

BETTER READ TOURS

# CREATIVE WRITING

——— with ———  
KATE FORSYTH

Writing Retreat *&* Literary Tour

August 30 - Sep 7 2020

Stratford-upon-Avon  
and the Cotswolds  
E N G L A N D





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# ABOUT

Join internationally bestselling author Kate Forsyth for a week in beautiful Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare, at a writing retreat designed to help you re-discover your creativity and joy in writing.

This retreat is for writers at any stage of their careers, from those who have always wanted to write but never found the time, to those who are deeply immersed in a creative project and want to find the way to boost it to the next level.

Spend your mornings talking, listening, laughing and playing with words with Kate and your fellow students. Spend your afternoons exploring the glorious countryside of Oxford and the Cotswolds, with landscapes and towns that have inspired some of the world's most beloved authors.



Discover Oxford, 'the city of dreaming spires', and have a restorative ale in the pub where C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien first shared their enchanted worlds. Walk the streets where Shakespeare once trod, and read the curse he cast on anyone who disturbed his grave. Wander through some of England's most beautiful gardens, and be inspired by the romantic setting of castles and yew mazes, mysterious circles of standing stones, and haunted manor halls.



## Literary Tours

On four afternoons, you will join the others in the group to discover the most fascinating historical and literary sites that Oxford and the Cotswolds have to offer. On the remaining four afternoons, you are free to write in the solitude and quiet of your own room, or to explore the many charming shops, museums, stately homes and castles in the area.



# STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

the birthplace of William Shakespeare,  
steeped in culture and history

You will be staying in the picturesque 17th century Shakespeare Hotel, which is situated in the heart of the medieval market town of Stratford-upon-Avon. It's a short stroll away from many of the town's most famous sights, such as Shakespeare's birthplace, Holy Trinity Church where his body rests, the Royal Shakespeare Company theatre, and the River Avon.

With more than 800 years of history, Stratford-upon-Avon also has all the shops, pubs, restaurants and modern conveniences

you could hope for, without losing any of its period charm. You can walk along the river or sit and watch the swans glide by. Visit the butterfly farm, or take a ghost tour. See a play performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company, or drift over the Cotswolds in a hot air balloon.





# Kate Forsyth

## A little bit about your TOUR DIRECTOR & WRITING MENTOR

Kate Forsyth wrote her first novel at the age of seven and has now sold more than a million copies internationally.




Recently voted one of Australia's Favourite 15 Novelists, Kate Forsyth has been called 'one of the finest writers of this generation'. She has written more than 40 books, for all age groups and across many genres, and published in almost 20 countries.

Her most recent book, *The Blue Rose*, is a story of love and betrayal set against the backdrop of Imperial China and the French Revolution. Other novels for adults include *Bitter Greens*, which won the 2015 American Library Association award for Best Historical Fiction; and *The Wild Girl*, which was named the Most Memorable Love Story of 2013. Kate's books for children include the

collection of fairy-tale retellings *Vasilisa the Wise & Other Tales of Brave Young Women*, illustrated by Lorena Carrington; and *The Impossible Quest* fantasy series which has been optioned for a film. Kate has a BA in literature, a MA in creative writing and a doctorate in fairy tale studies, and is also an accredited master storyteller with the Australian Guild of Storytellers. She is a direct descendant of Charlotte Waring Atkinson, the author of the first book for children ever published in Australia.

Visit Kate's website  
[kateforsyth.com.au](http://kateforsyth.com.au)

follow Kate online

 @KateForsyth  
 @kateforsythauthor  
 @kate\_forsyth\_

# THE WRITING COURSE

All genres of fiction have their own conventions and characteristics, which can sometimes seem like unbreakable rules. By drawing together different elements of different genres, however, the writer can create ground-breaking novels of great freshness and originality.

For seven days, Kate will share with you all the secrets she has learned about writing stories which fire the imagination, touch the heart, and keep readers turning the pages long into the night.

Whether you are working on a medieval supernatural thriller, a time travel romance, a children's fantasy adventure, a contemporary novel that draws on ancient myths, or a historical novel about the lives of forgotten women... you will discover your muse in this week-long inspirational retreat.



## What You'll Learn

- The key conventions of the world's most popular literary genres (including contemporary and historical fiction, dual timelines, crime and mystery, romance, horror, fantasy and magic realism).
- What rules to keep and what rules can be broken.
- Storytelling patterns and structures.
- What kind of research you need to do to bring your story to life.
- The importance of voice, and how to find it.
- Building characters that are vivid and vital.
- Creating a strong sense of time and place.
- Suspense and the art of surprise.
- How to connect to your creative flow, and consistently find the time and space to write the story you've always dreamed of bringing to life.

For seven days, from 9am to 12 noon, you will write, read, listen, learn and discuss all aspects of creative writing, from first discovering your story to finding a publisher.

# ITINERARY

Sunday 30 August

## Walking Tour of Oxford

Meet Kate Forsyth and your Tour Manager Roger Bailey at Oxford Railway Station at midday. Follow in the footsteps of Lewis Carroll, C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Philip Pullman and Colin Dexter's famous detective Inspector Morse around the City of Dreaming Spires. Enjoy afternoon tea in Oxford before traveling together by bus to Stratford-upon-Avon.

Settle into your accommodation at the Shakespeare Hotel, an atmospheric 17th century inn on Chapel Street in Stratford-upon-Avon. Order room service and rest and recover in peace and solitude, or head out to explore the birthplace of the Bard. There are many atmospheric pubs and restaurants within walking distance of the hotel.

1  
DAY

## Meal Key

B	Breakfast	L	Lunch
MT	Morning Tea	D	Dinner

2  
DAY

Monday 31 August

## Discovering Your Story: 9am-12pm

Students introduce themselves and talk about their writing. The class will then discuss how to discover your story, from the first flash of inspiration through to beginning to plan your story's narrative structure.

We will also examine the key conventions of the world's most popular literary genres and how we can combine them in new ways to enliven our own writing.

Afternoon free to write, relax or explore.

**Tour: Welcome Dinner with Kate Forsyth**

3  
DAY

Tuesday 1 September

## Discovering Your Voice: 9am-12pm

The class will discuss The Writer's Voice, and how the choices a writer makes about such literary techniques as point of view, language, sentence structures and so on, creates the voice of the story. We will examine the work of writers in the set reading list to see the difference in their voices. We will also look at creating characters that are vivid and vital, with their own individual voice.

**Tour: Secrets of the Cotswolds**  
(including Lunch at Stow-on-the-Wold)

Explore the dreamy villages of the Cotswolds, built in the famous golden stone that glows in the sun. Enjoy some of England's best countryside as you wind your way through such famous villages as Bourton-on-the Water and Stow-in-the Wold. Discover a stone circle set in a meadow of wild flowers and hear the intriguing local legend behind its creation.



## TESTIMONIAL

*'I have been to many writing workshops over the past few years, but Kate's workshops surpassed any I have previously attended. I learnt so much from Kate and that knowledge has given me a new impetus to finish the novel I started some years ago. I would highly recommend Kate's workshops to any aspiring writer. The Shakespeare Hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon was the perfect setting and the afternoon tours were first class.'*

– Barbara Hunt

4  
DAY

Wednesday 2 September

B MT

### The Importance of Research: 9am-12pm

The more deeply you immerse yourself in the time and place of your novel, the more vividly you'll be able to bring it to life on the page. But how do you go about it? What do you need to know? Should you trust the Internet? Do you need to go to the place you are writing about? What about gaining access to primary sources? And how much research is too much research? We will be reading examples from authors who have cleverly used historical detail to bring their work alive.

Your afternoon and evening is at leisure to write, relax or go exploring.

5  
DAY

Thursday 3 September

B MT L

### Storytelling: 9am-12pm

What makes a good story? Why is storytelling so important in human society? What can we learn from the structures and archetypes of myths and fairy tales to make our own writing more powerful and meaningful?

### Tour: Walking Tour of Stratford-upon-Avon

Enjoy lunch at the world-famous 'Dirty Duck' pub and then take a walking tour of Stratford-upon-Avon with Kate and Roger. View Shakespeare's birthplace and grave, and the world famous Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Visit Anne Hathaway's Cottage, a quaint thatched farmhouse surrounded by stunning gardens (please note, this is a walk of 20 minutes or more from Stratford-upon-Avon so please inform us if you would prefer to miss this part of the tour).

Your evening is free to take in a play or simply relax.



6  
DAY

Friday 4 September

B MT

### Narrative Building Blocks: 9am-12pm

This workshop looks in depth at the key narrative building blocks: openings and endings, scene structure and development, plots and sub-plots, conflict and resolution. We shall also examine such literary devices as unreliable narrators, foreshadowing, flashbacks, red herrings and cliffhangers, with reference to the books on the recommended reading list.

### Tour: Warwick

Experience one thousand years of jaw-dropping history at Warwick Castle, a medieval castle developed on the foundations of a fortification built by William the Conqueror in 1068. Within the castle's mighty walls are a magnificent Great Hall, lavish state rooms, haunted bedrooms and a tranquil private chapel. The castle is surrounded by 64 acres of glorious landscaped gardens, with topiary peacocks and an island with a secret past.

Your evening is your own to write, relax or go exploring.





B MT

## Saturday 5 September

### Dangerous Writing: 9am-12pm

Good writing is dangerous writing. It is not afraid to surprise and shock, to unsettle and make uneasy, to seduce and subvert. Yet many people find it hard to write scenes of sex and violence, or to kill off favourite characters, or to touch on matters that might upset or repulse. How far can you go in your own writing? Are there any topics that remain taboo? Should you be worried about what your friends and family may think? Is it forgivable to draw upon true life stories, whether your own or other people's? We discuss the dangers and pleasures of dangerous writing.

Your afternoon and evening have been left free since Friday 22nd June is Midsummer's Eve, and there will be so much for you all to do. The famous circle of stones at Stonehenge is only two hours drive away, and the lesser-known but equally impressive stones of Avebury even closer at one-and-a-half hours away. Stratford-upon-Avon comes alive with street performers and theatrical events, or you can sit around a bonfire and listen to songs and stories in Anne Hathaway's magical garden. Wear a crown of flowers, drink some mead, and enjoy one of England's most magical nights.

7  
DAY



8  
DAY

B MT D

## Sunday 6 September

### The Writer's Life: 9am-12pm

Writing a novel is only part of a writer's life. Writers must also learn to rewrite and edit, to proofread, to work with editors and publishers and publicists, to promote, to teach, and to manage social media and marketing. At the same time, writers must try to find a balance between work, art and life.

Writing can become an all-consuming obsession, ruinous to one's health and relationships. However, if managed well, it can become a source of enormous creative fulfillment and a lucrative career choice. How can you avoid the rest and achieve the second? This session will also leave plenty of time for lots of questions!

Your afternoon will be free for writing or to relax.

### 6pm: Farewell Dinner with Kate Forsyth at a Mystery Location

B

## Monday 7 September

### Farewell to Writing in Oxford

**9.30am:** Check out of the Shakespeare Hotel and transfer to Oxford Train station, if required. As we say farewell to our History, Mystery and Magic retreat we leave with newfound friendships, knowledge and rekindled drive to pursue your writing dream.

9  
DAY

*"Kate was very supportive of us and our individual writing and personal challenges. She went out of her way to make sure that meals and tours ran smoothly, even those arranged outside of the itinerary. The tour guide was cheerful and knowledgeable; he was extremely flexible and eager to meet the needs and wishes of whoever had attended the optional tours. "It was very memorable!"*

— Jo Edgar-Baker

# PACKAGE DETAILS

## INCLUDED

What is included in the cost?

- Single accommodation at The Shakespeare Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon
- Daily breakfast
- Seven writing workshops with Kate Forsyth
- Services of a Tour Manager
- Selected reading extracts during the workshop
- Newsletters sent out by Kate Forsyth prior to program commencing
- Four Historical and Mystery tours with meals provided, with experienced Blue Badge guide Roger Bailey, and Kate Forsyth
- Welcome dinner
- Farewell dinner
- Transfer from Shakespeare Hotel to Oxford Railway Station on day of group departure.

## EXCLUDED

What is not included in the cost?

- Airfares – you need to book your own flights to England
- Travel to Oxford
- Travel Insurance – you must obtain your own travel insurance. This is compulsory.
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary.
- Personal expenses such as laundry, mobile phone and other incidentals.
- Alcoholic beverages with included itinerary meals.

# PRICING

Price in AUD for single accommodation - \$7,735

The price is land content only and does not include airfares.

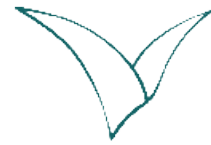
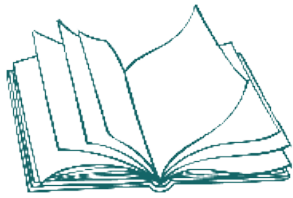
To secure your booking a deposit of 30% is required.

Deposit to secure booking	\$2330.50
Installment due by 19th April 2020	\$2702.25
Final Payment due by 15th July 2020	\$2702.25

Full payment needs to be completed no later than  
15th July 2020







# BETTER READ TOURS

Better Read Than Dead, nestled in the heart of Newtown's lively King Street, is one of Sydney's most iconic and beloved independent bookshops – and Lonely Planet's favourite Sydney bookshop. Better Read Than Dead has been an active member of Sydney's literary community for over two decades, renowned for its enthusiastic support of authors and its keen engagement with wide-ranging literary events.

Better Read Than Dead launched Better Read Literary Tours in 2017. The acquisition of Bookshop Travel has led Better Read Literary Tours to combine Better Read Than Dead's wealth of bookish knowledge with the expertise of this trusted educational tour company to provide our travellers with a programme of thoughtfully curated, fully escorted tours to the world's most fascinating literary destinations.

Our erudite local guides have been carefully chosen and provide inimitable insight into their region. There is no one better suited to walk alongside you as you explore these foreign shores and learn of the historical, cultural and political events that have shaped the world's greatest and most influential writers.

Better Read Literary Tours also offers a range of international writing workshops which merge our unique, local-infused itineraries with the opportunity to work closely with an experienced Australian mentor. These workshops offer the perfect retreat from the day-to-day, whether you're seeking to centre your creativity, find inspiration in a stunning new landscape, hone your writing practice or turn your focus on to a particular project.

We are running four international tours in 2020 and are working hard to create new and compelling travel opportunities for the following year. Be the first to learn of new tours by following us on social media and subscribing to our newsletter.

# BOOKING

## ENROL

If you would like to secure your place, please complete a booking enquiry form  
- available on our website by clicking “Book Now” -

## OR

COMPLETE attached form on page 15

EMAIL completed form, or any issues, to [tours@betterread.com.au](mailto:tours@betterread.com.au)

POST to Better Read Bookshop, 265 King Street, Newtown NSW 2042.

For more information:

Jenny: 0475 761 717

[www.betterreadtours.com](http://www.betterreadtours.com)

## What happens when I send in a booking enquiry form?

A representative of Better Read Literary Tours will contact you via phone and email to discuss booking options. A place is offered and a tax invoice will be issued.

We will receipt your payment and issue a tax invoice showing your payment and any balance due.

## Cancellation

If you need to cancel your booking all effort will be made to find a new participant to take your place. If a new participant can be found \$300 will be forfeited from your refund as an administration fee.

If your place cannot be filled your booking will remain and no refund will be given if less than 90 days until tour commencement. If you cancel more than 90 days prior to the start of the tour you will be eligible for a refund of 70% of the tour cost. All requests for cancellation of your booking and refund of funds must be made in writing.

## Travel Insurance

Travel insurance at the time of booking is recommended.

# T's & C's

Please read the following terms and conditions carefully.

**Prices:** All prices are subject to availability and can be withdrawn or amended at any time without notice. Price and inclusions valid on tour dates only.

**Amendment/Cancellation Fees:** Amended or cancelled bookings will incur charges. These charges can be up to 100% of the cost of the booking, regardless of whether travel has commenced. Better Read Tours reserves the right to charge cancellation fees over and above those charged by wholesalers, tour operators, airlines, cruise companies, etc. Fees will also apply where a booking is changed or tickets are reissued.

**Deposit & Final Payment:** To confirm your reservation you will be required to pay a deposit. The amount of the deposit is 30% of the total tour price. Your deposit forms part of your final payment which must be received by us before documents are issued. Final payment is required 90 days prior to the departure date. Subject to the Australian Consumer Law, the deposit is non refundable.

**Travel Documents:** Travel documents are subject to certain conditions and/or restrictions including restrictions on refunds, changes of dates and subject to cancellation and/or amendment fees. All travel documents are non transferable. All airline tickets must be issued in the identical name of the passport holder, as airlines are at liberty to deny carriage if the name varies and the booking may be cancelled. Any resulting fees will be at the traveller's own expense.

**Travel Insurance:** Travel insurance is strongly recommended by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for all overseas travel and is compulsory to participate in a Better Read Tours tour. We will be pleased to provide information to you about comprehensive travel insurance.

**Passports & Visas:** It is your responsibility to ensure that you have valid passports, visas and re-entry permits which meet the requirements of immigration and other government authorities. Any fines, penalties, payments or expenditures incurred as a result of such documents not meeting the requirements of those authorities will be your sole responsibility. All travellers must have a valid passport for international travel and many countries require at least 6 months validity from the date of entry. If you need information regarding visa and other travel document requirements for your trip please let us know. We can obtain such information from an external visa advisory service provider on your behalf. We do not warrant the accuracy of such information. Subject to the Australian Consumer Law, we accept no liability for any loss or damage, which you may suffer in reliance on it. We can obtain visas for you if you wish and fees may apply for this service.

**Health:** It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of any health requirements for your travel destinations and to ensure that you carry all necessary vaccination documentation. Better Read Tours expects that you have achieved a good level of fitness prior to departure that enables you to comfortably walk up stairs and to walk reasonable distances with vigour.

**Taxes:** Certain taxes are mandatory in various countries. There may also be an additional local tax charged at some airports. All taxes are subject to change without notice. It is recommended that you visit the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs for all up to date information. [www.smarttraveller.org.au](http://www.smarttraveller.org.au)

**Fee & Charges:** Credit card charges may apply.

**Agency:** Better Read Tours Pty Ltd ABN 16 621 237 885 is a tour company and the travel supplier. We work to bring to you a unique travel experience. Better Read Tours will assist you in all possible areas should there be dissatisfaction with any service provided.

**Liability:** Subject to the Australian Consumer Law, we do not accept any liability of whatever nature for the acts, omissions or default, whether negligent or otherwise, of third party providers over whom we have no direct control. Under circumstances where liability cannot be excluded, such liability is limited to the value of the purchased travel arrangements to the extent permissible. We do not accept any liability in contract, tort or otherwise for any injury, damage, loss (including consequential loss), delay, additional expenses or inconvenience caused directly or indirectly by any event or matter which is beyond our control or which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part.

**Privacy Policy:** Better Read Tours are committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of personal information.

**Bookings:** Better Read Tours reserve the right to refuse any booking at our sole discretion. No reason will be given for such refusal.



# BETTER READ TOURS

## Booking Enquiry Form

Thanks for booking with us. Better Read Tours will record your booking request and contact you via email to confirm. A Tax Invoice will be sent via email with payment options and the amount due.

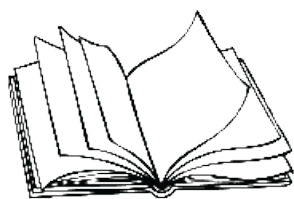
Your booking is not confirmed until we acknowledge that a deposit has been received. If you have additional accommodation requirements we are happy to advise you on who to enquire with but we do not make bookings outside of the dates for the selected travel experience. All bookings are subject to our terms and conditions.

When filling in this form, please ensure spelling is correct and your name is written as it is on your passport. Type directly on to the form or print out, scan and complete.

Please send the completed booking request via email to [tours@betterread.com.au](mailto:tours@betterread.com.au) or post to Better Read Tours, C/-Better Read Bookshop, 265 King St Newtown NSW 2042. One form is to be completed per person.

We look forward to assisting you.

DATE OF ENQUIRY:		REQUESTED EXPERIENCE:	
TITLE:	FIRST NAME:	LAST NAME:	
ADDRESS:			
STATE:	POSTCODE:	COUNTRY:	
STATE:		SECONDARY NUMBER:	
EMAIL ADDRESS:			
DOB:	WOULD YOU LIKE TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH OUR NEWSLETTERS? Y / N		
COMMENTS:			



# TAKE THE JOURNEY