



CICERONI
T R A V E L

THE SCOTTISH ENLIGHTENMENT EDINBURGH & ITS HINTERLAND

SUNDAY 14 – FRIDAY 19 JULY 2019 (6 DAYS)

LECTURER: TOM DUNCAN

£2185

- **Discover Edinburgh & its hinterland**
- **We explore the city's most important museums, galleries & the Botanic Garden**
- **Private visits to a number of important country houses, including the amazing Marchmont in the Borders**
- **Private evening visit to Holyrood Palace**
- **Excellent 4* hotel in heart of Georgian 'New Town'**



Edinburgh, Palace of Holyrood

OVERVIEW

Long the capital of an independent Scotland, not much has survived from Edinburgh's medieval past, apart from some defensive and ecclesiastical remains in the Old Town, in and around Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace. When King James VI succeeded his cousin, Elizabeth, as King James I of England, not unnaturally, the city went into decline, neglected by the Stuart dynasty, though one honourable exception was the extensive rebuilding of Holyrood by order of Charles II, which we shall see when we visit the palace privately.

With the Stuarts in exile, their Hanoverian successors looked on Scotland as a hotbed of Jacobite resistance, with some justification, perhaps? When George IV visited Edinburgh in 1822, a visit masterminded by Sir Walter Scott, Scotland's profile, already growing in popularity, received royal approval, a process cemented during Queen Victoria's long reign – the era of kilts and 'shortbreadary' had definitely arrived.

That said, Edinburgh enjoyed a more substantial fame as the 'Athens of the North' built on strong foundations, its reputation as a centre of intellectual endeavour an international one from the later eighteenth century onwards. Subsequent economic prosperity ensured that Scotland's capital came to be endowed not just with buildings of great architectural merit but with institutions to match. This is the Edinburgh of intellectuals such as David Hume, of the artists Allan Ramsay, Henry Raeburn and David Wilkie, the architects William, James and Robert Adam and that most prolific of popular writers, Sir Walter Scott.

What better way to begin than by exploring the city itself, tracing its footprint from its medieval origins to the fine 'New Town' of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This will be supported by time spent visiting four of its great public institutions. The National Museum of Scotland is a vast treasure trove and we shall see some of its most important exhibits. The Scottish National Portrait Gallery has recently been reorganised and the resulting new 'picture hang' is an object lesson in how to bring history alive. The city's National Gallery, though modest in size, punches way above its weight, the collection making one of the finest smaller galleries in Europe, formed through judicious purchases, stellar gifts and not least by the long-term loans from the fabled Bridgewater/Sutherland collection - Raphaels, Poussins and much else besides. Finally, we shall also visit the Edinburgh Botanic Garden, one of the worlds' great centres of horticultural research.

In the countryside surrounding the capital city an already strong tradition of medieval castle building was superseded in Georgian times as country houses were commissioned, resulting in a concentration of fine, and at times quite extraordinary, mansions garlanding Edinburgh. These range from the early Georgian grandeur of Newhailes and Arniston just outside the city, to the extraordinary Marchmont House in the Tweed Valley, the focus of a recent exemplary restoration. We shall also visit privately Mertoun, the seat of the Duke of Sutherland where we shall see the family's collection, one of the most important in Scotland.

Led by Tom Duncan and based in the heart of Edinburgh's Georgian quarter, the 'New Town', we spend five nights at the 4* Principal Edinburgh Charlotte Square Hotel, formerly The Roxburghe Hotel.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1: Sunday 14 July – We arrive at Edinburgh Airport in the mid- afternoon. While the main group flight is from London it should be possible to fly from other airports, both within the UK and abroad, where available. We then drive immediately into the city for an introduction to **Edinburgh** from our coach, stopping en route as required. We check into our hotel, the **4* Principal Edinburgh Charlotte Square** and later that evening we have dinner in our hotel – water, wine and coffee are included with all group lunches and dinners.

Day 2: Monday 15 July – This morning we visit **The National Museum of Scotland**, a complement to yesterday's introduction to the city, which is full of amazing treasures. We then take our coach out of the city for a private lunch and visit to **Arniston**, the home of Henrietta Dundas Bekker. This is a very important house designed by William Adam for the Dundas family and it has wonderful contents. We return to the city and the evening will be free.

Day 3: Tuesday 16 July – A short walk will take us to the **Scottish National Portrait Gallery**. It has recently been reorganised and the resulting new 'picture hang' is an object lesson in how to bring history alive. From monarchs and statesmen to all the luminaries of the Scottish Enlightenment and on to more modern times, the range of personalities is endless. After some free time for lunch, not included, we continue to the **Scottish National Gallery** for a guided visit, with works by Raphael, Titian, Rubens, Poussin, Claude, Rembrandt and then some of the great Scottish painters such as Ramsay, Raeburn and Wilkie, amongst many others. The evening will be free.

Day 4: Wednesday 17 July – We spend today in one of the most enchanting areas within easy reach of the city, the Tweed Valley in the Borders. We have been fortunate in gaining access to **Marchmont House**, recently rescued and restored to its magnificent, mid eighteenth century best. After lunch in the house, we continue upriver towards Melrose to **Mertoun** for a private visit, where the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland will host our visit and show us their amazing art collection. While some of the fables Ellesmere/Sutherland paintings are on loan to the Gallery in Edinburgh (which we will have seen on a previous day) the family have amazing pictures by Claude, Cuypp, Panini and many others in their private home. We return to Edinburgh and a free evening.

Day 5: Thursday 18 July – **Newhailes** is one of those 'sleeping beauty' houses, long neglected, its remarkable contents hidden away. Rescued some years ago by the Scottish National Trust with remarkable sensitivity, if you do not know it, it will come as a revelation. We return to the city centre and the remainder of the afternoon will be free. We meet that evening for a private visit to **Holyrood Palace**, including rooms not usually on view and which are used by the Royal Family when in residence. We have dinner in a nearby restaurant after which we return to our hotel.

Day 6: Friday 19 July – Edinburgh's **Botanic Garden** is one of the most important botanic gardens and research institutions in the world. It has marvellous trees and shrubs, borders which are both themed and mixed while the ranges of glasshouses are home to an amazing variety of flora from all over the world. After our guided tour and a quick snack lunch on site, not included, we continue to Edinburgh Airport for the return flights to London and elsewhere.

PRACTICALITIES

Price £2185 **Without Flights** £2035 **Deposit** £275

Single Supplement £450 (Double/Twin Room for Sole Use)

Hotels 5 nights with breakfast at the 4* Principal Edinburgh Charlotte Square Hotel

Flights FlyBe

Outward: **BE2104** Departs London Heathrow (Terminal 2) **1120**, arrive Edinburgh **1255**

Return: **BE2107** Departs Edinburgh **1545**, arrive London Heathrow (Terminal 2) **1730**

Price includes 2 dinners & 2 lunches with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers, entry fees & gratuities, services of Tom Duncan and local guide

Not included Travel to/from Heathrow, 3 dinners & 4 lunches



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