



Highlights of Southern England: London, Bath & Oxford

11 days | 14 days with Canterbury & London extension

From regal urban residences to age-old hamlets cropping up in the countryside, Southern England merits a trip for itself—and that's before taking London into account. This tour hits it all: Get swept from the English capital to the undulating plains and cobbled lanes of Salisbury, Bath, and Oxford; if that isn't enough, spend a final night on the grounds of Ashridge House, a storied property that has hosted royals and celebrities over the centuries. Keep basking in British beauty and history on this trip's extension to Canterbury and Kent, and discover why the latter's lovingly referred to as "the garden of England."



Your tour package includes

- 9 nights in handpicked hotels
- 9 breakfasts
- 1 lunch
- 4 dinners with beer or wine
- 2 food tastings
- 8 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- London's Tower Bridge
- Buckingham Palace
- Stonehenge
- Salisbury Cathedral
- The Jurassic Coast
- Somerset cheese farm visit
- Bath
- Cotswolds villages of Bibury & Burford
- Oxford University
- Ashridge House & Gardens
- Cream tea & scone tasting

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least two hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with few hills and stairs.

Group size

15–38

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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to London today.

London → 3 nights

Day 2: Arrival in London

Included meals: welcome dinner

Welcome to England! After touching down at London Heathrow Airport—the second-busiest international passenger terminal in the world—transfer to your hotel and unwind. Later in the evening, meet up with your Tour Director and fellow travelers, and get to know one another over a welcome dinner.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of London

Included meals: breakfast

Join a local guide for a panoramic tour of London's regal landmarks, soaking in centuries of history and culture along the way.

- Pass stately Trafalgar Square—a popular public plaza surrounded by museums, galleries, and historic buildings—and St. Paul's Cathedral. Sit atop Ludgate Hill at the highest point of the City of London neighborhood, this Baroque Anglican church dates back to the 17th century and has hosted state funerals and royal jubilees over the years.
- See Westminster Abbey, one of London's four UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Since its consecration in 1065, it's seen 16 royal weddings and the coronation of 40 monarchs, and serves as the final resting place of 18 British rulers.
- Catch a glimpse of skyline icons like the Elizabeth Tower (the clock tower known as Big Ben) and the London Eye observation wheel. Then, take some time to marvel at the Tower of London: a historic castle that has functioned as a royal palace and prison, and is now home to the Crown Jewels.
- Stop by Buckingham Palace—the official residence of the ruling monarch—where you might catch the Changing of the Guard ceremony.

From there, depart for an optional, expert-led

tour of the longest-inhabited castle on the planet. Or, enjoy a free afternoon in London proper. The 350-acre Hyde Park is a little over a half-mile from Buckingham Palace; make the walk and roam its grassy fields, or maybe even rent a boat for a leisurely cruise on The Serpentine.
+ Windsor Castle

Day 4: Free day in London

Included meals: breakfast

Yesterday, you saw the Tower of London and the London Eye from a distance—today, if you choose, you'll get much closer. View the city's past and present from two incredible angles on a pair of optional outings. If you'd rather explore on your own, take your free day to check out some of London's many excellent museums. (Some of our favorites: the traditional exhibits of the British Museum in the Bloomsbury district, and the more interactive offerings of the Cutty Sark clipper ship in Greenwich, on the south bank of the River Thames.)

+ Tower of London
+ London Eye & Pub Dinner

Salisbury → 1 night

Day 5: Salisbury Region via Stonehenge & Salisbury

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Head southwest out of London, setting your sights on the iconic monoliths of Stonehenge. Upon arriving, enter the recently opened Stonehenge Visitors Centre, taking in a number of exhibitions before walking to the monument itself. Gaze upon this UNESCO-listed landmark, erected some 5,000 years ago, before hopping back on your bus. From this prehistoric site, drive to the medieval city of Salisbury for a guided sightseeing tour.

- View the soaring spire of Salisbury Cathedral, the 765-year-old mother church of the city, and understand why its ornamented exterior is considered an excellent example of Early English Gothic architecture. Then, go inside to marvel at its sumptuous interior—and one of the only four surviving copies of the *Magna Carta*.

- Stroll the shopping streets of Salisbury proper, snapping pictures of the city's historic buildings as you go.

Leave the city and continue to your hotel in the Salisbury region, where you'll enjoy an included dinner, served with beer or wine, alongside your fellow travelers.

Bath → 2 nights

Day 6: Bath via the Jurassic Coast & cheese farm

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, tasting

Climb aboard your bus and embark on a scenic drive along the UNESCO-listed Jurassic Coast, so named for the many fossils found in its rocky shores.

- First stop: Lulworth Cove! Shaped like a scallop and filled with waters that shift from turquoise to navy, it's a prime example of the area's geography and topography. Use your free time to explore the beach and surrounding hills—or sit back and take it all in.
- Keep along the route, admiring its powerful coastline and peaceful countryside, before stopping at West Bay Beach. If it looks familiar, you aren't mistaken: Its sheer East Cliff and the nearby resort town provided the backdrop for the popular TV series *Broadchurch*. Soak in the sights, then continue to a local restaurant for an included lunch.
- Did you save some room? From lunch, make your way to the Somerset region for a tour of a local farm, complete with a tasting of cheeses crafted on-site.

After eating your fill, turn back north and make for the elegant city of Bath. Pull up to your hotel, then spend a relaxing night in. Or, maybe explore Bath's monument-rich city center.

Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Bath

Included meals: breakfast

Bath has the unique honor of being a double UNESCO World Heritage Site: first named to the list in 1987 for its mix of Roman remains and Georgian aesthetics, then again in 2021 as one of the Great Spa Towns of Europe. Dive right into its highlights today, with your Tour Director in the lead.

- Pass a host of famous places, including the Royal Crescent—one of England’s eminent examples of Palladian architecture—and the Circus. And no visit to Bath would be complete without entering its namesake attraction: the Roman Baths that have stood since the first century A.D.
- Enjoy free time for lunch and shopping, or enter the Bath Abbey on your own. Founded in the seventh century and expanded in the English Gothic fashion, it’s a stone’s throw from the Roman Baths and a worthwhile visit for any architecture aficionado.

Once you’ve recharged, join an optional excursion and head further into the city to visit the home-turned-museum of a certain author—and Bath’s most famous resident. Alternatively, spend some free time indulging at a modern-day spa, fed by the same thermal waters that soothed the Romans thousands of years ago.

+ Literary Bath & Afternoon Tea

Oxford → 2 nights

Day 8: Oxford via the Cotswolds

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

One of 46 nationally designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the UK, the Cotswolds is widely regarded as the most picturesque landscape in all of England. Today, spend some time driving through its lush pastures and down its country lanes, stopping in villages as you go.

- Begin in Bibury, a town of just 627 people, and take a leisurely stroll down Arlington Row—a cottage-lined lane so pretty that Henry Ford purportedly attempted to buy them all and ship them to the United States for reconstruction. (He only ended up purchasing one.)
- Continue to Burford, the “Gateway to the Cotswolds” and a living exhibition of Tudor and Georgian architecture. Walk down High Street, taking it all in, before breaking for lunch.

Wrap up in the Cotswolds and make the short drive to the city of Oxford. Freshen up in your hotel room, then reconvene in the evening for an included dinner, served with beer or wine.

Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Oxford

Included meals: breakfast

Beyond the oldest university in the English-speaking world, you’ll find buildings of every

English architectural style in Oxford—even dating as far back as the late Anglo-Saxon period. Spend the first half of your day following a local guide on a walking tour of the city, admiring its spire-studded skyline as you go. Then, tread the campuses of New College and Christ Church, constituent schools of the University of Oxford and educational institutions that trace their roots back as far as 1379. Learn about their academic heritage and legacy, and come to know how the latter simultaneously serves as a cathedral and place of higher learning. (An extra fun fact: Oxford University was used as a filming location for the *Harry Potter* franchise, as well as other movies!) Once you finish, board your bus for an optional trip to Blenheim Palace—birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill—or spend a free afternoon in Oxford.

Please note: The New College closes during the academic year. If it’s closed, your group will visit a different campus instead.

+ Blenheim Palace & Lunch

Ashridge House → 1 night

Day 10: Transfer to Ashridge House

Included meals: breakfast, tasting, farewell dinner

The English countryside is dotted with grand, historic estates set within acres of meadows, woodlands, and immaculately manicured gardens. Ashridge House ticks all those boxes, and today, you’ll be treated as an honored guest.

- Travel to the former royal residence of King Henry VIII and Princess Elizabeth I and spend a day immersed in regal splendor. While on its 190-acre grounds, you’ll tour the main house and saunter through its Italian gardens.
- Use some free time to explore the property at your leisure, or perhaps grab lunch at its on-site cafe.
- Rejoin your group for a tasting of cream tea and scones, a quintessentially English pick-me-up.

Afterward, settle into your overnight accommodations on the grounds of Ashridge House. Get situated, then celebrate your trip with your group during a farewell dinner, served with beer or wine.

Flight Home

Day 11: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early

morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home, or extend your stay to continue exploring the storybook scenery of Kent County. (And if you wanted some more time in London, don’t worry—we’ve got you covered.)

+ Canterbury & London extension

You don’t have to go to continental Europe to find Roman walls, medieval streets, and rolling wine country—it all exists just a few hours outside of London. On this trip’s extension, you’ll spend some more time in Southern England, calling the holy city of Canterbury home for two nights. Enter its UNESCO-listed cathedral and see a slew of other highlights; if you’re so inclined, venture out into Kent County on an optional excursion and spend an afternoon sampling the fruits of its vineyards. Finally, end your tour by returning to the English capital for a final night of merriment.

Canterbury → 2 nights

Day 11: Canterbury via Leeds Castle

Included meals: breakfast

Thanks to its abundant orchards and hop gardens, the county of Kent more than earns its nickname of “the Garden of England”—and that’s before you realize over a quarter of its area contributes to a pair of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Today, you’ll drive into this lovely corner of the country, stopping at Leeds Castle en route.

Built across two islands in a lake formed by the River Len, Leeds Castle has existed in one form or another since 857. It’s been expanded over the years, and during your tour of the property, you’ll enter its library, dining room, writing room, and salon. Close your eyes and picture the countless late-night parties it hosted in the 1930s as Olive, Lady Baillie’s residence. Continue to your hotel in the city of Canterbury and enjoy a free evening to explore the area.

Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Canterbury

Included meals: breakfast

Travel to Canterbury—yet another UNESCO World Heritage Site—this morning and join a local guide for a walking tour.

- Step inside Canterbury Cathedral, seat of the leader of the Church of England and an enduring symbol of the city.

- Proceed to the King's Mile neighborhood and walk about in the shadow of quaint buildings and independent shops.
- Pass by King's Bridge, spanning the Great Stour, and stand in Buttermarket square, letting 800+ years of history wash over you.

Add an optional jaunt out into the Kent countryside for an afternoon of wine-sipping, or hang back in Canterbury and explore the city at your pace.

+ Kent Wine Country & Lunch

London → 1 night

Day 13: Transfer to London

Included meals: breakfast

Return to London this morning and enjoy a free afternoon—or maybe join your new friends on a tasty trip into the East End.

Whichever you choose, regroup in the evening for a farewell drink as a group.

+ London's East End: Brick Lane & Curry Dinner

Flight Home

Day 14: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: goaheadtours.ca/ASH | 1-800-754-5066

Day 3: Windsor Castle

\$175CAD (5 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Led by a Blue Badge Guide, you'll travel to Windsor for a guided tour of the world's largest and longest-inhabited castle. Founded by William the Conqueror in 1070, Windsor has been the British Royal Family's preferred retreat for the past 900 years. Step inside the State Apartments and St. George's Chapel, where knighting ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter take place. View the exhibit of royal treasures within the castle. You'll then have time to stroll through the town of Windsor and have a look at Eton College, a prestigious prep school attended by Princes William and Harry. Please note: When the Windsor Castle excursion falls on a Wednesday, entrance will be replaced by an excursion to Hampton Court. For any departures where the Windsor Castle excursion falls on a Tuesday, the excursion will be moved to another day on tour or cancelled. Additionally, St. George's Chapel is closed to the public on Sundays. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

Day 4: Tower of London

\$149CAD (3 hours, departs in the morning)

Enter the Tower of London, a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its dark history of treason, imprisonment, and beheadings. With a local Blue Badge Guide leading the way, you'll explore the nooks and crannies of this royal castle, seeing ancient coin collections, suits of armor, and the glittering Crown Jewels as you go. Explore exhibitions about the Royal Mint and old armaments before watching a live historical reenactment and visiting the White Tower. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

Day 4: London Eye & Pub Dinner

\$195CAD (5 hours, departs in the evening with dinner)

Glide through London's skyline, 450 feet above the River Thames, on the London Eye—the world's fourth-tallest observation wheel. Settle into an enclosed gondola for a 30-minute ride and take in the view of the city below. (In clear weather, the panorama stretches for 25 miles.) Afterward, take a brief tour of London's West End before ending your outing with dinner at a local pub. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

Day 7: Literary Bath & Afternoon Tea

\$169CAD/\$179CAD* (3 hours, departs in the afternoon)

World-famous for novels that defied gender norms and detailed iconic characters, author Jane Austen was Bath's most famous resident. Make your way to the Jane Austen Centre, where you'll enjoy a presentation delivered by a costumed guide. Then, explore this beautifully decorated Georgian townhouse on your own, learning more about the Regency era and how it informed Austen's work. Once finished, you'll sit down

for a cuppa in the Regency Tea Room, paired with a light lunch. Turn the page on your visit by heading to Persephone Books, an independent publisher that reprints neglected authors—most of whom are women from the mid-20th century. Peruse its collection of novels, short stories, and more (and maybe grab a book for your return flight) before going back to your hotel.

Day 9: Blenheim Palace & Lunch

\$219CAD/\$229CAD* (4.5 hours, departs in the afternoon, includes lunch)

Start this excursion with an included lunch at a local pub before leaving Oxford for the gorgeous grounds of Blenheim Palace. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987, this Baroque-style residence was the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill; while there, you'll learn about the events that shaped the former prime minister's personal and political life. Go from the home's lavish state rooms, bedecked with works of art, to the Churchill Exhibition, before ending your time at Blenheim with a stroll through a portion of its 2,000 acres of gardens and water terraces.

Extension excursion options

Day 12: Kent Wine Country & Lunch

\$159CAD/\$169CAD* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon, includes lunch)

Winemaking in England? Thanks to its dry climate and high-quality soil, the county of Kent is home to some 50 exceptional vineyards. Spend an afternoon at one of the region's top wineries, enjoying a guided tour of its fields and developing an understanding of English winemaking. Afterward, enjoy an included seasonal lunch—crafted to complement the vintner's wines—before heading home a satisfied bunch.

Day 13: London's East End: Brick Lane & Curry Dinner

\$185CAD/\$195CAD* (3.5 hours, departs in the evening, includes dinner)

To understand London like a local, you need to go beyond its tourist sites to places like the East End. Once the city's poorest neighborhood, it has since blossomed into a thriving cultural mecca and a safe haven for immigrants escaping persecution. Today, you'll meet up with a local guide in Spitalfields—the heart of London's Bangladeshi community—for a tour of the district. As you go, you'll pass the Kinderstransport Memorial, commemorating the Jewish children who escaped Central Europe before World War II; discover the silk weaving traditions of Protestant Huguenot refugees who fled Catholic persecution in France; and stop at the Brick Lane Mosque to learn of its history as a place of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim worship. Finally, head to Brick Lane—called “Banglatown” by the locals—to check out its vibrant street art and hear about the Bangladeshi community's cultural contributions to the area. Finish up with a Bengali curry dinner, then make your way back to your hotel.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at goaheadtours.ca/terms