England has the best vaccination news in all of Europe. If you are fully vaccinated join us as we explore London differently. We’ll find hidden gems not on the usual tourist track. We invite you to join us for an extraordinary opportunity to explore the cultural capital of Europe on a 7-night program to London. Led by Art Historian, Fiona Bennett, we will explore both the timeless classics and the vibrant contemporary artists who make London an epicenter for art connoisseurs. Our program will feature visits to special exhibitions and galleries as we see London through the eyes of those with a deep appreciation of art. Travel by train to Cambridge and visit the Fitzwilliam Museum, one of Britain’s earliest public museums. A special lunch has been arranged at Clare College, one of Cambridge’s oldest colleges. Another excursion takes us southeast to Kent where we visit Winston Churchill’s home, Chartwell, as well as to Penshurst Place dating to 1341 and Sissinghurst Castle gardens, two of the country’s most interesting and beautiful gardens. Our director, Jonathan Binstock, has arranged a viewing of a special private collection which will likely be a highlight of the trip. There will also be time for you to explore at your leisure. We hope you can join us!

Tour Highlights

- Discover the Queen’s Gallery followed by traditional afternoon tea at Fortnum & Mason.
- Explore the Banksy Designated Graffiti area and the home of William Morris
- Visit the studio of installation artist and filmmaker Isaac Julien
- Spend a day exploring Cambridge including a special lunch at Clare College
- Day trip to Sissinghurst Castle & Penshurst Place gardens and Chartwell, Churchill’s former home
- Enjoy a tour of the Percival David Collection at the British Museum and the intricate interiors at Leighton House

Accommodations in London

The Dixon Hotel (7 nights)

Occupying an awe-inspiring building that dates from 1906, when it served as the Tower Bridge Magistrates Court, The Dixon is a hotel that captures all the culture, creativity and variety of London SE1. Named after John Dixon Butler, the historic building’s original Edwardian architect, The Dixon is steeped in history but inspired by the contemporary character and culture of its vibrant neighborhood.
Our program begins in London with a welcome reception and dinner. The following morning the group departs using London’s wonderful underground system for the Wallace Collection, an internationally outstanding collection which contains unsurpassed masterpieces of paintings, sculpture, furniture, arms and armor and porcelain. It was built over the 18th and 19th centuries by the Marquess’ of Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace. Continue on to Leadenhall Market with a stop en route at the original Twinings’ Tea Shop which has been housed in the same shop for over 300 years. Leadenhall is a covered Victorian market and one of the oldest markets in London, selling meat and fish as far back as far as the 14th century. After a leisurely lunch visit the main public art gallery of Buckingham Palace, the Queen’s Gallery. Enjoy afternoon tea at Fortnum & Mason, purveyors of fine foods, tea and wine located at this site since 1707.

Explore London’s East End today full of galleries and street art. Begin with a stop at St. Dunstan-in-the-East Church, a casualty of the London Blitz and now a quaint garden. Visit 18 Folgate Street where artist Dennis Severs’ former home stands as a time capsule of the 18th century. Continue on to the Banksy Designated Graffiti area to view his unique artwork. Enjoy a private visit to the studio of Isaac Julien, CBE, a British installation artist and filmmaker recommended by our director, Jonathan Binstock. Julien’s 1989 drama-documentary, Looking for Langston, poetically explored Langston Hughes and the Harlem Renaissance. End the day at the home of William Morris, home to a internationally-significant collection of textiles, ceramics, paintings and furniture.

Spend the day outside of London, traveling by train from Kings Cross station to Cambridge. Begin at one of the country’s earliest public museums, the Fitzwilliam Museum, with a world-renowned collection of more than half a million pieces of art. Enjoy a special lunch at Clare College, founded in 1326, before walking to the famous King’s College Chapel, a fine example of Gothic English architecture. The following day travel south of London to the exquisite Sissinghurst Castle gardens before traveling through Kent to Penshurst Place, built in 1341 with gardens considered the most beautiful in England. End the day exploring Churchill’s home, Chartwell, where his paintings and treasures are housed.

Discover the Percival David Collection at the British Museum with a special tour of some of the world’s finest Chinese ceramics. Continue on to Portobello Market, home of over 1,000 antique dealers for some free time and lunch. This afternoon, visit the former home of Victorian artist Frederic, Lord Leighton, filled with a fascinating collection of paintings and sculptures. Tonight an optional theater performance and back stage visit will be offered.

Our last day has been left open to allow flexibility in planning special events such as studio visits and the private art collection our director is arranging for us. More details will be shared in London. After some time at leisure, enjoy a farewell dinner.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: MEDIUM. The trip will spend considerable time in museums and will require being able to be on your feet for extended periods of time. The program will be using public transportation and trains to get around, and this sometimes involves walking for 10 minutes or more and using stairs. The trip is not suitable for those who have mobility problems.