



Gardens of the Cotswolds

Designed for the
Women Gardeners of Ridgewood

June 7 - 16, 2016

Dreamy spires and picturesque villages capture the romance and gentle beauty of the Cotswolds, a beautiful corner of England where lush, rolling hillsides meet the horizon and life seems lifted from the pages of a storybook. From the soaring towers of Oxford University to the quaint, tumbling cottages that sleep by the riverside to the gorgeous Georgian architecture of ancient Bath, the Cotswolds seem to extend an invitation to slow down, stay a while, and dream.

The Cotswold Hills stretch from Stratford-upon-Avon in the north to Bath in the south, and Gloucester in the west to Oxford in the east. And they contain some of the most beautiful gardens in England. Nowhere in the world is the passion for horticulture expressed more vividly than in Britain, where gardens have served as inspiration for painters, writers, and flower lovers for centuries. From great country estates to miniscule inner-city gardens, the British use their exceptionally long growing season to fullest advantage, and you can see the results in the *Gardens of the Cotswolds*.



Sudeley Castle

We'll explore the hills and dales, villages and towns, at a relaxed pace that allows you to appreciate the full glory of an English spring. From the byways of some of the prettiest villages in England, to medieval Warwick Castle. This spring, why not join us for a stroll in the *Gardens of the Cotswolds*?



Barnsley House

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy is:

Land only (no airfare included): **\$3980**
Single supplement: **\$980**

Airfares are available from most U.S. departure cities. Please call for details.

The following services are included:

- Hotels:** 8 nights accommodation in a first-class hotel.
All hotel taxes and service charges included.
- Coaching:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary.
- Meals:** Full breakfast daily, 6 dinners, 2 lunches.
- Guides:** Discover Europe tour director throughout and local guides at many gardens.
- Expenses:** Portage of one large suitcase per person.
- Entrances:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary.

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour.





Tuesday, June 7 Departure from your chosen US gateway city. **Overnight: Plane**

Wednesday, June 8. Upon arrival at London Heathrow airport, you'll be met for the transfer to our hotel in the Cotswolds. After checking in, there will be time to unpack, relax and begin exploring the neighborhood before we meet for a welcome reception and dinner. **(D)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**

Thursday, June 9. A panoramic drive this morning introduces us to the landscapes of the Cotswold Hills, where villages of thatched-roof cottages nestle in valleys of rolling green. We'll wander through several of the prettiest villages, where cottages of honey-colored stone nestle by little bridges built over peacefully flowing streams. We'll stop in Burton-on-the-Water for lunch, before continuing on to Sudeley Castle, steeped in history, and explore its beautiful gardens. We'll return to our hotel in time to freshen up before dinner. **(B, D)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**

Friday, June 10. Heading south this morning, a short drive brings us to Iford Manor, home of the Peto Garden. This unique Grade I Italianate garden was designed by Harold A Peto, who lived at the Manor from 1899 - 1933. From here we stop in the city of Bath, where we will visit the Roman Baths, perhaps the best-preserved Roman remains in Britain, and then have time for lunch. On the way back to our hotel, we'll stop in Malmesbury to visit the Abbey House Garden, a spectacular 5-acre garden set beside the 12th-century Abbey church. Dinner at the hotel. **(B, D)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**



A Cotswold Village Street

Saturday, June 11. We begin the day by driving into the east Cotswolds to the village of Whichford, where we visit the Whichford Pottery. This family business has been making garden pottery for 40 years now and is licensed by the RHS to provide a special series of commemorative flower pots and planters. You can watch the potters at work and see their displays in the various small gardens at the site. We continue this afternoon to Broughton Castle, the home of Lord and Lady Sele, where we'll enjoy a private tour of the house and garden. Dinner is included at the hotel again this evening. **(B, D)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**

Sunday, June 12. A leisurely start this morning with a gentle drive through beautiful countryside. After a traditional Sunday lunch in a country pub, we'll visit the Hidcote Manor garden, England's foremost 20th-century garden, where a series of horticultural "rooms" have been created, each different in color, character, and intention. Next, we'll visit the beautiful Kiftsgate Court gardens, home of Heather Muir, a pioneer in the rediscovery of shrub roses (including the celebrated rambling Rosa filipes "Kiftsgate"). The evening is free to dine at the local pub. **(B, L)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**

Monday, June 13. Our first visit this morning is to Barnsley House and the masterpiece garden created by Rosemary Verey, one of the most influential gardeners of the 20th century, where we'll have a tour with one of the head gardeners. You'll have an opportunity to see how the ideas and designs from her many books and articles are reflected everywhere in this glorious space before we gather for lunch at the Village Pub. After lunch the afternoon will be free to explore Cirencester (once an important Roman city), where you can browse the local shops, or visit the Corinium Museum and the town's marvelous "wool" church. The evening is also free. **(B, L)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**

Tuesday, June 14. This morning we will make a private visit to the estate of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales at Highgrove (subject to confirmation). After lunch, we'll visit Rodmarton Manor, a fine example of a Cotswold "Arts & Crafts" House and one of the last great country houses to be built in the traditional way. The large garden is known for its roses, herbaceous borders and its topiary. We'll return to our hotel for dinner. **(B, D)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**



Hidcote

Wednesday, June 15. This morning's visit is to Rousham. This landscape garden is a place of pilgrimage for students of the work of William Kent (1685-1748). Rousham represents the first phase of English landscape design and remains almost as Kent left it, one of the few gardens of this date to have escaped alteration. We continue through the east Cotswolds to the village of Whichford, where we visit the Whichford Pottery. This family business has been making garden pottery for 40 years now and is licensed by the RHS to provide a special series of commemorative flower pots and planters. You can watch the potters at work and see their displays in the various small gardens at the site. After a break here for lunch we visit Pettifers Garden. Pettifers has now taken some 15 years to create but continues to evolve and has a peaceful feeling that comes with the extraordinary views over the landscape. Now mature, this is a plantsman's garden with plenty of interest all year round. A farewell dinner is included at our hotel this evening. **(B, D)** **Overnight: Cotswolds**

Thursday, June 16. Morning transfer to Heathrow Airport for your returning flight to the U.S. **(B)** **Overnight: Home**

Key to included meals: B - breakfast, L - lunch, D - dinner