



# BLenheim PALACE

Riding in Splendour

Afternoon of the first day you will arrive at Blenheim Palace in time for tea. You enter the grounds up the front Drive from the Woodstock Gate and you will be greeted by liveried staff.

During your stay you will be treated as if you are close friends of the Duke. You will sleep in the magnificent bedrooms in the private wing of the Palace and enjoy candle lit three course dinners cooked by the Duke's French chef.

The Duke's sister, Lady Henrietta Spencer Churchill will be your hostess. Lady Henrietta grew up in the Palace and is a World famous interior designer. Having done extensive work in the United states as well as decorating many of the rooms in the palace.

On the first morning a splendid breakfast will be served in the private dining room. You will then be given a private tour of the Palace. You will visit the State rooms and see the bedroom where Winston Churchill was born.

The Palace is an acknowledged architectural masterpiece designed by Vanbrugh and his assistant Hawksmoor who's genius you can see all round you. There is no doubt that it is one of the finest houses in the World. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century it was redecorated with the colossal Vanderbilt railway fortune when Consuelo Vanderbilt married the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke.



Following the tour you will be driven to the Palace Stables where your horses will be waiting for you. You will be escorted on horseback around the immense Park. This is where the famous horse trials are held once a year.

Having access to the Park and being able to ride around it on horseback is a unique privilege we have secured for you.



At around 1.30 pm guests will stop for lunch. Lunch will either be in a local restaurant or neighbouring Ditchley Park. Ditchley was home to the great hostess Nancy Astor and a house where Winston Churchill spent many weekends during the second world War. It is a magnificent 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion.

After lunch guests will ride again for a few hours before returning to the Palace in time for tea and a well earned rest.

Dinner will be a sumptuous affair in the private dining room.

The following day after breakfast you will ride out across the Park up the Avenue to the Victory Column. Around the Column the woods have been laid out to reflect the position of the regiments at the Battle of Blenheim, the famous victory in 1704 which made the first Duke's reputation and gave its name to this Palace. In fact the Palace was built for him by the nation in recognition of this achievement. The Park also boasts ancient oak woodland and lakes and bridges laid out by the legendary Capability Brown.

Before being presented to Churchill by the grateful nation Woodstock was a royal palace. It is for this reason that it is the only other Palace in Britain apart from Buckingham Palace. Henry 11 famous mistress (Fair Rosamund) lived here and Elizabeth 1 was imprisoned here. You are literally riding through English history.

After lunch you will explore the ancient woodlands around High Lodge a folly where the Duke lived while the Palace was being built. Before finally return for a well earned tea before departing.

During these two days you will have seen from horseback some of the finest sights in England. You will have experienced the grandeur and majesty of a vanished age but seen from the inside from the point of view and in the company of the family that still inhabits it.

