

OUR HOTELS FOR THE PRE-CRUISE TOUR TO THE UK 2019

Here is some information about the three unique hotels we will be staying at during our 5-night pre-cruise tour.

Everybody has a past and at **The Oakley Court**, ours includes royalty, spies, Napoleon and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

We weren't always a luxury country house hotel in Windsor. Life began way back before the days of Dracula dining at our table and The Phantom staging his famous opera. But before we go any further, we promise you there's no skeletons in our closet. You can put the cushions down – behind the scenes, our story is thriller-free.

The scene begins with a flashback, a Time Warp to our unique history. Dating back to 1859 before our movie career even began, a chap called Sir Richard Hall-Say built the house for his young wife and their three children. Sir Richard later sold the property, after his appointment as High Sheriff of Berkshire, to the rather well-connected Lord Otho Fitzgerald. It was during his time at The Oakley Court that famous names began to grace the stage including the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII!), Leslie Ward (The famed SPY artist of Vanity Fair) and Napoleon IV, the last survivor of the Napoleon dynasty – to name just a few.

After changing hands from a Sheriff to a founder of Avery Scales and then his son, it wasn't until The Oakley Court was bought by eccentric Frenchman, Ernest Olivier, that the hotel became the famous backdrop for classic horror. Five films were made by Hammer within the grounds in 1949 including 'The Man in Black'



starring a young Sid James. While shooting here Hammer found Down Place, later the home of Bray Studios, setting the stage for many more films to come.

After 1965, when Olivier passed away, the house was vacant – except for the film crews who made over 200 films on location. These include the world-famous Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975) and the original 'Half a Sixpence' (1967). In 1977 the house was granted Grade II heritage listing. The hotel opened in 1981 and has been used to film TV shows such as 'Law and Order' and 'The Comic Strip Presents'. The hotel hosted Queen Elizabeth II in 2009 as she joined us for the annual swan upping. This marked the first time a reigning monarch had personally attended a swan upping and her Majesty, along with local school children enjoyed the festivities from the hotel grounds. We were later the official base of the GB Olympic rowing team, competing at the nearby Dorney Lake for London 2012.

Oakley Court is a Victorian Gothic country house set in 35 acres (140,000 m²) overlooking the River Thames at Water Oakley in the civil parish of Bray in the English county of Berkshire. It was built in 1859 and is currently a luxury hotel. It is a Grade II* listed building that has been often used as a film location.

The Court was built in 1859 for Sir Richard Hall Say who married Ellen Evans of Boveney Court in 1857. He was appointed High Sheriff of Berkshire in 1864 and Justice of the Peace in 1865. In 1874 Oakley Court was sold to Lord Otho FitzGerald, then to a John Lewis Phipps and in 1900 to Sir William Beilby Avery of Avery Scales. In 1919 Ernest Olivier purchased the property together with 50 acres (200,000 m²) of Berkshire woodland for £27,000.



In August 1949 Oakley Court became home to the famous British film production company Hammer Films. Hammer shot five films there, including "The Man in Black" and "The Lady Craved Excitement", before moving to the adjacent Down Place - what subsequently became Bray Studios - the following year.

While the bulk of Hammer's most famous horror movies were filmed at Bray in the late 50's and early 60's, the studio continued to make occasional use of Oakley Court as an exterior location, for example in *The Brides of Dracula* (1962), *The Reptile* (1966), and *The Plague of the Zombies* (1966).

Other films shot there over the years include "Witchcraft" (1964); *And Now the Screaming Starts!* (1973); the William Castle horror-comedy *The Old Dark House* (1963) (a remake of the original *The Old Dark House*, directed by James Whale and starring Boris Karloff); the cult independent horror film *Vampyres* (1974); the classic 1976 mystery farce *Murder by Death*; and the 1978 Peter Cook and Dudley Moore comedy, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Freddie Frances was inspired by Oakley Court's exteriors and long wished to set a film there; his 1970 *Mumsy, Nanny, Sonny, and Girly* was written specially to take advantage of the unique landscaping and architecture.

It is perhaps best known as Dr. Frank N Furter's castle (called *The Frankenstein Place*) in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975).

In 1995, it featured as the 'Laxton Grange Hotel' in the British television series *Pie in the Sky* starring Richard Griffiths.



The Greenway Hotel & Spa, a Luxury Country Hotel in Gloucestershire



Located on the outskirts of the Regency town of Cheltenham, The Greenway is a 16th century luxury Elizabethan manor house hotel and spa. The 21- bedroom hotel, with its warm Cotswold stone exterior, is the picture of English country charm.

The grandfather clock ticks as you enter through stone archways into a beautiful entrance hall with wooden floors, an open fire and a décor of soft golds and honeys.

The Greenway Hotel & Spa is a charming honey-coloured stone, 16th-century Elizabethan manor house set in eight acres of manicured gardens. With an award-winning restaurant, a spa, a hydrotherapy pool and the chance to enjoy a range of country pursuits, it offers both comfort and style in the heart of the Cotswolds.



On arrival at The Greenway Hotel & Spa, pass under the stone archways into the warm ambiance of the entrance hall with its rich wood floor and a glowing fire. The rooms and suites are decorated in a mix of traditional country house and boutique style with vibrant soft furnishings and lovely garden views.



Why Stay at The Greenway Hotel & Spa?

Well, it's definitely because of the eight acres of stunning grounds with views over the rolling Cotswold Hills, our luxury bedrooms, not to mention the outstanding service of our friendly team.

Perhaps it's our fabulous Elan Spa with its hydrotherapy pool, thermal suites, outdoor hot tub, Champagne nail bar and ESPA treatments. Could it be our 2 AA Rosette restaurant, headed up by our talented head chef Marcus McGuiness? Then there's the relaxed lounge and bar with open stone fireplaces, perfect for relaxing with a cocktail and canapés after a day out at Cheltenham races.

Our proximity to Cheltenham with her rich history, upmarket boutiques and coffee shops is a definite pull for our guests, but it's all of these elements combined that make The Greenway Hotel & Spa such a unique destination.



Welcome to **Bovey Castle**, Devon

Located in the heart of Dartmoor National Park in Devon, the 5 Red Star Bovey Castle rests in 275 acres of beautiful countryside and rolling valleys.

The house was built in 1907 to designs by Detmar Blow, for the second Viscount Hambleden (the son and heir of the Conservative politician and stationery magnate William Henry Smith).

By 1930 it had become a hotel operated by the Great Western Railway, known as the Manor House Hotel. In 1948 it was taken over by the British Transport Commission. It was expanded under new ownership in the 1990s, then purchased and refurbished by the entrepreneur Peter de Savary in 2003 and renamed 'Bovey Castle'. In 2006 de Savary sold 'Bovey Castle' to Hilwood Resorts. In 2014 it was sold to The Rigby Group plc as part of their Eden Hotel Collection. In 2017 British diver Tom Daley and American screenwriter Dustin Lance Black got married at Bovey Castle.

First opened as a hotel and golf resort in 1930 by Great Western Railways, our luxury castle hotel boasts 60 fabulous bedrooms, 22 self-catering country lodges nestled in the grounds, not to mention two refurbished restaurants, the Elan Spa and our award-winning 18 hole championship golf course, designed by J F Abercromby.

Why stay at Bovey Castle Hotel?

Well, it's definitely because of the luxurious hospitality of Bovey Castle, the attention to detail and outstanding service. It may also be to make the most of the simply glorious surroundings or to indulge in a treatment or two in the Elan spa.

Perhaps it's the vast array of country pursuits, golf and activities available to experience or the wonderful choice of dining options, from afternoon tea to fine dining in the Great Western and the classic British menu in Smith's Brasserie. The unrivalled location and

views over the dramatic Dartmoor National Park play a part, but it's all of these elements combined that make Bovey Castle Hotel such a unique destination time after time.



The History of Bovey Castle

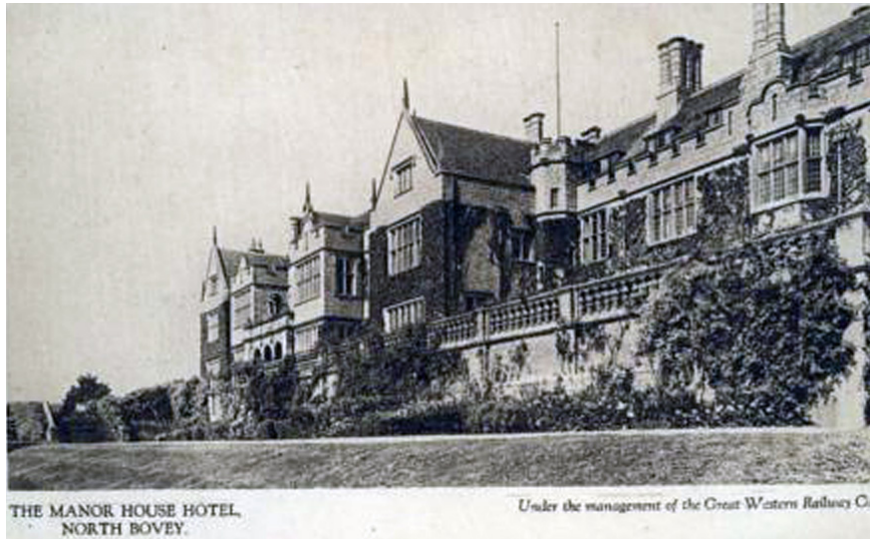
In 1890, William Henry Smith (WH Smith, later to become Viscount Hambleden) purchased 5,000 acres of land from the Earl of Devon for £103,000. The estate consisted of several large ancient manors, including Moretonhampstead and North Bovey; almost thirty farms, extensive woodland and fishing rights on the rivers Bovey and Teign. It was his son, Frederick, who built the Manor House in a lavish neo-Elizabethan style as one of the family's numerous country retreats.

The interior boasted a Jacobean style staircase, plaster ceilings, an oak panelled dining room, open fireplace with a carved stone chimney and an Adam drawing room. Frederick became involved in Devon life and was a subaltern in the Devonshire Yeomanry, leading the regiment in Gallipoli and Egypt in the First World War. During the First World War, the Manor House became a convalescent home for officers and as a military hospital when war broke out again in 1939.



The Hambleden family rarely visited the Manor House during the 1920s, but when they did venture down to Devon the villages of Moretonhampstead and North Bovey would turn out to watch the spectacle. Lord Hambleden died in June 1928. His estate, consisting largely of the entire ordinary shareholding of WH Smith and his properties, were valued at

£3,500,000 but was liable for death duty of £1,000,000. North Bovey Manor House and its estate were almost immediately put on the market to pay the death duty, which was eventually auctioned to the Great Western Railway for conversion to a golfing hotel for reputedly only £15,000.



The hotel and golf course opened in 1930 and the hotel entertained many celebrities. Following several successful years, another 17 bedrooms, a cocktail bar, dining room and squash and badminton courts were added between 1935-1936. From 1946 to 1983, it was returned to the Great Western Railway and re-opened as a hotel. It then changed owners

again in 1991 when considerable expansion took place and the golf course became a top priority. The 18 hole championship course is now one of England's finest.

The Manor House became Bovey Castle in 2003 and 22 estate lodges, a second restaurant, spa and pool were added, with further refurbishment of the bedrooms undertaken in 2008 by Annabel Elliot and her team.

Bovey Castle became part of the award-winning Eden Hotel Collection in June 2014, joining seven other sister hotels across five counties from Warwickshire down to Devon. Eden Hotel Collection completed a multi-million pound refurbishment of the public areas, spa and restaurants in 2015, and relaunched Bovey's new look in June 2015.

In August 2016 Bovey Castle was awarded 5 stars by the AA.

