



Kent: The Garden of England 2026

Discover the timeless charm of England's South East, where exquisite castles invite you to marvel at their lush gardens, and sweeping coastal vistas will take your breath away. Immerse yourself in the region's unique spirit as you drink in the local history at Britain's oldest brewery, hear cobblestones patter beneath your feet in Rye and soak up the medieval and gothic features of Canterbury's magnificent cathedral. A treasure trove of England's finest is yours to uncover.





About your tour notes

These tour notes contain everything you need to know before your tour departs – from where to meet your fellow guests and local guide to what essentials to pack for your journey. We recommend you print this document out and bring it with you on your tour. Give a copy to loved ones at home so they can follow your adventure, too.

Important: please refresh this document as close to your departure as possible to ensure you're equipped with the latest information available.

Tower Suites by Blue Orchid @ 18:00

100 Minories, London, EC3N 1JY

Tower Suites by Blue Orchid @ 15:00

100 Minories, London, EC3N 1JY



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Tour highlights

- ✓ Visit the iconic castles and gardens of Hever, Leeds, Dover and Sissinghurst
- ✓ Delve into the fascinating history of Canterbury Cathedral with a local guide
- ✓ Sample celebrated beers at Shepherd Neame, Britain's oldest brewery

More inclusions

- ✓ 6 breakfasts, 3 dinners
- ✓ 6 nights in thoughtfully selected accommodation
- ✓ Luxury minicoach

Currencies you'll use

- England - GBP



Included meals

Breakfast (B) is included daily.

Some of your lunches and dinners are also included, either in hotels or local restaurants. These are indicated by (L) and (D) in the itinerary.

Please note that drinks will not always be included.

We will do our best to accommodate any specific dietary requirements you may have. Please ensure to make these clear to us before your tour begins so we can communicate them to our hotels, restaurants and suppliers.

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Your itinerary

Day 1 | London (England)

A capital filled with rich history and culture, London is where we'll meet for the start of our incredible journey. Tonight, we'll get to know one another over a delicious welcome dinner.

Included today



Accommodation

Tower Suites by Blue Orchid
(or similar)



Meals

+ Dinner

Day 2 | London – Chartwell House and Hever Castle – Canterbury

After breakfast, we'll set a course for our first historic stop: Chartwell House. Many of us will know the public face of Sir Winston Churchill, but a chance to see inside Chartwell will give us a glimpse into his private home. From the library to the sitting room and study, this red stone manor is a time capsule brimming with insights into 1930s family life. Next, we'll set our sights on the enchanting Hever Castle. We'll have the opportunity to wander through Anne Boleyn's childhood home and gaze upon the large collection of antique furniture, books and Tudor paintings housed here. Then, we'll move on to Canterbury – where we'll spend the evening at our leisure.

Included today



Accommodation

Abode Hotel (or similar)



Meals

+ Breakfast

Day 3 | Canterbury – Kent Countryside – Maidstone

Our day will begin with a locally guided visit to the magnificent Canterbury Cathedral. The oldest working church in England, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to medieval ruins, an oak-roofed Chapter House and a staggering gothic nave. Then: we'll move on to the picturesque Kent countryside – filled with quaint villages bursting with character. Tonight, we'll come together for a delicious included meal – sharing photos and stories of the day's adventures.

Included today



Accommodation

Leeds Castle (or similar)



Meals

+ Breakfast

+ Dinner

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Day 4 | Maidstone – Faversham and Whitstable – Maidstone

This morning we'll take some time to explore Leeds Castle on a guided tour of the famous moat, the areas below stairs and the grand bedrooms (some of which were favoured by King Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson during their frequent stays). Then: onwards to the Shepherd Neame Brewery in Faversham, where we'll be treated to a tour – with the chance to sample some award-winning beers. We'll round off the day with a seaside stroll in the quaint town of Whitstable before returning to our idyllic accommodation for the evening.

Included today



Accommodation

Leeds Castle (or similar)



Meals

+ Breakfast

Day 5 | Maidstone – Tenterden – Rye

Next stop: historic Tenterden, a quintessentially English town overlooking the valley of the River Rother. After taking a wander around with our expert Tour Leader, we'll pull up a chair and get comfy at a local winery – where we'll clink glasses over an included wine tasting. Our final destination of the day will be the charming market town of Rye. Here, we'll spend the rest of the day at our leisure – with plenty of free time to visit the Rye Heritage Centre and explore the time-honoured town centre.

Included today



Accommodation

The Mermaid Inn (or similar)



Meals

+ Breakfast



Day 6 | Rye – Dover – Rye

Today we'll dedicate some time to exploring Rye's cobbled lanes and timber-clad houses, experiencing some of the magic that inspired writers and artists such as Henry James and Paul Nash. After tracing the shoreline and spotting those famous white cliffs, we'll arrive at Dover Castle: the gateway to the English coast. This fortress boasts evocative interiors that tell centuries of historic tales, not to mention far-reaching views from the Great Tower and dark medieval tunnels with covert cannons every few paces. The afternoon will see us back in Rye, where some free time will allow for the chance to see more of the town before our farewell dinner.

Included today



Accommodation

The Mermaid Inn (or similar)



Meals

+ Breakfast

+ Dinner

Day 7 | Rye – Sissinghurst – London

Our journey may be coming to a close, but we have one more stop before returning to London – the world-renowned Sissinghurst Castle and Gardens. Created by the poet and writer, Vita Sackville-West, this is one of the most famous gardens in England – featuring a particularly special collection of old garden roses. After enjoying some free time to stroll the colourful grounds, we'll make tracks back to London – where we'll say our goodbyes.

Included today



Meals

+ Breakfast



Travel advice

Finances

Changing money

Cash: Foreign money can be changed at banks, airports, some railway and tube stations, and at major hotels (though at a less favourable rate).

Credit cards: Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted. American Express is only accepted in some larger establishments.

Cash machines: ATMS are widely available.

Tipping

Tipping is entirely at your discretion. If you feel you have received exceptional service, it is recommended that you tip £1-2/€ per day for Drivers and £4- 5/€ per day for Tour Leaders.

Insurance

Before travelling with Back-Roads Touring, it is compulsory for all guests to take out comprehensive travel insurance. Please ensure your insurance covers medical expenses (including repatriation), cancellation cover, loss or damage to baggage and personal effects, money and personal liability.

We recommend you carry your insurance details with you at all times. You may be asked to provide details of your medical insurance or a payment guarantee in some countries before medical assistance can be provided.

For more information, please see our [FAQ page](#).

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact our friendly Customer Service team [here](#).

Passports and visas

Please ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your tour. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain



countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your tour's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

Please note: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure as requirements do change periodically.

We advise you to either carry a photocopy of your passport (and visa, if applicable) with you while abroad, or to ensure that you leave a copy with relatives back at home. This will enable the local embassy or high commission to arrange a replacement if the original should be lost or stolen. If you do take copies with you on your tour, please ensure that you keep these separate from your original documents.

Medication and mobility

Whilst on your tour, we want you to have the smoothest journey possible which requires x mobility conditions:

- You must be fit enough to get on and off the vehicle on a regular basis, and to walk around towns and villages or to attractions.
- You must be able to walk up and down stairs and use a shower over the bath.

Please note that, unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate mobility scooter or wheelchair users as we frequently stay in traditional-style hotels and the majority do not have lifts or ground-floor rooms.

If you take medicine for certain conditions, such as diabetes or heart problems, please carry it with you at all times.

Please declare any medical conditions you may have in advance of your tour. If you are in any doubt as to whether our tours are suitable for you, please contact our friendly Customer Service team [here](#).



Mental health and wellbeing

Culture shock, homesickness and periods of feeling down happen regardless of age. Be rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Tour Leader and Driver will do their utmost to make you smile.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call loved ones. Hearing a familiar voice whilst in an unfamiliar destination can help ground you and remind you you're not alone.
- Eat well. Nobody feels their best when they're hungry. There are plenty of nutritious culinary delights to be savoured along the road!
- Integrate with your fellow guests. The more you socialise with the group, the less likely you'll feel homesick.

Transport

We travel in premium mini-coaches equipped with comfortable seats, air conditioning and large windows for enjoying the view.

With far more flexibility than a standard-size coach, we're able to take the scenic route – winding through beautiful countryside to the heart of tiny villages and coastal towns.

Will I have regular access to Wi-Fi?

Most accommodation we stay in will offer free Wi-Fi as well as many restaurants and cafes you may visit. If you would like more regular internet access without large roaming fees, you can purchase a Back-Roads Touring eSIM [here](#).



What to Pack

Based on our experience, the following items are essential.

Please note, this is a general packing list for Back-Roads Touring tours. What you pack will depend on the countries you're visiting as well as the time of year you plan to travel.

Clothing

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ Sun hat | ✓ Long-sleeved tops | ✓ Light jacket |
| ✓ Sunglasses | ✓ Short-sleeved tops | ✓ Waterproof jacket |
| ✓ Sleepwear | ✓ Shorts/skirts | ✓ Trousers |
| ✓ Warm jacket | ✓ Socks | ✓ Swimwear |
| ✓ Underwear | ✓ Smart casual evening wear | ✓ Walking/comfortable shoes |

Other essentials

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------|
| ✓ Multi-use adapter plug | ✓ Toiletries | ✓ Camera |
| ✓ Batteries | ✓ Sunscreen | ✓ Towel |
| ✓ Umbrella | ✓ Reusable water bottle | ✓ Insect repellent |
| ✓ Any personal medication | ✓ Basic medical kit (paracetamol, aspirin, plasters etc) | |

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How much luggage can I bring

As we travel in mini-coaches, luggage space is limited. Here's what you can take with you on tour:



1 x suitcase



1 x small carry-on bag
(backpack or handbag)

If you have more luggage, please make arrangements to store it prior to joining the tour. **We are unable to carry extra luggage on the mini-coach.**

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FAQs

Which type of hotels will we stay in?

Our thoughtfully selected accommodation is full of charm and historic details – expect elegant country inns, grand town centre hotels and even the odd castle! For this reason, rooms vary in size, and most hotels don't have lifts – meaning you'll likely need to access your room via stairs. Porterage will be included wherever possible.

Although air conditioning is mostly unavailable in historic buildings, fans will be provided during hot spells. Most hotels have bathtubs with overhead showers (rather than walk-in showers), so you'll be able to enjoy a soak at the end of the day.

That's everything!

We can't wait to welcome you on tour.

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