

CHESTER

~ A Treasure Trove of Discovery ~
6th to 10th October



A treasure trove of history, the two thousand year old City of Chester is a pot-pourri of England through the ages with beautiful buildings from every era, each carefully restored to retain that olde-worlde backdrop to the modern-day bustle of vibrant city life. Awash with history and heritage and famed around the world for its unforgettable half-timbered buildings, the city can rightly claim to be Britain's most outstanding 'black and white' city.

Wednesday 6th October Depart Oxted 8.30am for the drive to Chester. En route we shall visit The Black Country Living Museum at Dudley where history comes to life at Britain's friendliest open-air museum, giving a true taste of the region's rich heritage and unique character. Authentic buildings and their contents have been brought together to form a unique collection of all things Black Country and re-create a traditional canal-side village. Throughout the Museum you will find costumed characters who are all experts in their fields, with chain-makers, glass cutters, shopkeepers and housewives who combine to give a full flavour of the region's fascinating history. Continuing on we arrive late afternoon at our hotel, just a few minutes drive from the heart of Chester.

Thursday 7th October A full day to explore this picturesque and historic city. Take a stroll around the old walls, the most complete circuit of city walls in Britain; explore 'The Rows', probably the world's first shopping mall or perhaps relax in one of the many fine parks. With so much to do you are spoilt for choice. The city is a myriad of different things; medieval, historical, architectural and retail. Visit the 900 year old Norman cathedral, see the Amphitheatre ~ the largest stone built arena in the UK or visit the The Grosvenor Shopping Centre which offers a stylish and cosmopolitan way of shopping with a wide range of retailers - there is something for everyone all under one roof.

Friday 8th October A visit to Port Sunlight, the purpose-built garden village created in 1888 by the industrialist William Hesketh to house the employees of his soap factory and named after the company's most popular product, Sunlight soap. Here we shall enjoy morning coffee before making our way to the museum which gives an insight into the lives of the villagers and workers. A guide will then join us on the coach for a guided tour of the village. There will then be time for lunch and further exploration before making our way back to the hotel, giving time to relax or enjoy the facilities at the hotel before dinner.



Saturday 9th October Today we take a scenic ride to the market town of Llangollen, perhaps best known for its International Eisteddfod. Here there will be time to explore and find lunch before making our way to Llangollen wharf where we shall join the horse drawn canal boat for a relaxing two hour ride along the last stretch of the Llangollen Canal, not navigable by any other boats. A stop at the end gives an opportunity to admire the chain bridge across the River Dee, and marvel at the man-made Horseshoe Falls, one of Thomas Telford's masterpieces, before making our way back to Llangollen.

Sunday 10th October Departing from the hotel after breakfast we commence our homeward journey making a stop at the Trentham Estate. Here, at the head of a mile long lake and hanging woods is one of the most stunning gardens in Europe – a connoisseur's garden on the grand scale. Here we shall be at leisure to enjoy the calm fountains and colourful plantings of Tom Stuart-Smith's "Italian Gardens" or Piet Oudolf's famous prairie plantings in the "Floral Labyrinth" and "Rivers of Grass". Indulge in Britain's unique Barefoot Walk or perhaps find some ideas to try at home in one of the 12 engaging show gardens. Enjoy lunch in their new £1 million Garden Room Restaurant with panoramic views across the lake and garden, visit the Shopping Village which has a collection of carefully selected shops, and The Garden Centre, which offers a range of products. Continuing on we make our way home, arriving back early evening.

What's included:

Best Western Mollington Banastre Hotel, Chester

4 nights Dinner, Bed & Breakfast.

All bedrooms have private facilities, TV, telephone & hospitality tray.

Time to explore Chester

Entry to the Black Country Museum

Entry to Port Sunlight, with morning coffee and guided tour

Horse-drawn boat trip

Entry to Trentham Estate

COST: £388.00 per person

Single Room Supp: £40.00

