

LONDON TO EDINBURGH: A TALE OF TWO CITIES



Day 1

Depart from home city.

Day 2: City Tour and Orientation

Upon arrival in London, get acquainted with the city on a **motorcoach overview tour** of the major sites, including **Buckingham Palace**, **Trafalgar Square**, **The Houses of Parliament** and **Clock Tower** (aka **Big Ben**), **Westminster Abbey**, **St. Paul's Cathedral**, and **The Tower of London**.

Your **Focus Director** will familiarize you with the area around your hotel and share practical information about London such as banking, mail services, phone, personal security, and health care. Check into your hotel and enjoy free time until dinner.

Feast on a **traditional dinner** of fish and chips or bangers and mash.

Delve into the city's creepiest corners on an **evening walking tour of London's secret haunts**.

Day 3: City of London

Absorb the sights and sounds of London on your **morning walking tour** of the district known as "The City of London," including **St. Paul's Cathedral** and the **Tower of London**.

Spend the afternoon exploring the world's greatest collection of antiquities in the **British Museum**. Spanning two million years of history, its collections of over 13 million pieces include the Rosetta Stone and the Elgin Marbles.

After dinner, sit back and watch the written word come to life with a **West End theatre performance**.

Day 4: Royals and Intellectuals

Explore the royal side of London with a tour of **Westminster Abbey**, the most ancient of London's great churches and the crowning place of British monarchs since 1066. The Abbey is also known for **Poets Corner** – the final resting place of many renowned English authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Charles Dickens, Rudyard Kipling, Lord Alfred Tennyson, and Thomas Hardy.

Present yourself at **Buckingham Palace** to watch the traditional **Changing the Guard**.

E Oxford

Leave the city midday and head to **Oxford**, home to Oxford University for over 700 years. What better source of literary inspiration than to walk the grounds of the university attended by such famous writers as C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Percy Bysshe Shelley. Visit one of the many colleges within Oxford, such as **Christ Church College**, as well as **Martyrs' Memorial**. Finally, no proper literary pilgrimage is complete without a visit to the **Eagle and Child** – the legendary Oxford pub where the "Inklings," writers such as Tolkien and Lewis, met for nearly two dozen years in the mid 20th century.

Day 5: Straight to Stratford

E Stratford-upon-Avon

Set off for a full day's adventure in Stratford-upon-Avon, William Shakespeare's hometown. A walking tour will lead you to his birthplace at the **House on Henley Street**, now a museum to his life and works. Then head to picturesque **Anne Hathaway's Cottage**, the countryside childhood home of Shakespeare's wife.

I The Shakespearean Source

Meet an actor from the **Royal Shakespeare Company** and learn straight from the source what it's like to perform the Bard's work. The actor will also give you a personal tour around Stratford.

A blossoming poet or playwright is sure to find inspiration in this quaint town – it's happened before!

Day 6: Lake Bards

E Lake District

Travel through the Lake District, one of the United Kingdom's 14 National Parks and one of England's few mountainous regions. The Lake District was made famous during the early 19th-century by the 'Lake Poets' of the Romantic Movement – including William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Robert Southey.

Your first stop is at **Dove Cottage** in Grasmere, Wordsworth's home for nine years. Filled with memorabilia, the cottage gives a peek into the life of Britain's arguably most famous poet.

In the afternoon, venture to **Hill Top**, a small 17th-century cottage once home to Beatrix Potter. Hill Top Farm, in the village of Sawrey, was once filled with animals and inspired the author's creativity in regard to plot and characters. Shedding light on her life and work, the visit will rekindle the magic of characters like the famous Peter Rabbit. As you head north for the evening, you will have more time to see and explore the beautifully green and sprawling lands of the Lake District.



Oxford University, C.S. Lewis' alma mater



Students explore castle ruins



The Eagle and Child, meeting spot of literary legends



Playing cards at a local restaurant

9 DAY PROGRAM

Landmarks

Buckingham Palace
Trafalgar Square
Houses of Parliament
Big Ben
Westminster Abbey
St. Paul's Cathedral
Tower of London
Christ Church College
Martyrs' Memorial
House on Henley Street
Anne Hathaway's Cottage
Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
Dove Cottage
Hill Top
Auld Alloway Church
St. Michael's Church
Culzean Castle
Edinburgh Castle

Museums and Galleries

British Museum
The Writers' Museum

Interactive Insights

The Shakespearean Source

Eye-opening Excursions

Oxford
Stratford-upon-Avon
Lake District
Ayrshire



Edinburgh Castle

Day 7: From Here to Ayr

E Ayrshire

This coastal region in southwest Scotland brims with historical remembrance of the 'national poet of Scotland,' Robert Burns, and was his inspiration for the poem *Tam o' Shanter*. Begin your day by visiting Burns' humble birthplace in **Alloway**. This cottage is now also a museum to his life and works, including the original of *Auld Lang Syne*. Tour **Auld Alloway Church**, then pay a visit to the **Burns Monument**. Finally, tour the poet's final home in **Dumfries**. It was here that he wrote some of his best-known prose, and was finally laid to rest at **St. Michael's Church**.

Before leaving Ayrshire, visit the immense, breathtaking **Culzean Castle**. This romantic 18th-century castle majestically rests on the cliffs above the Firth of Clyde.

Arrive in **Edinburgh** in time for **dinner at a Scottish pub**.

Day 8: Great Scots

Wake up to a full day in **Edinburgh**, the capital of Scotland and one of the focal centers of the Enlightenment. This gorgeous city was, and still is, home to countless celebrated writers – from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of the *Sherlock Holmes* series, to Irvine Welsh, author of *Trainspotting*.

Your tour will first take you into **Edinburgh Castle**, a majestic fortress standing upon Castle Rock. Stroll down the **Royal Mile** and pass by the **Palace of Holyroodhouse**, the Queen's official Scottish residence. The tour ends on **Princes Street**, lined with an array of stores and boutiques.

In the afternoon, you are free to explore the city known as the "Athens of the North." You may wish to visit **The Writers' Museum** in Lady Stairs House, a tribute museum to three of Scotland's best literary figures: Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Robert Burns.

Enjoy a farewell feast.

Day 9: Cheerio!

Enjoy free time in the early morning, perhaps for writing a final journal entry in the park.

Coach transfer to airport for flight home.

Note: *This itinerary may be modified depending on your travel dates, arrival and departure times, national holidays, and hours of operation in the host country. Prices vary depending on departure city and duration of program.*



A student relaxing in the Scottish countryside



Students pose for a final group photo in Edinburgh



Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare's hometown