

Great Gardens & Grand Estates *of England*

May 14-22, 2027



Hosted by Columbus Botanical Garden

Calling all garden lovers!

Pack your sun hat (and perhaps your wellies) and join Andrew Ruhs, executive director of the **Columbus Botanical Garden**, for an unforgettable journey through England's most celebrated gardens and grand estates.

Enjoy four days in historic Oxford, explore the charming villages of the Cotswolds, stroll the magnificent grounds of Blenheim Palace, and discover the legendary gardens of Sissinghurst and Great Dixter in Kent. Visit romantic Hever Castle, childhood home of Anne Boleyn, before culminating your adventure with reserved admission to the world-famous **RHS Chelsea Flower Show**.

Designed for garden lovers who appreciate beauty, history, and exceptional company, this thoughtfully paced journey is one you'll never forget. Space is limited.



**EARTHBOUND
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.
P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA
Tel: 206.842.9775
www.EarthboundExpeditions.com



TRIP AT A GLANCE

4 Nights Oxford

2 Nights Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent

2 Nights London

GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

Tickets to the Chelsea Flower Show ♦ Insider access to private gardens ♦ The charming Cotswolds ♦ Churchill's Chartwell House and Gardens ♦ Great Dixter Gardens ♦ RHS Wisley Gardens ♦ Sissinghurst Gardens ♦ Rousham Gardens ♦ Blenheim Palace, birthplace and former home of Winston Churchill ♦ University of Oxford Botanic Garden ♦ Hidcote Manor Garden ♦ The charming English countryside ♦ Hever Castle, childhood home of Anne Boleyn ♦ A wonderful group of like-minded garden and history lovers!

IT'S INCLUDED!

- Hosted by Andrew Ruhs and Carmen Overton of the Columbus Botanical Garden, Columbus, Georgia
- Visits with distinguished English garden experts and horticultural guides
- Fully escorted by an experienced Earthbound Expeditions Tour Director
- Eight nights in hand-selected four-star hotels
- Daily breakfast plus nine additional multicourse meals featuring regional cuisine
- Travel throughout by private deluxe, air-conditioned motor coach
- Admission to all gardens, estates, and attractions featured in the itinerary
- Exclusive guided garden tours, where available, with head gardeners, estate gardeners, or property owners

TRIP FACTS

9 days/8 nights (*land*)

\$6,995 per person based on double occupancy

\$1,750 single supplement (*waived if you are willing to share and a roommate is found*)

Tour begins in Oxford on May 14, 2027, at 6:00 pm

Tour ends in London on May 22, 2027, after breakfast

SAVE \$100!

- Pay your final balance by check and save \$100





Your Custom Garden Adventure Begins!

Day 0: Depart the U.S. for England

Remember, you'll need to depart the U.S. no later than May 13. If you have the time, you may wish to arrive a few days early and catch a play at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre or visit London's great museums before meeting the group in Oxford. *We highly recommend booking flights to and from Heathrow Airport. It is much closer to both London and Oxford than Gatwick Airport.*

Day 1: Friday, May 14 - Your Custom Garden Journey Begins in Oxford!

Welcome to the United Kingdom! Transfer by train, taxi or airport shuttle to your centrally located, four-star hotel in the heart of Oxford. Take time to relax and freshen up before meeting your guide and fellow travel companions for an evening outing to a local pub for a welcome dinner. *Sleep in Oxford (D)*

Day 2: Saturday, May 15 – Discover Oxford

This morning, enjoy a student-led walking tour of the historic University of Oxford, the oldest university in the English-speaking world and the world's second-oldest university in continuous operation. Founded more than 900 years ago, Oxford has educated generations of scholars, leaders, and Nobel laureates. Lovers of literature will enjoy seeing the colleges and pubs associated with C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Lewis Carroll. After lunch, our exploration continues at the University of Oxford Botanic Garden, Britain's oldest botanic garden, founded in 1621. Stroll through its beautiful herbaceous borders, glasshouses, and remarkable plant collections while learning about its enduring role in botanical research, conservation, and education.

Sleep in Oxford (B, L)



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Spend a morning discovering Blenheim Palace

"Gardens are not made by singing 'Oh, how beautiful,' and sitting in the shade."

— Rudyard Kipling

Day 3: Sunday, May 16 – Blenheim Palace and Rousham Gardens

This morning, visit the magnificent Blenheim Palace, birthplace of Winston Churchill and one of England's finest country estates. Explore the engaging Churchill exhibition, stroll through the Memorial Garden, and follow in Churchill's footsteps as you discover this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Surrounding the palace are some of England's most spectacular landscaped grounds. Originally laid out in the early 18th century and later transformed by the legendary landscape architect Lancelot "Capability" Brown, the gardens feature sweeping parkland, tranquil lakes, elegant cascades, and breathtaking vistas.

This afternoon, continue to enchanting Rousham Gardens, one of England's best-preserved 18th-century landscape gardens. Designed by William Kent in 1738, Rousham remains remarkably unchanged, offering a peaceful, timeless beauty that has inspired garden lovers for generations. Return to Oxford in the late afternoon.

Sleep in Oxford (B, L)



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Tour historic homes, palaces and castles

Day 4: Monday, May 17 – The Cotswolds and Hidcote Manor Garden

Today, we visit Hidcote Manor Garden, one of England's most celebrated and influential gardens. Created in the 1930s by the American horticulturist Lawrence Johnston, Hidcote is renowned for its series of beautifully designed outdoor "garden rooms," each featuring its own distinctive character, color palette, and seasonal beauty. Meander through its exquisite borders, rare plant collections, and hidden vistas that continue to inspire gardeners from around the world.

This afternoon, return to Oxford through the idyllic Cotswolds, pausing in the picturesque market town of Chipping Campden, celebrated for its honey-colored stone architecture, inviting shops, and timeless English charm.

Sleep in Oxford (B, D)

Day 5: Tuesday, May 18 – RHS Garden Wisley and Hever Castle

Our journey today continues as we depart Oxford for Royal Tunbridge Wells. En route, we'll visit **RHS Garden Wisley**, one of the Royal Horticultural Society's most horticulturally diverse. Wisley was given to the Royal Horticultural Society in 1903. From the start, the garden acquired a reputation for its collections of lilies, gentians, Japanese irises, primulas, and water plants.



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Romantic Sissinghurst is rated as one of the top gardens of the world

After lunch, we are off to **Hever Castle**. Spanning more than 600 years, the history of Hever Castle is rich and varied. The castle became the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, King Henry VIII's second wife, who became Queen of England for just 1,000 days. Arrive at Royal Tunbridge Wells in the late evening. Dinner included upon arrival. *Sleep in Royal Tunbridge Wells (B, L, D)*

Day 6: Wednesday, May 19 – Great Dixter and Sissinghurst Castle Garden

Today is devoted to two of England's most celebrated gardens. Begin at Great Dixter, the iconic home and garden of the legendary plantsman Christopher Lloyd. Originally redesigned by Sir Edwin Lutyens, Great Dixter is renowned for its bold, innovative plantings, colorful mixed borders, meadow gardens, and creative combinations that continue to inspire gardeners around the world.

Next, enjoy time at the historic Penshurst Place and Gardens, one of England's oldest and most beautiful manor estates, where formal gardens, ancient yews, and centuries of horticultural tradition create a memorable setting.

We next drive to Sissinghurst Castle Garden, one of England's greatest garden delights. Sissinghurst was the garden of poet and writer Vita Sackville-West and her husband Harold Nicolson, journalist, member of Parliament and diplomat, and is possibly the most influential of all 20th century gardens. Built around the remnants of an Elizabethan castle, of which the tower remains a central garden feature, the garden is



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Spend a morning at Penshurst palace gardens

divided into distinct spaces where a formality established by Nicolson is clothed by a romantic planting style pursued by Sackville-West. The garden retains its original charm and romance with such delights as its parterre, white garden, cottage garden, nut walk and orchard. We shall explore Sissinghurst's many hidden corners, sumptuous planting combinations and the view from the top of the tower, always a good starting point for those who wish to understand the garden's layout. *Sleep in Royal Tunbridge Wells (B, L, D)*

Day 7: Thursday, May 20 – Chartwell: Winston Churchill's Country Home

This morning, depart Royal Tunbridge Wells and journey north to London, stopping to visit Chartwell, the beloved country home of Winston Churchill. Purchased in 1922, Chartwell served as Churchill's family retreat and the place where he wrote, painted, and entertained throughout much of his life.

Explore the beautifully preserved house, filled with Churchill's personal belongings, treasured gifts, and works of art, then stroll through the magnificent walled garden and rose garden, lovingly restored by the National Trust.

Later this afternoon, continue to your charming hotel in central London. This evening, gather with your fellow travelers for dinner at one of London's inviting restaurants.

Sleep in London (B, L, D)



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Your grand adventure culminates in London!

Day 8: Friday, May 21 – The RHS Chelsea Flower Show

Today, experience one of the highlights of your garden journey. RHS Chelsea Flower Show is the pinnacle of horticultural excellence and one of the world's most prestigious flower shows. Set within the historic grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, this extraordinary event showcases breathtaking show gardens, innovative landscape designs, spectacular floral displays, and the finest plants from Britain's leading nurseries. Stroll at your leisure through the beautifully curated exhibits, gather inspiration from award-winning designers, and soak in the vibrant atmosphere of this unforgettable celebration of gardening.

This evening, gather with your guide and fellow travelers for a memorable farewell dinner as you toast a remarkable journey through England's most celebrated gardens.
Sleep in London (B, D)

Day 9: Saturday, May 22 – Your Garden Journey Concludes

After breakfast, your unforgettable journey through England's magnificent gardens and grand estates comes to a close. London offers convenient rail, taxi, and Underground connections to Heathrow Airport. If time permits, consider extending your stay to explore the city's world-class museums, historic landmarks, and beautiful parks. Depart with lasting memories, new friendships, and inspiration gathered from some of England's most celebrated gardens. (B)



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Meet Your Garden Hosts!



Andrew Ruhs is the executive director of the Columbus Botanical Garden in Columbus, Georgia, where he leads strategic growth, community engagement, and fundraising initiatives. After serving as interim executive director and previously as president of the board, Andrew brings a strong background in business management and finance, along with a deep commitment to the garden's mission. Outside of his work, Andrew enjoys spending time outdoors, traveling, and occasionally growing plants with a little help from his golden retriever.

Carmen Overton is the director of development at the Columbus Botanical Garden in Columbus, Georgia, where she leads fundraising, donor engagement, membership, and strategic partnerships to support the Garden's growth and community impact. She has more than 20 years of experience in nonprofit leadership. Carmen is passionate about connecting people to meaningful experiences through nature, the arts, and education. Outside of her work, she enjoys spending time outdoors, often with a good book in hand while relaxing on her front porch swing.



Reservations & Questions

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Know Before You Go!

Reservations and Deposits: A \$1,000 per person deposit is required to confirm your space on this journey. Deposits can be made by credit card or by calling the Earthbound office at 206.842.9775. Deposits are refundable, minus a \$250 per person cancellation fee, for 60 days from the processing date or until 90 days prior to departure, whichever comes first. Deposits made within 90 days of departure are nonrefundable. Final payment is also non-refundable, which is why we strongly urge guests to purchase travel insurance.

Not Included: International airline tickets, alcoholic beverages, room service and gratuities for ship crew and staff, hotel staff, travel insurance, meals not listed in the brochure, and any activities or items not listed in your itinerary.

Physical Requirements: It is the responsibility of each guest to be aware of their physical abilities or limitations and to be in sufficient good health to undertake the trip. [Click here](#) to read “Is an Earthbound trip right for you?” or call the Earthbound office for more details.

Travel Insurance: Earthbound Expeditions strongly encourages the purchase of travel insurance coverage. We include information on trip insurance in your deposit information.

Events and Hosted Journeys: If a planned event is cancelled for any reason, another event will be included in its place. This is not cause for refund. Events are subject to change. Also, if a host or special guest is unable to attend as planned, Earthbound Expeditions will do its utmost to find another host who has similar interests, talents, and expertise. The inability of a host to participate in a tour is not grounds for a full or partial refund.

Terms & Conditions: [Click here](#) to read the full terms and conditions.

Garden Visits: It's uncommon, but possible, that a garden listed may be closed or temporarily unavailable due to renovation or a private event. If this occurs, a suitable substitute will be found. There are more lovely gardens and grand estates in England than you can possibly imagine!



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