English Countryside

July 30 - August 8, 2020

Roman baths
Stonehenge
Salisbury Cathedral
Shakespeare’s birthplace
Christ Church College
Windsor Castle
Buckingham Palace
West End theatre performance
London sightseeing
Tower of London
Ride on the London Eye
**DAY 1  THURSDAY, JULY 30  FLIGHT TO LONDON**

Our journey begins as we transfer to the airport for our flight to **London, England**.

*Note:* The airport location and airline will be confirmed no sooner than 9 months before departure. Friends Club trips typically fly out of Chicago, Des Moines, or Cedar Rapids.

**DAY 2  FRIDAY, JULY 31  BATH (D)**

Upon arrival in London this morning, we will board our deluxe motorcoach and enjoy the English countryside as we travel to **Bath**. The area is famous for its elegant, honey-colored Georgian architecture and is both a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a tourist mecca. In the 18th century, Bath was the haunt of English fashionable society who brought brilliant architects to design the Palladian terraced housing, circles, crescents, and squares that dominate the city. It’s compact and civilized, built for strolling around, exploring alleyways, gawking at the superb housing, and ogling the expensive products in the shops. We will stop at the city’s **Roman baths** and view the remarkably preserved saunas and hot and cold pools that remain from one of the greatest religious spas of the ancient world. These baths are fantastic examples of early thermal engineering and plumbing! We’ll then check into our accommodations for the next two nights and enjoy dinner as a group.

**DAY 3  SATURDAY, AUGUST 1  BATH (BD)**

We will depart for Salisbury following breakfast, stopping at the prehistoric **Stonehenge** along the way. Little is known about the origin and purpose of this unique ring of standing stones dating back to around 3100 BC. Was it a calendar, a clock, a temple, or an altar? After exploring the mysteries of Stonehenge, we’ll continue on to the famed **Salisbury Cathedral**, among the most beautiful in the world. Within the Chapter House, we will find the best preserved of the four original Magna Carta manuscripts dating back to 1215 AD. We’ll also see the world’s oldest working mechanical clock and admire the fabulous stained glass. Up next is a visit to **Wilton House** for a glimpse into the life of English aristocrats. This English country house has been the home of the Earls of Pembroke for over 400 years. Time will be available to browse the nearby **Wilton Shopping Village** before we return to the hotel in Bath for some free time to explore the city. Dinner will be enjoyed together this evening.

**DAY 4  SUNDAY, AUGUST 2  STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (BD)**

After breakfast this morning, we say goodbye to Bath and head to Stratford-upon-Avon. The drive will take us through the heart of the **Cotswolds**, where we can marvel at the gentle hills and rolling green landscapes interrupted only by unspoiled market towns and picturesque villages of honey-colored stone. We’ll arrive in **Stratford-upon-Avon** this afternoon and check into our hotel for the next two nights. Take some time to freshen up and relax before joining the group for a delicious dinner.

**DAY 5  MONDAY, AUGUST 3  STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (B)**

Today is a day for exploring this charming town steeped in English history, including **William Shakespeare’s birthplace** and **Anne Hathaway’s cottage**. The 16th-century, half-timbered home of glove maker John Shakespeare on Henley Street is where the famous playwright was born and raised and now houses a museum dedicated to his life. A short distance away sits the thatched farmhouse where Shakespeare courted his bride-to-be. Nestled within stunning grounds and gardens overflowing with fragrant blooms and traditional shrubs, the cottage still contains original pieces of family furniture, including the Hathaway bed. The afternoon is yours to explore on your own.

**DAY 6  TUESDAY, AUGUST 4  WINDSOR (BD)**

Our day begins with breakfast before we continue our tour of the English countryside by traveling to **Oxford**. An established town since the 9th century, this “city of dreaming spires” is famous throughout the world for its university and place in history. For over 800 years, Oxford has been home to royalty, scholars, and writers. While here, we’ll visit **Christ Church College**, one of the largest at the University of Oxford. This beautiful location served as inspiration for Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* and was more recently used in filming *Harry Potter*. Our day comes to an end in **Windsor**, where we will spend two nights and enjoy a delightful dinner together.
Across the road from our hotel is Windsor Castle, the Queen’s favorite weekend home and the oldest and largest inhabited castle in the world. Built in the 11th century by William the Conqueror after the Norman invasion of England, the castle sits atop a steep hill that offers an impressive view of much of the castle grounds. Explore the highlights of the castle at your leisure. Visit the State Apartments where thirty-nine monarchs have resided and view the ever-changing exhibits of valuable treasures. You can even walk in St. George’s Chapel, which served as the location for Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s wedding! Spend as much time as you wish in the castle before walking back to the hotel for an afternoon and evening at leisure.

Following breakfast, we will make the short drive into London to see the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace. We will also walk in the footsteps of dignitaries from around the world as we tour halls and galleries of one of the world’s few remaining working palaces. The afternoon is yours to discover the many museums, shops, and historical sites the city has to offer. After time to freshen up at our hotel, we will gather for dinner and head to the West End theatre district for an amazing performance!

Our touring today will feature the highlights of the city, including Big Ben, the London Bridge, and the Houses of Parliament. After lunch, our group will head to the Tower of London. From medieval torture to grim executions and its infamous royal prisoners, the Tower of London has long found itself at the center of the city’s dark history. Built by William the Conqueror in 1066, the historic castle has served as a royal menagerie, Her Majesty’s prison, an execution site, a royal observatory, a royal mint, and a military storehouse. Here we will view the Crown Jewels, meet the famous Beefeaters in their traditional Tudor uniforms, and explore the White Tower and the Royal Armory. Our farewell evening will begin with champagne and breathtaking views aboard the famous London Eye before we reminisce about our journey through the English countryside over a fantastic dinner.

We’ll transfer to the airport for our flight home.
Inclusions:

- Round Trip Airport Transfers
- Round Trip Air to London
- Private Motorcoach Transportation
- 8 Nights’ Accommodations
- 14 Meals (8 Breakfasts, 6 Dinners)
- Professional Tour Manager
- Admission to Attractions as Stated on Itinerary
- Porter Service of One Bag Per Person at Hotels
- Taxes and Gratuities for Included Services
- Travel Protection Plan

Not included in the price of this tour: meals/beverages other than those listed on the itinerary, beverages other than tea or coffee with included meals, items of a personal nature/souvenirs, phone calls and faxes from hotels, passport fees, current baggage fees at the airport as assessed by the airline, and any service not listed in the above inclusions.

Tour Pricing

$5,379 per person, Double Occupancy

$6,549 per person, Single Occupancy

Travel protection is included in your trip cost (per person: Double - $358; Single - $458)

A $500 deposit per person is required with your registration form.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL: (319) 358-2230 or (319) 358-2215 OR EMAIL: FRIENDSCLUB@HILLSBANK.COM

Custom designed tour by Star Destinations, Inc.

Activity Levels

1. Light: Relaxed pace; minimal/easy standing/walking; must be able to physically get on/off the motorcoach.
2. Moderate: Intermittent standing/walking; some stairs and uneven surfaces due to nature of attractions.
3. Active: Moderate to heavy standing/walking; some stairs, inclines, and uneven surfaces due to nature of attractions.
4. Energetic: Well-paced walking/physical activity; various terrains, uneven surfaces, and hilly ground; best enjoyed by mobile travelers.

Documentation: Each U.S. citizen must have a passport valid through February 8, 2021, to participate. If you don’t have a passport, call our office and we’ll tell you how to apply for one. Holders of non-U.S. passports have different entry requirements. Please NOTE: Due to airline security measures, your passport name must match your airline ticket name and your tour reservation name or you may be denied aircraft boarding.

Basic Secondary Travel Protection Plan Included: Hills Bank is including a Travel Protection Plan in your tour pricing. Travel Protection means passengers are covered when unforeseen medical circumstances arise which may force you to cancel or interrupt your vacation. Coverage is as follows: Accidental Death and Dismemberment ($25,000), Emergency Medical Expenses/Emergency Assistance (Emergency Accident and Sickness Medical Expenses - $50,000 / Emergency Evacuation and Repatriation - $250,000), Trip Cancellation (Trip Cost), Trip Interruption (150% of Trip Cost), Missed Connection ($750), Travel Delay ($750) up to $150 per day, Baggage and Personal Effects ($2,500), Baggage Delay ($250). A brochure with full details is available. To review full plan details online, go to http://www.tripmate.com/wpF450D. Star Destinations, Inc. (SDI) is not an insurer and does not have any liability for any coverage amounts. As a travel retailer, SDI is not qualified or authorized to answer technical questions about the benefits, exclusions, or conditions of any of the insurance coverages in the plan or to evaluate the adequacy of your existing insurance coverage. If you have any questions about this coverage, contact Trip Mate at 1-800-888-7292. Purchasing a travel protection plan is not required in order to purchase any other products or services offered by SDI.

Cancellation: Full refund of all monies is made if cancellation is received in writing to Hills Bank prior to final payment. A 100% fee is charged if the cancellation occurs between final payment and departure. If the reason for cancellation is due to a medical or other reason that is covered by Travel Protection, you may be eligible for reimbursement for such fees from your Travel Protection Plan provider.

Travelers with Special Needs: You must advise Star Destinations, Inc. (SDI) at the time of registration of any disability requiring special attention. SDI will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of travelers. The Americans with Disabilities Act is applicable only in the U.S. and accommodations outside the U.S. may be more limited. Travelers requiring assistance are required to be accompanied by a companion who is capable of and totally responsible for providing the assistance. Neither SDI personnel nor its suppliers may lift or physically assist with traveler’s special needs including but not limited to walking, dining, or other routine activities. Travelers thinking they may need assistance should call SDI to determine what accommodations may reasonably be provided. Arrangements at an additional cost are the financial responsibility of the traveler.

Terms & Conditions: Star Destinations, Inc. (SDI) acts as an agent or and makes arrangements with airlines, hotels, railroads, bus lines, cruise lines, adventure companies and other independent parties to provide you with the travel services and accommodations. Although great care is taken in choosing suppliers, we are unable to directly control them and therefore cannot be held responsible or liable for their acts or omissions. The travel services are subject to the conditions imposed by these suppliers and their liability may be limited by their tariffs, conditions of carriage, and international conventions and agreements. Should for any reason beyond our control, the hotel or establishment described in the attached itinerary may not be available, SDI and its agents reserve the right to lodge travelers in another hotel of similar or superior category. SDI cannot assume responsibility for any claims, losses, damages, costs or expenses arising out of injury, accident or death, damage, loss or delay of baggage or other property, or delay, inconvenience, loss of enjoyment, upset, disappointment, distress or frustration, whether physical or mental, resulting from a) mechanical breakdowns, dangers inherent to the sea, fire, theft, civil disturbances, strikes, government actions, weather and other factors and causes beyond our control. b) passenger’s failure to follow instructions of SDI or its representatives. c) any other cause beyond the control of SDI. In addition, SDI reserves the right to vary the Tour Price advertised or printed to cover any increase in air fare, fuel price, Government taxes and charges, exchange rate fluctuations, or other Tour related tariffs and costs subject to price guarantee. The price of this tour is based on the GBP/USD exchange rate of 1.28 as of 1/19/19. If you request a variation or change to your booking, SDI may choose to accept or reject that request at its sole discretion. If SDI accepts your request, you must pay the variation fee and any costs associated with it.

Tour Pricing:

$5,379 per person, Double Occupancy

$6,549 per person, Single Occupancy

A $500 deposit per person is required with your registration form.

Final Payment is Due: March 20, 2020

For further information or questions, please call:
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or email: FriendsClub@HillSBank.com