

# Derbyshire: A Grand Tapestry of Country Houses and Historic Estates

May 17 – 24, 2026

*Arrangements by* Classical Excursions



## Overview *of the* Itinerary

### May 17, Sunday – London

Arrival in London and overnight at a five-star hotel. In the afternoon, enjoy private receptions at Soane Britain and de Gournay. In the evening we have dinner at a private club.

### May 18–23, Monday to Saturday – Derbyshire / Chatsworth Estate

Transfer to Derbyshire and six-night stay at The Cavendish Hotel on the Chatsworth Estate, with excursions to the country houses and gardens of Derbyshire.

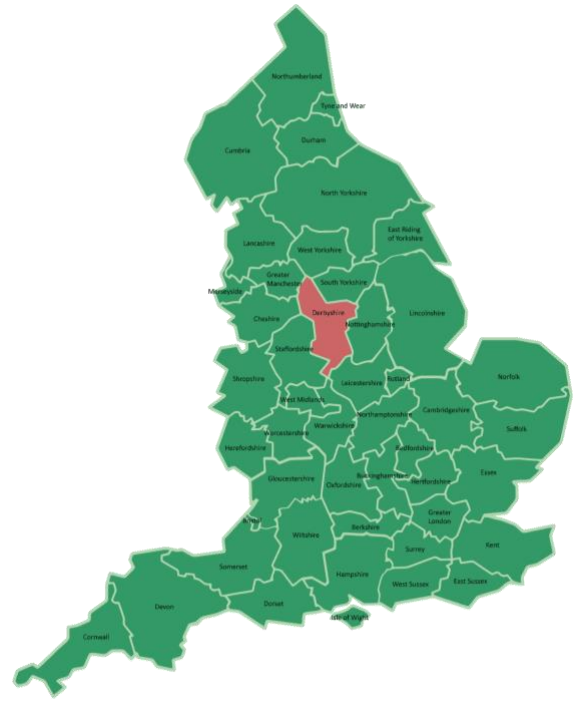
### May 24, Sunday – Departures

Independent departures from the UK.

Derbyshire is renowned for its outstanding country houses and the dramatic landscapes of the Peak District. The region offers an exceptional concentration of historic estates, from the Elizabethan splendor of Hardwick Hall to the medieval beauty of Haddon Hall and the grandeur of Chatsworth.

Based at The Cavendish Hotel on the Chatsworth Estate, our week features private access, expert commentary, and special events including a lecture by architectural historian **Oliver Gerrish**, a private reception and dinner at **Haddon Hall**, and a welcome at **Chatsworth** by the **Duke of Devonshire**.

Our excursions by private coach include visits to **St. Paul's Walden Bury**, **Renishaw Hall**, **Kedleston Hall**, **Catton Hall**, **Hardwick Hall**, **Haddon Hall**, **Chatsworth**, **Melbourne Hall**, **Casterne Hall**, **Locko Park**, and **Eyam Hall**, representing architectural traditions from the medieval through the Georgian periods.



## Overview of our Days

### May 17 – Arrival in London

Arrive independently in **London** and transfer to our **five-star hotel**.

In the afternoon, we enjoy private receptions at **Soane Britain** and **de Gournay** in London.

In the evening, we gather at a **private club** for a welcome dinner and to meet our tour leaders and fellow travelers as we set the stage for the week ahead in **Derbyshire**.

### May 18 – From London to Derbyshire and the Chatsworth Estate

This morning we depart **London** by private motor coach and drive north into the **heart of Derbyshire**, passing from the ordered landscapes of the **Home Counties** into the more rugged beauty of the **Peak District**.



On our journey north, we enjoy a private tour at **St. Paul's Walden Bury**, a Grade II listed house with a Grade I listed garden. A historic home of the **Bowes-Lyon family**, it is closely associated with **Queen Elizabeth**, the Queen Mother. The gardens—featuring one of the finest surviving examples of an 18th-century formal wilderness—include three allées radiating in a patte d'oie formation, clipped beech hedges, garden buildings, and the rescued **James Wyatt** temple from **Copped Hall**.



We arrive at **The Cavendish Hotel**, our home for the next six nights, beautifully situated on the **Chatsworth Estate**. After time to settle in and enjoy the views, we gather for dinner at the hotel.

On one evening during our stay, we will be treated to a lecture by architectural historian **Oliver Gerrish**, who will place Derbyshire's houses in the broader story of **British architecture** and country life.

## May 19–23 – Derbyshire: England's Historic Heartland

Over the next several days, we explore **Derbyshire's outstanding houses and gardens** on a series of carefully planned excursions by private coach. The exact daily sequence of visits will be confirmed closer to departure, but our program will include:



**Chatsworth** – The seat of the Dukes of Devonshire, renowned for magnificent state rooms, important collections, and glorious gardens shaped by “Capability” Brown and Paxton. Our visit includes a welcome by the Duke of Devonshire and access to private areas of the house.



**Haddon Hall** – A remarkably preserved medieval and Tudor house overlooking the River Wye. Our private visit—hosted by Lord and Lady Edward Manners—includes a garden tour by designer Arne Maynard, followed by a reception and dinner.

**Hardwick Hall** – Built by the formidable Bess of Hardwick, this Elizabethan masterpiece is famous for its expansive windows, remarkable tapestries, and the celebrated High Great Chamber and Long Gallery.

**Renishaw Hall** – Home to the Sitwell family since the 17th century, Renishaw offers richly varied interiors—from Jacobean to Adamesque to Regency—and gardens considered among the most enchanting in England.

**Kedleston Hall** – Robert Adam’s neoclassical triumph, designed for the Curzon family with grand ceremonial interiors inspired by ancient Rome.

**Catton Hall** – An elegant Georgian house whose modest exterior conceals ornate rococo and classical interiors. Our visit includes a private tour and refreshments.



**Melbourne Hall** – Formerly a 17th-century ecclesiastical residence, Melbourne is famed for its early 18th-century formal gardens, sculpted hedges, water features, and vistas.

**Casterne Hall** – An intimate family home set in dramatic landscape, with a Georgian façade and interiors layered with centuries of family heritage.



**Locko Park** – A country house combining 18th- and 19th-century architectural styles, surrounded by extensive landscaped grounds.

**Eyam Hall** – A charming 17th-century manor at the center of Eyam, a village known for its extraordinary response to the plague of the 1660s. The house retains Jacobean character and historic furnishings.

Throughout the week, we return each afternoon or evening to the comforts of **The Cavendish Hotel**, with opportunities to enjoy walks on the Chatsworth Estate, quiet time in the lounges, and convivial dinners in the hotel's dining room.

## May 24 – Departures

After breakfast our motorcoach returns participants to London for independent departures. **If you plan to depart on a flight on May 24<sup>th</sup> please do not plan any departures before 1:00 pm. The coach will plan to arrive at Heathrow airport at 11:00 am, allowing for afternoon or evening departures. If your flight departs earlier you will need to arrange for an independent transfer by car (3 hour ride).**

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Please contact the Office of Classical Excursions to register:

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*Updated as of November 2025 | Itinerary subject to change without notice*