



ACADEMY TRAVEL

TAILORED
SMALL GROUP
JOURNEYS

CURTAIN UP!

THEATRE IN DUBLIN,
STRATFORD-UPON AVON & LONDON



OVERVIEW

Enjoy some of the best theatre currently in production with eight top-flight performances on Academy Travel's British Isles Theatre Tour, led by Dr Kate Foy. Our 14-day tour takes us from the historic city of Dublin, against the backdrop of the annual Fringe Festival, to Shakespeare's home in Stratford-upon-Avon and on to the 'Best of the West End' in bustling London.

Plays and players, places and faces will be examined through a lecture program designed to dig deeper into the rich social and cultural history of Irish and English theatre. This program will be complemented by visits to theatre-related sites hosting memorabilia, costumes, and historical items, as well as backstage tours of some of the region's most iconic theatre spaces, all curated by expert guides.

Theatre and its relationship to the wider cultural life of England and Ireland is also reflected in walking tours and other visits, including the National Portrait Gallery, the KIng's Gallery, Westminster Abbey and Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon.



TOUR LEADER

Dr Kate Foy is a professional actor and educator who specialises in actor-training and theatre history. She holds a BA and an MLitt from the University of New England (NSW), and a PhD from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

TOUR DATES

September 9-22, 2024 | 14 Days

TOUR PRICE

\$14,340 per person, twin share
\$2,990 single supplement

TOUR DEPOSIT

A **\$1,000** non-refundable deposit is required per person to confirm your booking on tour. Now that the final program is released, an instalment of **\$2,000** per person is required.

GROUP SIZE

Maximum number of **16** in group

ITINERARY

Dublin (3 nights), Stratford-upon-Avon (2 nights), London (8 nights)

INCLUSIONS

13 nights' accommodation in centrally located 4-star hotels. All breakfasts, 1 lunch and 5 dinners. Best available tickets to **8** performances. Services of an expert tour leader and an experienced tour manager throughout. Economy flight Dublin - Birmingham. All ground transport, entrance fees and tipping.

PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Enjoy eight performances across Dublin, Stratford and London



DUBLIN FRINGE FESTIVAL

Two performances at the 2024 Dublin Fringe Festival. The DFF has been breathing new life into theatre and the arts for 16 days every September since 1995

PERICLES

Shakespeare's stirring tale of love, hope and miracles in the RSC's Swan Theatre, with award-winning actor Alfred Enoch in the title role



HELLO, DOLLY!

A much-anticipated West End revival at the London Palladium, with BAFTA Award winner Imelda Staunton starring as *Dolly Gallagher Levi*

NATIONAL THEATRE

A performance at London's National Theatre, selected from the 2024-2025 season. The NT creates world-class productions of both new and classic works



THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

A contemporary take on the Bard's classic comedy as the iconic Globe Theatre transforms into Elizabethan London, complete with ship masts and piers

OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD

A brand new production of this Olivier award-winning classic, based on the extraordinary true story of Australia's first penal colony



OPERATION MINCEMEAT

A critically acclaimed and fresh new musical by the collective SpitLip at the Fortune Theatre, which tells the unlikely story of an MI-5 escapade



DETAILED ITINERARY

Start & Finish

The tour starts at 4.00pm on Monday 9 September, at The Morgan Hotel, Dublin.

The tour ends after breakfast on Sunday 22 September, at The Bloomsbury Hotel, London.

Included meals are indicated with B, L, D.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

Eight Performances

Enjoy some of the best theatrical performances currently in production with eight performances included, and explore the rich social and cultural history of theatre behind the curtain.

Historic Dublin

Explore this beautiful city, sitting astride the River Liffey, graced with elegant Georgian architecture, and steeped in literary and theatrical history.

Shakespeare in Stratford

Where better than William Shakespeare's birthplace to enjoy the best and boldest interpretations of Shakespeare's works from the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Theatrical London

Uncover the fascinating history of this complex and multi-layered city through visits to sites old and new to complement our performance program.

Private Tours

Enhance your experience with guided walks and behind-the-scenes tours of historic and contemporary theatres and theatre-related sites in the company of expert guides.

Monday 9 September

Arrive Dublin

We meet tour leader Kate Foy and tour manager Paula Booth this afternoon before heading out for an orientation walking tour. Under the backdrop of the Dublin Fringe Festival, the city will be transformed into a tapestry of creativity, where every street corner, historic building, and unconventional space becomes a stage for artistic expression. Dublin is known as one of the friendliest cities in Europe and this evening we experience hospitality Dublin-style with an early dinner in a traditional local pub. Overnight Dublin (D)

Tuesday 10 September

Theatrical Dublin | Dublin Fringe Festival

This morning, after a lecture in our hotel introducing us to Irish theatre and plays, we make our way to Trinity College, Ireland's oldest University founded by Queen Elisabeth I in 1592. A masterpiece of architecture, we tour the collection of elegant Georgian and Victorian buildings on campus before viewing the barrel-vaulted Long Room in the Old Library and the *Book of Kells*, a beautifully illuminated Gospel manuscript that dates back to the 9th-century. We then make a short walk over the River Liffey to Abbey Theatre, founded as a national theatre for Ireland by William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory in 1904, under the generous patronage of Miss Annie Horniman – heiress to a tea fortune, theatre impresario and proto feminist. Here we enjoy a backstage tour followed by free time to explore the city. We meet again early this evening for our welcome dinner before our first Fringe Festival performance. Overnight Dublin (B, D)

Performance I

Venue: To be advised

Program: To be advised

Wednesday 11 September

Literary Dublin | Dublin Fringe Festival

The birthplace of Samuel Beckett, George Bernard Shaw, and William Butler Yeats, Dublin was declared a UNESCO City of Literature in 2010 and its creative roots run deep. Our walking tour this morning takes us through the city's



Trinity College Dublin

Alfred Enoch



history in the footsteps of literary figures both real and imagined from Oscar Wilde to Joyce's Leopold Bloom, Maeve Binchy, Seamus Heany and so many others, while enjoying the beautiful Georgian architecture of the city. After a pre-show discussion and a chance to enjoy a pint in the home of the black stuff, we take in our second Fringe Festival performance this afternoon. Tonight you might like to join the tour leader and experience some traditional Irish folk music in a nearby pub. Overnight Dublin (B)

Performance II

Venue: To be advised

Program: To be advised

Thursday 12 September To Stratford-upon-Avon

An early departure from our hotel this morning with a coach transfer to the airport where we join our flight to Birmingham. From here we make our way to Stratford-upon-Avon by coach. Arriving in the early afternoon there is time for a late lunch before we head off on our orientation walking tour. Our stroll takes us from our hotel, along the River Avon to the Holy Trinity Church where we have our first encounter with The Bard as it is here that William Shakespeare was baptised, married and where he is buried, near his wife Anne. This evening we enjoy dinner at the Black Swan, also known as the Dirty Duck, a pub which dates back to the 15th century and whose proximity to the RSC theatres makes it a popular destination for actors and theatre goers. Overnight Stratford-upon-Avon (B, D)

Friday 13 September Shakespeare and Stratford | *Pericles*

This morning, after a lecture in our hotel introducing tonight's performance, we'll discover more about the man who put Stratford on the map, beginning with a visit to Shakespeare's Birthplace. This half-timbered 16th-century house was purchased through a public campaign supported by Charles Dickens in 1847. Fully restored, it is now a comprehensive museum dedicated to Shakespeare's life and times. We also visit the Guild Chapel, decorated with extraordinary medieval wall paintings, and the King Edward VI Grammar School, where Shakespeare was reputedly a student. After free time for lunch, we then make our way to the beautiful cottage and gardens which were home to Anne Hathaway, who was to become Shakespeare's wife. Returning to our hotel there is time to relax before we head to the Swan Theatre for Shakespeare's nautical tale of a wandering prince, *Pericles*, Prince of Tyre. Award-winning actor Alfred Enoch plays in the title role. Overnight Stratford-upon-Avon (B)

Performance III

Venue: Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Program: Shakespeare's Play, *Pericles*



Drury Lane

National Theatre



Saturday 14 September

To London | **Hello, Dolly!**

Following a relaxed morning with a lecture in our hotel, we depart Statford for London today. Our journey takes us through the charming English countryside, stopping enroute for refreshments. Arriving in London's West End in the afternoon, we check-in to our hotel with free time to get acquainted with the surrounding area. This evening sees us take the tube to Soho's Palladium theatre for the first West End staging of *Hello, Dolly!* since 1984. In this iconic musical featuring Jerry Herman's timeless score, BAFTA award-winning Imelda Staunton re-unites with Director Dominic Cooke following their critically acclaimed production of *Follies* at the National Theatre. Overnight London (B)

Performance IV

Venue: The London Palladium

Program: Musical, *Hello, Dolly!*

Sunday 15 September

London at Leisure

Following a mid-morning lecture in our hotel, the day is free to explore London at leisure. Your tour leader and manager will be happy to help with suggestions and handy tips. In the evening we meet again at the hotel and make the short walk to The Ivy for dinner. This restaurant, in the heart of the theatre district, has been serving patrons since 1917, including theatre luminaries such as Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, Marlene Dietrich, John Gielgud, and Noël Coward. Overnight London (B, D)

Monday 16 September

Backstage in The West End | **National Theatre**

We start our day with a lecture in our hotel on West End's Theatreland, an area which comprises of dozens of theatre venues old and new within close proximity of one another, before making our way to the Royal Drury Lane in the heart of the district. Here we take an in-depth guided backstage tour of this grand theatre which has operated for more than 350 years and survived tragedy, fire, bankruptcy and even murder! The theatre's sumptuous foyer and magnificent auditorium have recently been brought back to their former glory by its owner, Andrew Lloyd Webber. Following a break for lunch, we then have a guided tour of the surrounding theatre district. Posters outside the venues will reveal a roll-call of some of the best-known names in theatre. There will be time for a light dinner before tonight's performance at the National Theatre on the South Bank of the Thames, a venue whose "brutalist" architecture has drawn much comment since it opened in 1976. The National Theatre Company, or NT as it is known, was established under the directorship of Sir Laurence Olivier and continues to create world-class productions of new works and classics. Overnight London (B)

Performance V

Venue: National Theatre, London

Program: To be advised



Globe Theatre



King's Gallery

Tuesday 17 September Fashion and Glamour in London

“A gentleman gets his suit made on Savile Row, and he goes to Jermyn Street for everything else.”

This morning we meet our local guide and embark on a fashion walking tour through the heart of London, beginning with the beautiful shop fronts and luxury retailers in the compelling district of St James. After meeting with a number of sustainably-minded British designers on fashionable Jermyn Street, our tour takes us through Savile Row's influential boutiques, home to made-to-measure tailors who have served the well-heeled local residents and denizens since the late 18th century. Finishing with the glamour of Mayfair, with everything from high couture to fine jewellery and even Royal designers, we meet with a unique silk designer who makes everything on-demand! This evening, if schedules permit, we hope to enjoy a performance at the atmospheric Wilton's Music Hall – the oldest surviving Grand Music Hall in the world. Overnight London (B)

Wednesday 18 September London's Southbank | *The Comedy of Errors*

Today we are transported back to Shakespeare's London as we venture to the Globe Theatre, the replica of Shakespeare's iconic wooden 'O', founded by American actor Sam Wanamaker. Here we take a guided tour of this extraordinary open-air theatre, including the brand-new exhibition space. Following our visit, we enjoy a walking tour along the Thames with a local guide, an area which includes the Millennium Bridge – an epic span across the river connecting Bankside with St Paul's Cathedral. We conclude our tour at the former Bankside Power Station, now repurposed as the striking Tate Modern, where we enjoy lunch together. There is time to relax at our hotel this afternoon before we return to the Globe for Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. This wild comedy about rival cities, long-lost siblings and mistaken identities comes to life as the Globe transforms into a bustling dock – complete with ship masts and piers. Overnight London (B, L)

Performance VII

Venue: Shakespeare's Globe, London

Program: Shakespeare's Play, *The Comedy of Errors*

Thursday 19 September Royal London

This morning we begin with a private, before-hours visit to the newly renamed King's Gallery at Buckingham Palace, which rose from the ruins of Queen Victoria's private chapel, destroyed in an air raid in 1940. Totally renovated for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2002, the gallery displays exciting new exhibitions, along with a beautifully curated, and ever-changing selection of treasures from the Royal Collection. We then take a leisurely stroll through London's beautiful parks, making our way from Buckingham Palace to St James Park, Green Park, Piccadilly and Soho. After a break for lunch, we continue on to Westminster Abbey for a tour of this fascinating site, a venue

HOTELS

Hotels have been selected principally for their central location. All hotels are a comfortable four-star standard.

Dublin, The Morgan Hotel

(3 nights)

www.themorgan.com

Stratford-Upon-Avon, The Arden Hotel

(2 nights)

www.theardenhotelstratford.com

London, The Bloomsbury Hotel

(8 nights)

www.doylecollection.com

WEATHER

September brings cooler temperatures across the British Isles as Autumn arrives, so it is a great month to visit these historic and fascinating cities. Daytime temperatures in Dublin average 15-17°C, with colder evenings at 8-10°C. It will be slightly warmer in the UK, with averages of 18-20°C. You should bring a light jacket and jumpers for the evenings. As we all know, the UK can sometimes be a bit damp, so bring an umbrella!

FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

Grade Two

This tour is designed for people who lead active lives. To participate on this tour, you should be able to:

- keep up with the group at all times
- walk for 5-7 kilometres over the day at a moderate pace
- stand and slow walk for up to 90 minutes galleries and museums
- negotiate walking over uneven ground on dirt tracks
- walk up and down steps and slopes
- get on and off a coach with steps unassisted
- move your luggage unassisted



for joyful celebrations and poignant commemorations and a resting place for royalty and commoners alike. The later afternoon and evening are at leisure. Overnight London (B)

Friday 20 September

Costume and Theatre | *Our Country's Good*

Costume design plays its own important role in any theatrical production so today, after a lecture in our hotel, we head to the V&A for a tour of the Museum's Costume Gallery which houses a magnificent collection of stage costumes and accessories dating from the mid-18th century. After time for lunch, we make our way to the National Portrait Gallery, recently reopened after extensive renovations. As the gallery is home to more than 220,000 works from the 8th century to the present day, we'll focus our visit on paintings and photographs of the theatre greats. This evening we have our penultimate performance featuring a revival of the Olivier Award-winning play *Our Country's Good*, written by Timberlake Wertenbaker. This major revival at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre addresses questions surrounding justice and prison systems under British rule. Overnight London (B)

Performance VIII

Venue: Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, London

Program: Play, *Our Country's Good*

Saturday 21 September

The Curtain Call | *Operation Mincemeat*

We wrap up our lecture program this morning, then there is free time before we head to Covent Garden's Fortune Theatre for the final performance of our tour – the critically acclaimed new musical and West End triumph *Operation Mincemeat*. This fast-paced show by Fringe theatre company SplitLip tells the hilarious and unbelievable true story of the twisted secret mission that won us World War II. After the curtains close, we return to our Bloomsbury hotel for a farewell meal in the beautiful Dalloway Terrace. Overnight London (B, D)

Performance IV

Venue: Fortune Theatre, London

Program: Musical, *Operation Mincemeat*

Sunday 22 September

Departure

The tour ends this morning after breakfast. Please consult your individual travel documents for your ongoing journey. (B)



ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS

For further information or to secure a place, please contact **Jamal Fairbrother** on 9235 0023 (Sydney) or 1800 639 699 (outside Sydney) or email:

jamal@academytravel.com.au