

4 Night South Downs Discovery Tour

Trip style:

Destination: 📍 South Downs

Trip code: ABW04-HCR05

Carbon Footprint: 🌳 76kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

A 4-night South Downs Discovery Tour takes in natural wonders such as Devil's Dyke and the bucket-and-spade charms of Brighton. You'll also get to visit the Roman-founded city of Chichester and spend time at Amberley Museum. This huge open-air homage to the region's industrial past has vintage vehicles, traditional craft exhibitions, and even a narrow-gauge railway ride. And to top it all, there's an opportunity to explore over 1000 years of history at the impressive Arundel Castle.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the Roman city of Chichester
- Admiring the mighty Arundel Castle
- Spending time by the seaside in Brighton
- Visiting Devil's Dyke
- Learning about Sussex's industrial heritage at the Amberley Museum
- Staying at Abingworth Hall, a skip away from Thakeham

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided sightseeing with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

Please note - Entrance fees are not included. See more information tab for details.

TRIP SUITABILITY

Trip suitability

Our Discovery holidays give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of the local area through **active sightseeing**.

On each Discovery day, you will be walking throughout the course of the day as you explore the venues and locations we visit. You'll also be hopping on and off the coach throughout - you should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Most of this walking will be at attractions but some may be across country tracks or footpaths so be sure to **bring sturdy shoes**. There will also be stairs to climb in the majority of the venues you visit, though other more accessible options may be available. At some venues, there may also be uneven surfaces, such as cobbles or rocky paths.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

Day 2: Brighton & The Downs

Today we head to the famous seaside resort of Brighton, made popular as a watering hole for London high society in the 18th century. There's the opportunity to visit the Royal Pavilion, remodelled in Indian style as a seaside palace for King George IV when he was Prince Regent, before wandering along the promenade or Brighton's Palace Pier. This afternoon we venture inland to explore Devil's Dyke, the longest, deepest and widest 'dry valley' in the UK, where we can enjoy spectacular views over the South Downs and to the sea.

Day 3: Amberley & Arundel

Enjoy a morning exploring Amberley Museum, set in a former chalk quarry and dedicated to the industrial heritage of England's south-east. There are over 40 exhibit areas to discover, including a narrow-gauge railway, restored buses, rural crafts and trades, and historic communications. The afternoon will be spent in Arundel, with time to visit spectacular Arundel Castle and the formal Collector Earl's garden, Arundel Cathedral or perhaps explore Swanbourne Lake.

Day 4: Around Chichester

Our day starts in Chichester, founded by the Romans who built its city walls and featuring the 12th century gothic-style cathedral; its 61-foot spire can be seen for miles around. There are many historic buildings in the city and its Roman heritage is one of the many features of the Novium Museum, whose 500,000 exhibits include the remains of Roman baths and the burial possessions of the 'Mystery Warrior' – an Iron Age man who was buried in Chichester. From here we will travel to nearby West Dean, where you have the choice of visiting either West Dean Gardens or Weald & Downland Living Museum. West Dean Gardens date back to 1622 but much of what we see today was created in the 1800s, with Victorian glasshouses, a 300-foot Edwardian pergola, a walled kitchen garden and a sunken garden. Weald & Downland Living Museum is perhaps most famous for being the place where they film The Repair Shop. It has a rich variety of working buildings, historic rural vehicles, displays of past domestic life and furnishings, and examples of period gardens. We end the day with a scenic drive back to Abingworth Hall.

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Abingworth Hall

Country living just got cosier at this former farmhouse. Abingworth Hall is just a skip away from the village of Thakeham at the foot of the South Downs – a landscape of ancient woodland, hidden valleys, chalky cliffs, and high-backed hills so deserving of its national park status finally bestowed in 2010. While the views from the doorstep are as wow-worthy as you'd expect, the walking opportunities around the sightseeing greats such as Devil's Dyke, Seven Sisters Country Park, Kingley Vale, Parham House, and the Clayton Windmills (known locally as Jack and Jill) are equally standout. You'll also be within easy driving distance of several historic towns and cities, most fabulously Arundel, Chichester, and Brighton.

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays walk leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on guided walking holiday arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's guided walks (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

Safety Information - Discovery Tours/Discover More Tours

The itinerary may be changed for safety reasons. Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole and may need to alter or curtail the planned itinerary for the day if circumstances dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest if fitness requirements are in doubt, or if clothing, equipment and behaviour are unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone and first aid kit. Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you. If you have a particular health condition or disability please put this on your guest registration form. This information will be confidential to your leaders and the house manager, but leaders do need to take account of any issues when planning. Please carry a copy of these trip notes with you, or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

Packing list - Discovery Tours

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing. Essentials Suitable, sturdy footwear with a good grip. You'll be on your feet for much of the day Waterproof jacket Waterproof overtrousers Sunhat Rucksack Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity) Sunscreen Mobile phone UV sunglasses Recommended First aid kit, including plasters Sit mat Waterproof pouch for valuables Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace) Wallet/purse Optional extras Walking poles, Flask for hot drinks Durable lunch box Waterproof rucksack liner
