

# Castles & Gardens of Kent

Monday 30th April - Friday 4th May 2012

**Monday** Departing Bradford at 8.00 we travel, with a stop en route, to the county town of **Bedford**. Situated amid gardens on the banks of the Great Ouse, the town has an attractive range of shops. From here we travel to our hotel.

**Tuesday** We travel to nearby **Bowl Water**, and will enjoy a **scenic cruise**. We then visit **Sissinghurst Gardens**, set amongst the ruins of an Elizabethan house. The attractive and influential gardens feature woods and streams and have strong connection with the writer and diplomat Harold Nicolson, and the poet, novelist and gardener Vita Sackville-West.

**Wednesday** We travel to **Dover** to visit the **Castle**, one of the most iconic sites in England. Overlooking the town, it was the site first of Saxon fortifications and then Norman. The Great Tower built during the 11th and 12th century, allows access to the roof providing spectacular views over the town and the visit also allows access to the Secret Wartime Tunnels, as well as the "medieval tunnels" burrowed during the 1216 -17 siege, and extended during the Napoleonic Wars.

**Thursday** Today we visit **Royal Tunbridge Wells**, a beautiful market town with its famous colonnaded walkway - The Pantiles, with its fascinating range of shops. From here we travel to **Knole**, which is the birthplace and childhood home of Vita Sackville-West. The house includes world renowned Stuart furniture, important paintings and the prototype of the famous Knole settee.

**Friday** We visit **Ightham Mote**, a romantic moated manor house, built nearly 700 years ago with a wide variety of owners, from courtiers of Henry VIII to high society Victorians. The building is surrounded by peaceful gardens, water features, lakes and woodland walks. From here we travel home arriving in Bradford mid evening.



## The Hotel

Located next to Leeds Castle, this hotel is set within its own 26 acres of grounds and is the perfect base to discover the tranquility and beauty of Kent, the 'Garden of England'. Recently refurbished, it has a restaurant, bar and coffee shop as well as a Health and Leisure club with swimming pool, sauna, steam room, spa pool and work out facilities. All rooms include en-suite bathrooms, hairdryer, tea and coffee making facilities, TV with satellite channels, trouser press and in many cases iron and ironing board.

Hotel: Ramada Hotel & Resort Maidstone, Hollingbourne, Nr Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1RE Tel: 08448 159045



## This 5 day Tour Includes

- ☞ A full itinerary of visits as described
- ☞ 4 nights dinner, bed & full breakfast

## Prices

Per person in twin/double	£335.00
Per person in single (limited)	£410.00
Insurance	£26.35
<b>National Trust Discount</b>	<b>-£28.50</b>
<b>English Heritage Discount</b>	<b>-£14.00</b>

**Depart code B**