

DESTINATION WESSEX

WESSEX HERITAGE - Five Day Specimen Tour

Day 1

Leave London for the city of **Winchester**, the ancient capital of Wessex in the time of the legendary Alfred the Great. Check into your hotel, relax and perhaps take the Keats walk that inspired **John Keats** to write "To Autumn". Include 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.

There will be a welcome reception and dinner in the evening.

Day 2.

The morning tour begins with a short drive to the attractive town of Romsey and a visit to the 12th century **Romsey Abbey** which shows Norman and Early English architecture at its best. On then to the nearby garden at **Mottisfont Abbey** which contains the national collection of old roses.

The next stop is **Salisbury** where you can check into your hotel and relax before lunch. In the afternoon, a guided visit to **Salisbury cathedral** which has the highest spire in England and a visit to the cathedral close including the 14th century Memorial Hall where there will be a presentation on Salisbury history.

Day 3.

This morning, the first stop will be at the delightful garden of **Heale House** where the head gardener will show you around. Then on to **Stonehenge**, one of Wessex's four World Heritage Sites and perhaps its best known landmark. After a guided tour of Stonehenge, the tour will head west to **Stourhead**, one of Britain's most beautiful gardens. After lunch and a talk on the garden, there will be time to take a leisurely stroll around the lake and to enjoy the stunning views.

Then, it will be back towards Salisbury through serene **Wessex countryside** and its picturesque villages. On the way you will visit **Wilton House**, for 450 years the home of the Earls of Pembroke. It was also a focal point in the planning of the D-day offensive in the Second World War.

Return to the Salisbury Hotel.

Day 4

Leave for 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. We will then take you to a historic inn for lunch.

After lunch, a short drive to **Bath** and check into your hotel. Following a brief city orientation tour, including the **Royal Crescent** and a stop for afternoon tea, there will be free time for you to **explore the centre** of Bath.

Day 5

This morning, the focus will be on the **Bath** of Roman times. First, a tour of the almost 2000 year old **Roman Baths** themselves. Across the square is the magnificent 15th century **Bath Abbey** which the tour will visit before picking up the Roman theme again and moving over to the newly completed restoration of the **Roman Spa**.

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.

