Join David Faulkner the Walter C. Teagle Director of First-Year Writing Seminars, John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Cornell University for

Two Englands: Jane Austen and Thomas Hardy in Southwest Britain

June 15–24, 2024

Itinerary

SATURDAY–SUNDAY, JUNE 15–16
HOME / LONDON / WINDSOR
Depart on overnight flights to London’s Heathrow Airport. On arrival, a private transfer will take you to our hotel overlooking Windsor Castle. In the evening, join the group for a welcome reception followed by a free evening to take advantage of the ideal location in the heart of Windsor. MACDONALD WINDSOR HOTEL (B)

MONDAY, JUNE 17
CHAWTON HOUSE LIBRARY / JANE AUSTEN HOUSE
Following breakfast and our first lecture, head southwest to Chawton House, an Elizabethan manor house inherited by Jane Austen’s brother, Edward Austen Knight. It now accommodates a unique library called The Centre for the Study of Early Women’s Writing, 1600–1830. Continue to Jane Austen’s House Museum, the charming house in Chawton where she (re)wrote her major novels during the last eight years of her life. Then we will wind west across Hardy’s “Wessex” into Wiltshire for miles across Wiltshire’s Great Plain. BOOTHAM HOUSE (B,L)

TUESDAY, JUNE 18
MONTACUTE HOUSE / LYME REGIS
Following a morning lecture, turn south into Dorset toward beautiful Montacute House, the filming location of several scenes in Emma Thompson’s Sense and Sensibility (1995). Inside the manor is a spectacular art collection, including the only Venus of Wiltshire. Beyond the gates lies a history of local agricultural unrest that conjures Hardy’s life-world. At lunch, you’ll sample local specialties at the traditional “Fountain Inn” pub. As we arrive at the southern coast, the remote Dorset resort of Lyme Regis famously evokes both Austen’s Persuasion and a deeper, “evolutionary” past that foreshadows Hardy’s post-Darwinian perspective. MACDONALD BATH SPA HOTEL (B,L)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19
BATH
Begin at No. 1 Royal Crescent, a Georgian town house that creates a wonderful picture of life for both the wealthy and their servants in Georgian Bath. Hear a fascinating talk on Jane Austen before a guided Jane Austen-themed walking tour to see highlights of her former dwellings as well as the places that feature so much in her writing. Enjoy lunch independently before heading to the Assembly Rooms for an afternoon tour. Once the hub of the Georgian social calendar, the Assembly Rooms were an important setting for Austen’s novels Persuasion and Northanger Abbey. MACDONALD BATH SPA HOTEL (B,L)

THURSDAY, JUNE 20
MOMPESSON HOUSE / WILTON HOUSE / SALISBURY
After a morning lecture, return southeast into Wiltshire, across the landscape reimagined by Hardy as “Wessex,” towards Salisbury (“Melchester”). Visit Mompesson House, whose magnificent interiors and gardens offer a well-preserved example of a Queen Anne-style town house within Salisbury’s Cathedral Close. Enjoy lunch and a guided tour at Wilton House, an excellent example of 18th-century Palladian architecture and home of the Earls of Pembroke for over 450 years. Both of these great houses have featured in films of Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice. Austen’s heroines often travel, as we are doing—yet imagine the journey not only of favored daughters but also of a poor, vulnerable laborer like Hardy’s Tess Durbeyfield. MERCURE SALISBURY WHITE HART HOTEL (B,L)

FRIDAY, JUNE 21
STONEHENGE / SALISBURY
Travel to nearby Stonehenge for a private group tour of the iconic site as it nears alignment with the summer solstice. Return to Salisbury for a guided tour of the city’s fine medieval Cathedral, which boasts the tallest spire in Britain, visible for miles across Wiltshire’s Great Plain. MERCURE SALISBURY WHITE HART HOTEL (B,L)

SATURDAY, JUNE 22
ABBOTSBURY / WEYMOUTH / DORCHESTER
Head back towards the southern coast to see Hardy’s home and to visit the settings for several of his major novels. Visit unique Abbotsbury Swannery to feed the King’s swans at noon; take in the coastal resort of Weymouth (Hardy’s “Budmouth,” a favorite resort of George III) and the ancient market town of Dorchester (“Casterbridge”). We make our pilgrimage to Hardy’s rural birthplace and to the house he designed and inhabited in maturity (“Max Gate”). MERCURE SALISBURY WHITE HART HOTEL (B,L)

SUNDAY, JUNE 23
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL / THE VYNE
Following a leisurely morning, turn northeast toward Austen’s native Hampshire, to the medieval city and former royal capital of Winchester (“Wintoncester”), where Tess of the D’Urbervilles meets her end and Jane Austen rests in peace. The great Cathedral is just one of the historic highlights, its treasures include Austen’s tomb and the Winchester Bible, one of the finest surviving 12th-century bibles. Enjoy some free time and lunch in town. Continue to The Vyne, a splendid Tudor mansion set in 13 acres of attractive gardens, for a privately-guided tour. Return to Windsor to gather for a farewell dinner in celebration of our adventure. MACDONALD WINDSOR HOTEL (B,L)

MONDAY, JUNE 24
WINDSOR / LONDON / HOME
Following breakfast, join the group transfer to Heathrow Airport for return flights home. (B)

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Tour Rates

PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY........................................$6,995
PER PERSON, SINGLE OCCUPANCY.....................................$8,195

The best-preserved copy of “Magna Carta” (1215) resides here, an essential touchstone of English history and identity. MERCURE SALISBURY WHITE HART HOTEL (B,L)
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TRAVEL INSURANCE
Travel insurance for trip cancellation and interruption, medical problems, baggage loss and delay, etc., is highly recommended. Cancellation policies that apply to this expedition are included in this brochure. Information about travel insurance will be sent to confirmed participants.

GROUP SIZE
This exclusive program can accommodate 29 participants.

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A deposit of $1,000 per person is required to reserve space on this program. To register using a credit card or check, call (888) 328-2089 or email res@criteriontravel.com. Final payment deadline is March 18, 2024 (90 days prior to departure). For those who register after March 18, 2024, full payment is due upon registration. Final payment must be made by check or bank transfer.

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The itinerary presented for this tour is subject to modification and change by Cornell University and Criterion Travel. Every reasonable effort will be made to operate the program as planned; however, should unforeseen world events and conditions require the itinerary to be altered, Cornell University and the tour operator reserve the right to do so for the safety and best interest of the group. Any extra expenses incurred in this situation are the responsibility of the participant.

A NOTE ABOUT RATES
Tour rates are based upon current fuel prices, taxes, tariffs, and a minimum number of participants. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change. If there are significant changes, details will be advised prior to departure.