

## DESTINATION WESSEX

### Compendium of Three Day Specimen Tours

#### WESSEX HERITAGE

##### Day 1

Leave London for the city of **Winchester**, the ancient capital of Wessex. There will be a guided tour of the historic centre of the city, including a viewing of King Arthur's famous **Round Table** and a visit to **Jane Austen's House**. This will end with a special tour of the magnificent 900 year old **cathedral** where Jane Austen is buried.

After lunch, continue to **Salisbury** where you will check into your hotel and then visit Salisbury **cathedral** which has the highest spire in England followed by a visit to the **cathedral close** including the 14th century **Memorial Hall** where there will be a presentation on Salisbury history.

##### Day 2.

This morning, you will visit **Stonehenge**, one of Wessex's four World Heritage Sites and perhaps its best known landmark. The tour will then head west to **Stourhead**, one of Britain's most beautiful gardens. After an introduction to the 18th century garden, there will be time to take a leisurely stroll around the lake and to enjoy the stunning views. **Lunch at Stourhead**.

Then, it will be on to Longleat. Set in 900 acres of **Capability Brown** designed parkland, **Longleat House** is widely regarded as the best example of Elizabethan architecture. A special tour will be arranged for your visit.

Leave Longleat for **Bath**. Check into your Bath hotel. After a brief introduction to the city, you will be free to begin to **explore Bath**

##### Day 3

This morning, the focus will be on Roman Bath and more specifically on the almost 2000 year old **Roman Baths** themselves. The tour will be followed by a cup of tea in the famous **Pump Room** and a walk across the square to the magnificent 15th century **Bath Abbey**.

After lunch, there will be free time to stroll around **more of Bath**, perhaps to do some **shopping**.

Departure for London will be in the late afternoon.

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## DESTINATION WESSEX

### HISTORIC HOUSES OF WESSEX – Three Day Specimen Tour

#### Day 1.

Leave London for the cathedral city of **Salisbury**. Today's tour will begin in the medieval period. When you check into your hotel, you will find that it has been serving its customers for over 700 years. Your first visit will be to the 13th century **Medieval Hall** in the cathedral close and a presentation on **medieval Salisbury**. Back to the hotel for lunch

After lunch leave for nearby **Wilton House**, for 450 years the home of the Earls of Pembroke. Much of the Tudor building was destroyed by fire in 1647. **Inigo Jones** and **John Webb** then rebuild the house in the Palladian style. The house has magnificent 17th century state rooms and a very fine art collection.

Then return to Salisbury when there will be time to **visit the cathedral** and to take a stroll in the old city centre.

#### Day 2.

Leave for **Longleat**, one of the very best examples of Elizabethan architecture, set in 900 acres of **Capability Brown** designed parkland. It was completed in 1580 and has been the home of the same family ever since, the **Marquesses of Bath**. Here again, there is a fine art collection.

Continue to **Bowood House** where lunch will be taken. This will be followed by a tour of this beautifully proportioned Georgian house. A special feature is **Robert Adam's** fine Diocletian wing that includes a library plus painting and sculpture galleries. The house is set in over 2,000 acres of gardens and grounds, landscaped by Capability Brown in the 1760's.

On the way to Bath, there will be a visit to **Corsham Court**, a fine Elizabethan house built in 1582 and substantially altered in the Georgian period. It houses a collection of both 16th and 17th century Italian and Flemish paintings.

Continue to **Bath** and check into your hotel.

#### Day 3.

Begin with a visit to the **Building of Bath Museum** and a presentation on the creation of **Georgian Bath**. After that, a tour of the city that will include a walk from the **Royal Crescent** down through the Circus to **Queen Square**. Featured will be No.1 Royal Crescent, a carefully restored Georgian house, the Georgian Garden, the **Jane Austen Centre** and then lunch. After lunch, the walk will continue down through the lanes to **Pulteney Bridge** and **Bath Abbey**. It will conclude with a visit to the **Roman Baths** and a cup of tea in the **Pump Room**.

Then it will be time to head back to London.

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## DESTINATION WESSEX

### WESSEX GARDENS - Three Day Specimen Tour - 1

#### Day 1.

Leave for **Sherborne**. Check into your hotel and have lunch. Then head south into the beautiful rolling countryside of Dorset and to the 15th century manor house of **Athelhampton** and one of the finest architectural gardens in England. The Historic Houses Association chose it as **Garden of the Year in 1997**.

Now for something quite different, the **Abbotsbury subtropical Gardens** which were established in 1765 and hold 20 acres of exotic and rare plants. While in Abbotsbury, visit the nearby famous **swannery**.

Return to Sherborne and enjoy this heritage rich town.

#### Day 2

Leave for **Hestercombe** where the Grade 1 listed gardens cover 50 acres. The formal gardens have the distinction of having been designed **by Sir Edwin Lutyens** and planted by **Gertrude Jekyll**. They are a supreme example of this famous partnership. They have now been joined by the Landscape Garden which was created in the 1750's and reopened in 1997 for the first time in 125 years. Lunch at Hestercombe.

Afterwards visit **Barrington Court** originally a Tudor manor house best known today for the quality of its formal garden. This was influenced by Gertrude Jekyll and laid out in a series of walled rooms including the **White Garden, Rose Garden, Iris Garden and Lily Garden**.

The last stop will be at **Tintinhull Garden** which was created around a 17th century manor house and enhanced in recent years by the well known garden designer, **Penelope Hobhouse**. It is a wonderful collection of "rooms" with small ponds, varied borders and secluded lawns plus an attractive kitchen garden. Return to Sherborne.

#### Day 3.

Today, the first stop will be at **Stourhead**, one of the most finest gardens in England. It was designed by **Henry Hoare** and laid out between 1741 and 1760. Classical temples are set around the central lake at the end of a series of vistas which change as the visitor moves around the paths. and through the woodland

Then leave for **Bowood House** for lunch. This will be followed by a tour of this beautifully proportioned Georgian house. A special feature is **Robert Adam's** fine Diocletian wing which includes a library plus painting and sculpture galleries. The house is set in over 2,000 acres of gardens and grounds, landscaped by **Capability Brown** in the 1760's.

The third and final stop is at **Abbey House Gardens** which is located in a historic location, next to the ruins of a 12th century abbey. Included within its borders are a wide variety of environments including the slopes down to the river and the ancient fishponds of the monks. It is particularly noted for its over 2,000 different roses, the largest private collection and its nearly 2,000 herbal plants.

After Abbey House gardens, it will be time to head up the M4 motorway back to London.

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## DESTINATION WESSEX

### WESSEX GARDENS - Three Day Specimen Tour - 2

#### Day 1.

Depart for Bath. On the way, stop in Corsham and visit **Corsham Court**, a fine Elizabethan house which contains two collections of paintings by Italian and Flemish masters. The visit will begin with a guided tour of the house and followed by one of the garden which **Capability Brown** designed in the 1760's. It contains herbaceous borders, secluded gardens and broad lawns plus a variety of specimen trees. Continue to Bath, check into your hotel (2 nights) and have lunch.

After lunch, visit **Prior Park**, an 18th century landscape garden created by Ralph Allen with advice from **Capability Brown and Alexander Pope**. It contains three lakes and a Palladian bridge set in a sweeping valley with great views over Bath. After returning from Prior Park, there will be time to explore **the many attractions of Bath**.

#### Day 2.

Leave for **Hestercombe** where the Grade 1 listed gardens cover 50 acres. The formal gardens have the distinction of having been designed by **Sir Edwin Lutyens** and planted by **Gertrude Jekyll**. They are a supreme example of this famous partnership. They have now been joined by the Landscape Garden which was created in the 1750's and reopened in 1997 for the first time in 125 years. **Lunch at Hestercombe**.

The tour next heads east to **Stourhead**, one of the most stunning gardens in England. It was laid out between 1741 and 1780 and is an outstanding example of the English landscape garden. You will be taken on a walk around the lake.

You will next visit the **Peto Garden at Iford Manor** an Italian style garden set on a hillside with colonnades, terraces, statues and ponds. It is a Grade 1 listed garden that won the Historic Houses Association award of **Garden of the Year in 1998**. Return to Bath and see more of this **World Heritage Site**.

#### Day 3.

Begins with a visit to the world famous **Roman Baths**. Then leave for **Bowood House** which is set in over 2,000 acres of gardens and grounds, also landscaped by **Capability Brown** in the 1760's. After a visit to the gardens, there will be a tour of this beautifully proportioned Georgian house. A special feature is **Robert Adam's** fine Diocletian wing which includes a library plus painting and sculpture galleries. Lunch will be taken at Bowood.

Then continue to Malmesbury for a special tour of **Abbey House Gardens**. They are in a historic location, next to the ruins of the 12th century abbey. Included within their borders are a wide variety of environments including the slopes down to the river and the **ancient fishponds of the monks**. They are particularly noted for their over **2,000 different roses**, the largest private collection and their nearly 2,000 herbal plants. It will then be time to head up t the M4 motorway and return to London.

## DESTINATION WESSEX

### WESSEX GARDENS - Three Day Specimen Tour - 3

#### Day 1.

Leave London for **Sherborne**, Dorset. Check into your hotel (2 nights) and have lunch. Then visit **Tintinhull Garden** which was created around a 17th century manor house and enhanced in recent years by the well known garden designer, **Penelope Hobhouse**. It is a wonderful collection of “rooms” with small ponds, varied borders and secluded lawns plus an attractive kitchen garden.

Leave for **Barrington Court** originally a Tudor manor house that is best known today for the quality of its garden. This is a formal garden, influenced by **Gertrude Jekyll** and laid out in a series of walled rooms including the **White Garden, Rose Garden, Iris Garden and Lily Garden**.

Return to Sherborne and enjoy this heritage rich town.

#### Day 2

Head south into the beautiful rolling countryside of Dorset and to the 15th century manor house of **Athelhampton** and one of the finest architectural gardens in England. The Historic Houses Association chose it as **Garden of the Year in 1997**.

Now for something quite different, the **Abbotsbury Sub-Tropical Gardens** which were established in 1765 and hold 20 acres of exotic and rare plants. Lunch will be taken during the visit to the gardens.

The third stop will be at **Forde Abbey**, which was founded in 1140 and survives externally almost as the monks left it in 1539. It is surrounded by an outstanding garden which was recognised as **Garden of the Year in 1992**. It contains 30 acres of colourful borders, wide lawns, ponds and mature trees.

Return to Sherborne.

#### Day 3.

Leave for **Hadspen Garden**. This charming garden in the grounds of Hadspen House is best known for its display of colour coordinated borders.

The tour now heads back towards London. On the way, two stops will be made. The first of these will be at **Stourhead**, one of the finest gardens in England. It was laid out between 1741 and 1780 and is an outstanding example of the English landscape garden. Lunch will be taken here

The second and final stop is at a man-made structure that was created long before gardens were around. However, the road to London goes right past it and so it would be a shame not to make a stop. It is **Stonehenge**.

The tour will then proceed to London and to your hotel.

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## DESTINATION WESSEX

### MILITARY HERITAGE - Three Day Specimen Tour

#### Day 1.

Leave London for the cathedral city of **Salisbury**. We will first visit **Old Sarum** with its spectacular views over its successor, the Salisbury of today. Next will be a visit to Lord Pembroke's **Wilton House** where much of the **planning for DDay** in 1944 was carried out. On the way back to the hotel we will admire **Old Wardour Castle** and view the collection of **Cap-Badges** carved into the chalk hillside at Fovant by troops over the years.

Drop down into Salisbury Town to the Cathedral Close to visit the **Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment Museum** and hear from its curator of some of the famous actions in which its soldiers have taken part. Hopefully there will also be time to visit, just across the Close, **Salisbury Cathedral** with the highest spire in Europe.

When you check into your hotel, you will find that it has been serving its customers for over 700 years. There will be a **welcome reception** in the evening hosted by the hotel's proprietor, a well known local military collector. After supper we will be privileged to have a **private tour of Stonehenge**.

#### Day 2.

It is now time to concentrate for a time on one of the air aspects of Wessex's military heritage and we will travel to the **Museum of Army Flying** just north of Winchester. Here the emphasis is less on high-tech bombing and more on the difficulties and dangers of deploying troops by glider and also operating as the 'eyes' of the Army using small and often unarmed aircraft.

It is then just a short distance to **Winchester, capital of ancient Wessex**, where we will be staying in the every centre of this lovely historic town. It is blessed with an abundance of **military museums** and we will chose a couple of museums from either that of the **Gurkhas**, the **Royal Hussars** or the **Light Infantry and Royal Green Jackets**.

The evening will allow a visit **Winchester Cathedral** and its old alleys and byways.

#### Day 3.

After an early breakfast we go to **Portsmouth, the home of the Royal Navy**. In the morning we will stay on land and visit Henry VIII's favourite warship - the **Mary Rose**, Nelson's flagship at the battle of Trafalgar - **HMS Victory**, and the pride of Queen Victoria's fleet - **HMS Warrior**. We will embark on a couple of classic yachts whose skippers are retired military men and whose stories have to be heard to be believed (or not!). They will show us around the Royal Navy base from the water and tell us about the **modern warships** tied up alongside in the harbour.

After tea on board, and perhaps a **splicing of the mainbrace**, it will be time to disembark and return to London late in the day.

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