

English Gardens

11 DAYS/10 NIGHTS - GROUP TRAVEL
SUGGESTED ITINERARY - CAN BE CUSTOMIZED



As famed English gardener and writer Russell Page once wrote, “green fingers are the extension of a verdant heart.” British culture is intrinsically linked to a passion for horticulture. The perfect destinations for garden lovers, travelers to England and Scotland can experience traditional English gardens, water gardens, rock gardens, bonsai gardens as well as beautiful parks and woodlands – and all in places naturally abundant in beauty like England’s legendary Lake District, which is home to many of the gardens you will visit on this tour. A great many of these gardens are located on the grounds of historic estate and manor houses. Some are so beautiful they have been chosen as film locations (as part of the tour, you will visit one where Jane Eyre was filmed). Visit the very best of Britain’s gardens, and enjoy the historic and literary aspects that will also form part of the itinerary, such as a visit to the former cottages of two beloved English writers: Beatrix Potter and William Wordsworth. You will also tour a museum honoring the 19th century Brontë sisters, the authors of English favorites “Wuthering Heights” and “Jane Eyre.”



DAY 1 ~ ARRIVAL IN GRASMERE

Upon arrival, a Tour Director will meet your group inside the arrivals hall of Manchester Airport and accompany it by private coach to Grasmere, a lovely village based in the center of the English Lake District. It will serve as your base for the next three nights. Before arriving to the hotel, your group will stop in the nearby market town of Kendal to tour Levens Hall. The estate’s 17th century gardens are a must-see for any visitor to the English Lake District. The design of the four gardens has remained unchanged for three hundred years, and its topiary garden is one of the oldest of its kind in the world. The Hall itself was finished in 1820 with the completion of the Howard Tower. Today you will see its finest Elizabethan rooms including elegant bedrooms and a dining room containing embossed Cordova leather wall-coverings. After your visit your group will continue its

journey north to Grasmere where it will check-in to the hotel. There will be time to eat and relax before re-boarding the coach for a visit to the nearby Wordsworth Museum and Dove Cottage, the former home of William Wordsworth, one of England’s best poets of the Romantic Era. Wordsworth lived with his sister at Dove Cottage, and its garden today largely looks how it did when the Wordsworth’s resided there. Your group will see honeysuckles, Rosa Rugosa, English primrose, daffodils, bluebells as well as mosses ferns and ivy. Inside the museum, you will see a collection of manuscripts, paintings and memorabilia related to the poet. Wordsworth died in 1850 and was buried in a nearby graveyard at the village church in Grasmere. After your visit, the group will return to the hotel in Grasmere for dinner.



DAY 2 ~ GRASMERE

After breakfast meet your Tour Director for a full-day excursion around Lake

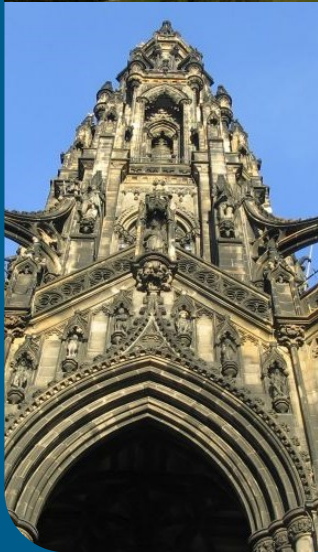
INCLUSIONS

- 1 night in Durham
- 3 nights each in Grasmere, Edinburgh, and Harrogate
- Breakfast daily
- Lunch and dinner per itinerary
- Ground transport via air conditioned luxury coach
- English speaking assistant and guides
- Admission tickets as outlined in itinerary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the cottage of one of the most famous writers of children's literature: Beatrix Potter
- Enjoy a leisurely cruise on Lake Windermere
- Investigate the works of the English Romantic poet, William Wordsworth, at his namesake museum
- Visit Maleny House, home to the national Bonsai collection
- Visit film locations for the movie Jane Eyre

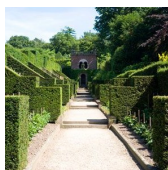
EuropeExpress



Windermere beginning with a guided tour of Hill Top, the former home of Beatrix Potter, a favorite author of children all over the world for her book “The Tale of Peter Rabbit.” Potter moved to this 17th-century house (which was located on the site of a working farm) in 1906. Before she passed away, she bequeathed the house to the National Trust with specific instructions to leave the house as she left it! The garden that surrounds this stone & slate farmhouse very much typifies the English country garden style with beds informally filled with flowers and vegetables.

After free time for lunch, your group will continue to Holehird Gardens, home to the Lakeland Horticultural Society. Long considered one of the best gardens in all of England, its 17 acres contain a walled garden, alpine plants, stunning perennial borders, rock gardens, heather gardens as well as an extensive variety of trees and shrubs. Holehird Gardens also maintains three National Collections: Astilbe, Hydrangea and Polystichum Ferns.

After the visit your group will proceed to nearby Lake Windermere, the largest natural lake in England and a source of inspiration for some of England’s best poets and artists. The entire lake forms part of the Lake District National Park, and since the mid 1800’s it has been a favorite vacation spot for the British. After your cruise on the lake your group will return to the hotel in Grasmere for dinner.



DAY 3 ~ GRASMERE

After breakfast meet your Tour Director for a tour to Holker Hall and Sizergh Castle. You will first visit Holker Hall & Gardens in Grange-over-Sands. Holker Hall is a friendly, stately home with magnificent, award-winning gardens classed as “amongst the best in the world...” (Good Gardens Guide). Holker Hall is Cumbria's

premier stately home and is surrounded by 25 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens. Here you will also find a motor museum, exhibitions, a deer park, a shop, a café, an adventure playground – as well as the world's largest slate sundial.

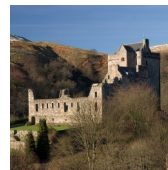
After free time for lunch your group will once again travel to the town of Kendal to visit Sizergh Castle, regarded as one of the very best houses in Cumbria. This castle was originally built in the early 13th century and was occupied by the Strickland family for 750 years. The gardens here are regarded as some of the best in the country. They feature the largest limestone rock gardens, which are managed by the National Trust. After your tour you will return to your hotel for dinner.



DAY 4 ~ EDINBURGH

After breakfast & check-out, your group will begin its exciting sightseeing program for the day. It will begin with a visit to the Dalemain Estate’s historic house & gardens, which are located only 2 miles from Lake Ullswater. This house, a medieval Tudor & Georgian home, has remained in the same family since 1679 and was the main location for the film Jane Eyre. Notice the house’s splendid interiors, fine furniture, family portraits and beautiful gardens. After free time for lunch, the group will continue sightseeing by traveling on to Ballerno where you will tour the Malleny House, home to the National Bonsai Collection.

After your visit you will continue north to Edinburgh where you will check-in to your hotel. Dinner will be served at the hotel with the remainder of the day free.



DAY 5 ~ EDINBURGH

After your included Scottish breakfast you will board your coach for your visit to



the Edinburgh Botanical Garden and later tour of the city.

You will first visit the Edinburgh Botanical Gardens with your own specialized guide. At the Inverleith Garden you will see many wonders of the plant kingdom which are displayed in grounds that include ten plant houses, a world famous rock garden, peat and woodland gardens, an ecological garden, colorful herbaceous borders, an arboretum and an extensive collection of rhododendrons. Time to stop for lunch on your own.

After lunch you will meet your guide at the hotel for your half-day panoramic tour of Edinburgh where you will see many of the most famous sights. After your tour you will return to your hotel for dinner. After dinner the remainder of the day is free at leisure.



DAY 6 ~ EDINBURGH

After your included Scottish breakfast you will board your coach for your visit to Inveresk Lodge Gardens and Culross Palace & Town House.

Inveresk Lodge Gardens' inviting terrace garden entices visitors with its colorful herbaceous beds, a variety of attractive shrubs and a collection of old roses selected by Graham Stuart Thomas. The fine Edwardian conservatory has an aviary, tree ferns and hardy exotics. In the informal area, many of the plants hold the Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit. Time to stop for lunch on your own.

After lunch you will continue on to Culross Palace & Town House near Fife. The Palace was built between 1597 and 1611 for Sir George and features many decorative items. On the ground floor of the West Wing there is a collection of Staffordshire and Scottish pottery. At the rear of the palace you will find a model 17th Century

garden with raised beds, a covered walkway, a flowery mead and hurdle fencing. It contains a variety of unusual vegetables, herbs and perennials.

After your tour you will return to your hotel for dinner. After dinner the remainder of the day is free at leisure.

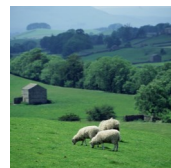


DAY 7 ~ DURHAM

After your included Scottish breakfast you will check out of your hotel and board your coach for your visit to Priorwood Gardens and Hexham Herbs.

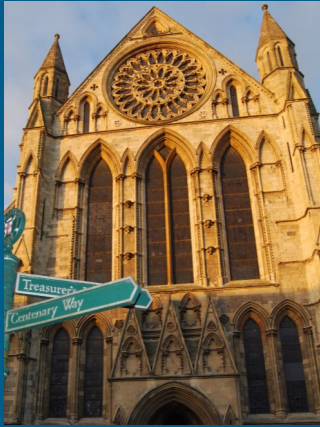
Priorwood Gardens is a specialist garden where most of the plants grown are suitable for drying. The colorful and imaginative selection ensures variety for the dried flower arrangement made on the premises. Priorwood Garden is just a short walk from Harmony Garden in Melrose and from Priorwood Garden you will be able to see the impressive ruins of Melrose Abbey. Time to stop for lunch on your own.

After lunch visit Hexham Herbs; this 2-acre garden specializes in many different garden herbs. Next you'll see Chesters which is located very close to Hexham Herbs. This fort has an excellent example of Roman Baths and is in a pretty location beside the river. After your visit you will continue south to Durham. En route to Durham you will have a short stop at Hadrian's Wall. If indeed you have time, you will also be allowed an entrance to one of the Wall Forts (either Housesteads or Vindolanda). On arrival in Durham check into your hotel. Optional visit to see Durham Cathedral in the evening.



DAY 8 ~ HARROGATE

After your included English breakfast you will check out of the hotel and will board your coach for your visit to see Heriot country and the Dales en route to



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Harrogate. While passing through Herriot Country you will stop in the town of Thirsk for a brief visit. You will then have an entrance to The World of James Herriot (a museum). This was the home and veterinary practice of Alf Wight (James Herriot). After your tour you will be taken to a local restaurant or bistro for an included lunch.

After lunch you will then continue on to Harrogate. On arrival in Harrogate you will be taken to see Newby Hall & Gardens. The interior of this 17th Century house was designed by Robert Adam and houses beautiful classical sculptures and tapestries.



DAY 9 ~ HARROGATE

After your included English breakfast you will board your coach for your day visit to York. Spend the day on your own then meet your coach driver at a designated meeting point to be arranged between the driver and the group for your return transfer back to the hotel. Dinner will be at the hotel.



DAY 10 ~ HARROGATE

After your included English breakfast you will board your coach for your visit to Harlow Carr Botanical Gardens and the Bronte Parsonage museum. Explore Harlow Carr Botanical Gardens and then you will have some time to stop for lunch on your own.

Continue on to the Bronte Parsonage Museum, which was the home of the

Bronte sisters who wrote the famous novel Jane Eyre. The Parsonage setting in the moorland provided much of their inspiration. After your tour you will return to your hotel in Harrogate for dinner. After dinner the remainder of the day is free at leisure.



DAY 11 ~ HARROGATE

After your included English breakfast you will check out of your hotel and will board your coach for your transfer to Manchester Airport for departure flight back to the USA.



For information and reservations, please see your professional travel agent