



of the  
BEST

## UK ESCORTED TOURS

There's nowhere quite like home, says **Isobel Turner**

**M**agnificent castles, sprawling lakes and awe-inspiring peaks – the UK isn't short of magical charm. And with no differing time zones or currencies to contend with, staying on British shores has undeniable appeal.

For clients keen to simply sit back and enjoy the allure of the UK, escorted tours can take the stress out of planning a trip, with some even offering pick-ups from close to home. From spotting majestic wildlife off the Scottish coast to exploring historic sites in the south, here are eight guided tours that show you don't have to venture far for a little bit of enchantment.



### UNCOVER HISTORIC TREASURES IN SOMERSET

For history-loving clients, this new addition to Just Go Holidays' Historic Houses range ticks all the boxes. The Splendour of Stunning Somerset & Best of the West Country tour traverses stunning landscapes (think lush, rolling fields and valleys flanked by foliage-clad cliffs) and showcases breathtaking architecture, including the Grade I listed Longleat House (pictured). The tour culminates with a visit to Cheddar Gorge, where visitors can get a real taste for the region by sampling local cheese. What's more, Historic Houses members receive a £30 discount on each tour in the range.

**Book it:** Just Go Holidays' The Splendour of Stunning Somerset & Best of the West Country five-day tour starts from £1,029 per person, based on two sharing, departing September 8, including four nights' accommodation, excursions, breakfast and dinner. [justgoholidays.com](http://justgoholidays.com)



### STEAM THROUGH THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

Iconic railways abound in Scotland, and this Newmarket Holidays tour checks off three of the most celebrated. It's all aboard in Inverness, the tour's starting point, for an 80-mile journey that showcases the country's unbridled natural beauty. Throughout the two-and-a-half-hour ride, passengers can marvel at the Black Isle, Loch Carron and the towering mountain of Liathach before arriving at Kyle of Lochalsh, opposite the Isle of Skye. The Strathspey Steam Railway is up next for a meander through unspoiled moorland and forest, where clients will truly see the beauty of travelling by steam train. The final journey traverses the West Highland Line, departing Fort William and following the tracks of the Hogwarts Express across Glenfinnan Viaduct.

**Book it:** Newmarket Holidays' five-day Scottish Highland Railways tour starts from £797, including B&B accommodation, dinners, all rail trips and flights departing April 15. [newmarketholidays.co.uk](http://newmarketholidays.co.uk)

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### ROAM LIKE THE ROMANS IN NORTHERN ENGLAND

Spanning 73 miles from Wallsend on the east coast to Bowness-on-Solway on the west, Hadrian's Wall is a historic spectacle that offers a unique glimpse into the heritage of Roman Britain. This Intrepid Travel tour follows the footpaths (*pictured*) that run alongside the wall, beginning in the western outpost of Carlisle and stretching all the way to East Wallhouses. Along the way, a local guide will share fascinating insights into the area's earliest history, and the group will have the chance to visit sites such as the Vindolanda Roman Fort and the Fort at Housesteads, exploring a number of charming villages along the way.

**Book it:** Intrepid Travel's seven-day Walk Hadrian's Wall Highlights tour starts from £1,144 per person, including accommodation, ground transport, a local guide and selected meals and activities, departing April 28. [intrepidtravel.com](http://intrepidtravel.com)



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### GET CLOSE TO NATURE IN WALES

Imposing mountains, magnificent valleys and quaint villages: clients seeking awe-inspiring vistas won't be disappointed with Shearings' tour of Llandudno and Snowdonia (*pictured*), which shows off some of Wales's top natural beauty spots. Covering more than 40 square miles and encompassing nine mountain ranges, Eryri National Park (Snowdonia) is a natural wonder, and the group will spend a day exploring its wild landscape. There's also an opportunity to visit the picturesque village of Betws-y-Coed, encircled by woodland, and the history-rich isle of Anglesey.

**Book it:** Shearings' five-day Llandudno and Snowdonia tour starts from £299 per person, based on two sharing for a March 4 departure, including coach travel, accommodation, excursions, breakfast and dinner. [shearings.com](http://shearings.com)





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### WANDER THROUGH THE WEST COUNTRY

Stonehenge, undoubtedly one of the UK's most famous sites, is shrouded in mystery. After making a stop in the former Anglo-Saxon capital of Winchester, travellers with On the Go Tours can explore the Unesco-listed spot and marvel at its captivating rock monuments. Next, the journey continues to Devon, where animal lovers can watch wild Dartmoor ponies as they graze (pictured). The itinerary continues west, concluding in Cornwall with visits to St Michael's Mount, Land's End and St Ives.

**Book it:** On the Go Tours' five-day Stonehenge, Devon and Cornwall tour starts from £1,255 per person, based on two sharing, departing April 5, including accommodation, breakfast, coach travel and entrance fees for Stonehenge and Tintagel Castle.

[onthegotours.com](http://onthegotours.com)



**Claire Dutton,**  
trade sales manager,  
Just Go Holidays

"An escorted tour is a hassle-free way to see the very best of a region. In the UK we have some incredible destinations and places of interest that can sometimes be overlooked. The beauty of a tour is that an expert team of product specialists will pull together the various elements of an itinerary into one easy-to-book, organised package. For customers, this means there's no need to worry about organising excursions. Agents should show what's on offer via their shop windows, social media channels and marketing campaigns so customers know they can book these types of holidays for them."

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### SET SAIL IN SCOTLAND

Anchors aweigh in Stornoway, the starting point of this tour that sails the Minch, the strait of water separating the Outer Hebrides and the Scottish mainland. Passengers can hope to see minke whales and various dolphin species breaching the surface, and, as the trip takes place when they are most active, the luckiest of guests may even catch a glimpse of an orca or humpback. On dry land, the group will hike to Stoer Lighthouse, renowned for its prime wildlife-spotting position.

**Book it:** Wildlife Worldwide's six-day Whales & Dolphins of the Outer Hebrides tour starts from £2,295 per person, based on two sharing and departing August 11, 2025, including accommodation on liveaboard vessel *Monadhliath*, selected meals, guided activities and transfers. [wildlifeworldwide.com](http://wildlifeworldwide.com)

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Richard Darby, Steven F. Granville



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## ESCAPE TO EAST ANGLIA

Pretty coastal towns, meandering waterways and a rich history make Norfolk a charming destination. After exploring the cathedral city of Norwich, head to Cley Marshes for a spot of birdwatching, then embark on a steam train ride to Holt, passing stunning coastline and rolling hills along the way. Throughout the remainder of the tour, the group will visit the royal residence of Sandringham (*pictured*) and drift peacefully along the Norfolk Broads aboard a Mississippi-style paddleboat.

**Book it:** Great Rail Journeys' five-day Norwich, Sandringham and the Norfolk Broads tour starts from £695 per person, based on two sharing and a departure date of April 28, including accommodation, breakfast and dinner, excursions and all rail and coach travel. The price includes a discount of £100 for bookings made by February 29.

[greatrail.com](http://greatrail.com)

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## JOURNEY FROM TOP TO TOE

From the historic streets of Edinburgh (*pictured*) to the vibrant waterfront of Plymouth, this Cosmos tour ticks off some of the UK's most-acclaimed sites and charming towns in one trip. Highlights include a visit to Shakespeare's hometown of Stratford-upon-Avon, a journey through the stunning scenery of the Lake District and a visit to Bath's 2,000-year-old Roman baths. Clients will also enjoy views of majestic Loch Lomond and a walk through York's quaint streets, as well as overnight stops in London, Leeds, Edinburgh, the Scottish village of Strathpeffer, Glasgow, Liverpool, Cardiff and Plymouth.

**Book it:** The 13-day England, Scotland and Wales tour with Cosmos starts from £2,069 per person, based on two sharing and departing April 29, including accommodation, breakfast, three dinners and all transport.

[cosmos.co.uk](http://cosmos.co.uk)



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