

Sterling Garden Tours invites you to join...
Chelsea and Gardens of the Cotswolds, Sussex, and Kent
May 12-23, 2024

May 12, Sunday Depart the USA for London's Heathrow Airport

May 13, Monday - London Heathrow - Cotswolds

Arrival London Heathrow Airport. A group transfer will be provided for guests on flights arriving by 1.00PM. Please look for someone holding a sign stating Sterling Tours Ltd in arrivals. Our accommodation is at the Lygon Arms, located in the charming Cotswolds village of Broadway. Steeped in over 600 years of fascinating history, our honey-colored Cotswolds coaching inn has been hosting royalty and notable figures throughout the centuries. There is a restaurant, cozy log fires and spa. This evening join Shannon, Keegan (from Sterling Tours) and your guide Peter Weiss, along with traveling companions for a welcome dinner at the hotel. **Dinner**



May 14, Tuesday - Cotswolds



This morning we will visit Broughton Grange, set overlooking a beautiful Oxfordshire valley. Its history dates to 1620, initially as a small farm cottage. Leading landscape designer Tom Stuart-Smith was commissioned to transform a field into a walled garden. This impressive new garden features three individually themed terraces and has been designed in relation to the surrounding rural landscape. It is considered among Tom's best work and is widely featured in books and magazines. There is an arboretum and a tree collection including a wide range of interesting species and cultivars.

After our lunch at Broughton, we will enjoy a tour of Rousham garden, designed by William Kent (1685-1748). Kent was a painter, stage designer and architect who spent time in Italy, the influence of which can clearly be seen in the gardens. He was a pioneer of the 'New English Style of Landscape.' Until then gardens had been in a more formal style. The garden today still retains a quality of Englishness and harmony between the house, garden, and countryside.



We will also visit the house which was built in 1635 and is still owned by the same family. Return to the hotel with the late afternoon and evening at leisure. **Breakfast, Lunch**

May 15, Wednesday - Cotswolds

This morning we travel to Hertfordshire to visit Serge Hill and Tom Stuart-Smith LTD. Tom is the winner of 8 Gold medals at the Chelsea Flower Show. He specializes in gardens that combine naturalism and modernity. Four generations of his family have lived at Serge Hill. In 1986 Tom renovated a dilapidated barn and field which he turned into his new home and garden. We will also visit Tom's sister at, The Barn. Her garden has two contrasting areas with a wide range of herbaceous perennials and shrubs tolerant of generally dry conditions. There is an area of naturalistic planting, wild-flowers, and exotic meadows. Tea and cake will be provided on our tour.



Departing Tom Stuart-Smith, we will drive to some of the charming villages of the Cotswolds. Places with names like Stow-on-the Wold and Chipping Campden. We will have time to wander down the High Streets here, find our own lunching spots (Lunch on your own and payable direct), discover cottage gardens and duck in the shops or tearooms. **Breakfast**

May 16, Thursday - Oxfordshire, Cotswolds



This morning we will travel to Pettifer's Garden. Since 1984, owner Gina Price has transformed Pettifers into one of the most influential gardens in England. During spring, ribbons of plants flow through the borders, creating a glowing tapestry of color.

We continue to Hidcote, an Arts and Crafts inspired garden, created by American horticulturist Major Lawrence Johnston. We will explore the maze of narrow paved pathways and discover intricately designed outdoor rooms and magnificent vistas. Many of the plants in the garden were collected from Johnston's many plant hunting trips to far-away places. Time to explore on your own and find a bite for lunch (Lunch on our own and payable direct.). Return to Cotswold's for a free evening. Dinner included at the hotel this evening. **Breakfast, Dinner**



May 17, Friday - Cotswolds - Sussex-Kent.

We check out of our hotel in the Cotswolds this morning and travel southeast to Royal Tunbridge Wells. En route we will stop for Lunch at Gravetye Manor, a quintessential English Country Manor, surrounded by gardens with a Michelin starred restaurant. After our "farm-to-table" luncheon we will have a tour of the gardens. We continue to Hotel Du Vin & Bistro for our next three-night accommodation with the late afternoon and evening at leisure. **Breakfast, Lunch**



May 18, Saturday - East Sussex



Today we have a private opening at Great Dixter, an outstanding garden and the family home of gardener and garden writer Christopher Lloyd – it was the focus of his energy and enthusiasm and the subject of over 40 years of books and articles. Now under the stewardship of Fergus Garrett, Great Dixter is an historic house, a garden, a center of education, and a place that attracts horticulturists from all over the world. If Fergus is available when we visit, he will lead our tour. We will also explore the house which was started in the 15th century.

Our final stop today is Scotney Castle to explore the Victorian Country house, romantic garden, and 14th century moated castle - all in a beautiful, wooded estate of 770 acres. We will also be able to visit the tearoom for any lunch you may wish to have (Lunch on our own and payable direct.) Return to our hotel for the evening at leisure. Dinner included at the hotel this evening. **Breakfast, Dinner**

May 19, Sunday - Kent

This morning we visit Sissinghurst, a magnificent garden with profuse bloom. Historic, poetic, iconic; a refuge dedicated to beauty. Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson fell in love with Sissinghurst Castle and created a world-renowned garden. Vita, the poet, and writer, began transforming Sissinghurst Castle in the 1930s with her diplomat and author husband, Harold Nicolson. Harold's architectural planning of the garden rooms, and the colorful, abundant planting in the gardens by Vita, reflect the romance and intimacy of her poems and writings.



After our visit to Sissinghurst concludes we will make our way to Chapel Down Vineyards. Here we will enjoy a wine tasting with lunch at the vineyards, Swan Restaurant! This is a family-friendly restaurant serving award-winning sparkling and still wines from Chapel Down, which will be included in our varietal wine tasting to enjoy with our lunch. **Breakfast, Lunch.**



May 20, Monday Kent-Surrey London



En route to London we will stop at the Royal Horticultural Society test gardens at Wisley. One of the great gardens of the world, Wisley, is home to some of the largest plant collections anywhere on the globe. We will find everything from grand borders to wonderful woodland and beautiful wild garden. The garden was created to inspire and educate. We will have free time for lunch and a visit to the amazing gift shop which houses a diverse collection of gardening books and related gift items. Upon arrival in London, we will check into our hotel, the Chesterfield, for three nights. This quintessentially British hotel is in the heart of Mayfair near Bond Street, Piccadilly, and the Royal Parks. **Breakfast**

May 21, Tuesday - London - Chelsea Flower Show

Today as members of the Royal Horticultural Society we will attend the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show on "Members only Day". The grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea will be transformed with stunning horticultural displays. World-renowned garden designers, plant specialists, florists and nurseries come together every year to one of London's most charming and affluent neighborhoods. Tonight, we will gather for a festive farewell dinner at the hotel. **Breakfast, Dinner**



May 22, Wednesday - London



Free day in London. We may wish to continue the garden theme with a visit to the Chelsea Physic Garden located on the edge of the Thames River since 1673. The Garden's plant collection is unique in being the only botanic garden collection focused on medicinal, herbal, and useful plants. For a change of pace, you could peruse one of the fine museums such as the Victoria & Albert or the British Museum. Shoppers might enjoy Bond Street and Knightsbridge or attend the Wednesday antique market in Camden Passage. **Breakfast**

May 23, Thursday - London

Independent departures or additional nights in London. It has been an absolute pleasure to enjoy this lovely program with you! Happy Travels and Happy Gardening!

Breakfast

Chelsea Flower Show and English Gardens 2024

**TOUR LAND COST PER GUEST
BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY: \$8525
Single supplement \$ 1895**

THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- 10 nights First Class accommodation
- All hotel taxes and service charges
- Breakfast daily, special lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Deluxe transportation by private motor coach
- Arrival airport transfer (If arriving by 1:00pm)
- Membership in the Royal Horticultural Society for the first 10 guests to sign up, 1 per family.
- All sightseeing and entrances as per the itinerary
- Guided by Peter Weiss, lecturer, artist, writer, and photographer
- Escorted by Shannon Cummins and Keegan Cummins (Mother and Son team from Sterling Tours Ltd)

COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Airfare (Booked Independently, please provide your air schedule ASAP) Feel free to contact Shannon Cummins at Shannon@sterlingtoursltd.com to discuss any air questions. She can direct you to online links such as Kayak, Google, or your preferred Airline itself, to book your Air on your own. If you wish to use miles, be sure to contact your CC company to assist you. If you have a wonderful Travel Agent that you work with, they may be able to book your air for you too. Sterling Tours Ltd only handles land arrangements, NOT AIR.
- Tips to your guide and driver
- Travel insurance, we suggest you read our Terms and Conditions page and access the link for a quote with Travel Guard. **Please see additional information in our Terms and Conditions.**
The process of getting a quote online is quite simple or you can easily contact them from their information provided to get your quote and coverage sorted too.
- Transfer back to the airport. Your hotel should be able to hire a taxi for you. In London, Uber is very resourceful too.