Walking Through the Cotswolds

September 23 - October 4, 2015

12 Days • 26 Meals

Escorted by Lynn Macdonald
The Cotswold Hills roll through the south central English countryside touching six Counties from the upper Thames to an escarpment known as the Cotswold Edge north of the Severn Valley. Its bedrock of Jurassic limestone created a rare grassland which, in the Middle Ages, ensured local prosperity with the production of wool. In 1966 the area was designated an “Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty”, a description which suits the area perfectly. We will be charmed by the predominantly rural landscape dotted with interestingly named towns and villages built from the unique locally quarried pale honey coloured stone. Chipping Campden is noted for being the home of the Arts and Crafts movement founded by William Morris at the end of the 19th century.

This journey has been designed for the active walker. Walks will be led by a professional walking guide and our group leader. Most walks will be leisurely and will last two to three hours (estimated times and/or distances plus change in elevation have been listed in the itinerary). On each of our walking days, we will have a picnic lunch at a site picked by our walking guide. While members need to be fit and active to fully enjoy this tour, there are several fun days of touring included.

Maximum Group size is 22 members - book early!
September 23, Wednesday  
Canada / London
Group members gather in Toronto for a direct overnight flight to London.

September 24, Thursday  
London / Moreton-in-Marsh
Upon arrival at Heathrow we transfer to the picturesque town of Moreton-in-Marsh in north eastern Gloucestershire, situated in the crossroads of the Roman Fosse Way and the A44. The award winning 34 bedroom Redesdale Arms Hotel sits at the gateway to the Cotswolds on the High Street of this historic town. We will have plenty of time for an afternoon wander round the charming shops and narrow streets of this lovely ancient town.  
Redesdale Arms Hotel (1 night)  
D

September 25, Friday  
Moreton-in-Marsh / Bourton-on-the-Water
Blenheim Palace is the principal residence of the Dukes of Marlborough and is one of England’s largest houses, built between 1705 and 1722. The Park offers more than 2000 acres of beautifully sculptured parkland designed by Capability Brown in the 1760s with the Formal Gardens being arguably the jewel in the crown. Our home for the next seven nights will be the 4-star Harrington House in Bourton-on-the-Water. Dating from the Tudor period, and of considerable historic interest, Harrington House mirrors the mellow architectural style of the Cotswolds. Its peaceful atmosphere, lovely gardens and proximity to the charming centre of Bourton-on-the-Water, make this an ideal place from which to enjoy a week’s sightseeing and gentle walking with our expert local guide.  
Harrington House (7 nights)  
BD

September 26, Saturday  
Cotswold Farm Park / the Slaughters
We walk from Harrington House through the delightful villages of Lower and Upper Slaughter before our transport takes us to the Cotswold Farm Park. The farm pioneers rare breed conservation and is run by Adam Henson. We will have plenty of time for lunch and to explore. We then return to Bourton, for optional visits to the Motoring Museum, Birdland Park, or the Model Village – or simply relax back at Harrington House. (about 3 miles of mostly level walking)  
BLD

September 27, Sunday  
Hidcote Manor Gardens / Chipping Campden
Hidcote is arguably where modern small garden design began and provides plenty of inspiration; after a morning visit we hike along part of the North Cotswold Diamond Way, crossing undulating farmland and woods, and dipping into valleys before reaching the butter and honey coloured houses of Chipping Campden. (about 3 miles of mostly level walking)  
BLD

September 28, Monday  
Batsford Arboretum / Broadway
We’ll begin today with a visit to Batsford Arboretum and then our transport will take us to view Capability Brown’s Broadway Tower. Our hike then begins from pretty Snowshill village taking us on field paths and along the Cotswold Way to Broadway, with its beautiful cottages of mellow Cotswold stone. (about 3 miles of walking - height change about 100 feet)  
BLD

September 29 , Tuesday  
Stratford-upon-Avon
Today is dedicated to exploring Stratford-upon-Avon, the home town of William Shakespeare. We shall visit three of Shakespeare’s houses before taking a walking tour around the town followed by a relaxing cruise on the River Avon. For those interested by advance arrangement theatre tickets can be purchased with a later transfer back to our hotel. (about 2 hours of level walking)  
BLD

September 30, Wednesday  
Gloucester / Painswick
Gloucester is the largest city in the area and is overlooked by the Cotswold Hills. We shall visit the cathedral, docks, and antiques market. Before enjoying a wildlife walk at Prinknash Abbey and a hike through typical Cotswold countryside to Painswick, known as the ‘Queen of the Cotswolds.’ (3 miles of walking / elevation change 300 feet)  
BLD

October 1, Thursday  
Chedworth Roman Villa / Bibury
Visit the Chedworth Roman Villa, with some spectacular mosaics plus examples of underfloor heating and bathhouses. Next we take our transport to the hamlet of Coln Rogers before hiking through the hamlets of Winson, Ablington and Arlington before reaching our destination beside the River Coln in Bibury. Some free time will be available at Lodge Park and the Sherborne Estate. (about 3 miles walking with 200 feet of ascent)  
BLD
October 2, Friday  Bourton-on-the-Water / Bath
Our highlight today is the visit to Highgrove House, the family residence of Charles, Prince of Wales and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall. After enjoying a walk in the gardens, which are run with Charles’ environmental principles, we will enjoy afternoon tea. Continue to the Roman city of Bath in the valley of the River Avon which dates from AD 60. Our hotel for the next two nights is set in an ensemble of Georgian townhouses in Bath’s original classic square. Hilton Bath City Hotel (2 nights)

October 3, Saturday  Bath
Our local expert guide will lead us in a walking tour of the city taking in many historic sites including the Royal Crescent (dating from 1767 and is one of the greatest examples of Georgian architecture to be found in the UK), and the Abbey. Finally we tour the Roman city of Bath then enjoy some free time to explore on your own. Perhaps take a thermal spa treatment or visit the Bath Fashion museum. In the evening we will have dinner at the hotel.

October 4, Sunday  Bath / Stonehenge / London / Canada
Located in Wiltshire about 13km north of Salisbury, the prehistoric monument of Stonehenge sits in its own magical and awe inspiring way since approx 2000 BC. The remains of the standing stones within earthworks is in the midst of several hundred Neolithic and Bronze age monuments in England. The new world-class visitor centre is now open and adds an extra fascinating dimension to this world famous site. Continue to Heathrow where we catch our homeward bound Air Canada flights.

CT RATING 3 - Moderately Challenging: Designed as a leisurely, in depth experience with multiple night stays at hotels, this tour features six longer walks (up to 3 miles and 3 hours), some over uneven terrain. Estimated walking times and distances are shown. Members should have no mobility issues to fully enjoy this journey.

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars (per person)
Land Only (Join / Leave in England) $3,885
Toronto ........................................ $5,095
Ottawa / Montreal ...........................$5,195
Halifax ........................................ $5,295
St. John’s ...................................... $5,455
Winnipeg ..................................... $5,395
Saskatoon / Regina ........................$5,495
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver ......$5,395
Victoria ....................................... $5,495
Single Supplement ...................... $695

Air add-ons from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and airline are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Land only rate includes group transfer from and back to London Heathrow. Refer to inclusive features for details.

Prices are based on a minimum 15 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective January 2015. Prices are subject to change due to factors beyond our control.

The price includes the cost of comprehensive insurance ($250 - $285pp) for passengers up to and including 74 years on departure date (rate varies by the cost of the trip). Cost supplements will apply for members aged 75 years on departure date (rate varies by the cost of the trip). Clients 86 years and older and/or residing outside Ontario - please contact our staff for procedures. This insurance is effective from the date of purchase and carries limitations on pre-existing medical conditions. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Refer to enrollment form for terms and conditions. Please check our website for the most current information. Final payment will be due July 15, 2015.

To reserve your spot on this tour, complete the enclosed enrollment form, indicating the tour you wish to join and your home city, and forward it with your deposit of $500 per person to:

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Bourton
Mystical Stonehenge (credit Visit Britain)

A view over the city of Bath (credit Visit Britain)