

*A Custom Designed Itinerary to
Scotland and England*

By

IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS

IQOTC REF: F610494

DAY 1: EDINBURGH. Upon arriving into Edinburgh airport you will be met and privately transferred to the **Howard Hotel**. Here you will check into a superior queen bedded room for a three night stay. This luxury hotel was created out of three converted Georgian townhouses and has the feeling of staying in a rich friend's private home. It is ideally situated in the heart of "old" Edinburgh; located about 6 short blocks from Princes Street. <http://www.thehoward.com/>

DAY 2: EDINBURGH. Meet at your hotel today with a private guide for a half day walking tour of Edinburgh. The main focus of the visit will be Edinburgh Castle, perched atop an extinct volcano. It's the birthplace of James I who was cruelly snatched away from his mother, Mary, Queen of Scots.



The following are additional points of interest that you can visit with or without your guide. Along the Royal Mile, heart of medieval Edinburgh, there are several places of interest including St. Giles' Cathedral, the High Kirk of Edinburgh and the church where John Knox preached. You'll also find the Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre and the John Knox House make interesting stops. At the other end of the Royal Mile, leading from the Castle, is the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the Queen's official city residence

in Scotland and the former home of Mary, Queen of Scots. Enjoy the balance of the day at leisure.

DAY 3: EDINBURGH. Enjoy a day on your own to explore in Edinburgh. Another great way to tour is to take advantage of the Hop on Hop off bus. With great views from the top of the bus, strategically placed stops and an interesting commentary, this truly is the best way to see the sights of Edinburgh. You can hop on and off as many times as you like aboard this open-top double-decker bus. There are 24 stops and the entire route takes approximately 60 minutes. The bus departs every 20 minutes from each stop.

DAY 4: EDINBURGH / SCONE / BLAIR CASTLE / DUNKELD. Your rental car will be delivered to your hotel this morning. A full size Jaguar X or similar with unlimited mileage, CDW, and tax included. Head north today to visit Scone Palace, the treasure house of Scotland, richly furnished in neo-Gothic style with superb pieces of French furniture. There is also a collection of unusual and interesting timepieces and an outstanding collection of European ivories. Scottish kings used to be crowned here on the famous Stone of Destiny before it was moved to Westminster Abbey. In November 1996 it was returned to Scotland and is now on display in Edinburgh Castle. Continue north to Blair Castle, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Atholl and the residence of the Duke of Atholl until the death of the last member of the line in 1996.



A large part of the tower built in 1269 is intact and the castle with its turrets, crenellations and parapets, continues to dominate a strategic route into the heart of the Highlands. The Duke of Atholl is the only British citizen to have been allowed a private army, the Atholl Highlanders, the sole survivor of the clan system. (We include 15-day Great British Heritage Passes, which allow entry to over 600 public and privately-owned historic properties including many on this program). Then return south to Dunkeld and make your way to the **Kinnaird Estate**. Here you will check into a deluxe room for a two night stay.

Sitting in the beautiful wooded valley of the Tay, one of Scotland's most unique hotels is situated in 9,000 acres of spectacular Perthshire countryside. The Kinnaird Estate comprises the original Edwardian mansion and eight charmingly furnished individually-styled cottages, located at secluded spots around the Estate. <http://www.kinnairdestate.com/>

DAY 5: GLAMIS CASTLE. After breakfast drive approximately forty-five minutes to visit Glamis Castle today. This is the childhood home of the Queen Mother and birthplace of Princess



Margaret. It is said to be the most haunted castle in Scotland. The ghost of Lady Glamis, burned as a witch in 1537, has been seen floating above the castle clock. Other ghosts include the Grey Lady who haunts the chapel, a tongueless woman running across the grounds and the mad Earl who walks about on the roof! Only in Scotland... Return to Kinnaird for your overnight.

DAY 6: DUNKELD / TRAQUAIR / KELSO. Enjoy a two hour scenic drive south to Traquair House while en route to Kelso. Traquair House brewery was founded in 1965 by Peter Maxwell Stuart, 20th Laird of Traquair. Since his death in 1990 the brewery has been managed by his daughter, Catherine Maxwell Stuart. Spend your day reliving the past. See the secret stairs, spooky cellars, books, embroideries and letters from former times. Look at modern Scottish art in the art gallery, browse through the gift and antique shops, then search for the centre of the maze. Sip Traquair ale with your lunch or have tea in the sun. On arrival in Kelso you will check into a deluxe room at the **Roxburghe Hotel** for a two night stay. The hotel reflects the warm, friendly country house atmosphere to be expected when staying with friends in a beautiful home rather than merely checking into a hotel. If you shun modern and soulless accommodation in favor of tranquility and a bit of up-market sophistication, this is the place for you. Owned by the Duke of Roxburghe, the hotel nestles privately amongst woodlands on the banks of the River Teviot. Many of the 22 bedrooms have been individually designed by the Duchess herself, some of which have four poster beds and log fires. <http://www.roxburghe.net/>

DAY 7: FLOORS CASTLE / ROXBURGH CASTLE. Drive approximately thirty miles to Floors Castle today. Floors Castle is the largest inhabited house in Scotland. In 1721 additions were made to an existing tower house to create a plain country house, which was then absorbed in the construction of a magnificent 19th century baronial mansion. In the grounds is a holly tree, which marks the spot where King James II was killed by an exploding cannon, while besieging Roxburgh Castle. You may also like to visit Roxburgh Castle. This large 12th century courtyard fortress was the strongest castle in the marches.

Occupied by both the Scottish and the English through the centuries, it was partly demolished and rebuilt on numerous occasions. Of this impressive Scottish royal castle, only fragments of the gatehouse, curtain wall and flanking towers now remain, with the earthworks of a 16th-century English rectangular fort in its centre.

DAY 8: KELSO / CASTLE HOWARD / YORK. Drive south to York today with a stop to visit Castle Howard while en route.

One of Britain's finest historic houses is still home to the family whose forebears conceived, designed, and built it over three centuries ago. Upon your arrival in York you will check into your courtyard room at the **Middlethorpe Hall** for a one night stay. The hotel is about a mile and a half from York's city centre, on the edge of the racecourse. This lovely country house is a fine example of a William & Mary house. It is set in 27 acres of well-tended grounds. <http://www.middlethorpe.com/>



DAY 9: YORK / STAMFORD. After breakfast spend time exploring York before heading south approximately two and a half hours to Stamford. Here you will check into a superior room at the **George Hotel** for a one night stay. Enjoy the balance of your day at leisure. Situated in the far south of the county, Stamford is a beautiful stone built market town which retains its medieval street pattern. The many fine buildings include the grand Elizabethan mansion Burghley House. <http://www.georgehotelofstamford.com/>

DAY 10: STAMFORD / WADDESDON MANOR / BRAY. Drive approximately two and a half hours today to Bray, with a visit to Waddesdon Manor while en route.

Overlooking the Vale of Aylesbury, it was built by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild. This lovely Renaissance-style château houses one of the finest collections of French 18th century decorative arts in the world. On your arrival in Bray you will check into a deluxe room for 3 nights at the **Oakley Court Hotel**. This elegant Victorian mock-gothic manor house has had over 200 films shot here before it became a luxury hotel. <http://www.oakleycourt.co.uk/>

DAY 11: BASILDON PARK. It is an approximate one and a half hour drive to visit the Basildon Park. This beautiful Palladian mansion was built in 1776-83. The interior is notable for its original delicate plasterwork and elegant staircase, as well as the unusual Octagon Room. The house fell on hard times early in the last century but was rescued and restored by Lord and Lady Iliffe, who filled it with fine pictures and furniture. The early 19th-century pleasure gardens are currently being restored and there are way-marked trails through the parkland. This property is owned by The National Trust. Overnight at Oakley Court.

DAY 12: HAMPTON COURT / HAM HOUSE. After breakfast drive east to visit Hampton Court and nearby Ham House. Cardinal Wolsey was the original builder of Hampton Court Palace. He was “persuaded” to “give” the palace to King Henry VIII. At the palace you’ll see a remarkable



Astronomical Clock built in 1540, plus a variety of dozens of intricate chimneys. The Great Hall features a hammer beam roof. In the gardens you’ll see *The Great Vine* planted by "Capability" Brown in 1768. It still produces 500 to 600 bunches of grapes a year! Try your navigational skills in the famous Hampton Court triangular maze. It’s fun! Most people wind up ringing the bell for help after getting hopelessly turned around. Ham House is one of London's architectural and garden glories of the Stuart era. Its interior, so rich in

17th and 18th furniture, fine art and original textiles, and the gardens, now restored to the 1671 formal plan of Slezer and Wyck and concomitant 17th century planting, are essential viewing for those interested in the fashions, court lifestyle and gardens of Stuart Restoration England during the roistering times of that merrie monarch, King Charles II.

DAY 13: ATHELHAMPTON / KINGSTON MAURWARD. After breakfast drive to Kingston Maurward, with a stop at Athelhampton, a Tudor house originated by Sir William Martyn, Lord Mayor of London, in 1480's. Athelhampton contains paneled Tudor rooms and a great hall, still with its half-timbered roof, and original Tudor windows. There is a wonderful old wooden furniture collection. On arrival in Kingston Maurward you will check into a suite at the **Old Manor** for a one night stay. The Old Manor is a beautiful Elizabethan "E plan" Manor house, built in the 1590's and has been sympathetically restored to provide luxurious accommodation in comfort and style. It is located within the listed parkland of the former Kingston Estate, now operated by Kingston Maurward College, Dorset's College of the Countryside. From its many stone mullioned windows there are fine views over the surrounding parkland and lake. The Manor features in Thomas Hardy's novel "Desperate Remedies" and has been used as a film location many times. <http://www.kingston-maurward.co.uk/about.htm>

DAY 14: EAST GRINSTEAD. You will drive east today to East Grinstead. Here you will check into a large room with garden views at the **Gravetye Manor** for a two night stay. This peaceful 16th-century Elizabethan manor in William Robinson's Natural English garden is surrounded by a forest, yet only thirty miles from London. Relax in oak paneled sitting rooms warmed by open log fires and furnished with antiques. Every bedroom enjoys vistas of the tranquil gardens. Dine by candlelight, savoring classical British dishes, home-grown vegetables and fruits, with wines from one of Britain's finest cellars. <http://www.gravetyemanor.co.uk/>

DAY 15: LEEDS CASTLE. Enjoy a visit of Leeds Castle today. Lord Conway called Leeds "the loveliest castle in the world".

It is set on an island in the middle of a lake, surrounded by beautifully landscaped gardens. Leeds is known as "Lady's Castle" because eight of England's Medieval Queens made it their home. Return to Gravetye Manor for a final night.



DAY 16: DEPARTURE. Make your way to London Airport today. Drop off your rental and board your departing flight.

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