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From
$10,359 USD

Single Room
$12,241 USD

Twin Room
$10,359 USD

Prices valid until
30th December 2024

21 days
Duration

England, Scotland
Destination

Level 2 - Moderate
Activity

Queen Victoria’s Great Britain: a small group tour

Jun 04 2024 to Jun 24 2024

Queen Victoria’s Great Britain Tour

The Queen Victoria’s Great Britain tour is an educational small group tour which takes the traveller with an interest in political, social environmental and technological history on a journey through Victorian Britain.

This was an era of enormous change; change which occurred in almost all areas of life. Victoria came to the throne in 1837 and reigned as monarch until 1901. During this period the British Empire expanded to

its greatest extent fuelled by the industrial revolution. Goods poured into the country from across the globe. Railway tracks criss-crossed the country. Gas lighting for domestic purposes was introduced and then superseded by electricity. Charles Darwin wrote his revolutionary *On the Origin of Species*, and the right to vote was extended to all male householders, though women in England had to wait quite a bit longer.

By the time Victoria died, there were bicycles, motor cars and even aeroplanes; the telephone was in use and photography had become part of everyday life. Clean water and new sanitation methods dramatically increased life expectancy. Florence Nightingale helped improve hospital conditions and the introduction of anaesthetics increased life expectancy during operations. Even the queen accepted the use of chloroform during the delivery of her last two children.

About Queen Victoria (1819-1901)

When Victoria was born she was fifth in line to the throne after her three elderly uncles and her father. Victoria (or Alexandrina as she was christened, after the tsar of Russia) was the only child of Edward, the 4th son of George III.

Her father died when she was less than a year old and Victoria was left to the care of her mother, her mother's close companion, Sir John Conroy, and a governess. They went to live in Kensington Palace on a limited budget but supported by her mother's brother, Leopold of the Belgians. She was raised as a queen in isolation.

Victoria turned 18 on the 24th of May 1837 and succeeded to the throne a month later. Now that she was queen Victoria quickly took control of as much of her life as was possible. She removed her headquarters to Buckingham Palace and banished her mother and Sir John to a remote wing. She began to enjoy a social life and formed a warm relationship with the Whig Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne. Fortunately she fell in love with her cousin, Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, a match promoted by her mother and her mother's brother, Leopold, and she married

Albert in 1840.

Victoria reigned for 63 years and 7 months. The Britain of 1901, the year of her death, was a very different place from the one she had found when she first ascended the throne.

Read more in our articles:

- Queen Victoria's Britain Part 1 and Part 2
- Famous Personalities from Queen Victoria's Britain
- Victorian Country Life
- Victorian Women's Fashion
- London's Victorian Architecture

See all articles published by Odyssey Traveller on Britain.

We have also selected external articles for you to enjoy:

- Queen Victoria
- The Royal parks of London
- The Royal Mausoleum

About our Queen Victoria's Great Britain Small Group Tour Victorian England (and Scotland)

Our guided tours of Victorian England and Scotland take us from London to Glasgow as we travel the country in search of the people who helped to bring about this change, and the places in which they lived. During our trip we will come to a greater understanding of what made this one of the most amazing periods of Great Britain's history, and a realisation of what this change means for us in the 21st century.

This program over 21 days visits 23 contributing locations that provide participants with an understanding of Queen Victoria's Great Britain. Our

trip visits some 30+ places and includes talks and short lectures from knowledgeable guides. We will look at the important developments in technology, science, medicine, politics, social life, art and architecture, with an examination of Gothic Revival and the iconic Arts and Crafts movement, including works by Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

Highlights of our trip:

- Our visit to **London** includes a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament, as well as trips to the Florence Nightingale museum, the Victoria and Albert museum, and the home of Charles Dickens.
- In **Manchester**, we walk around this nineteenth century with an expert tour guide, in order to explore the history of Victorian philanthropy.
- In **Glasgow**, we explore how this city evolved in the Victorian period, with a visit to the Tenement House. While more Edwardian than Victorian, it gives us insight into the lives of working class people in the nineteenth century.
- We also enjoy a trip through the **Lake District**, passing through the Yorkshire Dales national park. The rugged scenery of the Lake District inspired Victorian writers, artists, and thinkers. We make a visit to the homes of John Ruskin and William Wordsworth.
- In the **Cotswolds**, we journey to the town of Selsley for a visit to All Saints Church, with stained glass by the famous Arts and Crafts designer, William Morris.

The tour provides a learning platform that complements Odyssey's program Britain's Canals & Railways. Our tour guide takes you to some of the great cities, including the rave new factory towns at Port Sunlight & New Lanark, and inspirational landscapes to learn about the way people lived and worked in Victorian Britain across all classes.

If you have enjoyed Canals & Railways, then this tour focused on Queen Victoria continues your learning about this unique period in British history and the world.

Tour in Britain with Odyssey Traveller

This tour is only one of many small group tours offered by Odyssey Traveller in Great Britain, England and Scotland. These active tours are designed for the mature traveller to enjoy in a small group holiday and learning environment.

For more details on this tour, click the ‘Top 5’ or ‘Itinerary’ buttons above! If you’re keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right-hand side of this page.

Highlights

1. Learn about the life of Queen Victoria on the Isle of Wight.
2. Study Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the design evolution of the Arts & Crafts movement.
3. Appreciate the philanthropic funded public buildings of Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow.
4. Understand the visual romance inspired by the Lake district in art and & literature.
5. Consolidate your knowledge of social change & leisure ensuing from Industrialisation.

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: London

Overview:

We make our way to the hotel for an introductory talk and welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

Copthorn Tara or similar

Day 2

Locations: London

Overview:

Today we will have a full day of sightseeing with a local guide, centred around the theme of Victorian life and the emergence of leisure time. We will explore Soane house, once the residence of Sir John Soane, which has since been preserved as a time capsule to Victorian living. Next, we will visit the Foundling Museum, which gives a fascinating but harrowing insight into the lives of Victorian children. Charles Dickens also drew the public's attention to the plight of children through many of his stories, and our penultimate visit of the day is to one of his houses, now a museum. Finally, we will travel up to Alexandra Palace, the so-called 'people palace' that was opened in 1875. The story of The Alexandra Palace Theatre is truly unique. The Theatre accommodated audiences of up to 3,000 people who were entertained by pantomime, opera, drama and ballet. Victorian engineering enabled stage machinery to allow performers to appear, fly into the air and disappear through the stage floor.

Accommodation:

Copthorn Tara or simila

Day 3

Locations: London

Overview:

Another busy day of action will see us visit Charles Darwin's house, St. Thomas Hospital, and the Florence Nightingale museum. Across all three we will learn about the major medical and scientific breakthroughs that defined Victorian Britain.

Accommodation:

Copthorn Tara or similar

Day 4

Locations: London

Overview:

Our day commences with a visit to the Victoria and Albert museum, and will continue with a tour of the Houses of Parliament. The chance to look inside the Houses of Parliament offers a unique opportunity to witness how a government functions in the modern era, whilst highlighting the powerful presence that Britain's Victorian past still holds today. Later in the day we will visit Sambourne Musuem and Leighton House, to help create a rounded understanding of Victorian life.

Accommodation:

Copthorn Tara or similar

Day 5

Locations: London - Downe - Guildford - Portsmouth

Overview:

First stop today is the Crossness Pumping Station. This building represents Victorian municipal architecture, engineering and sanitation all within this one building. Like the hospital and the approach of Florence Nightingale, sanitation improvements brought disease under control, substantially lifting life expectancy in the cities of Victorian Britain. Next, the group heads south to Portsmouth, via Guildford. Guildford is where the Victorian garden designer, Gertrude Jekyll, the

artist John Russell, and the author, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known to many as Lewis Carroll, all lived and worked. We learn about their influence on Victorian Britain during the industrial revolution. We arrive at Portsmouth, our base for the next 3 nights. There is a group dinner this evening.

Accommodation:

Holiday Inn Portsmouth or similar.

Day 6

Locations: Portsmouth - Isle of Wight - Portsmouth

Overview:

Today we travel to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. Here we explore Queen Victoria's favourite holiday home, and learn about her family and gain an insight into her private life.

Accommodation:

Holiday Inn Portsmouth or similar.

Day 7

Locations: Portsmouth

Overview:

Today starts with a 2 hour sightseeing tour of Portsmouth with a local guide. The rest of the day is allocated as a free day allowing you the opportunity to explore the maritime naval history of this city.

Accommodation:

Holiday Inn Portsmouth or similar.

Day 8

Locations: Portsmouth - Bristol

Overview:

Today we travel to Bristol. We stop to explore Tyntesfield House, a National Trust propoerty that is one of the best examples of the Gothic

revival that swept across stately homes in Britain. Our guide provides an insight into the property. To finish the day, we will enjoy a group dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Accommodation:

Holiday Inn City Centre or similar

Day 9

Locations: Bristol

Overview:

Today we spend the morning learning about the work of Brunel, of one the great engineers during the reign of Victoria. We visit the Clifton Suspension bridge and SS Great Britain and museum. In the afternoon we travel to Selsey to visit All Saints church. This is our first introduction to the Arts and Crafts movement in design. W. M. Morris's design is a place of beauty, an icon in the Arts and Crafts movement.

Accommodation:

Holiday Inn City Centre or similar

Day 10

Locations: Bristol - Cardiff- Bristol

Overview:

Today we enjoy a day excursion to Cardiff, where we continue exploring Victorian architecture by visiting the sights of this city and its shopping arcades. We also visit Cardiff Cathedral known for it's Gothic Revival style. Designed by Victorian architects Pugin & Pugin, this Roman Catholic church is unique! Time permitting, before returning to Bristol we spend time in the National Gallery with a guided tour about pre-Raphelite works. The National gallery also includes the largest collection of impressionist works outside London and there will be time to view these works as well.

Accommodation:

Holiday Inn City Centre or similar

Day 11

Locations: Bristol - Liverpool

Overview:

Today we visit Port Sunlight. Port Sunlight is the utopian vision of the Quaker Lever Brothers. As industrialisation gathered pace, industrialists could see that attracting and retaining labour would be crucial. We also visit the Lever gallery, established after the death of Lord & Lady Lever, a public display of their collected artworks. In the evening we enjoy a group dinner at our hotel.

Accommodation:

To be confirmed

Day 12

Locations: Liverpool

Overview:

We start the day with a tour of Liverpool to gain an oversight of the role played by Victorian philanthropists in providing Liverpool with a edge in status over neighbouring rival cities. The Walker Gallery and the Picton Gallery are examples of Victorian philanthropy which we explore today.

Accommodation:

To be confirmed

Day 13

Locations: Manchester

Overview:

Today we continue to learn about the philanthropy of industrialists in Victoria's Northern England. Our guide for the day provides an overview of Victorian Manchester and its history during that period. We view key locations where events occurred and visit the main sights including the art gallery. At the Manchester gallery we view its Victorian galleries to discover more about the Pre-Raphaelites including William Holman Hunt, Ford Madox Brown and John Everett Millais. Dinner this evening

is at a hotel.

Accommodation:

Ibis Centre Hotel or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Manchester

Overview:

Today is a free day to explore on your own. You may take the opportunity to explore nearby Preston or Bradford or consolidate your appreciation of Manchester.

Accommodation:

Ibis Centre Hotel or similar.

Day 15

Locations: Manchester - Settle - Dent - Lake District

Overview:

We travel to the Lake District via the Yorkshire Dales. We ride the train to Settle, a popular market town before going on to Dent. We continue our journey to Ambleside on the edge of Lake Windemere where we stop at Blackwell to visit one of the great Arts and Crafts houses, considered one of the greatest examples of late 19th century design. The Lake District was an inspiration for Victorian poets, writers and painters. Train travel opened this region up to enable Victorians to escape from the industrial cities and be inspired by nature. There is a group meal this evening at our hotel.

Accommodation:

Brathay Lodge or similar.

Day 16

Locations: Lake District

Overview:

We begin the day by taking the Victorian steamer across Coniston Water to Brantwood, to the home of Sir John Ruskin. Brantwood offers a fascinating insight into Ruskin's world and the last 28 years of his life spent at Coniston. Filled with many fine paintings, beautiful furniture and Ruskin's personal treasures, the house retains the character of its famous resident. Ruskin is famous as a writer, artist and social reformer and many great thinkers have been influenced by his ideas. Brantwood remains a place of inspiration. Ruskin's legacy – from the Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts and Crafts movement to the founding of the National Trust and the Welfare State is studied today. After Brantwood we visit Rydal. This village was home to the poet William Wordsworth and we visit his home and explore the village. We enjoy a group dinner this evening at the hotel.

Accommodation:

Brathay Lodge or similar.

Day 17

Locations: Abbotsford - New Lanark - Glasgow

Overview:

Today we travel to Glasgow via Abbostford and New Lanark. In Abbotsford we stop to visit Sir Walter Scott's House, a Gothic Revival castle. Scott described Abbotsford as a conundrum. Scott built Abbotsford over many years as a place of inspiration, providing the foundations for his research and writing. It was also as a home for his family, a place for entertaining his many guests and displaying his growing collections of books (over 7,000 of them), as well as armour, weapons and artefacts. From here we travel to the UNESCO world heritage village of New Lanark. New Lanark is an an exceptional example of a purpose-built 18th century cotton mill village on the banks of the River Clyde. Robert Owen applied his form of benevolent paternalism in industry and formulated his Utopian vision of a society without crime, poverty, and misery. The village was founded in 1785,

and the cotton mills, powered by water-wheels, were operational from 1786 to 1968. By 1799, New Lanark was the biggest cotton mill in Scotland and formed one of the largest factory sites in the world. Over 2,000 people lived or worked in the village. New Lanark was a milestone in social and industrial history. The moral, social and environmental values have had lasting influences on society. The nature and layout of New Lanark was a model for other industrialists to follow. Ebenezer Howard adopted the concept for the (Welwyn) Garden City. The social and economic systems that Owen developed were considered radical in his own time but are now widely accepted in modern society. From here we travel to Glasgow and have a group dinner this evening.

Accommodation:

Mecure Glasgow City Hotel or similar.

Day 18

Locations: Glasgow

Overview:

We we have a full day tour of the city with a focus on the Victorian history of the city with our local guide. Our first place of interest is the Tenement House. Whilst more Edwardian than Victorian it is a time capsule of life, a regular terrace house in Garnethill, providing an educational window on its previous inhabitants. The People Palace Museum that follows, enables the group to see how the city of Glasgow evolved during the Victorian period. From here we travel across to Holmwood House designed by Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson, so named for his love of Greek architecture. Holmwood is a family home like no other in Glasgow. Thompson designed the house for paper magnate James Couper and his wife in 1857–8, and it is widely regarded as this Scottish architect’s finest domestic creation. His stunning design legacy impresses at every turn. After years as a convent it is now in a restoration phase, carefully revealing the works that the nuns covered up. Finally, we visit Hill House designed by one of Scotland’s favourite architects and inspiration for the Arts and Crafts movement, Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Thomson & Mackintosh where contemporaries, the

decision on style preference in Victorian Britain is yours.

Accommodation:

Mecure Glasgow City Hotel or similar.

Day 19

Locations: Glasgow - Bute - Glasgow

Overview:

Today we have a full day excursion to the island of Bute. From Glasgow we travel by coach to Weymss Bay to catch a ferry to Bute, the ferry journey takes approximately 35 minutes. At Bute we head to the Mt. Stuart House, a Gothic Revival wonderland. A feat of Victorian engineering, this neo-gothic mansion was one of the most technologically advanced houses of its age. The house contains, through the family's patronage to the art and design community, one of the largest private art and book collections in Great Britain. As we leave Bute, we will, time permitting, spend a penny at the still-working Victorian public toilets at Rothesay harbour.

Accommodation:

Mecure Glasgow City Hotel or similar.

Day 20

Locations: Glasgow

Overview:

On our final day in Glasgow, we we visit the Hunterian Museum and Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. The Hunterian Museum is Scotland's oldest public museum and houses the greatest collection of work by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, including the Makintosh House. The Mackintosh House is a meticulous re-build of the principal interiors from the Mackintoshes' Glasgow home. The principal interiors were decorated in his distinctive style, remarkable then, and now, for the disciplined austerity of the furnishings and decoration. The house was demolished in the early 1960s but the original fixtures were preserved and reassembled, complete with the contents, as an integral part of the Hunterian Art Gallery. The architects took pains to ensure that the

sequence of rooms exactly reflected the original. Virtually the same views and effects of natural light are enjoyed as the original house. We then make our way to Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum to view the Mackintosh and Glasgow Style and Glasgow Boys galleries. The museum's building is a magnificent example of Victorian municipal architecture. Tonight there is a farewell evening dinner.

Accommodation:

Mecure Glasgow City Hotel or similar.

Day 21

Locations: Glasgow

Overview:

The tour concludes after breakfast.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 20 nights hotel accommodation.
- 20 breakfasts and 9 dinners.
- Guided tours and entrances as per itinerary.
- Transport by coach.
- Tipping and gratuities.
- Odyssey Program Leader.
- Detailed Preparatory Information.

What's not included in our Tour

- Return international airfares and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of personal nature such as laundry and phone calls.

Level 2 - Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, be in good health, mobile and able to participate in 3-5 hours of physical activity per day, the equivalent of walking/hiking up to 8 kilometres on uneven ground.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.