



SCHOLARLY™  
SOJOURNS  
THINK INSIDE THE VACATION

# The Great Castles of Britain

History and majesty merge on this scenic journey across Southern 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.



## Tour Itinerary Overview

Oct. 16: Tour begins in Rochester, England  
Oct. 17: Maidstone—Dover—Bodiam—Eastbourne  
Oct. 18: Eastbourne—Arundel—Berkeley—Usk, Wales  
Oct. 19: Usk—Caerphilly—Chepstow—Goodrich—Usk

Oct. 20: Usk—Raglan—Harlech—Beddgelert—Beaumaris  
Oct. 21: Beaumaris—Caernarfon—Conwy—Beaumaris  
Oct. 22: Beaumaris—Rhuddlain—Kenilworth—Warwick  
Oct. 23: Tour concludes in Warwick, England

## Day to Day Tour Summary

### Day 1: Sunday, October 16

Arriving at Strood Railway Station this afternoon, you are greeted by both your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director and your tour leader, historian Paul Remfry. From there, we make a 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 short journey to the Chilston Park Hotel—a stunning, 17th-Century manor house that has been painstakingly converted into atmospheric lodging. After some time to relax and unwind, we gather in the hotel's marble lounge for a welcome reception followed by the opening dinner in its award-winning, 2-AA-rosette restaurant this evening. (R, D)



Majestic Arundel Castle bathes in the afternoon sun

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. This evening we arrive in the seaside town of Eastbourne where our hotel offers mesmerizing views across the English Channel. Following check-in, the evening is free to explore, shop, and dine on your own. Your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director will be happy to provide restaurant suggestions. (B)

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

-Barbara B., Annapolis, MD

**Included meals are indicated in parentheses following each daily description:**

**B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner; R = Reception**





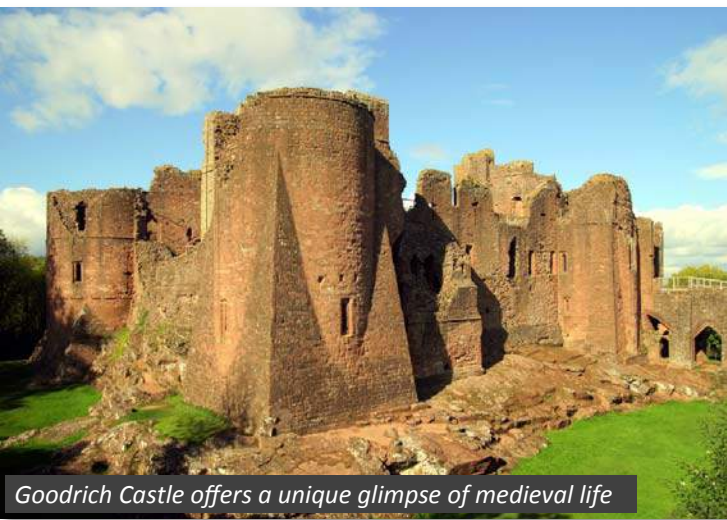
## Day to Day Tour Summary

### Day 3: Tuesday, October 18

We depart Eastbourne early this morning and drive along England's south coast to visit three incredible castle ruins. Our first stop is Pevensey Castle which began as a Roman 'Saxon Shore' fort in the 3rd century and was later reoccupied by the Normans following their conquest in 1066. At Lewes, we encounter one of only two remaining motte-and-bailey castles that contains two mottes and at Arundel we discover a visually -stunning castle proudly overlooking the River Arun. At midday, we enjoy an enchanting Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic before driving north through the picturesque Cotswold villages. Our final stop is at Berkeley Castle—one of the few remaining castles which is still occupied. Here we enjoy a 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—our resting place for the next two nights—and then gather for dinner and our first of two seminar evenings. (B,L,D)

### Day 4: Wednesday, October 19

Following a briefing in the cozy lounge of our hotel this morning, we travel to four of the most striking castles in South Wales. The first stop is graceful Caerphilly Castle which is both the second largest castle and the first fully-concentric castle in Britain. After an engaging tour here we travel to picturesque Chepstow where we take a privately-guided tour of its unique



*Goodrich Castle offers a unique glimpse of medieval life*



*Enjoying a Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic at Arundel Castle*

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. This afternoon we drive along the beautiful Wye River Valley—and directly past the elegant ruins of Tintern Abbey—on our way 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. Returning to Usk late this afternoon, we conclude the day with a visit to Usk Castle which lies hidden in a private garden here. 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 remainder of the day is free to spend as you see fit. Your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director can point the way to great dining options as well as the best pubs in the village. (B)

### Day 5: Thursday, October 20

Departing Usk, we travel 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 here and then allows a generous amount of time for us to explore the extensive and

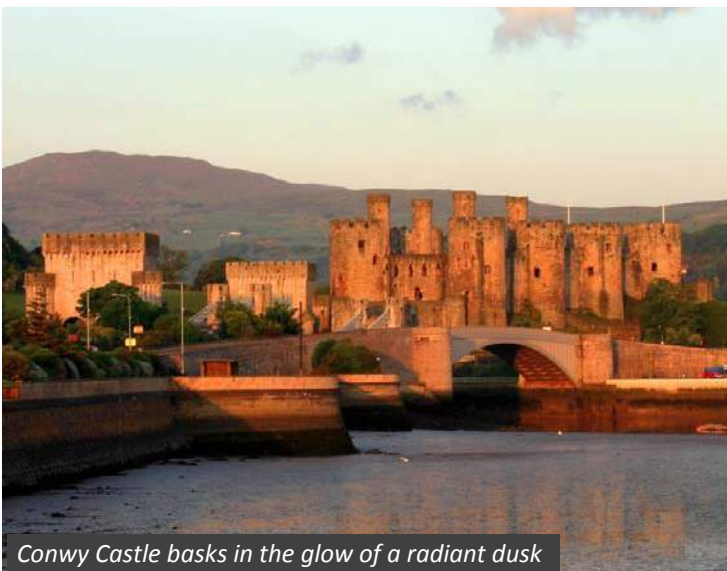


## Day to Day Tour Summary

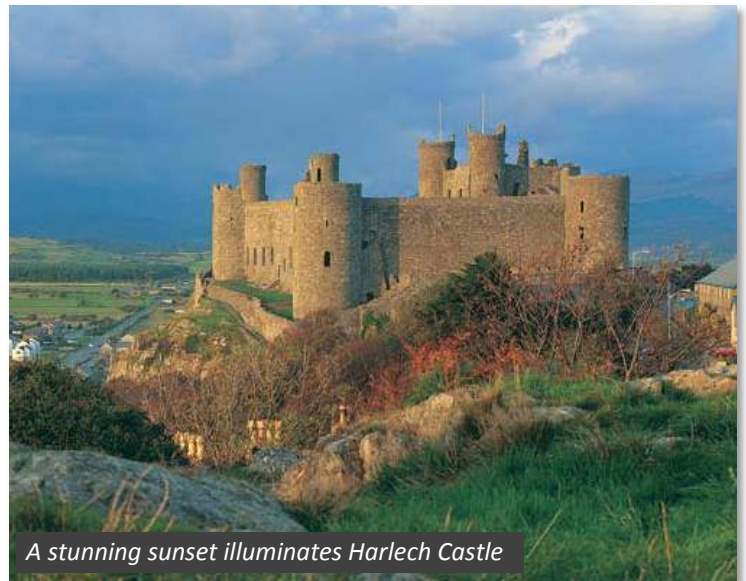
sprawling ruins on our own. Afterward, we travel north, driving through the very heart of picturesque Wales and heading toward its scenic northwestern corner. Our next stop is Harlech Castle—the first of four great castles built by King Edward I during his invasion of Wales between 1282 and 1289. Together the castles have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site due to both their historic significance and their well-preserved state. Departing Harlech, we continue our drive through breathtaking Snowdonia National Park, making a stop here to explore and shop in the charming town of Beddgelert before continuing on to the seaside town of Beaumaris where we lodge for two nights in the very shadow of its remarkable castle. The evening is reserved for our second seminar discussion and group dinner which is held in the dining room of our historic hotel. (B,L,D)

### Day 6: Friday, October 21

Today we visit three of the most remarkable castles on our sojourn—Beaumaris, Caernarfon, and Conwy—which, along with Harlech, were all built by King Edward I. We spend the entire morning exploring the extensive 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. Following a generous break for lunch in the unique, walled town at the castle's base, we



*Conwy Castle basks in the glow of a radiant dusk*



*A stunning sunset illuminates Harlech Castle*

continue to nearby Conwy where we tour not only the breathtaking castle, but also stroll along the still-intact town walls that extend for nearly a mile around the town. Returning to Beaumaris this afternoon, we enjoy an in-depth tour of its unique castle which boasts 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. The entire evening in Beaumaris is left free for you to dine, explore, and perhaps visit one or two of the town's many atmospheric pubs. Your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director is always available to provide assistance and recommendations for dining and entertainment. (B)

### Day 7: Saturday, October 22

Before departing North Wales this morning, we pay a visit to Rhuddlan Castle to see 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. Following our tour here, we head south once again and back into England. This afternoon we visit romantic Kenilworth Castle which is significant from both architectural and historical viewpoints. Most notably, it withstood a 6-month siege during the 13th century which is believed to be the longest sustained siege of any English castle. This afternoon we continue on to the historic city of Warwick, home to what is perhaps the most quintessential of all British castles. After





## Day to Day Tour Summary



*The magical towers of Caernarfon Castle*

checking in at our hotel, we enjoy some free time to shop and explore in this lovely and bustling market town. This evening, we make our way to Warwick Castle itself for a very special reception before our closing dinner. (B, R, D)

### Day 8: Sunday, October 23

Following breakfast, we enjoy our final morning briefing in the lounge of our hotel. Afterward, we return to the massive Warwick Castle where we enjoy an extensive tour as well as an engaging demonstration of medieval falconry. The stone castle we see today dates from the 12th century having been built atop the site of an earlier, wooden motte-and-bailey castle that was built by William the Conqueror in 1068. After lunch we assemble with Paul Remfry and fellow sojourn members for the closing presentation and to say our farewells. (B)

## 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.

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.



*Charles & Daisy Berkeley welcome a Scholarly Sojourns group*





## Your Tour Leader Is a Celebrated Historian and Castle Expert



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 an historian with a passion for telling the stories of castles and the people who once lived in them, Paul Remfry 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 fifty booklets and scholarly articles for academic and archaeological journals. His scholarship, particularly on the castles of Wales and the Marshes, is widely praised as superlative and his research approach to the study of castles has garnered widespread acclaim from the academic community.

## Your Journey Crosses Southern England and Travels Through the Heart of Wales



## Atmospheric Lodging Creates the Perfect Backdrop for Your Tour



### Chilston Park Hotel—Lenham, England

In years past, the 17th-century manor house Chilston Park was home to eminent politicians, writers, lords and viscounts. Today it is a classic British country house hotel with style and charm to spare. But perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this beautiful hotel is its unique styling, enhanced by fine antiques, some as old as the manor itself. Set back from tree-lined lanes, the manor house at Chilston Park sits in 22 acres of parkland and features a two AA Rosette restaurant.



### Glen-Yr-Afon Hotel—Usk, South Wales

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 Bulkeley Hotel—Beaumaris, Wales

Just a few steps from breathtaking Beaumaris Castle, the Bulkeley Hotel occupies a strategic location in the center of the picturesque and historic town of Beaumaris, nestled upon the shores of the Menai Strait. The hotel enjoys stunning views overlooking the water and to the mountains of Snowdonia in the distance. The shops, pubs, and restaurants of Beaumaris are just steps away.

For a complete list of lodging on this tour, please visit [www.scholarlysojourns.com](http://www.scholarlysojourns.com).

## The Highlights and Special Features of Your Tour

- 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
- 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





## Tour Details

### The Great Castles of Britain

**Dates:**

October 16-23, 2016 (Sojourn #1201642)

**Price:**

\$2,995/Person (Double Occupancy)

\$3,340/Person (Single Occupancy)

**Click here to  
register online!**

**Tour begins/concludes:**

Rochester, England / Warwick, England

**Optional air package\*:**

\$1,198/Person

\*Includes round-trip airfare New York – London, airport transfers in the UK, and 100% travel assurance. Departures from other North American gateways also available. Price subject to change until booked.

**Price Includes:**

Eight-day travel program of sightseeing, castle tours, presentations, and discussions led by Paul Remfry, 7 nights hotel accommodation, meals as indicated on the day to day summary, opening and closing receptions, all entrance fees, visits, excursions, and sightseeing as noted in the detailed itinerary, private guides, ground transportation, the services of a dedicated Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director for the duration of the tour, all gratuities (except for hotel porters), and all other sojourn activities as described in the day to day summary.

**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, 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 porters; laundry; other personal items or incidental hotel charges; any other item not specifically indicated.

## Arrival and Departure Information

**Meeting location:**

The meeting point for this tour is Strood Railway Station in Strood, England, which is serviced by frequent trains from London's St. Pancras station (journey time is 30 minutes). Participants should plan to arrive here by 2:30PM on Sunday, October 16. An optional shuttle will also be offered from London Heathrow Airport Terminal 3, departing at 1:00PM that day. Alternatively, participants may arrive directly at our hotel and then take a taxi to meet the group at Rochester Castle at 3:00PM.

**Sojourn Start Time:**

The tour program begins promptly 3:00 PM on Sunday, October 16. The first group activity will be a tour of historic Rochester Castle.

**Sojourn Conclusion:**

Your sojourn concludes at approximately 12:00 PM on Sunday, October 23 in Warwick, England. If making your own flight/travel arrangements, please allow for enough time to travel to the airport after the program ends. Heathrow Airport is approximately 90-minutes by car from Warwick.

**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 general public.

## Registration Information

**To register or for further information:**

**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](http://www.scholarlysojourns.com)**

Here you will find an online registration form as well as a printable version. You will also find the most up-to-date details on this sojourn and all of the other programs offered by Scholarly Sojourns.

## Other Information

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

**Please Note:** The information presented here details this sojourn's planned activities, meals, accommodations, and starting/ending times. We reserve the right to make changes which will improve the program or when circumstances beyond our control necessitate such modifications. Prices are subject to change until booked. Complete terms and conditions are available at our website.



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