

# TOUR TIMES

A PUBLICATION FROM MARY VALENTINE TOURS

Specializing in small group travel throughout the United Kingdom



February 2024



## Jane Reigns

You may have noticed that in recent weeks, Jane Austen's visibility and status as one of the world's greatest writers seems as great as ever, not just among scholars but also among fans everywhere.

In February alone, the Hallmark Channel introduced four new Austen-related films, three of them in modern settings with traditional themes. Titles include *Paging Mr. Darcy*, *Love and Jane*, and *An American in Austen*. All three center on contemporary women finding love in connection with their favorite author. The fourth, a serious period version of *Sense and Sensibility*, Austen's first published novel, features a predominantly Black-led cast.

PBS' *Sanditon*, a version of Austen's last and unfinished work, returns to television with six new episodes starting in March. Organizations such as JASNA continue to flourish and sponsor outstanding programs of interest to Austen fans.

And, of course, our May tour features not only a visit to Tintern Abbey in Wales, thought by many to be Austen's inspiration for Northanger Abbey, but also overnight stays in Bath where we'll visit sites that played a significant role in Austen's life and writing. These include the Jane Austen Center, the Assembly Rooms, the Pump Room, the Royal Crescent, and an Austen-inspired walk about town.

It seems to be raining Jane. Come join the celebration. Spaces are still available for our May tour. See details inside.



***Dear Reader,***

*This month, Tour Times is packed with information and challenges.*

*We still have spaces left on our May 21-28 tour of London, Wales, and Bath where we'll visit new sites no matter how often you've been to the UK before.*

*Get ready to learn some Cockney Rhyming Slang.*

*See a description of the 1....6 packing scheme.*

*Review instructions on how to proceed if you lose your passport while abroad.*

*Cheers.*

Mary



## HOW TO RESERVE A SPACE ON OUR MAY TOUR

Cost per person: \$6450. This covers hotels for eight nights; eight breakfasts; seven dinners; one afternoon tea; group taxis in London; a luxury coach in the countryside; tickets and entry fees to 15-20 venues. Not covered: airfare, airport transfers, lunches, incidentals, and tips for our driver. Group size: 7-10.

To reserve a spot, send a payment of \$3500.00 (which includes a nonrefundable \$500 deposit) to Mary Valentine now. The balance (\$2950) is due no later than April 1, 2024.

Send payments to:

Mary Valentine Tours

15030 Ventura Blvd. #456

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

323.868.6394 or 747.998.5630

[www.maryvalentinetours.com](http://www.maryvalentinetours.com)

We also accept payment via Zelle at [maryvalentinetours@gmail.com](mailto:maryvalentinetours@gmail.com).

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## Amanda Finn's 1-2-3-4-5-6 Packing Rules

Travel advisor Amanda Finn advocates her 1-6 rule for packing light if you plan to be traveling for up to two weeks. For more than two weeks, plan to do some laundry.

Here's how it goes:

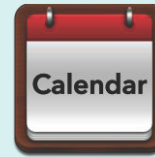
"Pack one hat, two pairs of shoes, three bottoms, four tops, five pairs of socks, and six pairs of underwear. You're also allowed swimsuits, medications, and toiletries.

"This discipline will make you less likely to overpack."

For more information, go to

<https://www.explore.com/1174358/the-complete-guide-to-packing-light/>

## DAILY SCHEDULE



May 21: In the morning, we sail from London's Westminster Bridge to Greenwich where we tour the Old Naval College and view its spectacular Painted Ceiling and stop at the Prime Meridian.

In the afternoon, we visit the Garden Museum and take a walking tour of Chelsea in Bloom where shops compete for the most beautiful floral decorations.

May 22: Our schedule includes a visit to the Staterooms at Kensington Palace, as well as the special exhibit at the recently reopened National Portrait Gallery. An early dinner at the Portrait Restaurant will be followed by a candlelight concert at St.-Martin-in-the-Fields.

May 23: Our coach picks us up and soon we're in Wales at St. Fegans National History Museum, Tintern Abbey, and the Big Pit Coal Mine.

May 24 will find us in Cardiff, the capitol of Wales, where we view Parliament, the Docks, the Welsh Assembly, and the performing Arts Concert Hall. Then we're on to St. Davids, the smallest city in Wales, where we spend three nights at a 5-star hotel noted for its modern art.

May 25: We visit the Chapel of St. Non and Welsh poet Dylan Thomas' home.

May 26: We spend the morning exploring St. Davids, including stops for a tour at the Cathedral and St. Davids Castle. St. Davids is filled with opportunities for walks as well as shopping. An evening of music



by the men's chorus of St Davids will close out the day.

May 27: We leave St. Davids and stop at the Royal Mint which is producing the UK's new money featuring King Charles. We then check into the five-star Pig Near Bath for one night.

May 28: Following a Jane Austen/ Bridgerton/Queen Charlotte walking tour of Bath, we stop at Persephone Books for tea, scones and lively conversation before heading for our last hotel and final meal together.

We'll add more stops as we get closer to May.

## TEN ESSENTIALS FOR CARRY-ON

Robynne Trueman of TheTravel.com has identified the "10 Essentials for Carry-on." See if you agree.

1. A change of clothes
2. Medications
3. Pajamas that double as athletic wear
4. Packable down jacket or rain layer
5. E-reader, iPad, or smartphone
6. Microfiber towel
7. One spare pair of socks
8. One change of underwear (minimum)
9. Toiletries
10. Flip flops or sandals

Final advice: wear your heaviest clothes and shoes on the plane to keep your carry-on lighter.



# What to Do If You Lose Your Passport While Abroad

Losing your passport while abroad is never a pleasant experience, but there are some things you can do to minimize the pain and get your travel back on track. Here are answers from the Department of State to some of the most frequently asked questions concerning lost or stolen passports.\*

## **Q: What should I do if I lose my passport while traveling abroad?**

A: You will have to replace the passport before returning to the United States. Contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for assistance. Ask to speak to the Consular Section to report your passport lost or stolen. If you have been the victim of a serious crime, be sure to tell a consular officer about it as soon as possible so we can provide appropriate assistance. If you are scheduled to leave the foreign country shortly, please provide our consular staff with the details of your travel. We will make every effort to assist you quickly. You will also be directed to where you can obtain a photo for your replacement passport. In most cases, you will need to get a passport photo prior to your arrival at the consular section.

## **Q: What information or documents do I need to replace my passport when overseas?**

A: The following list identifies documents/items you should take with you to the embassy/consulate. Even if you are unable to present all these documents, the consular staff will do their best to assist you to replace your passport quickly. Please provide:

- A Passport Photo (one photo is required; get it in advance to speed the process of replacing your passport)
- Identification (driver's license, expired passport etc.)
- Evidence of U.S. citizenship (birth certificate, photocopy of your missing passport)
- Travel Itinerary (airline/train tickets)



## HOW TO KEEP YOUR PASSPORT SAFE

Travel experts recommend having a photo of your passport saved on your phone and traveling with multiple photocopies stored in different pieces of luggage.

It also doesn't hurt to make sure your passport is hidden or secured in a hotel safe. Some experts advise against taking your passport with you on outings. But if that's not an option for you, a discreet belt bag may offer passport security.





- Police Report, if available
- DS-11 Application for Passport (may be completed at time of application)
- DS-64 Statement Regarding a Lost or Stolen Passport (may be completed at time of application)

**Q: How Long is a replacement passport valid?**

A Replacement passports are normally valid for a full ten years for adults or five years for minors

**Q: How much will a replacement cost?**

A: The normal **passport fees** are collected from applicants for replacement passports. Applicants unable to pay the fee will be asked to provide names of persons they feel would be able to assist them financially.

**Q: Can the U.S. Embassy Issue a Replacement Passport on a Weekend or Holiday?**

A: Most U.S. embassies and consulates cannot issue passports on weekends or holidays when the embassy/consulate is closed. All U.S. embassies and consulates have after-hours duty officers available to assist with life or death emergencies of U.S. citizens abroad. Contact the nearest **U.S. embassy or consulate** after-hours duty officer for assistance if you have an emergency need to travel or have been the victim of a serious crime.

**Q: Can I travel if I find my passport after reporting it lost or stolen?**

A: No. If you have already reported your passport lost or stolen, the passport is no longer valid and cannot be used for international travel.

\*For more information on lost passports, go to the US Dept. of State website.

Source: US Department of State 2023





## How well do you understand Cockney Rhyming Slang?

Thought to have emerged from the multi-cultural East London 's working class in the 1800s, Cockney rhyming slang is still heard in some parts of England as it substitutes words or phrases for more frequently used language. For example, in the column on the left are some currently used examples of rhyming slang.

As Jonathon Thomas at Anglotopia explains, one school of thought argues that Cockney rhyming was developed as a secret code so criminals could communicate without the authorities understanding them. Others say Cockey slang became popular because it allowed speakers to create a sense of community. Regardless of which theory is more accurate, Cockney rhyming is entertaining and evolving, just like other languages.

Ready to try your hand at a quick translation? Here goes.

"My absent-minded artful dodger has recently experienced a lot of barney rubble. While climbing the apples and pears outside the house, as he hummed *God Save the Baked Bean*, he tripped and fell, tearing his bag of fruit. He then collided with the Aunt Joanna we were moving that day. My skin and blister came to the rescue and patched him up. Fortunately, he wasn't brown bread, but he does now put an Ascot race on his leg before going out. I frequently remind him to butcher's hook before crossing the street, even though I'm not his trouble and strife."

What do you think this speaker is saying?

### Translator

Pig's ear - beer  
Butcher's hook - look  
Dog and bone - phone  
Tea leaf - thief  
Round the houses - trousers  
Sexton Blake - cake  
Baked bean - Queen  
Adam and Eve - believe  
Apples and pears - stairs  
Artful dodger - lodger  
Bag of fruit - suit  
Ascot Races - braces  
Aunt Joanna - piano  
Brown bead - dead  
Sherbet dab - taxicab  
Pork pie - lie  
Skin and blister - sister  
Barney rubble - trouble  
Tom and Dick - sick



The Artful Dodger from *Oliver Twist*