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**Brand New UK Countryside Tours Launches**

**“Telling the Stories Of England” Escorted Journeys**

**Expert designed, Providing Rare, Behind-the-Scenes Access for the Curious Traveler**

**New York, NY, February 15, 2017** – With the launch of UK Countryside Tours comes the unveiling of a program of brand new and tremendously innovative “Telling the Stories of England” escorted journeys offering exclusive and private behind-the-scenes experiences designed to inspire Americans to explore Britain’s diverse regions. This one-of-a-kind tour operator stands apart in providing entrée by eminent authorities to an unparalleled collection of treasures.

Designed by leading academics and singular experts in their fields, the [heritage and cultural tours of England](#) are organized along the following categories: Art and Culture, History and Heritage, and Houses and Gardens. Unique for its access to eminent authorities, fabulous masterpieces and manuscripts, UK Countryside Tours works with 12 top universities including Cambridge and Oxford, 49 country houses, 25 castles and monuments, 27 magnificent gardens, 12 cathedrals, 45 museums, and seven major libraries, eight art galleries, six historic battlefields and seven national parks.

Each journey has been carefully curated to bring the fascinating stories of England alive in the fields of History and Heritage, Art and Culture, and Country Houses and Gardens. Group tours are offered for seven days/six nights with prices ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000, with options for independent travelers and customized itineraries. Roundtrip international airfare is not included in the prices. Many of the tours start in regional cities, such as Manchester, served by the growing number of direct and connecting flights from North American airports.

Here are highlights of the program:

**Art and Culture**

- **Art Treasures of Northern England** focuses on the historic city of Durham, the cradle of Christianity in Northern England with its outstanding art collections, palatial architecture and UNESCO World Heritage Site, including behind the scenes access to the magnificent French style chateau, the Bowes Museum, home to one of the most exceptional collections of fine and decorative art in Europe.
- **Great Lives**, a two center tour of Kent and Cambridge, enables tourists to walk in the footsteps of artists, authors and brilliant minds who played a part in the most famous stories in England’s history. Guests visit the historic towns that inspired Charles Dickens’ novels, the landscapes that inspired JMW Turner, the family home of Winston Churchill, and the Cambridge College where Charles Darwin studied expertly led with rare access to original correspondence and field notes.

- **England's Music Powerhouse** is a two city expedition celebrates the rich seam of musical creativity which has flowed from the northern cities of Manchester and Liverpool. Music lovers will trace the evolution of a rich and diverse musical heritage from the rhythms of the cotton mills, the global influences of the ports, and the passions of radical politics and protest songs. Culminating in the stories some of the world's most influential bands – The Beatles and Oasis.
- **Landscapes and Literary Connections** enables literary buffs to meander through the timeless villages of the New Forest to the rugged uplands of the Lake District and the wild intensity of the Yorkshire moors as they discover the landscapes which inspired such as Thomas Hardy, Jane Austen and the Bronte sisters. Guests will enjoy distinctive rural heritage, folk customs and celebrated regional foods from Dorset cider to Grasmere gingerbread whilst expert guides share favorite readings bringing each location to life in the words of the author.

### History and Heritage

- **Mayflower 400** commemorates the 400 anniversary of the Mayflower Pilgrims' trek to the New World. This trip begins in the villages and churches where the leading separatists William Bradford and William Brewster lived and worshiped and follows their journey through quintessentially English rural villages, coastal towns and bustling sea ports from Northern England to the South Coast. On the way, travelers see a full size replica of the Mayflower, visit the oldest pub on the Thames and stand on the steps of Plymouth Harbor.
- **Over Here – The Lives of US Servicemen in Britain** highlights the story of the hundreds of thousands of American men and women who fought with British servicemen to help defeat Hitler's Nazi Germany during World War II. Discover what life was like for the local residents who experienced this "Friendly Invasion" and the human stories of the American service personnel – from graffiti in the Eagle bar to the American Military cemeteries and the American Air Museum in Duxford.
- **Radical Thinkers** – Manchester, cotton and the birth of industry. The world's first industrial city has always been a hotbed of new thinking, big ideas and revolution. Travelers who love industrial heritage and political history will see the place where Rolls met Royce and Marx met Engels and contrast the story of railways, canals and cotton mills with the city's imposing Victorian architecture, great libraries and art collections.

### Garden and Country Houses

- **Cultivating Extravagance** highlights the best of architectural and horticultural extravagance in Southern England. Travelers will delight in England's most exotic regal folly, The Royal Pavillion, Brighton, wonder at the work of the Millennium Seed Bank and discover the beauty and tranquility of the South Downs National Park, visiting an eclectic series of houses and gardens in the company of expert garden historians and designers.

- **Statements in Stone** unlocks the story of the evolution of the English Country House – tracing the development of ideas, fashions and taste from the timber-framed manor house to high Victorian extravagance. Part of the Study at Chatsworth program, this tour will include a celebration dinner at magnificent Tissington Hall, ancestral home of Sir Richard Fitzherbert Bt., as well as visits to seven of the finest and most significant country houses in England.
- **RHS Royal Chelsea and Hampton Court Palace** grants special access to the internationally renowned Flowers Shows at Royal Chelsea or Hampton Court Palaces. Presented in association with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), travelers will enjoy unique access to the RHS library collections of rare books and botanical illustrations and an exclusive, insider guide to gardens, plantsmen, designers and the judging process at the Shows.
- **The Great Heiress** trip spotlights how in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century more than 300 American heiresses married into British aristocracy and helped to save many country houses from financial trouble and decay. These marriages brought a wave of financial investment and cemented America’s impact on English society, taste and design. Travelers will visit some of the glorious English Country Houses rescued in this way, including Blenheim Palace and Highclere Castle.

UK Countryside Tours has a philanthropic component where a portion of proceeds from admission are used to benefit the academic institutions, libraries, museums, historic houses and wildlife reserves.

UK Countryside Tours has the backing of national tourism agencies Visit England and VisitBritain. “Telling the Stories of England” is partly funded by Visit England’s Discover England Fund.

For more information about UK Countryside Tours, visit [www.ukcountrysidetours.com](http://www.ukcountrysidetours.com), email [info@ukcountrysidetours.com](mailto:info@ukcountrysidetours.com) or call (844) 221-3366.

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