

Explore magnificent Cliveden



How long do I need? One day

Where is it? Maidenhead

Highlights

Balance the excitement and adrenalin of Olympic rowing with relaxed and classic views of the River Thames, from Boulders Restaurant and the beautiful grounds of the Cliveden House and estate. End the day with a visit to nearby Taplow Court if you have time.

Start your day with lunch at [Boulders Restaurant](#)

Located in an unbeatable setting on Boulders island in the River Thames at Maidenhead, approximately seven miles (18 km) from Eton Dorney Rowing Centre, Boulders Restaurant and Bar enjoys a marvellous position, beside Boulders Lock and Weir. Its Riverside Brasserie and Terrace Bar provide superb and uninterrupted views over the lock and downstream towards Maidenhead Bridge. Take your time: Cliveden is only four miles / seven km way.

Boulders Restaurant and Bar

Boulders Lock Island, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8PE

Opening hours: Lunch in the brasserie is served Tuesday – Sunday, 12:00 – 15:00. Lunch from the Terrace Bar is served all week, 12:00 – 15:30

Costs: Menus vary – see website or call for details

Tel: +44 (0)1628 621291

Web: www.bouldersrestaurant.co.uk

[Cliveden House and estate](#)

A country retreat on a grand scale, Cliveden's magnificent gardens and breathtaking river views have been admired for centuries. For 300 years, the lavish house was dedicated to the pursuit of pleasure, politics and power. In the early 20th century it became home to wealthy Waldorf and Nancy Astor, who hosted glittering parties and political gatherings here. In the 1960s Cliveden was still in the headlines for its association with the scandalous Profumo Affair.

Today everyone can enjoy Cliveden's 376 acres of formal gardens and parklands, which look down over the River Thames as it meanders

between richly wooded cliffs. You can explore the woodlands on marked paths or wander amongst the formal gardens where you will see handsome statues from the ancient and modern worlds and fine floral displays in the beautifully restored parterre. In 2010, the National Trust began the task of planting 1,100 yew trees to recreate Cliveden's lost maze, which was originally designed by Lord Astor in 1894. The finished Maze is due to open in May 2011.

Cliveden House is now a luxurious hotel, but parts are still open to visitors at limited times. You can enjoy traditional afternoon tea in the hotel, which has won Tea Guild Awards for Excellence. Non-residents are also welcome in the restaurant for lunch and dinner. The estate and garden, with the Orangery Café and coffee shop are open daily in summer, with last admission at 17.00. Admission is free to National Trust members. For an additional charge, you can also take a relaxing boat trip on the River Thames: the Cliveden website has the latest details.

Cliveden National Trust Estate

Taplow, Maidenhead, Buckinghamshire, SL6 0JA

Opening hours: House, garden and shop open 7 days a week 19 Feb – 24 Dec.

Costs: Admission costs apply – see website or call for details

Tel: +44 (0)1494 755562

Web: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden

Taplow Court – Olympic history for a summer Sunday

Taplow Court, a mid 19th century mansion set high above the River Thames near Maidenhead, is another impressive house with an interesting past. At the turn of the 19th/20th centuries it was home to William Henry Grenfell, Lord Desborough of Taplow - the great all-round sportsman who became first chairman of the British Olympic Association and was the chief organiser of the 1908 London Olympic Games.

As a schoolboy William Grenfell showed early talent, setting the Harrow school mile record which stood for 60 years. At Oxford he was president of Oxford University Athletic Club and rowed twice in the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race, including the famous dead heat of 1877. He swam across the base of Niagara Falls twice, the second time in a snowstorm, and climbed the Matterhorn three times. In 1906, he led the British team to the silver medal in Epee (fencing) at the Interim or Intercalated Olympic Games in Athens.

This great sporting character also served as president of the Epee Club, the Marylebone Cricket Club, the All England Lawn Tennis Club, the Amateur Fencing Association, the National Amateur Wrestling Association and the Amateur Athletic Association. His political career saw him as Member of Parliament for Salisbury, Hereford and High Wycombe and he was also Mayor of Maidenhead. Lord Desborough died in 1945 in his ninetieth year. Whilst living at Taplow Court, Lord Desborough and his wife Ettie hosted gatherings of the elite, aristocratic social group known as 'The Souls'. Their eldest son was the war poet Julian Grenfell, who was killed in 1915.

Taplow Court is now the home of SGI-UK, a lay Buddhist society. The house is open to the public from 10.00 – 17.00 on the first Sunday of June, July and August and for Heritage Open Days, which take place on the second weekend in September. On these days, guided tours are available to visitors. Cream teas are served in the canteen or you may picnic in 85 acres of grounds. The website will have details of any further openings planned during the period of the 2012 Olympics.

Taplow Court Grand Cultural Centre

Taplow, Berkshire, SL6 0ER

Opening hours: First Sunday of June, July and August

Tel: +44 (0)1628 773163

Web: http://www.sgi-uk.org/index.php/centres/Taplow_Court

Getting around

[AA Route Planner](#) can provide details of the route between all points on this itinerary. To get instructions, simply type in the post codes given here in the route planner.