



## 2017 Great Britain Sheep-to-Shawl Tour Frequently Asked Questions

You are about to embark on a wonderful travel experience that will take you from "sheep to shawl" as you travel throughout England, Wales, and Scotland! Friends and family who have not yet become yarn lovers are also welcome! Whether you are a first-time international tourist or a more experienced traveler, these FAQs have been assembled in hopes of providing you with answers to questions that might be on your mind. This is not an exhaustive list of information but is intended as a guide in helping you plan for your trip and avoid unexpected "surprises". This list will be updated periodically as the tour date draws closer. I am here to help and am happy to answer other questions you may have. E-mail me at [deb@fibergarden.com](mailto:deb@fibergarden.com), or phone 715.284.4590. I look forward to traveling with you!

### Pre-trip:

- ***Are the reservation and payment dates negotiable?*** It is VERY important that you adhere to all stated deadlines for making reservations and payments. These deadlines are set by the tour company. In addition, there are a limited number of spaces available and they will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis.
- ***Can the price of the trip ever increase?*** Land prices include local government value added taxes (VAT) applicable on December 1, 2014. Any additional costs resulting from a tax increase prior to travel may result in an increase in trip price.
- ***What do I need to include when planning my budget for the trip?*** Trip cost is a concern to most of us. I am providing some guidelines here of some known and optional costs to assist you in developing a realistic budget for the trip.
  - Let's start with the basic trip costs. If you plan to share a room with another traveler, the tour price is \$4300. If you want single accommodations, the cost will be \$5399. You will get a lot of value for this price! Take a look at the tour flyer for a complete listing of what's included. Please also note that once on the tour, all of the fees for the stops we will be making are included. It is the policy of the tour company that they never try to "upsell", meaning they will not try to sell you additional cost tours, etc. during the trip. This trip cost also reflects that the group size will be limited to 15 – 26 travelers, insuring a more intimate and "up close and personal" tour.
  - Meals. Included in the prices listed above are all breakfasts, one lunch and 7 dinners! So the only meals you need to plan for are lunches and three dinners, plus any meals during your travel to and from Great Britain.
  - Travel insurance. A copy of the insurance policy can be found on the tour web page. Please carefully read the information on travel insurance and consider how it may help protect your investment and provide peace of mind should something outside of your control force you to cancel your trip. The Fiber Garden will provide you with a price quote which varies by the age of the traveler. After receiving your quote, if you have specific questions regarding the policy and its coverage, please contact Travel Guard directly at 1.800.826.1300. Insurance is non-refundable.

- Air transportation and airport parking. In order to get the best prices for airfare, it is important that we book early. It is important to submit your trip reservation as early as possible to expedite flight planning. For budgeting purposes, you can estimate \$1,500 round trip. Actual airfares may be higher or lower.
  - Be sure and budget for those treasures you'll want to purchase to remember your trip. There will be lots of fiber shops to explore all throughout our trip.
  - Gratuities. There are some suggested gratuities for the exceptional local team that will be guiding us throughout our ten days. We will have a motor coach driver and a tour director. Suggested gratuities are \$5.00 each to the driver and director per day. Any guides we have for walking or city tours have a suggested gratuity of \$2.00. Gratuities are always at your discretion, both in terms of whether or not you offer a gratuity and the amount. Our driver and tour director will be with us for the entire duration of our trip, so we will get to know them well! Most hotels and restaurants include a service charge in your bill. Ask if it has been included and if not, it is at your discretion with a recommended amount of between 10% and 15%. Tipping is not usual in pubs. If someone performs a special service for you, a gratuity is a nice way to say "thanks".
  - Consider budgeting for the trip throughout the year:
    - First payment will be \$250 at the time of booking. (Remember...book early!)
    - Travel insurance, if elected, can be paid within two weeks of deposit to receive the extra early purchase coverages or any time up until 24 hours prior to departure for your trip.
    - Airfare booked and paid as soon as we reach our minimum group size (estimated to be January 1, 2017).
    - If you want to avoid a large lump sum payment in April, consider making monthly payments toward your trip throughout the year. This option is offered on the trip reservation form.
    - Final payment of the remainder of your trip balance will be due on April 1, 2017.
  - This list is not all-inclusive, but should provide the major expenses you need to consider when planning the budget for your trip.
  - ***What is the refund policy if I need to cancel my trip?*** The following schedule applies to individuals who must cancel their trip reservation:
    - Land cancellations (\$4300 or \$5399):
      - Cancellations prior to March 8, 2017. Full refund less a \$50 administrative fee
      - March 8 – April 12, 2017: Cancellation fee is \$500
      - April 13 – May 26, 2017: Cancellation fee is 25% of trip cost
      - May 27 – June 6, 2017: Cancellation fee is 35% of trip cost
      - June 7 – 15, 2017: Cancellation fee is 50% of trip cost
      - June 16, 2017 (day of departure): Cancellation fee is 100% of trip cost
    - Air cancellations. Cancellation penalties will apply based on the policies of the airline your flight is booked with.
    - Minimum Group Number. Trip price is based on a minimum group size of 15. If this minimum is not reached, those registered will have the option to either cancel their reservation and receive a full refund (except insurance which is not refundable) or pay an additional \$900 to travel with a smaller group.
- Reservations may NOT be transferred to another individual if you need to cancel. If you purchased travel insurance, check your policy for trip cancellation coverage.
- ***Do I need a passport?*** Yes, you will need a passport that is valid for at least six months past the date of your trip. If you need to apply for a passport or renew your passport, you can do so through the [U.S. Department of the State](http://www.state.gov).
  - ***What if I have a criminal conviction?*** You may be denied entry into your chosen destination as a result of any prior criminal convictions. It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate embassy to assess your situation.

- ***What should I pack?*** Several weeks prior to the trip, you will receive a packet of information from CIE Tours that includes a comprehensive guide to help you prepare for your trip. The information here is just to get you started.

The average temperature in Great Britain in June is a low of 50 degrees and a high of 66 degrees. You are limited to one suitcase weighing less than 50 pounds. In addition, CIE International will provide you with a carry-on backpack for your flight and tour. Casual clothes are fine for the day, with smart casual attire acceptable for evening dinners. Don't overpack!! Plan your wardrobe so you can wear a few shirts and pants in multiple outfits. (After all, you need to have room left in your luggage to stash all those treasures you'll be bringing home!!!) Include an all-weather coat so you're ready come rain or shine. Comfortable walking shoes are a "must". A few other items that you might want to tuck in your suitcase include a travel alarm, converter/adaptor plugs for your electronics, a folding umbrella. Leave expensive jewelry or other valuables at home!

- ***How do I get from the airport to our London hotel?*** We will have one group transfer provided by CIE Tours from Heathrow to our hotel. This transfer will also include a tour of the city. Once you arrive at Heathrow, you will go to baggage claim to get your luggage. Instructions for connecting with the rest of the group will be sent prior to the trip. Every effort will be made to get people flying from the same U.S. airports on the same transatlantic flights so you will have travel companions to help pass the time once you arrive at Heathrow and before our group transfer. *(All the more reason to reserve a space on the tour early so we can get the best airfare and flight schedules!!)* In the rare event where someone's flight schedule is such that it is not feasible for them to be included in the group transfer, we will advise you on getting transportation to the hotel.
- ***What else do I need to know to prepare for the trip?*** There is a lot of information that could be shared here, but these are the very basics. As mentioned above, you will be receiving a comprehensive guide to assist you in preparing for the trip. The Fiber Garden will work with you every step of the way guiding you through the pre-trip preparations, tour documents, etc. Once you make your reservation for the tour, please be sure to thoroughly read any information e-mailed or sent to you by Deb and the Fiber Garden.

## **In Great Britain:**

- ***Can I use my cell phone?*** It depends. You will want to check with your cell phone provider to see if your phone can be used when traveling internationally, and what the rates are. It will be far more economical to rely most heavily on Wi-Fi for communications as it is more available and less expensive. Another option is to purchase a cheap cell phone once in Great Britain that includes pre-paid minutes to get you through the trip. [Some good information](#) for traveling in Europe with your cell phone can be found in the linked article.
- ***Is there internet access?*** Yes! Our motor coach will have free Wi-Fi so you can keep in touch back home as we travel the highways and byways of Great Britain. All of our hotels also have Wi-Fi, most of them free. There are also numerous local cafes where you can access Wi-Fi. Internet speeds can be unreliable at times, but should be available in most of the locations we will visit.
- ***Currency.*** Great Britain's currency is the British pound. Your bank can assist you in getting foreign currency prior to your trip. Check your bank's website for a link to order currency. It is advisable to have some British pounds with you prior to your trip to get you through the first couple of days of the tour. Once in Great Britain, there will be other opportunities to exchange currency if needed. It is best to carry smaller denominations of U.S. dollars as most places will not accept \$100 bills for exchange.

## **Post-tour:**

- ***How do I get from our Edinburgh hotel to the airport?*** We will have a group transfer just as we did when arriving in London. Because the entire group will transfer to the airport at the same time, be sure you have plenty of reading material or a knitting project to help pass the time if you have a long wait prior to your flight. As in the transatlantic flights at the beginning of the trip, every effort will be made to get group members on the same flights headed home. (Have I mentioned the need to book early?? ☺)

- ***How can I participate in the extra post tour travels in Scotland?*** [E-mail Deb](#) and request to be put on the list to be notified when the Scotland tour extension information is available. While those concluding their travels in Edinburgh head to the airport for the return trip home, we'll be off on a continuing adventure!

Please contact me if there are other questions that you need answered. I'm here to help you have the best of travel experiences! I will continue to update this document and will remain in communication with each traveler as the date of our trip approaches.

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