

The Great Castles of Britain

HISTORY AND MAJESTY MERGE ON THIS SCENIC JOURNEY ACROSS SOUTHERN BRITAIN



A SCHOLARLY
SOJOURN

JOIN US FOR A BREATHTAKING JOURNEY THROUGH THE MAGICAL SCENERY OF SOUTHERN ENGLAND AND WALES AS WE VISIT TWENTY OF THE MOST FASCINATING MEDIEVAL CASTLES AND EXAMINE THE STORIES THEY HAVE LEFT FOR POSTERITY

TOUR DETAILS AT A GLANCE

2017 DEPARTURE

October 15–22, 2017

PRICE

\$2,995/person (double occupancy)

\$3,440/person (single occupancy)

TOUR BEGINS

Rochester, England

TOUR CONCLUDES

Conwy, Wales

OPTIONAL AIR PACKAGE

From \$1,299/person*

*See page 10 for details

POST-TOUR EXCURSIONS

From \$199/person*

*See page 9 for details

TO REGISTER

Call us at 1-800-419-3443 or

Use the [online registration form](#)

**CLICK HERE TO
REGISTER ONLINE**

ABOUT SCHOLARLY SOJOURNS

Not only our name, but also what we call our flagship tours, Scholarly Sojourns are intellectually-stimulating travel programs that explore fascinating topics in history, literature, archaeology, art history, and science. Designed and guided by distinguished scholars, these engaging journeys provide the unique opportunity to explore a subject on location.



Arundel Castle

The Great Castles of Britain

GO INSIDE THE MOST STUNNING CASTLES OF BRITAIN

The victory of William I at Hastings marked not only a transition in the ruling class of Britain but also the beginning of a metamorphosis for the Saxon and Welsh landscapes. For in the years directly following their conquest, the Normans and their cohorts turned to feudalism—and the castle—to complete the subjugation of the vanquished. From the late 11th century to the mid-15th century, scores of castles were erected across the realm—many over former Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and Roman ruins—as each successive dynasty sought to solidify its control.

The remarkable structures these feudal monarchs left behind provide a fascinating window into the past and remain tangible relics of a chaotic time during which countless lives were turned upside-down as dynasties rose and fell. These amazing edifices once served both as military devices and as private homes. Many still dominate town centers. Some are enormous complexes; others little more than eroded earthworks.

Regardless of their size or condition, however, each castle provides a unique glimpse into history. They expose their builder's tastes, socio-political power, and sophistication. They reveal an epoch when the masses had to deal with warfare and violent local rivalries in addition to the struggles of daily survival. They are lasting symbols of an era of strife and social status, of political mayhem, and cultural evolution.

This unique sojourn visits the most stunning castles — some occupied, but many more ruined — which still survive in the historic British landscape. Each of them played its role in history, effecting both social and economic change while permanently marking the territory over which it ruled. And each provides a fascinating chapter in the story of medieval Britain. Join us on this breathtaking journey through the magical scenery of Southern England and Wales as we visit twenty of the most impressive medieval castles and examine the stories they have left for posterity.

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

DAY 1

STROOD TO TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Arriving at Strood Railway Station this afternoon, you are greeted by both your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director and your tour leader, author and historian Paul Remfry. Once the entire group has arrived, we make the short journey across the River Medway to the historic city of Rochester. Here we enjoy an engaging tour of the 11th-century castle, which features an imposing and very well-preserved tower made of Kentish ragstone. It was built in 1127 by William of Corbiel, Archbishop of Canterbury, to guard a strategic crossing over the Medway. Following our tour, we enjoy some time to explore and shop in Rochester's charming town center before boarding our coach for the journey to Tunbridge Wells and the Royal Wells Hotel—a Victorian hotel on Mount Ephraim, just a short walk away from the bustling town center. The hotel owes its regal title to Queen Victoria, who visited frequently as a young Princess in the early 19th century, and later granted the use of her coat of arms, which is proudly displayed at the top of the building. After some time to relax and unwind, we gather for a welcome reception followed by a special opening dinner in the hotel's Brasserie restaurant this evening. [R | D]

DAY 2

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Following breakfast we travel to nearby Leeds Castle which is widely regarded as one of the most visually-stunning castles in Britain. Set upon islands in a lake formed by the River Len, it is evident why the unique location would have been easy to defend. A castle has stood here since 1119, and it is noted that Leeds Castle was a favorite residence of King Edward I. Departing Leeds, we make our way to Dover where we experience a private, guided tour of the extensive and well-preserved complex of Dover Castle, perched high atop the legendary white cliffs. This magnificent edifice has guarded the shores of Britain from invasion for nearly 20 centuries and, in fact, was used by the British military as recently as World War II. Originally fortified by the Romans, the site contains the best-preserved Roman lighthouse (Pharos) in Europe, standing over 80 feet tall. Continuing our journey, we visit yet another visual marvel: breathtaking Bodiam Castle—a 14th-century moated structure with towers, crenellations, and a watery setting that were intended as much for display as for defense. Our last stop is Pevensey Castle which began as a Roman 'Saxon Shore' fort



Leeds Castle

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

DAY 1: SUNDAY

October 15

Tour begins in Rochester, England

DAY 2: MONDAY

October 16

Tunbridge Wells—Leeds—Dover—
Bodiam—Tunbridge Wells

DAY 3: TUESDAY

October 17

Tunbridge Wells—Lewes—
Arundel—Portchester—Cirencester

DAY 4: WEDNESDAY

October 18

Cirencester—Goodrich—
Chepstow—Berkeley—Usk

DAY 5: THURSDAY

October 19

Usk—Caerphilly—Caldicot—
Raglan—Usk

DAY 6: FRIDAY

October 20

Usk—Harlech—Conwy

DAY 7: SATURDAY

October 21

Conwy—Rhuddlan—Caernarfon—
Beaumaris—Conwy

DAY 8: SUNDAY

October 22

Tour concludes in Conwy, Wales



Dover Castle

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ Your sojourn leader, Paul Remfry, is a noted scholar, castle historian, and widely-published author who has spent his entire professional life researching the castles of England and Wales
- ◆ Experience in-depth tours of 20 of the most significant and stunning castles in the British Isles
- ◆ Drive through the heart of Wales from South to North and experience its diverse beauty
- ◆ Two nights in the charming village of Usk in stunning Monmouthshire, South Wales
- ◆ A private tour of Berkeley Castle conducted by its future resident—Charles Berkeley—himself

“Your attention to detail is way beyond any tour operator I have ever worked with!”

- Paula F., Travel Agent,
Mahwah, NJ



Caerphilly Castle

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

in the 3rd century and was later reoccupied by the Normans following their conquest in 1066. This evening we return to the Royal Wells Hotel and you are free to explore, shop, and dine on your own. Your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director will be happy to provide restaurant suggestions. [B]

DAY 3

TUNBRIDGE WELLS TO CIRENCESTER

We depart Tunbridge Wells early this morning and drive along England's south coast to visit some incredible castle ruins in South England. At Lewes, we encounter one of only two remaining motte-and-bailey castles that contains two mottes. Further down the road at Arundel we discover a visually-stunning castle proudly overlooking the River Arun. At midday, we enjoy an enchanting Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic before continuing west to Porchester Castle. Here we encounter a fascinating structure which started as a Roman fort and then had a castle built within its walls during the 12th century. Later it became an impressive royal residence and remained occupied until the 17th century, after which it served as a prisoner-of-war camp during the Napoleonic Wars. In the late afternoon we make a pleasant drive north into the stunning region known as the Cotswolds which is peppered with some of the most charming and quintessential English villages to be found. Here, we rest for the night at an historic inn where we enjoy the first of our two seminar dinners. [B | L | D]

DAY 4

CIRENCESTER TO USK

Following a briefing in the cozy lounge of our hotel this morning, we travel to visit remarkable Goodrich Castle. While its extensive walls now lie mostly in ruin, Goodrich still boasts an impressive, tall, square Norman keep, a well-preserved chapel, and one of the most complete sets of medieval domestic buildings surviving in any English castle. This afternoon we drive along the beautiful Wye River Valley where we stop briefly to admire the elegant ruins of Tintern Abbey. Not far from here we arrive in picturesque Chepstow where we take a privately-guided tour of its unique border castle as well as enjoy an engaging demonstration of medieval archery. A leisurely lunch break here ensures time to explore the interesting town center and perhaps do a bit of shopping in its charming high street. Our final stop is at Berkeley Castle—one of the few remaining castles which is still occupied. Here we enjoy a

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

private audience with the future resident of the castle, Charles Berkeley himself, who gives us a very personal tour of this impressive structure which has been the home of his family since the 12th century. This evening we arrive in the charming village of Usk, South Wales and the atmospheric Glen-Yr-Afon Hotel—our resting place for the next two nights—and then gather for our second seminar dinner. [B, D]

DAY 5

USK

Departing Usk this morning, we travel to colossal Caerphilly Castle—which is both the second largest castle and the first fully-concentric castle in Britain. After an extensive visit here, we continue to Caldicot Castle—a sprawling medieval stone structure that evolved from Roman fort to Norman castle to Victorian family estate. Following our visit, we enjoy a Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic within the atmospheric walls of the castle. This afternoon, we head north to explore mighty Raglan Castle which boasts strong, soaring ramparts that survived cannon bombardments as recently as the English Civil War. Our tour leader provides us with a thorough tour and then allows a generous amount of time for us to explore the extensive ruins on our own. Returning to Usk this evening, we conclude the day with a visit to Usk Castle which lies hidden in a private garden. Although smaller in size than most of the others on our tour, Usk Castle reveals a fascinating history dating back to 1120. Prior to that the site was chosen by the Romans to build an early legionary fortress before relocating to nearby Caerleon. Our visit concludes with a lovely reception in the castle's gardens. Afterward, the evening is left free to spend as you see fit. Your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director can point the way to dining options as well as the best pubs in the village. [B,L,R]

DAY 6

USK TO CONWY

Today we travel north, driving through the very heart of picturesque Wales and heading toward its scenic northwestern corner. Our first stop is Tretower Castle and Court located amidst the beauty of Brecon Beacons National Park. These two historic properties—a ruined castle with 13th-century round keep and late medieval garden share the grounds with a 15th-century medieval mansion called Tretower Court—stand within paces of each other in an idyllic landscape. Together these historic buildings, or, more accurately, complexes of linked buildings, demonstrate how priorities gradually shifted



Harlech Castle

BOOKING IS EASY!

1) CALL TO REGISTER OR USE OUR ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM

Call us at 1-800-419-3443. Our friendly customer service team is ready to assist you Mon—Fri, 9:00AM—5:00PM (EST). Or, you can complete the [online registration form](#) anytime.

2) WE WILL CONFIRM YOUR REGISTRATION BY EMAIL

Within 24 hours you will receive an email confirmation of your registration along with some additional information and an invoice for the deposit due.

3) RETURN THE PAPERWORK AND PAY YOUR DEPOSIT

Simply review the registration documents and pay the deposit within 14 days to finalize your booking.

CLICK HERE TO
REGISTER ONLINE

SAVE WITH SOJOURN COMBINATIONS!

Save \$250 per person and receive a free transfer between locations when you book two consecutive sojourns.

THIS TOUR COMBINES WELL WITH:

UNCOVERING CAMELOT GREAT CASTLES OF IRELAND



Conwy Castle

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ Privately guided tours of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd
- ◆ Two nights in the picturesque town of Beaumaris, overlooking the waters of the Menai Strait on the Isle of Anglesey, Wales
- ◆ An afternoon drive through the breathtaking mountain scenery of Snowdonia National Park
- ◆ Visit the beautiful Wye River Valley and see the ruins of famed Tintern Abbey
- ◆ A Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic under the ramparts of Arundel Castle

"I already had very high expectations based upon my previous tour with you, but you even exceeded those expectations!"

—Tallien P., Santa Monica, CA



Day-to-Day Tour Summary

from defense to comfort during the Middle Ages. Continuing north, we make a lunch stop in an atmospheric mining town in central Wales before our visit to Harlech Castle—the first of four great castles built by King Edward I during his invasion of Wales between 1282 and 1289. Together these castles have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site due to both their historic significance and their well-preserved state. From Harlech, our journey takes us through breathtaking Snowdonia National Park, where we make a stop to explore and shop in the charming village of Beddgelert before continuing to the seaside town of Conwy—a walled market town on the north coast of Wales where we lodge for the next two nights. [B]

DAY 7

CONWY

We begin the day with a visit to Rhuddlan Castle where we examine its unique, diamond layout—so shaped due to the fact that its gatehouses are positioned at the corners of the square baileys instead of along the sides like at Harlech or Beaumaris. Afterward, we visit two of the most remarkable castles on our sojourn—Caernarfon and Beaumaris—which, along with Harlech and Conwy, were built by King Edward I. Our tour leader provides an extensive tour of the remains of Caernarfon—the historical seat of The Prince of Wales and the site where Prince William will be made Prince of Wales in an elaborate ceremony after his father, Prince Charles, becomes King of Great Britain. Afterward, we enjoy a break for lunch in the atmospheric, walled town at the castle's base, before we continue to Beaumaris Castle, a unique structure boasting its own pier which allowed the castle to be provisioned by sea during times of conflict when accessing the fortress by land was not possible. This evening we gather for a very special reception before our closing dinner. [B | R | D]

DAY 8

CONWY

Following breakfast, we enjoy our final morning briefing in the lounge of our hotel. Afterward, we enjoy a tour of Conwy Castle. After our visit to the castle we assemble with Paul Remfry and fellow sojourn members for the closing presentation and to say our farewells. An optional shuttle will be available for those wishing to return to London or Heathrow Airport. [B]

Lodging



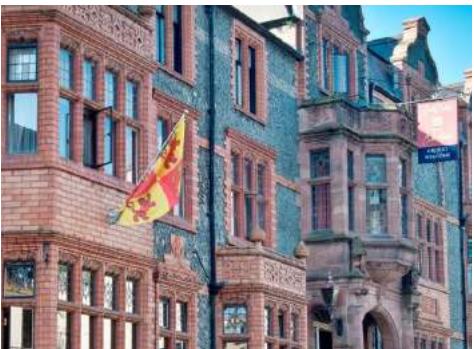
Royal Wells Hotel—Tunbridge Wells

The Royal Wells Hotel boasts spectacular views from its hilltop location on Mount Ephraim, a short walk away from the bustling town center. The hotel owes its regal title to Queen Victoria, who visited frequently as a young Princess in the early 19th century, and later granted the use of her coat of arms, which is proudly displayed at the top of the building.



Glen-Yr-Afon Hotel—Usk

Overlooking the banks of the River Usk, this award winning country-house hotel is set among beautifully-maintained gardens. The stunning Victorian architecture creates an atmosphere of yesteryear and ensures that all of its rooms are quite unique. The hotel offers two cozy bars as well as several comfortable guest lounges. The picturesque village of Usk is just a 5 minute stroll away.



The Castle Hotel—Conwy

Set in a 300 year old coaching inn and on the site of a medieval abbey, the Castle Hotel offers an elegant abode in a stunning atmosphere. The rooms at the Castle Hotel display fine, period features and some have views of Conwy Castle. The hotel's restaurant serves traditional Welsh cuisine using fresh, local produce. The hotel is just steps from Conwy's celebrated castle and town walls as well as the scenic River Conwy.

For a complete list of lodging on this tour, please visit www.scholarlysojourns.com.



Goodrich Castle



YOUR TOUR LEADER

Paul Remfry is arguably one of the greatest living castle scholars of our era. He is a meticulous researcher who has spent over 30 years studying medieval history, genealogy, and architecture. As a historian with a passion for telling the stories of castles and the people who once lived in them, Paul lectures throughout the United Kingdom and also frequently appears as an expert on television documentaries exploring the history of castles. He has also written extensively about castles, abbeys, and battles and his list of published works now includes some 20 books and over 50 booklets and scholarly articles for academic and archaeological journals. His scholarship is widely praised as superlative and his research approach to the study of castles has garnered widespread acclaim from the academic community.

“The absolute most amazing vacation I've ever been on...”

-Jessica H., San Francisco, CA

CASTLES YOU VISIT

ROCHESTER CASTLE

LEEDS CASTLE

DOVER CASTLE

BOADIAM CASTLE

PEVENSEY CASTLE

LEWES CASTLE

ARUNDEL CASTLE

PORTCHESTER CASTLE

GOODRICH CASTLE

CHEPSTOW CASTLE

BERKELEY CASTLE

CAERPHILLY CASTLE

CALDICOT CASTLE

RAGLAN CASTLE

USK CASTLE

TRETOWER CASTLE

HARLECH CASTLE

RHUDDLAN CASTLE

CAERNARFON CASTLE

BEAUMARIS CASTLE

CONWY CASTLE

We were somewhat apprehensive to try an organized tour, but this experience was phenomenal.”

-Barbara B., Annapolis, MD



A Visit to Berkeley Castle

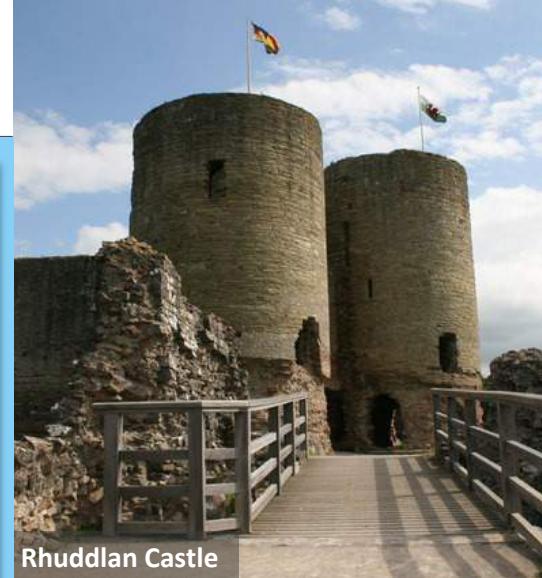
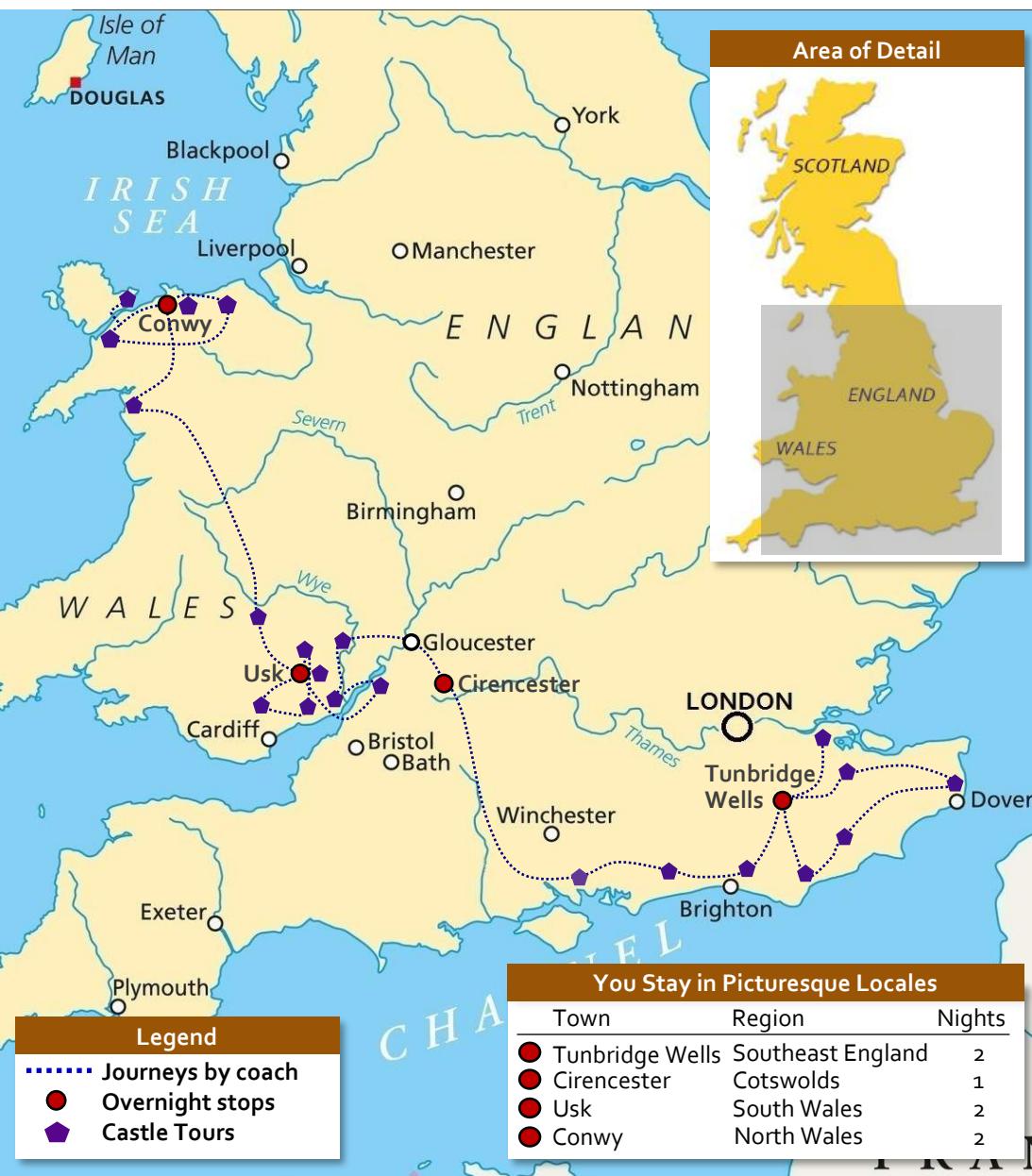
Berkeley Castle is a special stop on our tour for a number of reasons, just one of which is that it is the oldest building in Britain to be inhabited by the same family who constructed it. In fact, the Berkeley family is one of just three families in England which can trace its ancestry back to Saxon times. Their castle's place in history is significant, not just because it is still intact, but because both they and their home have played such an important role in the power struggles of the realm for centuries. In times past, the Berkeleys were close to the throne, able administrators, fighters who supported their king or queen (as long as they could), backed the winning side, and married well. Their Castle is full of fascinating stories. Indeed, English history has been lived out within its walls and by this family.



Charles & Daisy Berkeley welcome a Scholarly Sojourns group

Our visit to Berkeley Castle is certainly a highlight of this sojourn, not only because of the castle's vital place in English history, but because Charles Berkeley himself shows us around his family's ancestral home and infuses his commentary with personal stories of his childhood and growing up in this historic structure.

Tour Map



"We seemed to get special treatment everywhere we went. This made a good tour a fabulous tour."

- Richard H., Myrtle Beach, SC

WEATHER & CLIMATE

In England and Wales, the average October daily high temperatures range from 55° - 59° Fahrenheit (13° - 15° centigrade). The evenings and nights are a bit cooler averaging 43° - 45° Fahrenheit (6° - 7° centigrade).

Rain is likely at this time of year. Participants are encouraged to bring a lightweight, waterproof jacket or a small umbrella. The humidity levels vary greatly depending upon location. Inland is hotter and drier, while the coastal climate is slightly cooler and more humid.



Enjoying a Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic at Arundel Castle

Tour Details & Registration Information

THE GREAT CASTLES OF BRITAIN

2017 DEPARTURE

October 15-22, 2017 (Sojourn #1201742)

PRICE

\$2,995/Person (double occupancy)

\$3,440/Person (single occupancy)

[CLICK HERE TO
REGISTER ONLINE](#)

TOUR BEGINS

Rochester, England

TOUR CONCLUDES

Conwy, Wales

OPTIONAL AIR PACKAGE:

From \$1,199/Person *

*Includes round-trip, economy airfare, airport transfers in Britain, and 100% travel assurance. Price subject to change until booked.

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

TO REGISTER

Call us: 1-800-419-3443 - We are ready to assist you Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (EST).

Visit us at: www.scholarlysojourns.com - Here you will find an online registration form as well as a printable version.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Due within 14 days of registration: \$500/person deposit

Due 90 days prior to departure: Balance

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Scholarly Sojourns highly recommends that all of our tour participants purchase travel insurance to protect their trip. We will send further information once you have been confirmed on a sojourn.

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PRICE INCLUDES

Eight-day travel program of sightseeing, castle tours, presentations, and discussions led by Paul Remfry; 7 nights accommodations; 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 4 dinners, 3 receptions; the services of a dedicated Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director who accompanies the group; ground transportation; entrance fees; gratuities (except for hotel porters); all other activities described in the day-to-day summary. **Included meals are indicated in brackets following each daily description:** B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner; R = Reception.

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

Airfare; airport transfers; meals not indicated in this detailed itinerary; beverage options other than water, wine, beer, or soft drinks with group meals; local transportation by bus, taxi, metro or light rail; passport or visa fees and necessary photos; immunizations; travel insurance; excess baggage charges; airport taxes; medical, hospitalization, or evacuation costs; gratuities for hotel porters; laundry; other personal items, including incidental hotel charges; any other item not specifically indicated.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE INFORMATION

MEETING LOCATION AND TIME

The meeting point for this tour is Strood Railway Station in Strood, England, which is just across the River Medway from Rochester where the tour begins. Those making their own travel arrangements should plan to arrive here by 2:30pm on Sunday, October 15th. You will be greeted by your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director who will assist you with boarding the coach. An optional shuttle will also be offered from London Heathrow Airport Terminal 3, departing at 1:00PM that day.

CONCLUSION AND DEPARTURE

Your sojourn concludes at approximately 11:00 AM on Sunday, October 22nd in Conwy, Wales. An optional shuttle will be offered for those wishing to go directly to Manchester Airport or connect (via train) to Heathrow Airport. If making your own flight/travel arrangements, please allow for enough time to travel to the airport after the program ends. Manchester Airport is approximately 75-minutes by car from Conwy and Heathrow is a 3-hour journey .

EARLY ARRIVAL OR LATE DEPARTURE

Scholarly Sojourns is happy to assist you with booking additional nights prior to the start of your tour or following its conclusion. Often we are able to secure better rates than are available to the public. We are also happy to provide itinerary suggestions should you wish to do additional travel in Britain.



SCHOLARLY SOJOURNS

www.scholarlysojourns.com

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