



A Monk and an Art Historian
THE ABBEYS OF SOUTH WALES

Tintern, Ewenny, St Marys Abergavenny, Margam, Neath, Llanthony

Wednesday 9 September - Saturday 12 September

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- **Father Oliver Holt** is a Benedictine monk at Douai Abbey, where he is bursar and organiser of concerts in the abbey church. He also sits on the abbot's council at Douai and the prior's council at Downside Abbey. He studied English Literature with Nicholas at Oxford, and is knowledgeable about monastic art and architecture.

-The Norman Benedictine **Ewenny Priory** that inspired Turner to create one of his greatest watercolours.

-**St Marys Abergavenny**, described as 'The Westminster Abbey of Wales', with its finest collection of medieval figure sculptures in the country including a **Hastings** family member's effigy who came to her end along the battlements of Abergavenny while in pursuit of her beloved pet squirrel, and The '**Jesse**' sculpture', regarded as one of the finest medieval sculptures in the world, exhibited at Tate Britain.

-**Margam Abbey** and its most important collection of stone **Celtic crosses** in Britain, as well as a vast twelve-sided 13c chapter-house.

-**Neath Abbey**, 'The fairest abbey in all of Wales', and the river **Wye** itself, an inspiration for the 'Picturesque Movement, whose followers included Girtin, Turner and other great English watercolourists.

-**Tintern Abbey**, explored by **William Wordsworth**, whose 250th anniversary we celebrate in 2020.



Gliffaes Country House Hotel, Crickhowell
+44 1874 730371

Set in the middle of the Brecon Beacons National Park between the two market towns of Abergavenny and Brecon, Gliffaes Country House Hotel is one of the finest hotels in South Wales. Situated in a spectacular position above the Usk River, this truly charming country house hotel offers comforting log fires, locally sourced food beautifully prepared by Head chef Karl Cheetham, and, thoughtfully appointed and cheerfully elegant interiors. Tucked away in the Brecon countryside on thirty acres of its own grounds, surrounded by the rolling hills of the Black Mountains, the 23-bedroom hotel has been owned and run by the same family for over 70 years. It is the only four-star hotel in the Brecon Beacons.

HISTORY

Inspired by his Grand Tour travels, an extravagant Reverend West decided to blow his family's fortune on building Gliffaes in Italianate style in 1883, with a campanile and a wide stone terrace overlooking hedge-chequered hills. Now run by Susie and James Suter, who are carrying the hotel into its fourth generation, it is an impeccable example of old-fashioned class. Stucco-embellished ceilings, Delft tile-rimmed fireplaces, polished barley-twist wood, Lewis & Wood fabrics and antique chairs reupholstered in Welsh tweed to blend in with contemporary works of Welsh art.

WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

- 10.18 Suggested train from **Paddington**
- 12.47 Arrive Bridgend. Minibus to **Poco Poco Restaurant** in Bridgend for lunch
- 2.45 Leave for Ewenny Priory, Bridgend, Norman Benedictine monastery.
- 3.00 Arrive Ewenny Priory
- 4.00 Leave for hotel
- 5.30 Arrive Hotel
- 7.00 Dinner in Hotel

THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

- 10.00 Talk by Oliver Holt and Nicholas Friend 'Monasticism in South Wales'
- 11.15 Leave for St Marys Priory Abergavenny
- 11.45 Arrive Abergavenny to see St Marys Priory exterior
- 12.30 Lunch in Abergavenny at **Nicholls Coffee Shop**
- 1.45 Sculpture in St Marys Abergavenny including 'Jesse'.
- 2.30 Leave St Marys Priory for Llanthony
- 3.00 Arrive Llanthony Priory
- 4.00 Llanthony Priory Hotel Tea Room
- 4.30 Leave for hotel
- 5.15 Arrive hotel
- 7.00 Dinner in Hotel

FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

- 10.00 Leave for Margam Abbey
- 11.30 Arrive Cistercian Margam Abbey
- 12.00 Margam Abbey Stones Museum
- 12.45 Leave for Neath's Ambassador Hotel's restaurant
- 1.15 Lunch-The **President's Restaurant & Bar**
- 2.45 Leave for Neath Abbey
- 3.00 Arrive Neath Abbey
- 4.30 Leave Neath Abbey
- 6.00 Arrive Hotel
- 7.30 Dinner in hotel

SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 Reading of Wordsworth's poem 'Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey'
- 12.30 Lunch in Hotel
- 2.00 Leave for Tintern Abbey
- 3.00 Arrive Tintern
- 4.00 Leave Tintern
- 4.45 Arrive **Newport Station**
- 5.03 Train leaves for Paddington
- 6.44 Train arrives Paddington

£1395 members, £1445 non-members, £1395, £221 single room supplement, includes all lectures, tuition and pastoral care by Nicholas Friend and Father Oliver Holt OSB, special visits and transportation during the tour, three nights with breakfast, all lunches and dinners with wine, all coffees and teas: £250 deposit. *Please note that this cost excludes train tickets to Bridgend and from Newport.*

