

LONDON

a&b. LONDON, 2,000 YEARS OF A CITY

(Two hours with a break in between.)

Architecture, history and art are blended into this chronological tour of one of the world's most exciting cities. It begins with the foundation of a Roman trading place and garrison town of Londinium, record the attack of Boudica on the Romans and their departure, the arrival of the Normans under William the bastard Duke of Normandy whose son built the White Tower of what is now the Tower of London a former fortress and royal palace. We visit the medieval splendour of oak-beamed Westminster Hall, once London's main court of justice, watch the building of the Houses of Parliament, the great fire that destroyed them and the rebuilding of Pugin's great interiors for the new Gothick Houses of Parliament and join a tour behind the scenes. We look at Old St Pauls' before the plague and the Great Fire of London, see London burning and hear the descriptions of Samuel Pepys, see Christopher Wren's plans to rebuild the city and the new St Pauls with its whispering gallery which at first is disliked for being a 'Papist' building and watch how it survives the Battle of Britain. We end with a private tour around Buckingham Palace with its rich but overwhelming interiors and see what it looks like from the balcony where generations of 'royals' have waved to the assembled crowds.

c. GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE & THE GREAT HOUSES OF ROBERT ADAM

We visit some of the Europe's most beautiful private homes designed on a scale that is both imposing yet very livable. We follow Robert Adam who was influenced of Palladio and the villas of the Veneto on his designs, travel south to see his London masterpieces, St James' Square, a precinct of great Adam houses, *Kenwood* on Hampstead Heath with its

great art collection and fine grounds in which concerts are held in summer (it was the house that features in the film *Notting Hill*). *Osterley* was designed by Adam and built for the Childs family of merchant bankers and magnificent Syon House built for the Duke of Northumberland, also with a great art collection and Adam's talented pupil John Vardy and his magnificent designs for Spencer House, the St James' home of the Spencer family the ancestors of Princess Diana, now open to the public at selected times.

GREAT GALLERIES OF LONDON

a. THE MUCH LOVED FRIEND: LONDON'S NATIONAL GALLERY AND PAINTINGS YOU MUST NOT MISS

This is like a mini art history course with masterworks from every period of art, an experience not to be missed. See the paintings that will haunt your dreams and learn their rich history from van Eyck's *Arnolfini Wedding*, one of the gallery's favourite paintings to Van Gogh's *Yellow Chair* this is truly great art.

b. THE WALLACE COLLECTION — FRENCH ROCOCO FURNITURE, PORCELAIN AND FINE ART

London's best kept secret, only three minutes from Oxford Street which contains furniture and porcelain once owned by Marie Antoinette, fine antique furniture and paintings bought by the Prince of Wales who became George IV who was the lover of Lady Hertford, whose husband built the collection that passed to his illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace. A family with a scandalous history collected great art treasures, died out without heirs leaving them to the public and so that this great museum is free.

c. TURNER — THE GALLERY, THE MAN AND HIS ART

'The sun is God' are alleged to be Turner's final words and his philosophy. We follow his career from the humble but talented son of a barber, the horror of his mother's incarceration in Bedlam, his fears of mental illness which made him a moody solitary genius, his travels in England and on the Continent, his time in Venice which produced some of his finest watercolours and his tragic and blighted relationships with women.