

AUTUMN IN THE HEART OF THE LAKES

A Celebration of the Nature, Art & Literature of the Lake District
with Guest Speaker David Mitchell

13th to 18th October 2024



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Enjoy a wonderful autumn break based at the Rothay Garden Hotel in Grasmere, the heart of the English Lakes from where we will explore some of the region's finest and most beautiful gardens, Arts and Crafts homes and historic castles. Each of our included guided tours has been specially selected to reflect the rich history, romantic landscapes and cultural life of the region. Autumn is one of the most lovely and peaceful times to visit the Lakes. It is also one of the most spectacular as the leaves in the valleys turn to golden yellows, russet browns and bright oranges. To be there in October when the early morning sun sits above the water is to experience the Lakeland landscape at its very best.

Today the Lakes are undoubtedly one of the most iconic areas of natural beauty and heritage in the British Isles. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2017, every day here will be one to treasure. Beginning with the glories of Hutton-in-the-Forest, the family home of Lord Inglewood; the house respected for its beautiful carved interiors, plaster ceilings, long gallery and porcelain collections contrasts magnificently with a joyous contemporary walled garden and long-established arboretum, which should be resplendent with autumnal tints. Rydal Mount, the favourite and final home of William Wordsworth, complete with its simple but charming garden and collections containing many special family items will provide a deeper insight into the famous poet and his private life.

No Lake District tour would be complete without a visit to Hill Top, the former home of Beatrix Potter; both here and at the associated gallery in Hawkshead you will be able to discover more about the inspiration for her writings and art as well as the impact of conservation work on the landscapes we see today. A visit to the 'Manor from Heaven' at Mirehouse, the home of the Spedding family for 350 years, associated with Wordsworth, Tennyson, Southey, Thomas Carlyle and John Constable will immerse you in the literary life of the lakes. Here the house and gardens are set in a magnificent arcadian landscape complete with views across Bassenthwaite Lake to the fells.

Our tour will also include a voyage across Coniston Water, on the restored Steam Yacht 'Gondola' to reach Brantwood House and Garden. The former home of the Victorian polymath, writer and art critic John Ruskin, it holds rich literary and art collections, often reflective of his unique garden famed for its plant collections, autumnal hues and magnificent views over Coniston Water. Blackwell House, designed by the architect M. H. Bailey Scott is a gem reflective of the principles and skill of the Arts and Crafts movement. Set in a garden designed by Thomas Mawson it is a joy to behold, with its calm gentle interiors each filled with light, immaculate furniture and subtle artistic touches.

At Levens Hall, we will enjoy a tour of the house to marvel at the glorious oak panelling, ornate plasterwork and collections of furniture, clocks, and paintings; some of which date back to the 16th century. The gardens, which feature the world's oldest topiary and a fine plant collection, will also provide a grand opportunity for a stroll and time to reflect.

Our final destination is Sizergh Castle, in the care of the Strickland family for over 700 years it has some of the finest panelled rooms and sumptuous interiors in England, home to magnificent collections of ceramics and furniture including examples by Gillows of Lancaster, glassware, paintings, sculpture and tapestries. Here you will also have time to explore the landscaped grounds including the rock garden where hopefully the autumn colours will be at their best.



Rydal Mount



Blackwell Arts and Crafts House



Sizergh Castle

YOUR HOSTS

Guest Speaker – David Mitchell



David Mitchell was previously a Curator at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; he is currently Deputy Chair of the National Trust for Scotland. He is also Director-Curator at Muddy Feet Consultancy, his own environmental education company specialising in landscape assessment, project development, horticulture, and interpretation. His knowledge as curator is augmented

with over thirty years' experience working as a consultant in the private and public sector, supporting organisations that include The National Archives of Scotland, The National Galleries of Scotland, The National Trust for Scotland and the Royal Zoological Society for Scotland. He has extensive broadcasting experience in television and radio with the BBC, STV and Channel Four; augmented by global involvement as an Expedition Lecturer for Noble Caledonia, the National Trust for Scotland and the American Ivy League Universities of Harvard, Dartmouth, and Brown. A Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture and the Royal Geographical Society he has a passion for nature and the land.

Tour Leader – Chantal Cookson



Chantal was born in Suffolk very near the sea and now lives in Northumberland where her husband farms. Chantal has been associated with Noble Caledonia since the company was founded in 1991 and has led tours, be it cruising or land, all over the world. Chantal's initial experience of cruising in British waters was in 1991 when Noble Caledonia undertook its first cruise around the British Isles, which was

a groundbreaking voyage and led to a very successful and popular concept. Though her main job over the last 25 years has been working for Sotheby's, she is now a Travel and Fine Art Consultant intertwining in her busy life still working periodically as part of the Noble Caledonia field staff team. Chantal is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

The Itinerary

Day 1 Grasmere, Lake District. Arrive at the Rothay Garden Hotel independently during the afternoon. For those wishing to arrive by train a transfer will be arranged from Oxenholme Railway Station which is on the main West Coast Line. Alternatively there is car parking available at the hotel. Meet for welcome drinks and dinner in the hotel. (D)

Day 2 Hutton-in-the-Forest & Rydal Mount. Enjoy a morning visit to the family home of Lord Inglewood. The house has a strong sense of history as well as a lived-in family home feel. Enjoy the significant architecture, furniture, and porcelain collections as well as the Walled Garden and Arboretum. From the terraces view the autumn colour across the designed landscape with a middle pond to the woodlands beyond. After lunch drive to Rydal Mount, near Ambleside, the final and favourite home of William Wordsworth. This charming house in an English garden setting was very much the focus of romantic literature. Today, it continues to be owned by the Wordsworth family and retains the feel of a lived-in family home. A visit to Rydal is like stepping back in time and meeting both William and Dorothy in person. Return to Grasmere in the late afternoon before meeting for dinner and an evening talk, 'The History of the English Garden - Origins Influencers & Makers'. (B, L, D)

Day 3 Hilltop House, Beatrix Potter Gallery & Mirehouse. This morning will start with a visit to the former home, gardens and orchard of renowned children's author, artist, farmer and conservationist, Beatrix Potter. Later, in nearby Hawkshead see some of her original artwork housed in a 17th century village house. After lunch in Hawkshead we will drive via Bassenthwaite Lake to Mirehouse. Sitting underneath Skiddaw, Melvyn Bragg described it as the 'Manor from Heaven'. Home of the Spedding family it is indeed a joy and inspiration to behold, as relevant to life today as it was 350 years ago. Here the garden and grounds offer spectacular views of the fells and lakeside. The house and its collections are a treasure trove of literary connections and works of art. Walk through the dining room, drawing room, library, music room and study, all memorable and beautifully apportioned with an approachable and modest grandeur. Return to the hotel for dinner this evening. (B, L, D)

Day 4 Steam Yacht Gondola, Brantwood House & Blackwell Arts and Crafts House. Start the day with a trip on the fully restored National Trust Steam Yacht across Coniston Water to visit William Ruskin's house and garden, Brantwood. Take time to explore the magnificent setting, the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement on the architecture as well as the historic collections of paintings, books, china and furniture. Explore the garden and its plant collection which although steep in places is well worth the effort for the fine views of the fells and the autumn colour. After lunch in the Brantwood cafe we



Mirehouse overlooked by Dodd Summit



Beatrix Potter's home, Hilltop House



William Wordsworth's home, Rydal Mount



Steam Yacht Gondola on Lake Coniston

depart for Bowness on Windermere to explore Blackwell – the amazing Arts and Crafts house. Designed by architect Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott in 1901, it has beautiful interiors with decorative features including furniture, tiles and plasterwork. Step out to the terrace garden designed by Thomas Mawson and take in the dramatic scenery towards Consiton Fells, Grizedale Forest and Lake Windermere. Enjoy dinner in the hotel followed by a talk, 'The Dryads Crown – A Celebration of Nature, Arts and Literature'. (B, L, D)

Day 5 Levens Hall & Sizergh Castle. Drive to Levens Hall in Kendal which, dating from 1170, is famed for its significant architecture, oak panelling, ornate plasterwork and collections of furniture, clocks, and paintings. The splendid gardens feature the world's oldest topiary. After lunch in the Levens Hall Kitchen Restaurant take a short drive to Sizergh Castle. Now in the hands of the National Trust it has been the home of the Strickland family for over 700 years. Here, are some magnificent interiors including the sumptuous Drawing Room and Queen's Room. The castle is filled with fine furniture dating from the Elizabethan to Georgian era including many examples by Gillows of Lancaster. Step out to the landscaped grounds especially the rock garden containing a rich collection of ferns, trees and shrubs which should be a riot of autumnal colour. Return to the hotel for farewell drinks and dinner. (B, L, D)

Day 6 Grasmere. After breakfast a transfer will be provided to Oxenholme Railway Station for those returning home by train. (B)

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	
Classic Double Room	£2595
Classic Twin/Double Superior Room	£2795
Deluxe Twin/Double Room	£2895
Deluxe Superior Double Room	£3195
Luxury Twin/Double Room	£3395
Classic Double Room for sole occupancy	£3695
Deluxe Twin/Double Room for sole occupancy	£3795

PRICE INCLUDES: Five nights hotel accommodation at the Rothay Garden Hotel • Meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)
 • Drinks with meals • Excursions as described • Two after dinner talks
 • Tour Leader • Guest Speaker • Group transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance.



ROTHAY GARDEN HOTEL, GRASMERE

The four-star Rothay Garden Hotel has an enviable riverside location in the pretty Lake District village of Grasmere and for our five night stay we will take over all 30 rooms allowing us to plan the perfect schedule. This privately owned and meticulously kept hotel is the perfect place for a comfortable stay in a charming Lakeland setting and offers a first class and friendly service that only a small hotel can provide. Many of the well-planned rooms and suites benefit from private patios and balconies which look over the delightful gardens and the hotel is within easy walking distance of the village.

Your Space

The hotel features two lounges and a cosy bar, spaces which offer the perfect place to relax after a day of touring. The lounge offers an all-day menu and you can choose from a range of premium wines by the glass. Relax in the lounges during the day or retire to the lounge bar after dinner to enjoy a drink with your fellow, like-minded guests. The Riverside Spa features floor-to-ceiling windows so that you can enjoy the views of the surrounding fells whilst you relax, a herbal pine sauna, heated loungers, a selection of treatments and a covered heated decking area where you can enjoy a drink.

Your Dining

The Garden Restaurant has been awarded 2AA rosettes consistently over the years and offers some of the finest dining in the area. Head Chef at the hotel, Adrian Kneeshaw has over 25 years' experience at Rothay Garden and believes passionately in offering guests fine food, locally sourced from the 'larder' that is the Lake District.

Your Room

Classic Double Room: Situated on the first floor and front facing towards Silver Howe and the Easedale Valley, these rooms have a fixed king size bed. The en-suite bathroom features either a shower over a bath or a walk in shower.

Classic Superior Twin/Double Room: Situated on either the ground floor or first floor, these rooms boast impressive views over either the river, the beautiful gardens or the Lake District countryside. They have either a fixed king size bed or a super king bed that can be configured as a twin. The en-suite bathroom features either a shower over a bath, a walk in shower or separate bath and shower. Many of these rooms have additional seating areas either on their balcony or outdoor terrace area.

Deluxe Twin/Double Room: Situated on either the ground floor or first floor, these rooms boast impressive Lake District views over either the river or the beautiful gardens and have a super king bed that can be configured as twin or double. The en-suite bathroom features either a shower over a bath, a walk in shower or separate bath and shower. Many of these rooms have additional seating areas either on their balcony or outdoor terrace area.

Deluxe Superior Double Room: Located on the second floor, these rooms have a super king double bed, an en-suite bathroom with separate bath and shower and fantastic views over the Lakeland fells.

Luxury Twin/Double Room: These rooms are situated on either the ground floor or second floor of the hotel and provide a relaxing and decadent stay. They feature super king Hypnos beds that can be configured as twin or double, an en-suite bathroom with either a shower over bath or separate bath and shower, extra comfortable sofas and spectacular views over the gardens or river.



Luxury Twin/Double Room



Classic Double Room

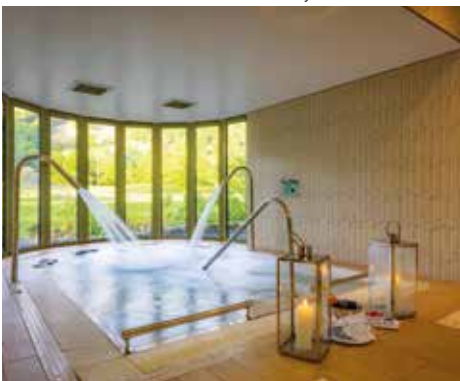


Deluxe Twin/Double Room

Please note: Due to the layout of the hotel, we do not recommend this tour for those with walking difficulties. The hotel does not have a lift and most of the rooms are only accessible by climbing a number of steps. There are 20 steps to the rooms located on the 1st floor and 11 further steps to the rooms located on the 2nd floor.



Deluxe Room with breakfast on the balcony



Riverside Spa



Classic Superior Double Room

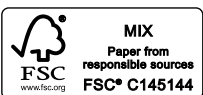


Restaurant

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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Grasmere.