

Great Country Houses & Gardens of
Northern Ireland & The Republic of Ireland
May 24-31, 2015

Sponsored by
The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America

Arranged by Classical Excursions



Castle Coole

Florence Court

Inspired by the architecture of Inigo Jones, who was the first to establish the Palladian style in 17th century England, Ireland at the same time developed its own dramatic Palladian movement starting with the new façade for the country house, Castletown, designed by Alessandro Galilei in 1719. He provided details that reflected Palladio's villas in the Veneto, such as colonnaded connections that linked the main building to end pavilions.

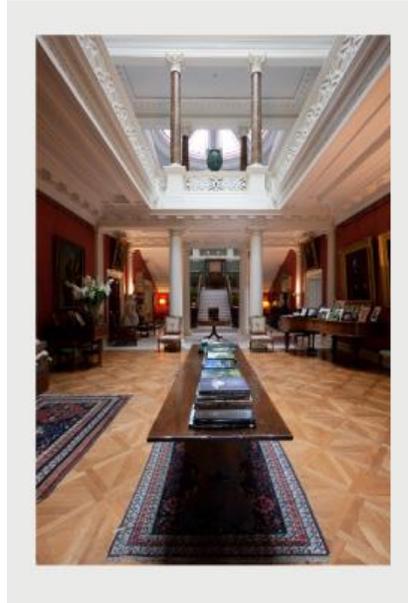
The leading architect of Palladian country houses in Ireland was Sir Edward Lovett Pearce, who provided interior details at Castletown among other work. He developed a style that combined baroque inventiveness, movement and boldness with the somberness of the English Palladian style. Castletown and at least 16 other outstanding Irish country houses will be included on this tour that the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art is pleased to offer.

The tour begins in Northern Ireland, with its glorious country houses set in bucolic settings and ends in Dublin. Many of the houses on the itinerary are privately owned.

This exclusive tour will include a stay at the privately owned Ballywalter Park, an Italianate Palazzo built in 1846 and now the family home of Lord Dunleath, along with a two-night stay at Belle Isle Castle, home of Lord Nicholas Hamilton and decorated by David Hicks. The tour concludes in the Republic of Ireland with a three-night stay at the five-star Merrion Hotel, located in the heart of Dublin.

This exclusive travel excursion is led by Lani Summerville of Classical Excursions, who has organized five previous tours to Northern Ireland, (including one of the first tours after the conclusion of the civil unrest), along with Mark Donnelly, private art consultant and a

former Sotheby's agent. Robert O'Byrne, one of Ireland's best-known writers on architecture and design, as well as a board member of the Irish Georgian Society will also be joining us for a day of specially selected private houses. Peter Lyden, President of The Institute of Classical Architecture & Art, will also be joining the tour as your special host.



Ballywalter Park Interior



Castletown

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

***Mount Stewart**, Newtownards, County Down: Originally built in 1804 and later extended, the first architect was George Dance, the teacher of Sir John Soane. Filled with magnificent antiques, the Regency-styled house contains 22 chairs used at the Congress of Vienna (1815) and given to Mt. Stewart's owner, Lord Castlereagh, British Foreign Secretary and member of the Londonderry family. Mt. Stewart's gardens cover 80 acres and are considered the most complete in Ireland, thriving in the area's subtropical microclimate. Overlooking Strangford Lough is the exquisite small banqueting pavilion inspired by the Temple of the Winds in Athens. Our visit is led by Lady Rose Lauritzen and includes cocktails in her private apartment.

***Grey Abbey**, a tour and luncheon at this lovely privately owned Georgian house from 1762. Our visit is hosted by the owners William and Daphne Montgomery.

***Florence Court**, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh: An important Irish Georgian mansion, it was named after Lady Florence Cole, the wife of Sir John Cole, the owner who probably had built around 1730 the finally proportioned center block of the house. A later generation in the 1760s added flanking arcaded wings with end pavilions. The vigorous treatment of the exterior is repeated in the interior. Lavish Rococo plaster decoration is featured which was painstakingly restored after a fire in 1955. The Venetian Room, staircase and dining room have the most elaborate plasterwork. The house is filled with 18th-century Irish furniture.

*Visit and lunch at **Seaforde House & Gardens**. Privately owned and occupied by Lady Anthea Forde, elder sister to Lorde Belmore, and who was brought up at Castle Coole. The house has a severe early 19th century façade and magnificent Greek revival interiors. The gardens are renowned for their rare specimen plants from around the globe.

***Castle Coole**, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh: Considered the finest Neo-classical country house in Ireland, it nearly bankrupted its owner, Armar Lowry-Corry, Earl of Belmore, in his attempt in the 1790s to outdo his brother-in-law and neighbor, the Earl of Enniskillen, at Florence Court. The quality of the Portland stone masonry is exceptional, with the design on all four sides of equal perfection. It continues inside, with harmonious unity and balance in the joinery and plasterwork. The final plans were executed by the English architect, James Wyatt. The plasterer was Joseph Rose, who had been hired by Robert Adam to work at Syon House and Harewood House in England. Another glory of Castle Coole is that almost all of the Regency furniture is original and still in place.

*A private visit and tea at **Barons Court**, hosted by His Grace, Duke of Abercorn. The house was started in 1779 by the architect George Steuart (who also designed Attingham Hall in Shropshire 1783). Later architects involved in redesigning and completing Barons Court were John Soane and Richard and William Morrison. The result was a powerful seven-bay house with a rotunda located in the heart of the building. The main pediment contains the family coat of arms. The interiors range from the classical coffered rotunda encircled by a ring of Ionic columns to a typical Morrisonian library redecorated by the prominent English decorator, David Hicks.

*A visit to **Castletown** in County Kildare, Ireland's first Palladian house to be erected with proper classical proportions and designed by a professional architect, Alessandro Galiliei (1691-1737). This house is said to have inspired the White House.

*A tour of the incredible Palladian jewel **Russborough House**. Built in 1741 by Joseph Leeson. "No other Palladian house in Ireland equals it either for its architecture or its spectacular setting".

*A rare visit to the **Marsh Library** founded in 1701 as Ireland's first public library. One of the few early 18th century buildings in Ireland still preserved and used for its original purpose, the library contains over 25,000 16th, 17th and 18th century books.

*A tour of the rarely seen **Provosts House**, owned by Trinity College. This grand mid-18th century town house, is the only 18th century mansion in the Republic of Ireland that still retains its original function and form.

*A visit to the privately owned 18th century **Lodge Park**, the home of Robert Guinness. Known both for its grand architecture and amazing 18th century gardens.

*A tour of the spectacular **Arbraccan** (former palace of the Anglican Bishop's of Meath) and now a private home, with author and Irish Georgian Society Board member, Robert O'Byrne.

***Marino Casino**, the pleasure pavilion designed by Sir William Chambers and considered to be one of the most perfect buildings in Europe.

This is only a partial listing, to view the complete itinerary with additional private houses please contact Classical Excursions.



Marino Casino



Lodge Park

Due to its exclusive nature, this tour is limited to 15 participants. To reserve a space, please contact Classical Excursions at 860-454-4867 or lani@classicalexursions.com. Tour price \$5050.00 pp based on double occupancy, single supplement of \$850 applies. A \$500 tax deductible donation to ICA & A is required to participate in this travel program.