

THE WALKING PARTY

ITINERARY FOR A 'TASTE OF SUFFOLK'

7 day itinerary

Distance: 65km

Walking : easy



I have decided to bring my two walks in Suffolk together to give the best of both. The beautiful desolate coast and the colourful medieval half timbered villages inland. This is the where I was brought up so it gives enormous pleasure to be able to show you around one of the most beautiful counties in England. Suffolk Pink, Suffolk Punch the Redpoll Suffolk Cattle and it surely has to be one of the best counties for the gastropub. Two master chefs here so you will be eating fabulously well. I think all agree now that the best cooking in Europe is in England! Good wine to taste, the fine collection of works of art at the country house Ickworth, cream tea, Pimms ...

Day 1 ARRIVAL You will be met at Ipswich railway station or Stansted airport in the late morning and driven to start with a picnic at Covehithe. Stop on the way to see Blythburgh church. After lunch walk down the beach to Southwold. A cup of tea in Southwold before continuing on foot to Walberswick. Pick up and drive to Aldeburgh. Stay at the Brudenell Hotel on the beach. All bedrooms with bathrooms en suite. Sea view rooms maybe with more gull noise so an option.

Walk: 6km

Day 2 THORPENESS and SNAPE MALTINGS After breakfast we shall wander up the beach to Thorpeness. A row on the mere before coffee at Thorpeness. Drive back to the Red House to see Benjamin Britten's home. Classically English and eclectic. Britten was so enamoured of Aldeburgh. Having escaped to the United States during the war he chanced upon a book of the Aldeburgh poet George Crabbe in a San

Francisco bookshop and Crabbe's dark poems of Aldeburgh made Britten set sail back to the Suffolk Coast to write his first opera Peter Grimes. He never left. Picnic lunch on the beach. Then a walk to the Snape Maltings where the Britten Festival takes place in the summer. Return to Aldeburgh. Optional visit to Fishers Gin Distillery or time to relax. Dinner in Aldeburgh. *Walk: 9km*



Day 3 ORFORD and STOUR VALLEY After breakfast we will drive to Orford. A quick coffee in the Pump St Bakery before setting off for a walk along the sea wall. We may hope to see avocets or seals. Back into Orford to buy some of Pinneys fabulous smoked fish: bloaters, salmon, kippers ... Lunch at the famous Butley Orford Oysterage. We then drive across inland to Flatford on the Stour river. Visit the site of Constable's most famous painting 'The Haywain'. This is Constable country. John Constable was born here back in 1776 and since then the area has been designated as an area of outstanding beauty. *"I associate all my careless boyhood with what lies on the banks of the Stour; those scenes made me a painter"*. From Flatford we walk to Dedham where we stay the night at the Sun Inn. All rooms have bathrooms en suite. *Walk: 9km*

Day 4 STOKE BY NAYLAND and KERSEY After breakfast in Dedham we do a quick drive to Higham and walk to Stoke by Nayland. Here we will lunch at The Crown before we drive to the village of Boxford for our afternoon walk to Kersey. Kersey was famous for its medieval woven cloth and appears in one of my favourite plays Measure for Measure when the First Gentleman criticises Lucio, that squirming fawning toad ... : *'And thou the velvet: thou art good velvet; thou'rt a three-piled piece, I warrant thee: I had as lief be a list of an English kersey as be piled, as thou art piled, for a French velvet. Do I speak feelingly now?'* Drive to the Bildeston Crown where you will stay two nights. Restored by its present owner James Buckle and an excellent English gastropub with a superb chef.

Walk: 15km

Day 5 ICKWORTH We set off on foot after breakfast through the village of Chelsworth and on for a lovely lunch in the tiny Cock Inn at Brent Eleigh. After lunch we drive to Ickworth House This is the seat of the Earls of Bristol and houses one of the great collections of the country. Drive back to Bildeston. Dinner at the Bildeston Crown.

Walk: 11km

Day 6 LAVENHAM and LONG MELFORD We drive after breakfast to the medieval village of Lavenham. Walk to Long Melford. Visit the church, probably the most beautiful of the flintstone churches. Lunch at the Swan before we drive to Sudbury to see the new ten million pound renovation of Gainsborough House. Drive to Hintlesham Hall for farewell evening. Stay at Hintlesham.

Walk: 9km



Day 7 After breakfast it is the grand departure in your cars or for Ipswich station or Stansted airport.

NOTE: *The itinerary is subject to change according to local conditions. All mileages shown are approximate.*