**Argument free holidays at Gartmore House**

“This is the only holiday we’ve been on where we haven’t argued!” – Gartmore House residents 2019

Holidays are supposed to bring couples happy, restful, quality time together, but in reality they often do the opposite. It’s been estimated that when we’re on a break nearly half of us quarrel at least once a day and one in ten couples are likely to break up afterwards.

In the beauty and serenity of an 18th century mansion in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, however, we’ve found the secret of the fairy tale harmony every couple dreams about - and it’s all down to doing your own thing every day.

Our guests regularly tell us they can’t believe how well they’ve got with each other while they were here.

As one of Scotland’s leading centres for residential art, craft, and activity courses, we’ve got something for everyone. We offer over 40 fascinating, expert-run experiences for our guests, from guided hillwalking in the adjacent mountains to bird watching, creative writing, and up-cycling old furniture.

Long-standing favourites, such as patchwork, quilting and watercolour painting always fill up fast. And we’re taking bookings for 2022 and 2023 in lots of exciting new subjects, ranging from archaeology, drone photography, bird identification, macramé, upholstery, voice coaching, tapestry, mosaics and mixed-media art.

Our warm and friendly tutors have many years in their field and pride themselves on their expertise. They’re keen to maximise the potential of their students and make sure everyone has fun. Course numbers are kept to a minimum to ensure every one receives that all important “one to one” tuition and time.

It was quite by chance we discovered we’re also helping relationships and fostering togetherness! The magic of these holidays is that couples or friends can choose completely different activities and still have the comfort and pleasure of holidaying together. It’s a win-win situation – people get to explore their favourite pastime without their loved ones being dragged along to something they’re not interested in.

Our guests regularly astonish us by saying how well they get on with each other when they pursue their own interests during the day since it means that they have plenty to tell each other in the evenings.

One couple was famously standing at the reception desk on check-out day when they realised they’d managed to spend a full week together without bickering. They hadn’t once sniped at each other, or questioned what they were doing.

They looked at each other in amazement and declared: “This is the only holiday we’ve been on where we haven’t argued!”

They’d arrived at Gartmore House a week earlier, weary from their journey and keen to get to their room to unpack and get settled. They both looked a little nervous, anticipating the week ahead. We were running two different art, craft and activity holidays that week. The wife had decided she’d do patchwork and quilting, while her husband chose watercolour painting.

After a good old cup of tea and some warm homemade scones, they met their tutors and fellow house guests and heard what the week ahead had in store. In the evening, after a hearty dinner, they retired to the lounge with their favourite tipple in hand and sat by the roaring log fire chatting with their new found friends. As the week progressed we saw their confidence grow as they explored new skills and could tell they were relaxing and recharging their batteries. There was even a bit of healthy competition between them. By the end of the course they were overjoyed with what they’d produced and delighted to have new skills and techniques to take back home.

The 2021 holiday courses are filling up fast, and we have an extensive calendar available for 2022 and 2023. For a full list, and to be inspired, see our website.

**Gartmore House art, craft and activity holiday centre**

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