

FALL BEAUTIES BOSTON & THE BERKSHIRES

TUESDAY 2 – THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER 2018 (10 DAYS)

TOUR DIRECTOR: JAMES HILL

£4190

- **Superb opportunity to discover Boston's cultural and art institutions**
- **In-depth view of the newly displayed Museum of Fine Arts**
- **Visits to the newly reopened art galleries at Harvard & Harvard's Arnold Arboretum**
- **Excellent located historic hotel in fashionable Back Bay**
- **Opportunity to visit Edith Wharton's estate The Mount & historic Williamstown**
- **Explore the gardens and estates of the Berkshires in Western Massachusetts**



Massachusetts State House, Boston

OVERVIEW

Boston's history is America's history – indeed, perhaps no other city has 'history' so deeply embedded within both its civic fabric and its art collections. Oft described as 'The Athens of America', Boston exudes a harmonious fusion of public spaces, fine architecture, art collecting and excellence in learning.

With New England and Boston at their 'Fall' best, our visit begins with the momentous events which led up to and beyond America's break with Great Britain, centred on visits to Boston's churches and civic buildings. We also explore the city's several art collections, stimulated by the reopening of two of America's most prestigious arts institutions – The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) and also the Art Museums at Harvard, Cambridge. These have been magnificently transformed and we shall enjoy a tour-de-force of European Old Masters and American paintings. A faux-Venetian *palazzo* is where Isabella Stewart Gardner transformed her considerable wealth into a home for one of the great private collections of America. Its natural heir is perhaps the Clark Institute in Williamstown, another remarkable individual art collection we shall visit.

The Berkshire Hills line the western edge of Massachusetts, a rural region of distinct beauty and peace. Boston's wealthy, cultural elites have long been attracted to its atmospheric and gentle landscape. We shall explore their legacy through visits to historic estates and gardens in and around the enchanting towns of Stockbridge and Williamstown – all a testament to the wealth of Massachusetts.

We shall stay at the **4* Lenox Hotel**, a landmark hotel located in the Back Bay district. Some of the city's premier cafés, restaurants, shops and the Boston Symphony Hall are all within walking distance of the hotel. The **4* Red Lion Inn** is located in the small historic town of Stockbridge, located two hours directly west of Boston, close to the state borders of New York State and Connecticut. This rambling, white-clapboard inn was first opened in 1773. The inn's long porch, charming lounges and comfortable rooms are only a part of its unique charm.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1: Tuesday 2 October – We fly from Heathrow with BA to Boston, arriving early afternoon. We travel by coach to our hotel, the **4* Lenox**, via an introductory orientation tour around the city centre. We have an early group dinner in our hotel – wine, water and coffee are included with all group lunches and dinners.

Day 2: Wednesday 3 October – We begin in the historic centre of Boston investigating the events surrounding America's break with Britain. We visit the **Old State House**, the seat of British colonial rule, and **The King's Chapel** – the first Anglican Church in New England. After coffee we visit the **Boston Athenaeum**, once the city's art gallery, its considerable holdings include paintings and multiple libraries - no other space in Boston has such a sense of history. After lunch (not included) we visit the grand **Massachusetts State House**. We end on 1 Beacon Hill with a visit to **Nichols House**, home of landscaper Rose Standish Nichols. The evening will be free.

Day 3: Thursday 4 October – To nearby Copley Square’s **Boston Library** to view the mural schemes of John Singer Sargent. We continue to the imposing neo-Romanesque **Trinity Church**. After coffee we travel to the **Museum of Fine Arts** for the first of two visits, today exploring the collection of **European Old Masters**. After lunch on site (not included) we walk the short distance to the **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum**. Our guided visit explores this world-renowned private collection displayed in a marvellous Venetian style palazzo, rich in Italian, Flemish and French paintings. The evening will be free.

Day 4: Friday 5 October – Today we cross the Charles River and travel to **Cambridge**. We begin at **Harvard Yard** and admire a diverse range of the University’s buildings. After a coffee break we visit **Harvard’s Art Museums**. Our guided visit will feature a selection of European and American paintings across the Fogg, Busch-Reisinger and Sackler Collections. After some free time in the museums and a group lunch off Harvard Yard, we return to Boston. The remainder of the afternoon and evening will be free.

Day 5: Saturday 6 October – We return to **The Museum of Fine Arts**, concentrating on the **Art of The Americas**. We trace American painting and its decorative arts from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries divided by a coffee break. At the end of the morning, lunch and the remainder of the afternoon will be free. Later in the evening we walk the short distance to our group dinner at **Bistro du Midi**, facing Boston Common.

Day 6: Sunday 7 October – We depart Boston and travel to its suburbs to visit the **Arnold Arboretum**, Harvard’s living garden of plants and garden architecture. After a snack lunch on site (not included) we travel two hours westwards to **Stockbridge** and our hotel, the **4* Red Lion Inn**. We have a group dinner in our hotel.

Day 7: Monday 8 October – We begin on this, Columbus Day, at **Mission House**, an early yet elaborate Stockbridge wooden house built in 1739. After coffee we continue to the **Norman Rockwell Museum**. America’s beloved illustrator lived most of his life here and documented a remarkable period of transformation in the nation’s history. His iconic images reflect huge changes in society, yet the charm of small-town American life is vividly captured in this engaging display. After lunch on site (not included) we visit **Chesterwood Estate**, the summer studio of early twentieth century sculptor Daniel Chester French. The evening will be free.

Day 8: Tuesday 9 October – Today we travel northwards to visit the elegantly planned Williamstown. Dotted with Federal-style buildings of great taste, we shall visit the **Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute**. Newly arranged, and one of the richest individual art collections in the US; French Impressionist and American period painters are very well-represented. After some free time and lunch (not included) we return to Stockbridge where the afternoon will be free. Later in the evening we have our final group dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 9 & 10: Wednesday 10 & Thursday 11 October – On our final day we visit **Naumkeag House and Gardens**, a charming *Gilded Age* estate. The McKim, Mead and White-designed cottage is complemented by gardens offering some of the best views of the Berkshires. We continue to Lenox to visit **The Mount**, the home of Edith Wharton. Both the finely restored house and its charming terraced gardens are reflective of Edith’s contribution to gardening, her travels and American literature. After a final group lunch at Lenox, we end our week at **Ashintully Gardens**, a large, episodic garden, landscaped in the mid-twentieth century with wide expanses and glorious vistas. We return to Boston airport for our evening flight, arriving at Heathrow on Thursday morning.

PRACTICALITIES

Price £4190 **Deposit** £500 **Price without flights** £3740 **Single Supplement** £795 (Double for Sole Use)

Optional Supplements

Upgrade at Hotel Lenox for two sharing:

from Superior Room to Junior Suite £170 or to Executive Suite £395 (per room)

Upgrades with BA to World Traveller Plus or Club Class on request

Hotel 5 nights with breakfast at 4* Hotel Lenox (Located along Boylston Street in Back Bay); 3 nights with breakfast at the 4* Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge

Flights British Airways

Outward: **BA213** Depart London Heathrow (Terminal 5) **1115**, arrive Boston **1330**

Return: **BA202** Depart Boston **2125**, arrive London Heathrow (Terminal 5) on Thursday 11 October **0900**

Price includes: 4 dinners & 2 lunches with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers, a subway, bus & ferry pass, entry fees & gratuities, services of James Hill & museum, house & garden docents & lecturers

Not included Travel to/from Heathrow, 4 dinners & 6 lunches



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