

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 that 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 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 that 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 that includes a library and 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 having 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.