

2ND JULY - 25TH JULY, 2020

THE SPITFIRE TRAIL

24 DAY ESCORTED TOUR



Explore the history of the iconic Spitfire on this 24 day escorted tour to the UK. Learn about RJ Mitchell's journey in creating what is probably one of the best loved aircraft in aviation history and see how it contributed to the turning point in WW2. Spend time in Kent "Hellfire Corner" and visit the memorial to "The Few". See what is being done today at restoration facilities to restore and keep the few remaining Spitfires airworthy and accessible to us all. Experience the sound of up to 18 Merlin and Griffon engines roaring as the Spitfire Scramble opens the show at Flying Legends and see hundreds of military aircraft from the many countries participating in the Royal International Air Tattoo, along with the Edwardian favourites at Shuttleworth.

Day 1: Thursday 2nd July

Auckland - Singapore

(Lunch/Dinner)

Meet & greet at Auckland Airport at 11am for our flight SQ286 departing at 2.10pm. We arrive in Singapore at 9pm and settle in for our overnight accommodation at the airport.

Hotel : to be confirmed, 1 night

Day 2: Friday 3rd July

Singapore - London

(Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner)

After a leisurely breakfast we will depart today on SQ318 at 12.35pm, arriving in Heathrow at 7.15pm. We will be picked up by our coach and transferred to our hotel in Bedford.

Hotel : Barns Hotel, Bedford, 3 nights

Day 3: Saturday 4th July

Sywell Aviation Museum

(Breakfast/Dinner)

Sywell Aerodrome is home to a small but award winning Museum which shares the rich heritage of the aerodrome and Northampton. It is also home to Ultimate Warbird Flights who operate the famous Grace Spitfire. If we are lucky we may get to see some flying action as well. Do let us know if you would like to tick this off your bucket list and book a flight!

Hotel : Barns Hotel, Bedford

Day 4: Sunday 5th July

Shuttleworth Collection & Air Show

(Breakfast)

We will spend the day at Old Warden aerodrome and enjoy the afternoon air display. The collection depicts the history of flight from the early 1900s to the 1950s and shows how the aeroplane operated in the pioneering years, was rapidly developed through necessity during World War I, was used for sport, pleasure and business in the 1920s and 30s and once again became a fighting machine in World War II. Also includes the beautiful Swiss Gardens and Shuttleworth House.

Hotel : Barns Hotel, Bedford

Day 5: Mon 6th July

Fan Bay Deep Shelter

(Breakfast)

This morning we head down to Kent and take a walk along the legendary white cliffs of Dover. Hidden below is an abandoned tunnel complex constructed in 1940/41 as accommodation for the gun battery above. For those keen, we will descend into Fan Bay Deep Shelter to explore the tunnels and see two sound mirrors, First World War early acoustic warning devices. We will then continue to South Foreland Lighthouse and tearooms.

Hotel : The Royal Hotel, Deal

Day 6: Tuesday 7th July

Battle of Britain Memorial & Kent B.O.B Museum

(Breakfast)

This morning we visit the Battle of Britain Memorial and The Wing which houses The Scramble Experience, a hands-on attraction that uses audio-visual effects, a video wall and other special techniques to show something of what it was like for the Few in the summer and early autumn of 1940. We spend the afternoon at the Kent Battle of Britain Museum, the most comprehensive and longest serving Battle of Britain Museum in the UK.

Hotel : The Royal Hotel, Deal

Day 7: Wednesday 8th July

Dover Castle

(Breakfast)

This morning we visit two museums sharing the former RAF Manston site: The Spitfire & Hurricane Museum and the RAF Manston History Museum. In the afternoon we roam through centuries of history at the most iconic of all English fortresses - Dover Castle. From the Romans to the Cold War, from The Keep to the Secret Wartime Tunnels, this medieval castle will keep us busy. It was from here that the extraordinary evacuation of the British Army from Dunkirk was masterminded in May and June 1940. Just outside the castle is the memorial to Louis Bleriot who landed here in 1909 on the first cross channel flight.

Hotel : The Royal Hotel, Deal, 3 nights

Day 8: Thursday 9th July

Headcorn Aerodrome & Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar

(Breakfast)

We start the day at Headcorn Aerodrome where we meet the team at Aero Legends and see their Spitfire pleasure flight operations. After lunch we head to Biggin Hill. The Hangar houses an amazing collection of airworthy Spitfires, probably the greatest concentration of Spitfire activity in the world, plus several others undergoing restoration. Our guided tour of the hangar is included; you have an option to "Sit in a Spit" for an additional cost. Hotel : Arundel House Hotel, Cambridge

Day 9: Friday 10th July

At leisure or IWM Duxford

(Breakfast)

Enjoy your day at leisure your way. If you would like to maximize time at Duxford and you only plan the one day at the airshow, we suggest a pre visit to the IWM to ensure that you get to see everything. Otherwise you can explore Cambridge

Hotel : Arundel House Hotel, Cambridge

Day 10: Saturday 11th July**Flying Legends Airshow**

(Breakfast)

Today is one of the tour highlights, Duxford and the "Flying Legends" Airshow, the Greatest Warbirds Event in Europe produced by The Fighter Collection in association with Imperial War Museum. Our Gold Pass includes use of a lined and carpeted marquee with luxury toilets, seated viewing enclosure, private access to the flight line walk, a souvenir programme, and a collectible badge/pass. There are many trade stands, the flight line walk, and all of the museum hangars to see before the flying starts usually at 2pm so you may like to take up the opportunity to have the pre-visit first on the Friday and/or a second optional day on the Sunday.

Hotel : Arundel House Hotel, Cambridge

Day 11: Sunday 12th July**At leisure or Flying Legends**

(Breakfast)

Return to the airshow for a second day at your own cost or have the day at leisure.

Hotel Arundel House Hotel, Cambridge

Day 12: Monday 13th July**Bentley Priory**

(Breakfast)

Bentley Priory, a Grade II* listed Mansion House in Stanmore, was home to Headquarters Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain. The museum tells one of the most important narratives of modern history – how the Battle of Britain was won and explores how technology, leadership and courage forged victory, enabling Britain's darkest hour to also be her finest hour.

Hotel : Harte & Garter Hotel, Windsor, 3 nights

Day 13: Tuesday 14th July**RAF Museum Hendon**

(Breakfast)

Located on the former Hendon Aerodrome, The Royal Air Force Museum London celebrates and commemorates the Royal Air Force. We expect to be here for much of the day. Three new innovative galleries explore the first 100 years of the RAF, its role today and invite visitors to imagine its future contribution and technology. The rest of the site houses the multi award-winning First World War in the Air Galleries, Historic Hangars and Bomber Command Hall. For a small additional cost you can sit in the cockpit of a Spitfire. If you prefer, you can stay in Windsor for the day.

Hotel : Harte & Garter Hotel, Windsor

Day 14: Wednesday 15th July**At leisure in Windsor**

(Breakfast)

Today you can choose to explore Windsor Castle, the Great Park, Saville Garden, St Georges Chapel, cruise the river, or walk around Eton College area. You could head into London for the day by train.

Hotel : Harte & Garter Hotel, Windsor

Day 15: Thursday 16th July**Farnborough Air Sciences Trust Museum**

(Breakfast/Lunch)

FAST (the Farnborough Air Sciences Trust) was founded in 1993 to safeguard Farnborough's priceless aeronautical heritage. The museum holds a collection of aircraft, satellites, simulators, wind tunnel and Royal Aircraft Establishment-related material. No other single location in the world has contributed so much to the development of aeronautical science over such a long period of time. Our visit today will be truly fascinating and includes a tour of two of the wind tunnels in the architecturally important listed buildings, not open to the General Public.

Hotel : Jurys Inn, Swindon, 3 nights

Day 16: Friday 17th July**At leisure in Swindon or Air Tattoo**

(Breakfast)

Today you can have an optional day at the Royal International Air Tattoo at your own cost. Public shuttle buses run from the station, an 8 minute walk from our hotel. Alternatively, have a day at leisure. There is the Great Western Railway's STEAM Museum and a Designer Outlet nearby with over 90 shops.

Hotel : Jurys Inn, Swindon

Day 17: Saturday 18th July**Royal International Air Tattoo**

(Breakfast/Lunch)

The Royal International Air Tattoo, the world's largest military airshow, has gained the well-earned reputation as one of the UK's top outdoor events. Over two miles of static aircraft, interactive activities and ground exhibitions with a thrilling 8 hour flying display including fast jets, giant transporters, historic aircraft and much more. Enjoy the show with our Cotswold Club pass including lunch.

Hotel : Jurys Inn, Swindon

Day 18: Sunday 19th July**Boscombe Down & Old Sarum**

(Breakfast)

We begin our day at the Boscombe Down Aviation Collection which tells the history of Boscombe Down and explains the place it has in the history of flight and flight test. Military flying began at Boscombe Down in 1917 and continues to the present day. Experimental operation began in 1940 and the site remains at the forefront for testing as the UK's and Western Europe's only dedicated military flight test centre.

Nearby, Old Sarum is one of the most enthralling and historically important sites in southern England. Uniquely, it combines a royal castle and cathedral within an Iron Age fortification, and for 150 years was a major centre of both secular and ecclesiastical government. After lunch we will explore the ruins.

Hotel : room2, Southampton, 2 nights

Day 19: Monday 20th July**Solent Sky**

(Breakfast)

It's a short walk this morning to Solent Sky, The "Birthplace" and "Home" of The Spitfire. The Museum showcases the history of aviation in Southampton and the Solent area, and pays tribute to RJ Mitchell. Geographically this was one of the most important areas in the country, if not the world, for aircraft experimental and development work between 1908 and the late 1960s, the most famous being the Spitfire. There are 18 aircraft of various types, including the Spitfire and S6b. In the afternoon you have some free time.

Hotel : room2, Southampton

Day 20: Tuesday 21st July**The Needles Old & New Battery**

(Breakfast/Dinner)

This morning we take the ferry across the Solent to the Isle of Wight, where we visit the Victorian coastal defence and secret rocket testing site perched high above the Needles Rocks. The remains of the High Down Test Site are a rare example of a 1950s secret British rocket test facility. The old and new batteries were built above the Needles stacks to guard the West end of the Solent.

Hotel : Albion Hotel, Freshwater Bay, 2 nights

Day 21: Wednesday 22nd July**Wight Aviation Museum and Airframe Assemblies**

(Breakfast

/Dinner)

This new museum due to open in April recognises the fusion of marine and aviation skills that led to the building of 600 aircraft on the Island during WW1 and illustrates the intense "War in the Air" over the Isle of Wight, during the Battle of Britain. Sandown Airfield is also home to Airframe Assemblies, a company dedicated to the restoration and repair of airframes for World War II warbirds mainly Spitfires. They will be happy to show us their current projects including a Typhoon. In the afternoon we will visit the old Isle of Wight Railway.

Hotel : Albion Hotel, Freshwater Bay

Day 22: Thursday 23rd July**Boulbee Academy & Tangmere Aviation Museum**

(Breakfast

/Dinner)

We catch our ferry across to Portsmouth and drop into Goodwood to see the Boulbee Academy where the Silver Spitfire is based. Lunch will be at the Aero Club Cafe overlooking the airfield. Then it's on to Tangmere Military Aviation Museum, which was established in 1982 on the old RAF Tangmere airfield. From its beginnings in 1916, through its illustrious service as one of Britain's front line fighter bases during WW2 and on to its key role as home to the world speed record breaking aircraft of the High Speed Flight in the post war years, it has occupied a unique place in aviation history. Our tour concludes and we travel back to Heathrow for the flights home or your onward journeys. We will arrive at Heathrow around 6pm, our flight SQ321 departs at 10.05pm.

Day 23: Friday 24th July**In Transit London - Singapore**

(Breakfast/Dinner)

SQ321 arrives at 6.10pm and SQ285 departs at 10.45pm. If you would like some time in Singapore on the way back, please ask and we can change your return flight to suit you. There may be an additional cost subject to availability so to avoid this please let us know asap.

Day 24: Saturday 25th July**Singapore - Auckland**

(Breakfast)

SQ285 arrives in Auckland at 12.20pm .

Itinerary subject to change.
See website for Terms and Conditions

\$11995 per person twin share

\$2890 single supplement

Deposit required \$500 per person

Includes: Economy return Airfares with Singapore Air • Private coach transport • All accommodation around 4* where possible • All breakfasts, dinners as stated • All entries as outlined in the itinerary • Tour escorted by experienced Tour Leaders • Gratuities • Gold Passes for Flying Legends and Cotswold Club for Air Tattoo

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