



Holidays at Highclere Castle



## The World of Downton Abbey

For the Holidays!

December 8-17, 2015

Limited to 25 participants.

An exclusive presentation by  
Friends of Louisiana Public Broadcasting

### Join Louisiana Public Broadcasting on a memorable trip for the holidays

**in 2015!** On a tour of historic England, we discover the world of the English aristocracy, in fact and fiction, past and present culminating in an exclusive private tour and reception at Highclere Castle: for more than 300 years the home of Lord and Lady Carnarvon, and the real *Downton Abbey*.

From Edwardian London and the iconic Houses of Parliament to the Georgian splendor of Jane Austen's Bath and the hallowed halls of Oxford, invited scholars and expert guides will help us explore our enduring fascination with the aristocracy, their grand estates, and how they survive today. We will learn the codes they live by, their manners and customs, their dress and lifestyle.

We'll tour the House of Lords, where Britain's gentry once passed abiding laws. We'll visit their elite schools: Eton College, which almost every British Prime Minister has attended; and prestigious Oxford University. We'll examine their fashion and accoutrements in a private viewing of the Museum of London's prized collections.

We'll put all this into context with visits to other *Masterpiece* locations and historic sites. What were Jane Austen's bonneted women really up to in Bath? Where is the Abbey in Downton, or Lacock? Was life below stairs so rosy? Do Inspector Morse's professors really discuss Shakespeare in pubs?

We'll lodge in select 4 -star hotels, take over our own country house, dine in fine restaurants, and indulge in high teas. A trip you won't want to miss!

### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Private tour and reception at Highclere Castle, the location for exterior and interior scenes of *Downton Abbey*
- Private guides, talks and visits with experts on British history and the Downton era in particular
- Tours of major historical sites in London and elsewhere, including the Houses of Parliament, Windsor Castle, Oxford and its University and Colleges, Lacock Abbey, Bampton village (Downton village scenes), Bath, Sandham Memorial Chapel (WWI memorial) among others
- Prime tickets to a theatre performance in London, plus evensong in Oxford
- Deluxe 4-star accommodations in London, Oxford, and Ston Easton
- 4 lunches, 3 dinners, 2 high teas and other receptions
- Private, air-conditioned motorcoach transportation to all destinations
- Free time for additional sight-seeing, shopping, or relaxing



House of Lords chamber

**TOUR COST: \$5,385 per person, ground only, based on double occupancy. Group limited to 25 participants.**

The *World of Downton Abbey* tour is an exclusive presentation of Friends of Louisiana Public Broadcasting and is organized by THE GRAND TOUR Travel Company, Peterborough, New Hampshire

# Daily Itinerary

## Tuesday, Dec 8

Group flight departure from New Orleans to London Heathrow, with arrival the following day.

## WEDNESDAY, DEC 9 (LONDON) WELCOME!

On arrival at Heathrow, we are met by our Tour Manager Alasdair Clayre, and transfer to the centrally located Kingsbury Hall Hotel in the West End, close to the theatres and Covent Garden. This evening we get together over a **welcome reception and dinner** at Simpson's-in-the-Strand, a historic London eatery where for 170 years they have served traditional roast beef from silver-domed trolleys. After dinner we'll take a brief coach tour of this great capital lit up at night.

## THURSDAY, DEC 10 (LONDON) WINDSOR AND ETON

After **breakfast daily** at our hotel, we make the short trip to Windsor Castle. Originally built by William the Conqueror, home to St George's Chapel and the Order of the Garter, Windsor is the largest inhabited castle in the world and still a favorite residence of the Queen. A short walk across the river brings us to Eton College, where we enjoy a rare guided visit of the school. Founded by King Henry VI in 1440 to educate a new class of men for the Royal Court, Eton was more recently the school of David Cameron, The Archbishop of Canterbury and Princes Harry and William. By now we will have earned the right to relax with a private **high tea** in Windsor with a special guest. Evening free.

## FRIDAY, DEC 11 (LONDON) COSTUMES & THEATRE

This morning we enjoy a special private visit to the storerooms of the Museum of London's superb collection of men and women's fashion through the centuries with a senior curator. We will focus on the Edwardian Era, named for the early 20th century period of Edward VII, as featured in *Downton Abbey*. **Lunch** is at a private London club, an exclusive retreat from the bustle of town life. After a free afternoon in London, this evening we attend a performance of a major drama or musical within walking distance of our hotel.

## SATURDAY, DEC 12 (LONDON/STON EASTON) TO THE MANOR BORN

Before departing from London, we set off to take a private tour of the Houses of Parliament, focusing on the "upper" house, the House of Lords. We bid good-bye to London and travel west to our next home near Bath. We stop off to visit the charming village of Lacock, preserved by the National Trust, where scenes from *Pride and Prejudice*, *Cranford* and *Harry Potter* were filmed. Then we arrive at the Ston Easton Park Hotel, an 18th century Palladian mansion set amid 36 beautiful acres in the rolling hills of Somerset. The group will have the virtual run of the hotel which includes an Edwardian era kitchen, a Victorian garden,



View of Oxford

and an elegant salon. We'll take a tour of the house and garden before **dinner** at the hotel's award-winning restaurant.

## SUNDAY, DEC 13 (STON EASTON) JANE AUSTEN IN BATH

A short drive brings us to the charming city of Bath. Historically an important religious site and Roman settlement, Bath later became a fashionable Georgian resort town and the setting for several of Jane Austen's novels. We visit the jewels of Regency Bath: the Assembly Rooms, the Pump rooms where you have a chance to taste the waters, the Parades, the Georgian baths, the Circus and Royal Crescent. **Lunch** is at The Pump Room. We return to Ston Easton for **high tea** and a late **supper**. There Emma Craigie, a local writer and teacher, will talk to us about her childhood at Ston Easton. Her late father, William Rees-Mogg, the prominent editor of the Times, bought and restored the crumbling mansion.

## MONDAY, DEC 14 (OXFORD) THE CITY OF SPIRES

After breakfast, we head northeast through the lower Cotswolds towards Oxford, stopping first for a visit to the charming village of Bampton. See the house given to Isobel Crawley, visit the church where Matthew and Mary marry, and the little library used for the village hospital exterior. Then it's on to **lunch** at the Trout Inn, the favoured pub of Inspector Morse. We arrive in Oxford and check in to deluxe Malmaison Oxford, a unique 4-star hotel in the historic city center, tucked inside ancient Oxford Castle, some of its rooms carved out of a prison! We'll enjoy an early evening walking tour of the city and its colleges. Too many names to mention are associated with Oxford, from Sir Christopher Wren to Tolkien. The University can claim 47 Nobel Laureates, 12 Saints and 8 current Cabinet ministers. At the historic Oxford Union, home of the internationally renowned debating society, we've invited an Oxford don to share his experiences at the University.

## TUESDAY, DEC 15 (OXFORD) HIGHCLERE

Today we travel past Watership Down, an area famous for its race-horse stud-farms, and proceed to Highclere Castle for our private guided tour through the magnificent state rooms, so familiar to us from the series, and enjoy a Champagne reception. Highclere

Castle has been in the Carnarvon family for over 300 years and is still home to the present Earl and Countess of Carnarvon who have extended us a warm welcome.

**Lunch** is at the nearby Dew Pond Inn. Following lunch we visit Sandham Memorial Chapel. Built to commemorate the unknown dead of the First World War and housing the murals of war-time artist Stanley Spencer, this is a reminder of the momentous events that shook the world of the early 20th century. From there we proceed to the town of Winchester and its famed Christmas markets in full swing. A stop in the Cathedral, fabled in song, is a must. Evening is free in Oxford.

## WEDNESDAY, DEC 16 (OXFORD) EVENSONG & FAREWELL

We have a day of leisure in Oxford to explore its world class museums, the shops of the covered market, or go "punting" on the river, if it's not too cold. This evening we gather for evensong in a College Chapel, sung by the young boys of the College's own school, followed by a fitting **farewell dinner** in a hallowed College Formal Hall, a privilege reserved for distinguished visitors to Oxford.

## THURSDAY, DEC 17

Tour ends after breakfast. Coach returns to London Heathrow airport for the returning group flight to New Orleans with arrival the same day.

*Meals in bold are included in the price of the tour.  
Itinerary subject to change.*

## TOUR REGISTRATION

**TOUR COST: \$5,385 per person, ground only, double occupancy. Single supplement: \$960**

**DEPOSIT: \$1,000 per person, first come, first served, due upon registration.** Includes a tax-deductible \$500 contribution to Friends of LBP.

**BALANCE DEADLINE: Friday, September 25, 2015.** After that date, call for availability.

**CONTACT:** Call Friends of LPB: 225-767-4214 or 1-800-272-8161 ext. 4214 to reserve your place on the tour with a credit card deposit, or send checks for the deposit amount to: England tour, Friends of LPB, 7733 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Registration materials and further information will be provided upon receipt of deposit or can be downloaded from [lpb.org/friends](http://lpb.org/friends).

### QUESTIONS?

Contact The Grand Tour at 800-727-2995 or [info@thegrandtour.com](mailto:info@thegrandtour.com)