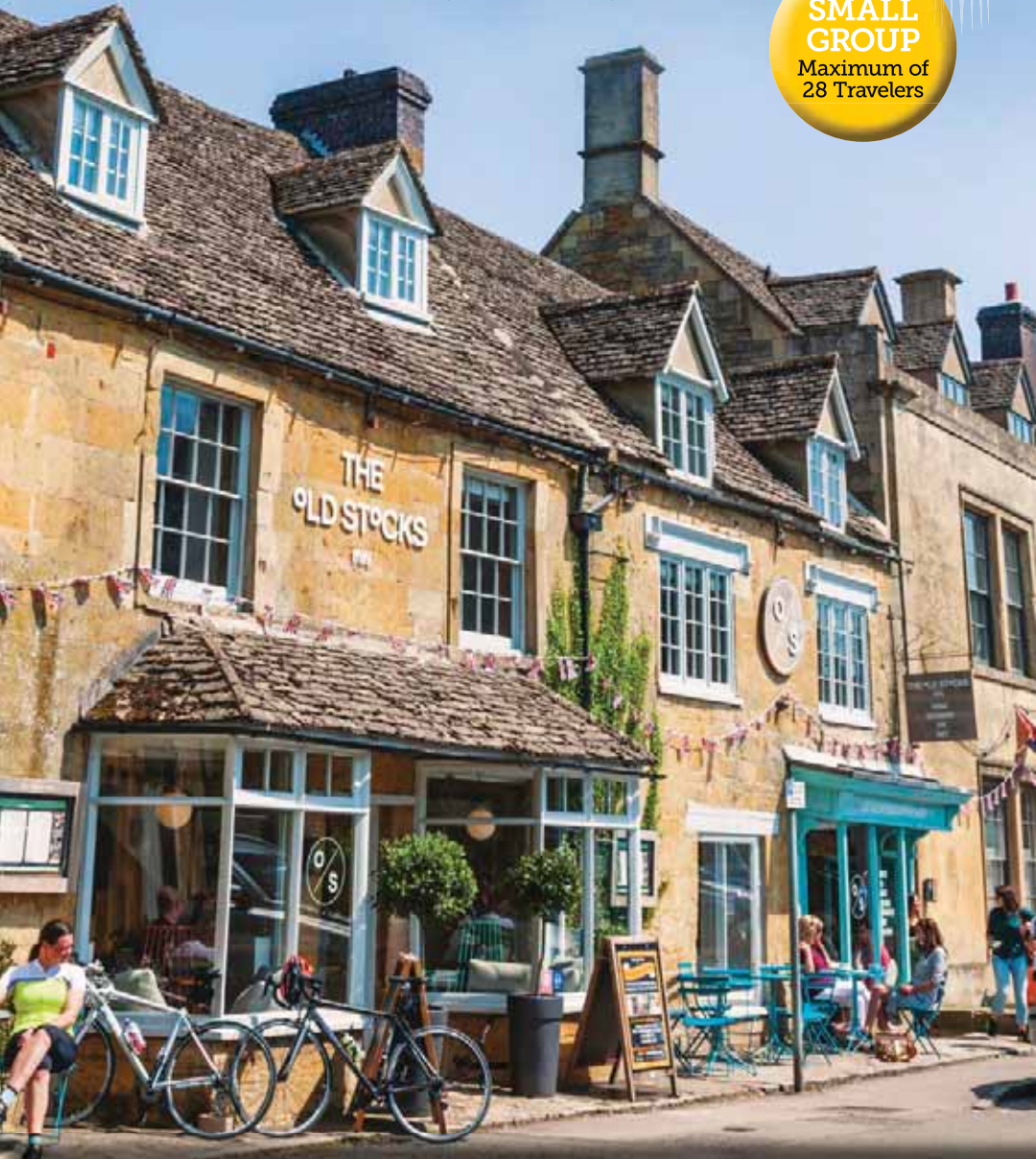


# Cotswolds

ESCAPE

SMALL  
GROUP  
Maximum of  
28 Travelers



SPONSORED BY

**EXPLORERS**  
ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

University of Illinois Alumni Association  
September 12-20, 2024

# EXPLORERS

ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

## Dear EXPLORERS and Friends,

Join us for an enriching journey through some of England's most celebrated sites! From your base in the Georgian town of Woodstock, venture through the poetic countryside to encounter delightful villages and customary gardens, cast together with centuries-old tales.

Together, we'll discover England's quintessential culture, cuisine and welcoming people and uncover the history that helped shape the nation. Thrilling excursions include a trip to Oxford's storied university and the butter-hued villages of the Cotswolds. Follow in Shakespeare's footsteps in his hometown of Stratford-upon-Avon and learn about Sir Winston Churchill while roaming the halls of Blenheim Palace. Experience the lyrical pace of Cotswolds hamlets, host to time-trodden bridleways and footpaths, cozy cottages and tea shops. Plus, engage with a local family at their traditional rural farm and visit Bath, a magical English city!

This well-rounded program features the camaraderie and security of group travel and the services of a professional Travel Director. What makes it even more special is our commitment to education. Throughout your travels, expert guides and lecturers provide meaningful context to enhance your experience. All these elements make for an unbeatable travel value that will generate lots of interest, so guarantee your place by reserving today.

Sincerely,



David Bambrey  
President, University of Illinois Alumni Association

The EXPLORERS program is open to alumni of the University of Illinois, their families, and friends.

### UNESCO World Heritage

1. City of Bath
2. Blenheim Palace
3. The Shakespeare Documents



Bath





# A World of Discovery



There's magic to be found in the Cotswolds! Here, gentle morning mists unveil ancient woodlands and wildflower meadows, trickling streams and the historic birthplaces of great English icons. Get a taste of this captivating region within its fine cities bursting with Roman heritage and delightful market towns that owe their elegance to the wool trade. Ample free time allows you to craft your own magical moments by visiting local gastro pubs, savoring tea and delicious scones, or browsing antique shops.

*Top: Cotswolds, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*  
*Above: Shakespeare Monument, Stratford-upon-Avon*  
*Cover: Stow-on-the-Wold*  
*Mail panel: University of Oxford | Bourton-on-the-Water*

## Inspiring Moments



- Soak up the alluring romance, history and quaint charms of the **Cotswolds**, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Travel through millennia to Roman times in **Bath**, lauded for its elegant Georgian architecture and storied bathing complex.
- Uncover the life and legacy of William Shakespeare in **Stratford-upon-Avon**.
- Tour **Blenheim Palace**, where Sir Winston Churchill was born and raised.
- Visit a **Cotswolds family farm** to enjoy a slice of traditional English country life.
- Enlighten your inner scholar beneath the ivory towers of the **University of Oxford**.
- Explore England's unspoiled countryside, marveling at **handsome Cotswolds villages and sleepy hamlets**.
- Experience two **UNESCO World Heritage sites** and a **UNESCO Memory of the World**.

ALUMNI CAMPUS  
ABROAD®



Oxford

### Day 1 | In Transit

Depart for London, England. 🚗

### Day 2 | London, England | Woodstock

Arrive in London and transfer 🚗 to Woodstock. Check in to the Macdonald Bear Hotel.

Spend time exploring Woodstock, host to tea shops, inviting pubs and fine museums. Later, gather to enjoy a Welcome Reception and Dinner with your fellow travelers.

### Day 3 | Oxford | Woodstock

**Oxford.** After a satisfying breakfast, head off to the city of Oxford to witness the oldest university in the English-speaking world. Four British kings, one pope and a host of poets, philosophers, authors, scientists and physicists graduated from Oxford. A walking tour showcases the precincts of the colleges. Along the way, take a closer look at one of the colleges.

**Blenheim Palace.** Welcome to Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Winston Churchill. This majestic palace was a gift from Queen Anne to General John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough to celebrate his victory at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704. Enjoy a tour of the palace's elegant staterooms, marveling at the priceless collections and portraits. Explore the formal gardens and delight in the sprawling parklands designed by "Capability" Brown.

### Day 4 | Stratford-Upon-Avon

**Enrichment: English Writing Tradition.**

**Stratford-Upon-Avon.** Witness the medieval market town that kindled William Shakespeare's love stories and venerated tales. Begin at the family house of Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's

true love, and witness her family's heirlooms. Next, visit the Tudor thatched cottage where Shakespeare grew up before becoming the world's greatest dramatist. Step into the rooms where he daydreamed and where he perhaps conjured up his marvelous stories of human emotion and conflict.

Delve further into Shakespearean history as you enjoy exclusive access to the UNESCO-listed Shakespeare Documents. These 400-year-old documents relate to Shakespeare's life events, business dealings and theatrical life. Archivists and Shakespeare experts share insights into the writer's life and noteworthy contributions.

### Day 5 | Cotswolds Villages

**Cotswolds – A Journey Through an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.** Delight in breathtaking rural England as you discover endearing Cotswolds villages, each with its own unique history and character. Visit Stow-on-the-Wold, designed with narrow lanes that allowed for easy shepherding during the wool trade era.

Family home of Anne Hathaway





Continue to Bourton-on-the-Water, famous for its ancient stone bridges spanning the tranquil river. Admire the market town of Chipping Campden, known for its long High Street in the town center. Drive through Moreton-in-Marsh and Minster Lovell, nestled along the romantic River Windrush.

**Enrichment:** *Contemporary England.*

#### Day 6 | Cotswolds

**AHI Connects | Traditional Cotswolds Life.** Visit a sprawling rural farm located in the heart of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Tour the family property and learn about the farm's traditions and operations. Enjoy chatting with the owners and learning about their lives. Then relax over a tasty lunch.

**Free Time:** Return to Woodstock and make your own plans during an afternoon at leisure.

#### Day 7 | Bath

**Bath.** Trace ancient history as you walk through the well-preserved city of Bath,

##### *Bourton-on-the-Water*



located along the River Avon. Bath was built around the only natural hot spring in Great Britain, and the city was originally an exclusive spa getaway for European aristocrats. Explore the renowned Roman Baths, a true feat of engineering with chambers containing baths, heated rooms and plunge pools. Admire the stunning architecture of Bath Abbey, Pulteney Bridge and the 18th-century Georgian Royal Crescent, a row of 30 terraced houses with Georgian facades and Romanesque columns. During your tour, ponder what life must have been like in Britain so many centuries ago.

**Free Time:** Enjoy lunch and follow your own path in this sophisticated city. You may wish to indulge at the Thermae Bath Spa or browse Bath's glittering emporiums for a bespoke gift.

##### *Rural farm, Cotswolds*



## Included Features



### Accommodations (with baggage handling)

- 7 nights in Woodstock, England, at the first-class Macdonald Bear Hotel.

### Extensive Meal Program

- 7 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners; including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.

### Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Small group:** Sized just right at 28 guests.
- **AHI Travel Assurance plan** covers Accident and Sickness Medical Expense, Trip Delay and Emergency Evacuation for U.S. residents.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- **AHI Sustainability Promise:** We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.
- **AHI Connects:** Local immersion.
- Free time to pursue your individual interests.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.



## Day 8 | Woodstock

**Rousham House and Gardens.** Travel to the Rousham House and Gardens for a tour of the Gothic manor house and perfectly appointed grounds. Here, the English landscape style highlights the work of British architect William Kent and represents the purest example of an Augustan landscape garden, remaining almost as Kent left it. Take in the many features that delighted 18th-century visitors, such as Venus's Vale, the Cold Bath, the seven-arched Praeneste, and "Eyecatcher," a sham ruin. Three 17th-century walled gardens delight with deep herbaceous borders that spill over the paths; peaches, apricots, plums and pear trees trained against the ancient brick walls; and a pool with a fountain surrounded by roses.

**Free Time:** After today's adventure, spend an afternoon at leisure in Woodstock.

Raise a toast to your fellow travelers as you cap off your final evening at tonight's Farewell Reception and Dinner.

## Day 9 | In Transit

Transfer ➡ to London airport for the return flight ✈ to your gateway city.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.

✈ Flights and ➡ transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

### Note About Activity Levels

We have designated activity levels for all excursions on this program. For more details, please call or visit our website.

#### Excursions on this itinerary require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats

Rousham House and Gardens



## Accommodations



### MacDonald Bear Hotel | Woodstock



The notable Macdonald Bear Hotel is nestled in the heart of beautiful Woodstock near Blenheim Palace. This charming property, set in a 13th-century inn, has an ivy-cloaked façade and welcomes guests with warm, rich interiors and a relaxing courtyard. Enjoy delicious British dishes prepared at the restaurant or sit by an open fire, savoring a fine wine or ale. Browse the modern art and jewelry on display from local craftspeople or walk to nearby cafes, antique shops and pubs. At the day's end, settle into your traditional bedroom featuring satellite television, antique furniture and pleasing décor.



Market Hall, Chipping Campden

# Reserve your trip today!

To book your journey,  
please call our AHI Travel Experts  
at **844-414-0369** or  
visit **<https://uiaa.org/explorers/>**.

## Program Dates

### Travel dates †

**September 12-20, 2024**

† Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

### Tour dates\*

**September 13-20, 2024**

\* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

## Land Program

Full Price	\$4,245
Special Savings	\$250
<b>Special Price*</b>	<b>\$3,995</b>

\*Special Price valid if booked by the date found on the address panel.

**Receive Bonus Savings when you Pay in Full at booking.**

**Call for details.**

VAT is an additional \$395 per person.

All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated).

Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined.

Single accommodations are an additional \$895 (limited availability).

**Please note:** Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://il.ahitravel.com/destinations/1802A?schoolId=69>. You can also request a copy from our travel experts. Any payment to AHI Travel constitutes your acceptance of the terms and conditions set out therein, including but not limited to the cancellation terms.

## AHI FlexAir

### Let us arrange your flights

**Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:**

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays





Blenheim Palace

## AHI Travel Expertise



From your reservation to your return home, we are here to ensure you have the adventure of a lifetime.

### *Before you go:*

**Travel Consultants** stand ready to answer your questions as they guide you through the reservation process.

**Passenger Service Representative** offers personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

**Travel Information** provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

### *Once you arrive:*

**Your Travel Director**, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

**Handpicked Expert Guides** offer fascinating insights and share their passion for their country with you.

**Knowledgeable Lecturers** deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.



Hamlet Monument,  
Stratford-upon-Avon

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