

English Gourmet Tour - Taste the Best

This six day tour leaves no doubt that there is far more to English cuisine than roast beef and Yorkshire pudding! This fascinating tour takes in all the diversity English food production has to offer; from breweries, to idyllic orchards and vineyards in the Kent countryside. Visits also include the country's biggest fish and meat markets, leading organic producers culminating with a meal at Rick Stein's award winning restaurant. As well as sampling the best the country has to offer, this tour promises the chance to learn new skills to take back to the kitchen and garden at home.

Itinerary at a Glance

- A tour of the main sights of London, including a flight on the London Eye
- Discussion and tasting of the unusual catches at Billingsgate Fish Market
- Tour and discussion on plant based medicine at Chelsea Physic Garden
- A visit to Fuller's Griffin brewery offering an insight into the brewing process and a tasting session
- Experience the hustle and bustle of Smithfield, London's wholesale meat market
- Witness the largest collection of fruit tree varieties in the world, at Brogdale's
- Learn about sustainable organic gardening from leading producers Yalding Organic farm and the benefits of healthy soil at Laverstoke Park
- Enjoy award winning wines at Denbies' vineyard
- Visit the home of Cheddar near Cheddar Gorge and fine cheese makers Lubborn Cheese Co
- Finally to Cornwall and to Ginsters pasty factory and a meal at Rick Stein's award winning local fresh fish restaurant
- Discuss the principles of Fair Trade

Full Itinerary Day Two Arrive in London

A meet and greet at the airport in London and transfer to a short panoramic city tour. Taking in all the main sights and a 'flight' on the London Eye, promising stunning views across the whole of the capital.

Day Three Full Day in London

The first visit is to Billingsgate Wholesale Fish Market; the largest fish market in the UK handling 25,000 tons a year. Starting with a wonderfully informative tour of the market and then followed by a small, hands-on experience; opportunity to taste several of the usual and unusual fish that pass through the market. Return to central London and a short, educational tour of the Chelsea Physic Garden, with a discussion on natural medicine using the plants grown here. The day ends with a visit to the Fuller's Griffin Brewery. There will be a tour of the Brewery incorporating all parts of the brewing process and ends with a full tasting session of Fuller's beers including the acclaimed London Pride.

Day Four: Morning Smithfield Market/Afternoon Free

Start with an early morning tour of the Smithfield market; London's wholesale meat market. Approximately 120,000 tons of produce pass through the market each year. As well as meat and poultry, products such as cheese, pies, and other delicatessen goods are available. Buyers including butchers, restaurateurs and caterers see the goods for themselves before they buy. The bargaining at Smithfield sets the guidelines for meat and poultry prices throughout the UK.

Day Five Visit to the 'Garden of England'

Heading south-east into the county of Kent, known as the Garden of England. The first visit is to Brogdale's National Fruit Collection; the largest collection of fruit tree varieties in the world. There are over 2,300 different varieties of apple, 550 of pear, 350 of plum, 220 of cherry, 320 varieties of bush fruits, as well as smaller collections of nuts and vines grown here in 150 acres of beautiful orchards. Next the tour continues to Yalding Organic Farm for a tour and talk on the sustainable use of organic gardening. Last visit of the day is to the Denbies Vineyard for a tour and tasting of their international award winning white wines.

Day Six Organic Farms and the Home of Cheddar

First stop today is Laverstoke Park the home of former F1 World Champion Jody Schechter. His experiment is based on the premise that healthy soil = healthy grass = healthy animals = healthy meat and milk = healthy people. See how his plans are developing for biodiversity and try the 'Best Organic Product' Gold Award winning Laverstoke Lamb or the buffalo burgers. Continue to Chewton near Cheddar Gorge for a visit to the Chewton Dairy makers of fine cheddar cheese. Continue to Cricket St. Thomas and visit Lubborn Cheese Co, makers of fine Somerset Brie & Camembert and Capricorn Goat's cheese.

Day Seven: Full Day to Cornwall

Discover that Cornish staple of foods: the pasty; originally created for working men in the fields to have a complete meal contained in pastry. A factory tour at Ginsters who produce three million pasties a week! To Padstow to visit Rick Stein's award winning local fresh fish restaurant Return across Dartmoor to Taunton.

Day Eight: Royalty and Cider

Morning travel north to Highgrove, the home of Prince Charles, the Duke of Cornwall. See how the Duchy of Cornwall estate works with the views of the Prince to work with nature. Tour of the gardens and kitchen garden run on organic principles allowing the household to be self sufficient. Then to Hereford for a visit to the Cider museum, also visit to an artisan cider and perry producer to see the production from a different perspective. Overnight Hereford.

Day Nine: Welsh excursion and head north

Morning take an excursion into Wales to visit the Welsh Venison Centre in the beautiful Brecon Beacons. Known as the 'meat of kings', venison can now be enjoyed by all - on the tour hear how venison can be used as an alternative to other red meats and is better for you. Overnight in Manchester.

Day Ten: Bread and cheese

Morning visit to the local cheese dairy of Butlers, makers of cheeses for more than 70 years, using locally produced milk. As well as traditional Double Gloucester and Red Leicester try the new Blacksticks Blue. Or Golden Speckle (creamy Lancashire with apricots). Then to visit Bread Matters for a discussion on all aspects of bread, if you wish to add another day, the group can have a bread making course too. Learn all about this English staple. Overnight Lake District.

Day Eleven: Yorkshire Dales to Leeds

Cross the country travelling through the pretty Yorkshire Dales to Hawes and the home to Wensleydale Cheese (the favorite of Wallace from the films of Wallace and Grommit'). Dairy tour and tasting before heading south to Leeds. Visit to a rhubarb production facility and see how this quintessentially English vegetable is grown. Overnight in Leeds.

Day Twelve: Head south for London

First stop in Coventry for a visit to LEAF Marque - the farming body for the promotion of traditional farming methods that include crop rotations and modern methods would be combining this with pesticides and fertilizers only when absolutely necessary to keep animals and crops healthy. Integrated Farm Management ensures the highest standards of food production with the minimum environmental impact, a 'win win' situation. Next stop is in Wellingborough to visit the Rapeseed Oil producer and a winner in the 2007 Taste of Britain awards. Overnight in London.

Day Thirteen: Morning visit and afternoon free

Morning visit to the Fairtrade Foundation to hear about their work around the world and with UK buyers and retailers to promote a fairer system of trade so that the poorer producers and countries receive more of the overall profits. Afternoon free to explore the city Overnight London.

Day Fourteen: Departure from London

We depart from London Heathrow with coach transfer for our departure flight.