

# THE BEST OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

(Note: This is only a sample tour)

**Day 1:** Depart for London.

**Day 2:** Arrive in **London** and meet guide for your sightseeing tour. Visit **Westminster Abbey, see Buckingham Palace, Big Ben and 10 Downing Street.**

**Day 3:** Morning visit the **Tower of London.** The tower has a notorious history of murder, confinement and intrigue and has served as a castle in wartime, a king's residence in peace, and as a prison and execution site and houses the best display of crown jewels on earth. Make your way to **Camden Market.** Spend the afternoon at the market and the immense choices of goods for purchase. Other possible market choices are Petticoat Lane or Portobello Road. Spitalfields and Brick Lane are trendy spots to shop. Tonight after dinner travel back in time when a series of brutal murders brought terror and panic to the streets of London's East End. Your **Jack the Ripper Walking Tour** will follow Jack's trail on the dark, deserted crooked cobblestone alleyways of Whitechapel to follow Jack the Ripper's bloodstained trail of terror.



**Day 4:** Make your way to **Buckingham Palace** for the changing of the guard. Walk to Green Park to visit the **Canadian War Memorial** that pays tribute to nearly one million men and women who served in the UK during WWI and II and in particular to those who lost their lives. Explore Southbank, an eclectic cultural heart of the city. It is home to attractions, theatres, restaurants, exhibitions, festivals and family fun activities. Stop at Borough Food Market for some lunch. The original Globe Theatre has been rebuilt - half-timbered and thatched and open air in the round - exactly as it was in Shakespeare's time. It hosts authentic old time performances of Shakespeare's plays with no amplification. Today you will visit the theatre and museum. **West End Theatre performance** tonight. Enjoy the lively district of Covent Garden famous for its fashionable boutiques, street performers, restaurants and the Royal Opera House, one of London's premier entertainment and leisure destination.



**Day 5:** London's **Museum Mile** includes: The National Gallery, Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Victoria and Albert Museum, Natural History Museum, The Science Museum, Museum of London, The Royal Academy, and The National Portrait Gallery, and the British Museum. For the literary buffs, the Dickens Museum is a great choice. This morning visit a Museum of your choice. Afterwards the London Eye Ferris Wheel is an optional afternoon activity. Shop til you drop along Oxford Street, Bond Street, Regent Street and Dover Street Market and Soho, a patchwork of streets, also famous as an entertainment. Tonight is your second theatre presentation.

**Day 6:** Morning guided visit to **Hampton Court Palace.** The palace is the 500 year old palace of Henry VIII. Actually it was the palace of his minister Cardinal Wolsey but Wolsey gave the envious king his palace. Following your visit, continue to Stonehenge, the most famous of the great prehistoric monuments of the British Isles. No one knows the exact combination of purposes for which Stonehenge was built, but it is thought that its purpose was broadly religious and perhaps for worshipping the sun gods. After your visit to **Stonehenge**, depart for Bath



**Day 7:** **Bath** is a perfect 18th century city, perhaps the best preserved in all of Britain. The museums, elegant shops and terraces of magnificent town houses are a joy to experience. After your guided walking tour of Bath stop at a quaint English tea room for "cream tea", a delicious snack consisting of tea or coffee alongside a freshly baked scone topped with clotted cream and strawberry preserves. Then visit the remains of these Roman Baths.

**Day 8:** Drive through the **Cotswolds**. Wool was a huge industry during medieval times and the prosperous Cotswolds grew the best wool. The Industrial Revolution hit as well as the popularity of cotton, and the Cotswolds collapsed. The region stood still in time and the area is like a romantic time warp. Enjoy the day visiting some of the delightful towns, Stow–on–the–Wold, Moreton–on–the–Marsh and Burton–on–the–Water. Overnight Stratford.

**Day 9: Stratford-Upon-Avon** in Warwickshire is where **William Shakespeare** was born in 1564. There is still an aura of Old Elizabethan England among the timbered inns and 16th century houses with their oddly protruding upper story. Guided town and to visit Anne Hathaway's thatched roof cottage in Shottery, the early home of the playwright's wife. Trace The Bard's life story in Stratford. Later can visit more Shakespeare locations on own if desired. Tonight a play at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, the number one theatre on earth for Shakespearean productions.

**Day 10:** Depart for **York**, England's best sightseeing city after London. Medieval York grew rich on the wool trade and became England's second city. Henry VIII used the city as his Anglican church's Northern capital. Meet your guide for your tour of the wonderfully preserved medieval quarter of the city.

**Day 11:** Depart for **Edinburgh** travelling through the National Park of the **North York Moors**. Stop at the great Roman stone wall known as Hadrian's Wall. The Romans built the wall, actual purpose still debated, during the reign of Emperor Hadrian in about A.D. 130. Today several chunks of the wall, ruined forts, and museums will thrill history buffs. There are about a dozen Roman sites clinging along the wall's route.

**Day 12:** Full day in Edinburgh. Your guide will accompany you for part of today. Today see **Edinburgh Castle**. The Castle dominates the skyline and is the most visited site in the city and offers splendid panoramic views of the city. The Castle is situated overlooking Edinburgh's Old Town, where a walk down the historic narrow wynds and closes is one of the most captivating experiences the city has to offer. The **Palace of Holyroodhouse** was begun for King James IV in the early sixteenth century but now is the residence of Her Majesty the Queen when she makes regular visits to Edinburgh. To the north, is Edinburgh's New Town, which is one of Britain's architectural gems with by far the largest area of Georgian architecture in Europe, "New Town": was created in the 18th Century! Between the Castle and the new Town is Princes Street, perhaps one of the most famous streets in the world.

**Day 13:** Full day excursion exploring the landscape of **Scotland**. Depart for **Stirling Castle**, one of Scotland's largest and most important castles. Visit this castle that sits atop Castle Hill surrounded on three sides by steep cliffs giving it a strong defensive position. Stirling Castle has been the site of many coronations including Mary Queen of Scots. Trossachs National Park is internationally known as an area of renowned and preserved beauty. Cycling is a fun and healthy way to explore **Loch Lomond** and The Park. Upon arrival in the park, pick up your bicycles and enjoy a few hours following the paths and trails along the rivers and lochs and through the forests.

**Day 14:** Cheerio and depart Edinburgh for home.

## **TOUR INCLUSIONS**

- Return Air to London return from Edinburgh
- Transfers
  - o London airport transfer
  - o 8 days coach tour London to Edinburgh with stops according to itinerary
  - o Edinburgh airport transfer
- 12 night hotel accommodation with private facilities
- 12 Breakfast daily
- 6 dinners
- Guided tours
  - o Orientation in London
  - o Jack the Ripper in London
  - o Bath
  - o Stratford
  - o York
  - o Edinburgh
- 4 day London Underground Pass
- Entrances/activities
  - o Westminster Abbey
  - o Tower of London
  - o Globe Theatre and exhibition
  - o Guided backstage tour of National Theatre
  - o Museum of choice
  - o 2 West End Theatre performance
  - o Guided visit Hampton Court Palace
  - o Stonehenge
  - o Roman Baths
  - o Cream Tea
  - o Guided Anne Hathaway Cottage
  - o Royal Shakespeare Performance
  - o Edinburgh Castle
  - o Stirling Castle
  - o Bicycle rental Loch Lomond