A circular walk around the award winning 18th century landscape garden, featuring the recently restored Temple of Bacchus. The Park was created between 1738 and 1773 and has been the subject of extensive renovation since 1981, with the most recent restoration being the magnificent folly, the Temple of Bacchus.

Note – there is an entrance fee for Painshill however Cobham Heritage members have a 2 for 1 entrance offer on production of your Cobham Heritage membership card. Entrance is free for Painshill Members and for members of the Historic Houses Association. Winter opening hours are 10-4pm. See the Painshill website (www.painshill.co.uk) for more details of fees and opening hours.

Parking: Parking is available free of charge.

Length of the walk: Approx. 1.5-hour walk, approx. 5km / 3 miles in length (Allow additional time if you wish to explore other areas of the Park).

The Walk

1. Start from the Painshill Car Park (access from Between Streets) and take the entrance path to the ticket office and shop, crossing a pedestrian bridge over the river.

2. After paying any entrance fees, leave the ticket office and pass the tea rooms. A number of paths start here – this walk takes the second left-hand path, signposted ‘Historic Route’, keeping the open green area on your right. Ignore a small left fork (with disabled access sign) and continue. As the path begins to gradually climb, turn sharp left, zigzagging uphill. On reaching the top of the hill, the path turns right, and the lake and vineyard are below on your left. There are lovely views both of the lake and also the countryside around Cobham from this spot.

3. Continue along this hill-top path to reach the Gothic Temple with its stunning views of the lake and the far end of the Park. Then continue by following the path downhill to the Ruined Abbey at the bottom, beside the lake. Turn right on the path, just before the Abbey and then go through a gate. Continue on the path, but just before another gate, take a sharp left to follow the path down and across the Chinese Bridge.

4. Once across the bridge, there is a path junction. Head left for the Grotto entrance (well worth a visit if it is open – usually only on summer weekends), otherwise take the right-hand path and a few steps further on, go left at a fork, to go over the top of the Grotto with some tantalising glimpses of the Grotto interior below. There is a magnificent Cedar tree ahead of you just before you cross a second bridge (Woollett Bridge) taking you to the far side of the lake.

5. Turn right, keeping the lake on your right and the River Mole on your left and head towards the Five Arch Bridge, pausing to appreciate the Mausoleum on your left. Walk across the Five Arch Bridge where you can look back at the beautiful views of the Gothic Temple on your right and at the Cascade on your left.

6. Take the track on the left as it heads up towards the Turkish Tent. You will have walked approx. 2 km at this point, so well worth a break to admire the stunning views from the Tent. Continue past the front of the Tent entrance and through a pedestrian gate, walking across the grassy area toward the Temple of Bacchus.
7. The Temple of Bacchus was recently rebuilt and looks wonderful, the classic architecture used for the design makes it arguably the most beautiful of all the follies. The interior is not yet open, but there are excellent views from the back of the Temple.

When you have finished admiring the Temple, from the front of it, (ie with the Temple on your left), continue half-right across the grass, then left through a gate, to enter the area known as the Elysian Plain. From now on the surface is mainly grassy and can be uneven. About two thirds of the way across the Plain, turn diagonally left on a crossing grassy path, to enter woodland and go downhill. Very shortly you reach a path junction where you can see the Gothic Tower away on your right (worth a visit if it is open). Otherwise turn sharp left to descend gradually down through the Alpine Valley. You catch glimpses of the River Mole ahead and then follow the path as it bears left. A little further on, you can look up to your left and see the Temple of Bacchus on the hill above you, and to your right, the Water Wheel.

8. The path (now gravel) ascends gradually with the River Mole on your right as you walk through some of the most rural scenes in the park. You reach a small Cascade which is at the head of the lake and take the path to the right, back towards the Five Arch Bridge. Don’t cross the bridge, but turn right and re-trace your steps towards the Woollett Bridge. Once there, don’t cross this bridge either, but keep straight on with the lake still on your left and the River Mole on your right.

9. As you walk down the length of the lake look out for a wide variety of birds, geese, swans and herons. You have lovely views across to the Ruined Abbey and the vineyard on the other side. At the bottom of the lake the path curves round to the left. Ignore a couple of other tracks joining from the left and a tarmac track going right, to continue straight on, back towards the Tea Room, Toilets and Exit to complete your walk.

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