

# Village Life<sup>®</sup> Cotswolds

EXCLUSIVE GUEST SPEAKER  
**Mark Cummings**

**April 26 – May 4, 2026**

**J**ourney through the charming Cotswolds, the Heart of England and home to some of the country's most scenic landscapes, filled with picturesque villages, rolling green hills and winding country lanes. From your home base in the first-class *Queens Hotel* in Cheltenham, embark on daily excursions, exploring grand properties and lovely countryside. At prestigious Oxford University, indulge in an exclusive after-hours tour of the Bodleian Library and Radcliffe Camera. At a local farm, learn about sustainability and foraging, harvest fresh vegetables from the garden and engage in a cooking lesson. Discover lush landscapes as you stroll the grounds at Sudeley Castle and visit Hidcote Garden. Explore tiny villages, discover country gardens and tread in Shakespeare's footsteps in Stratford-upon-Avon. Meet locals who will share their culture, cuisine and love of the area. Treat yourself to this unforgettable 7-night escape to England's castles and countryside!

### Exclusive Highlights

- Private after-hours tour of Oxford University's Bodleian Library and Radcliffe Camera.
- Specially arranged visit to Chavenage House and grounds hosted by a member of the family.
- Tour of UNESCO World Heritage site, Blenheim Palace, including its Palace State Rooms & Churchill exhibition.
- Visit to the Shakespeare Library and Archive Collections, listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World register.

Here: Radcliffe Camera, Oxford University  
Cover: Blenheim Palace







## Dear MLSN Members, Family and Friends,

Join us on this enriching ramble through the Heart of England, a 7-night program brimming with history, culture and gorgeous pastoral views. Follow in the footsteps of Shakespeare in Stratford-Upon-Avon as you call at Anne Hathaway's cottage and explore the fascinating Shakespeare Library and Archive Collections. Tread the campus at Oxford University, bastion of higher learning since 1096!

Revel in nature as you stroll the grounds of Chavenage House and the lush Arts and Crafts-inspired garden at Hidcote. Visit organic Daylesford Farm for a private talk on sustainability and foraging, then harvest fresh produce from the market garden and, using these ingredients, cook — and happily consume! — a delicious lunch.

Meet the locals at a village forum about Cotswold life. And enjoy a traditional pub dinner with a local folk duo who will talk about the history of folk music in the area and perform for us.

Discover town and country, castles and sheepcotes, libraries and gardens on this unparalleled program! Book today while space and special savings are still available.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy M. Greenfield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Greenfield  
Executive Director Emeritus



**For reservations, call Gohagan & Company at 800-922-3088  
or visit [gohagantravel.com/reserve](http://gohagantravel.com/reserve)**



Day 1 | April 26

Depart Home City.

Day 2 | April 27

R

London, England | Cheltenham

Arrive in London, England, and transfer to Cheltenham in the Cotswolds. Check in to the first-class *Queens Hotel*, unpack and settle in. Join us for a Welcome Reception, followed by a leisurely evening to enjoy dinner on your own at a local pub or restaurant.

Day 3 | April 28

B-L

Daylesford Farm | Cotswolds Villages

Travel to organic Daylesford Farm for a private talk

focusing on sustainability and foraging. Then harvest fresh produce from the market garden and cook and eat a delicious lunch. This afternoon, visit the market square of Stow-on-the-Wold, a historic wool town. Don't miss St. Edwards church and its famous North Door—flanked by two ancient yew trees, this unique portal supposedly inspired J.R.R. Tolkien's Doors of Durin in "The Lord of the Rings." Next stop: Bourton-on-the-Water, known as the "Venice of the Cotswolds" for its five stone bridges spanning the town's centerpiece, the Windrush River.

Day 4 | April 29

B-D

Blenheim Palace | Oxford

Built between 1705 and 1724, Blenheim Palace was a gift from Parliament to John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough, to thank him for his war service. Sir Winston was born here, and the estate remains in the Churchill family. Blenheim Palace was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987. Tour the Palace State Rooms and the Churchill Exhibition. Visit the illustrious campus of Oxford University. Traverse the Tudor-era Tom Quad to arrive at Tom Tower, which was

*Bourton-on-the-Water along the Windrush River*







**Ornate state room in Blenheim Palace**

designed by Sir Christopher Wren and built in 1681 to house a bell (aptly named Great Tom). Step into the dark-paneled, portrait-lined dining hall with its vaulted ceilings, which may remind you of the Great Hall of Hogwarts. Finally, learn about “Christ Church time”—which is five minutes later than Greenwich Mean Time. Enjoy an included group dinner at a local eatery in Oxford.

This evening, indulge in a private after-hours tour of the Bodleian Library & Radcliffe Camera. The Bodleian Library dates to 1488. Generations of scholars—from Sir Walter Raleigh to Hugh Grant—have studied here. Oxford alumni

include monarchs, Nobel Prize winners, British prime ministers, an American president, and writers such as T.S. Eliot, Oscar Wilde and J.R.R. Tolkien. (Wondering which American president? It was Bill Clinton.)

#### **Day 5 | April 30**

Chavenage House

This morning, chat with local residents about their history, culture and daily lives during a captivating village forum. After lunch, visit Chavenage House—over 400 years old and built in an Elizabethan architectural style. It has been visited by many British notables over the years, and will be familiar to viewers

of the PBS series “Poldark” and “Wolf Hall.” The Lowsley-Williams family have owned and lived at Chavenage since 1891. A family member will give you a fascinating private tour of the house and grounds and host you for afternoon tea and an informal discussion of life and work at Chavenage.

#### **Day 6 | May 1**

Cheltenham |  
Hidcote Garden

Start the day with a guided walking tour of lovely Cheltenham. After lunch, depart for Hidcote, a world-famous Arts and Crafts-inspired garden covering over 10 acres



**St. Edwards church door, Stow-on-the-Wold**



Chavenage House

near the village of Chipping Camden. The garden combines smaller, more formal rooms and larger-scale landscapes. Enjoy a guided tour through this lovely greenspace.

**Day 7 | May 2** **B**

Stratford-upon-Avon  
Explore the life of Shakespeare during a tour of the medieval riverside market town of Stratford-upon-Avon. Marvel at the treasures held in the Shakespeare Birthplace Trusts' Shakespeare Library and Archive Collections, which is listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World register. Enjoy lunch and leisure time in Stratford. Stroll the riverfront, discover Magic Alley, browse the shops or take a boat ride

on the Avon River. Then visit the childhood home of Shakespeare's wife, Anne Hathaway. It was built in 1463 and lived in by 13 generations of her family. Anne was born in the cottage in 1556; William would have visited her there while courting her. Note the lovely manicured gardens around the cottage.

**Day 8 | May 3** **B-D**

Sudeley Castle  
Over a thousand years old and regally situated on 1,200 acres, Sudeley Castle is an eye-popping estate. And it has an impressive pedigree; the castle's royal connections have played an important role in British history throughout time. During a guided tour,

marvel at the rooms and their artifacts and treasures, and stroll the grounds, which hold ten separate gardens.

Tonight, head to the Falcon Pub in the village of Painswick (known as the "Queen of the Cotswolds") to enjoy a traditional pub farewell dinner in a beautiful Georgian townhouse. A local folk duo will join us to talk about the history of folk music in the Cotswolds and to perform.

**Day 9 | May 4** **B**

Cotswolds | London | Return to Home City  
Following breakfast, check out of the hotel and transfer to Heathrow International Airport for your return flight home.

*Note: This itinerary is subject to change due to local conditions.*



**Featured Guest Speaker | Mark Cummings**

Mark is a multiple award-winning radio presenter, journalist and writer and has been broadcasting for over 40 years. For nearly half of that time, he presented the BBC Radio Gloucestershire Breakfast Show. He's presented several "West Country" travel series for BBC Points West and writes a monthly column for Cotswold Life, which he first started twenty years ago. Having traveled extensively as a backpacker, and now as an empty nester, he writes travel pieces that inspire readers to follow in his footsteps. His book "Glorious Gloucestershire" which he calls "a love letter to the county I adore," was published in 2024. He looks forward to sharing his insights during this program.



*Sudeley Castle*



*Cotswolds sheep*



*Hidcote Manor Garden*



## INCLUDED FEATURES



- 7-night stay at the first-class *Queens Hotel Cheltenham*.
- Small group travel, with a maximum of 36 travelers.
- Included meals | 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 2 dinners.
- Experienced Gohagan & Company Travel Director accompanies you throughout the program.
- Expert lecturers and local guides enrich your experience with their knowledge and insight.
- Chat with local residents about their history, culture and lifestyle in a village forum.
- Private sustainability and foraging talk at Daylesford Organic Farm.
- Private after-hours tour of Oxford University's prestigious Bodleian Library and Radcliffe Camera.
- Specially arranged private visit to Chavenage House and grounds hosted by a member of the family.
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- Complimentary audio headset during guided excursions.
- Complimentary water is available in your room and on excursions.
- Our extensive pre-departure materials better prepare you for your travel experience.
- Complimentary travel mementos.

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- 24-hour emergency support throughout the program to handle any schedule changes and unexpected delays.
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**TERMS** **\*The Special Savings Rate is valid if booked by 8/18/25 and paid in full at booking.**

**These Special Savings consist of \$500 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full Savings.**

- All rates are in U.S. dollars, per person, based on double occupancy, including taxes, unless stated otherwise.
- Single occupancy has limited availability.
- Deposit amount is \$1,500 per person.
- Final Payment is due at least 120 days prior to departure.
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## Queens Hotel Cheltenham

From an 18th-century spa to a modern boutique hotel, the *Queens Hotel Cheltenham* boasts a long history, a grand exterior and a prime position on one of Cheltenham's most beautiful Regency streets. The hotel is a stunning example of neo-classical architecture. Throughout its illustrious history, the hotel welcomed such eminent figures as General Sir Charles Napier, Edward Elgar and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Recently, the hotel has been restored to its former neoclassical glory, and the building's original comforts have been enhanced with the latest technology.

**2026 DEPARTURE DATE** | April 26 to May 4 | **Tour Begins: April 27**

| Occupancy | Standard Rate | Special Savings Rate* |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Double    | \$5,495       | <b>\$4,495</b>        |
| Single    | \$6,865       | <b>\$5,865</b>        |

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INCLUDED**

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*Cotswold Village*