



**Scotland and Northern England: Exploring the countryside and culture  
- a 12-day trip -**



Join us on a 12-day almost all-inclusive trip as we explore Scottish and northern English landscapes, villages, and majestic historic sites. We will stay in Stirling (Scotland), Durham (northeast England), and Ambleside (northwest England, in the Lake District) at 3 & 4 star hotels. A private coach will transport us to each place and take us on a few day excursions. You will also have some days to yourself when you can sightsee on your own or in small groups. See our itinerary below for details. Group size 25-30 people.

The trip is for the parish community of St Teresa of Avila, Elmira. However, people who are not part of the parish community are welcome to join.

**Dates:** May 4 – May 17. Spring flowers will be in bloom and daylight hours will be long! Daily temperature highs: 15-20° C.

**Trip Organizer & facilitator:** Joan Coutu

I am a professor of visual culture (art and architectural history) at the University of Waterloo. My area of research is British art and architecture. I know the UK well: I regularly visit for work and I lived in London for 5 years in the early 1990s while I was doing my PhD. I also have extensive experience with organizing and leading trips. Throughout my 28-year career with the University of Waterloo, I have organized ten course trips to Europe; the most recent being a 10-day trip to the south of England in 2023. Here's a [link](#) to my bio & cv.

**Travel agent:** I work with Anthony Sarracini, owner of [Ontario Sarracini Travel](#). I provide Anthony with an itinerary and his company handles the logistics and financials. He and his company specialize in group travel and our working relationship goes back over 30 years.

**Co-facilitator:** Father Peter Meyer, St Teresa of Avila Church, Elmira

**Cost:** \$4695 CDN per person based on double/ twin occupancy. Includes:

- Flights (Toronto to Glasgow; Manchester to Toronto)
- Airport transfers via private coach
- 10 nights accommodation in 3 hotels
- 10 breakfasts – at the hotels
- Private coach between destinations (Stirling-Durham-Ambleside), includes stops along the way (see itinerary below)
- 3 one-day excursions on a private coach
- Admission tickets to all sites noted below except those marked with an \*
- Pre-trip orientation sessions in Feb. – April 2025 (3 or 4 in total), providing logistic and sightseeing information and context
- During the trip: information about what to do, where to eat, site-specific historical context (optional), etc.

### **Costs not included:**

- Single supplement. If you prefer a single room, the supplemental cost is \$898 CDN
- Ground transportation to and from Toronto, Pearson International Airport (ranges in price from \$25-\$200 each way from Kitchener-Waterloo or Elmira via public transportation, shuttle bus, or taxi; sharing taxis or a shuttle keeps the price down).
- Lunches and dinners. See note below about average cost.
- Admission to Cairngorms Mountain Railway and sites you visit on your own.
- Trip cancellation and interruption insurance and extended medical insurance. While these are optional, extended medical insurance is highly, highly recommended! See note below.
- Souvenirs, gifts, and shopping: as much as your budget allows...

### **Payment schedule:**

**15 July 2024:** \$1000 deposit.

Remaining installments (\$3695) due in Fall 2024 and early 2025. Exact dates tbd.

Cancellation up to 120 days before date of travel.

All payments can be made directly to Sarracini Travel via e-transfer ([accounting@sarracini.com](mailto:accounting@sarracini.com)), cheque, or credit card. Please also contact Joan Coutu at [joancoutu@gmail.com](mailto:joancoutu@gmail.com) to secure your place. Your place on the trip is secured on a first-come-first-serve basis with the deposit & email to Joan. In the event that more than 30 people wish to come, we will investigate the possibility of securing more hotel rooms, a larger coach, etc. but our absolute maximum is 35.

### **Accessibility:**

- Moderate walking
- Uneven roads and sidewalks
- Path walking
- For hotels, please see their detailed accessibility notices on their websites
- Steep hills in Durham (taxis and local buses are available)
- Optional medium and extreme hill walking

### **Age restriction:**

All participants must be 18 years or older, or be accompanied by a legal guardian who is 18 years or older.

## Detailed Itinerary with links to hotels & sites

### May 4, 2025:

Trip begins at Toronto Pearson airport.

Flight. AirTransat, Toronto-Glasgow

- depart Toronto Pearson airport, 7:15 pm (evening)
- arrive Glasgow, 6:50 am, May 5

### May 5:

Airport transfer via private coach to Stirling, Scotland (45 mins); arrive mid-morning

**May 5-10:** 6 nights at the [Golden Lion](#) in centre of Stirling (May 5-10 inclusive)

- Day excursion by private coach to the Scottish Highlands. Visit [Cairngorms National Park](#) & tour of the [Dalwhinnie Distillery](#).
  - The Cairn Gorm is 4,081 feet (1,244m) – the sixth highest mountain in the UK. Don't worry, you don't have to climb it! There are lots of “wee walks” and “health walks” which offer fabulous views. We're also hoping that the Cairngorms Mountain Railway\* will be operational (it is currently undergoing [repair](#)); the view from the top is spectacular and you can enjoy a nice morning coffee or light lunch in the café.
  - The Dalwhinnie Distillery needs no explanation!
- Day excursion by private coach: Loch Ness boat tour with visit to [Urquhart Castle](#)
- Suggestions for the other 2 ½ days (costs not included in trip price):
  - Walk to [Stirling Castle](#)\*
  - Local bus to [National Wallace Monument](#)\*
  - [Falkirk Wheel](#) boat tour (25-minute taxi; 42-minute bus from Stirling)\*
  - take the train to Glasgow or Edinburgh\* (each between 30-45 mins away and \$20-\$25 return)

### 11 May:

Depart Stirling on private coach. Visit [Holy Island / Lindisfarne](#) in afternoon (when tide is low), enroute to Durham in northeast England.

**May 11-13:** 2 nights in Durham at [Hotel Indigo](#)

- Spend 12 May exploring [Durham Cathedral](#) and [historic village](#) which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

**May 13:**

Depart Durham on private coach. Stop at [Hadrian's Wall](#) enroute to Ambleside in England's Lake District in northwest England.

**May 13-16:**

4 nights at [Brathay Lodge](#) in Ambleside

- Day excursion via private coach to [Hill Top](#) (Beatrix Potter's House), short ferry across [Lake Windermere](#), and [Blackwell House](#) which is an extraordinary example of the English Arts and Crafts movement. Lunch\* can be arranged at a country pub enroute.
- Suggestions for other two days:
  - [Rydal Mount - Wordsworth House](#) (30 min. walk or local bus ride)
  - Relax in Ambleside
  - local bus to village of Grasmere
  - local bus to Windermere
  - local hill walking
  - canoeing/kayaking on Lake Windermere

**May 17:**

Depart Ambleside on private coach to Manchester airport.

Flight: Air Transat, Manchester-Toronto

- departs Manchester 1:25 pm
- arrives Toronto 4:05 pm

Trip ends at Toronto-Pearson airport.

## NOTES

**Estimated price of lunch and dinner, not included in amount paid to travel agent:**

Breakfasts will be substantial so you will probably prefer a light lunch.

- Estimated cost for lunch:
  - as low as \$10 CDN for a take-out sandwich/salad, drink, and side (bag of chips, fruit)
  - dine-in café or pub lunch, per person: \$15-\$25 CDN plus drink
- Estimated cost for dinner, per person:
  - Dine-in: \$25 and up, plus drinks
  - Take-out: \$15 and up, plus drink

### Optional Trip Cancellation Insurance and Extended Medical insurance:

All are optional but extended medical insurance is highly recommended. You can purchase insurance through various suppliers. Alternatively, you may already have insurance through your place of work and/or credit card but please confirm with both.

Optional insurance is provided by Ontario Sarracini Travel; it can be purchased at time of deposit or with subsequent installments:

#### **Cancellation Insurance: covers cost of trip in case of cancellation due to medical reasons:**

- Up to 50 years old \$ 465.00
- Between 50 and 60 years old \$ 480.00
- Between 60 and 70 years old \$ 570.00

#### **Emergency Medical Coverage**

- Up to 59 years old \$ 75.00
- From 60 years old \$ 99.00 and up based on health and medication taken.

### Extending your travel:

If you wish to travel before or after the trip, Ontario Sarracini Travel can book your flights. However, they will need to know in ample time before the date of travel.

### Note re: facilitators and responsibility:

- As facilitators of the trip, neither Professor Joan Coutu nor Father Peter Meyer are, in any way, employed by Ontario Sarracini Travel.
- The costs of Joan Coutu and Father Peter Meyer's travel have been absorbed into the cost charged to participants; this reflects their pre-trip preparation as well as logistics and facilitation during the trip.
- While Joan Coutu and Father Peter Meyer will both be available before and during the trip to assist, please note that they are providing recommendations and suggestions; as such they are not responsible or liable for anything beyond their control. This includes, amongst other things, departure times of all modes of transportation.
- Although this trip was organized with the parish community of St Teresa of Avila Church in Elmira in mind, this trip is not formally sponsored by St Teresa or the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton. As such, neither holds any liability.
- This trip is in no way affiliated with the University of Waterloo.
- All participants must recognize and acknowledge that they are responsible for their own decisions and actions.

## Questions?

Please reach out to Joan at [joancoutu@gmail.com](mailto:joancoutu@gmail.com)

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