

# BLOSSOMS & BULBS

*Dutch Bulbfields, Chateaux Gardens of France, English Villages & Gardens and the Chelsea Flower Show.*

**May 4th: AMSTERDAM** The tour commences at check-in to our city centre hotel, our home for four nights. We rest from the flight, or take an afternoon canal cruise to get our bearings, before meeting our fellow travellers for a Welcome Drink and Dinner. **[D]**

**May 5th: AMSTERDAM** Every day on the Great Trains of Europe Tours begins with a full buffet breakfast. **[B]** We spend a full day in one of the world's finest bulbfields, the Keukenhof Garden, with 80 acres of tulips, daffodils, hyacinths and other flowering bulbs, shrubs, ancient trees, exhibitions, gurgling streams, flower parades, and seven themed gardens. Little wonder we need all day to visit the Keukenhof! There are restaurants and tea shops. **[B]**

**May 6th: AMSTERDAM** We head into the countryside today (who will be first to see a windmill?) to the Gardens of the Dutch Baroque Palace Het Loo, the Royal Palace from the 1680s until 1982. Established by LeNôtre, the gardens feature perfect symmetry, axial layout with radiating gravel walks, parterres, fountains, basins and statues. **[B]**

**May 7th: AMSTERDAM** This afternoon there is an optional visit to the Aarlsmeer Flower Markets this morning, the hub of the world flower trade, where 19 million stems are auctioned each day. We visit the historic and beautiful Dutch city of Delft, home of Vermeer, and imagine what Amsterdam might have looked like centuries ago. **[B]**

**May 8th: PARIS** A great rail journey today. Our luggage is taken on ahead as we take our reserved First Class seats in the sleek Thalys train, for Paris at 300kph. On arrival we settle in to our 4 star hotel on the Left Bank. On our city sightseeing tour we begin our acquaintance with the City of Lights. **[B,D]**

**May 9th: PARIS** A quiet morning to stroll in the nearby Luxembourg Gardens or to visit a museum. Monet's waterlilies are finally on view in their original context at l'Orangerie. See them in real life this afternoon on our visit to Giverney and Monet's Garden. We enjoy the flower garden called Clos Normand and the water garden with its famous Japanese Bridge covered with wisteria, which should be at its best this week. Then the weeping willows, and the famous nymphaeas (water lilies). **[B]**

**May 10th: PARIS** A high speed French TGV train today into the Loire Valley and the Garden of Villandry, created by Dr Joachim Carvallo, from 1906, in complete harmony with the Renaissance architecture of the chateau. Great horticultural skill was deployed, especially in the use of vegetables. An arbour of grape vines leads to a great

parterre, conceived as a Garden of Music. On the other side of the canal is a Garden of Love. **[B]**

**May 11th: NORTH YORK MOORS** Another of the great rail journeys of the world as we farewell Paris and join the 300 kph Eurostar through the Chunnel. Customs requires that we travel with our luggage today. In London we join British Rail in the tracks of the Flying Scotsman to the mediaeval city of York. We see the Minster and the Shambles, then transfer to our inn in the North York Moors village of Pickering. A pub dinner tonight. **[B,D]**

**May 12th: NORTH YORK MOORS** This morning we visit the gardens of Castle Howard, laid out by Sir John Vanburgh in the early 18th century. Castle Howard is the palace of the Flyte family in "Brideshead Revisited". We lunch (with Claude Jeremiah Greengrass?) in the village of Goathland, "Aidens field" in the TV series 'Heartbeat'. Here we join the historic North York Steam Railway home to Pickering. **[B]**

**May 13th: NORTH YORK MOORS** This morning we visit historic Harewood House. Its garden is classic Capability Brown - forming an idyllic rural setting. We move on to the spa and garden town of Harrogate for a cream tea or a stroll around Harrogate's famous public gardens. Can you spot Agatha Christie? She 'disappeared' here in 1926. **[B]**

**May 14th: LAKE DISTRICT** We journey this morning through the Yorkshire Dales, immortalized in James Herriot's "All Creatures Great and Small" novels and television series. A village pub lunch stop, then on to the Lake District where we settle into our Lakeside hotel. **[B,D]**

**May 15th: LAKE DISTRICT** A visit this morning to a very special Lakeland garden, Holehird, which specialises in Lakeland flora and offers sweeping views of Lake Windermere. A bit of whimsy on the way home: we drop in on Beatrix Potter's garden, Hill Top - watch out for the fierce bad rabbit. **[B]**

**May 16th: LAKE DISTRICT** We take a magical rail journey today through some of the Dales' and England's finest scenery on the historic Settle to Carlisle Railway. A pub lunch, an afternoon cream tea and visits to some more of the Yorkshire Dales' picturesque villages. **[B]**

**May 17th: COTSWOLDS** Our British Rail journey south today brings us to the Peak District of Derbyshire, to visit the gardens of historic Chatsworth House, dating from 1687. Another Capability Brown garden, Chatsworth has been famous for its beauty since Jane Austen's Day. We move on in the late afternoon to the Cotswolds where we stay in a village inn in the pretty riverside village of Bourton-on-the-Water. **[B,D]**

**May 18th: COTSWOLDS** This morning's sightseeing takes us to picturesque Cotswold villages of honey-golden stone: Lower Slaughter, Stow-on-the-Wold, Chipping Campden. After a village pub lunch we visit one of England's favourite gardens - Hidcote Manor, designed and developed by Maj. Lawrence Johnston, who scoured the world to secure rare and exotic species for this extremely pretty garden, a series of "outdoor rooms". **[B]**



**May 19th: COTSWOLDS** Today we visit Stowe Landscape Gardens, covering 750 acres and including 40 listed historic monuments and temples. It is considered one of England's most important landscape gardens and the greatest names in English garden design were involved in its creation from Bridgeman in the 1710s to Vanbrugh, Kent, Gibbs and "Capability" Brown. Afternoon tea in the Cotswold village of Burford, serious about antiques. **[B]**

**May 20th: LONDON** Back on British Rail today we journey through more of the Cotswolds' rolling hills, as our luggage is taken on ahead to await our arrival in our London hotel. We enjoy London's sights from a double-decker bus. The Oxford Street shops are only a bus ride away from the hotel. A West End Show tonight? **[B]**

**May 21st: LONDON** The Oxford Street shops or Harrods this morning before an afternoon excursion to the Royal Horticultural Society's Wisley Garden, where keen English gardeners have gone to be inspired for over 100 years. Spread out over 240 acres, Wisley is a lovely, peaceful place for a stroll as well as a demonstration garden full of practical garden design ideas and cultivation techniques. **[B]**

**May 22nd: LONDON** A full day today at the renowned Chelsea Flower Show, arguably the world's greatest and best known. Our Farewell Dinner tonight. **[B,D]**

**May 23rd: HOMEWARD BOUND** Our tour ends this morning after breakfast. Thank you for your company on the Great Trains of Europe Tours. **[B]**



**FACT BOX:**  
**DURATION:** 20 DAYS  
**DEPARTURE:**  
 MAY 4th 2025  
**\$AU 13,950** per person twin share  
 Single Supplement : \$1,500  
*Enquire about competitive airfares*

**HIGHLIGHTS** A full day at  
**CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW**

**RAIL JOURNEYS**

- High Speed Thalys
- English Channel Eurostar
- Tracks of the Flying Scotsman
- North York Moors Steam Railway
- Settle to Carlisle Historic Railway

**GARDENS**

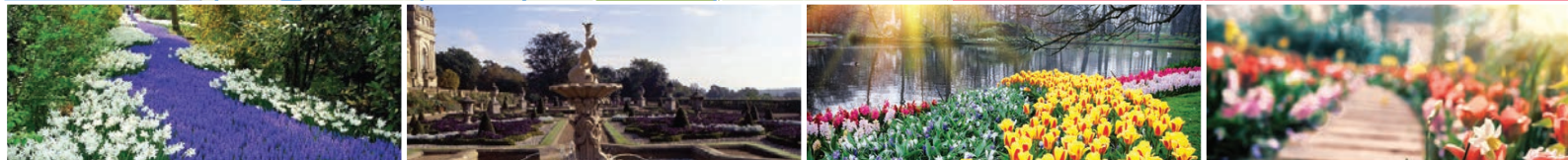
- Keukenhof Gardens
- Het Loo
- Monet's Garden
- Villandry
- Castle Howard
- Harewood
- Holehird
- Chatsworth
- Stowe
- Hidcote
- Wisley

**SIGHTS**

- "Heartbeat Country"
- Heriot's Yorkshire Dales
- Lake District
- Cotswold Villages

**INCLUDED FEATURES:**

- First Class rail travel in reserved seats
- 4 star city centre hotels
- 3 or 4 star historic village inns
- 6 dinners
- Full luggage handling [not on Eurostar]
- Local expert garden guides [where permitted]
- Full time Australian Tour Director



# BOOKING CONDITIONS

TOUR OPERATOR: Great Trains of Europe Tours  
(ABN 75 325 01 0 987) are members of IATA #96836610

**COSTS:** Costs are expressed in Australian dollars and are based on transport and accommodation costs, and Australian dollar exchange rates effective as at 31st December 2023.

Exchange rate fluctuations in the price of any service provided, beyond the control of Great Trains of Europe Tours, may be passed on to travellers, right up to the date of departure.

A deposit of \$2,500 per person will guarantee a place (unless already filled, in which case you will be advised of your place on the waiting list. With a maximum tour size of 25 travellers, tours often fill early).

Full final payment is due 90 days before commencement of the tour. Please make payment by cheque to "Great Trains of Europe Tours" or by bank transfer as follows:

Heritage Bank, Toowoomba

BSB 638-060 Account Number 111 097 34 Payment by credit card attracts a 1.5% surcharge.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellation at any time after the deposit is paid will result in the forfeiture of the deposit. Any booking cancelled between 90 days and 45 days before departure will incur a 50% cancellation charge on land content. Bookings cancelled within 45 days of departure will incur a 100% cancellation charge.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** A condition of joining a Great Trains of Europe tour is either the purchase of travel insurance through Great Trains of Europe Tours, or documentary evidence of a sufficient level of travel insurance purchased elsewhere.

**BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE:** A baggage allowance of 23kgs per person applies to all tour members.

**HOTELS:** Hotel star ratings, where provided, are those of the country in which the hotel is situated, and vary from country to country.

**OTHER IMPORTANT ADVICE:** The tour will proceed if a minimum of 15 travellers have paid deposits by 90 days before scheduled departure.

In the highly unlikely event that there are insufficient travellers for a tour, you will be offered either (i) a full refund of all monies paid, (ii) a modified cost structure for a smaller group, or (iii) a place on an alternative Great Trains of Europe Tour.

Each tour is sold as a package and there can be no refund for any element of the tour (eg. a meal or an excursion) not utilised by the traveller by her/ his own choice. Tour costs have built into them the costs associated with researching tours, communicating with overseas suppliers, brochure preparation and marketing. Great Trains of Europe Tours does not claim nor imply that some of the inclusions in our tours may or may not be available at a lower price direct from the overseas supplier. Travellers are reminded, however, that purchases made direct with overseas suppliers may not be covered by Australian Travel Agents licensing protections.

Most photographs used in this brochure were taken by the Tour Leader on past tours, but some have been provided by hotels, rail companies or Tourism Boards. Photographs are indicative only. Great Trains of Europe Tours reserves the right to decline any reservation or booking request, and may at the Tour Leader's discretion terminate any person's involvement in the tour due to unruly or disruptive behaviour.

Great Trains of Europe Tours does not accept responsibility for any injury, damage, loss, delay, change of schedule or other events which are beyond our direct control such as, but not limited to war, terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, civil disturbance, industrial action, acts of government or of God, or mechanical failure such as aircraft, trains or coaches.

Great Trains of Europe Tours cannot be held responsible for changes to provision of services by local suppliers, but we will do all in our power to provide an alternative service of equal standard to that advertised, or make a cash refund of the difference on the spot.

**CONTRACT:** The contract between the traveller and Great Trains of Europe Tours, entered into by your signing the booking form, shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Queensland.

*"Stan's tours are the group tours for people who don't like group tours: they are well organised but not regimented; flexible with plenty of time; no rush, no bustle."*



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*Tours*

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**Jackie Wood, Melbourne**

**(5 time tour member on the Great Trains of Europe Tours)**

# Great Trains of Europe Tours BOOKING FORM

One form per person, please.

Tour Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PASSPORT DETAILS

Full name (as in passport): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Passport No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph. Home: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. Work: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## MEDICAL / DIET

Do you have any medical conditions or dietary requirements that we should be alerted to?

☐ YES ☐ NO If you answered YES, please outline briefly: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to walk 500 metres and climb 25 stairs without assistance? ☐ YES ☐ NO

## NEXT OF KIN {to be contacted in event of an emergency}

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph. Home: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. Work: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

☐ Please provide me with travel insurance. ☐ I have a pre-existing medical condition.

{NOTE: Passengers over 75 years of age at end of a tour will need a medical clearance}

☐ I decline your offer of travel insurance and attach documentary evidence that I have sufficient travel insurance cover.

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

## ACCOMMODATION

☐ Double ☐ Twin, sharing with \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Twin, please find someone to share with me. If no suitable room-mate can be found, the single supplement is payable.

☐ Single Room ☐ Single occupancy of double sized room {surcharge} ☐ Non-smoking ☐ Smoking

## EXTRA ACCOMMODATION

☐ Pre-Tour in \_\_\_\_\_ {city} Date IN \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date OUT \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

☐ Post-Tour in \_\_\_\_\_ {city} Date IN \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date OUT \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## FLIGHTS

☐ I seek your assistance with an airfare. Please contact me. or ☐ I will make my own flight arrangements.

## PAYMENT METHOD

☐ I enclose a cheque, payable to “Great Trains of Europe Tours” for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or

☐ I have deposited \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in the “ Great Trains of Europe Tours” account at Heritage Bank, 400 Ruthven St, Toowoomba, Qld.,

4350, Australia as follows.

BSB 638 – 060 Account Number 11109734 Swiftcode HBSLAU4T, and I attach a pay-in slip as evidence.

*By signing this form I declare that I have read the Tour Terms and Conditions, understand them, and agree to abide by them.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



[www.greattrainsofeurope.com.au](http://www.greattrainsofeurope.com.au)

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