

LAND OF LIGHT & LIFE

Discover the Gardens, Castles &
Landscapes of Northumberland staying
at the **Matfen Hall Hotel Golf and Spa**

10th to 15th June 2018

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Here is a wonderful early summer break to Northumberland. From our central base near the market town of Hexham, once the haunt of marauding Vikings 1300 years ago, we will explore some of the region's finest and most beautiful gardens and castles, some close to the sea, providing the most dramatic of backdrops to the botanical wonders and buildings.

Northumberland, often described as 'Gods Own Country' is the birthplace of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and William Turner, the naturalist, hailed as the 'Father of English Botany'. Northumberland has an impressive legacy of gardening greats and with its unique climate and geology combined with inspirational design, they have produced sensational gardens across the county which will appeal equally to gardening enthusiasts and those who simply wish to dream away an hour or two in delightful surroundings. Wander too through majestic castles set in the vast Northumbrian landscapes.

Every day will be a highlight, from Belsay Hall and the lovingly restored heritage gardens to Craigside, the first home in the world to be lit by hydroelectricity and the magnificent gardens at Howick Hall, rated by the BBC Gardener's World Magazine as one of the top five coastal gardens in the country. We will also lunch here in The Earl Grey Tearoom and we hope Lady Howick will be available to show us around her private garden. Also, make a visit to Hadrian's Wall - the northwest frontier of the Roman Empire for nearly 300 years. It was built by the Roman army on the orders of the emperor Hadrian following his visit to Britain in AD 122. At 73 miles (80 Roman miles) long, it crossed northern Britain from Wallsend on the River Tyne in the east to Bowness-on-Solway in the west. The most famous of all the frontiers of the Roman Empire, Hadrian's Wall was made a World Heritage Site in 1987.

No visit to the far north would be complete without exploring Alnwick Castle and the famous gardens. In the words of the Duchess of Northumberland "The Alnwick Garden is an inspiring landscape with beautiful gardens, unique features - including a tree house and the Poison Garden - and magnificent architecture, all brought to life with water." Our last day includes the spectacular Bamburgh Castle, once home to the Kings of Ancient Northumbria, and one of Northumberland's most iconic buildings, overlooking the shores of the North Sea. London Festival Opera will perform in the Kings Hall where Yehudi Meduhin once gave a concert. With rich teak panelled walls, the King's Hall is capped with an ornate ceiling and overlooked by a beautiful stained glass window.



Lindisfarne Priory

THE HOLY ISLAND OF LINDISFARNE OPTIONAL TOUR

For those who wish to make the most of their final day, we are offering an optional visit to Holy Island. From a former fort to the holiday home of a wealthy Edwardian bachelor seeking a quiet retreat from London, this idyllic location of Lindisfarne Castle has intrigued and inspired for centuries. The renovation by Arts and Crafts architect Edwin Lutyens both hides and emphasises the old fort, all the while overlooking Gertrude Jekyll's enchanting walled garden and the unexpected grandeur of the Lime Kilns, an imposing and striking reminder of Lindisfarne's industrial past.



Lion bridge, Alnwick



Formal Gardens, Craggside



Belsay Hall

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. 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. Recent appearances have been in London, Rome, Paris, Hamburg, Brussels, Monte Carlo, Moscow, Marrakech, Mumbai, Barbados and Hong

Kong. 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.

GUEST SPEAKER



David Mitchell

David Mitchell was previously a Curator at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and is now an Honorary Research Associate. He is Director and Curator at Muddy Feet Consultants, an environmental education company specialising in landscape assessment,

project development, horticulture, interpretation and exhibitions. He has spent thirty years in private and public consultancy with organisations including The National Archives of Scotland, The National Galleries of Scotland, The Royal Collections Trust, 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. He is currently Chairman of Scotland's Gardens, a Trustee of the Pitlochry Festival Theatre, the Hidden Garden Glasgow and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture and the Royal Geographical 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 her busy life with working periodically as part of the Noble Caledonia field staff team. From the Arctic to the Antarctica, South America to Australia, the UK, Africa, India, the Seychelles, and many other destinations she has been able to pursue her love of the oceans, travel and photography. Chantal is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 Northumberland. Afternoon check in at Matfen Hall Hotel Golf and Spa. A transfer will be provided at a specific time from Newcastle Station. Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at our hotel this evening.

Day 2 Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens & Chesters Roman Fort and Museum. On our first morning we will visit Belsay Hall, a notable Regency style 1807 country house which is regarded as the first British country house to be built entirely in new, Greek revival style. It is a Grade I listed building and the vast and varied grounds provide a magnificent setting for the castle and hall. Marvel at the views from the massive 14th century defensive 'pele tower' at the top of the ruined Medieval castle. We will wander through beautiful formal terraces and beds packed with an impressive array of shrubs and flowers which change with the seasons. The high point is the unique Quarry Garden, a truly unique fantasy of ravines and pinnacles filled with winter flowering Rhododendrons, ferns and rare plants. In the afternoon, drive to Chesters Roman Fort on the line of Hadrian's Wall nestled in the valley of Chollerford next to the North Tyne River. Chesters Roman Fort is the most complete Roman cavalry fort in Britain with unusually well preserved baths and steam room, and the officers' quarters. Discover an amazing collection of Roman objects and inscriptions in



Hadrians Wall

Mandarin duck, Alnwick Castle

Howick Gardens



Lindisfarne Castle

the museum; these were found at the fort and along Hadrian's Wall. Dinner will be at the hotel this evening.

Day 3 Cragside. Today we will visit Cragside and explore the innovative former home of Lord and Lady Armstrong, packed with ingenious gadgets and modern conveniences. We will visit the Formal Gardens, Pinetum and Rock Garden and see how Lord Armstrong experimented with plants, trees and water on a gigantic scale to create the gardens at Cragside. We will end our visit with a guided Woodland Walk. This afternoon is at leisure and in the early evening London Festival Opera will perform at Matfen Hall Hotel Golf and Spa in the Great Hall. The performance will be followed by dinner.

Day 4 Alnwick Castle & Gardens. Enjoy a morning visit to the famous Alnwick Castle, the second largest inhabited castle in the country; home to the Duke of Northumberland's family, the Percys, for over 700 years. Combining magnificent Medieval architecture with sumptuous Italianate State Rooms, Alnwick Castle is one of this country's most significant heritage destinations. Later, we head to the gardens, one of the world's most ambitious new gardens. The Duchess of Northumberland's vision for a forgotten plot is now a truly

21st century experience full of imagination, inspiration and fun. Designed by Jacques and Peter Wirtz, the garden is a wonderful combination of spaces, themes, quirkiness and play. We return to our hotel for some free time before dinner.

Day 5 Howick Gardens & Bamburgh Castle.

Today we take a beautiful drive north to Howick Hall, which was the home of the Grey family from 1319, Charles 2nd Earl Grey is the most distinguished member. As leader of the Whig party he was Prime Minister from 1830 to 1834. Howick is also the home of Earl Grey tea, which was specially blended by a Chinese mandarin for Charles 2nd Earl Grey, to suit the water from the well at Howick, using bergamot in particular to offset the taste of the lime. We will visit the fascinating garden and break for lunch in the Earl Grey Tea House, before setting off in the afternoon for a short drive to Bamburgh Castle. The Bamburgh Castle we see today is a relatively recent structure, built by famed industrialist, the first Lord Armstrong at vast cost in late Victorian times. But the castle boasts a much longer history. There have been settlements on the site since prehistoric times and the regular archaeological digs that take place have unearthed some spectacular finds. Lord Armstrong's restoration saved it from ruin and the castle provides an ancestral

home to the Armstrong family to this day. We will visit the castle before a light afternoon tea in the Clock Tower cafeteria. To end our day, London Festival Opera will give their final performance in the King's Hall. We return to our hotel for our Farewell Dinner.

Day 6 Northumberland. After a leisurely breakfast check out from Matfen Hall Hotel Golf and Spa. A coach transfer will be provided at a specific time to Newcastle Station or join our optional excursion to Holy Island returning to the hotel in the afternoon.

THE HOLY ISLAND OF LINDISFARNE OPTIONAL TOUR - DAY 6

Depart after breakfast for a full day tour including lunch to Lindisfarne, the fabled offshore island only accessible at low tide via a narrow causeway. Stroll around the village and take in the fabulous views followed by a guided tour of the ancient Priory ruin with its 'rainbow arch'. Rising from the sheer rock face at the tip of the island is Lindisfarne Castle, built to defend a harbour sheltering English ships during skirmishes with Scotland. Aside its historical pedigree, the Holy Island of Lindisfarne has an exciting array of wildlife. Its island status protects tidal mudflats, saltmarshes and dunes, which together form the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve. Rare plants and an abundance of food supplies attract visiting birds from thousands of miles.

Price per person £110

NB. Minimum numbers are required to operate.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	
Classic Room	£1495
Deluxe Room	£1595
Premier Room	£1695
Principal Room	£1795
Classic Room for sole use	£2195

PRICE INCLUDES: Five nights hotel accommodation at Matfen Hall Hotel Golf and Spa on a bed, breakfast and dinner basis • Wine with dinner • Entrance fees • Tour Leader • Guest Speaker • Transfers.
Not Included: Travel insurance, optional excursion to Holy Island.



Matfen Hall Hotel

MATFEN HALL HOTEL, GOLF AND SPA

Matfen Hall Hotel Golf and Spa is located just 15 miles west of Newcastle in the charming village of Matfen and is the ancestral home of Sir Hugh and Lady Blackett. This stately home is set in 300 acres of pretty parkland and has been a hotel since 1999.

Your Room

The hotel offers 53 bedrooms which are all individually decorated in traditional and contemporary styles combining traditional charm with modern amenities. Facilities include en-suite bathroom, direct dial telephone, flat screen TV, ironing facilities, trouser press, tea/coffee making facilities, hairdryer, fridge, bath robes and safe.

Your Space

Set in the heart of some of Northumberland's most beautiful countryside, the hotel's estate is set out in a classic parkland landscape and includes a 27-hole course, par 3 course and driving range. Onsite there is also a fitness centre and spa with swimming pool, a spa bath, and massage facilities in relaxing candlelit treatment rooms. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available throughout the hotel. The hotel's Library Restaurant has been awarded 2 AA Rosettes for its cuisine, and dining in this dramatic setting is a stately affair - enjoy fine dining in front of a log fire with scenic views over the surrounding grounds. There is a focus on using the finest locally sourced ingredients, great pride is taken in producing imaginative menus, highlighting the best that the region has to offer. There is also The Conservatory Bistro which overlooks the golf course and is ideal for pre-dinner drinks and lighter fare.



Classic Room: These rooms are situated in the new section of the Hall and are decorated in contemporary style with the option of a twin or double bed configuration. Approximate size 30 x 35 metres.



Deluxe Room: These offer spacious comfort with a seating area and a luxurious en-suite bathroom. Deluxe rooms are situated in the new and original section of the hotel with the option of a twin or double bed configuration. Approximate size 52 x 46 metres.



Premier Rooms: These rooms offer spacious luxury accommodation in the original part of the hall. They are decorated with traditional elegance and have outstanding views of the gardens or golf course. Approximate size 68 x 65 metres.



Principal Rooms: Matfen Hall's Principal rooms are the perfect choice if you would like something extra special. Principal rooms are in the original part of the Hall with stunning views of the garden or golf course. Approximate size 68 x 65 metres.



Golf course



Pool



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: Alnwick castle