

## Kent - The Key to England

### Introduction

- 4 Days / 3 Nights
- Any Day Start
- 5 Star Hotels
- Standard Group Size 1 - 6

England's Channel coast looks over to it's nearest overseas neighbour, France. Over the course of time, invasion forces have always attempted to capture the county of Kent and so it came to be called the Key to England, as once taken the rest of the country should soon follow.

Kent is a delightful, undulating patchwork of orchards and pastures decorated with ancient woodland and picturesque villages. It also boasts many of the finest historic properties in England from churches and cathedrals to castles and grand stately homes. The evocative coast, distinctive for the White Cliffs so significant in WWII, has a rich and varied wildlife.

### Trip Profile

The aim of this tour is to give you a cross-section of England's history. Starting from London, we make our way to the coast where the area is dominated by castles towering over the cliff tops. From here, we make our way inland and visit a range of attractions from the world's most beautiful castle at Leeds to the seat of the Anglican Church at Canterbury.

The county is also known as the "Garden of England". Depending on the time of year, we will visit several notable world renowned gardens.

**Why Not? Create Your Own Tour.** As with all our tours the attractions you see will take account of your interests and can be adapted to what you want to see. You will however, see a cross-section of the history, countryside and heritage of England.

As the attractions are close together you will have the choice to stay in one hotel or move to different hotels each day. Hotel choices can be in time-locked Rye, on the coast or at a country house.

### Itinerary

#### Day One

We pick you up from your hotel and travel east along the motorway to the Kent coast. There are three outstanding castles and several significant forts and ports a few miles apart and we begin with two of the smaller castles at Deal and Walmer. Each castle was built by Henry VIII as a defence against the Spanish and French in the C16th. Walmer Castle is one of the best preserved castles of that era and had many significant guardians, including Winston Churchill and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. The gardens are exceptional.

After lunch, we go back in time to AD43 – the establishment of Richborough Fort. This was a Roman stronghold and the point where all modern English roads begin. Driving a few miles to the unspoilt ancient Cinque Port of Sandwich. This was once a thriving trading port but over the centuries the sea has receded and left the town as a Medieval time capsule. We have a short walking tour after which you can explore at your leisure.



Walmer Castle and Garden

## Day Two

We start the morning by driving along the coast taking in the view and hopefully, seeing across the sea to France. On the cliff tops are a number of memorials to the heroes of WWII. Dominating the coast is **Dover Castle**. Named UK tourist attraction for several years running, the castle offers a spectrum of history from Norman times to the present day. In the castle complex it is said is the oldest standing building in England, a Roman lighthouse and a warren of tunnels beneath the castle formed a control area in WWII.

After lunch, we start to explore the countryside and visit the beautiful gardens at **Great Dixter**. These gardens were laid out by Christopher Lloyd where he pioneered the use of natural plant regimes. Along the way are several unique churches and picturesque villages before we arrive at **Rye** – another beautifully preserved medieval town. Time permitting; we will visit one of the areas **vineyards** to sample the wine.



The White Cliffs of Dover

## Day Three

This morning we visit **Canterbury** an ancient city with significant architecture from the Romans to the modern day. The town is best known for the three World Heritage Sites. Most important is the Cathedral, the home of the Anglican Church. However, probably most significant is the tiny church of St Mary, arguably the oldest in the country. We will have a short tour to familiarise you with the area and then, you can choose what you want to see.

After lunch, a short drive across the North Downs takes us to one of the world's most celebrated gardens, **Sissinghurst Castle**. Created by Vita Sackville West surrounding an Elizabethan mansion, the garden is set around a series of compartments provide outstanding colour and an intimate atmosphere.



Canterbury Cathedral

## Day Four

This morning we visit what has been described as the most beautiful castle in the world, **Leeds**. Built over 1000 years ago, once a royal palace to Henry VIII and set in a natural lake, the castle sits serenely in the surrounding countryside. There are many attractions in the castle including the maze, the aviary, several gardens and museums.

After lunch, we start to make our way back to London along the route we can stop at a number of attractions. Amongst the best is a classic Tudor palace, **Knole**. Again once owned by Henry VIII following the reformation, the house has sumptuous suite of state rooms and numerous works of art by Reynolds, Raphael and Van Dyke. Contrasting with this house is **Chartwell**, home to Winston Churchill from 1922 to his death. The house is left as it was when Churchill was alive, with cigars and the day's newspapers on display. The gardens are well worth a visit in their own right.

We then return to either your hotel, to London or to the start of your next Classic England tour.



The quintessential English Scene

(4 Days, all accommodation with breakfast, personal driver / guide, based on the number in your group)

**Price per person – please contact us – Toll Free: 1866 464 7389**

## Accommodation and Tour Details

### Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation is based on a 5 star bed and breakfast in Rye. Lunch and evening meals are not included unless specifically stated in the tour notes. Two further hotel bands are available, our Country House and our Platinum Collections.

### Entrance Fees

Each tour is lead by a knowledgeable driver / guide. In most instances, entrances to historic attractions are included in the price we will quote you.

### Prices

We aim to offer the best and most competitive price for each of our tours. We use our partners to get the best price at the time of booking. The cost will also depend on the services you require. Please **contact us** for the best price.

## Airport Transfers

We can provide transfers from any location and airports or cruise ports. Return transfers from London airports to the start and finish of the tour are not in the tour costs.

## Practical Information

### Climate

As some of attractions on this tour are out of doors it is advisable to take the correct clothing. With the unpredictability of the climate and forecast, wet weather clothing is essential. Sturdy footwear and waterproof clothing are advised.

<b>Jan</b> 6	<b>Feb</b> 7	<b>Mar</b> 10	<b>April</b> 13	<b>May</b> 17	<b>June</b> 20
<b>July</b> 22	<b>Aug</b> 21	<b>Sept</b> 19	<b>Oct</b> 14	<b>Nov</b> 10	<b>Dec</b> 7

### Health

This tour involves a walking on some terrain that can be fairly rough. We ask all our travellers to carefully consider the physical demands of our tours and discuss any concerns that may arise. There is much scope for flexibility within each tour to accommodate a range of limitations and needs, but we do have to be clear what they may be before accepting any booking.

Additionally, if you find walking difficult or any other health requirement, please let us know as soon as possible. There may be motorised wheelchairs available at some attractions. These may be booked if sufficient notice is given.

### Taxes

Value Added Tax is applied to most goods. Most travellers can get a VAT refund, but you must ask and the paperwork and procedures can be long and complicated.

### Tipping

Some restaurants and hotels will automatically add a 10-15% service charge. Check your bill before tipping further. Taxis, Restaurants, Bell Boys, Porter expect a tip, bar staff in pubs, do not.

## Important information

The information in this tour profile is given in good faith and covers the planned excursions, attractions and conditions which should be available on this tour. In some instances, due to unforeseen circumstances, changes in the above itinerary might be necessary. To appreciate this tour to its best, you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary.

**Leisure Creations Ltd, 4 Austen Drive, Stock, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 9FB.**

**Telephone: +44(0)1277 841 651 Fax: +44(0)870 220 3156**

**Email: [info@classic-england.com](mailto:info@classic-england.com) Website: [www.classic-england.com](http://www.classic-england.com)**

**US Toll Free: 1866 464 7389**

Leisure Creations Ltd. Registered in England 4057887

Registered office: 4 Austen Drive, Stock, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 9FB

Vat Registration: 805 9583 05



Issue Date: October 2009 © Leisure Creations Ltd