



## **South West Area Tour to Durham/Northumberland**

**Five Nights at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Durham**

**The Land of the Prince Bishops**

**1<sup>st</sup> June to 6<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**Tour Price : £535 per person\*\***

**(based on two people sharing)**

**To include all coach travel, five nights dinner, bed & breakfast,  
portage and entrance to various venues.**

### **Daily Itinerary:**

#### **Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June**

We will leave Taunton Station at 8.30 a.m. and make our way north with the usual comfort stops. Lunch will be at the National Memorial Arboretum which comprises some 150 acres of trees and memorials devoted to the concept of Remembrance and the home of the Armed Forces Memorial.

The Arbour Restaurant, situated within the Visitor Centre, is a licensed, self-service catering establishment offering a wide selection of hot and cold options, snacks and drinks.

We will be staying at the Radisson Blu Hotel for five nights on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis the hotel overlooks the River Wear right in the city centre,

#### **Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June**

We start the day by visiting Crook Hall and gardens, a Medieval Manor House built circa 1217 is one of the oldest inhabited houses in Durham City. Home to the Bell family since 1995, the Medieval Hall merges into a Jacobean Manor house which in turn merges into a Georgian Town house reflecting its development over the centuries that it has stood beside the River Wear.

The afternoon is free for exploring Durham with its Castle which sits at the heart of Durham's World Heritage site and occupied continuously since the 11th century.

Durham Cathedral is one of the great buildings of Europe.

The Community of Cuthbert arrived in Durham from Lindisfarne in AD 995 and built an Anglo-Saxon cathedral. In 1083 a community of Benedictine monks was established in Durham following the Norman Conquest.

Construction of the Cathedral as we know it today is started in 1093 by Bishop William of St Calais.

### Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June

An all day visit to The Auckland Project; at the centre of the project sits Auckland Castle, one of the best preserved Bishops' palaces in Europe - here you will see a series of paintings by the Spanish master, Francisco de Zurbaran along with the Mining Art Gallery, Walled Garden and Auckland Tower.

### Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> June

Another all day visit to Beamish Open Air Museum; so many sites to visit at this extraordinary museum of Northern life. Take a peek into the 1820's Pockerley Old Hall, 1900's with its town, pit villages, colliery, 1940's farm and an array of period shops and businesses. Don't be dismayed that you will have to walk everywhere as there is a tramway to take you around to the various destinations. There is also a Railway Station from the Edwardian era.

### Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> June

Alnwick Castle and Gardens are our destination today. Alnwick Castle has been home to the Percy family for over 700 years and remains a family home today for the 12th Duke and Duchess and their four children.

The Percys, arriving from France with William the Conqueror in the 11th century, have been embroiled in the politics of the often bloody history of Britain, and the family is peppered with vivid characters.

Visit the beautiful state rooms including the drawing room which shows the influence of Italian design with the carved, painted and gilded ceiling, silk wall hangings and much more, the magnificent Library which houses nearly 15,000 books, occupies the principal floor of the large tower that was added to the keep during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

There are 12 acres of meandering and magnificent Gardens are home to the world's largest Tai Haku Cherry Orchard, a Grand Cascade comprising 120 water jets and the world's largest Treehouse Restaurant. The rose garden is a must with 300 varieties of highly scented roses and also the wonderful walled, herbaceous garden.

## Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June

After our luggage is safely stored we will start our return journey to the south-west. We will have our lunch stop at The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle. This is a hidden treasure, a jewel in the heart of beautiful Teesdale. The magnificent building stands proud in the historic market town of Barnard Castle.

Purpose built in the 19th century by John and Joséphine Bowes, the Museum has a wonderful story to tell.

The Piece de resistance of this wonderful museum is *The Silver Swan*: A musical automaton which is much loved and over the last century has become the icon of The Bowes Museum. The Silver Swan dates from 1773 and was first recorded in 1774 as a crowd puller in the Mechanical Museum of James Cox, a London showman and dealer. The Swan plays at 2 p.m.

The gardens were originally designed by John and Joséphine Bowes, and the formal parterre garden, complements this unique building. Today you can explore acres of parkland, or go for a peaceful stroll around the grounds where there are specimen trees from all over the world.

### Tour Price:

The tour price is £535 on two people sharing. Where available single rooms carry a supplement of £25 per night. The price includes all coach travel, five night's dinner, bed and breakfast at the Radisson Blu Durham

Admission to Crook Hall, Auckland Project, Beamish Museum, Alnwick Castle and gardens and The Bowes Museum together with a small charge for the driver's gratuity.

**PLEASE NOTE: The right to amend the venue or alter the order of itinerary is reserved. The information given was correct at the time of printing this itinerary.**

Members living outside the Taunton area contact Mary Ginger:

(☎ 01823 490527) regarding their travel arrangements please.

A non-refundable deposit of £75 is payable by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 the balance will be due and payable not later than 13<sup>th</sup> April please.

To be sent to Mary Ginger, 16 Church Close, Stoke St Gregory, Taunton TA3 6HA

Please note: If you are going to be away when payment is due will you be so kind as to let me have a post-dated cheque for this date please. I have a deadline to keep with the hotel and failure to pay on the due date could result in our losing the booking or a penalty to be paid.

NO FURTHER REMINDERS WILL BE SENT

