

# THE GLORIOUS LANDSCAPES OF PEMBROKESHIRE

See some of the loveliest gardens of West Wales  
& enjoy performances by London Festival Opera  
staying at the Grove of Narberth Hotel

26<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Pembrokeshire coastline near Manorbier

## An Introduction by Andrew Cochrane, Noble Caledonia Founder & Director



“ I have been travelling through Wales for many a year, trundling along the M4 and ultimately on to the ferry ports of Pembrokeshire. But, only recently have I had the time to leave the main road and explore what lies beyond. What a delight it has been, the landscapes of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire are upliftingly beautiful whether you are exploring the hills and valleys or taking in the stunning coastal paths. It is every bit as beautiful as Cornwall, but crowd and traffic free.

With magnificent coastal scenery, endless skies, cliff edge castles and romantic churches it is without doubt one of the most extraordinarily wonderful corners of Britain. Added to this there are some splendid hill and coast gardens, in magical settings. Some are centuries old. Whilst others are relatively modern, developed with care, love and passion. It's a landscape that has inspired poets and musicians through the ages and adding to our enjoyment during this escorted tour will be performances by London Festival Opera.

Our base for the five nights will be the truly exceptional Grove of Narberth Hotel, near Narberth, which we have taken over exclusively for the duration of our tour. For many it's love at first sight, at the end of a long and lovely drive stands a gleaming white part Jacobean and part Victorian country house. Surrounding the hotel are twenty five acres comprising of woodland, lawns, meadowland and a kitchen and walled garden with the Preseli Hills forming a distant backdrop. But, what makes this hotel stand out is the care and commitment of the owners who have overseen a huge restoration of this grand and historic house as well as converting and erecting surrounding buildings. It has all been achieved with great taste and whether you choose to stay in the main house or in some of the nearby suites you will be impressed with the care and loving attention that has been shown throughout the twenty-six rooms.

The good news does not end with the building. Diners travel many miles to experience the food created by Executive Chef Allister Barsby, utilising much of the hotel's garden produce. This, combined with the warm welcome and professional service, makes the Grove the place to stay in Pembrokeshire.

Our itinerary has been planned to avoid long road journeys, concentrating on a relatively small but beautiful area of West Wales. It offers an intriguing mix of scenery, gardens, music and culture. The land of Dylan Thomas awaits, I hope you will be able to join us on this special journey to the treasure that is West Wales. ”



Aberglasney House and gardens



St Davids Cathedral



Saundersfoot harbour



## Guest Speaker - Alan Mason



Alan Mason is one of the most experienced and best qualified garden designers and consultants in Europe. He is a founder member of The Professional Gardener's Guild and the founder of Senior Garden Advisors consultancy group. Alan started his garden design consultancy business in 1987 following a period where he was the youngest Head Gardener in the country, at Bramham Park and Garden Manager to the Queen's cousin Lord Harewood at Harewood House in Yorkshire. Here, he and his team elevated the gardens into the top ten most visited gardens in the country. During the 80's and 90's he presented television programmes from around Europe, including "Le Manoir" the making of his own garden in Brittany and the long running

"Gardens without Borders" from around France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Holland. Alan is also a judge of the show gardens at the prestigious Sandringham Flower Show and a garden design lecturer for The Royal Horticultural Society.

## 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.

## London Festival Opera

We are delighted that London Festival Opera will be joining us for our stay and presenting two concerts in the superb settings – performing a selection of celebrated arias and ensembles from the operas of Handel, Mozart, Rossini, Bizet and Puccini as well as some lighter pieces from the world of operetta and musicals. We have long been associated with London Festival Opera and each year our music themed tours grow in popularity. London Festival Opera has achieved a considerable reputation for presenting opera in the UK and overseas and has performed for Presidents, Prime Ministers and senior members of the British and European Royal Families. The company has performed at 10 Downing Street, the British Embassy in Paris, the President's Palace in Malta and as a guest company in one of Italy's greatest opera houses, La Fenice in Venice. Bringing together artists from the major British opera companies including the Royal Opera, English National Opera and Glyndebourne the programmes presented include a wide and varied range of repertoire, performed in formal evening dress and authentic period costume for an added visual impact.

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 Swansea, Wales.** Transportation will meet us at Swansea Station from where we drive into Pembrokeshire to the Grove, our base for the next five nights. We enjoy afternoon tea at the hotel and later perhaps spend some time in the Grove's four acre garden and 26 acre estate, for those who wish to stretch their legs there are some enchanting walks. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner in the hotel.

**Day 2 Dylan Thomas House & Aberglasney Garden.** After breakfast we drive into Carmarthenshire to Laugharne, a charming estuary town where Dylan Thomas lived in the early 1950's and the inspiration for Under Milk Wood. Visit his home containing much memorabilia and original furniture and his famous nearby writing shed. We then drive to Aberglasney, a house and garden with a history that dates back to the 16th century. The estate became uninhabited in the 1940's and after years of neglect the house and garden were purchased by an American benefactor, Frank Cabot in 1995 and is now run as a charitable trust. The past 20 or so years has witnessed a remarkable restoration. We will take lunch on the terrace and





Picton Castle



The garden at Dyffryn Fernant



Dylan Thomas House at Laugharne



Narberth Town Hall and Museum

then enjoy exploring the many garden rooms including the Walled Gardens, Pool Garden, the Cloister, Asiatic Garden and the Alphinum. We enjoy our first performance by London Festival Opera and return to our hotel for dinner.

**Day 3 Treffgarne Hall & Picton Castle and Garden.** After a leisurely breakfast we start our day with a visit to Treffgarne Hall, home of Martin and Jackie Batty. Stunningly situated on a hilltop with panoramic views, the handsome Georgian House provides a formal backdrop to the four-acre garden. Particularly attractive at this time of year will be the walled garden. See the large-scale sculptures, summer broadwalk, meadow patch, gravel garden and heather bed. We drive on to Picton Castle, the historic home of the Phillips family. After lunch explore the mature 40-acre garden which in mid-summer will be a riot of colour. Stroll through the Jungle Garden with the hot gingers and Canna lilies under the shade of banana trees, on to Peach Wood with its carpet of wild flowers and ferns and enjoy the spectacle

of the Walled Garden, especially its roses. For those who wish there will also be a guided tour of the castle. Return to the Grove for dinner.

**Day 4 St Davids & Dyffryn Fernant.** Today will be a full but fascinating day. We start with a drive to the ancient capital of St Davids and take a guided tour of the 12th century cathedral, in 1124 Pope Calixtus II declared that two pilgrimages to St Davids were equal to one to Rome. We take lunch in the cathedral's Refectory. In the afternoon we will visit one of the most beautiful and inspiring gardens in Wales. The six-acre Dyffryn Fernant is located between the Preseli Hills and the Irish Sea. Christina Shand began planting in 1996 on the most unlikely of land which she describes as 'between a bog and a hard rock', but some twenty years later a wilderness has been turned into a place of exotic beauty. The wide variety of environments and the plentiful sitting places invite you to take your time and view the garden from different angles and perspectives. Before leaving the garden we will enjoy tea and locally made cakes. Return to the Grove for our final performance by London Festival Opera and dinner.

**Day 5 Narberth, Manorbier & Saundersfoot.** Enjoy a morning relaxing at the Grove or use the arranged transport to visit the nearby town of Narberth, a delightful small market town. Here in the multi coloured Georgian and Edwardian high street there is a flourishing range of independent shops and galleries together with a Museum and award-winning cafes, pubs and restaurants. We leave the Grove in the mid afternoon bound for the nearby village of Manorbier and the idyllic 12th century Norman church. This is a stunning location with views across to the castle and sea. There will be time to explore the castle and take afternoon tea. Before leaving the

village there will be an early evening visit to the private Norchard Garden, an enchanting small garden in a magical setting. And so to dinner at the award winning 'Coast' restaurant in the seaside village of Saundersfoot. A fitting place for our farewell dinner.

**Day 6 Swansea.** After breakfast transportation will be provided to Swansea Station.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	Price
Superior Room	£2895
Deluxe Room	£3095
Junior Suite	£3195
Cottage Garden Suite	£3295
House Master Suite	£3395
Garden Master Suite	£3495
Superior Room for sole use	£3695

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Five nights hotel accommodation at The Grove of Narberth on a bed and breakfast basis • Lunch on days 2, 3 & 4 • Afternoon tea on days 1 & 5 • Dinner at the Grove on days 1, 2, 3 & 4 • Dinner at 'Coast' on day 5 • Excursions as described • Two London Festival Opera Performances • Tour Leader • Guest Speaker • Group transfers.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, meals other than those detailed.

**Please note:** The hotel does not have a lift and many of the rooms are only accessible by climbing a number of steps. We therefore do not recommend this holidays for those with walking difficulties.



The Grove of Narberth

## THE GROVE OF NARBERTH

The Grove of Narberth is a privately owned luxury country house hotel nestled in the heart of the rolling Pembrokeshire countryside with stunning views of the Preseli Hills. At the Grove you can be assured of a warm Welsh welcome and a truly relaxing stay in real luxury combined with great food and friendly professional service. The Grove was bought in 2007 in a rather sad and dilapidated state. It is now a unique and intimate hotel with individually designed rooms and one of the finest restaurants in Wales.

### History

The Grove of Narberth has an important local history that can be traced back to the 15th century when the site was occupied by a 'Ty Hir' or Longhouse owned by the Bailiff of Tenby. The longhouse, "Bailiff's Cottage" – which would have housed the resident family and their livestock – survives to this day, standing just apart from the main house. Next to the longhouse stands "Poyer's Cottage" complete with inglenook and bread oven, and the original arrow slits. The architecture of this cottage suggests that it was possibly built in the same era as the longhouse.

Daniel Poyer a local gentleman, inherited the property in 1677. It is thought that the main house, originally a two storey masonry stone building together with the walled garden, was built by Daniel in the 1680's. At around that time, historical coach route maps suggest that the Grove was an important stopping point for travellers on the journey west to St David's.

In 1874, John Pollard Seddon, a notable arts and crafts architect of his time, was instructed by the Lewis's of Henllan to make 'renovations and alterations' to form a larger gentleman's residence. This work extended the original Jacobean L-shaped house to provide a large hallway, new staircase, lounge, master bedroom and a library on the first floor landing. Seddon's design is very much in a neo-Gothic style which has strong references to the early arts and crafts movement.

The extension added a 3rd floor for servant's accommodation. At this time, all the existing rooms were remodelled and ornate ceramic fireplaces, designed by Seddon himself, added to the rooms. These distinctive fireplaces and his unique arts and crafts joinery give the Grove interiors its unique character which delights so many of the visitors.

### Gardens

The Grove's gardens offer a stunning visual treat throughout the year, framed by ancient oaks and towering beeches. The gardens are spread over four acres of the 26 acre estate which is beautifully located on a hillside overlooking rolling Pembrokeshire countryside. The rhododendrons introduce summertime and the flower borders then blaze into colour. The borders around the house and parterre on the front terrace are framed by formal box hedging with the beds filled with stunning herbaceous and perennial plants to provide interest throughout the year. The cottages enjoy a softer planting scheme with much higher densities of perennial planting together with flowering shrubs. The Head Gardener Jerry and his team are continually evolving the gardens. If you do come across him in the garden he would be more than happy to show you around and share with you some of his gardening tips.



The hotel gardens



The Fernery Restaurant

## Your Dining

Surrounded by wonderful Pembrokeshire produce and the hotel's own kitchen gardens, it is not surprising that The Grove of Narberth are very passionate about their food and drink. The restaurant is elegant with candlelit tables providing the perfect dining experience. Serving classic British food with a modern twist, the menu changes with the seasons, using produce from its own gardens. The team of professional staff work tirelessly to ensure that all they offer is of the highest quality served with real care.

## Your Accommodation

The Grove of Narberth is made up of four buildings: The Main House, an enchanting house filled with many of the original period features that set the scene for a truly warm and comfortable stay in Pembrokeshire. The Bailiff's Cottage, which is set just apart from the Main House, is the original building on the Grove. Built as a traditional longhouse it was owned by the Bailiff of Tenby in the 15th Century. Poyers Cottage is set just to the side of the main house and offers two delightful suites that are full of character and original features enjoying the benefit of small terraces overlooking the rear gardens. The Herb Cottages are set within the grounds just 100 yards from the Main House. The cottages all have sumptuous suites with stunning views of the Preseli's hills.



Junior Suite



Lounge



Cottage Garden Suite



Deluxe Room

## Your Room

Every bedroom at The Grove is individually designed with luxurious furnishings and a modern touch. Delicate fireplaces and a sprinkling of art and antiques give a sense of place and time in this enchanting house. The rooms all include a flat-screen TV and free wireless internet, hairdryer, tea and coffee making facilities and designer toiletries. All rooms have views of the gardens or rolling countryside, so that you feel you are in a truly special place.

**Superior Room:** Six charming Superior Rooms available with five situated in the Main House and one situated in one of the Cottages adjacent to the Main House. Superior Rooms all have showers situated over the bath.

**Deluxe Room:** Six delightful Deluxe Rooms available with three situated in the Main House and three situated in one of the Cottages adjacent to the Main House. The Deluxe Rooms have showers situated over the bath with some having a separate shower with a roll top bath.

**Junior Suite:** Four splendid Junior Suites available with three situated in the Main House with separate showers and deep roll top baths. One Junior Suite is situated in one of the Cottages adjacent to the Main House with a separate sitting area and the bathroom has a shower situated over the bath.

**Cottage Garden Suite:** Six luxurious Cottage Garden Suites available with five situated in Herb Cottages, a short stroll from the Main House. These Suites have been recently renovated by award-winning interior designer Martin Hulbert with a mix of modern and antique furniture and decorated with Welsh crafts. All Suites situated in Herb Cottages have luxurious bathrooms with deep baths and separate showers, in room safe, a mini-bar and some Suites have access to a private garden with patio and log burning stoves. One Cottage Garden Suite is situated in Poyer's Cottage with its own private access directly through the Main House or via the private terrace area. This Suite has a separate sitting area with a double sofa bed, a log burning stove and the bathroom has a separate shower and deep bath.

**Garden Master Suite and House Master Suite:** Two Signature Master Suites, one situated in the Main House and one situated in Herb Cottages, a short stroll from the Main House. These spacious Suites have been recently renovated by award-winning interior designer Martin Hulbert with a mix of modern and antique furniture and decorated with Welsh crafts. Both Suites have luxurious bathrooms with deep baths and separate showers and include a mini-bar and in room safe. The Garden Master Suite has access to a private garden with patio and a log burning stove.

# NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE

+44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | www.noble-caledonia.co.uk



Itinerary and accommodation subject to change. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.

Cover image: Pembrokeshire coastline.