



LONDON, HIGHCLERE AND COTSWOLD EXPERIENCE



'No, Sir, when a man is tired of London he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford.'

Samuel Johnson

Three days of luxury and heritage. See the best that London has to offer followed by a visit to magnificent Highclere Castle and a magical journey through the breathtaking Cotswolds. Read on for your in-depth itinerary.



The largest city in Europe London is home to approximately seven million people; spread over six hundred and twenty-five square miles. London was founded by the Romans in the first century AD. For one thousand years it has been the principal residence of British monarchs, and is rich in historic buildings and treasures from all periods. In addition to its royal palaces, museums, galleries and churches, London is overflowing with a vast array of theatres, restaurants, entertainment and shops. The attractions on offer are virtually endless.

Shopping in London is a Unique Experience (if you know where to go)

Shopping in London is a serious adventure. Knightsbridge, Sloane Street, Bond Street and Beauchamp Place have a selection and diversity of shops that are unrivalled. Our famous department stores Harrods, Harvey Nichols, Fortnum and Mason's and Liberty's, alongside designers such as Stella McCartney, Zandra Rhodes, Vivien Westwood and Jimmy Choo sit comfortably with the bustling markets of Covent Garden, Portobello, Berwick Street and many more. The whole of London beckons shoppers with its treasures and collectibles, crammed into quaint little antique shops and streets full of antiquarian booksellers and art galleries. Whatever you may be looking for we will know where to find it.



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Day 1

It is always difficult to recommend hotels to our clients as it depends so much on personal taste. However there is one hotel that ticks all the boxes for us. Poised between London's fashionable Chelsea and Knightsbridge, The Draycott Hotel provides the perfect home from home during your visit to London.

The hotel was adapted from three grand brick-faced Edwardian houses – numbers 22, 24 and 26 Cadogan Gardens – which were originally built by Lord Cadogan and are part of the Cadogan Estate. Guests of the Draycott immediately sense the hotel's warm atmosphere - which is more like that of a welcoming private residence, albeit a grand Edwardian one, staffed by an impeccably trained team which takes pride in anticipating and attending to each guest's particular needs. Either take breakfast in the hotel or we could drive you to The Brompton Quarter in Knightsbridge who specialise in the most wonderful croissants and pastries and from there you can explore Knightsbridge. By now it must be lunchtime and Knightsbridge is littered with diverse options. As this could easily turn into a gastronomic tour then we ought to get down to doing some serious sightseeing. Close to Knightsbridge is Kensington Palace, previous home of Princess Diana and from there we could drive by Buckingham Palace and travel down The Mall, under Admiralty Arch into Trafalgar Square and see the magnificent Lord Nelson on his column. It's then a very short distance down Whitehall past Banqueting House, Downing Street and Horseguards to The Palace of Westminster (Parliament) and Westminster Abbey. To try to include all the wonderful sites that London has to offer would be impossible so it is always better to structure the visits around your own personal desires. After a hectic days sightseeing and shopping, afternoon tea or cocktails followed by theatre and dinner seems like a plan.



Afternoon Tea

The choice is endless from the grandeur of Claridges, The Dorchester or The Ritz to the quaint, very English, Brown's Hotel, The Capitol, Stafford and Dukes. These are just a few to whet your appetite.



Maybe it's time for Cocktails

At this point in the day, real 'car-to-bar-to-theatre' proximity is a definite plus. Our favourite theatre land cocktail bars have a fantastic variation of themes but have a consistent high standard of cocktails. Asia de Cuba, The Lobby Bar, The Lab or Revolution are a few of our Soho choices. If we're not in a crazy spin to catch the curtain rising on our show we could sample the Blue Bar or the Donovan Bar in Mayfair or even Sketch. If you want to be really cool try the Ice Lounge.



Now for our evening's entertainment

Our theatre choice is enormous, with a huge variety that only a city like London can provide. We can help you choose between the seemingly endless names of world famous performers and even arrange the best seats for any performance if you wish. London is the only city on the world to have five international symphony orchestras with a vast array of visiting world-class performers. Our concert venues range from the grandeur of Queen Victoria's Royal Albert Hall to the modern Barbican centre and the South Bank.

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The Royal Opera House and the Coliseum are the two main venues for opera in London. The extravagant productions and constant rotation of international soloists make these theatres unique.

After an evening's entertainment a small late dinner can complete the perfect day.

From the totally English Rules, Scotts and Wiltons to the fun Asian fusion Zuma, Hakkasan, Novakov and Nobu and everything French or Italian in between, (notwithstanding a new opening every month) you could discuss dining in London for a week or more and still not reach a decision. We can save you the debate and offer our suggestions of the most memorable restaurants in London, some new, some old favourites. And so to bed.



Our main objective is to suggest hotels that offer a flavour and, in some cases, history that is unique to London. Whilst having recommended The Draycott Hotel to you we appreciate that you may prefer to be offered a choice. Claridges is the one 'large' hotel that embodies English glamour and gentility. This art-deco monument of the 1930s is still alive with its cocktail bar, dining room and sweeping, chandeliered staircase. All very reminiscent of The Titanic. We also have a passion for the traditional English boutique hotels. Nothing comes more traditionally attired than Dukes Hotel or the Stafford in Mayfair. These quintessential English establishments, with their beautifully furnished rooms and impeccable service are also on our afternoon tea recommendations. A touch of theatrical flamboyance sums up the Covent Garden Hotel with its extrovert English décor in the heart of Covent Garden's theatre land. A few blocks away the Soho Hotel is the epitome of colourful modern design set amongst the lively backdrop of the Soho district's vibrant nightlife. Our hotel selections as well as all our other recommendations are based on personal experience with that most satisfying feeling of money well spent as opposed to good value for money.



Day 2

Providing it is not closed due to the filming of the third series of Downton Abbey then a visit to Highclere Castle is a must. After lunch at The Carnarvon Arms which is now owned by Marco Pierre White, or The Yew Tree Inn, where Lady Carnarvon often takes friends for lunch, our journey takes us to the magical village of Lacock. The village appears today much as it did throughout the centuries. You can only be spellbound by its architecture with houses from the thirteenth century onwards. You will enjoy the tranquil atmosphere of a living village. It is wholly owned and maintained by the National Trust. Between the River Avon and the village is Lacock Abbey dating back to King John in 1086. Well worth a visit to see the very first photographic negative ever produced by Henry Fox-Talbot. Lacock Abbey also features extensively in Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone among many others. From Lacock we head up into the Cotswolds and spend the evening relaxing at the wonderful Ellenborough Park Hotel. Ellenborough Park, is a majestic country house situated adjacent to the famous Cheltenham racecourse in the village of Southam, just outside Cheltenham, offering guests luxurious accommodation, fine dining, country sports and spa facilities in a relaxing countryside setting. Ellenborough Park, once the estate of the Earl of Ellenborough, a former Governor of India, is a magnificent English country house with



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62 luxury bedrooms. The property boasts three sumptuous open-plan and one split-level suite, named after famous racehorses such as Arkle and Kauto Star. The hotel also features an Indian-themed spa with a hydrotherapy pool, fitness suite and heated outdoor swimming-pool. With interior design by Nina Campbell, Ellenborough Park provides the highest level of quality and service.

Day 3

Here you would have the Cotswolds literally on your doorstep and can head off in any direction you please. This is an area in which nestle lovely villages of soft yellow stone and thatched roofs surrounded by a landscape of woodland and high open plateaux known as 'wolds'. Rural England at its very best. We will take you to the most picturesque, undiscovered places on our way to Shakespeare's Stratford on Avon. William Shakespeare was born and lived most of his life and is buried in this quaint market town. Tour his houses and Anne Hathaway's cottage. After lunch we would head south for Oxford. Founded by French scholars in 1167. The chapels, gardens and lecture theatres of the thirty-nine colleges date back to the thirteenth century with many masterpieces by Christopher Wren. Christ Church College, probably the most spectacular, was founded in 1525 by Cardinal Wolsey and has produced sixteen Prime Ministers in the last two hundred years but more importantly is used as the dining hall in the Harry Potter films. The city boasts the first purpose built museum in England, the world famous Ashmolean, which was opened to the public in 1683.



Maybe you would prefer to see Blenheim Palace which is the finest example of English baroque architecture. Built for the Duke of Marlborough in the early eighteenth century for a staggering £240,000 and famous for its two thousand acres of Capability Brown landscaping. It later became the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill.

Our three day tour would end back in London in the early evening.