

Wales & the Welsh Borders

SEPTEMBER 4 - 13, 2024



A JOURNEY THROUGH THE ANCIENT CELTIC KINGDOM

Castle ruins, meandering medieval streets, and a magnificent Celtic heritage bring the beauty of Wales to life against a backdrop of rolling green hills and dramatic sea cliffs. Past and present coexist in this distinctive part of the world—the Romans mined for gold, the Tudors founded a dynasty, and the Normans built castles whose ancient remains are scattered along windy hilltops throughout the countryside. Along the way, Wales' ancient Celtic heritage was memorialized in a stunning collection of literature and artwork.

From the magnificence of Caernarfon Castle to the breathtaking vistas on peaceful St. David's Peninsula, we'll explore the places, personalities, and sweep of history that constitute the haunting beauty of Wales. We'll also step in and out of ancient market towns like Ludlow, visit beautiful villages like Hay-on-Wye—famous for its abundance of antique book stores, and the pastel-colored village of Portmeirion, built by Welsh architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis.

We'll experience the natural splendor of Snowdonia, with the highest mountain peaks in the country, and the Wye Valley, rich in ancient woodlands, wildlife, and the idyllic setting for the timelessly romantic ruins of Tintern Abbey.

Join Discover Europe as we pay homage to great poets and storytellers and journey into the heart and history of ancient Wales. Let the magic of this Celtic kingdom come to life on *Wales & the Welsh Borders*.



THE COST OF THIS ITINERARY, PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY IS:

LAND ONLY:	\$ 5390
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:	\$ 990

Airfares are available from many U.S. cities. Please call for details.

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE INCLUDED:

HOTELS:	8 nights' accommodation in first class hotels including all hotel taxes, service charges.
BAGGAGE:	Porterage of one large suitcase per person.
COACHING:	All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
MEALS:	Breakfast daily, 5 dinners
GUIDES:	Discover Europe guide throughout
ENTRANCES:	Entrance fees to all sites as detailed in the itinerary

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registration on receipt of deposit.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 4TH - Evening departure from U.S. for the overnight flight to Manchester.
OVERNIGHT: PLANE

THURSDAY, SEPT. 5TH - Upon arrival you will be transferred to our hotel in Conwy. There will be time to unpack and relax before we take a short tour of nearby Conwy Castle, built by Edward I between 1283 and 1289. This evening, we gather for a welcome dinner at the hotel.

(D) OVERNIGHT: CONWY

FRIDAY, SEPT. 6TH - A full day to explore the beauty of Snowdonia, from the diverse landscape of its national park (the second largest in Great Britain, with some of the highest peaks in the country) to its well-preserved medieval castles. We'll also visit the pastel-colored village of Portmeirion, built by Welsh architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis from 1925 to 1975 off the coast of Snowdonia. Here, Renaissance Italy rubs shoulders with 18th-century England in a joyful jumble of architectural styles; it's also where the cult classic TV program *The Prisoner*, was filmed. Finally, we'll stop at Caernarfon Castle, a massive and commanding example of medieval fortification. We return to Conwy for a free evening. **(B) OVERNIGHT: CONWY**

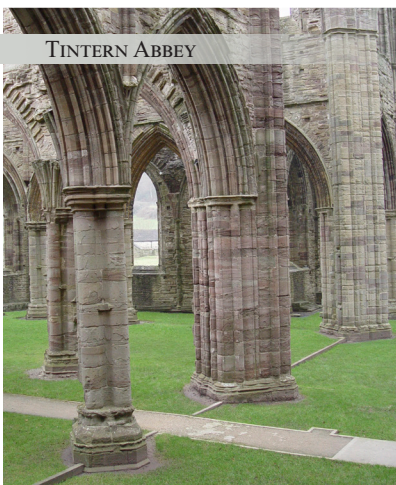
SATURDAY, SEPT. 7TH - Leaving our hotel, we head to Harlech Castle, linked in Welsh myth with the tragic heroine Branwen, of the *Mabinogion*, and set against a spectacular sea and mountain panorama. Continuing south along the coast of Cardigan Bay, we'll stop in Aberystwyth for lunch and some free time to explore. We will pay a visit to the National Library of Wales, the repository for most of Wales' ancient manuscripts. From here we head to our hotel on the coast of Cardigan Bay. We'll have time to unpack and freshen up before we meet for dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: GWBERT**

SUNDAY, SEPT. 8TH - With a full day to explore the haunting coastline on St. David's Peninsula, we head off to the birthplace of Wales' patron saint in the 6th century, a deeply peaceful Celtic corner of Wales. After a boat ride around Ramsey Island, where we will take in its unique coastline and plethora of wildlife, we head for a tour inside St. David's Cathedral—A site of pilgrimage and worship for more than 800 years. We will then meander along the south coast, stopping to visit Dylan Thomas's boathouse at Laugharne, to Swansea, where dinner awaits at our hotel. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: SWANSEA**



MONDAY, SEPT. 9TH - Enjoy a full day on the trail of Dylan Thomas in Swansea today. Swansea was where Dylan went to school and spent most of his early childhood, leaving in the early years of World War II. This morning we'll visit the Dylan Thomas birthplace museum and nearby Cwmdonkin Park and then head to Mumbles for lunch. After a short walking tour, we will drive to Rhossili Bay, designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, before returning to Swansea for a free evening. **(B) OVERNIGHT: SWANSEA**

TUESDAY, SEPT. 10TH - Leaving Swansea, we continue along the south coast to Cardiff, the Welsh capital. We'll visit the National Museum of Wales, and have time here for lunch, before we head north through the Rhondda Valley. Along our way, we will stop at the Penderyn Whisky Distillery for a guided tour. From here we head to our hotel in Hay-on-Wye where we'll check in and possibly have time to investigate some of the book stores before dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: HAY-ON-WYE**



WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 11TH - We will spend today exploring the Wye Valley, rich in ancient woodlands, wildlife, and towns. The lower Wye Valley was the first "tourist attraction" in Britain, inspiring the Picturesque movement, which attracted such luminaries as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Turner. We'll enjoy the beautiful river scenery and magnificent views, and spend time at Tintern Abbey and Chepstow Castle. We'll also visit the magnificent ruins of Raglan Castle on our way back to the hotel. The evening is free to sample a local restaurant. **(B) OVERNIGHT: HAY-ON-WYE**

THURSDAY, SEPT. 12TH - We travel to Ludlow, described by *Country Life* as "the most vibrant small town in the country," with over 500 listed buildings. We'll have time to visit the castle, find a welcoming pub for lunch and explore the town before we end our day in the delightful village of Alderley Edge, where we'll enjoy a farewell dinner at our hotel. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: ALDERLEY EDGE**

FRIDAY, SEPT. 13TH - Morning transfers to Manchester Airport for return flights to the U.S. **(B)**