

Carolyn & Dave T's August, 2010 Trip to England – for more details go online to my blog: <http://tastingspoons.com> (trip started 8/7/10) This was a 15-night trip, with no nights in London. Adjust the trip to suit your kind of travel.

1: Waddesdon Manor (**Five Arrows Hotel**), near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, http://www.waddesdon.org.uk/five_arrows/ Worth visiting – nice rooms, lovely house, superb meals. If you want to visit Waddesdon Manor, the National Trust House, this is an ideal location on the grounds. This place is about an hour or so north of Heathrow – an easy-enough drive after a long flight.

2 & 3: Nottingham – we stayed with friends, so don't have a hotel recommendation. But twice when we've visited we've eaten a really great dinner at Hart's Restaurant (downtown), 1 Standard Court | Park Row, Nottingham NG1 6GN

4 & 5 Harrogate – I chose Harrogate as a central location in Yorkshire. We'd already visited York before (it's a very nice walled city, and the Cathedral is worth a visit), and wanted to be further west. We stayed at the **Studely Hotel** (smallish hotel- www.studleyhotel.co.uk/) in downtown Harrogate. Easy parking. Good Thai restaurant in the hotel. Easy walking to everything there. The 2nd day we drove to Castle Howard (about an hour) and spent several hours there. Beautiful old mansion and grounds. We had dinner the 2nd night at William & Victoria's (a really nice pub), 6 Cold Bath Road, Harrogate (0)1423 521510. www.williamandvictoria.com/index.php If we were to go again, I might stay a night in Harrogate, but for sure I'd drive over to Grassington and stay there. More than one person told us we should stay in or near Grassington. Next time I might stay 3 nights in that area, fewer in the Lake District.

6, 7 & 8: **Lake District** – we'd been there before, so had seen the towns of Windermere and Bowness. We stayed at a B&B right on the main road, the east side of Lake Windermere. All accommodations in this area are expensive. Some are better than others. I probably wouldn't stay again at the place we did. We drove around (north, around Ullswater, beautiful) and probably could have done another day of driving (if it hadn't rained all day). The roads are narrow and crowded. Try to go off peak season. We had dinner at the Lazy Daisy in Bowness both nights. Casual café, good food.

9: **Chester** – we stayed at a place called the Inglewood Manor, NW of downtown, out in the country. www.inglewoodonline.co.uk/ It's an old country house turned into a hotel. Chester is another old, walled city, quaint and worth visiting. We'd been there before, so stayed out of town. The hotel was really a beautiful place, lovely grounds, good food. But the rooms leave a lot to be desired (the hotel probably needs remodeling). Our first day we had a delicious light afternoon tea (everything about it was note-worthy. And don't stay there the night of a wedding, as it may go on late into the night.

10 & 11: **Llanelli, Wales** – I'd booked us into a very cute little B&B about 30 minutes inland from Cardiff. called Beudy Bach. www.beudybachbnb.co.uk/ It's down a little dirt road, and was very nice. Not fancy, but friendly, pleasant owners. Three rooms, 2 share a bathroom. We took a drive down to The Gower (on the coast). It was a blustery, cold day and we didn't have the right clothes for beach or footpath walking. Pretty countryside. Had dinner at The Grey Hound, a local pub near the B&B. Very good food (no website). Gorgeous drive along the edge of the Brecon Beacons National Park on the way there, and on the way back.

12 and 13: **Hay-on-Wye, Wales** – This was definitely our favorite place of the trip. Not the town particularly (although it's notable for containing 32 used and antiquarian book stores), but the darling B&B, called Lower House. www.lowerhousegardenhay.co.uk/ It's outside the town of Hay, an patchwork quilt kind of old English cottage. Lovely owners, good food. Charming rooms (3 total) and gorgeous gardens. One night we ate at The Old Black Lion (an upscale pub - www.oldblacklion.co.uk/). Very good food. The 2nd night we drove about 30 minutes to go to Felin Fach Griffin, an upscale restaurant. We also had lunch there (very good), but we were disappointed in the dinner

14: **Cheltenham**: I wouldn't particularly recommend anyone stay in this town (we did because we have friends who live there). It's on the edge of the Cotswolds, which are so pretty and pastoral. If we went again, I'd definitely stay at the Wyck Hill House, near Stow-on-the-Wold www.wyckhillhousehotel.co.uk/. I've stayed there before. Lovely old place with fantastic food. It has new owners and has been completely remodeled. I can't guarantee it's still the same. If you happen to need to stay in Cheltenham, we stayed at the Malvern View Hotel on Cleeve Hill. Nice location way out of town. Good food.

15: **Marriott Heathrow Hotel** – because we had an early morning flight, we arrived mid-afternoon the previous day, gassed up the car, returned it to Europcar and took the train into London for a very special dinner at Fifteen, Jamie Oliver's restaurant. I booked the hotel room online, prepaid, no cancellations. We upgraded to the concierge floor which included full breakfast (normally 17 pounds each). Room was very nice. It does cost about \$6 apiece to take the bus from the hotel to any of the Heathrow terminals, per trip (20-30 minutes). When we departed we had a taxi take us door to door for \$15.