

D-DAY

75TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR



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DAY 1



After an early morning departure from London, you will travel to **IWM Duxford**, a former RAF airbase and widely regarded as the European centre for aviation history. An **IWM Duxford on-site specialist guide** will escort you on an incredible discovery covering the historical site of the airbase including the **Nissen Hut, Theatre hangar** and the memorial to the American Airforce aircraft & crews lost in operations from Britain during the Second World War, ending with a tour of the **American Air Museum**.

This afternoon, you will visit another hugely important, and until the end of classified wartime operations in the 1970's, a fairly little-known location - **Bletchley Park**. Home of the **ENIGMA Codebreakers** and the nerve centre of intelligence, this rural location was home to over 10,000 personnel at its peak. Breaking the German codes led to the ability to misinform the enemy into ultimately thinking the D-Day landings would happen in Calais, while preparations continued with Normandy the target sites. Famously dubbed by Winston Churchill as "*the geese that laid the golden eggs....but never cackled*", the story of the codebreakers at Bletchley Park is truly incredible.



Continue to **Oxford**; where you will overnight. A walking tour of this historic city is a must; sites include the **Bodleian Library**, the **Ashmolean Museum**, **Radcliffe Camera** and **Christchurch College**.

DAY 2

Your day starts with a visit to **Blenheim Palace**; a short drive from Oxford and one of the finest examples of a British stately home. Blenheim Palace is also the birthplace of Winston Churchill. Now a **World Heritage Site**, Blenheim Palace has stood proud through history and has many military connections. Of note is the permanent **Churchill Exhibition**, and your palace guide will detail the impact of WWII on Blenheim, from growing vegetables in the formal gardens, blacking out the entire palace to even using the Great Lake in preparations for the D-Day landings.

Your morning will continue with a visit to the **final resting place of Churchill**, in the village of **Bladon**, where he was buried in a private service after a State Funeral ceremony at St Pauls Cathedral.

This afternoon, you will visit **Winchester**, perhaps most famously well known as the capital of Wessex and stronghold of King Alfred the Great in Saxon days. Also home to the **Great Hall**, all that remains of **Winchester Castle**, housing the legendary Round Table of Arthurian legend. Winchester is also home to a collection of military museums on the site of the **Peninsula Barracks** which boasts an impressive historical pedigree, and was vacated in 1943 for the temporary use of the 60th infantry regiment of the 9th US infantry division in the preparations for D-Day. **The Rifle Depot**, it's previous name on account of it being the original base of **The Kings Royal Rifle Corps**, saw Churchill addressing the US troops based there shortly before D-Day.

Suggested overnight in the **Bournemouth / Poole** area.



DAY 3



Today combines two pivotal locations in one day. This morning, you will visit the **Tank Museum**. Located in **Bovington**, this was the site of the original training ground for tanks in the First World War. Now regarded as the world's leading tank museum it covers the history of the use of tanks from WWI to current day. D-Day is no exception with huge military operations taking place in nearby **Studland Bay** designed to test the capabilities of the amphibious tanks prior to landing at Normandy. One of the original Sherman DD tanks that took part in D-Day remains on display in the museum. Specialist talks from experts are available on request if this is of interest.



Continuing along the south coast your next stop will be Portsmouth and the **D-Day Story**. The **D-Day Story** is the UK's only museum solely dedicated to the Allied invasion in 1944. It tells the stories of those involved in the largest invasion ever assembled, before or since, landing 156,000 troops by sea and air on five beachheads in Normandy France. Completing a refurbishment in 2018, the museum uses imagery, audio-visual & hands-on interactions to tell the story in three parts: Preparation, D-Day & the Battle of Normandy, Legacy & the Overlord Embroidery.

A panoramic sightseeing trip of **Portsmouth** completes the day before the return journey to **London** for your overnight accommodation and the final part of the trip.*

Optional additional day in Portsmouth to spend at **Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, HMS Victory, Mary Rose & HMS Warrior, alongside specialist tours from experts. Highly recommended time permitting.*

DAY 4

This four-day tour culminates in **London** with exclusive behind the scenes tours of two iconic D-Day sites: **HMS Belfast** & the **Churchill War Rooms**.

Your day begins with an early morning **exclusive pre-public opening of the Churchill War Rooms**. Located in Whitehall, a stone's throw from parliament, deep below the streets of Westminster away from the German bombs, this was the centre of all operations for World War II. Your on-site expert will give you exclusive access behind the glass into the very rooms those pivotal decisions and those secret telephone calls to President Roosevelt were made.

Emerging into daylight, and back to the current year, you will enjoy a **panoramic tour** of some of London's iconic sites; **Parliament Square, Downing Street, the Cenotaph, Buckingham Palace, Wellington Arch, Bomber Command Memorial, St Pauls Cathedral & the Tower of London**.

The afternoon continues the D-Day theme with a visit to **HMS Belfast** - one of just three surviving vessels of the bombardment fleet from **Operation Overlord**. A crew member will be your guide you as you explore the ship from top to bottom, hearing her fascinating story.

From the river it is a short journey to your final stop of the day, the **Imperial War Museum** London. A collection dedicated to all the wars this is a moving and inspirational journey though the history of war through the eyes of those who lived it. Best explored at leisure, it allows time for personal reflection at the end of your D-Day UK story.

