

# 3 Night South Downs Discovery Tour

**Destinations:** South Downs, United Kingdom & England

**Trip code:** AWHCR-3



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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Spend three nights in the South Downs discovering a selection of highlights. Stroll around the Tudor ruins of Cowdray House, see the remarkable Roman mosaics at Bignor Villa, and visit Midhurst – a charming town in the heart of South Downs National Park. There are wildlife-spotting opportunities in Petworth Park, plus a chance to admire grand floral displays at Parham House.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- Entrance to Cowdray House Ruins
- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided sightseeing with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

**Please note** - Entrance fees are not included.

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## HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

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- Wildlife-spotting in Petworth Park
- Spending time in the charming market town of Midhurst
- Visiting picturesque Steyning on the River Adur
- Marveling at the Roman mosaics of Bignor
- Exploring the Tudor ruins of Cowdray House
- Discovering the Elizabethan charms of Parham House and Gardens

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## TRIP SUITABILITY

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### Trip suitability

Our Discovery holidays give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of the local area through **active sightseeing**.

On each Discovery day, you will be walking throughout the course of the day as you explore the venues and locations we visit. You'll also be hopping on and off the coach throughout - you should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Most of this walking will be at attractions but some may be across country tracks or footpaths so be sure to **bring sturdy shoes**. There will also be stairs to climb in the majority of the venues you visit, though other more accessible options may be available. At some venues, there may also be uneven surfaces, such as cobbles or rocky paths.

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## ITINERARY

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### Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea on arrival.

### Day 2: Petworth & Midhurst

We begin with a visit to Petworth House, home to one of the finest art collections in the care of the National Trust, before taking a gentle walk through Petworth Park to see the large herd of fallow deer which live here. After lunch we continue to Midhurst, forever associated with HG Wells, who both went to school and then taught at Midhurst Grammar School. There will be time to explore the historic centre to see some of its most characterful old buildings. Look out for the ones with woodwork painted dark yellow, a shade known locally as 'Gold Cup', denoting properties belonging to the Cowdray Estate. We'll also visit the atmospheric ruins of Cowdray House - a large Tudor mansion whose guests included Henry VIII and Elizabeth I during its heyday. It was all but destroyed by fire in 1793 and the kitchen tower is the only part of the mansion which remained intact.

### Day 3: Sussex Towns & Gardens

This morning we visit picturesque Steyning, dating back to Anglo-Saxon times when it was a port on the River Adur. Home to an impressive Norman church, timber-framed buildings and Georgian townhouses, we'll make a walking tour of the town with a chance to visit the museum and the independent shops at Cobblestone Walk. There's time for refreshments in one of the tea rooms before the journey to Bignor Roman Villa, which has some of the finest mosaics in Britain. We spend the afternoon at the fascinating Elizabethan Parham House, exploring the house and extensive gardens. The surrounding deer park is home to around 350 fallow deer which have been bred to have dark coats rather than the more usual pale ones.

### Day 4: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

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## ACCOMMODATION

### Abingworth Hall

Country living just got cosier at this former farmhouse. Abingworth Hall is just a skip away from the village of Thakeham at the foot of the South Downs – a landscape of ancient woodland, hidden valleys, chalky cliffs, and high-backed hills so deserving of its national park status finally bestowed in 2010. While the views from the doorstep are as wow-worthy as you'd expect, the walking opportunities around the sightseeing greats such as Devil's Dyke, Seven Sisters Country Park, Kingley Vale, Parham House, and the Clayton Windmills (known locally as Jack and Jill) are equally standout. You'll also be within easy driving distance of several historic towns and cities, most fabulously Arundel, Chichester, and Brighton.

### Country House Accommodation

#### Rooms

Designed with your comfort in mind, Abingworth Hall has 27 well-appointed guest rooms available in two categories: Classic and Premium.

**Classic Rooms** are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

**Premium Rooms** are more spacious en-suite guest rooms\*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers, and comfortable mattresses.

**We love:** The Premium Rooms for views of the impossibly pretty surroundings.

The **Choose Your Room** service is available at our UK country houses, allowing you the option of choosing and confirming a specific room for an extra charge of £30 per room. This is subject to availability. Upgrade supplements apply.

#### Check in & check out

You are welcome to check in from **4:00pm at the earliest**. On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team.

On the day of departure, we kindly ask all guests to check out by **10:00am**. You'll be asked to settle your bill prior to leaving. You may, of course, make a charitable donation to our HF Holidays Pathways Fund if you wish. Please note that we only accept card payments.

#### Room supplements

Premium single	Premium double/twin	Choose your room
£20 pppn	£20 pppn	£30 per room

\*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

### About Your Stay

#### A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with

guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

### **Evening entertainment**

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, the HF Holidays Big Pub Quiz held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays Leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

### **Walks talks**

Our HF Holidays Leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's walking delights (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

### **The walking day**

Prior to setting off on walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

## **Food & Drink**

Led by experienced chefs, we serve a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. We always aim to source the best produce available and use home-grown herbs and vegetables from our own gardens whenever possible. Additionally, we have a licensed bar with beers, soft drinks, and a superb selection of spirits. Full-board comes as standard and includes a cream tea on arrival and a hearty breakfast on departure day.

HF Holidays understands the importance of managing allergens effectively to ensure food is safe for guests with food allergies. Whilst we are always able to confidently inform guests which allergens are present in our ingredients and dishes, we are unable to guarantee absolute freedom from the 14 main allergens in our kitchens. Vegetarian and vegan menu choices are available. If you have allergies, food intolerances, or any special dietary requirements, please inform our reservation team at the time of booking.

## **Accessibility**

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on [020 3974 8865](tel:02039748865) or view the accessibility information online for [Abingworth Hall](#)

## **TRAVEL DETAILS**

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### **Address**

Abingworth Hall  
Storrington Road  
Thakeham  
West Sussex RH20 3EF

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1798 813636](tel:+44(0)1798813636)

### **By Train**

The nearest station is Pulborough.

Pulborough station has a short platform, so you'll need to check the departure boards for which carriage to sit in.

National Rail have up-to-date routes and train times.

## By Taxi

The six-mile journey from Pulborough railway station takes about 15 minutes.

It's best to avoid arriving at Pulborough station between 2:50pm and 3:20pm as there may not be any taxis available due to school pick-ups.

For pricing, please contact the taxi company directly.

### MJ Cars

You can pre-book a taxi from with MJ Cars\*. We recommend booking your taxi at least seven days in advance by contacting:

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1903 745414](tel:+44(0)1903745414)

Email: [mjcars@btconnect.com](mailto:mjcars@btconnect.com)

A return journey can be arranged on your behalf by the HF Holidays House Manager at Abingworth Hall.

\*MJ Cars is not owned or managed by HF Holidays.

### Sue's Private Hire

You can pre-book a taxi with Sue's Private Hire\* by phone, text or email. Please pre-book asap as there are no taxis based at Pulborough Station. Your journey will be mostly with a lady driver and an electric car.

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1798 874848](tel:+44(0)1798874848) / [+44 \(0\)7918 137066](tel:+44(0)7918137066)

Email:- [sueph520@yahoo.com](mailto:sueph520@yahoo.com)

\*Sue's Private Hire is not owned or managed by HF Holidays and prices are subject to change

## By Car

### From the M25

Take either the A24 or the M23 and then the A264 towards Horsham. At the Great Daux roundabout go south on the A24 towards Worthing. Go straight over two roundabouts and then at the traffic lights turn right onto the A272 to Billingshurst and Petersfield. After three miles turn left onto the B2139. Abingworth Hall is approximately four miles from this junction on the left hand side (go past Abingworth Meadows and Thakeham Pre-School).

### From the M27

Continue onto the A27 around Chichester. At the second roundabout take the first exit on to the A29, then the second exit on to the B2139 to Storrington. At the mini roundabout, take the second exit onto the A283. Continue through Storrington then turn onto the B2139 towards Thakeham. Take the second exit at the next mini roundabout, then the first exit. Continue down this road until you reach Abingworth Hall on the right.

## By Air

The nearest airport is Gatwick Airport.

The easiest way to get from Gatwick Airport to Abingworth Hall is by taxi, a 29-mile journey taking around 40 minutes.

## LOCAL AREA

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Whether you're enjoying a guided or self-guided walking holiday, there's always the opportunity to linger for longer. Here's our pick of the very best things to see and do within easy travelling distance of Abingworth Hall.

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## Arundel

Just a 30-minute drive away, this picturesque West Sussex market town is most famous for two landmarks: Arundel Castle and Arundel Cathedral. A short way from the town centre is the open-air Amberley Museum with over 40 exhibits spread across its 36 acres.

## Arundel Wetlands Centre

A 30-minute drive away, this 60-acre nature reserve run by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust provides a protected habitat for swans, geese, ducks, and other beautiful wetland birds. Boat safaris are available, weather permitting.

## Bignor Roman Villa

Home to some of the best-preserved Roman mosaics in the UK, this courtyard villa turned visitor attraction is the heart of the South Downs National Park. The land is still farmed by the family of George Tupper, the farmer who discovered the site whilst ploughing in 1811.

## Pulborough Brooks Nature Reserve

Just four miles away, this nature-rich area is set in the sheltered Arun Valley within the South Downs National Park. Expect a great variety of habitats (wetlands, heathland, woodland) as well as some wonderful wildlife viewing. The visitor centre is open year-round.

## Uppark House & Garden

A 50-minute drive away, this 17th century stately National Trust property set within intimate gardens and woodland overlooking the South Downs was lovingly restored following a fire in 1989. Interiors include Grand Tour paintings and a very impressive dolls' house.

## Parham House & Gardens

Set the foot of the South Downs, this E-shaped Elizabethan mansion was built in 1557. Highlights include the deer park, mature trees, four-acre walled garden with herbaceous borders, and seven acres of landscaped pleasure grounds.

## Fishbourne Roman Palace

Just a couple of miles outside Chichester, Britain's largest residential Roman building was one of the great archaeological discoveries of the 1960s. The palace is most famous for its collection of mosaics, many of which were identified early in the excavation campaign.

## Petworth House & Park

Managed by the National Trust, this 17th century mansion set in a 700-acre deer park is a 30-minute drive away. The majestic grounds were designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and include the Ionic Rotunda erected in about 1765.

## Weald & Downland Living Museum

Having shot to fame as the filming location of the BBC's *The Repair Shop*, this open-air museum brings the history of Sussex to life with over 50 historic buildings. One highlight is the working watermill dating from the early 17th century.



## Bluebell Railway

Running across 11 miles from Sheffield Park to East Grinstead in Sussex, stopping at Horsted Keynes and Kingscote, the UK's first preserved heritage line is ideal for those who like the romantic thrill of steam travel. Special events are hosted throughout the year.

## USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

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### Essential Information

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing.

#### Essentials

- Suitable, sturdy footwear with a good grip. You'll be on your feet for much of the day
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Sunhat
- Rucksack
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- Sunscreen
- Mobile phone
- UV sunglasses

#### Recommended

- First aid kit, including plasters
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace)
- Wallet/purse

#### Optional extras

- Walking poles,
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Waterproof rucksack liner

## Admission Information

### Please note

Admission fees are payable locally and aren't included in your holiday price, apart from what is stated in the what's included section. This gives you greater choice, freedom, and flexibility to only pay the entrance fees for the attractions that interest you most. Should you choose to visit all the highlighted attractions during your holiday please see the table below for the approximate totals. If you have National Trust (NT), English Heritage (EH) or Historic Houses (HH) membership, please be sure to bring your membership identification with you.

2024 prices

**Approx. cost of entrance fees**

**3 night holiday**

**4 night holiday**

**7 night holiday**

<b>HH &amp; NT members</b>	£24	£1111.70	£135.70
<b>NT members</b>	£39.50	£1111.70	£151.20
<b>HH members</b>	£41	£1111.70	£152.70
<b>No memberships</b>	£56.50	£1111.70	£168.20

## 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.

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