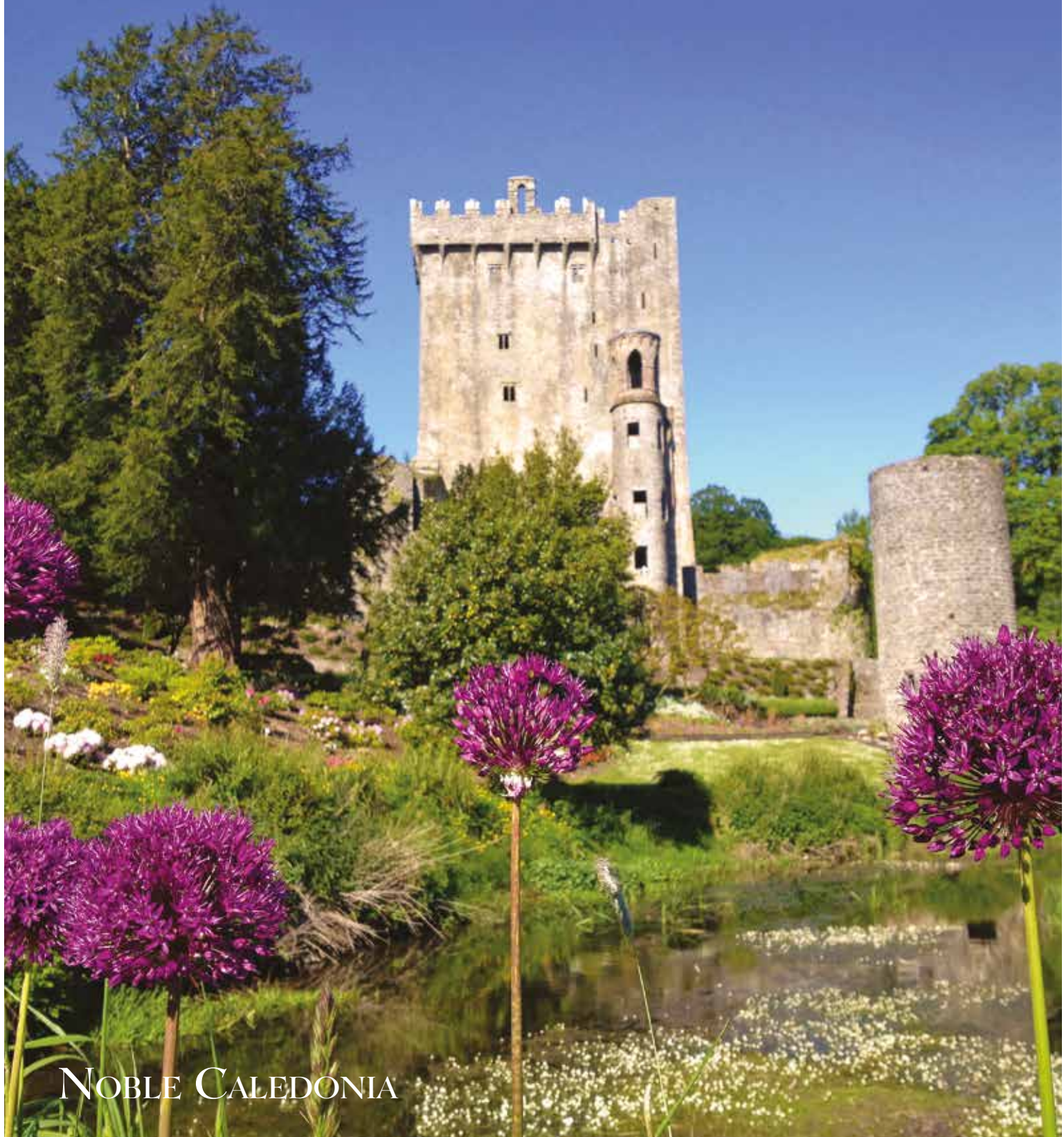


GARDENS OF IRELAND

An escorted tour with Kristin Jameson
26th May to 5th June 2015



NOBLE CALEDONIA



We are delighted to be working with Kristin Jameson who along with her two sisters, Andrea and Tara, are the ninth generation direct descendants of John Jameson, whose name is now synonymous with Irish whiskey. After leaving school Kristin studied art in Florence and continued her career as an artist. She returned to Ireland to manage the family estate in County Waterford. Both her grandparents and parents were keen gardeners and Kristin took up the challenge of keeping and extending the gardens at Tourin with her two sisters with enthusiasm. Tourin Gardens have been open to the public since 1995 and are part of the Waterford Garden Trail of which Kristin was Chairman for five years. Kristin has travelled widely and in 2012 and 2013 joined Seamus O'Brien on a botanical expedition to Sikkim in the foothills of the Himalayas.

Kristin Jameson will be escorting this unique tour. In Kristin's words:

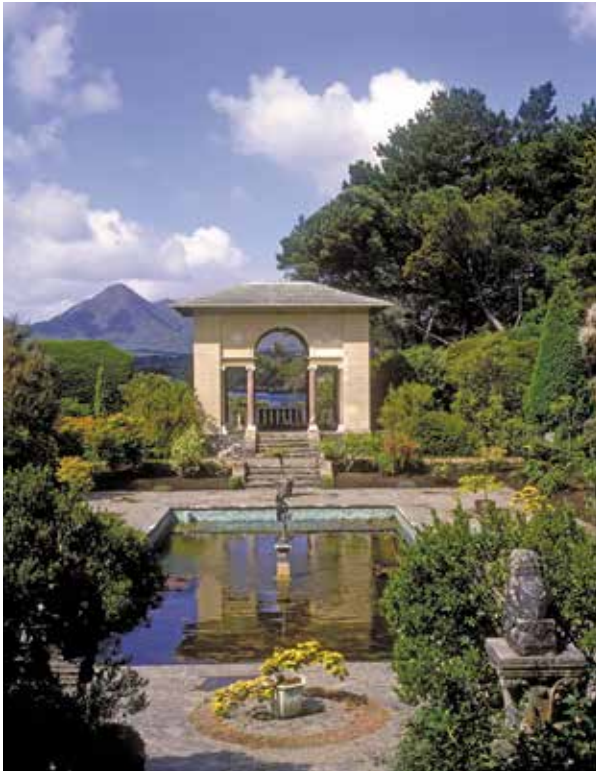
“ Due to the influence on our climate of the warmer waters of the Gulfstream flowing past our southern shores, the gardens in southern Ireland can boast a wealth of rare and tender plants rarely seen in other parts of Western Europe.

Join me on a tour of my favourite gardens along the east and south coast of Ireland, starting with the magnificent, sweeping architecture of Powerscourt, the wonderful collection of rhododendrons and other rare plants at Mount Usher and Kilmacurragh Botanical Gardens of Plant Hunters' fame in County Wicklow. We will stay the first three nights overlooking the Wicklow Hills at Tinakilly Country House, visiting two more interesting gardens in County Kildare, Burtown and Coolcarrigan. The next two days will be based at the comfortable Faithlegg House Hotel near Waterford, where we will visit Mount Congreve Gardens which boasts a collection of the largest number of different wooded plants in the world. From Waterford we will drive through some of Ireland's hidden and least known countryside to the heart of the beautiful Blackwater Valley to visit the historic Houses and

Gardens of Cappoquin and Tourin. In the afternoon after exploring the gardens at Lismore Castle perched dramatically high above the River Blackwater, we continue our journey to Ballymaloe House near Cork for two nights, taking time to enjoy this family run hotel and gardens on our first morning. (An optional visit to the Jameson Distillery at nearby Middleton for a tour of the old Distillery and a whiskey tasting will be on offer.)

*A visit to both Cedar Lodge Garden and to Blarney Castle and Gardens is a 'must' before taking the scenic route to Parknasilla Resort & Spa, one of Ireland's most renowned hotels, situated on the Ring of Kerry. At the beautiful Parknasilla Resort there will be time to relax and enjoy the hotel's excellent facilities as well as visit some of Kerry's famous Gardens, which include Innacullen, a spectacular island garden of almost sub-tropical splendour and Derreen Gardens, one of Ireland's most romantic and quintessential Irish gardens, owned by the Landsdowne family and famous for a large number of Tree Ferns *Dicksonia Antarctica*. We will spend our last day visiting the magnificent Lakes of Killarney and Muckross House and Gardens.* ”





The Italian Garden at Innacullin



Azalea bed, Blarney

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Dublin. Fly by scheduled flight. Drive to the Tinakilly Country House, situated in the heart of County Wicklow. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner this evening with your fellow guests.

Day 2 Mount Usher and Kilmacurragh Gardens, County Wicklow. We start our first morning with a drive to Patricia Butler's lovely eighteenth century Dower House surrounded by a nineteenth century garden which features a white garden. A personal friend of Kristin Jameson, Patricia is a garden historian and author of several books and after showing us her garden we will enjoy a morning coffee together. Only a few miles down the road, Mount Usher Garden is one of Ireland's best known gardens. It extends over 22 acres with the Vraty River running through it and contains many champion trees of Ireland and the UK, as well as over 4500 different varieties of trees, shrubs and plants. The garden was created by four generations of the Walpole family over a period of 112 years. In the afternoon we will visit Kilmacurragh Botanical Gardens. This is one of Kristin's very favourite Irish Gardens. Not only does it have a magical atmosphere, but the large tree rhododendrons, *R. falconeri*, *R. thompsonii* and countless more, tell of secrets from past history. They tell us of travels to far away China and of Himalayan expeditions to collect the seeds that grew into these very plants, trees and shrubs that we will see flowering in bright coloured abundance. Originally owned by the Acton family, the 52 acre garden at Kilmacurragh became part of the National Botanic gardens of Ireland, Glasnevin in 1996 when a major plan of rescuing the remaining original plants and of replanting was started. The new plan incorporates phytogeographical planting with areas devoted to floras from different regions of the world. We will be met by Seamus O'Brien, author, exhibition leader and Curator of Kilmacurragh, who will give us a guided tour of this magnificent garden.

Day 3 Coolcarrigan and Burtown House Gardens. Today we will visit the gardens of two of Kristin's friends in County Kildare, whose gardening knowledge and artistic skills Kristine admires very much. Coolcarrigan Garden owned by Robert and Anastasia Wilson Wright is definitely a plantsman's garden with a very unusual collection of trees and shrubs, many of which will not be found elsewhere in Ireland. Paths meander through the eight acre garden with surprises and new vistas around every corner. After lunch we head to Burtown House and Garden which is owned and run by Leslie Fennel, her son James and family and was home to the late Wendy Walshe, one of Ireland's most famous botanical artists. See her work hanging in a gallery in the gardens. Leslie is not only a gifted artist but also a passionate gardener, and will show us around the garden and her enthusiasm and love for all her plants is infectious.

Day 4 Powerscourt Gardens. This garden needs no introduction with its sweeping architecture, open spaces and magnificent vistas. One of the Great Gardens of Europe, Powerscourt Gardens include forty-five acres of

formal gardens, sweeping and stepped lawns, numerous water features, an extensive arboretum and an Italian garden designed by Daniel Robertson in the middle of the nineteenth century. After visiting the gardens we will start our journey south as far as Kilkenny where we will spend an easy, late afternoon visiting the Castle or just taking a stroll around this charming town with its lovely Cathedral, busy craft shops and cafe before arriving at Faithlegg House Hotel outside Waterford in time for a drink before dinner.

Day 5 Mount Congreve and Fairbrook Gardens. Mount Congreve Garden has the largest collection of woody plants in Europe and the largest plant collection assembled in the last half of the twentieth century in the world. The gardens are the creation of Ambrose Congreve, who decided at the age of eleven to begin planting and never stopped till his death in 2011. We will not have time to walk the sixteen miles of pathways or enjoy every plant in this 100 acre garden. However, we will see the most interesting areas in bloom at this time of year. Fairbrook Gardens is only a couple of miles away from Mount Congreve and here we will be greeted by the owner and artist Clary Maestenbrook, who will show us her garden and her art work. The garden is made up of a series of individual and beautifully laid out gardens filled with pieces of sculpture and water features.

Day 6 Cappoquin House, Tourin and Lismore Castle Gardens. Today, Kristin will welcome us not only to her home and garden at Tourin but also to the beautiful Blackwater Valley where she lives. Our first visit will be to Cappoquin House and Gardens where the owner, Sir Charles Keane will welcome us with a glass of his homemade apple juice. This is an historic house of fine proportions with a lovely garden looking out over the river valley. A ten minute drive down river will bring us to Tourin, where we will be welcomed to this Jameson Home with a 'tasting' of two different Jameson Whiskeys, followed by lunch and a walk through the five acre garden,



Mount Usher Garden and the Vraty River



Strawberry tree



The three Jameson sisters and Tourin House



Broad walk, Kilmacurragh Gardens



Muckross House and Gardens

past the sixteenth century Tower House to the walled garden and on down to Tourin Quay and the river Blackwater. In the afternoon we will visit Lismore Castle Gardens and Art Gallery. Dramatically situated on a rock overlooking the river Blackwater, this must be one of the most spectacular and romantic sites for a castle in Ireland. The castle has been home to Sir Walter Raleigh, Robert Boyle (father of Chemistry), Fred Astaire and owned by the Dukes of Devonshire since 1753. The garden is divided into two distinct areas. The upper garden which retains some of the original Jacobian style and more formal beds and the lower more informal garden. Ballymaloe House where we will stay for two nights is a family run hotel, with a lovely garden, café, craft shop and nearby cookery school of world renown.

Day 7 Garden at Cedar Lodge. This morning take full advantage of Ballymaloe's delicious Irish breakfast followed by a relaxed morning, reading the newspaper or visiting the garden. There will be an optional tour of the Jameson Middleton Distillery nearby. After lunch at Ballymaloe we will visit Neill and Sonia William's lovely garden at Cedar Lodge.

Day 8 Blarney Castle. There is so much to see at Blarney that we will spend the morning visiting the castle and gardens. From the top of Blarney Castle you can see sixty acres of sprawling parklands, which include gardens, avenues, arboretums and waterways. Head gardener Adam Whitbourne will give us a guided tour of the series of specialised gardens which include a Fern Garden, a Bog Garden, a Poison Garden, an Irish Garden and Kristin's personal favourite, the 80 metre Rose Pergola that frames the Herbaceous Border. We will finish our visit with a browse for those interested around Blarney Woollen Mills. This afternoon our drive to Parknasilla Resort & Spa, with a short stop in Kenmare,

will bring us into the heart of the Ring of Kerry with its very special and breathtakingly beautiful landscape.

Day 9 Inlacullen and Derreen Gardens. Situated in the harbour of Glengariff in Bantry Bay and reached by boat over a short stretch of water, this is without doubt the best situated garden in Ireland with views out to sea and back towards the mainland. The thirty-seven acre garden was bought by Annan Bryce in 1910, who employed the famous English landscaper and architect Harold Peto to design this remarkably beautiful garden. The most famous feature is the Italian garden with its casita, or tea house, and pergola of Golden bath Stone, inserted with various coloured marbles from prestigious Carrara to local Connemara stone. Trails lead through rare and unusual trees to a walled garden and to a Grecian temple on top of a hill with a fine view out to sea. Derreen Gardens is one of Ireland's most romantic and quintessentially Irish gardens, planted by the fifth Marquis of Lansdowne in 1870 and now owned and managed by his great grandson, David Bingham and his wife Anthea. Derreen is famous for the large number of tree ferns, Dicksonia Antarctica, as well as for azaleas and rhododendrons.

Day 10 Killarney and Muckross House. Muckross House is situated deep in the Killarney National Park with a backdrop of the famous lakes. The house itself was built in 1843 for Henry Arthur Herbert, it then passed to the Guinness family and was presented to the state in 1932 by Senator Vincent Arthur and family. In this garden, formality in the form of smart lawns, clipped hedges and topiary cones mingle with shrub roses and ancient wisteria as well as a sunken and water garden allowing the visitor to lose themselves in this truly lovely garden.

Day 11 Cork to London. Transfer to the airport for your return scheduled flight to London.



Fairbrook Gardens lilypond

Prices per person

based on double occupancy

Twin: £2695 per person

Single: £3095

Price Includes: Economy class scheduled air travel, ten nights accommodation on breakfast and dinner basis as follows: three nights at Tinakilly Country House in a deluxe room, two nights at Faithlegg House Hotel in a classic room, two nights at Ballymaloe House in a standard room, three nights at Parknasilla Resort & Spa in a standard room, lunch on days 3, 6 and 7, excursions, entrance fees, tour escort, transfers, airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, gratuities.

NB. Manchester flights available on request. Those choosing to fly from Manchester will be able to join our transfers free of charge if the flights coincide with our group flights from London.

YOUR ACCOMMODATION



Hotel entrance



Tinakilly Country House



Hotel room

Tinakilly Country House, County Wicklow – Three nights

Tinakilly Country House is an elegant Victorian country mansion set in seven acres of beautifully landscaped gardens overlooking the Irish Sea in County Wicklow. The hotel was originally built by the British government in 1883 for Captain Robert Halpin, commander of 'The Great Eastern' and mariner supreme who laid 2600 miles of telegraphic cable in 1866, joining Europe to America. Each of the 51 luxurious and historic rooms features antique furniture, as well as cosy bathrobes, tea & coffee making facilities, ensuite bathrooms and satellite television. There is also complimentary Wi-Fi in the public areas. While Tinakilly House is a true reflection of the Victorian period, their kitchen prides itself on the fine blend of modern and traditional cuisine. Fresh fish, game and Wicklow lamb are provided locally and Tinakilly's own herb gardens supply the kitchen. The award-winning wine list features not only the traditional Bordeaux and Burgundies, but also a broad range of exciting new world wines, which gives their cellar a truly international flavour.



Faithlegg House Hotel



Classic room



Piano lounge

Faithlegg House Hotel, Co. Waterford – Two nights

Faithlegg House Hotel is located on the river Suir in Waterford and is an 18th century mansion which has been beautifully restored to form the centre piece of a superb four-star hotel and golf course. All 82 guestrooms include safes and complimentary newspapers. Guests can use the in-room complimentary wireless high-speed Internet access and the 32-inch plasma televisions which are equipped with cable channels. All accommodations provide desks and phones, bathrooms with shower/tub combinations, hair dryers and complimentary toiletries. Additional amenities include coffee/tea makers and irons/ironing boards. The hotel has a fully equipped leisure centre with swimming pool, a magnificent 18 hole parkland golf course with its own club house and pro shop. The Estuary Leisure Club has a steam room, hot tub and gym. There is also a range of beauty treatments, massages and body wraps available. The Roseville Rooms serve fine cuisine using locally sourced produce. Relax with a coffee or a cocktail in the Piano Bar & Lounge, whilst the Reading Room has views over the golf course.



Restaurant



Ballymaloe House



Hotel entrance

Ballymaloe House, East Cork – Two nights

Built in 1450, Ballymaloe House is a renowned Irish country house hotel and restaurant owned and run by the Allen family for over 40 years. Situated on a beautiful 400-acre estate in rural East Cork, Ballymaloe House offers a warm welcome, tastefully decorated guestrooms and cottages. The byword for timeless elegance and pleasures of days gone by, Ballymaloe boasts the serenity of the countryside with the convenience of modern amenities and attractions. Originally a private farm, Ballymaloe House has converted and preserved several of the historic buildings, re-purposing the structures into guestrooms, cottages, and the popular multi-purpose venue The Grainstore. Guests visiting Ballymaloe House are showered with traditional Irish hospitality and leave rejuvenated. All rooms are individually named and distinct in character, each of the guestrooms at Ballymaloe House are furnished and styled to the highest standard, balancing contemporary comforts and timeless elegance and all have private baths. Award-winning cuisine is offered which celebrates the best of local, seasonal produce.



Parknasilla Resort & Spa



Pygmalion Restaurant



Standard room

Parknasilla Resort & Spa, Kerry – Three nights

For generations this very special place has captured the imagination of many including such literary luminaries as George Bernard Shaw. Surrounded by 500 acres, Parknasilla Resort & Spa is situated in the middle of some of Kerry's finest scenery. Pictures can only do limited justice to its location where water, islands and mountains create something spellbinding. Here you will find interesting walks, tiny sandy coves and beach huts for those who wish to swim in the sea. Once a grand house, Parknasilla has grown gracefully into her life as a hotel. The ground floor of the original main house is where you will find a number of delightful sitting rooms, all offering wonderful views. Here also is the Pygmalion dining room where gourmet food is provided using many locally sourced fine meats and fish. The health spa with a magnificent swimming pool is a new addition and the views from the pool across the sea have to be seen to be believed. Ultimately, what makes a great hotel is its staff. Here, you will find some of the best in the world all dedicated to making your stay in Kerry a most memorable and joyful experience. All rooms offer crisp white sheets and duvet, en-suite bathroom, hairdryer, selection of soft fluffy towels, bathrobe and slippers, luxury bath products, multi-channel TV, tea & coffee making facilities, mineral water, direct dial telephones and Wi-Fi.



NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE
+44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | www.noble-caledonia.co.uk



All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Blarney Castle and Gardens. Back cover: Bearded Iris, Tourin