

# Exmoor Somerset & Devon Garden Tour

**Destinations:** Exmoor, United Kingdom & England  
**Trip code:** SLGDT



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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There are gardens galore to explore, each with their own style and character. Uncover a series of magical gardens at RHS Rosemoor with over 4,000 different plants, while the gardens at Forde Abbey feature the tallest powered fountain in the UK. Enjoy the variety of Hestercombe's garden – a Georgian park-like garden of Grecian temples, follies and vistas and the various 'rooms' of Medieval Cothay Manor's gardens, accessed via a Yew walk. There's also the kitchen garden of Barrington Court and the walled garden of Cannington to enjoy.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- High quality Full Board en-suite accommodation and excellent food in our Country House
- The guidance and services of our knowledgeable HF Holidays' leader, ensuring you get the most from your holiday
- All transport to and from gardens on a comfortable, good-quality mini-coach with PA system
- All garden admissions costs. For Garden Tours, National Trust, English Heritage and RHS admissions are not included.
- Heritage gardens (please note this does not include entrance to stately homes/houses, for which there is a

separate admission fee)

## HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

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- Rosemoor, the RHS "Wisley of the west"
- Cothay Manor, coloured-themes and extensive herbaceous borders
- Hestercombe boasts two distinctly different gardens: one a classic Georgian park-like garden of Grecian temples, follies and vistas; the other, the masterpiece resulting from the association of Gertrude
- Jekyll and Sir Edwin Lutyens

## ITINERARY

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### Day 1: Arrival Day

Check-in starts from 2.30pm (Best and Better rooms from 1pm). All guests are invited to join us for afternoon tea where we'll introduce your leader.

### Day 2: Cannington Walled Gardens & Hestercombe

We'll explore the walled gardens of Cannington near Bridgwater, which is managed by the horticultural students of Bridgewater College. These are charming gardens offering diverse plantings and glasshouses. Then we'll visit the wonderfully restored gardens of Hestercombe. Here Sir Edwin Lutyens created a new formal garden. He also worked with Gertrude Jekyll and this is considered to be one of the finest examples of their collaborated work.

### Day 3: Ford Abbey & Barrington Court

The gardens of Ford Abbey, a former Cistercian abbey, are extensive, yet laid out in an informal style. Here, the tallest powered fountain in the country is a spectacular centre piece. Then we'll discover the kitchen garden of Barrington Court (National Trust), near Ilminster, which has been in constant use for over 60 years. Gertrude Jekyll was in her late 70's with very poor eyesight when she submitted plans for this garden, which is often considered to be one of her finest.

### Day 4: Free Day

A free day for you to explore the local area or to relax in the Country House

### Day 5: RHS Rosemoor – All-day Adventure

No visit to North Devon would be complete without visiting the magnificent 65-acre RHS garden, Rosemoor. Lady Anne Palmer inherited the garden in 1931 and she described it as dull and labour intensive. However, as her interest in horticulture developed she collected a wonderful diverse collection of plant material, with over 4,000 plants represented in Lady Anne's Garden.

### Day 6: Gothic Knightshayes Court & Mediaeval Cothay Manor

Knightshayes Court, just north of Tiverton, is claimed to be one of the best displayed plant collections within the National Trust gardens, with over 1,200 plant species. One of the highlights is a 4-acre walled kitchen garden producing organic produce. Then we'll see the mediaeval manor of Cothay, often described as "The Sissinghurst of the West". There are 12 acres of magical romantic gardens to explore, all set out in a series of rooms.

## Day 7: Marwood Hill Gardens & Castle Hill Garden

Our last morning is spent in the magnificent 200-acre Marwood Hill Gardens, created by the late Dr James Smart in 1949. This garden has featured on many television programmes over the years. Our final garden is Castle Hill – it's full of vistas and follies. The approach to the house is via the Millennium Garden, a double herbaceous border designed by a former Chelsea Gold Medallist, Xa Tollemache.

## Day 8: Departure Day

Depart after a leisurely breakfast.

## ACCOMMODATION

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### Holnicote House

Lying near the attractive village of Selworthy, in the heart of the Exmoor National Park, historic Holnicote House stands within a series of peaceful gardens with spreading lawns. Once the centrepiece of an extensive 12,500 acre estate, the charming and characterful house was gifted to the National Trust in 1944. Since then it has been reimagined as a walkers' retreat, with wonderful access to the countryside. As well as 32 delightful bedrooms, there are two comfortable lounges and a sociable bar. The landscaped gardens are still part of the wider Holnicote Estate and provide a wonderful area to wander. Outside the house, explore wild Exmoor, walk in the Quantocks, climb Dunkery Beacon and stroll on the Somerset Coast Path with the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, drop in Dunster Castle, ride a Victorian cliff railway and watch for wildlife including the majestic red stags.

### Matchless Country House Accommodation

#### Accommodation Info

#### Rooms

*Tea & coffee-making facilities, TV, Hairdryer, Toiletries, Wi-Fi*

Stay in one of the main building's bright, beautifully presented rooms or in the thatched cottages in the grounds, called Butlers and Guns respectively. With 32 bedrooms, Holnicote House has plenty of space and there's a range of Good, Better and Best Rooms to choose from: best rooms are on the first floor and decorated in keeping with the National Trust estate, with plenty of space and great views over the back garden, reaching out across Crawler Hill and Dunkery Hill, Somerset and Exmoor's highest point. Ask for numbers 1, 4 or 9 to feel suitably special.

*All 'Good' rooms are ensuite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Better' and 'Best' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress, larger television, enhanced toiletries and a fluffy bathrobe & slippers – upgrade your stay for just an extra £15-20 per person per night. You can choose a specific room for an extra £30 per room, subject to availability. Upgrade supplements still apply.*

#### Facilities

*Free Wi-Fi, boot room and drying room, attractive garden, outdoor swimming pool, multi-purpose activity room, lounge, library and board games to borrow*

After a day walking on Exmoor or exploring the heath and moorland, come back to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Relax by sitting in the pretty gardens or challenge a fellow guest to a game of croquet. Take a dip in the large heated outdoor pool. For something less strenuous, snag a comfy chair in one of the cosy lounges, borrow a book, join a game of cards or scour the countryside through the large telescope. Head to the bar before dinner for a drink and a chance to catch up with your companions, best



enjoyed by the windows overlooking the estate.

## Food & Drink

As at all our country houses, holidays are full board, from afternoon tea served as a welcome treat through that evening's meal to a hearty breakfast on the day of departure. Lunch is a chance to stock up on our famous picnic snacks. Food at Holnicote House is hearty and has a strong emphasis on ingredients from the area and seasonal produce. Once a week the wood panelled dining room with its giant fireplace hosts a Local Food Night, when, over a sociable evening, you might try classic Porlock oysters or Priddy Oggies, a local pasty of chicken, bacon and cheese. Mains might include Exmoor venison or Bellbrook valley trout, while you could cap it all with a Somerset apple cake, dressed with cream.

## Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865

## TRAVEL DETAILS

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Our address is: Holnicote House, Selworthy, Minehead, Somerset TA24 8TJ

### By Train:

The nearest railway station is at Taunton. For train times and route planning by train visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) or phone 03457 48 49 50.

### By Taxi:

The 29 mile journey from Taunton railway station takes approximately 50 minutes. Pre-booked taxis cost approx £56 per taxi. Details of our current recommended taxi company and rates will be sent to you with your booking. The taxi company will arrange shared taxis wherever possible. The return taxi journey can be arranged on your behalf by the Holnicote House Manager.

### By Bus:

The number 28 bus operates between Taunton station and Minehead. At Minehead change for the number 10 bus that will take you to the Selworthy turn (which is at the end of Holnicote House drive). A 2 minute walk along the drive will bring you to the house. Alternatively pre-book a taxi from Minehead; the 4½ mile journey will cost you approx £10 from our recommended taxi provider. For bus times see [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)

### By Car:

From Bridgewater take the A39 though the southern outskirts of Minehead towards Porlock. Holnicote House is on the left about 4½ miles out of Minehead, and about ¾ mile after the signpost to Luccombe (do not follow the signs to Selworthy). After the Selworthy Village sign look out for our sign 500 yards further on, on the left. Free car parking is available in the grounds.

## Travelling From Overseas

For most guests, travelling to London Heathrow airport is the most convenient option.

From Heathrow first take the train to London Paddington station. From here there are direct trains to Taunton. Its a relatively straightforward journey - allow 2½ hours. See [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) for train times.

Bristol Airport may also be convenient for some guests. Take the train to Taunton

From Taunton you can travel on to Selworthy by bus or taxi (see above).

## LOCAL AREA

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During your stay at Holnicote House you may enjoy visiting the following places of interest, either in your free time, or on your journey to and from Selworthy:

### Selworthy Village

Less than a mile from Holnicote House is Selworthy village. At first glance the thatched cottages seem typical of many ancient settlements in this area. However, Selworthy is not as old as it looks, having been rebuilt in 1828 by Sir Thomas Acland. Sir Thomas was a philanthropist and designed the 'model' village himself to provide housing for the aged and infirm of the estate. He used traditional designs and materials to create a deliberately old-fashioned village.

### West Somerset Railway

Travel on Britain's longest steam railway from Minehead to Bishops Lydyard. Now lovingly restored by volunteers, the line recreates a classic Great Western Railway branch line with steam trains operating daily from April to October. Minehead station is 10 minutes' drive from Selworthy, or can be reached on the number 300 bus. [www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk)

### Dunster Castle

An historic castle transformed into a comfortable stately home for the Luttrell family. Some highlights include the 'modern' 1950s kitchen and the snooker room. Dunster Castle sits in extensive gardens, complete with its working watermill. The adjacent town of Dunster is full of character and also well worth a visit. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunster-castle](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunster-castle)

### Lynton & Lynmouth

The quaint Victorian town of Lynton sits high on a hill, overlooking the coast and Lynmouth harbour. The two settlements are connected by the historic cliff railway. The short walk from Lynton to the Valley of Rocks is highly recommended.

### Coleridge Cottage

The poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and his wife Sara lived in the village of Nether Stowey, about 45 minutes' drive from Selworthy, from 1796 to 1799. In 1909 it was acquired by the National Trust, and later restored and opened to the public. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coleridge-cottage](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coleridge-cottage)

### Hestercombe Gardens

Hestercombe Gardens, around an hour's drive away near Taunton, were constructed in three periods - a landscape garden from the 1750s, a Victorian terrace and shrubbery from the 1870s, and Edwardian gardens of 1904-1908 designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll. [www.hestercombe.com](http://www.hestercombe.com)

## Arlington Court

Arlington Court, about an hour's drive away near Barnstaple is a fine Regency house set in an extensive estate. The grounds include a formal Victorian garden whilst the stables house the National Trust's carriage collection of over fifty horse-drawn vehicles. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/arlington-court](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/arlington-court)

## USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

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### What To Bring

As you'll be walking around the gardens please bring stout, comfortable footwear for rough, wet or uneven terrain in gardens, and clothes for the great British weather!

## HOW TO BOOK

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When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday & Sunday: 9am – 1pm Bank Holiday Monday: 9am – 1pm

### PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

### NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £10 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit [hfholidays.co.uk/membership](http://hfholidays.co.uk/membership) for details.

### BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

### MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

### YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit [hfholidays.co.uk/insurance](http://hfholidays.co.uk/insurance)

## PEACE OF MIND

### ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website [atol.org.uk](http://atol.org.uk)

### MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

## TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

## PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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