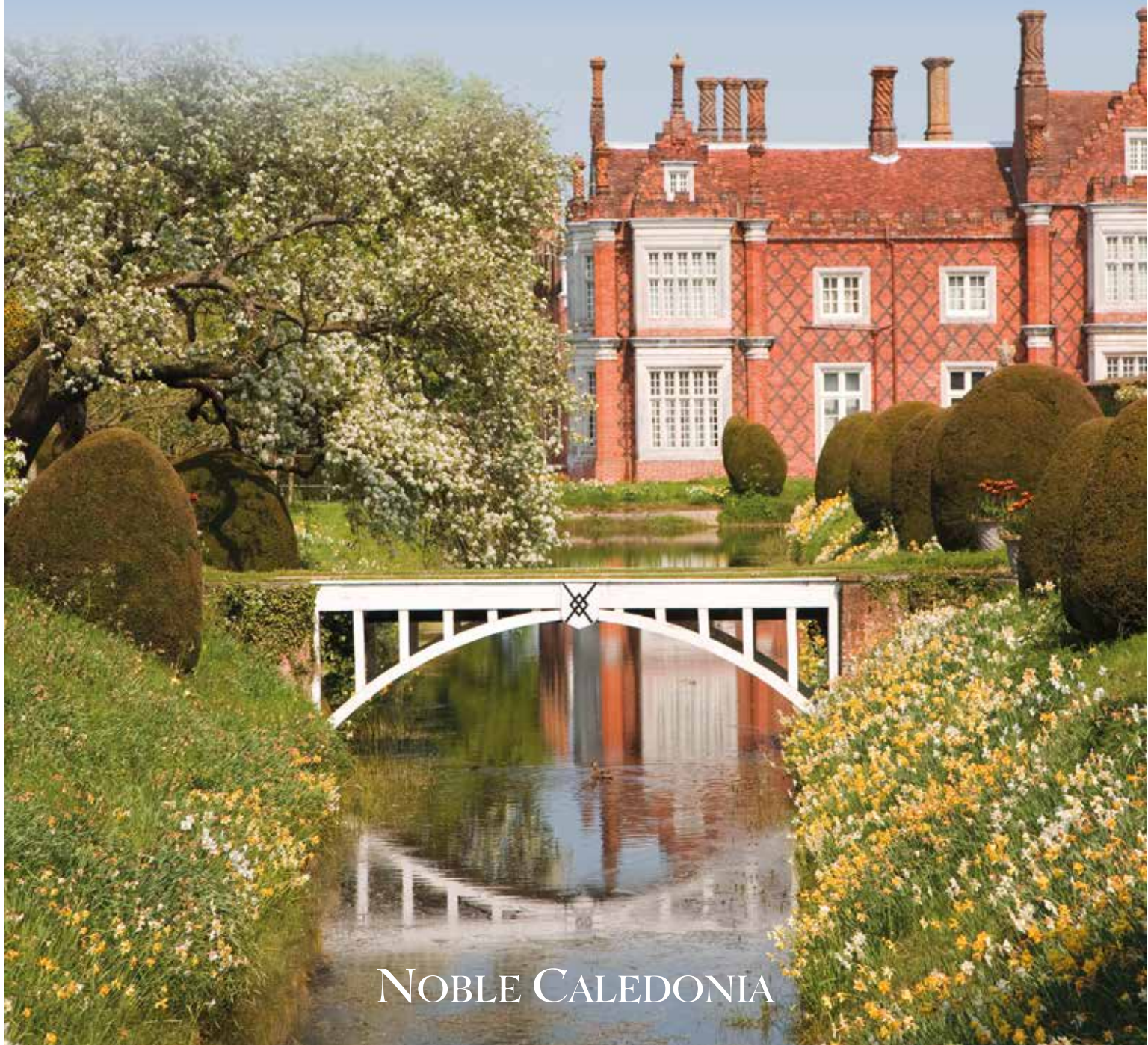


SOMETHING ABOUT SUFFOLK

A six day exploration of East Anglia's Great Houses & Gardens
with Alan Mason, Chantal Cookson & London Festival Opera

18th to 23rd May 2025



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Hintlesham Hall

An Introduction by Andrew Cochrane, Noble Caledonia Founder & Director



“ Have you ever visited the Suffolk Heritage Coast? If so, you will know it is a wonderfully peaceful and scenic stretch of coast and an ‘Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’. It may only be slightly less than one hundred miles from London but could be 500 hundred miles in its unhurried atmosphere and gentle pace of life. Somehow, Suffolk and in particular the 50 mile stretch of Heritage Coast has survived the onslaught of the 21st century, making its towns and villages a pleasure to visit and its unspoiled landscape a joy. Nowhere is this truer than the seaside town of Aldeburgh, known the world over for its Music Festival, a magnet for cultural tourists. We have chosen Aldeburgh as our base for five nights because there is something very special about the town. Likewise, our choice of hotel, the Wentworth, is one of those rare owner managed properties of enormous charm with the added bonus of facing the sea and the fisherman’s huts and little boats which dot the beach.

The big skies and extraordinary light of East Anglia are unique and offer the most amazing conditions in which to create stunning gardens. From our Aldeburgh base we will visit some of the finest gardens in Suffolk and North Essex. We will admire the big skies of Constable Country, spend a morning in Beth Chatto’s famous dry garden and enjoy a private visit to Hintlesham Hall where London Festival Opera will entertain us in the splendid surroundings. There will also be visits to two other great houses and gardens: Otley Hall and Helmingham Hall, and a private visit to the Grade 1 listed Guildhall in beautiful Bury St Edmunds. Finally, no trip to Aldeburgh would be complete without a visit to Benjamin Britten’s home the Red House.

I have been visiting Aldeburgh for over 30 years and it is difficult to put into words why it’s so special, but it does have a unique timeless quality rarely found on our coasts. To make the most of your visit our itinerary has been planned at a leisurely pace, no early starts and some free time to enjoy the hotel, Aldeburgh and its surroundings. The hotel has an excellent location being just a few minutes’ walk from the High Street with its speciality shops and art galleries. You may care to bring your walking boots as the area has some fine coastal, heath and marshland walks offering delightful views and bird watching. ” ”



Helmingham Hall and Gardens



Beth Chatto Woodland Garden



The Guildhall, Bury St Edmunds



Otley Hall



The Red House

The Itinerary

Day 1 Aldeburgh. A transfer to the Wentworth Hotel from Ipswich Railway Station will be provided to those arriving by train. Those driving may park at the hotel's car park. Meet in the evening for welcome drinks and dinner in the hotel.

Day 2 Otley Hall. Enjoy a relaxing morning in Aldeburgh. Perhaps take an after breakfast walk along the coast towards Thorpeness or enjoy exploring Aldeburgh's picturesque High Street or the Church of Peter & Paul, the last resting place of Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. In the late morning we head for Otley Hall, a Grade 1 listed 15th and 16th century moated Tudor Hall. Set within 10 acres of delightful gardens it is as though time has stopped among the ducks, swans, geese and peacocks. It is easy to imagine how the place might have looked in late Medieval and early Tudor times and the days when the owner Bartholomew Gosnold planned two voyages that resulted in the founding of the United States. We will explore both the house and the gardens before a buffet lunch is served in Martha's Barn, locally celebrated for its local, seasonal and artisan food.

Day 3 Beth Chatto Garden & Hintlesham Hall. After breakfast depart for the Beth Chatto Garden, across the border in North Essex. Beth Chatto OBE took an overgrown wasteland of brambles, parched gravel and boggy ditches in 1960 and created one of the most amazing gardens in the country. Beth oversaw the development of the gardens well into her 90's and they remain a family-run business. Wonder at the Gravel Garden which was once a car park and is never watered, as well as the Scree Garden, Water Garden and Woodland. In the early afternoon drive back into Suffolk for lunch at the 16th century Hintlesham Hall. Set in 175 acres of classic Suffolk landscape we will spend the afternoon here. After lunch London Festival Opera will perform and before leaving we will have time to stroll in the grounds. Enjoy dinner at the Wentworth this evening.

Day 4 Fullers Mill & Bury St Edmunds. This morning we drive to West Suffolk and the enchanting and tranquil seven acre Fullers Mill Garden on the banks of the River Lark. Created by the late Bernard Tickner it is a marvellous and thought provoking garden located on both sides of the river. It combines a beautiful site of light dappled woodland with a plantsman's collection of unusual shrubs, perennials, lilies and marginal plants. Transfer to Bury St Edmunds for lunch at the Angel Hotel before arriving at the town's celebrated Grade 1 listed Guildhall. Dating back to the thirteenth century the building has a fascinating history, and we will visit its World War II operational rooms to learn about the role they played in the Battle of Britain. Following lunch the Guildhall's Banqueting Hall will provide a stunning backdrop for a performance by London Festival Opera. Return to the Wentworth for dinner.

Day 5 The Red House & Helmingham Hall. Just outside Aldeburgh is the home of composer Benjamin Britten and tenor Peter Pears. They shared the Red House for almost twenty years and today you will find it just as they left it, a charmingly informal snapshot as though Britten and Pears had just stepped out for a moment. Following a light lunch back at the Wentworth continue on to Helmingham Hall, the home of the Tollemache family since 1510. The Hall appears to float on the surface of its broad surrounding moat. The Head Gardener will join us for a wander around the extensive and beautiful gardens. Drive back along Suffolk's lanes to Aldeburgh for our farewell dinner at the Wentworth and the music of Nick Raisson.

Day 6 Aldeburgh. After breakfast a transfer will be provided to Ipswich Railway Station for those returning home by train.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	Prices
Standard Double Room	£2595
Standard King Size/Twin Room	£2595
Darfield House King Size/Twin Room	£2695
Standard Double Room - sea facing	£2895
Standard King Size/Twin Room - sea facing	£2895
Large King Size/Twin Room - sea facing	£3095
Superior King Size/Twin Room - sea facing	£3295
Standard Double Room for Sole Use	£3495
Standard King Size/Twin Room for sole use	£3495
Darfield House Double Room for Sole Use	£3595
Standard Double Room for Sole Use - sea facing	£3695

PRICE INCLUDES: Five nights hotel accommodation at the Wentworth Hotel on a breakfast and dinner basis • Lunch on days 2, 3, 4 & 5
 • Drinks with included lunches and dinners • Excursions as described
 • Two London Festival Opera Performances • Tour Leader
 • Guest Speaker • Group transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance, lunch on day 1.

Please note: The hotel does not have a lift and the majority of the rooms are located on the first and second floor of the hotel therefore only accessible by climbing a number of steps. We therefore do not recommend this holiday for those with walking difficulties.



Wentworth Hotel

WENTWORTH HOTEL

For the duration of our tour we have taken over all the accommodation of this fine sea facing hotel which has been run by the same family since 1920. At any time, the returning guests can number up to 75% of those staying and it is easy to see why. It is a traditionally run hotel of impeccable standards.

All of the 35 bedrooms are beautifully appointed and individually designed with inland or sea-views and some benefit from a small sitting area overlooking the sea. Each winter the hotel closes its doors for a few weeks for refurbishment, which is readily apparent in its open plan sitting areas and guest rooms.

The sea facing dining room overlooks the town's long shingle beach and the characterful wooden fishing huts and is famous throughout the area for its fine food, in particular its fish which is supplied by the local fisherman. Outside, the hotel's Tiffany garden is a lovely spot to read or enjoy a drink and take in the coastal views. The hotel also offers two cosy guest lounges with open fires and comfortable sofas.

Your Room

Standard Double Room

Located on the first or second floor, these rooms have a five-foot double bed and are inland or sea facing with en-suite shower room or bathroom.

Standard King Size/Twin Room

Located on the ground, first or second floor, these rooms have a six-foot king size bed (which can be split into two three-foot single beds) and are inland or sea facing with en-suite shower room or bathroom.

Larger King Size/Twin Room

Located on the first or second floor, these rooms have a six-foot king size bed (which can be split into two three-foot single beds) and are sea facing with en-suite shower room or bathroom.

Superior King Size/Twin Room

Located on the ground, first or second floor, these rooms have a six-foot king size bed (which can be split into two three-foot single beds) and are sea facing with en-suite bathroom. In addition, these rooms have a seating area or separate sitting room.

Darfield House Double/King Size/Twin Room

Located on the ground or first floor, these rooms have a five-foot double bed or six-foot king size bed (which can be split into two three-foot single beds) and are inland facing with en-suite shower room or bathroom.



Superior King Size/Twin Room



Standard Double Room



Larger King Size/Twin Room



Restaurant



Lounge



Darfield House Double/King Size/Twin Room



Terrace Bar



Lobby area

YOUR HOSTS

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 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.





Aldeburgh



NOBLE CALEDONIA

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



Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: The Tudor manor house and moat of Hemingham Hall.