ENGLAND AS THE CUSTODIAN OF THE JEWISH PAST

Led by world-renowned scholar

Professor Gary A. Rendsburg
Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish History
Distinguished Professor, Rutgers University

July 31 – August 9, 2023
10 Days / 9 Nights

SABABA TRAVEL
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Gary A. Rendsburg is one of the world’s leading experts in the Bible, Jewish history, and Hebrew manuscripts. He has lived in both Oxford and Cambridge and has conducted extensive research both at the Bodleian Library (Oxford) and at the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Research Unit of the Cambridge University Library.

In addition, he knows the collections at the British Library and the British Museum well, plus he has visited all the other sites on our itinerary, from Blenheim Palace to Bletchley Park and beyond.
Welcome to England!

Monday, July 31, 2023
Arrival – Randolph Hotel, Oxford

Upon arrival at London Heathrow Airport (LHR), you are transferred as a group to the city of Oxford. From lush green rolling hills to this medieval town, this pretty country surprises and delights at every corner. Tonight, get to know your fellow travelers, Travel Director, and Scholar-in-Residence over a Welcome Dinner at your hotel.

Overnight: Randolph Hotel, Oxford
Meals Included: Welcome Dinner with wine at the hotel

https://www.graduatehotels.com/oxford-uk/
Breakfast at the hotel

Join Gary Rendsburg this morning for a walking tour to discover Oxford. Highlights include: New College, the Bodleian Quad, the Radcliffe Camera, Christ Church College, Dead Man’s Walk (along which the medieval Jewish community would convey its dead), and the Oxford Botanic Garden (site of the medieval Jewish cemetery).

Enjoy dinner at the Gardener’s Arms, Oxford’s popular vegetarian pub.

Overnight: Randolph Hotel, Oxford
Meals Included: Breakfast, dinner with beer
**Wednesday, August 2, 2023**

**The Bodleian Library**

Breakfast at the hotel

Today is dedicated to visiting two of Oxford’s libraries, starting with a visit to the Bodleian Library. Guided by César Merchán-Hamann, Hebraica curator, we will see its unsurpassed collection of Hebrew manuscripts, including Maimonides’s Mishneh Torah bearing the author’s signature, Maimonides’s handwritten copy of his Commentary on the Mishna, and the exquisite Kennicott Bible, the crown jewel of all medieval manuscripts.

After our behind-the-scenes visit, we will take the one-hour guided tour of the Bodleian Library, during which we will be able to visit the oldest rooms within the library complex, dating to c. 1600.

We then continue to Merton College Library for some time to explore the oldest, continuously operating library in the world.

Overnight: Randolph Hotel, Oxford

Meals Included: Breakfast
Thursday, August 3, 2023
Day Trip to London / British Museum and British Library

Breakfast at the hotel

After breakfast, journey to London for a visit to the world-famous British Museum, the greatest institution in the world for the study of the ancient past. Marvel at the Rosetta Stone, the Gilgamesh Epic, and numerous other artifacts which inform our knowledge of the ancient Near East.

We then will explore the Treasures of the British Library, one of the world’s great cultural and educational institutions, home to Magna Carta, Codex Sinaiticus, and the Golden Haggadah.

Overnight: Randolph Hotel, Oxford
Meals Included: Breakfast
Friday, August 4, 2023
Blenheim Palace

Breakfast at the hotel

Visit one of the largest private homes in all of Britain and see its exquisite gardens. Blenheim Palace (9 miles north of Oxford) is home to the present 12th Duke of Marlborough, scion of the extensive Spencer-Churchill family. Notable members of the family include Sir Winston Churchill (who in fact, was born at Blenheim Palace), Consuelo Vanderbilt (who married the 9th Duke of Marlborough), and Lady Diana Spencer (later Princess Diana).

Next stop will be a visit to St Martin’s Parish Church in Bladon, the burial spot of Winston Churchill.

Upon return to Oxford, the rest of the day is free until Shabbat services and Shabbat dinner, to be held at the Oxford Jewish Congregation (O.J.C.), a few short blocks from the hotel.

Overnight: Randolph Hotel, Oxford
Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner
Saturday, August 5, 2023
Free Day in Oxford

Breakfast at the hotel

For those who wish to attend Shabbat services, the O.J.C. is 0.4 miles from our hotel, a short 10-minute walk. Services will be followed by a catered Shabbat lunch (for those pre-registered) in the synagogue.

Overnight: Randolph Hotel, Oxford
Meals Included: Breakfast (and Lunch by special request)
Sunday, August 6, 2023
Bletchley Park and Cambridge

Breakfast at the hotel

Check-Out: Randolph Hotel, Oxford

Today we head to Bletchley Park Museum and heritage attraction, where we will discover firsthand the incredible achievements of Britain's World War II codebreakers, led by Alan Turing (portrayed by Benedict Cumberbatch in “The Imitation Game” [2014], which you may wish to watch in advance).

Next grab lunch *al fresco* at Bletchley Park, before we travel to Cambridge, our home for the next 3 nights.

Overnight: Hilton Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge
Meals Included: Breakfast

Monday, August 7, 2023
Walking Tour of Cambridge

Breakfast at the hotel

Discover Cambridge this morning on a walking tour with Gary Rendsburg, as we walk down narrow medieval streets, admire old buildings, and enrich our knowledge with visits to two notable buildings: King’s College Chapel and the Wren Library at Trinity College.

Use the afternoon to explore Cambridge on your own or relax at the hotel.

Overnight:  Hilton Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge
Meals Included:  Breakfast
Tuesday, August 8, 2023
Cambridge University Library
(including the Cairo Genizah Collection)

Breakfast at the hotel

Join us today as we discover further the history of Cambridge. First on the agenda: our visit to the Cambridge University Library, home to the most extensive collection of Cairo Genizah documents in the world (c. 200,000, about two-thirds of the total). Your group will be privy to an exclusive guided tour led by Ben Outhwaite, director of the Genizah Research Unit.

Later, enjoy afternoon tea and scones at The Orchard in Grantchester, where Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, Bertrand Russell, John Maynard Keynes, and Ludwig Wittgenstein would gather during the summers of the early decades of the 20th century.

Overnight: Hilton Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge
Meals Included: Breakfast, Afternoon Tea
Wednesday, August 9, 2023
Cheerio, England!

Breakfast at the hotel
Check-Out: Hilton Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge

After breakfast, say a fond farewell to Cambridge and to your newfound friends as you prepare to return home after a memorable holiday.

One group transfer to Central London (for those who wish to extend their stay) and to London Heathrow (for those returning to the U.S. or headed for other destinations) is included. Individual transfers to other London airports and railway stations are available at an additional charge.

Meals Included: Breakfast
Cost Per Person based on a minimum of 15 participants: $6499

Single Supplement: $1984

HOTELS: Accommodation at hotels includes breakfast daily and hotel service charge. The pricing has been based on the following hotels:

July 31 – August 6 (6 nights) – Randolph Hotel, Oxford
August 6 – August 9 (3 nights) – Hilton Hotel, Cambridge

WHAT IS INCLUDED:
10 breakfasts, 1 afternoon tea, 1 lunch, 3 dinners
Audio Headsets for flexible sightseeing
Luxury air-conditioned coach with WiFi
Local coach bus or airport transfer only
Select hotels all tried and trusted
All porterage (1 bag per person)
Restaurant gratuities for included meals
Expert Travel Director and a professional driver
All hotel tips, charges, and local taxes
Gratuities to Travel Director, Coach Drivers, and Local Experts

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED:
Early check-in or late check-out
International airfares
Travel insurance, passport fees, visa fees, etc.
Laundry, phone calls, etc.
Items of a personal nature
Beverages, meals, and sightseeing not detailed in the itinerary
Excess baggage (beyond the 1 bag per person)
Optional Experiences
Shabbat Lunch (must pre-register)
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“This blessed plot, this Earth, this realm, this England.”
— William Shakespeare, King Richard II, Act 2, Scene 1

“This till we have built Jerusalem
In England’s green and pleasant land!”
— William Blake, “And did those feet in ancient time”