

www.brooklandtravel.com  
 info@brooklandtravel.com  
**T: 0845 1212863 or +44 (0)1305 259467**  
**F: +44 (0)1305 259469**



## TOURS THROUGH TIME

A RANGE OF FULLY GUIDED HISTORICAL TOURS

### Border Abbeys and Castles

From The Otterburn Tower Hotel, Northumbria

**20/24 June 2011** (to include transfers from Newcastle Station on Day 1 and Day 5)



Image: Thirlestane Castle

From **The Otterburn Tower Hotel**, situated on the edge of the Northumbria National Park we travel to the English/Scottish borders and explore the picturesque remains of three of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Abbeys at **Jedburgh, Melrose and Kelso**. These suffered irreversible damage at the hands of Henry VIII in the 1540's. Turbulent times have left a legacy of castles and fortified towers in this beautiful border countryside where the meandering River Tweed flows. **Abbotsford** was the home of Sir Walter Scott and there will be the opportunity to discover the history of the house as well as the beautiful formal gardens.

Included in this programme is a guided tour of **Traquair Castle**, a former Royal Hunting Lodge and defensive tower. It has an impressive history and between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries it was gradually extended and turned into a family home for the influential Lairds of Traquair. Everywhere within the house are portraits, old prints and maps, which refer to the history of the house. We also explore 14<sup>th</sup> century **Etal Castle, Norham Castle, Flodden Battlefield** and the border town of **Berwick upon Tweed**. Berwick upon Tweed has an astonishing history and it is home to the most complete set of Tudor walls in Europe and also Berwick Barracks Museum.

### Itinerary at a glance

Day 1 - Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Day 2 - Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Day 3 - Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Day 4 - Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Day 5 - Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> June
Independent travel and check-in to the hotel from 14.00hrs  <i>Alternatively:</i> 17.00hrs: Coach transfer from Newcastle rail/coach station  19.00hrs: Welcome Reception and introduction to the tour  19.30hrs: Dinner	Breakfast  Depart by executive coach for Abbotsford and Melrose Abbey. Refreshments available locally  Return to hotel for a leisurely evening and dinner  A leisurely evening and dinner at the hotel	Breakfast  Depart for Etal Castle  Continue to Berwick-upon-Tweed. Free time for lunch and to explore the town  Return to hotel for a leisurely evening and dinner	Breakfast  Depart for Interleithen and Traquair House. Refreshments available locally  Return to hotel via Hawick with a tour of a 15 <sup>th</sup> century tower en-route  A leisurely evening and dinner at the hotel	Breakfast  Visits to Kelso and Jedburgh abbeys. Free time for lunch in Jedburgh, to explore the town and perhaps visit the Mary Queen of Scots Visitor Centre  We return to the hotel for car drivers and then continue to Newcastle for rail departures.  16.30hrs: Arrive at Newcastle rail/coach station

## Full Itinerary

### Day 1

For those who prefer not to drive directly to the hotel, a transfer from Newcastle Station is arranged for **Monday** afternoon (depart at 17.00hrs) and the tour commences with a welcome drink in the hotel lounge before dinner is served in the restaurant. **Julian Humphrys**, author, historian and guide will set the scene with an introduction to the tour and the Scottish Borders.

### Day 2

On **Tuesday**, after a hearty breakfast, we depart by executive coach or mini coach for **Abbotsford** and **Melrose**. At Abbotsford, Scott created an impressive entrance hall to the house which is adorned with armoury, portraits, Coats of Arms, items relating to the Napoleonic War and medieval Scotland and much more. 2,000 rare books can be discovered in Scott's atmospheric study where he wrote some of his famous novels. A small chapel, the Chinese Drawing Room, the Library and Dining Room are just some of the highlights of a visit to Abbotsford. Here is an opportunity to purchase Scottish Borders textiles, jewellery, woodturning, knitwear and delicious local produce in the gift shop, which also sells rare and current books. After lunch (not included but facilities available), we continue to the border town of Melrose and **Melrose Abbey**.

Much of this ornate 12<sup>th</sup> century Abbey, reputed to be the burial place for **Robert the Bruce**, is still remaining. The Cistercian monks from Rievaulx in Yorkshire founded the abbey in 1136. At the end of the day we return to Otterburn for a relaxing evening with dinner.

### Day 3

Our first stop on **Wednesday** morning is **Etal Castle**, looked after by English Heritage. There is much border history warfare to be discovered at this 14<sup>th</sup> century castle, situated in Etal Village. We then drive to the historic border town of **Berwick upon Tweed** and learn how this market town changed hands between the English and the Scots no less than 14 times. It was eventually retaken by the English in 1482. We'll discover the most complete set of Tudor Walls, built by **Elizabeth I** to protect the town from further raids, and see the remains of a medieval castle that preceded the defensive walls. There will be some free time, perhaps to visit **Berwick Barracks Museum**. At the end of the day, a restful evening and dinner awaits us at The Otterburn Tower Hotel.

### Day 4

On **Thursday** morning, we travel to Innerleithen and **Traquair House**, known as Scotland's oldest inhabited house. This is a stone tower house of four storeys and a Garret, built on the site of a royal hunting lodge. It was visited by many Scottish and English Kings and the **Stuarts of Traquair** supported **Mary Queens of Scots** and the Jacobite cause without counting the cost. We shall be able to study the castle, its history and also the fine interiors. These include the bed belonging to Mary Queen of Scots, a superb collection of Jacobite glass, an eighteenth century library and secret stairs used by priests in time of terror. On our return to Otterburn we travel south of Hawick to tour an interesting and well-preserved 15<sup>th</sup> century rectangular tower that is in the care of Historic Scotland. On our return to the hotel there will be time to freshen up before dinner is served.

### Day 5

We visit another two of the great four border abbeys on **Friday** morning, starting with **Kelso Abbey**, founded by Tironesian monks of France in 1128. En route to Kelso Abbey we will stop off to view Smailholm Tower (Historic Scotland). This defensive tower stands on a rocky crag overlooking remarkable countryside. There will be time to stop for coffee and refreshments within the town of **Kelso** where the fragmented remains of the great abbey church are an impressive sight. We join Julian to tour the abbey before continuing to **Jedburgh Abbey**, founded by **David I**. The Visitor Centre here contains the priceless Jedburgh Comb and other artefacts discovered during the excavation of the site.



Within walking distance of the town square is **The Mary Queen of Scots Visitor Centre**, which tells the story of Mary Queen of Scots and her tragic life.

We return to Otterburn Tower Hotel at 15.30hrs and to Newcastle Station by 16.30hrs, for onward travel.

*(Image: A mask cast from the severed head of Mary, Queen of Scots)*

**Please note: This tour does involve a fair amount of walking, including over uneven surfaces and steps**

## Tour Cost

English Heritage Members:	£499 per person
Non-Members:	£530 per person*
Single Supplement:	£60 (limited single availability)
Feature/Four Poster Room Supplement:	£60 (subject to availability)
Non-Refundable Deposit:	£100 per person (full balance due 8 weeks prior to departure date)

\* If your membership has been in place for over 1 year, you are entitled to free entry to Historic Scotland properties

### Included

- Four nights accommodation at The Otterburn Tower Hotel, Otterburn with full English breakfast each morning and three course dinner each evening
- All visits as described in the brief itinerary including private tours/entries
- Welcome reception on the first evening with a complimentary glass of wine or soft drink
- Services of a professional guide/historian
- Executive-style coach or mini-coach for transfers between sites and transfers from Newcastle on Day 1 and Day 5

### Not Included

- Lunches and other refreshments (although suitable stops are provided)
- Travel insurance (highly recommended) – details available on request

*Brookland Travel reserves the right to alter the itinerary should it be necessary due to conditions beyond their control. Every effort will be made to maintain the spirit of the theme.*

## How to Book

You can visit our website and go to the "Contact Us" page to make a provisional booking. Alternatively, please ring the office between 9.00am-5.00pm (Monday-Friday). A non-refundable deposit of £100 is required at the time of booking. If booking within 8 weeks of the departure date, the full balance is payable.

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## Your Accommodation



### The Otterburn Tower Hotel \*\*\*

Otterburn  
Northumberland  
NE19 1NS  
T: 01830 520620  
F: 01830 521504  
E: [info@otterburntower.com](mailto:info@otterburntower.com)  
[www.otterburntower.com](http://www.otterburntower.com)

**The Otterburn Tower County House Hotel and Restaurant is set in 32 acres of beautiful gardens and woodland. This fortified Northumbrian country house, founded by a cousin of William the Conqueror in 1086, combines almost a thousand years of history and the surrounding countryside is breathtakingly beautiful – it is hard to believe that this was once the scene of battles and conflict. The historic beauty of the hotel is seen in every room, individually refurbished to the standards and comfort expected by today's visitors.**

There are 18 en-suite bedrooms which are all individually designed to give you that touch of comfort and luxury you expect, direct dial telephone, trouser press, hairdryer and hospitality tray. All rooms are linked to satellite TV channels.

**Extra nights** may be available, on request. Please enquire at the time of booking, as we may be able to secure a competitive rate for you.

## Directions

### By Road:

The Otterburn Tower is situated on the A696, which is the main Newcastle to Edinburgh road. Otterburn is just 30 minutes out of Newcastle (25 miles). There are excellent motorways and trunk roads link the region with the rest of the UK.

### By Coach:

National express +44(0)8705 808080  
Arriva central enquiry +44 (0) 191 281 1313  
Snaths Transport for local and regional travel including a taxi service +44(0)1830 5206

### By Rail:

Intercity 225 or A25 electric trains from London reach Newcastle in less than three hours. This tour provides a free transfer from Newcastle Station. Your train journey can be checked by calling National Rail Enquiries: **08457 48 49 50 / [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) / [www.thetrainline.com](http://www.thetrainline.com)**