

GEORGIAN GROUP TOUR  
OF  
NORTHERN IRELAND

13 – 18 May 2018



Belle Isle Castle Estate

Northern Ireland is a different place to the Republic of Ireland and this is evident in its buildings as well as many other aspects of life. Our tour will encompass some of the most magnificent houses in both the east and west of the country beginning in the Ard Peninsula and then travelling across the country to the grandest of houses in County Fermanagh.



Mount Stewart - hall

Our tour on the eastern coast will include Ballywalter Park, home of the 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Dunleath and considered the grandest and stateliest of all the private houses in County Down. Close by is the magnificently restored Mount Stewart, winner of a Georgian Group Architectural Award for

restoration and the Temple of the Winds, one the masterpieces of James ‘Athenian’ Stewart and a garden building of international significance. We will also visit Grey Abbey where we will have lunch as guests of William and Daphne Montgomery whose family have owned the estate since 1718. Further visits on the eastern side will include Larchfield, the stunning private walled estate of Sarah and Gavin Mackie and Castle Ward, with its fascinating history where the gothic and classical collide, an eccentric 18th-century mansion resting on a rolling hillside and looking out over the tranquil waters of Strangford Lough in County Down.

Crossing the great expanse of country through County Armagh on the way to County Fermanagh, we will have a privileged visit to Marlacoo House, a classic late Georgian house often described as ‘that of a covetable medium size’ and home to Primrose Wilson, an eminent figure for the cause of conservation on both sides of the border who will treat us to lunch and a talk on conservation in Northern Ireland.



Crom Castle

For the last few days of our tour, we will stay at the beautiful and luxurious Belle Isle Castle on an island in Lough Erne on the Duke of Abercorn’s estate. Amongst a group of important houses in the county is Crom Castle where Lord Erne will give us a personal tour of his family home. Castle Crom was built for the third Earl of Erne in the 1830s and is home to his descendants today – an enigmatic and magnificent neo-Tudor mansion with turrets and crenellated towers stretching far into the sky above. The nearby Castle Coole, the majestic 18th century home of the Earls of Belmore, designed by James Wyatt, was created to impress and impress it does. Further north is Baronscourt, the home of the Duke of Abercorn’s family since 1612, which is among that handful of old family estates in the British Isles which combine great historical and architectural interest with a landscape of outstanding natural beauty. There are plans to visit other private houses, one of which is Ballyscullion Park where we will have an introductory talk on the history and houses of Northern Ireland and enjoy dinner as guests of owners Richard and Rosalind Mulholland.

While the itinerary may be subject to change, this tour promises to be a fascinating glimpse of a variety of special houses and a chance to meet some interesting owners across the entire country of Northern Ireland.

Hotel details, room descriptions and prices are attached. If you are interested in joining us, please email me with your 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice of room at Belle Isle and I will advise on availability and send you a booking form. Once we have enough participants for the tour to proceed, I will send details of recommended flights. We ask members not to book any flights before receiving confirmation. If you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

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