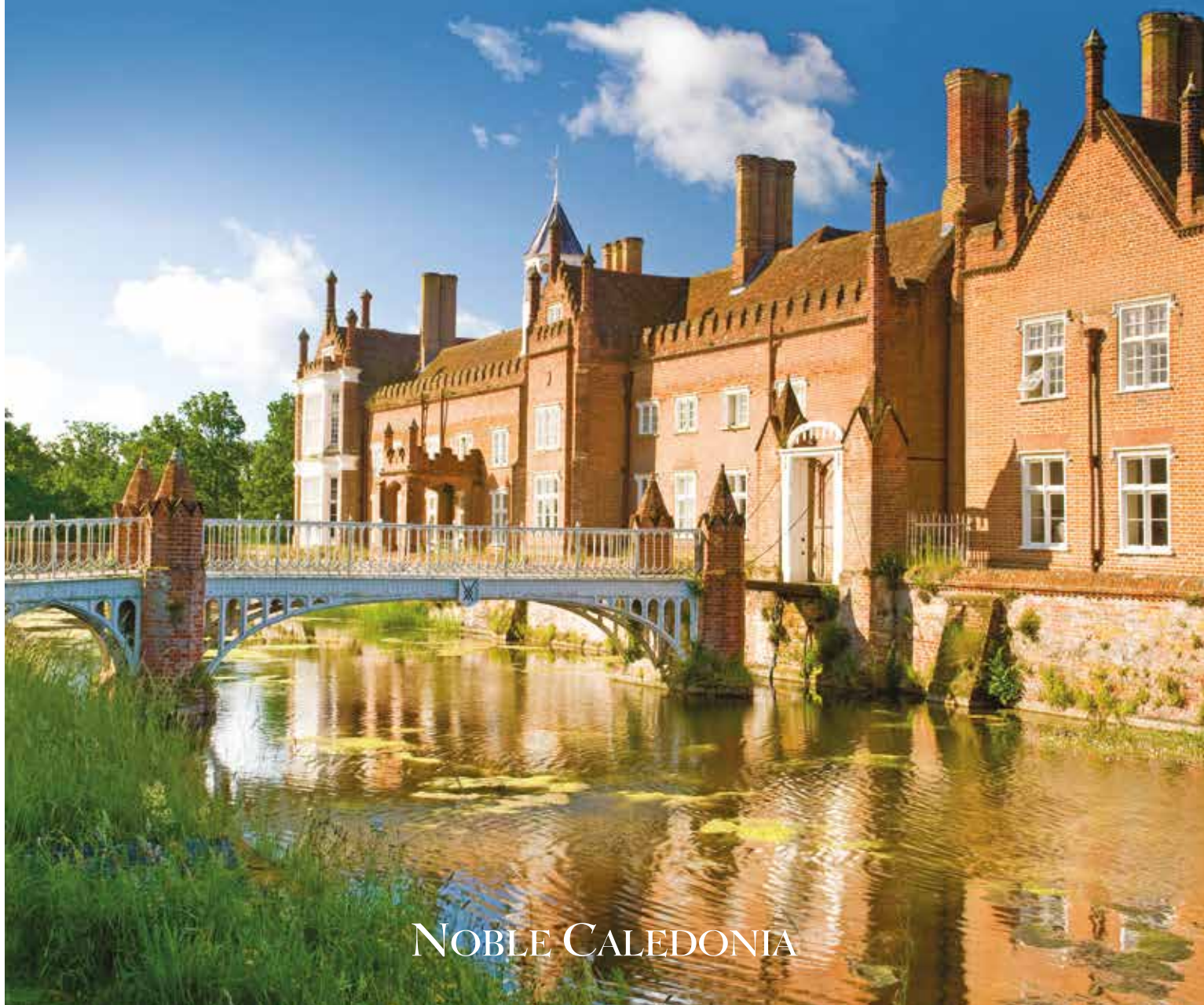


SOMETHING ABOUT SUFFOLK

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

29th May to 3rd June 2022



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Somerleyton Hall and Gardens

An Introduction by Andrew Cochran, 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 beyond and travel into North Essex and across the border into Norfolk. We will admire the big skies of Constable Country, stopping in lovely Dedham, spend a morning in Beth Chatto’s famous dry garden and enjoy a private visit to Helmingham Hall where London Festival Opera will entertain us in the splendid surroundings. There will also be visits to two other great houses and gardens: Somerleyton Hall and Raveningham Hall, two of the finest gardens in East Anglia. In contrast we will visit smaller but equally charming Priors Oak Garden in Aldeburgh. Finally, no trip to Aldeburgh would be complete without a visit to Benjamin Britten’s home the Red House in Aldeburgh.

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. ”



Flatford Mill, Dedham



Beth Chatto Woodland Garden



Helmingham Hall and Gardens



Raveningham Garden



Somerleyton Hall interior

The Itinerary

Day 1 Aldeburgh. A transfer to Aldeburgh from Ipswich Rail 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 Helmingham Hall. Enjoy a relaxing morning in Aldeburgh. Perhaps join an after breakfast walk along the coast to the village of Thorpeness, created in 1910 by Stuart Ogilvie as a fantastic holiday village of Tudor and Jacobean buildings. Depart at noon for Helmingham Hall for a private visit to the home of the Tollemache family since 1510. The Hall appears to float on the surface of its broad surrounding moat. After lunch in the Coach House, wander around the extensive and beautiful gardens including a tour with Lady Tollemache, who has over the past 30 years succeeded in melding the older garden forms into a harmonious whole. After tea, London Festival Opera will entertain us before we drive back to the Wentworth for dinner.

Day 3 Beth Chatto Garden & Dedham. Depart in the morning for the Beth Chatto Gardens, 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 late morning drive into Constable County to the delightful village of Dedham for lunch at the historic Sun Inn located in the picturesque High Street. Enjoy some free time for a stroll through Dedham and then either return to Aldeburgh or



The Red House at Aldeburgh

visit Flatford Mill and see why Constable so loved this pretty hamlet and surrounding countryside. Enjoy dinner at the Wentworth this evening.

Day 4 Raveningham & Somerleyton. This morning we drive through Suffolk to southern Norfolk and the Raveningham Estate, the family home of the Bacon family since 1735. Sir Nicholas Bacon, President of the RHS will meet us and join us for a tour of the wonderful historic gardens. Our next visit is Somerleyton Hall. After lunch in the wonderful glassed Winter Garden we will tour the splendid gardens and fine Hall, one of the finest private houses in East Anglia. After afternoon tea meet in the opulent Ballroom for a performance by London Festival Opera. Return to the Wentworth for dinner.

Day 5 The Red House & Priors Oak. 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. We return to the hotel for some free time. This afternoon we will visit Priors Oak, a private garden in the leafy lanes of Aldeburgh. It is a tranquil 10 acre garden of herbaceous borders, ferns and Mediterranean plants. Skirting the wood are 100 buddleias, a magnet for butterflies. We drive back to

the Wentworth for our farewell dinner and the music of Nick Raisson.

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

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	
Standard Double Room	£2145
Standard King Size/Twin Room	£2145
Darfield House King Size/Twin Room	£2245
Standard Double Room - sea facing	£2395
Standard King Size/Twin Room - sea facing	£2395
Large King Size/Twin Room - sea facing	£2595
Superior King Size/Twin Room - sea facing	£2795
Standard Double Room for Sole Use	£2895
Darfield House Double for Sole Use	£2995
Standard Double Room for Sole Use - sea facing	£3095

PRICE INCLUDES: Five nights hotel accommodation at the Wentworth Hotel on a breakfast and dinner basis • Lunch on days 2, 3 & 4 • Afternoon tea on days 2 & 4 • Excursions as described • Two London Festival Opera Performances • Tour Leader • Guest Speaker • Group transfers.
Not Included: Travel insurance, lunch on days 1, 5 & 6.

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. 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 is famous throughout the area for its fine food and 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.

The much-loved entertainer Joyce Grenfell stayed at the Wentworth during her visits to the Aldeburgh Music Festival between 1962 and 1979 and published a collection of her letters. Her book 'Letters from Aldeburgh' are full of her inimitable wit and love for life and a copy of the book will be provided to every booking, an ideal read for a stay in Aldeburgh.

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.





Sunset over fishing boats, River Alde, Aldeburgh.

NOBLE CALEDONIA

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