



## CHURCHILL'S RETREAT: MADEIRA

THURSDAY 10 – TUESDAY 15 DECEMBER 2015

William Wordsworth wrote a poem about 'the flowers/That in Madeira bloom and fade'. The poet Rainer Maria Rilke composed while sitting on his balcony at the elegant sea-side Reid's Hotel in Funchal, Madeira's capital city. George Bernard Shaw took lessons from the hotel's dancing master, and left a signed photograph with the inscription "To the only man who ever taught me anything." No doubt Albert Schweitzer ran his fingers over the keys of Funchal's impressive cathedral organ during his stay, and Camille Saint-Saens hummed along to local folk songs while here. Ralph Richardson passed through, and Gregory Peck stayed while filming *Moby Dick*. Madeira inspired Sacheverell Sitwell, A.J.Cronin, John Dos Passos and countless other writers. In 1950, an ailing Winston Churchill came to Madeira to recover from a stroke, to write his war memoirs, to prepare himself for the 1950 Election, and above all, to paint.

Churchill was forty before he discovered the pleasures of painting. The purely visual compositional challenge of depicting landscape with lines and brush-strokes rather than words gave him a temporary and welcome respite from the torrents of words that flowed through him demanding an entirely different order of attention and action. Over his remaining forty-eight years his considerable nonverbal creativity yielded more than 500 pictures. Sheer delight accounted for his devotion to painting. We study his creations, attend to his eloquent writings on painting and reading, and stand in one of his favorite spots from which to paint the harbour in Camera de Lobos enthralled by its colourful boats and tiny fisherman's cottages. With Churchill, particularly his accomplishments as a writer and artist, as the jumping off point, we ponder the literary and musical works of other artists and writers who also retreated to the rest, recuperation, and rejuvenation offered by Madeira.

## THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER

### GATWICK AIRPORT

- 1.50 Flight departs
- 5.35 Arrive Funchal, taxis to hotel
- 7:30 Dinner in hotel
- Optional Introductory evening wander in Old Town of Funchal

## FRIDAY 11 DECEMBER

- 10.30 Coffee on hotel veranda
- 11.00 Lecture '*A Glass of Madeira, m'dear?*' or the British Interest in Madeira
- 1.00 Lunch at Hotel
- 2.30 Visit to Cathedral
- 3.30 Blandy's Wine Lodge and Library
- 4.30 Return to hotel. Free afternoon.
- 7.30 Dinner in hotel dining room

## SATURDAY 12 DECEMBER

- 10.30 Coffee on veranda
- 11.00 Lecture: *George Bernard Shaw, Albert Schweitzer and Rainer Maria Rilke*
- 12.00 Lunch at Hotel
- 1.30 Cable car to Jardim Botânico
- 3.00 Cable car to Monte for Monte Palace Gardens
- 4.30 Return to hotel
- 7.30 Dinner in hotel dining room

## SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER

- 10.30 Coffee on veranda
- 11.00 Coach to Quinta das Cruzes
- 12.00 Convento de Santa Clara
- 12.30 Lunch
- 1.30 Return to hotel.
- 4.00 Tea at Reid's Hotel
- 7.30 Dinner in hotel dining room

## MONDAY 14 DECEMBER

- 10.30 Coffee on veranda
- 11.00 Lecture: *Churchill, the Painter and Writer*
- 12.00 Leave Camara do Lobos (11 KM, 11 MINUTES)
- 12.30 Winetasting in Camara do Lobos
- 1.00 Lunch Vila de Piexes
- 2.30 Coach to Cabo Girao, second highest cliff in the world.
- 4.00 Return to hotel for free time
- 8.00 Dinner in hotel dining room

## TUESDAY 15 DECEMBER

- 9.00 Leave for airport via the Camellias in Quinta do Palheiro Ferreiro
- 11.40 Flight departs
- 3.35 Arrive Gatwick London



## QUINTA JARDINS DO LAGO

Situated on one of the hills surrounding the city of Funchal close to its principal area of historical interest, this lovely Madeiran family home was built in the 18th century. More recently it was the home of a well-known French and British family.

The interior of the main house was refurbished and decorated to maintain its original standard and ambience and to provide a setting for its antiques and painting collection. Offering a variety of pleasant and relaxing areas, library, billiard room, a charming breakfast room with a veranda featuring an exceptional sixteenth century ceramic wall panel, an elegant evening Restaurant “The Beresford” and a Bar “The Visconde” in the main lounge where exotic cocktails and nightcaps can be enjoyed.

The Gardens, with an area of 2,5 hectares full of examples of rare species and old trees, have been, for the last 45 years, the home of “Colombo”, the Quinta’s giant tortoise. The tranquil lake nestled in these mature botanical gardens, provided the origin of the Quinta name. Amongst the mango trees, in a relaxing area there is a huge semi-covered heated swimming pool, with Bistro, Sauna, Turkish bath and Jacuzzi.

**COST** £1850 members, £1900 non-members, single room supplement £95, £300 deposit, includes flights, all transfers, taxis and cable cars, five nights accommodation in Quinta Jardins do Lago Hotel, all breakfasts, all lunches, tea at Reids, five dinners with wine, all lectures, all entrance fees, all gratuities, VAT.