully landscaped grounds, living plant collections and horticultural trials. In the afternoon we visit a nearby **private garden** which in contrast to Bridgewater is much smaller but no less intriguing. (*B, D*)

Day 3 After breakfast, we visit **Dunham Massey**, a great plantsman's garden full of native favourites and exotic treasures set around an elegant Georgian mansion. After being pressed into service to help the war effort in both world wars, Dunham Massey was taken over by the National Trust in

1976 and work began to transform the garden to its former glory. It was decided that the garden would have an Edwardian pleasure ground feel with the freedom to choose from a range of planting options, with native favourites alongside exotic treasures. The garden continues to evolve today - modern additions include the Rose Garden and the Winter Garden. Next, we explore **Tatton Park**, whose gardens have developed over 200 years yet retain much of their Edwardian character. (*B, D*)

Day 4 Today we visit **Arley Hall**, which preserves the atmosphere of a garden kept for its own delight. A pair of herbaceous borders were laid out here in 1846 and they survive to this day, beautifully maintained - one of the great garden sights of England. Following this, we return to our original departure points. (*B*)

Inc. meals: *B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner*



The Paradise Garden, RHS Bridgewater
© RHS Neil Hepworth

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star BW Pinewood Hotel in Wilmslow
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

11 - 14 May	£695	£645
Single Supplement		£120

Tour code: **BBNW**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,295

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

NO SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT

PREMIUM

Stately Homes and Seaside Castles of Norfolk

Our historical tour of Norfolk takes us through verdant rolling countryside to many of the fine stately homes including Sandringham, the much-loved retreat of the British monarchy, where we enjoy an afternoon tea followed by a private guided tour. Other highlights include the 500-year-old Oxburgh Hall, Blickling Estate, a stunning Jacobean mansion, a trip on the North Norfolk Heritage Railway and Wolterton Park, set in classic English parkland. We round off the tour with a visit to Lady Walpole at her ancestral family home, the charming, moated manor of Mannington Hall, where we enjoy a guided tour and lunch.

Day 1 We depart from our designated pick-up points (London, Colchester) and head to **Oxburgh Hall**, a stunning moated country house before continuing to **Castle Rising**. (D)

Day 2 We begin at **Blickling Estate**, a Jacobean mansion surrounded by magnificent gardens, historic parklands and delightful meadows before enjoying a nostalgic trip aboard the **North Norfolk Railway**. From here, we pay a visit to **Sandringham**, the private home to five generations of British monarchs, where we will enjoy afternoon tea and a guided tour. (B, AT, D)

Day 3 We tour **Holkham Hall**, the home of the Earls of Leicester with a vast collection of art. Nearby is **Hindringham Hall**, where we enjoy a private tour of the lovely gardens. (B, D)

Day 4 We depart for **Hoveton Hall**, which has been in the Buxton family since 1946 and is a much-loved family home. We have a tour of the house with the owner. This afternoon we head to **Wolterton Hall**, set in over 150 acres of sculptured parkland. We have in depth tour of the house and the garden followed by some light refreshments in the Saloon. (B, D)

Day 5 We depart for **Mannington Hall**, a charming moated medieval manor house and home to the Walpole family where we join **Lady Walpole** for a tour of her estate. Enjoy some time to view the gardens then a light lunch before we take to the road to return to our original pick-up points. (B, L)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner



Oxburgh Hall

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner (with wine), bed & breakfast at the 4-star Knights Hill Hotel, King's Lynn
- ▶ One lunch and one afternoon tea
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

19 - 23 May **£1,395** **£1,295**

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Tour code: **BPCN**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,745

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Dutch Bulbfields in Spring

Enjoy a riot of colour among the beautiful bulbfields of Holland where nothing quite compares to the sight of not hundreds, not thousands, but millions of flowering bulbs, carpeting the fields in a radiant vision of patterns and patchwork. Included in this relaxing cruise aboard a comfortable ship with a delightful French ambience is a visit to one of the most famous gardens in the world: Keukenhof, a stunning display of bulbs of every variety.

Day 1 We depart by rail from London St Pancras to Antwerp, where we visit the **Museum Mayer Van Den Bergh**, which has an intimate and homely atmosphere and showcases work by Belgian artists from the 16th century, and the **Botanic Garden**. We later embark the MS La Bohème and enjoy a **welcome cocktail reception** before dinner. (D)

Day 2 This morning we cruise from Antwerp to **Rotterdam**. On arrival we venture ashore and explore at leisure. (B, L, D)

Day 3 We cruise from Rotterdam to Utrecht then depart for **Keukenhof**, one of the most famous gardens in the world with over seven million bulbs. We rejoin the ship in **Amsterdam** with the evening free to explore ashore, or alternatively join our optional canal cruise, an opportunity to view this spectacular city from the water. (B, L, D)

Day 4 Today we explore **Kasteel Museum Sypesteijn**, built in the early 20th century in 17th

century style. Located beside the Loosdrecht lake and River Vecht, the castle is surrounded by stunning gardens. Later, we visit **De Haar Castle** which has equally splendid grounds including a Roman garden, ponds and canals, as well as both French and Romantic English landscape styles. (B, L, D)

Day 5 We disembark and have the morning free to explore **Amsterdam**. Recommended is a visit to the **Museum Van Loon**, a magnificent canal-side private residence from the Dutch 'Golden Age', with a large collection of paintings, fine porcelain and silver. In the afternoon, we catch the train from Amsterdam Centraal railway station to London St Pancras. (B)

A three-night Amsterdam extension is available from £345pp, including 4-star hotel, breakfasts, transfers and a three-day Amsterdam Travel Card

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Keukenhof Gardens

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' full board accommodation on board the MS Beethoven in an Upper deck cabin
- ▶ Drinks on board with meals and at the bar (excluding premium drinks and spirits)
- ▶ Standard class rail travel from London to Antwerp, returning from Amsterdam
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all visits
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

4 - 8 May

Upper Deck **£1,845** **£1,745**

Single Supplement **£375**

Optional Excursions:
Amsterdam canal cruise **£49**

Tour code: **BCDB**

8 DAYS FROM
£2,295

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

TOUR MANAGER
TREVOR EDWARDS

Gardens and Villas of Sicily

Sicily has become one of Europe's best-loved destinations in recent years and it is truly an island of the senses. As soon as you step on to its warm and fertile shores you'll understand why. Our eight-day tour takes in the best that the island has to offer, with a strong emphasis on gardens, which is what sets this holiday apart from other Sicilian offerings. From an elegant garden on the slopes of Mount Etna we continue to Taormina and visit a private garden which boasts spectacular views across the bay before exploring the Greco-Roman remains of the city itself. Heading south we gain an exclusive insight into Sicilian gardening with a member of the team at Villasmundo and visit the private garden of a Sicilian aristocrat. We conclude in Palermo, a melting-pot of architectural styles.

Day 1 We depart from London to Catania and upon arrival we transfer to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 Visit **Villa Trinità**, an elegant garden born from lava, which thrives on the slopes of Etna. This afternoon we take an excursion to **Mount Etna**, Europe's highest active volcano. (B, L, D)

Day 3 Today is ours to explore **Taormina** and its many highlights, including the private garden of **Casa Cuseni**. (B, D)

Day 4 We begin at the **Gardens of Princess Maria Carla Borghese**, created out of barren ground almost 50 years ago. Next it's on to **San Giuliano**, where a member of the team gives us an exclusive insight into Sicilian gardening. (B, D)

Day 5 We discover an extensive collection of herbs and spices with a multisensory tour of **Gli Aromi Sicily**. Lunch here makes for today's biggest highlight. (B, L, D)

Day 6 After lunch at a former **Benedictine monastery**, we transfer to the village of Monreale and visit the **Cathedral and Abbey**, with its 70,000 square feet of mosaics, amazing gold leaf and glass interiors. (B, L, D)

Day 7 In Palermo we visit the **Botanical Gardens**, the public garden of **Villa Giulia** and the impressive **Norman Palace**. (B, D)

Day 8 Transfer to the airport and fly to London. (B)
Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Villa Giulia

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Seven nights' dinner including wine, bed & breakfast: three nights in Giardini Naxos; two nights in Ragusa; two nights in Palermo
- ▶ Three lunches
- ▶ Return flights from London to Sicily
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of Trevor Edwards as tour manager plus a local guide

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
19 - 26 Mar	£2,395	£2,295
16 - 23 Apr	£2,595	£2,495
Single Supplement		£395

Tour code: **BSIC**

8 DAYS FROM
£2,695

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

TOUR MANAGER
KATE WILLIAMSON

Villas and Gardens of the Italian Lakes

Our tour begins with a visit to the private garden of the President of the Italian Camellia Society, home to a collection of over 500 plants. We also discover the three Borromean islands, Bella, Madre and Pescatori, which feature sumptuous terraced gardens and elegant statuary. Other highlights include Villa Taranto and Villa Pallavicino, where animals from the villa's own zoo roam the grounds, and a private guided tour at Villa Cicogna Mozzoni.

Day 1 We depart from London to Milan and transfer to our hotel at Lake Maggiore for lunch. (L, D)

Day 2 Visit the gardens of **Villa Taranto**, flourishing with rare botanical examples and a wide range of plants. Later, we visit the most remarkable wholesale nursery business in the Italian Lake District, **Compagnia Del Lago**. (B, D)

Day 3 Today we tour the Borromean islands. We cruise from Stresa to **Isola Bella** and continue to **Isola Pescatori** and **Isola Madre**. (B, D)

Day 4 Tour the private garden of the **President of the Italian Camellia Society**, home to 500 plants and 318 cultivars. After lunch, we have free time in Stresa before we pay a visit to **Villa Pallavicino**. (B, L, D)

Day 5 Explore the perfect example of a formal Italian garden at **Villa Cicogna Mozzoni** situated in what were ancient hunting grounds for the nobility,

in the foothills between Varese and Lake Lugano. Here we will be privileged to enjoy a private guided tour with the owner. Later we transfer to our hotel in Como. (B, D)

Day 6 Today is free to explore at your own pace. Take a boat trip on the lake or visit the nearby **Villa Melzi d'Eril** (admission not included). (B, D)

Day 7 We spend the day on **Lake Como**. On arrival in **Tremezzo** we will have time to enjoy the elegant 18th century **Villa Carlotta**, where tree ferns, palms, eucalyptus, Japanese maples and cactus revel in the microclimatic conditions. Next, we continue to **Villa Balbianello**, which offers unparalleled views down the three branches of the lake. (B, D)

Day 8 Today we transfer to Milan airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Isola Bella

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Seven nights' dinner, bed & breakfast: four nights at the 4-star Grand Majestic Hotel, Lake Maggiore and three nights at the 4-star Hotel Barchetta Excelsior, Lake Como
- ▶ Two lunches
- ▶ Return flights from London to Milan
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all visits
- ▶ Services of officially accredited guide Kate Williamson as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
1 - 8 May	£2,795	£2,695
Single Supplement		£595

Tour code: **BSLG**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,995

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

TOUR MANAGER
KATE WILLIAMSON

Palladian Villas of Veneto

Join us as we discover no fewer than five glorious villas on our tour. The first on our list is one of the most recognisable buildings of the Renaissance - the palladian masterpiece, **Villa Rotonda**. Others featured on this stunning itinerary include **Villa Valmarana**, **Villa Barbarigo** and **Villa Valmarana**, where family members give us a personal tour and host dinner. We also have a special farewell dinner, hosted by old Italian nobility - the **Godi Malinverni** family.

Day 1 We depart from London to Venice and visit the grand gardens of the **Villa Pisani**. (D)

Day 2 We are joined by a local guide for a walking tour of Vicenza's historic city centre, including the wonderful **Teatro Olimpico**. We continue to **Villa Rotonda**, where we have a personal guided tour with the aristocratic owner. From here, we visit the **Villa Valmarana** and enjoy a personally guided tour followed by dinner in a room adorned with Tiepolo's frescoes. The Villa's surroundings are designed to suit different tastes and functional needs, ranging from an Italian garden with dovecote, a walk in the shadow of two hundred year-old horn oaks and a frescoed pagoda. (B, D)

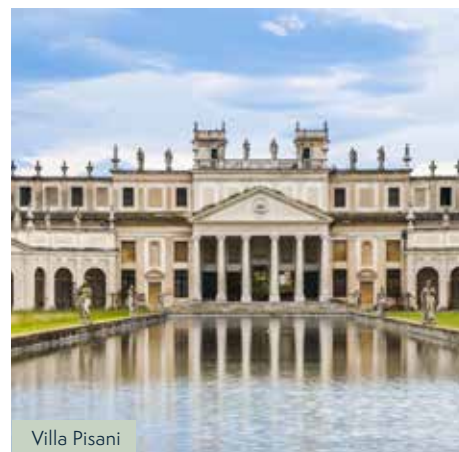
Day 3 We start at the **Villa Barbarigo**, surrounded by an exceptional example of Baroque gardens. One of the most striking features is a series of ascending pools decorated with statues and

fountain. Next, we'll have a photo opportunity outside **Villa Vescovi** in the Euganean Hills. Dating from 1535, this was the summer retreat of the Bishops of Padua. Later, we explore **Le Paradis des Papillons**, a wonderful garden which is a haven for butterflies and birds. (B, D)

Day 4 After breakfast, we explore the **Villa Barbaro**, with its secret garden behind the villa. In the evening we visit the lustrous **Villa Godi Malinverni**, where we have a gala dinner, hosted by the aristocratic owners. (B, D)

Day 5 We head for Padua and visit the **Orto Botanico** (Botanic Garden) followed by the **Scrovegni Chapel**, with its exquisite Giotto frescoes, before our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Villa Pisani

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' bed and breakfast in the 4-star Sweet Hotel in Schiavon (or similar)
- ▶ Four dinners
- ▶ Return flights London to Venice
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all visits
- ▶ Services of officially accredited guide Kate Williamson as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
21 - 25 May	£2,095	£1,995
Single Supplement		£195

Tour code: **BVEN**

4 DAYS FROM
£1,595

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Rome, Ninfa and Castel Gandolfo

Open by special arrangement, we are delighted to offer this rare opportunity to visit the beautiful gardens of Ninfa. We also have the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the Popes as we visit the gardens of Castel Gandolfo. We also visit Villa Lante, a study in geometry and symmetry dating back to the 16th century, and tour the 16th century gardens at Villa D'Este, romantically overgrown with tall pines, evergreen oaks and cedars.

Day 1 We depart from London to Rome, where upon arrival we have a short city tour that includes the **Colosseum**, **St. Peter's Square and Basilica** and the **Spanish Steps**. (D)

Day 2 After breakfast we depart for **Viterbo**, where we have a guided tour. We'll see a number of grand palaces and old churches enclosed by an intact set of medieval walls. Nearby, we find the gardens of **Villa Lante**, described as "one of Italy's greatest Renaissance gardens." The dominant theme is water, and in front of the palazzina is a central water parterre, which is a classic example of late-Renaissance or mannerist style. A later addition is the French-style parterre de broderie, with intricate shapes in clipped box set against a ground cover of reddish gravel. (B)

Day 3 The gardens of **Castel Gandolfo** await discovery this morning, the traditional papal

residence outside of Rome. In the afternoon, we visit **Ninfa** - named after a mythical nymph and with a curious history. The garden is now deemed to be the most beautiful garden in Europe, though for hundreds of years the site lay deserted due to malaria. After the mosquito hazard was removed in 1922, the Duchess of Sermoneta and her son Prince Caetani began to lay out a romantic garden among the village ruins. (B)

Day 4 This morning we visit **Villa d'Este** in Tivoli, the 16th century gardens known for their use of water. From the upper terrace, the valley is filled with sparkling spray and the senses are met by the sound of cascading water. Amble along the Path of One Hundred Fountains to the remains of the miniature Rometta. Later, we transfer to the airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Gardens of Ninfa

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Three nights' bed & breakfast at a 4-star hotel in Rome
- ▶ Dinner and welcome drink on the first evening
- ▶ Return flights from London to Rome
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
14 - 17 May	£1,695	£1,595
Single Supplement		£420

Tour code: **BRNI**

6 DAYS FROM
£2,245

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

TOUR MANAGER
TREVOR EDWARDS

Gardens of the French Riviera - International Rose Festival

The French Riviera, a century-long symbol of glamour, showcases opulent gardens by Thomas Hanbury and the Rothschilds. Visit Grasse for the International Rose Festival amid azure skies. The rose festival features intense perfume displays, creating an idyllic paradise for the wealthy.

Day 1 We depart from London on a flight to **Nice**, where we visit the garden of **Serre de la Madone**, a place of luxuriant and exotic beauty. (L, D)

Day 2 We visit the **Fondation Ephrussi de Rothschild** at St Jean Cap Ferrat, a garden designed as a series of compartments. We continue to the **Jardin Exotique d'Èze**, filled with several hundred species of exotic plants (cacti, aloes, agaves). (B, L)

Day 3 We begin at the private garden of **Clos du Peyronnet** for a guided tour. Next, we go from France to Italy and tour the stunning gardens of **La Mortola**, perhaps the greatest of the Riviera Gardens in the richness of its collections. (B, L, D)

Day 4 Today following breakfast we depart for a visit to the International **Rose Festival in Grasse**, a truly magical event filled with colour and fragrance. There are a variety of fringe attractions, including perfume displays, but roses – of every colour, variety and style imaginable – are the key feature,

with a competitive aspect that is taken very seriously. (B)

Day 5 We drive to **Cap d'Antibes** for a visit to **Villa Thuret**, home to a huge collection of rare plants; the private garden of **La Mouissone** and the artists' village of **St Paul de Vence**. (B, L, D)

Day 6 We conclude in the glamorous surroundings of **Monte Carlo**, playground of the rich and famous, where we take a walk through some of the charming public parks and gardens. Later, we transfer to Nice airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Ephrussi de Rothschild

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Five nights' bed & breakfast at the 4-star Hotel Le Grimaldi, Nice (or similar)
- Three dinners and four lunches
- Return flights from London to Nice
- Comfortable coach travel throughout
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Change to Services of Trevor Edwards as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

International Rose Festival

11 - 16 May **£2,295** **£2,245**

Single Supplement **£495**

Tour code: **BFRR**

4 DAYS FROM
£1,195

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

The Genius of Monet

Just as the gardens at Giverny inspired Monet, who spent half his life nurturing and enjoying them, they continue to enthral visitors more than 90 years after his death. The restored gardens give a vivid impression of Monet's favourite subjects. The perfect complement to Giverny is the Orangerie Museum in Paris. The centrepiece of this outstanding collection is Monet's breathtaking series of murals, *Les Nymphéas*. These two-metre-high murals extend to almost 200m in length and provide a moving testament to the genius of a painter at the height of his powers. Besides Giverny, we visit the Château de Chantilly, with its collection of fine art and its gardens designed by Le Nôtre, and also the market town of Senlis.

Day 1 We depart from London by Eurostar and upon arrival in Paris we are met by our comfortable coach. We travel to the charming town of **Chantilly**, in the heart of the Chantilly Forest, where our hotel is set in its own wooded grounds. Later, we enjoy a welcome glass of kir before sitting down to dinner. (D)

Day 2 This morning, we transfer to the **Château de Chantilly**, one of the jewels in the crown of France's cultural heritage, a magnificent edifice surrounded by water. Our visit includes the sumptuously decorated Grands Appartements, along with time to stroll around the extensive formal gardens, designed in part by André le Nôtre. Later we

transfer to **Senlis**, a market town typical of Picardy, where we can explore the shops or enjoy some pâtisserie. (B, D)

Day 3 The famous house and gardens of **Claude Monet** await discovery today, along with free time in **Giverny** where you can visit the church where Monet is buried. (B, D)

Day 4 We travel to Paris today and visit the **Musée de l'Orangerie des Tuileries**. The highlights of its collection are Monet's two-metre-high murals, entitled *Les Nymphéas*. Thereafter, there is time to sightsee at leisure before we catch our Eurostar train back to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Monet's Garden

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Three nights' dinner (with wine), bed & breakfast at the Château de Montvillargenne, Chantilly
- Return standard class rail travel between London and Paris with Eurostar
- Comfortable coach travel
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

24 - 27 May **£1,295** **£1,195**

Single Supplement **£295**

Tour code: **BMOG**

6 DAYS FROM
£1,795

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Gardens and Architecture of Mallorca

Away from the busy beach resorts, the Balearic island of Mallorca offers a timeless, verdant landscape of wooded hills and orange groves, sweeping bays and rocky mountains. Dotted around the island is a host of historic gardens whose origins date back hundreds of years, as well as more modern creations, providing a rich range of horticultural delights.

Day 1 We depart from London to Palma and transfer to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 Our day starts at the gardens of **Raixa**, once part of a Moorish estate. The garden is divided into seven terraces with parterres, pergolas, fountains and loggias. From here, we take a tour of the garden of **Son Marroig**, which is arranged in a series of attractive terraces and the dramatic views of the rocky coastline make this garden memorable. Later, we take a ride on the vintage narrow gauge train, known as the **Orange Blossom Express** that runs along a highly scenic route from Soller to Palma. (B, L, D)

Day 3 We visit the **Jardines de Alfabia**, where young chusan plants (*Trachycarpus fortunei*) contrast with more substantial mature date palms. After lunch, we visit the monastery of **Real Cartuja de Valldemosa** with its green bell tower. (B, L, D)

Day 4 Today we tour the city of **Palma**. Visits here include the **Gothic cathedral**, the former royal residence **Palacio de la Almudaina** and the adjacent **Hort del Rei**, the 10th century **Arab Baths** and the **Castell de Belver**, a heavily fortified Gothic castle that is now the city's museum. (B, L, D)

Day 5 After breakfast, we transfer to the **Albufera Nature Reserve**, the island's major reserve of maritime marshlands, and the **Formentor Woods**. We enjoy lunch in the former capital of the island, **Alcudia**, and then transfer to the **Museo Sa Bassa Blanca**, which showcases a collection of modern art exhibitions with surrounding beautiful gardens. (B, L, D)

Day 6 After breakfast, we transfer to Palma airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Raixa

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Five nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Hotel THB Maria Isabel, Playa de Palma, plus four lunches
- Return flights from London to Palma
- Comfortable coach travel throughout
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

23 - 28 Apr **£1,895** £1,795

Single Supplement £325

Tour code: **BMCA**

8 DAYS FROM
£1,895

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Gardens and Architecture of Andalucia

Andalucia is unrivalled in Europe for its wealth of history, culture, Moorish architecture and gardens – all set against the backdrop of the snow-capped mountains of the Sierra Nevada. We visit the gardens which complement the adjoining palaces and discover the wild mountain landscapes. A highlight for many will be the wonderful Generalife Gardens in Granada, where patios and terraces are filled with colour, and captivating views of the city are framed by archways. Moving on to Córdoba we will visit the Great Mosque, one of the most ancient garden sites in the world, and continue to the vibrant city of Seville, where visits include the Cathedral and the Maria-Luisa Park. Our tour concludes in the dramatically situated town of Ronda with its Moorish courtyards.

Day 1 We depart from London to Málaga and on arrival, we transfer to our hotel for our evening meal. (D)

Day 2 Visit the **Alhambra Palace** and **Generalife Gardens**, Granada's outstanding attraction with a spectacular setting above the city. Later we take a wander through the medieval streets of the Albaicín, catching glimpses of patio gardens. (B)

Day 3 Head to the **Alpujarra** and **Sierra Nevada** region, paying visits to small villages and enjoying beautiful scenery along the way. (B)

Day 4 We spend the day in **Córdoba**. Here, we discover the **Great Mosque** with its Orange Grove, which was first laid out in the late 8th

century and must be one of the true wonders of the world. (B, D)

Day 5 Enjoy a guided tour of **Seville** including the **Plaza de España**, **Gardens of Murillo**, the **Cathedral**, Seville's Orange Tree Courtyard and the **Royal Palaces of the Alcázar**. (B)

Day 6 Today is free to explore **Seville**. (B)

Day 7 We visit **Ronda** to see its **Alameda del Tajo Gardens** and the **Palacio de Mondragon**. We continue to our hotel. (B, D)

Day 8 After breakfast, we transfer to Málaga airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Generalife Gardens

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Seven nights' bed & breakfast: three nights at the 4-star Hotel Santos Saray in Granada; three nights at the 3-star Hotel Macarena in Seville; one night at the 3-star Hotel R. Polo in Ronda (or similar)
- Three dinners
- Return flights from London to Málaga
- Comfortable coach travel throughout
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Services of a professional tour manager & local guides

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024

13 - 20 May **£1,995** £1,895

Single Supplement £395

Tour code: **BANG**

8 DAYS FROM
£2,195

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Gardens of Madeira

Set in a bright blue sea, some 400 miles off the coast of Africa, lies the lush, volcanic Portuguese island of Madeira. Much of the island is assigned as a conservation area where rare flowers cover the island like a green mantle. One of the best ways to explore the island is by following the footpaths alongside the "levadas" (small man-made irrigation canals), which wind their way around the island, and we have included a gentle half-day levada walk, with the opportunity to take further walks on your free days. Further highlights include the splendid Palheiro Gardens and the glorious Monte Palace Gardens, and our departure is timed to coincide with Madeira's Flower Festival, when the streets are carpeted in flowers and colourful displays can be seen on every corner.

Day 1 We depart from London on a flight to **Funchal**. On arrival we transfer to our hotel accommodation. (D)

Day 2 We begin our exploration of Madeira with a visit to the **Quinta da Boa Vista**, home to the best orchid collection on the island. In the afternoon we visit the **Botanical Gardens**, with more than 2,000 exotic plants. (B)

Day 3 We visit the **Quinta do Palheiro** (formerly known as **Blandy Gardens**). In the afternoon we will enjoy a gentle half-day walk on the footpaths alongside the "levadas". (B)

Day 4 Today we visit the local market followed by the **Quinta Vigia**, a small garden which is part of the Presidential Palace, and the neighbouring **Santa Catarina Park**, set in a natural amphitheatre. (B)

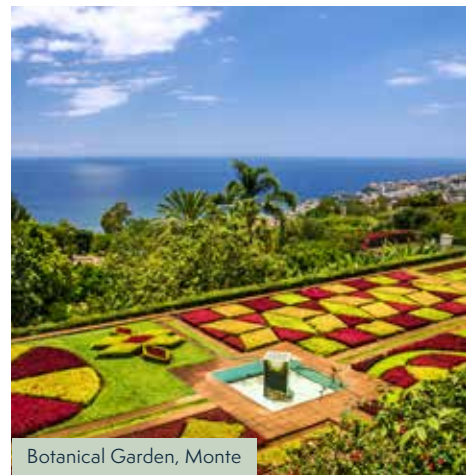
Day 5 Today is at leisure to relax in the hotel or explore on your own. Alternatively join us on an optional full day tour of the island, with lunch. (B)

Day 6 We take the 10-minute cable car ride to the wonderful **Monte Palace Gardens** which surround the chateau-like Palace. In the afternoon we go to the famous **Reid's Palace Hotel** for a tour of the lush gardens followed by a delicious afternoon tea in luxurious surroundings. (B, AT)

Day 7 Today is at leisure to relax in the hotel or explore on your own. A farewell dinner will be served in the hotel in the evening. (B, D)

Day 8 After breakfast, we transfer to Funchal airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner



Botanical Garden, Monte

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Seven nights' bed and breakfast at the 4-star Golden Residence Hotel, Funchal (or similar)
- ▶ Welcome and farewell dinners at the hotel and afternoon tea at Reid's Palace
- ▶ Return flights from London to Funchal
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager and local guides

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
6 - 13 May	£2,295	£2,195
Single Supplement		£395

Tour code: **BGMD**

5 DAYS FROM
£1,595

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Discover The Durrells' Corfu with Lee Durrell

Explore the Greek island that inspired Gerald Durrell's hilarious accounts of a sun-kissed childhood with his eccentric family (and other animals), as well as ITV's *The Durrells*. During this tour, we meet naturalist and writer Lee Durrell, who will give a talk on her late husband Gerald's pioneering role in wildlife conservation and will accompany us to some of her family's favourite places in Corfu.

Day 1 We depart from London (other airports are available on request) on a flight to Corfu. On arrival we will transfer to our luxurious home for the next four nights: the five-star **Corfu Holiday Palace**. In the afternoon, we ease into our holiday with an optional guided walking tour through picturesque **Corfu Town**. (D)

Day 2 We start today with a visit to one Corfu's must-see destinations, the **Achilleion Museum**, which is filled with statues and other mementoes. Along with our local guide, **Lee Durrell** will join us today as we follow in the footsteps of the Durrells, first by taking a trip to **Pontikonisi**, or Mouse Island, a place that Gerald and his sister Margo both loved to visit, and where Gerald Durrell's ashes are scattered. This evening Lee will give a fascinating talk about the Durrell family's love affair with Corfu and its wildlife and tell the story of her and Gerald's pioneering work for the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust. (B, D)

Day 3 We are joined once again by Lee as we visit some of the unforgettable locations from Gerald Durrell's childhood, his books and the TV series, beginning at the **White House** in Kalami, the beautiful building on the north-east coast of Corfu that was once the home of Lawrence Durrell, Gerald's novelist brother. In the afternoon we continue to the **Lake of the Lillies**, where Lee will give a poignant reading from the chapter in which it features in *My Family and Other Animals*. We conclude today at the picturesque village of **Perithia**, the oldest on the island, dating back to the 14th century. We will enjoy **lunch** featuring local specialities in one of the tavernas and later meet a local bee keeper with an opportunity to buy some delicious wild honey. (B, L, D) **Day 4** Today is free to discover more of Corfu at your leisure. (B, D)

Day 5 We transfer to Corfu airport in time to catch our flight home. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner



Mouse Island

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Four nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the 5-star Corfu Holiday Palace
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ Return flights from London to Corfu
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Special Appearance by Lee Durrell, including a tour of locations and exclusive evening talk and Q&A session
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager and local guide

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
7 - 11 May	£1,695	£1,595
Single Supplement		£225

Tour code: **BCFU**

8 DAYS FROM
£1,895

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Crete Archaeology

The Greek island of Crete presents a rich tapestry of archaeological treasures, sleepy villages and lively towns, all set in a Homeric landscape of mountains, gorges and flower-strewn pastures. It was home to one of the earliest European civilisations, the Minoans, who roamed these hills some 4,000 years ago. Their legacy can be seen all over the island, in particular at the legendary Palace of Knossos, the centre of the Minoan civilisation in Europe.

Day 1 Upon arrival in **Crete** we transfer to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 Today we visit the **Archaeological Museum** and the mighty **Palace of Knossos**, the centre of the Bronze Age Minoan civilization, which leaves the visitor breathless with wonder at the technology and facilities of that period. (B)

Day 3 Free day, or join our optional excursion to the island of **Spinalonga**, a former leper colony. Later, we enjoy some free time in charming **Agios Nikolaos**. (B)

Day 4 The first stop is at **Gortyn**, an old Greek Roman town with its famous law stones, Roman amphitheatre and the ruins of **Saint Titus**, before we visit **Phaistos**, one of the most important centres of Minoan civilisation, and the most wealthy and powerful city in southern Crete. We continue

to **Zaros**, located on the south slope of Ida Mountain, where we stop at the lake. (B)

Day 5 Enjoy a walking tour of **Rethymnon**, which is a mixture of Venetian and Turkish influences. Later, we travel to **Chania** to explore its historic centre and Venetian harbour. (B)

Day 6 We have free time to explore the local area, or alternatively join our optional excursion to the **Arkadi Monastery** and **Eleutherna Museum** including lunch. (B)

Day 7 Today, we visit the Minoan cemetery of **Armeni** and Byzantine monuments in the picturesque **Amari valley**. (B, D)

Day 8 After breakfast, we transfer to the airport where our tour concludes. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Palace of Knossos

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Seven nights' bed & breakfast: three nights at the 3-star Atrion Hotel, Heraklion and four nights at the 4-star Bio Hotel in Rethymnon
- ▶ One dinner in the hotel and a farewell dinner (with wine) in a local taverna
- ▶ Return flights from London to Crete
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an archaeological expert as tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
23 - 30 Apr	£1,995	£1,895
Single Supplement		£295
Optional Excursions:		
Arkadi Monastery		£110
Spinalonga		£95

Tour code: **BCRE**

7 DAYS FROM
£1,795

SAVE PER PERSON
£100

Malta's Archaeological Heritage

Malta's diminutive archipelago is by no means any indication of the vast riches it holds — from the Neolithic to now, they are many and varied — a land of golden limestone cliff coasts, lucid seas, beautiful laidback towns and heart-stirring views. During this tour, we venture inside the walled citadel of Mdina, explore the warren of narrow tomb lined passages of St Paul's Catacombs, and take to the waves for a boat trip around the spectacular cliffs and caverns of the famed Blue Grotto. But most startling of all, perhaps, are the mysterious sites left by civilisations with whom we are just starting to get acquainted — the millennia-old Mnajdra Temples and the megaliths of Ħaġar Qim: which make for a truly unforgettable archaeological expedition.

Day 1 We depart from London to **Malta** and upon arrival we transfer to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 We explore **Valletta**, Malta's capital city, including the **Upper Barrakka Gardens**, the **Grand Master's Palace** and the **Archaeological Museum**. (B, D)

Day 3 Today we explore **Mosta Church** and the walled citadel of **Mdina**. Later we visit the **Skorba Temples**, the **Museum of Roman Antiquities** and **St. Paul's Catacombs**. (B, D)

Day 4 Visit **Ħaġar Qim** and the **Mnajdra Temples**. We then take a **boat trip** to the stunning **Blue Grotto** and the **Dingli Cliffs**. (B, D)

Day 5 Today is free to spend at leisure or there is an optional excursion to the neighbouring island of **Gozo**, which has archaeological wonders of its own. (B, D)

Day 6 Take a tour of the fishing village of **Marsaxlokk**, visit the **Tarxien Temples** and explore the world-renowned **Hal Saflieni Hypogeum**. This historic wonder is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. (B, D)

Day 7 After breakfast, we transfer to Malta airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Ħaġar Qim

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Six nights' dinner (with wine), bed & breakfast at the 4-star AX ODYCY, St Paul's Bay
- ▶ Return flights from London to Malta
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
7 - 13 May	£1,895	£1,795
Single Supplement		£195
Seaview Room Supplement		£60
Optional Excursion:		
Gozo		£145

Tour code: **BMAL**

6 DAYS FROM
£1,445

SAVE PER PERSON
£50

Galicia's Camellia Route

With a milder, wetter climate than the rest of Spain, the gardens in Galicia have a luxuriant air, accentuated by the fact that many belong to grand country mansions (pazos). Another happy feature of the climate is that camellias thrive here, and in the spring sunshine they provide welcome splashes of colour, blooming exuberantly in shades of white, pink and red. We will follow the length of the camellia route, which extends from La Coruña in the north by way of the historic pilgrimage centre of Santiago de Compostela to Vigo in the south. Along the way, we visit a collection of splendid gardens, including the outstanding Castillo de Soutomaio, while enjoying some spring sunshine and the uplifting sight of one of the garden world's favourite flowering plants in full bloom.

Day 1 We depart from London to **La Coruña** and on arrival transfer to our hotel. (D)

Day 2 This morning we have a **tour of the city** followed by a visit to the garden of **Pazo de Mariñán** which is filled with old camellia plants. (B)

Day 3 We leave La Coruña and head for **Santiago de Compostela** where we will visit the **Monasterio de San Lorenzo de Trasouto**, whose garden is occupied by an extraordinary masterpiece of box topiary. We then visit the great Romanesque **Cathedral** with its Baroque façade and Cloisters, reputed to hold the remains of **St James** which has made Santiago a centre for pilgrimage. (B, D)

Day 4 Depart for the **Pazo de Oca** at La Estrada,

where the practical and the beautiful are united in a network of canals and ponds in a mainly 18th century garden. Our next visit is to the **Pazo de Santa Cruz de Rivadulla** a charming manor house that boasts hundreds of varieties of Camellia. (B)

Day 5 We visit the **Pazo de Rubianes** at Arousa, and the impressive hill top **Castillo de Soutomaio**, which has an important and historic camellia collection. We continue to our hotel in Vigo. (B, D)

Day 6 We visit the **Pazo de Quiñones de León**, a Baroque mansion which became a city museum in 1937. We later transfer to La Coruña airport for our return flight to London. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner



Santiago de Compostela

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Five nights' hotel accommodation on a bed & breakfast basis, plus three dinners with wine; two nights at the Eurostars Ciudad de La Coruña; two nights at the Eurostars Gran Hotel, Santiago de Compostela; one night at the Eurostars de Vigo (or similar)
- Return flights from London to La Coruña
- Comfortable coach travel and all visits
- Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
13 - 18 Mar	£1,495	£1,445
Single Supplement		£195

Tour code: **BCGG**

9 DAYS FROM
£3,095

SAVE PER PERSON
£200

FREE AIRPORT
LOUNGE

Grenada - Gardens of the Spice Island

Based at the Blue Horizons Garden Resort, close by Grand Anse Beach, this most colourful tour features a host of local gardens and estates. We also enjoy a rum distillery tour and tasting, along with the option to enjoy a day cruising on the crystal clear Caribbean waters.

Day 1 Enjoy access to the Executive lounge before we depart from London to Grenada, where welcome drinks and dinner await us. (IF, D)

Day 2 We begin our holiday with an introduction to our hotel's gardens and grounds. (B)

Day 3 Today gets off to a fabulous start with an exploration of the island, with visits to a trio of private gardens; **Gemrose Eden**, **Hyde Park** and the historic **Tower Garden**. (B, AT)

Day 4 After breakfast, a full day island tour awaits, beginning at **Mount Edgecombe**, where we will follow a botanically fascinating trail through the grounds. Next it's on to the botanical wonders at the **Belmont Estate**, known as the Caribbean's finest Agro-tourism experience. A buffet lunch is served here. This afternoon we have a tour and tasting at the **River Antoine Rum Distillery**. (B, L)

Day 5 Our day starts at **Smithy's Garden**, where we enjoy a relaxed Grenadian breakfast with the owner. We then tour the gently sloping garden,

noted for its wild and natural feel, and admire the resident birds. We continue to **Annandale Waterfall** and the **Grand Etang Rainforest**. Our day concludes at the **Balthazar Estate**, where we will see giant heliconia, musa and ginger. (B)

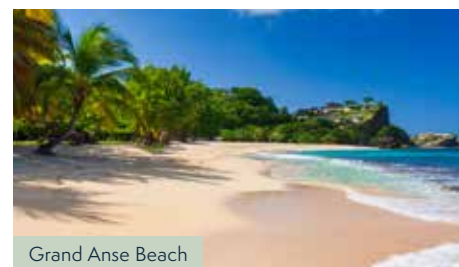
Day 6 Visit **Sunny Side Garden**, home to koi ponds, an orchard and an excellent variety of palms, orchids and hibiscus. The afternoon sees us at **Palm Tree Gardens**, with thousands of flowering plants and its resident tortoises. (B)

Day 7 Our last full day is free to relax or join our optional excursion, a **full day cruise**. We leave St. George's Harbour and sail up the West Coast stopping to snorkel at the Mollinaire Underwater Sculpture Park. (B, D)

Day 8 After a morning in **St George's** we transfer to the airport for our return flight to London. (B, IF)

Day 9 We arrive in London.

Inc. meals: IF: In flight, B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner



Grand Anse Beach

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Seven nights' bed & breakfast at the Blue Horizons Garden Resort in a superior garden view studio
- Two dinners, one lunch, one afternoon tea, welcome and farewell drinks
- Return flights from London to Grenada
- London pre-flight Executive lounge access
- Comfortable coach travel throughout
- All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- Services of a professional tour manager and local guides

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
11 - 19 May	£3,295	£3,095
Single Supplement		£495
Deluxe One Bedroom		
Garden View Room Supplement		from £55
Deluxe One Bedroom Partial		
Ocean View Room Supplement		from £95
Optional Excursion: Cruise		£120

Tour code: **BGRE**



Île aux Aigrettes

12 DAYS FROM
£3,695

SAVE PER PERSON
£200

FREE AIRPORT
LOUNGE

Gardens of Mauritius

The Indian Ocean island of Mauritius is only the size of the county of Surrey, yet it is blessed with a rich and diverse flora and fauna, and is home to some of the rarest plants and creatures in the world. Caressed by a benign climate and light but regular rainfall, virgin forests and coastal lands provide ideal habitats for myriad species, many of them unique to the island – of the 1,000 or so plants indigenous to Mauritius, about 300 are totally unique. Our exploration will reveal trees that will be the last of their kind in existence, giant waterlilies, and colourful Cannas and Heliconias. We will witness outstanding conservation work with almost extinct plants and animals and there will also be plenty of time to enjoy the facilities of our resort hotel, the white sandy beaches and turquoise waters, and soak up the local culture, with its unique combination of European, Indian and African influences.

Day 1 Enjoy access to the airport Executive lounge before we depart from London on our overnight flight to **Mauritius**. (IF)

Day 2 Upon arrival in Mauritius, we transfer to our hotel and have the rest of the day to settle in and relax. (D)

Day 3 Our day starts at **La Vanille Tropical Garden**, where we will have a guided tour of the flora and fauna in this unique zoo. In the afternoon we visit the **Domaine de Saint Aubin**, a colonial house from 1819, which offers a number of different visitor experiences. (B, D)

Day 4 Today we take a boat trip to the island's nature reserve of **Île aux Aigrettes** and continue to the well-stocked **Vaneron Garden Centre and Nursery at Trianon**. An **afternoon tea** with pastries is included here. (B, AT, D)

Day 5 After breakfast, we visit the estate of **Gros Cailloux in Petite Rivière** on the west coast of the island. There are five different sectors which we will discover in our tour: agriculture, fruit and vegetables, a nursery, landscaping and leisure and events. Later we transfer to the capital city of **Port Louis** to explore the modest but very interesting **Natural History Museum** whose exhibits include a rare skeleton of the dodo, which became extinct in the 17th century. (B, D)

Day 6 Free day to relax and enjoy the facilities of the hotel or explore the surrounding area at your leisure. (B, D)

Day 7 Enjoy a guided visit to **Curepipe Botanical Garden** and **Le Petrin Nature Reserve** along with **Ebony Forest**, a conservation project. Our day concludes at the **Seven Coloured Earths**, a rare geological oddity created by volcanic activity. (B, D)

Day 8 We depart on an excursion to the **Black River Gorges National Park**. Look out for the rare tambalacoque or dodo tree, black ebony trees and the exotic birds that perch in them. We also visit the **Plaine Champagne**, the **Grand Bassin** and stop at **La Morne beach** for a swim. (B, D)

Day 9 Travel to the capital **Port Louis** and a visit to the **Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolan Botanic Garden**, famous for its canal full of giant waterlilies. Later we visit the **Domaine de Labourdonnais**, which has become one of the most attractive cultural visits in Mauritius. (B, D)

Day 10 Today we visit the **Exotica Garden Centre and Nursery**, the **Garden of Clothilde** and **Eureka House**, a colonial mansion and garden. (B, L, D)

Day 11/12 For our final day we relax in the hotel before our overnight flight to London. (B, IF)

Inc. meals: IF: In flight, B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner



Giant tortoise

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ▶ Nine nights' dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Anelia Resort and Spa
- ▶ One Afternoon Tea and one lunch
- ▶ Return flights from London to Mauritius
- ▶ London pre-flight Executive lounge access
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2024		
27 Mar - 7 Apr	£3,895	£3,695
Single Supplement		£795
Superior Ocean View Supplement		from £135

Tour code: **BMAU**

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