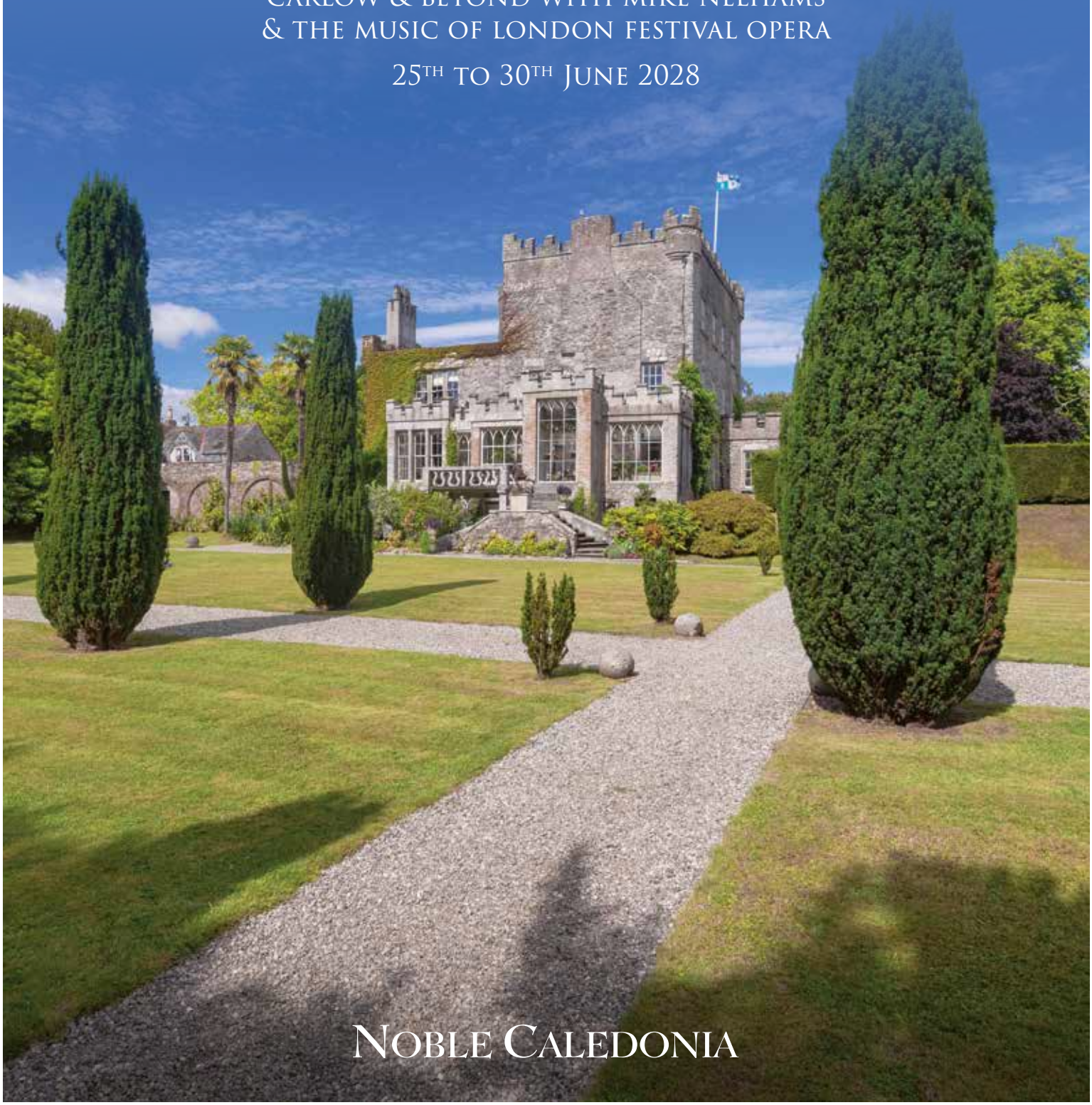
GREAT HOUSES, CASTLES & GARDENS OF IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

EXPLORE IRELAND'S GARDEN COUNTIES OF WICKLOW, CARLOW & BEYOND WITH MIKE NELHAMS & THE MUSIC OF LONDON FESTIVAL OPERA

25TH TO 30TH JUNE 2028



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Mount Congreve Gardens overlooking the River Suir

An Introduction by Andrew Cochrane, Noble Caledonia Founder & Director



“For many years we have arranged garden tours along Ireland’s ‘Wild Atlantic Way’ from Donegal to Kerry. It may come as a surprise to some that many of the nation’s best gardens are found on the other side of the country in the lush landscapes of Leinster. Here, good farming land produced great houses and splendid gardens many of which have survived and prospered of late. County Wicklow is known as the Garden County and adjoining County Carlow possesses some of the grandest estates and gardens. This has always been my favourite area to explore as so much of Ireland’s history both ancient and modern has taken place in a relatively small area to the south of Dublin. Never far from view are the dramatic Wicklow mountains which compare favourably with any of the hills and mountains of the west and form a magnificent backdrop to some of our garden visits.

There are so many great estates and wonderful gardens in this region, we are spoilt for choice as we cannot include them all. However, in wanting to provide an interesting mix of garden styles, landscapes and history we have opted for what we think will make the most interesting of visits. The advances in garden restoration in the past decade have been quite striking. We will visit some of the best including Altamont with its 40 acres of lush gardens and Killruddery, where the formal French gardens are considered one of the finest examples in Ireland. We will also visit Kilmacurragh, a National Botanic Garden on the site of a 7th century monastery. In 1854 the site came to Thomas Acton who built a new and pioneering garden and more latterly became part of the National Botanic Gardens of Ireland. I visited recently and was amazed at what has been achieved over the past 10 years, it’s stunning. Other highlights will include Huntington Castle sitting in the shadows of the Blackstairs Mountains and Mount Usher, an award-winning example of a Robinsonian garden.

As with any tour one of the most important aspects is finding a suitable hotel in the right location. Marlfield House is a stunningly elegant period hotel which has been welcoming guests for over 40 years. Set in 36 acres of lovely gardens and woodland it is the perfect place for our tour. Rarely do you find a privately owned hotel which combines such style and elegance with a well-tended garden which is just perfect for after dinner walks. Being there in late June when daylight stretches to after ten in the evening and also taking advantage of the early dawn to enjoy the peace of the lovely garden sets up the perfect day. To enhance our stay further, we will enjoy performances by our good friends London Festival Opera at Huntington Castle and at Marlfield House.”



Mount Congreve Gardens



Killruddery House

LONDON FESTIVAL OPERA

We are delighted that London Festival Opera will be joining us for our stay and presenting two entertaining programmes of opera and operetta including the celebrated works of Mozart, Verdi, Bizet, Puccini and the lighter repertoire of Gilbert & Sullivan. Bringing together artists from the major Opera companies including the Royal Opera House, London Festival Opera have achieved a considerable reputation for presenting opera in some of the world's leading venues.





Altamont Gardens



Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Garden

GUEST SPEAKER
Mike Nelhams



We are most fortunate in having Mike Nelhams as our Guest Speaker. We have known Mike for over 20 years as he has welcomed our vessels to the Isles of Scilly and more recently accompanied our tours in Cornwall. Mike first went to Tresco on a Studley Trust Scholarship as a student in 1976. He first trained for three years at the Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley. After managing a woodland garden in Sussex for five years he returned to Tresco Abbey Garden in 1984 as Head Gardener and then in 1994 took the post of Garden Curator which was established for him. He is an RHS judge on the Tender Plants Committee, judging regularly at Chelsea, Hampton Court and London RHS shows and also is a frequent lecturer throughout the English-speaking world. He has published a book, "Tresco Abbey Garden" and has made many appearances on national TV and radio, as well as having written many articles for the horticultural press. A Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture and an Associate of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society, Mike regularly leads garden tours.





Kilmacurragh Gardens



Marlfield House Hotel Gardens



Mount Congreve Glass House

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Dublin, Ireland. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival, a drive of just over an hour takes us south to Marlfield House situated on the outskirts of Gorey, a busy historic market town. Meet for drinks followed by dinner at the hotel. **(D)**

Day 2 Huntington Castle & Altamont Gardens. After a leisurely breakfast we will drive to Huntington Castle, the ancient seat of the Esmonde family and presently occupied by the Durdin Robertsons, descendants of the Esmonds. As with all Irish castles there is a wealth of stories and tales dating back to the 14th century when it was a stronghold and abbey. The current structure dates back to 1625. There will be a tour of the castle and some free time to explore the extensive grounds including the ancient Yew Walk. Following a light lunch in the courtyard, London Festival Opera will perform in this marvellous setting. We will then head to Altamont Gardens, set in over 40 acres of lush gardens and riverside walks. Its earliest beginnings were as a riverside retreat for Augustinian nuns, and it was more latterly developed as a house and garden from the 18th to 20th century. It is laid out in the style of William Robinson which strives for 'honest simplicity'. After a coffee break in the wonderfully rustic outdoor café filled with birdsong, we return to Marlfield House for dinner. **(B, L, D)**

Day 3 Kilmacurragh Botanic Garden. After yesterday's busy day we will slow the pace today allowing for a morning at leisure to relax and enjoy the delights of Marlfield or perhaps explore Gorey. After lunch at the hotel it is a short drive to Kilmacurragh Botanic Garden. Around the ruins of a fine Queen Anne style house lie the 52 acres of wild Robinsonian gardens which were established in 1712 and further expanded in the 19th century during the great botanical explorations with numerous plant species from around the world. The climatic conditions and soil resulted in a high success rate of new species and since taking over the site in 1996 the National Botanic Gardens of Ireland have performed a marvellous restoration. Before returning to Marlfield enjoy some refreshments in the café. Tonight, London Festival Opera will perform in the hotel, followed by dinner. **(B, L, D)**

Day 4 Mount Congreve & Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Garden. This morning we drive south to County Waterford and the stunning gardens of Mount Congreve where six generations of Congreves have created one of Ireland's great gardens. Situated on the banks of the River Suir there are over seventy acres of intensively planted woodland, a four acre walled garden and 10 miles of walkways. Highlights include the Georgian Glass House, the Rock Waterfall and the Chinese Pagoda built in the centre of an old quarry. Extensive work has been carried out over recent years making Mount Congreve a world class garden. After lunch in the Stables Café we drive to the coast and the nearby Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Gardens of Tramore. Set high above the seaside resort of Tramore are eleven unique garden areas encompassing the incomparable beauty of Japanese horticulture. On a guided tour we will learn about the fascinating life of Patrick Lafcadio Hearn, born 1850 in Greece, he spent his childhood in Ireland and later moved to the USA and Japan. **(B, L, D)**

Day 5 Killruddery House and Gardens & Mount Usher. After breakfast drive to Killruddery House for a private tour of the house. Being a home, the atmosphere is special as are the interiors including elaborate chimney-pieces by Giacinto Micali, crimson silk damask from Spitalfields and stained glass by John Milner. Outside, the French formal gardens are deemed one of the finest examples on the island. Lunch on arrival will be followed by guided walks around this most splendid of gardens by the River Vartry. Return to Marlfield House for our farewell dinner. **(B, L, D)**

Day 6 Dublin to London. Check out after breakfast and return to Dublin Airport for the return scheduled flight. **(B)**

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

	Price
Standard Room	£3495
Classic Room	£3695
Junior State Room	£3895
State Room	£4095
Pond Suite	£4295
Master Suite	£4695
The Nest*	£5095
Small Single Room	£3795
Standard Room for sole occupancy	£4495
Classic Room for sole occupancy	£4695

PRICE INCLUDES: Five nights hotel accommodation at Marlfield House • Meals as indicated (B- Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner) • Two London Festival Opera performances • Tour Leader • Guest Speaker • Excursions as described • Transfers.
Not Included: Travel insurance.

*Please note that this category features two bedrooms and can accommodate up to 4 guests. Prices available upon request.



Exterior of Marlfield House

MARLFIELD HOUSE

Marlfield House is a stunningly elegant period hotel which is set in 36 acres of lovely gardens and woodland and we have taken over all the accommodation of this luxurious boutique hotel for the duration of our tour. All the suites and rooms, both in the main house and scattered around the garden are of the highest standard, individually styled with love and attention and those in the house are furnished with antiques and paintings. As you would expect of a hotel of this standard the cuisine is multi award winning offering classical French and Mediterranean influenced food in the flower filled Turner style conservatory overlooking the garden. On some evenings we will dine in the Duck Restaurant, a more relaxed dining experience on a sunny terrace overlooking the gardens. Ireland is famous for its many great hotels and Marlfield House is certainly one of them and a perfect base for our escorted tour.

Your Accommodation

All of the bedrooms are uniquely decorated with rich fabrics and elegant furnishings and have marble bathrooms, king sized double or twin beds and many overlook the garden or the lake. They are furnished with carefully chosen antiques and paintings and have Voya toiletries, Frette linen, oversized bathrobes with slippers, hairdryers, iron & ironing board, Wi-Fi, TV's and radios. Bottled water and fresh fruit await guests on arrival. The majority of the Standard and Classic Rooms are on the first and second floors which are only accessible by stairs. The State Rooms are located on the ground floor.

Standard Room

The charming Standard Rooms overlook the gardens and courtyard and measuring 15 square metres, they are the smallest rooms and are cosy in character. They feature an en-suite bathroom with either a walk in shower with separate bath or a shower over bath, a seating area and everything one would expect in a fine country house.

Classic Room

The comfortable Classic Rooms overlook the gardens and courtyard and measuring 23 square metres, they have a classical antique finish. They feature an en-suite bathroom with shower over bath, a seating area and are furnished with carefully chosen fabrics. They are on the ground, 1st and 2nd floor of the house.



Classic Room



Standard Room



Junior State Room – The French Room

Junior State Room
The Junior State Rooms measure 36 square metres and are beautifully decorated with rich fabrics and fine antique furniture. The rooms have an en-suite marble bathroom with a walk in shower and bath, a seating area with fireplace and doors that open on to the garden.

State Room
State Rooms measure between 45 and 52 square metres and feature a separate seating area with a period marble fireplace with gas fire and large marble bathrooms. The antiques and furnishings have been thoughtfully selected and truly reflect an era of gracious living. All three staterooms are completely different in style and décor and have views of the garden or lake. All have large bathrooms with separate bath and shower and double sinks.

Master Suite
The elegant and stately Master Suite, known as The Print Room, measures 68 square metres and is beautifully decorated. The walls are adorned with paintings and prints and the room contains fine antiques. The king size bed is set in an alcove and a panelled octagonal dressing room leads to the elegant marble bathroom with large jacuzzi bath, walk in shower and twin sinks. The Suite overlooks the Knot Garden.

Pond Suites
Separate to the manor house, the Pond Suites are located overlooking the pond in a lush, wooded setting of mature oak trees and ferns. Encompassing large open plan interiors of 50 square metres with patio doors onto a private terrace, they are the epitome of a modern, luxurious country house experience in the most private of settings. A large bathroom with a free-standing bath sits under a round picture window, walk-in shower, double sinks & separate WC.

The Nest
The Nest Pond Suite can accommodate up to four guests and is a large, modern two bedroom suite located by the duck pond in a lush, wooded setting of mature oak trees and ferns. Encompassing a large open plan living area with cosy couches and patio doors onto a private terrace, two ensuite bedrooms with full length French doors overlooking the pond it is the epitome of a modern, luxurious country house experience.

Single Rooms
The Single Rooms overlook the gardens and courtyard and are small and cosy in character. They feature a double bed and an en-suite bathroom with a walk-in shower. They are on the first and second floor of the house.


The Restaurant


Master Suite – The Print Room


State Room – The Georgian Room


Reception Hall


Pond Suites - The Fox Suite


The Duck Restaurant

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