Tour Times

A publication from Mary Valentine Tours

September 2026

Dear Reader,

September is a busy month for for travelers to the UK and for Mary Valentine Tours. Airports and travelers report longer lines and more chaos than ever. I think our Top Travel Tips will help you navigate.

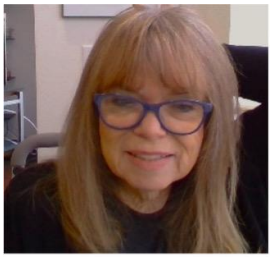
At the top of the list for many is a visit to the British Museum to see the Bayeux Tapestry, a 900-year-old set of embroidered panels that tell the story of the Battle of Hastings. Good luck getting tickets. I got up at 4:00 a.m., the minute online sales opened, only to find myself in a queue with 18,000 people ahead of me.

At Mary Valentine Tours, however, we are not daunted. We're going to Reading, an hour out of London, to see a duplicate tapestry in Reading's Museum. Our next newsletter will provide tales of our Bayeux visit as well as other stops on our September tour.

I am also announcing our travel program for 2027 so there's lots to think about. Read on.

Cheers.

Mary





WHAT'S INSIDE

We're excited to announce our 2027 tours:

Artisans, Arts & Crafts Tour in May

Heart of Great Britain Tour in September to celebrate our 20th anniversary.

Part 2 of Mary's Travel Tips including the "Great Baggage Debate - to carry on or to check?"

A reminder of the MVT Book Club's October selection.

Visit our Website





2027 Tours Announced - Prices Dramatically Reduced

2027 features two tours: one brand new and the other marking the 20th anniversary of Mary Valentine Tours, both at reduced prices.

We've significantly reduced our prices to make our tours more affordable for more travelers.

Tour 1 May 14-21, 2027: Artisans, Arts and Crafts tour

This 8-day tour highlights the importance of arts and crafts in the United Kingdom and includes a visit to the home of William Morris, father of England's Arts and Crafts Movement. Plans include time to visit potteries, textile mills still in operation, weavers, embroiderers, jewelry makers, and knitters. Included are demonstrations and hands-on experiences.

The bulk of our time will be spent in the Peak District in the English countryside where arts and crafts still abound. Think thatched roofs and warm fireplaces.
Price: $5895.00

More details will follow.

Tour 2 Sept.15-22, 2027 Heart of Great Britain Tour in celebration of Mary Valentine Tour's 20th anniversary!

Look forward to 8 days of experiences at off the beaten path at locations throughout the UK. Current plans call for visiting waterfalls in Wales, King Arthur's Tintern Abbey, a Welsh cooking class, a tour of the Lake District, a tour of All Creatures Great and Small locations, a village that was purposely flooded in the 1940s and re-re-emerged on its own decades later, the Heights of Abraham , abbey ruins, and more. More details will follow. Price: $5895.00



William Morris' home at Kelmscott Manor

Mary’s Travel Tips, Part 2

Here are last month’s tips and a half-dozen new ones.

To read details about the first six, go to the July 2026 *Tour Times*. Back issues are available on our website.

1. Plan ahead.
2. Get your passport and other travel requirements in order.
3. Buy travel insurance.
4. Investigate places to stay.
5. Prioritize safety wherever you are.
6. Don’t look like a tourist.

The second half -



7. Review your airline’s carry-on size and weight requirements. Several airlines have just changed their acceptable sizes for carry-ons. For example, some airlines now say that the dimensions for a carry-on must include wheels and handles. If your carry-on exceeds these dimensions, you will be forced to check the bag and pay as much as $60-$100.

8. Pack light, whether you carry on or check your bags. Heavy bags lead to back and arm pain or more serious injuries. Prepare to wear some items more than once. You can always wash items in your hotel room.

9. Practice with your camera before leaving home, so you won’t miss any shots.





10. Leave a copy of your itinerary with a friend, to be used if an emergency arises and you need to be contacted.

11. Get to the airport even earlier than usual. Airports in the US and around the world are reporting longer lines this season because of new travel document requirements.

12. Prepare for changing weather. Brits are fond of saying, “In the UK we have all four seasons—sometimes in one day.” Bring layers, bring rain gear, bring a spare pair of shoes. P.S. Average temperatures in the UK in September: 59F. Average rainfall: 2 inches

BONUS TIP: Prepare physically. If your tour includes lots of walking, for example, start walking daily at home. If you’re not used to walking much at home, try starting with 15-20 minutes a day and then increasing your time in increments. Let your tour guide know if you’re having difficulties with the physical demands of the trip. Do not suffer in silence.



CHECKED LUGGAGE OR CARRY-ON: WHICH IS THE BETTER CHOICE?

There is no obvious answer to this question. Anty time you fly, you have to decide whether to check a bag, carry one on, or both. A myriad of factors may influence the decision to carry on, to check, or to do both. These may include your destination, and how long you’ll be gone. The main differences include size limitations and access to your bag during the flight. What may your choice on one flight may not be your choice on the next.
Here are some considerations to take into account making a decision.

Why choose carry-on bags?

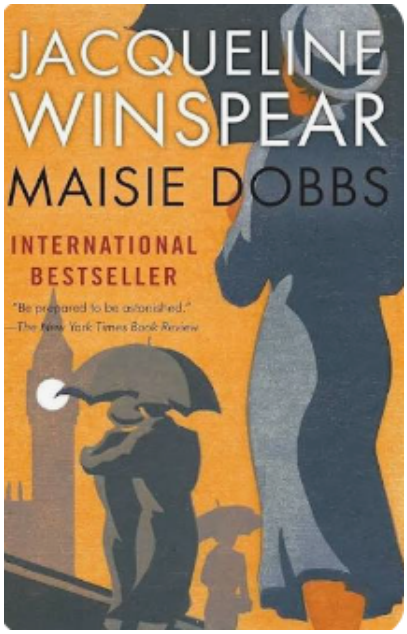
- There’s no fear the airline will lose your bag.
- Your arrival will be faster as you don’t have to wait by the carousel.
- Limited space means packing is lighter.
- You pay no extra fee as you might if you’d checked your bag.

Why choose to check your bag(s)?

- You can take more items with you. You have more space for gifts.

- There are fewer restrictions on liquids in your luggage.
- Advanced technology has led to fewer lost items.
- You don’t have to haul bags around the airport as you wait to board your flight.

MVT Book Club Reminder



On Saturday, October 17, our book club will discuss *Masie Dobbs* by Jacqueline Winspear. Time: 2:00 PST

Set in London and Kent, England in the 1920s, our book selection tells the story of a young nurse who leaves nursing life to become a detective. In this adventure, Masie discovers and solves the mystery of veterans who are dying mysteriously in a convalescent hospital after the war.

You're welcome to join us even if it's your first time or you are not coming on one of our tours. Just send us an email saying you're interested and we'll add you to our mailing list. On October 16, we'll send you the Zoom link for the following day.

About Mary Valentine

Tour leader Mary Valentine has been a Sociology professor and a life-long Anglophile. For more than 35 years, she has traveled extensively throughout the UK and led tours there since 2007.



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