

Defence of the Realm

Provisional tour itinerary 2025

Proposed departures: 20/07/25 to 30/07/25 - 10/08/25 to 20/08/25 - 28/09/25 to 08/10/25

Day 1, Meet at our London Hotel, where we stay overnight, after a welcome dinner (D,B)

Day 2, this morning we visit the Churchill War Rooms, a labyrinth of underground meeting rooms, from where Winston Churchill, his ministers and military advisors influenced the course of the second World War. A short journey brings us to The Imperial War Museum in Lambeth, the most comprehensive display and record of the most devastating conflict in human history. This afternoon we depart for the University City of Cambridge where we enjoy a guided tour of the wonderful colleges.

Overnight Cambridge Hotel (B)

Day 3, A visit to The American Cemetery at Cotton, before we arrive at Imperial War Museum Duxford, Europe's largest air museum. Included is a flight in a 1930's de Havilland Dragon Rapide biplane. This afternoon we travel to Woodhall Spa in Lincolnshire "bomber county".

Overnight Petwood Hotel (B)

Day 4, East Kirby Aviation Centre is where we start our day, this former WW2 bomber station is now a living and working airfield, where we will see amongst many fascinating exhibits, Avro Lancaster NX611 "Just Jane" and recently restored de Havilland Mosquito HJ711. This afternoon we visit the unique Thorpe Camp, once part of the Woodhall Spa wartime complex, where we will find an "Aladdin's cave" of rare WW2 exhibits.

Overnight Petwood Hotel (B)

Day 5, our day starts at RAF Coningsby, home of The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, where we will see Spitfires, Hurricanes and Avro Lancaster PA474, one of only two still flying. This afternoon a visit to The International Bomber Command Centre at Canwick overlooking the great city of Lincoln. Tonight, we will dine together in the "Squadron Bar" at the Petwood Hotel, once the officers mess of 617 squadron "the dam busters".

Overnight Petwood Hotel (D,B)

Day 6, we travel south to the RAF Museum Cosford, where we will view a vast range of military aircraft, including the three V Bombers from the Cold War. This afternoon we will visit the beautifully landscaped National Arboretum,

Overnight Leamington Spa Hotel (B)

Day7, WW2 it is said was shortened by two years as a result of the code breakers of Bletchley Park, we will learn of the top-secret work of Alan Turing and his group. This afternoon we visit The Shuttleworth Collection a wonderful aviation and automotive museum.

Overnight Winchester (B)

Day 8, we travel to the south coast, driving through the beautiful county of Dorset and visit the Bovington Tank Museum and view the world's largest collection of tanks, followed by a visit to Bucklers Hard on the banks of the Beaulieu River, where many of Nelson's fleet were built for the battle of Trafalgar.

Overnight Portsmouth (B)

Day9, we start with a visit to the Submarine Museum at Gosport, then on to The Historic Dockyard in Portsmouth to see HMS Victory and learn about Henry VIII's flag ship The Mary Rose.

Overnight Portsmouth (B)

Day10, 81 years after the D Day landings we shall visit "The D Day Story" which tells of the sequence of events before during and after the invasion of Europe. This afternoon we visit Tangmere Military Aviation Museum, on the site of England's most southerly Battle of Britain airfield. Tonight, we dine together to reflect on the past nine days.

Overnight Portsmouth (D,B)

Day11, did we save the best to last? We visit The Heritage Hanger at Biggin Hill aerodrome where there are seldom less than ten Spitfires under restoration and being serviced. Here there is also the opportunity to take a flight in a twin seat mark 9 Spitfire, (at an extra cost) and can be arranged through www.flyaspitfire.com

All good things come to an end! We travel the short distance back to Central London where sadly our tour ends.