

5th EDITION

Guide to Rural England

GLOUCESTERSHIRE



WHERE TO GO | WHAT TO SEE | WHAT TO DO
WHERE TO STAY | WHERE TO EAT | WHERE TO BUY

Fully illustrated with detailed directions and maps











Gloucestershire

For many, Gloucestershire is the Cotswolds, the delightful limestone hills that sweep across the county from Dyrham in the south to Chipping Campden in the north. As well as providing some of the most glorious scenery and the prettiest villages in the country, the county is also home to the historic towns of Cirencester and Cheltenham. “The most English and the least spoiled of all our countryside.” So wrote J B Priestley in 1933 in his *English Journey* and, more than 70 years later, his verdict would surely have been the same.

However, Gloucestershire is not all about

the Cotswolds. To the west, on the River Severn, is the ancient city of Gloucester, while further down river is the Vale of Berkeley and historic Berkeley Castle. On the opposite bank of the river lies the Forest of Dean. Wild woodland, royal hunting ground, naval timber reserve, important mining and industrial region: the Forest has been all these, and today its rich and varied landscape provides endless interest for walkers, nature-lovers and historians. Bounded by the Rivers Severn and Wye, the area has been effectively isolated from the rest of England and Wales and so has developed a character all its own.



-  historic building
-  museum and heritage
-  historic site
-  scenic attraction
-  flora and fauna
-  stories and anecdotes
-  famous people
-  art and craft
-  entertainment and sport
-  walks




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Newent

-  Market House  Church of St Mary
-  The International Centre for birds of Prey
-  Castle Hill Farm  Three Choirs Vineyard

Capital of the area of northwest Gloucestershire known as the Ryelands, and the most important town in the Vale of Leadon, Newent stands in the broad triangle of land called Daffodil Crescent. The rich Leadon Valley soil was traditionally used for growing rye and raising the renowned Ryelands sheep, an ancient breed famed for the quality of its wool. The town was one of the county's principal wool-trading centres, and the wealth produced from that trade accounts for the large number of grand merchants' houses to be seen here. The most distinctive building in Newent is the splendid timber-framed **Market House**, built as a butter market in the middle of the 16th-century, its upper floors supported on 16 oak pillars that form an open colonnade. The medieval **Church of St Mary** has many outstanding features, including the shaft of a 9th-century Saxon cross, the 11th-century Newent Stone and the 17th-century nave. During the Civil War, Royalist troops had removed the lead from the roof to make

bullets, an act that caused the roof to collapse during a snowstorm in 1674. A new nave was started after Charles II agreed to donate 60 tons of timber from the Forest of Dean. The church's 150ft spire is a landmark for miles around.

There aren't too many windmills in Gloucestershire, but at **Castle Hill Farm**, just outside town, is a working wooden mill with great views from a balcony at the top.


A mile south of Newent is the **International Centre for Birds of Prey** housing one of the largest and best collections of birds of prey in the world. The 110 aviaries are home to eagles, falcons, owls, vultures, kites, hawks, caracaras, secretary birds and buzzards. Between 20 and 40 birds are flown daily at the Centre, which is open every day from February to November. Also on site are a tearoom, children's play area, pets corner and picnic area. Call 01531 820286/821581.

On the road north towards Dymock, set in 75 acres of rolling countryside, the **Three Choirs Vineyard** is the country's largest wine producer. Unusually, there's also a brewery here, Whittington's, named after Dick Whittington who is believed to have been born in the nearby hamlet of Pauntley. The vineyard also has a restaurant, shop and offers bed and breakfast accommodation in rooms overlooking the rows of vines.

Around Newent

DYMOCK











3 miles N of Newent on the B4216

-  Dymock Poets

Dymock boasts some fine old brick buildings, including the White House and the Old Rectory near the church



Market House, Newent

-  historic building
-  museum and heritage
-  historic site
-  scenic attraction
-  flora and fauna
-  stories and anecdotes
-  famous people
-  art and craft
-  entertainment and sport
-  walks

and, outside the village, the Old Grange, which incorporates the remains of the Cistercian Flaxley Abbey.

At the heart of the village is the early Norman Church of St Mary, whose unusual features include a tympanum depicting the Tree of Life, a 13th-century stone coffin lid, stained glass by Kempe – and the last ticket issued at Dymock station, in 1959. A corner of the church is dedicated to the memory of the **Dymock Poets**, a group who based themselves in Dymock from before the First World War. The group, which comprised Lascelles Abercrombie (the first to arrive), Rupert Brooke, John Drinkwater, Wilfred Gibson, Edward Thomas and Robert Frost, sent out its *New Numbers* poetry magazine from Dymock's tiny post office. It was also from here that Brooke published his *War Sonnets*, including *The Soldier* ("If I should die, think only this of me: That there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England..."). Brooke and Thomas died in the war, which led to the dissolution of the group. Two circular walks from Dymock take in places associated with the poets.

Many other literary figures are associated with the Forest. Dennis Potter, born at Coleford in 1935 the eldest son of a Forest coal-miner, is renowned for writing the screenplays for some of TV's most memorable programmes, including *Pennies From Heaven* and *The Singing Detective*. But he also wrote with passion about the Forest in *The Glittering Coffin* and *The Changing Forest: Life in the Forest of Dean Today*. Mary Howitt, born in Coleford in 1799, is known as a translator, poet and author of children's books. It was as a translator that she met a Danish storyteller called Hans Christian Andersen who asked Mary to translate his stories into English.



St Mary's Church - Upleadon

UPLEADON



2 miles N of Newent off the B4215

 Church of St Mary the Virgin

The **Church of St Mary the Virgin** features some fine Norman and Tudor work, but is best known for its unique tower, half-timbered from bottom to top; even the mullion windows are of wood. The church has a great treasure in its Bible, an early example of the Authorised Version printed by King James' printer Robert Barker. This was the unfortunate who later issued an edition with a small but rather important word missing. The so-called Wicked Bible of 1631 renders Exodus 20.14 as 'Thou shalt commit adultery'.

KEMPLEY

3 miles NW of Newent on a minor road

 Church of St Mary  Dymock Woods

A village famous for its cider and for having two churches, of very different age and significance. The little **Church of St Mary** (English Heritage), now redundant, dates from the end of the 11th century and would be a gem even without its greatest treasure. That treasure, in the chancel, is an almost complete set of 12th-century frescoes, the most renowned in the region and among the finest

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in the land, protected by Reformation whitewash and Victorian varnish. Their subjects include St Peter and the Apostles, Christ with his feet resting on a globe, and the de Lacy family, to whom William the Conqueror granted the manor. The red sandstone Church of St Edward the Confessor was built in 1903 by the 7th Earl Beauchamp in the style of the Arts and Crafts Movement using exclusively local materials.

This is the area of **Dymock Woods**, Forestry Commission woodland, famous for its daffodils.

Cinderford

 Church of St Andrew  Dean Heritage Centre

Cinderford is a former coal-mining community with evidence of the mines visible among the trees.


At Camp Hill in the nearby hamlet of Soudley is the **Dean Heritage Centre**, where four galleries open all year round tell the story of the Forest and its people. It is a perfect setting for a family day out with woodland walks, café, adventure playground and children's activity room, museum and crafts shops, farm animals and woodland crafts, including charcoal burning and woodturning. A level trail runs round Soudley Ponds, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest.

At nearby Awre, an ancient crossing place of the Severn, the **Church of St Andrew** has changed little in its 700 years. Its most notable possession is a massive mortuary chest carved from a single piece of wood and used as a laying out place for bodies recovered from the Severn. In the churchyard are examples of headstones featuring the local speciality – cherubs.

Around Cinderford

DRYBROOK

3 miles N of Cinderford off the A4136

 Mechanical Organ Museum

Hidden away at the north end of the village, at Hawthorns Cross on the edge of the Forest, is the **Mechanical Organ Museum**, with its vast collection of mechanical music spanning 150 years. The tuneful exhibits include mechanical organs, polyphons, pianolas, automatic pianos, electric organs and musical boxes. The museum is open at Easter and on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in April, May, July and August.

MITCHELDEAN



5 miles N of Cinderford on the A4136

 St Anthony's Well

Mitcheldean is a peaceful community on the northern fringe of the forest. A mile or so south of the village is **St Anthony's Well**, one of many throughout the land said to have magical curative powers. The water at this well is invariably icy cold and bathing in it is said to provide a cure for skin disease – St Anthony's Fire was the medieval name for a rampant itching disease. The monks at nearby Flaxley Abbey swore by it.

WESTBURY-ON-SVERN

5 miles NE of Cinderford on the A48

 Severn Bore  Westbury Court Garden

The village, bounded on three sides by the river, is best known for the National Trust's **Westbury Court Garden**, a formal Dutch water garden laid out between 1696 and 1705. The only restored Dutch water garden in the country and home to what is believed to be

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England's oldest evergreen oak, the garden is planted with historic varieties of apple, pear and plum, along with many other species introduced to England before 1700. The house was demolished long ago, and the only building to survive is an elegant two-storey redbrick pavilion with a tower and weather vane.


Also worth a visit in Westbury is the Church of Saints Peter, Paul and Mary, with its detached tower and wooden spire. Walmore Common is winter home to thousands of swans, as well as many wading birds and unusual flora.

Westbury is an excellent spot to watch the famous **Severn Bore**. This is a tidal wave that, several times a month, makes its way along the river. The bore travels at an average speed of about 10 miles an hour and has been known to reach a height of 6½ feet. The Severn Estuary experiences the second highest tide

anywhere in the world, and the difference between the lowest and highest tide in any one day can be more than 14.5 metres. These high, or spring tides, occur on several days in each lunar cycle throughout the year.

LONGHOPE

7 miles NE of Cinderford on the A4136

 Harts Barn & Craft Centre

Another good starting point for a tour in and around the Forest of Dean is Longhope, a pleasant settlement south of the A40 Gloucester to Ross-on-Wye road.

Longhope is the location of the **Harts Barn Crafts Centre**, situated in a hunting lodge built by William, Duke of Normandy, and housing an array of working crafts including jewellery, pine furniture, art gallery, handmade gifts, glassware, dried flowers and picture framing.

Willow Lodge Garden and Arboretum

Longhope, Gloucestershire GL17 0RA

Tel: 01452 831211

e-mail: wood@willowgardens.fsnet.co.uk

website: www.willowgardens.fsnet.co.uk

The four acre garden is divided into separate areas giving the element of surprise as you walk from herbaceous borders and beds, to an alpine bank, to trilliums and other woodland plants in the shadier areas.

The arboretum has many rare and unusual plants from all over the temperate world. A collection of Ilex (Holly), more than a dozen different Magnolia, quite a number of Betula and Acers with coloured bark, leaves, and leaf shapes. The arboretum is also under planted with drifts of wild daffodils, bluebells, terrestrial orchids and snowdrops. Other features include a bog garden planted with many marginals and bog plants especially Asiatic primulas; also a stream and pond.

The garden has been open to the public for several years and raised considerable funds for charities both local and national. There is ample free parking for cars, plants for sale, tea and home made cakes and most areas of the garden are accessible to wheel chairs.



FOREST GUILD GIFTS AND ANTIQUES

The Old Stable, Upper High Street, Newnham-on-Severn, Gloucestershire GL14 1BB
 Tel: 01594-516417

e-mail: forestguildcraftshop@yahoo.com

website: www.bigartweb.net/artist/forestguild/

Forest Guild Gifts and Antiques is hard to define but easy to love. It's a delightful mix of gifts, crafts, antiques, curios, toys, jewellery and just about anything else of interest that the owners can manage to unearth and put on display.

The shop is a charming curio itself, located in the historic village of Newnham-on-Severn, in a 15th-century former stable right by the River Severn. It's been run since 1984 by owner Elizabeth Holder, and its long life is a testimony to its quality and value-for-money. For most of that time the shop has sold Bridgewater Pottery, the popular English earthenware and has an exclusive Forest of Dean mug designed by Emma. Another talent showcased here is local jeweller Jan Fryer, whose stunning contemporary designs have caught the eye of many celebrities. There's second-hand jewellery for sale to tempt the canny bargain-hunter, while upstairs the antiques section specialises in Windsor chairs and country antiques. There are fascinating curiosities too, like old shooting sticks and tools. Truly there's something for everyone at Forest Guild Gifts and Antiques, which is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10am-1pm and 2pm-5.30pm.



DEAN HERITAGE CENTRE

Camp Mill, Soudley, Gloucestershire GL14 2UB
 Tel: 01594 822170

e-mail: info@deanheritagemuseum.com

website: www.deanheritagemuseum.com

The **Dean Heritage Centre** is a must see if you are visiting the Forest of Dean. Set in a deep valley it allows visitors to discover the story of the forest in the heart of the forest.

Open all year around, there are daily walks held and family events are often hosted at weekends. The museum at the Dean Heritage Centre tells the history of the forest, which was formed by and industrial past, and there are now five galleries.

Families are given the chance to dress up in Victorian clothes and there are plenty of craft activities and trails around the museum to keep youngsters occupied.

Homemade cakes and meals can be enjoyed in the centre's cafe, which overlooks the mill pond and if you have brought your own packed lunch there are plenty of picnic areas and specially built barbecues around the site.

An impressive waterwheel and beam engine can be seen and workshops can be arranged for schools and other groups. There is also a venue space that can be hired for meetings etcetera. Ring for details.



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There's also a tearoom, play area and history trail. Usually closed on Mondays.

Just to the north on the A40 is **Willow Lodge Gardens and Arboretum** (see panel on page 79). The four acre garden and arboretum, developed from a neglected plot, from 1988 onward, is open to the public most Sundays and Mondays from April to August. Call 01452 831211.

NEWNHAM-ON-SEVERN

3 miles SW of Cinderford off the A4151

One of the gateways to the Forest, and formerly a port, Newnham lies on a great bend in the river. Its heyday was at the beginning of the 19th century, when a quay was built and an old tramway tunnel converted into what was perhaps the world's first railway tunnel. The village has many interesting buildings, which can be visited by following

the Millennium Heritage Walk plaques installed by the parish council with funds provided by an open-air jazz concert.

LITTLEDEAN


1 mile W of Cinderford off the A4151

 Littledean Hall

Places of interest here include the 13th-century church, the 18th-century prison and, just south of the village, **Littledean Hall** (private), reputedly the oldest inhabited house in England. The house has Saxon and Celtic remains in the cellars and is thought to have been built in the 6th century. It became a Royalist garrison during the Civil War.

RUARDEAN

4 miles NW of Cinderford on the A4136

 Church of St John the Baptist  Ruardean Hill

A lovely old village whose **Church of St John**

LITTLEDEAN HOUSE HOTEL

*Broad Street, Littledean, nr Newnham-on-Severn,
Gloucestershire GL14 3JT*

Tel: 01594-822106











e-mail: littledeanhousehotel@hotmail.com

website: www.littledeanhousehotel.co.uk

Littledean House Hotel is a family-run country guesthouse in the heart of the stunning scenery of the Forest of Dean. The hotel has its own scenery too, by way of its glorious gardens nestling beneath a massive Scots pine tree, and with lovely views to the local beauty spot, May Hill. Inside the house there is lots of period charm, with a large open log fire in the old-fashioned bar area, and leather sofas and chairs for guests to relax in.

Brothers Richard and Mathew Bond, and Mathew's wife Clare, took over the running of the hotel in 2010 and have set about making it even better than it already was. Richard and Kate are the chef's who run the hotel's own restaurant, using fresh local produce to cook steaks, sausage and mash, roasted pork belly and plenty of changing daily specials too. The meals are accompanied by fine wines from the wine list, while you can also relax in the bar and treat yourself to one of the many real ciders and ales on offer, including the popular local cider, Tosher's Tipple. There are 14 ensuite rooms upstairs, with views over those gorgeous gardens, and the Wye Valley on their doorstep.



 historic building  museum and heritage  historic site  scenic attraction  flora and fauna
 stories and anecdotes  famous people  art and craft  entertainment and sport  walks

the Baptist, one of many on the fringe of the forest, has a number of interesting features. A tympanum depicting St George and the Dragon is a great rarity, and on a stone plaque in the nave is a curious carving of two fishes. These are thought to have been carved by craftsmen from the Herefordshire School of Norman Architecture during the Romanesque period around 1150. It is part of a frieze removed with rubble when the south porch was being built in the 13th century. The frieze was considered lost until 1985 when an inspection of a bread oven in a cottage at nearby Turner's Tump revealed the two fish set into its lining. They were rescued and returned to their rightful place in the church.

Ruardean was the birthplace in the 1840s of James and William Horlick, later to become famous with their Horlicks formula. Their patent for malted milk was registered in 1883,



Forest Path to Ruardean Hill

and the granary where the original experiments were carried out still remains in the village.

Ruardean Hill is 951 feet above sea level and from its summit, on a clear day, Herefordshire, the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons can all be seen.

Lydney

-  Dean Forest Railway & Norchard Railway Centre
-  Forest of Dean Model Village & Gardens
-  Roman Temple Site
-  Lydney Park Spring Gardens

The harbour and the canal at Lydney, once an important centre of the iron and coal industries and the largest settlement between Chepstow and Gloucester, are well worth exploring, and no visit to the town should end without a trip on the **Dean Forest Railway**. A regular service of steam and diesel trains operates the 4¼-mile route on 'the Friendly Forest Line' through the Forest between Lydney Junction, St Mary's Halt, Norchard and Parkend. The fare covers unlimited travel for the day. At **Norchard Railway Centre**, headquarters of the line, are a railway museum, souvenir shop and details of restoration projects. Popular events throughout the year include Days Out with Thomas, Santa Specials and Steam Footplate Experience Courses. Resident locomotives in 2010 included ex-GWR pannier tank 9681 and Prairie (2-6-2T) 5541.

A popular family tourist attraction is the **Forest of Dean Model Village & Gardens**, which features more than 50 detailed miniatures of local landmarks and buildings in five landscaped garden zones that include an adventure play area.

DEAN FOREST RAILWAY

Norchard, Forest Road, Lydney,

Gloucestershire GL15 4ET

Tel: 01594 845840 / 843423

e-mail: info@dfr.co.uk website: www.dfr.co.uk

Even if you are not a railway enthusiast, exploration of the medieval forest should not be complete without a trip on the **Dean Forest Railway**.

It is the last remnant of the old Severn & Wye Railway and can be found nestling in a tree-lined valley in west Gloucestershire, where a regular service of mainly steam trains operates the 4¼ mile route through the forest between Lydney Junction (national network), Lydney Town, Norchard and Parkend.

A popular destination with tourists, most visitors enjoy looking around the souvenir shop and especially the railway museum at Norchard Station, the railway's headquarters and designated car park. The fare usually covers unlimited travel for the day.

During the season March to October, there are Days out with Thomas and 40's Weekends, Hallowe'en Ghost Trains and Santa Specials, with the stylish Royal Forester Dining Train running monthly on Sundays.

Restoration projects are generally centred at Norchard. Particularly impressive is the restored Great Western Railway push-pull train which is in service on Bygone Branchline Days. Some mainline diesels and railcars are also used to augment the predominantly GWR loco stud which proves to be so nostalgic against the backdrop of a mainly deciduous forest landscape. Phone or visit the website for details.




One of the chief attractions in the vicinity is **Lydney Park Spring Gardens and Roman Temple Site**. The gardens, which lie beside the A48 on the western outskirts, are a riot of colour, particularly in May and June, and the grounds also contain the site of an Iron Age hill fort and the remains of a late-Roman temple excavated by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in the 1920s. The nearby museum houses a number of Roman artefacts from the site, including the famous Lydney Dog – a bronze statuette dating from about AD365 that apparently represents a half-grown wolfhound – and a number of interesting items brought back from New Zealand in the 1930s by the first Viscount Bledisloe after his term there as Governor General. Also in the park are traces of Roman iron-mine workings and Roman earth workings.

Around Lydney

ALVINGTON



2 miles SW of Lydney on the A48

 Wintour's Leap

In the churchyard at Alvington are the graves of the illustrious Wintour family, leading figures in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Half a century after that event came Sir John Wintour's remarkable escape from Cromwell's men at what is now known as **Wintour's Leap**. Sir John was an adventurer, Keeper of the Forest of Dean and sometime secretary to Queen Maria Henrietta of the Netherlands. In 1644 he was at the head of a Royalist force defeated at Blockley, near Chepstow, by Parliamentary troops. Wintour is said to have escaped from the battlefield by riding up by

the Wye and hurling himself and his horse into the river from the cliffs.

Coleford

 GWR Museum  Puzzle Wood

 Perrygrove Railway

Coleford is a former mining centre that received its royal charter from Charles I in the 17th century in recognition of its loyalty to the Crown. It was by then already an important iron processing centre, partly because of the availability of local ore deposits, and partly because of the ready local supply of timber for converting into charcoal for use in the smelting process. It was in Coleford that the Mushet family helped to revolutionise the iron and steel industry. Robert Forester Mushet, a freeminer, discovered how spiegeleisen, an alloy of iron, manganese, silicon and carbon, could be used in the reprocessing of burnt iron and went on to develop a system for turning molten pig iron directly into steel, a process that predated the more familiar one developed by Bessemer.

Coleford, still regarded as the capital of the Forest of Dean, is a busy commercial centre with an interesting church and a number of notable industrial relics. The Forestry Commission is housed at Bank House and has information on all aspects of the Forest. There are miles of waymarked walks and cycle trails through the Forest, and the famous Sculpture Trail starts at Beechenhurst Lodge.

Coleford is also home to the **Great Western Railway Museum**, housed in an 1883 goods shed, the last surviving part of Coleford Station, on the line that once connected the town with Monmouth and

Lydney. Exhibits include several full-size steam locomotives, large scale model engines, an original signal box, a miniature railway and a wealth of railway memorabilia. There's also a craft shop and refreshment room.

Another treat for railway fans is the **Perrygrove Railway**, where a narrow gauge (15in) steam train takes a 1½ mile trip through farmland and woods. In the evening, the Ghost Train journey through the dark woods promises a few scary surprises. There are also woodland walks, picnic and play areas, and light refreshments available.



Nearby is another visitor attraction, also on the B4228 just south of the town. The **Puzzle Wood** has 14 acres of pre-Roman open-cast ore mines redesigned as a family attraction, with paths forming an unusual maze, breathtaking scenery, wooden bridges, passageways through moss-covered rocks and lots of dead ends and circles.

J R R Tolkien, author of *Lord of the Rings*, was a regular visitor to the Forest of Dean and reputedly based Middle Earth on Puzzle Wood.

Around Coleford

STAUNTON

3 miles NW of Coleford on the A4136

 Buck Stone and Suck Stone  Long Stone

Lots to see here, including a Norman church with two stone fonts and an unusual corkscrew staircase leading up past the pulpit to the belfry door. Not far from the village are several enormous mystical stones, notably the **Buck Stone** and the **Suck Stone**. The former, looking like some great monster, used to buck, or rock, on its base, but is now firmly fixed in place. The Suck Stone is a real giant, weighing in at many thousands of tons.

THE ROCK BED AND BREAKFAST

*Hillersland, nr Symonds Yat Rock,
Gloucestershire GL16 7NY*

Tel: 01594-837893

e-mail chris@stayattherock.com

website www.stayattherock.com



The Rock is a 4 star family run Bed and Breakfast located at 600 ft on the ridge between the Wye and Ruardean Valleys and is a short forest walk from the famous viewpoint of Symonds Yat Rock. The Rock offers Hotel standard accommodation with the friendliness and affordable value of a B&B. The newly converted Valley View Rooms were formerly the Rock Inn's Skittle Alley. The valley views stretch 25 miles allowing you to fully appreciate this designated area of outstanding natural beauty with Miles of footpaths from the door. B&B in the new Valley View Studios bridge the gap between traditional B&B and self catering with king size beds luxury bathroom or wet room, and kitchenette with fridge. The 4 Forest View B&B rooms have ensuite shower rooms. The two ground floor rooms are dog friendly as is the ensuite single room between the two studios. All seven rooms and lounge /breakfast room, complete with wood burner, are located in separate annexes to the main house so you can come and go as you please. The Rock offers acclaimed traditional and home-made vegetarian breakfast options to set you up for the day, before exploring this hidden gem of an area with one of the best viewpoints in Southern England.



There are several other stones in the vicinity, including the Near Harkening and Far Harkening down among the trees, and the **Long Stone** by the A4136 at Marion's Cross.

CANNOP

4 miles E of Coleford on the B4226

 Hopewell Colliery  Cannop Valley

Cannop Valley has many forest trails and picnic sites; one of the sites is at Cannop Ponds, picturesque ponds created in the 1820s to provide a regular supply of water for the local iron-smelting works. Nearby is **Hopewell Colliery**, a true Forest of Dean free mine where summer visitors can see old mine workings dating back as far as the 1820s and some of the old tools of the trade, then relax with a snack from the café. Open March to October; call 01594 810706.



Hopewell Colliery - Cannop


PARKEND*3 miles SE of Coleford off the B4234*

 Nagshead Nature Reserve  Go Ape!

This is a community once based, like so many others in the area, on the extraction of minerals. In the early years of the 19th century, before steam engines arrived and horses did all the donkey work, Parkend became a tramroad centre and laden trams ran from coalpits, iron mines, quarries, furnaces and forges to river-borne outlets at Lydbrook and Lydney. New Fancy Colliery is now a delightful picnic area, with a nearby hill affording breathtaking views over the forestscape. Off the B4431, just west of Parkend, is the RSPB's **Nagshead Nature Reserve**, with hundreds of nest boxes in a woodland site with footpaths, waymarked trails and a summer information centre.

To the east of Parkend, **Go Ape!** Is an award-winning high wire forest adventure course with rope bridges, Tarzan swings and zip slides, all set high up in the treetops. Full and half-day packages are available.

CLEARWELL*1.5 miles S of Coleford off the A466*

 Clearwell Caves

Clearwell Caves are part of the only remaining working iron mine in the Forest of Dean. This natural cave system became filled with iron ore around 180 million years ago and has been mined for at least 4000 years. As a result, the cave complex now consists of many miles of passageways and hundreds of caverns. Visitors can take their own self-guided tour or participate in a more strenuous adventure caving trip. Other amenities on site include a gift shop, picnic area and tearoom. Call 01594 832535. A memorable visit can be completed by



Ventilation Shaft - Clearwell Caves

wandering down to Clearwell village with its lovely French Gothic-style church and the pretty surrounding countryside.

ST BRIAVELS*5 miles S of Coleford on minor roads*

 Castle

On the edge of a limestone plateau high above the Wye Valley, this historic village is named after a 5th-century Welsh bishop whose name appears in various forms throughout Celtic Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, but nowhere else in England. In the Middle Ages St Briavels was an important administrative centre for the royal hunting forest, and also a leading manufacturer of armaments, supplying weapons and ammunition to the Crown.

The ample Church of St Mary the Virgin, Norman in origin, enlarged in the 12th and 13th centuries and remodelled by the Victorians, is the scene of a curious and very English annual custom, the St Briavels Bread

and Cheese Ceremony. After evensong, a local forester stands on the Pound Wall and throws small pieces of bread and cheese to the villagers, accompanied by the chant, “St Briavels water and Whyrl’s wheat are the best bread and water King John can ever eat”. This ceremony is thought to have originated more than 700 years ago when the villagers successfully defended their rights of estover (collecting wood from common land) in nearby Hudnalls Wood. In gratitude, each villager paid one penny to the church warden to help feed the poor, and that act led to the founding of the ceremony. The small pieces of bread and cheese were considered to bring good luck, and the Dean Forest miners would

because of its impressive size. Its aisle is almost as wide as its nave, and its huge pinnacled tower is supported by flying buttresses. Like many churches in the county, it was built during the 13th and 14th centuries and remodelled by the Victorians. Inside, it has a number of interesting effigies, including an unusual brass relief of a medieval miner with a pick and hod in his hand and a candlestick in his mouth. Other effigies depict a forester in 15th-century hunting gear with a hunting horn, a sword and knife; and, from the 17th century, an archer with wide-brimmed hat, bow, horn and dagger.

South Gloucestershire and the Vale of Berkeley



keep them in order to ward off harm.

St Briavels Castle, which stands in an almost impregnable position on a high promontory, was founded by Henry I and enlarged by King John, who used it as a hunting lodge. Two sturdy gatehouses are among the parts that survive.

NEWLAND

1 mile SW of Coleford off the A466

Cathedral of the Forest

Newland’s Church of All Saints is often known as the **Cathedral of the Forest**

Frampton-on-Severn

Frampton Court and Frampton Manor

Cotswold Canals Arlingham Peninsula

Frampton’s 22-acre Rosamund Green, incorporating a cricket ground and three ponds, is one of the largest village greens in England, formed when the marshy ground outside the gates of **Frampton Court** was drained in the 18th century. The court is an outstanding example of a Georgian country house, built in the Palladian style in the 1730s and the seat of the Clifford family ever since. Fine porcelain, furniture and paintings grace the interior, and in the peacock-strutted grounds an ornamental canal reflects a superb Orangery in Dutch-influenced Strawberry Hill Gothic. A unique octagonal tower was built in the 17th century as a dovecote.

On the other side of the green is **Frampton Manor**, the Clifford family’s



Frampton Court

former home, built between the 12th and 16th centuries. This handsome timber-framed house is thought to be the birthplace of Jane Clifford, who was the mistress of Henry II and bore him two children. The manor, which has a lovely old walled garden with some rare plants, is open by written appointment.

At the southern edge of the village stands the restored 14th-century Church of St Mary with its rare Norman lead font. The church stands beside the Sharpness Canal, which was built to allow ships to travel up the Severn Valley as far as Gloucester without being at the mercy of the estuary tides. The canal has several swing bridges and at some of these, as at Splatt Bridge and Saul Bridge at Frampton, there are splendid little bridge-keeper's cottages with Doric columns.


To the west of Frampton, on a great bend in the river, is the **Arlingham Peninsula**, part of the Severn Way Shepperdine-Tewkesbury long-distance walk. The trail passes close to Wick Court, a 13th-century moated manor house. The land on which the village of

Arlingham stands once belonged to the monks of St Augustine's Abbey in Bristol who believed it to be the point where St Augustine crossed the Severn on his way to converting the heathen Welsh tribes.

The Severn naturally dominated life hereabouts and at Saul, a small village on the peninsula, the inhabitants decorated their houses with carvings of sailors, some of which, in bright, cheerful colours, can be seen today. The village lies at the point where two canals cross. Two separate waterways, the Stroudwater Navigation and the Thames & Severn Canal, once linked the Severn and the Thames, a route of 37 miles. The canals, known collectively as the **Cotswold Canals**, were abandoned in 1933 and 1954 respectively, but most of the route is intact, and since 1972 the Cotswold Canals Trust has worked in partnership with local authorities on restoration work. Continuing round the bend in the river, Epney is the point from which thousands of baby eels are exported each year to the Netherlands and elsewhere to replenish their own stocks.

SLIMBRIDGE

4 miles S of Frampton on the A38

 Wildfowl and Wetlands Centre


Slimbridge Wetland Centre was founded as a trust on the banks of the Severn in 1946 by the distinguished naturalist, artist, sailor and broadcaster Peter (later Sir Peter) Scott. He believed in bringing wildlife and people together for the benefit of both, and the Trust's work continues with the same aims. Slimbridge has the world's largest collection of ducks, geese and swans, and spectacular flamingoes among the exotic wildfowl. Family attractions include canoe safaris and Land Rover trips. Also at the centre are a tropical


house, pond zone, a watery children's play area, wildlife art gallery, restaurant and gift shop, and there are magnificent views from the observation tower. Sir Peter died in 1989 and his ashes were scattered at Slimbridge, where he had lived for many years. A memorial to him stands at the entrance to the Centre, which is widely regarded as the birthplace of modern conservation.

BERKELEY

6 miles S of Frampton off the A38

 Berkeley Castle  Jenner Museum

 Butterfly House & Plant Centre

 Gloucester & Sharpness Canal

The fertile strip that is the Vale of Berkeley, bounded on the north by the Severn and on the south by the M5, takes its name from the small town of Berkeley, whose largely Georgian centre is dominated by the Norman **Berkeley Castle**. Said to be the oldest inhabited castle in Britain, with the same family resident from the start, this wonderful gem in pink sandstone was built between 1117 and 1153 on the site of a Saxon fort. It was here that the barons of the West met before making the journey to Runnymede to witness the signing of Magna Carta by King John in 1215. Edward II was imprisoned here for several months after losing his throne to his wife and her lover. He eventually met a painful death in the dungeons in the year 1327. Three centuries later, the castle was besieged by Cromwell's troops and played an important part in the history of the Civil War. It stands very close to the Severn and once incorporated the waters of the river in its defences so that it could, in an emergency, flood its lands. Visitors passing into the castle by way of a bridge over a moat will find a wealth of treasures in the Great Hall, the



Berkeley Castle

circular keep, the state apartments with their fine tapestries and period furniture, the medieval kitchens and the dungeons.

The Berkeley family have filled the place with objects from around the world, including painted glassware from Damascus, ebony chairs from India and a cypress chest that reputedly belonged to Sir Francis Drake. Other exhibits include a four-poster bed with a solid wooden top, and a set of bells once worn by the castle's dray horses and now hanging in the dairy. The castle is surrounded by sweeping lawns and Elizabethan terraced gardens. Special features include a deer park, Queen Elizabeth I's bowling green, a beautiful lily pond and the **Butterfly House & Plant Centre**. Denizens of the Butterfly House include the Atlas moth, the world's largest moth, and the Plant Centre is stocked with unusual varieties from the Castle grounds. The 6500-acre Berkeley Estate incorporates farms, the WWT Slimbridge Wetlands Centre and part of the River Severn itself.

The parish church of St Mary, which contains several memorials to the Berkeley family, has a fine Norman doorway, a detached tower and a striking east window depicting Christ healing the sick. A curious piece of carving in the nave shows two old gossips with a giant toad sitting on their heads.

Next to the castle and church is the **Jenner**

Museum (see panel below), once the home of Edward Jenner, the doctor and immunologist who is best known as the man who discovered a vaccine for smallpox. The son of a local parson, Jenner was apprenticed to a surgeon in Chipping Sodbury at the tender age of 14. His work over several decades led to the first vaccination against smallpox, a disease that had killed or disfigured many thousands every year. His beautiful Georgian house in Church Lane has a state-of-the-art display showing the importance of the science of immunology. In the grounds of the house is a rustic thatched hut where Jenner used to vaccinate the poor free of charge and which he called

the Temple of Vaccinia. The east window of the church is a memorial to Jenner, who is buried in the churchyard.

At Sharpness, a mile or so west of Berkeley, the world's first nuclear power station operated between 1962 and 1989. It marks the entrance to the **Gloucester & Sharpness Canal**, opened in 1827 to bypass the tricky waters of the lower Severn. Sixteen miles in length, it has a lock from the tidal River Severn at Sharpness and a lock back into the River Severn at the head of Gloucester Docks, from which the River Severn Navigation runs 43 miles north to Stourport. There are several interesting villages in the vicinity, including Breadstone, which has a church built entirely of tin.

The Jenner Museum

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website: www.jennermuseum.com*

Born in Berkeley in 1749, Edward Jenner returned here after completing his medical training and his house, The Chantry, is now home the **Jenner Museum** where this pioneering doctor and immunologist's life and work is explored. Intrigued by the country lore that said that milkmaids who caught the mild cowpox could not catch smallpox, one of the most feared diseases of all time, Jenner set about developing a means of vaccinating against smallpox, which he successful did in 1798. In 1967, the World Health Organisation masterminded a final global plant to eradicate the disease and, in 1980, smallpox was declared dead.

Not only did Jenner develop the first vaccination but his discovery has now been developed into one of the most important parts of modern medicine – immunology. Along with his work on smallpox, Jenner also made several other important contributions to medicine: he was probably the first to link angina with hardening of the arteries, he described rheumatic heart disease and he purified important medicines. Both Jenner's medical work and also his work as a naturalist and geologist are described here through numerous displays and exhibits.



Thornbury

Castle

The woollen industry was important here in late medieval times, and the church, set away from the centre near the site of the old manor house, reflects the prosperity of those days. The side chapel is dedicated to the Stafford family, the local lords of the manor, whose emblem, the Staffordshire knot, is much in evidence. Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham, was responsible for starting work on **Thornbury Castle** in 1511 but did not live to see its completion. Charged with high treason by Henry VIII, he was beheaded on Tower Hill in London in 1522. The building was restored by Anthony Salvin in the 1850s and is now a luxury hotel.

Around Thornbury

TORTWORTH

4 miles NE of Thornbury off the B4509

Tortworth Chestnut

Overlooking the village green stands the Church of St Leonard, which contains some fine 15th-century stained glass and a pair of canopied tombs of the Throckmorton family,



Thornbury Castle

former owners of the Tortworth Park estate. In a field over the church wall are several interesting trees, including an American hickory, a huge silver-leaved linden and two Locust trees. Nearby, and the most famous of all, is the famous **Tortworth Chestnut**, a massive Spanish chestnut that the diarist John Evelyn called “the great chestnut of King Stephen’s time”. Certainly it was well established by Stephen’s time (the 1130s), and a fence was put up to protect it in 1800. At that time a brass plaque was erected with this inscription:

*May man still guard
thy venerable form
From the rude blasts and
tempestuous storm.
Still mayest thou flourish
through succeeding time
And last, long last,
the wonder of the clime.*

And last it has; its lower branches have bent to the ground and rooted in the soil, giving the impression of a small copse rather than a single tree.

ALMONDSBURY

6 miles S of Thornbury on the A38

The Church of St Mary has some fine windows, including a memorial to Charles Richardson, the 19th-century engineer who designed the original Severn Tunnel. A curious event took place in 1817 at nearby Knole Park when a personable young woman arrived at the door of the local squire saying that she was an Oriental princess who had been kidnapped and taken on board a ship, from which she had escaped by jumping overboard. The squire believed the story and ‘adopted’ Princess Caraboo, who soon became the toast of Bath. Her fame spread far enough to come to the attention of her former Bristol landlady,

who identified the fake princess as a certain Mary Baker, a penniless woman from Devon. The embarrassed squire raised the money to send the impostor to Philadelphia. She returned some years later to Bristol, where she died in 1865.

Chipping Sodbury

Dodington House

This pleasant market town was one of the earliest examples of post-Roman town planning, its settlement being arranged in strips on either side of the main street in the 12th century. The town once enjoyed prosperity as a market and weaving centre, and it was during that period that the large parish church was built.

A mile or so to the east, on a loop off the A432, is **Old Sodbury**, whose part-Norman church contains some exceptional tombs and monuments. One of these is a carved stone effigy of a 13th-century knight whose shield is a very rare wooden carving of a knight. Also in the church is the tomb of David Harley, the Georgian diplomat who negotiated the treaty that ended the American War of Independence. A tower just to the east of the church marks a vertical shaft, one of a series sunk to ventilate the long tunnel that carried the London-South Wales railway through the Cotswold escarpment. Opened in 1903, the 2½ mile tunnel required its own brickworks and took five years to complete.

A lane leads south from Old Sodbury to **Dodington House**, built between 1796 and 1816 where previously an Elizabethan house stood. It was designed in lavish neo-Roman style by the classical architect James Wyatt who was killed in a carriage accident before seeing his work completed. The house, whose

interior is even more ornate than the facade, is open daily in the summer. Connected to the house by an elegant conservatory is the private Church of St Mary, also designed by Wyatt, in the shape of a Greek cross.

Around Chipping Sodbury

DYRHAM

4 miles S of Chipping Sodbury on the A46

Dyrham Park

The National Trust-owned **Dyrham Park** stands on the slope of the Cotswold ridge, a little way south of the site of a famous 6th-century battle between Britons and Saxons. This striking baroque mansion, used as a location for the filming of *Remains of the Day*, houses a wonderful collection of artefacts accumulated by the original owner, William Blathwayt, during diplomatic tours of duty in Holland and North America (later he became Secretary of State to William III). Among the most notable are several Dutch paintings and some magnificent Delft porcelain. The west front of the house looks out across a terrace to lawns laid out in formal Dutch style. Much of the estate is a deer park, which perhaps it was



Dyrham Park

originally, as the word Dyrham means deer enclosure in Saxon. A charming little church in the grounds has a Norman font, a fine 15th-century memorial brass and several memorials to the Winter and Blathwayt families.

MARSHFIELD

8 miles SE of Chipping Sodbury on the A420


This old market town was once the fourth wealthiest town in Gloucestershire, after Bristol, Gloucester and Cirencester, its prosperity based on the malt and wool industries. Its long main street has many handsome buildings dating from the good old days of the 17th and 18th centuries, but not many of the coaching inns remain that were here in abundance when the town was an important stop on the London-Bristol run.

Among the many notable buildings are the Tolzey Market Hall and the imposing Church of St Mary, which boasts a fine Jacobean pulpit and several impressive monuments from the 17th and 18th centuries. Each Boxing Day brings out the Marshfield Mummers, who take to the streets to perform a number of time-honoured set pieces wearing costumes made from newspapers and accompanied by a town crier. On the northern edge of town is a folk museum at Castle Farm.

A lane leads south through a pretty valley to the delightful hamlet of **St Catherine's**, whose church contains a splendid 15th-century stained-glass window with four lights depicting the Virgin Mary, the Crucifixion, St John and St Peter.

BADMINTON

4 miles E of Chipping Sodbury off the B4040

 Badminton Park

The **Badminton Park** estate was founded by Edward Somerset, the son of the Marquis of



Badminton Park

Worcester, whose 25-foot-high monument stands in the little church next to the main house. The central section of the house dates from the 1680s and contains some marvellous carvings in lime wood by Grinling Gibbons. The rest of the house, along with the grounds and the many follies and gateways, is the work of the mid 18th-century architect William Kent. The house contains an important collection of Italian, English and Dutch paintings.

The game of badminton is said to have started here during a weekend party in the 1860s. The Duke of Beaufort and his guests wanted to play tennis in the entrance hall but were worried about damaging the paintings. Someone came up with the bright idea of using a cork studded with feathers instead of a ball. In such a moment of inspiration was the game born, and it was one of the guests at that weekend bash who later took the game to Pakistan, where the first rules were formalised.

Many of the buildings on the estate, including the parish church and the estate villages of Great and Little Badminton, were designed in an ornate castellated style by Thomas Wright. The park is perhaps most well known as the venue for the Badminton Horse Trials, which annually attract the best

of the international riders, and spectators in their thousands.

HORTON

3 miles N of Chipping Sodbury off the A46

Horton Court

On high ground northeast of the long, narrow village stands the National Trust's **Horton Court**, a part-Norman manor house rebuilt for William Knight, the man given the task of presenting Henry VIII's case to the Pope when the king was trying to divorce Katherine of Aragon. Among the many interesting features is a covered walkway resembling a Roman cloister. The 12th-century Great Hall survives from the earlier building.

WICKWAR

5 miles N of Chipping Sodbury on the B4060

Hawkesbury Monument

A market town of some importance in days gone by, Wickwar had its own mayor and corporation and two breweries; in the 1890s it became the first town in the west to install electric street lighting. Wickwar boasts a number of handsome Georgian buildings, notably the town hall with its distinctive bell tower and arches. A round tower close to the church marks a vertical shaft sunk in 1841 to ventilate the railway tunnel that runs below. To the east, across South Moon Ridings and up on to the ridge, stands the **Hawkesbury Monument**, designed in Chinese style and erected in 1846 as a memorial to Lord Robert Somerset of Badminton, a general at the Battle of Waterloo. It has 145 steps, and the reward for climbing to the top is a spectacular view along the Cotswold escarpment and across the Severn to the Welsh mountains.

DIDMARTON

8 miles NE of Chipping Sodbury on the A433

St Lawrence's Well

Plenty of interest here, notably the medieval Church of St Lawrence, left alone by the serial remodelers of Victorian times and retaining its original three-storey pulpit and antique box pews. Across the road, a semicircle of stones marks the site of **St Lawrence's Well**, which the saint himself, after a personal visit, promised would never run dry. In the centre of the village, Kingsmead House has two oddities in its garden: an octagonal gazebo from which the owner could get the first view of the stagecoaches arriving from Bath, and a Gothic hermit's house made of yew.

WESTONBIRT

9 miles NE of Chipping Sodbury on the A433

National Arboretum

Westonbirt - The National Arboretum, three miles south of Tetbury, contains one of the finest and most spectacular collections of trees and shrubs in the world – 18,000 of them spread over 600 acres of glorious Cotswold countryside. Wealthy landowner Robert Stayner Holford founded this tree wonderland by planting trees for his own interest and pleasure. His son, Sir George Holford, was equally enthusiastic about trees and continued his father's work until his death in 1926, when he was succeeded by his nephew, the 4th Earl of Morley. Opened to the public in 1956, and now managed by the Forestry Commission, the arboretum has something to offer all year round: a crisp white wonderland after winter snows, flowering shrubs and rhododendrons in spring, tranquil glades in summer, glorious reds, oranges and golds in the autumn. The grounds provide endless delightful walks,

including 17 miles of footpaths, and there's a visitor centre, plant centre, café and picnic areas.

Gloucester

 Cathedral	 Llanthony Priory
 Museum & Art Gallery	 Docks
 Waterways Museum	 Folk Museum
 House of the Tailor of Gloucester	
 Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum	
 Parliament Rooms	

The capital city of Gloucestershire first gained prominence under the Romans who, in the 1st century AD, established a fort to guard what was then the lowest crossing point on the Severn. A much larger fortress soon followed, and the settlement of Colonia Glevum became one of the most important military bases, crucial in confining the rowdy Celts to Wales. William the Conqueror held a Christmas parliament and commissioned the Domesday Book in Gloucester, and also ordered the rebuilding of the abbey, an undertaking that included the building of a magnificent church that was the forerunner of the superb Norman Cathedral. The elaborate carved tomb of Edward II, murdered at Berkeley Castle, is just one of many historic monuments in **Gloucester Cathedral**;



Gloucester Cathedral

another, the work of the Wedgwood designer John Flaxman, remembers one Sarah Morley, who died at sea in 1784. She is shown being delivered from the waves by angels. The ashes of the educationalist Dorothea Beale, who founded St Hilda's College, Oxford, are buried in a vault in the Lady Chapel. Also buried here are Robert of Normandy, son of Edward the Conqueror, and John Stafford-Smith, who composed the tune for *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

The exquisite fan tracery in the cloisters is the earliest and among the finest in existence, and Crécy Window, 72ft by 38ft, is the largest surviving stained-glass window in the country. It was built to celebrate the English victory at the Battle of Crécy in 1346 and depicts the coronation of the Virgin surrounded by assorted kings, popes and saints. The young King Henry III was crowned here, with a bracelet on his little head rather than a crown. The cloisters at the Cathedral were used for schoolrooms at Hogwart's School in two Harry Potter films, and the scene with the troll in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was shot in the monks' washing room, or *lavatorium*.

The old area of the city around Gloucester Cross boasts some very fine early buildings, including St John's Church and the Church of St Mary de Crypt. Just behind the latter, near the house where Robert Raikes of Sunday School fame lived, stands an odd-looking tower built in the 1860s to honour Hannah, the wife of Thomas Fenn Addison, a successful solicitor. The tower was also a memorial to Raikes.

Three great inns were built in the 14th and 15th centuries to accommodate the scores of pilgrims who came to visit Edward II's tomb. Two of them survive. The galleried New Inn, founded by a

monk around 1450, doubled as a theatre and still retains the cobbled courtyard. It was from this inn that Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed Queen. Equally old is the Fleece Hotel in Westgate Street, which has a 12th-century stone-vaulted undercroft. In the same street is Maverdine House, a four-storey mansion reached by a very narrow passage. Described as the finest and largest urban timber-framed building in Britain, this was the residence and headquarters of Colonel Massey, Cromwell's commander, during the Civil War siege of 1643. Most of the region was in Royalist hands, but Massey survived a month-long assault by a force led by the king himself and thus turned the tide of war.

Gloucester Docks were once the gateway for waterborne traffic heading into the Midlands, and the handsome Victorian warehouses are always in demand as location

sites for period films. Restaurants, bars, cafés and shops have sprung up, and various river cruises are available from the Llanthony Warehouse quay. The docks are also home to several award-winning museums. The **Waterways Museum** occupies three floors of a splendid Victorian warehouse and is entered by a lock chamber with running water. The museum tells the fascinating 300-year-old story of Britain's canals and inland waterways with films, hands-on displays, floating historic boats and boat trips.

Nearby, the **Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum** uses archive film, photographs and life-size reconstructions to tell the history of the county's regiments. Perhaps their most glorious moment came during the Korean War when the regiment held their position behind the Imjin River despite being completely surrounded for three days.

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

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The team of volunteers and staff take care of more than 70 nature reserves across Gloucestershire, each one a special place for wildlife. Staff and volunteers work all year round to maintain and enhance these important sites for wildlife. The reserves are home to some of the rarest wildlife in the county and are visited and enjoyed by thousands of people every year.

The conservation team protects the threatened wildlife in Gloucestershire by working with landowners, national organisations and local authorities. They work to ensure the future of threatened species such as the water vole, skylark and stag beetle and their habitats. The wild ranging events programme promotes understanding and enjoyment of wildlife and the environment.

They work to organise informative activity days, talks and guided walks for people of all ages and abilities. Children have fun and gain curriculum knowledge through exciting activities in schools, at the Conservation Centre on Robinswood Hill, and through Wildlife Watch club activities.



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Thereafter they were named the Glorious Glosters. Also in the Docks area is the Gloucester Antiques Centre where more than 140 dealers buy and sell a wide variety of antiques, collectables and curios.

Elsewhere in the city **Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery** (free) houses treasures from all over the county to reveal its history, from dinosaur bones and Roman remains to antique furniture and the decorative arts. Among the highlights are the amazing Birdlip Mirror, made in bronze for a Celtic chief just before the Roman conquest, two Roman tombstones and a section of the Roman city wall revealed under the cut-away gallery floor. The extensive art collection includes work by Jan Brueghel, Willem van der Velde, Gainsborough, Turner and Atkinson-Grimshaw.

Timber-framed Tudor buildings house **Gloucester Folk Museum**, where the exhibits include farming, fishing on the Severn, the port of Gloucester, the Civil War, a Victorian schoolroom, a dairy, an ironmongery, transport and a wheelwright's workshop.

The **House of the Tailor of Gloucester**, in College Court, is the house sketched by Beatrix Potter in 1897 and used in her tale *The Tailor of Gloucester*. It now brings that story to life, complete with Simpkin the Cat and an army of helpful mice. Apparently, the story is based on a true incident. After a Saturday night drinking spree, a Gloucester tailor's assistants returned to the shop to sleep off their over-indulgence. But they slept right through to Sunday morning and were then afraid of appearing unshaven and tousled on the street amongst the church-goers. Waiting for nightfall, they occupied themselves with finishing a waistcoat their employer had started making for the mayor but hadn't finished because he, the tailor, fell ill. They

finished the waistcoat apart from one buttonhole. As in Beatrix Potter's story, they left an explanatory note saying "No more twist".


Another building of interest is the half-timbered **Parliament Rooms**. King Richard II held parliament in the older part of the building in 1378 and, at Easter, Whitsun and Christmas, the king would 'wear the crown' in Gloucester.

In the southwestern suburbs of Gloucester are the ruins of **Llanthony Priory**. The explanation of its Welsh name is an interesting one. The priory of Llanthony was originally founded in the Black Mountains of Wales at the beginning of the 12th century, but the inmates were so frightened of the local Welsh that they begged the Bishop of Hereford to find them a safer place. The Bishop passed their plea to Milo, Earl of Hereford, who granted this plot of land for a second priory bearing the same name as the first. Llanthony Secunda was consecrated in 1136. On a nearby hill the monks built St Ann's Well, whose water is believed to cure eye problems.

Around Gloucester

TWIGWORTH

2 miles N of Gloucester off the A38

 Nature in Art

Twigworth is the home of **Nature in Art**, which occupies stately 18th-century Wallsworth Hall. This is the world's first museum dedicated solely to fine, decorative and applied art inspired by nature. It contains both two and three-dimensional work in all styles and media from around the world, and spans some 1500 years. Work by 600 artists from more than 50 countries is on display. Open Tuesday to Sunday.

PAUNTLEY

8 miles N of Gloucester on the A417

Pauntley Court

The penniless orphan boy, who in the pantomime fable was attracted by the gold-paved streets of London and became its Lord Mayor, was born at **Pauntley Court**. Richard Whittington, neither penniless nor an orphan, was born here about 1350, one of three sons of landowner Sir William de Whittington and Dame Joan. He became a mercer in London, then an important financier and was three times Mayor (not Lord Mayor – that title had not been invented). He married Alice Fitzwarren, the daughter of a wealthy landowner from Dorset. The origin of the cat connection is unclear, but an event that could have contributed to the myth was the discovery in 1862 of the carved figure of a boy holding a cat in the foundations of a house in Gloucester. The carving can be seen in Gloucester Museum.

HARTPURY

5 miles NW of Gloucester on the A417

Tithe Barn

There are two very interesting listed buildings here: a rare medieval set of bee hives in a building known as a bee bole and, in the churchyard, a Soper stone tomb with a shrouded body on top. At nearby Ashleworth is a magnificent 14th-century **Tithe Barn** with a stone-tiled roof, projecting porches and elaborate interlocking roof timbers.



REDMARLEY D'ABITOT


9 miles NW of Gloucester on the A417

This hilltop village, built on the red marle (clay) from which it takes its name, and once the property of the French d'Abitot family, was for a time the home of the actress Lily

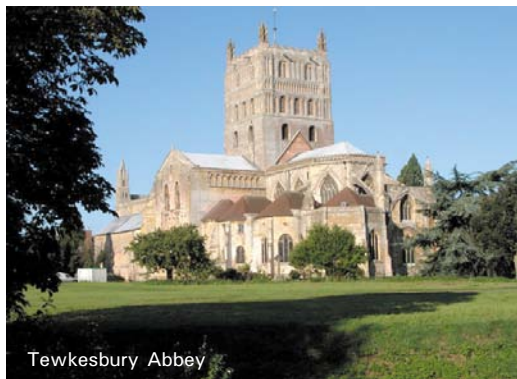
Langtry, mistress of the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. The link with the actress is remembered in two streets in the village – Drury Lane and Hyde Park Corner.

Tewkesbury

 Abbey  John Moore Countryside Museum

 Battle of Tewkesbury

A town of historic and strategic importance close to the confluence of the Severn and Avon rivers. Those rivers also served to restrict the lateral expansion of the town, which accounts for the unusual number of tall buildings. (They also contributed to the disastrous floods of summer 2007.) Tewkesbury's early prosperity was based on the wool and mustard trades, and the movement of corn by river also contributed to its wealth. Tewkesbury's main thoroughfares, High Street, Church Street and Barton Street, form a Y shape, and the area between is a marvellous maze of narrow alleyways and small courtyards hiding many grand old pubs and medieval cottages. At the centre of it all is **Tewkesbury Abbey**, the cathedral-sized parish church of St Mary. One of the largest and grandest parish churches in the country, it was founded in the 8th century and completely rebuilt in the 11th. It was once the church of the Benedictine Abbey and was among the last to be dissolved by Henry VIII. In 1540, it was saved from destruction by the townspeople who raised £453 to buy it from the Crown. Many of its features are on a grand scale – the colossal double row of Norman pillars; the six-fold arch in the west front; and the vast main tower, 132ft in height and 46ft square, the tallest surviving Norman main tower in the world. The choir windows have



Tewkesbury Abbey

stained glass dating from the 1300s, and the abbey has more medieval monuments than any besides Westminster. A chantry chapel was endowed by the Beauchamps, an influential family that married into another, that of Richard Neville, Warwick the Kingmaker. Other treasures include the 17th-century Milton Organ that is still in daily use. There's a cathedral shop, and the refectory has been restored to its original function as an eating place, although it is now licensed.

American visitors to the abbey may be interested in a memorial plaque to Victoria Woodhull Martin, a native of Ohio for which she served as Congresswoman and then, in 1872, became the first woman to run for President. When she failed to get elected and her second husband having died, she quit American politics and settled in Tewkesbury where, says her epitaph, "she devoted herself unsparingly to all that could promote the great cause of Anglo-American friendship". She died in 1927.

An excellent introduction to Tewkesbury and its history is provided at Out of the Hat, a recently opened heritage and visitor centre that occupies a former hat shop. The 17th-century building has been lovingly restored,

renovated and enhanced. The Tourist Information Centre is on the ground floor, the two upper storeys incorporate interactive displays, games, information panels and much more.

Three museums tell the story of the town and its environs: the Little Museum, laid out like a typical old merchant's house; Tewkesbury Museum, with displays on the social history and archaeology of the area; and the **John Moore Countryside Museum**, a natural history collection

displayed in a 15th-century timber-framed house. The museum commemorates the work of John Moore, a well-known writer, broadcaster and naturalist, who was born in Tewkesbury in 1907.

The **Battle of Tewkesbury** was one of the fiercest in the Wars of the Roses. It took place in 1471 in a field south of the town, which has ever since been known as Bloody Meadow. Following the Lancastrian defeat, those who had not been slaughtered in the battle fled to the abbey, where the killing began again. Abbot Strensham intervened to stop the massacre, but the survivors, who included the Duke of Somerset, were handed over to King Edward IV and executed at Market Cross. The 17-year-old son of Henry VI, Edward Prince of Wales, was killed in the conflict and a plaque marking his final resting place can be seen in the abbey. One of the victors of the battle was the Duke of Gloucester, later Richard III. Tewkesbury was again the scene of military action almost two centuries later during the Civil War. The town changed hands several times during this period and on one occasion Charles I began his siege of Gloucester by requisitioning every pick, mattock, spade and shovel in Tewkesbury.

Around Tewkesbury

BREDON

4 miles NE of Tewkesbury on the B4080

Breton Barn

Bredon Barn (National Trust) is a 14th-century structure built of Cotswold stone, with a splendid aisled interior that gives it the atmosphere of a church. Unusually, it has five porches, one of which has a rare stone chimney cowling. Call 01451 844257.

DEERHURST

3 miles S of Tewkesbury off the A38

Odda's Chapel

Set on the eastern bank of the Severn, Deerhurst is a village whose current size and status belies a distinguished past. The church, with a distinct Celtic feel, is one of the oldest in England, with parts dating back to the 7th century, and its treasures include a unique double east window, a 9th-century carved font, a Saxon carving of the Virgin and Child and some fine brasses dating from the 14th and 15th centuries. One depicts the Cassey family, local landowners, and their dog, Terri.

Another Saxon treasure, 200 yards from the church, is **Odda's Chapel**, dedicated in 1056 and lost for many centuries before being gradually rediscovered after 1885 under a half-timbered house. The connection was then made with a stone inscribed with the date of consecration discovered in 1675 and now on view in the Ashmolean in Oxford.

FORTHAMPTON

3 miles W of Tewkesbury off the A438

Forthampton Court

This unspoilt Severn Vale village is dominated by the ancient Church of St Mary

and by **Forthampton Court**, sometime home to the abbots of Tewkesbury and still retaining its fine 14th-century banqueting hall, chapel and a medieval wood-based picture of Edward the Confessor. Near the churchyard can be seen relics of harsher times – a set of stocks and a whipping post complete with manacles.

Tetbury

Chavenage House Police Museum

A really charming Elizabethan market town, another to have prospered from the wool trade. Its most famous building is the stone-pillared 17th-century Market House in the heart of town, but a visit should also take in the ancient Chipping Steps connecting the market house to the old trading centre, and the Church of St Mary, an 18th-century period piece with high-backed pews, huge windows made from recovered medieval glass, and slender timber columns hiding sturdy iron uprights.

Tetbury Police Museum (free), housed in the original cells of the 1884 police station, has a fascinating collection of artefacts, memorabilia and uniforms from the Gloucestershire Constabulary. The original courtroom has been restored and a realistic model display shows a court scene with magistrates and the accused in the dock.

Two miles northwest of Tetbury, west of the B4014, stands **Chavenage House** (see panel opposite), a beautiful Elizabethan mansion built of grey Cotswold stone on earlier monastic foundations in the characteristic E shape of the period. The elegant front aspect has remained virtually unchanged down the years, and the present owners, the Lowsley-Williams family, can trace their lineage back to the original owners. Two rooms are covered with rare 17th-

Chavenage House

Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8XP
Tel: 01666 502329 Fax: 01453 836778
e-mail info@chavenage.com
website: www.chavenage.com

Chavenage, is a wonderful family owned Elizabethan Manor House, hidden away in the magnificent South Cotswolds. Originally monastic, only two families have occupied the house since the reign of Elizabeth I. The house and its interior have changed little since it was reconstructed in 1576. The main historical interest is centred upon the English Civil War, at which time the house was owned by Col. Nathaniel Stephens M.P. One of the feature rooms is the completely tapestried Oliver Cromwell Room. From this period the 'Legend of Chavenage' has arisen with the headless ghost of Charles I, coming to the house to collect the soul of Col. Stephens with a coach and four, which subsequently disappears into a fireball at the gates of the Manor House.

Tours are lead by a member of the family, with the majority of the tour on the ground floor. The house is open to the general public from May to September on Thursday and Sunday afternoons, 2 pm to 5pm as well as Easter Sunday and Monday and Bank Holiday Mondays. The Lowsley-Williams are also happy to open the House, on any day of the week, at any time throughout the year to groups numbering between 15 and 100. Joanna Gouriet, the Prue Leith trained daughter of David Lowsley-Williams, runs the in-house catering and can produce any meal to suit pre-arranged groups.



century tapestries, and the house contains many relics from the Cromwellian period. Cromwell is known to have stayed at the house and, during the Civil War he persuaded the owner, Colonel Nathaniel Stephens, a relative by marriage, to vote for the King's impeachment. According to the Legend of Chavenage, Stephens died after being cursed by his

daughter and was taken away in a black coach driven by a headless horseman. The present owner, who conducts tours round the property, welcomes visitors to 'Gloucestershire's second most haunted house' (Berkeley Castle is the most haunted!). In 1970, an astonishing find was made in the attic – a portfolio of watercolours by George IV of plans for the restoration of Windsor Castle. Call 01666 502329 for visiting times.



Chavenage House, Tetbury

Around Tetbury

BEVERSTON

2 miles W of Tetbury on the A4135

The same Robert Stayner Holford who started the Westonbirt Arboretum built the model village of Beverston in conjunction

with the architect Lewis Vulliamy. Their aim was to combine rural practicality with improved standards of accommodation, and the limestone terraces and model farms can be seen from the main road. The village also had a castle, once occupied by Earl Godwin, father of King Harold; the earthworks are still visible.

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE

10 miles W of Tetbury on the B4508

Heritage Centre

A hillside former wool town with a number of interesting buildings: Berkeley House with its stone Jacobean front; the terraced house that was the family home of Isaac Pitman and where he devised his renowned method of shorthand; the Perry and Dawes almshouses; and the Church of St Mary with memorials to Lord Berkeley and his wife Margaret. The **Wotton-under-Edge Heritage Centre**, housed in a former fire station, provides an excellent introduction to the town and the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

OZLEWORTH

11 miles W of Tetbury on minor roads

Newark Park Nan Tow's Tump

Midgeer Wood Nature Reserve

A secluded hamlet with a very unusual circular churchyard, one of only two in England. The church itself has a rare feature in a six-sided Norman tower. Also at Ozleworth is the National Trust's **Newark Park**, built as a hunting lodge by the Poyntz family in Elizabethan times. James Wyatt later converted it into a castellated country house. It stands on the edge of a 40ft cliff with superb views across to the Mendips. Attractions include a 14-acre woodland

garden, countryside walks across the estate and two new waymarked woodland walks connected to the Cotswold Way.

This is great walking country, and one of the finest walks takes in the **Midgeer Wood Nature Reserve** on its way up to **Nan Tow's Tump**, a huge round barrow whose tomb is said to contain the remains of Nan Tow, a local witch.

Dursley

Cam Long Down

One of the most notable buildings in this former centre of the cloth-making trade is the 18th-century market hall standing on 12 pillars at a busy town-centre junction. It has a bell turret on its roof and a statue of Queen Anne facing the fine parish church. William Shakespeare reputedly spent some time in Dursley after being spotted poaching, and there is a reference to a bailiff from the town in *Henry IV*. Cloth is still produced in the mill at Cam on the northern edge of the town, continuing a tradition started in the 16th century.

Local legend is rich in stories about **Cam Long Down**, a small, isolated peak that is sometimes claimed to be the scene of King Arthur's last battle. One story concerns the



Cam Long Down, Dursley

FOX AND HOUNDS

The Street, Coaley, nr Dursley, Gloucestershire GL11 5EG

Tel: 01453 890366

e-mail: foxandhounds2010@gmail.com

Fox and Hounds is a fantastic country pub serving the very best in traditional English pub grub. A lot of the produce used here is sourced locally and the local sausages, gammon and steaks are delicious.

There are three real ales on sale at Fox and Hounds as well as a range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits. This popular pub has plenty of parking outside and boasts a skittle alley and darts as well as live music monthly. Walkers and cyclists often stop here while exploring the Cotswold Way.



Devil, who decided one day to cart away the Cotswolds and dam the Severn. On setting out with his first cartload he met a cobbler and asked him how far it was to the river. The cobbler showed him one of the shoes he was taking home to mend and replied, “Do you see this sole? Well, I’ve worn it out walking from the Severn.” This persuaded the Devil, who was obviously a lazy devil, to abandon his task; he tipped out his load, creating the hill that can be seen today.

Around Dursley


STINCHCOMBE

3 miles W of Dursley off the A4135

Stancombe Park, on the southern edge of Stinchcombe, is a handsome country house built in 1880 on the site of a Roman villa, whose mosaic floor can be seen in Gloucester Museum. The gardens at Stancombe are occasionally open to the public.

NORTH NIBLEY

2 miles SW of Dursley on the B4060




 Tyndale Monument

This village was the birthplace, around 1494, of William Tyndale, the first man to translate and print the Old and New Testaments. He

used the original sources instead of the approved Latin, for which heresy he was burnt at the stake in Belgium in 1536. Three-and-a-half centuries later, the imposing **Tyndale Monument**, paid for by public subscription, was erected on the ridge above the village to commemorate his life and work. Standing 111 feet high on the escarpment, it is one of the most prominent landmarks on the Cotswold Way and offers superb views. North Nibley is also the site of the last ‘private’ battle in England, which took place in 1471 between rival barons William Lord Berkeley and Viscount de Lisle.

ULEY

11 miles NE of Chipping Sodbury on the B4066

 Owlpen Manor  Uley Bury  Coaley Peak

 Hetty Pegler’s Tump  Nympsfield Long Barrow

Even in this part of the Cotswolds where almost every prospect pleases, Owlpen is uniquely lovely – “a breathtaking ensemble of truly English beauty” enthused one visitor; Prince Charles called it “the epitome of the English village”. Manor house, church, mill and cottages of pearl-grey stone are framed by a natural amphitheatre of steep, wooded hills, a timeless setting for this beautiful village.

The jewel in the crown of this enchanting village is **Owlpen Manor**, a romantic Tudor

building built between 1450 and 1616 and set in formal Queen Anne terraced yew gardens. Inside, contrasting with the ancient polished flagstones and the putty-coloured plaster, are fine pieces of William Morris-inspired Arts and Crafts furniture; there's also a rare beadwork collection and some unique 17th-century painted cloth wall hangings. Within the grounds are a Courthouse dated 1620, an 18th-century Mill and a licensed restaurant in a medieval Cyder House, complete with a massive cider press.

The village lies in the shadow of **Uley Bury**, a massive Iron Age hill fort that has thrown up evidence of habitation by a prosperous community of warrior farmers during the 1st century BC. Another prehistoric site, a mile along the ridge, is Uley Long Barrow, known locally as **Hetty Pegler's Tump**. This chambered long barrow, 180 feet in length, takes its name from Hester Pegler, who came from a family of local landowners. Adventurous spirits can crawl into this Neolithic tomb on all fours, braving the dark and the dank smell to reach the burial chambers, where they will no longer be scared by the skeletons that terrified earlier visitors. The walls and ceilings of the chamber are made of huge stone slabs infilled with drystone material.

A little further north, at the popular picnic site of **Coaley Peak** with its adjoining National Trust nature reserve, is another spectacular chambered tomb, **Nymphsfield Long Barrow**.

Stroud

 Museum in the Park  Stratford Park

The capital of the Cotswold woollen industry, Stroud stands on the River Frome at


a point where five valleys converge. The surrounding hill farms provided a constant supply of wool, and the Cotswold streams supplied the water-power. By the 1820s there were more than 150 textile mills in the vicinity. Six survive, one of them specialising in green baize for snooker tables; another, Snow Mill, has cornered a niche market producing more than 160 types of snowflake for films and other entertainments. A stroll round the centre of town reveals some interesting buildings, notably the Old Town Hall dating from 1594 and the Subscription Rooms in neo-classical style.

An easy walk from the centre is **Stratford Park**, a large park containing dozens of trees both ordinary and exotic, and a lake with ducks. The **Museum in the Park** is a family-friendly place in a 17th-century wool merchant's mansion with innovative and colourful displays that include dinosaur remains, a Roman temple – and the world's first lawnmower, invented in 1830 by local entrepreneur Edwin Buddings. It required two operators, one pulling and one pushing.

Around Stroud

MINCHINHAMPTON

4 miles SE of Stroud off the A419

 Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons

A scattered community on a ridge between two picturesque valleys, Minchinhampton acquired its market charter as far back as 1213. The area is good for walking and exploring, with the old stone quarries at Ball's Green and the National Trust woodland and grassland at

Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons. The majority of the commons are open to walkers and riders, and nature lovers

BLACK HORSE

Littleworth, Amberley, nr Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 5AL

Tel: 01453 872556

e-mail: enquiries@blackhorseamberley.co.uk

website: www.blackhorseamberley.co.uk

The Black Horse is a real hidden gem of a pub perched on the edge of Minchinhampton Common above Stroud Valley.

Dating back 400 years this traditional country pub in The Cotswolds, owned by Sharyn O'Flynn, offers a relaxed environment and the very best in professional service.

It offers award winning real ales, excellent wines and home cooked, hearty pub food. Homemade soup of the day with warm rustic bread and pan fried fillet of red mullet with red onion and sweet corn salsa are among the starters on the menu. Main courses include pan seared fillet of sea bass, new potatoes, sugar snap peas and white wine, and butternut squash & blue cheese risotto with rocket and parmesan salad. There is also a wide range of pub classics and salads to choose from.


The Black Horse is very popular with locals and visitors. Keen walkers often stop off here during, or following, their exploration of The Cotswolds and there are always plenty of stories to be shared. On warm summer evenings customers can enjoy the beautiful gardens and breathtaking views across The Cotswolds and in the winter cosy log fires provide a relaxing and homely environment. The Black Horse is an ideal venue for weddings and private parties.



might spot rare butterflies such as the Chalkhill Blue, the tiny Green Hairstreak and the Duke of Burgundy Fritillary. The Commons are also famous for their grassland species, including the lovely Pasque flower, whose resurgence has been assisted by the introduction of a small herd of Belted Galloways to help manage the rich grassland areas of the lower slopes.

WOODCHESTER

2 miles S of Stroud off the A46

 Woodchester Park Mansion

Woodchester Park Mansion is one of Britain's most intriguing Victorian country houses. Building started in 1854 and was halted abruptly in 1868, three-quarters finished, with the scaffolding in place and the workmen's tools abandoned. What stands now, as in 1868, is a vast shell with gargoyles and flying buttresses on the Gothic facade, and all

the props and stays and tools inside.

SELSLEY



2 miles S of Stroud off the A46

 All Saints Church

All Saints Church, built in the 1860s by wealthy mill-owner Sir Samuel Marling, is notable chiefly for its exceptional stained glass. This was commissioned from William Morris and Company and features designs by many of the Morris partnership, including Philip Webb, Burne-Jones, Ford Madox Brown, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Morris himself.

NAILSWORTH

4 miles S of Stroud on the A46

 Stokescroft  Ruskin Mill

This small residential and commercial town was once, like so many of its neighbours, a centre of the wool trade. Several of the old

PAINT-A-POT*5 Cossack Square, Nailsworth, nr Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 0DB**Tel: 01453 835043**e-mail: enquiries@paint-a-pot.co.uk**website: www.paint-a-pot.co.uk*

The name sounds fun and that is just what you can look forward to when you visit **Paint-A-Pot**. Owner Deborah Pearson ensures that there always something for all the family to paint, including kitchen, and tableware, vases and ornaments. Inside the colourful shop there is plenty to do including 'Decopatch', a simple version of decoupage using papier mache shapes which are then covered in a choice of beautiful papers. There are a variety of animal figures, boxes, frames and letters.

Hand and footprint keepsakes are extremely popular and imprints in clay can be done with prior booking. Also hand and foot prints can be made into sterling silver jewellery including pendants, charms and cuff links. The party room is available for larger groups and children's parties, hen parties etc and commissions can be made for special celebrations or gifts.

For those who want something to do on a rainy day there is an option to take away pottery painting or buy a range of Decopatch including all the necessary materials or in ready made kits which also make an ideal gift and are great for party bags. Paint-a-Pot is open Tuesday to Thursday 9.30am - 5pm and Friday & Saturday 10am - 5pm.

**COUNTRY QUALITY MEATS***10 Old Market, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire GL6 0DU**Tel: 01453 835058*

Over a period of 20 years **Country Quality Meats** has established a reputation as one of the best butchers in the Cotswolds for quality, reliability and friendly, personal service.

Paul Dowdeswell and his staff sell only the best, usually locally sourced meat, hung for 28 days to ensure maximum flavour and tenderness in the cuts and joints and chops. They prepare their own bacon, dry-cured or oak-smoked, and make their own sausages with a variety of flavours. The shop sells seasonal game both furred and feathered, along with old favourites like faggots, oxtails and pigs' trotters, and a selection of prepared frozen meats to take home for year-round availability.



mills have been modernised, some playing new roles, others plying their original trades.



Ruskin Mill is a thriving arts and crafts centre; **Stokescroft** an unusual 17th-century building on Cossack Square. During restoration work in 1972, scribblings found on an attic wall suggested that soldiers had been billeted there in 1812 and 1815. Perhaps this is

why it is known locally as the Barracks. It is thought to have housed Russian prisoners during the Crimean War, which accounts for the name of the square.

About half a mile north of the town, the Dunkirk Mill Centre contains a fulling mill, which lays on demonstrations of the finishing of fine woollen cloth.

FROCESTER*4 miles SW of Stroud off the A419* **Tithe Barn**

In the grounds of the chapel at the centre of the village stands the wonderful **Frocester Tithe Barn**, a massive 186 feet in length and looking much as it did when built on the instructions of Abbot John de Gamages between 1284 and 1306.

BISLEY*4 miles E of Stroud on minor roads* **All Saints Church**  **The Bisley Boy**

Country roads lead across from Stroud or up from Oakridge Lynch to the delightful village of Bisley, which stands 780 feet above sea level and is known as Bisley-God-Help-Us because of the winter winds that sweep across

the hillside. Bisley's impressive **All Saints Church** dates from the 13th century and was restored in the early 19th by Thomas Keble, after whose poet and theologian brother John, Keble College in Oxford was named. The font has two carved fish inside the bowl and a shepherd and sheep on the base. In the churchyard is the Poor Souls' Light, a stone wellhead beneath a spire dating from the 13th century. It was used to hold candles lit for souls in purgatory. Below the church are the Seven Wells of Bisley (also restored by Thomas Keble), which are blessed and decorated with flowers each year on Ascension Day. At the top of the village is a double lock-up built in 1824, with two cells beneath an ogee gable.

The village's main claim to fame is the story of the **Bisley Boy**. When Bisley was a rich

WESTLEY FARM HOLIDAY COTTAGES

*Westley Farm, Chalford, nr Cirencester,
Gloucestershire GL6 8HP*

Tel: 01285-760262

e-mail: info@westleyfarm.co.uk

websites: www.westleyfarm.co.uk and www.cotswoldyurts.co.uk

Right in the middle of England's largest designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with views across the Golden Valley, Westley Farm offers award winning holiday accommodation all year round. The five traditional stone-built cottages are scattered over a 75-acre Cotswold hill farm and sustainably managed, earning a silver award under the Green Tourism Business Scheme. In fact, the whole farm is run with the environment in mind with several projects encouraging bio diversity under way. The result is a glorious mosaic of wild flower meadows and ancient woodlands to explore from your doorstep. You are as likely to see deer, buzzards, foxes and bunnies from your windows as well as the cattle and sheep you may expect. With a choice of good pubs within easy walking distance and a log fire to come home to, Westley Farm makes the perfect base for discovering the lesser-known corners of the Cotswolds.

In addition to the cottages, there are also 4 luxury yurts for hire in the summer. This is seriously 'posh camping' with crisp cotton sheets, proper beds and woodburning stoves. One of them even has a roll-top bath with hot & cold running water!



wool town it had a royal manor, Over Court, where the young Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I) often stayed. The story goes that during one of those visits the princess, then aged 10, caught a fever and died. Fearing the wrath of her father Henry VIII, her hosts looked for a substitute and found a local child with red hair and remarkably similar physical characteristics except for the rather important fact that the child was a boy called John Neville. Could this explain the Virgin Queen's reluctance to marry, her problem with hair loss and her "heart that beats like a man's", or was the story made up to fit those facts?

Vale of Gloucester and the Central Cotswolds

SLAD

2 miles N of Stroud on the B4070

Immortalised by Laurie Lee in his autobiographical *Cider With Rosie*, the sprawling village of Slad in the valley of the same name was for centuries a centre for milling and the production of fruit. Cider gave way to champagne on 13 March 2002, after a Polish-bred horse called Galileo, trained by Tom George at Slad, was successful in one of

the big novice hurdles at the Cheltenham Festival. A Roman villa was found in the valley, and the votive tablets discovered at the site are now in Gloucester Museum.

PAINSWICK

4 miles N of Stroud on the A46

 St Mary's Church  Prinknash Abbey Park

 Painswick Rococo Garden

 Gloucestershire Guild of Craftsmen Gallery

This beautiful little town, known as the Queen of the Cotswolds, prospered with the wool trade, which had its peak in the second half of the 18th century. At that time 30 mills provided power within the parish, and the number of fine houses and farms in and around the town are witness to those days. Many of them are built of the pale grey limestone that was quarried at Painswick Hill.

St Mary's Church, which dates from around 1380, was the site of one of many local skirmishes in the Civil War when a party of Parliamentary soldiers came under cannon fire, which did considerable damage to the building. A later fire, a lightning strike, Victorian 'restoration' and more recent modernisation, have left little of note inside the church apart from a fine 18th-century reredos and some 300 modern kneelers depicting biblical scenes, views of the town,

THE ROYAL OAK INN

St Marys Street, Painswick, Gloucestershire GL6 6QG
Tel: 01452 813129 website: www.theroyaloakpainswick.co.uk

Dating back to the 17th Century, **The Royal Oak Inn** is located in the heart of Painswick. This historic public house is highly acclaimed for its superb food, local real ales and West Country ciders. Your hosts, Keith and Claire, are proud to offer menus focused on traditional local dishes. Using quality locally sourced produce the Chefs prepare such dishes as the famous Puppy Dog Pie. Painswick is on the Cotswold Way, a National Trail of more than 100 miles, and so the Inn is a popular destination for visitors, walkers and locals alike.



animals, birds and memorials to local people. The project involved around 60 people and took four years to complete.

But if St Mary's interior is generally disappointing, its churchyard is one of the must-see sights of the county. In the 1790s local people planted 99 yews – it was said that whenever a 100th was planted it would wither away – and these now stand sentinel over the graveyard's other extraordinary feature, the 33 richly carved table tombs all dating from the wool trade's boom years in the 17th and 18th centuries. The craftsman who created these striking rhapsodies in stone, John Bryan, is himself buried here beneath a pyramidal tomb.


Other buildings of interest include Court House, where King Charles I spent a night in 1643 before setting off for the siege of Gloucester, and the Post Office, dating back to the 1400s and the only surviving wooden-framed house in the town. In Bisley Street, the **Gloucestershire Guild of Craftsmen Gallery** provides a showcase for pieces made by members of the guild, which is one of the oldest in the country. This feast of creative design includes jewellery, glass, velvet and silk, turned wood, greeting cards and more.

In the grounds of early 18th century Painswick House, on the B4073 at the northern edge of town, **Painswick Rococo Garden**, hidden away in magnificent Cotswold countryside, is a unique restored 18th-century garden with plants from around the world and a maze planted in 1999 with a path structure in the shape of 250 to commemorate the garden's 250th anniversary. Other attractions are carpets of snowdrops in early spring, a kitchen garden, a children's nature trail, a gift shop and a licensed restaurant.

A little further north, at Cranham, **Prinknash Abbey Park** (pronounce it Prinnage) comprises an active monastery, chapel, replica of a Roman mosaic, gift shop and tearoom. The Benedictine monks of Caldey Island moved here in 1928 when the old house was made over to them by the 20th Earl of Rothes in accordance with the wishes of his grandfather. They no longer occupy the old house, having moved into the impressive new monastery in 1972. The abbey chapel is open daily for solitude and contemplation. Part of the abbey gardens are given over to the Prinknash Bird & Deer Park, where visitors can feed and stroke the fallow deer and see the waterfowl, the peacocks and the African pygmy goats. By the lake is a charming two-storey Wendy House.

EDGE

4 miles N of Stroud on the A473

 Scottsquarr Common

Straddling a hilltop across the Spoonbed Valley, Edge has two delightful village greens and the mid 19th-century Church of St John the Baptist with an ornate spire. To the west of the village lies **Scottsquarr Common**, an Area of Special Scientific Interest with an abundance of wild flowers and butterflies and spectacular views.

MISERDEN

5 miles NE of Stroud off the B40470 or A417

 Miserden Park Gardens

Miserden Park Gardens, with views over the lovely Golden Valley, were created in the 17th century and are known for their spectacular spring bulbs, perennial borders, roses, topiary and an avenue of Turkish hazels.

CHELTENHAM ANTIQUES MARKET

54 Suffolk Road, Cheltenham Spa,
Gloucestershire GL50 2AQ
Tel: 01242 529812 website: www.anticuecrystalchandeliers.co.uk

When visiting Cheltenham you simply must visit **Cheltenham Antique Market** if you are looking for lighting or furniture dating back to the 19th or 20th century.

With more than three hundred old chandeliers displayed over three floors there is sure to be something to meet most people's taste and budget in this Aladdin's Cave.

Cheltenham Antiques Market offers one of the largest selections of affordable chandeliers in the country. There is plenty to look at and antique lovers spend hours here, returning time and time again to see what is new on offer.

There are lights in a variety of sizes and ages from Italy, France, Holland, Belgium and England. They are all individually rewired to comply with current EU regulations.

Once you have worn yourself out at Cheltenham Antiques Market why not treat yourself to something to eat at one of the welcoming eateries nearby.



CLEMATIS HOUSE B&B

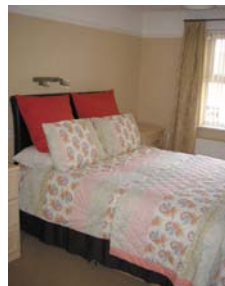
246 Gloucester Road, Cheltenham Spa, Gloucestershire GL51 8NR
Tel: 01242 690246
e-mail: kas-shave@hotmail.com
website: www.bedandbreakfastcheltenham.co.uk

If you are looking for a modern B&B in Gloucestershire with good railway links and beautiful gardens look no further than **Clematis House B&B**.



Owned by Karen Shave, this delightful family-run B&B offers smart, well appointed bedrooms with en-suite facilities. A relaxing and comfortable stay is offered here, perfect for those who have spent the day sightseeing, shopping or exploring the Cotswolds.



For those visiting the town on business, several major business parks are situated nearby. The B&B has the additional benefit of good public transport links and there are plenty of shops in the nearby Montpellier district.


Ken and Karen are only too happy to help tourists with their local knowledge.



Cheltenham

 Art Gallery & Museum  Holst Museum

 Pittville Pump Room  Racecourse

 Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Railway

Smart, fashionable Cheltenham was a small, insignificant village until a mineral spring was accidentally discovered in 1716. According to tradition, the first medicinal waters were discovered when locals saw pigeons pecking at salty deposits that had formed around a spring. A local man, William Mason, built a pump room and began Cheltenham's transformation into one of Europe's leading Regency spa towns. Mason's son-in-law was the astute Captain Henry Skillicorne who added a meeting room, a ballroom and a network of walks and carriageways, and called it a spa. A number of other springs were soon discovered, including one in the High Street around which the first Assembly Rooms were built. In 1788 the Royal seal of approval came in the shape of King George III who spent five weeks taking the waters with his family and made Cheltenham a highly fashionable resort. An entirely new town was planned based on the best features of neoclassical Regency architecture, and as a result very few buildings of any antiquity still stand. One of these is the Church of St Mary, with parts going back to the 12th century and some very fine stained glass.

Skillicorne's walks and rides are now the tree-lined Promenade, one of the most beautiful boulevards in the country, its crowning glory the wonderful Neptune's Fountain modelled on the Fontana di Trevi in Rome and erected in 1893. Housed in Pittville Park, overlooking picturesque gardens and ornamental lakes north of the town centre, is the magnificent **Pittville**

Pump Room. Concerts and special exhibitions are held here throughout the year. **Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum** has an acclaimed collection of furniture and silver, much of it made by Cotswold craftsmen and inspired by William Morris' Arts and Crafts movement, as well as some fine paintings by Dutch and British artists, Oriental porcelain and English ceramics.

Gustav Holst, of Latvian-Russian descent, was born in 1874 in a terraced Regency house in Clarence Road. It is now the **Holst Birthplace Museum and Period House** where the original piano of the composer of *The Planets* is the centrepiece of the story of the man and his works. There's also a working Victorian kitchen, an elegant Regency drawing room and a nursery. The Museum was founded in 1974 by Holst's daughter Imogen. (Other notable natives of Cheltenham include Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris, Sir Frederick Handley-Page, Sir Ralph Richardson and the Polar explorer Edward Wilson.)

Two remarkable modern pieces of public art take the eye in the centre of town. The Wishing Fish Clock in the Regent Arcade is a work in metal by the famous artist and craftsman Kit Williams: below the clock, from which a mouse pops out when disturbed by the arrival of an egg laid by a duck on high, is suspended a 12ft-long fish, which celebrates the hour by swishing its tail and blowing bubbles, to the delight and fascination of shoppers below. The mechanical parts of the clock are the work of the renowned local clockmaker Michael Harding.

Off the High Street are the Elephant Murals, which portray an event that occurred in 1934 when three elephants from a travelling circus escaped and raided a provision shop stocked with corn – an incident that older

THE SUFFOLKS INDEPENDENT SHOPS

EDWARD COX (GOLDSMITH)

28 Suffolk Parade, Montpellier, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire GL50 2AE
Tel: 01242 577573

In the 20 years that **Edward Cox (Goldsmith)** has been trading in Montpellier it has built up a fantastic reputation among locals and visitors. The independent store is owned by Peter and Val Russell and sells a wide selection of bespoke jewellery in gold, silver and platinum. Customers spend hours browsing the unusual gemstones in the splendid showroom and a personal one-to-one service is offered. Repeat customers are frequent here and once you have paid a visit yourself it won't be hard to understand why.



There are also a variety of items from specialist independent designers, which compliment the collection of Edward Cox (Goldsmith). It is open Wednesday – Saturday between 10am and 4pm.

THE OLD GROCERS DECORATIVE ANTIQUES

34 Suffolk Parade, Montpellier, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire GL50 2AE
Tel: 01242 230974

The Old Grocers Decorative Antiques is a pleasantly unusual antique shop with a modern slant. There is a whole variety of items on sale including upholstery fabrics on role, soft furnishings and furniture such as wooden tables and bookshelves.

This delightful shop can be found in the Suffolks district of Cheltenham Spa and is popular with visitors to the area. The five minute walk from the town centre is definitely worth it as you can spend a long while exploring this wonderful shop. It is full of colour and decorative pieces, furniture of English / French country style, as well as hand painted items.



STUDIO 33

33 Suffolk Parade, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL50 2AE
Tel: 01242 580334

'Purveyor of Beauty' is the statement echoed throughout **Studio 33**. Her colours drawn from travels to remote places, paintings and architecture - leaving one breathless.

The studio where creativity thrives supports interior design as featured. Product development for celebrated brands always a secret.

Silken cloths, chantilly lace aching for form exclusively designed for memorable moments. Rare furniture to embellish your home for generations.

Studio 33 is owned by Linda Hewitt. She lives between London and Cheltenham.



marc@whitenoiseimages

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locals with long memories still recall.

Cheltenham Boys College was used for the anarchic 1968 film *If*, directed by former pupil Lindsay Anderson after he persuaded the headmaster that it would be a respectable film!


Cheltenham Racecourse, two miles north of town, is the home of National Hunt Racing, staging numerous top-quality races highlighted by the March Festival when the Gold Cup and the Champion Hurdle find the year's best steeplechaser and best hurdler. Several other festivals have their home in Cheltenham, including the International Jazz Festival (April), the International Festival of Music (July), the International Festival of Literature (April) and the Cheltenham Festival of Science (June).

Within the racecourse grounds is the southern terminus of the **Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Railway**, which offers a 20-mile scenic round trip to Toddington on trains hauled by preserved steam locomotives. En route, the train passes through the Greet Tunnel, which, at 693 yards, is the second longest on a heritage railway. Locomotives in use in 2010 included 3717 *City of Truro*, 7903 *Foremarke Hall*, 2-6-2T 5542 and 9F 92203. Call 01242 621405 for details of timetables, events and driving courses.

Around Cheltenham

PRESTBURY

1 mile NE of Cheltenham on the A46

 Prestbury Park

Racing at Cheltenham started at Cleeve Hill but moved to land belonging to **Prestbury Park** in 1819, since when all the great names in steeplechasing and hurdling have graced the Prestbury turf. But Prestbury's greatest son was

not a jump jockey but the amazing Fred Archer, undisputed champion of flat race jockeys, born in the village in 1857. In *The King's Arms* hangs a plaque with this inscription:

*'At this Prestbury inn lived
FRED ARCHER the jockey
Who trained upon toast,
Cheltenham water & coffee.*

*The shoe of his pony
hangs in the bar
Where they drink to his prowess
from near and from far*

*But the man in the street
passes by without knowledge
That 'twas here Archer
swallowed his earliest porridge.'*

CLEEVE HILL

3 miles NE of Cheltenham on the B4632

 Belas Knap  Cleeve Cloud

The Cotswolds rise to their highest point, over 1000 feet above sea level, at **Cleeve Cloud** above Prestbury and a mile from the village of Cleeve Hill. The views from here are magnificent, and also worth the climb to see a massive Neolithic long barrow known as **Belas Knap**, where excavations have revealed the bones of more than 30 people. It is very unusual in having a false entrance at the north end that does not lead to any chambers.

GOTHERINGTON

5 miles NE of Cheltenham on the A435

 Prescott Hill Climb  The Bugatti Trust

This is the location of the famous **Prescott Hill Climb**, scene of hill climb championships and classic car meetings, as well as the location of **The Bugatti Trust** (see panel on page 114), a charitable trust whose aims are to preserve

The Bugatti Trust

Prescott Hill, Gotherington,
nr Cheltenham,

Gloucestershire GL52 9RD

Tel: 01242 677201

Fax: 01242 674191

e-mail: trust@bugatti.co.uk

website: www.bugatti.co.uk/trust

The Bugatti Trust is recommended to visitors with an interest in design and art in engineering as well as the history of the motor car. Ettore Bugatti designed and built beautiful

and world leading racing and sports cars in the 1920's and 1930's. There were numerous other sensational Bugatti products from the 'Royale' to world speed record trains and aircraft. The whole story of the Bugatti family from Carlo, Ettore's artist father, to the sad demise of the family control of the Molsheim factory in the 1950's, can be seen at the Bugatti Trust. The Trust is a Bugatti research centre and small museum, containing an amazing collection of drawings, documents, photographs, artefacts and a few cars. This history is an inspirational combination of art and engineering. Open Monday-Friday 10.00am-4.30pm. Free entry.



and make available for study the works of Ettore Bugatti. The whole fascinating story of the Bugatti family and its cars can be seen here: the little museum contains an amazing collection of drawings, documents, photographs and artefacts, including a few Bugatti cars. Open from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday and on Hill Climb days.

WINCHCOMBE

6 miles NE of Cheltenham on the B4632

Sudeley Castle Folk & Police Museum

Railway Museum Hailes Abbey

Winchcombe Pottery

This delightful little town was the Saxon capital of Mercia. In medieval times it prospered as pilgrims made their way to the shrine of St Kenelm who had been martyred here by his jealous sister in the 8th century. His shrine was second only to that of Thomas

à Becket as a destination for pilgrims.

Winchcombe grew in importance into a walled town with an abbot who presided over a Saxon parliament. The abbey was destroyed in 1539 after the Dissolution of the Monasteries and all that remains today is a section of a gallery that is part of the George Inn. As well as pilgrims, the abbey gave rise to a flourishing trade in wool and sheep.

One of the most famous townsmen of the time was Jack Smallwood, the Jack o' Newbury who sponsored 300 men to fight at Flodden Field in 1513, and was a leading producer of woollen goods. Silk and paper were also produced, and for a few decades tobacco was grown locally – a fact remembered in place names such as Tobacco Close and Tobacco Field. This activity ceased in 1670 when a law was passed banning home-produced tobacco in favour of imports from the struggling colony of Virginia.

The decline that followed had the effect of stopping the town's development, so many of the old buildings have survived largely unaltered. These include St Peter's Church, built in the 1460s and known particularly for its 40 grotesques and gargoyles, the so-called Winchcombe Worthies. **Winchcombe Folk & Police Museum**, in the Tudor-style Town Hall by the Tourist Information Centre, tells the history of the town from neolithic times to the present day, and also keeps a collection of British and international police uniforms and equipment.

A narrow passageway behind an ordinary house front leads to **Winchcombe Railway Museum and Garden**, a wonderland full of things to do: the railway museum contains one of the largest collections of railway equipment in the country, and visitors can work signals and clip tickets and generally get misty-eyed about the age of steam. The Cotswold garden is full of old and rare plants.

Winchcombe Pottery was established in 1926 on the site of an old country pottery dating back to the early 1800s. The pieces were fired in a bottle-kiln, which is still standing but is not now used. Visitors are welcome to look around the showroom and, at most times, the workshop. As well as the standard range of domestic ware, a number of individual pots are sold in the showroom.

A mile or so north of Winchcombe stand the ruins of **Hailes Abbey**, founded in 1246 by Richard, Earl of Cornwall. Richard, caught in a storm at sea, vowed that he would found a religious house if he survived, and in 1245 his brother Henry III gave him the manor at Hailes to do it. It was built on such an ambitious scale that the Cistercian monks were hard pressed to maintain it, but after Richard's son, Edmund, donated a phial said to contain



Winchcombe Church

the blood of Christ (later proved to be a fake) the abbey soon became an important place of pilgrimage and was even mentioned in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The closure of the abbey in 1539 brought great distress to the town: merchants lost the custom of the pilgrims and the poor no longer received their 'doles' from the monks.


The abbey fell into disrepair and today shattered walls and arches are all that remain of this mighty Cistercian foundation, yet the atmosphere of a 13th-century monastery lingers most powerfully. Some of the many artefacts found at the site, including medieval sculptures and decorated floor tiles, are on display in the abbey's museum. Some of the medieval glass from the abbey is now in the church at Stanton.

One mile south of Winchcombe, and set

against the beautiful backdrop of the Cotswold Hills, is **Sudeley Castle**, which has royal connections going back 1,000 years. This magnificent palace was the last home of Catherine Parr, sixth and last wife of Henry VIII. King Charles I stayed at the castle, and his nephew, Prince Rupert, established his garrison headquarters here during the Civil War. The interior of the castle, restored by the Dent family in sumptuous Victorian style, is a treasure house of old masters (Turner, Rubens, Van Dyck), tapestries, period furniture, costumes and toys, and the beautiful grounds include a lake, formal gardens and a 15 foot double yew hedge. Among the many other attractions are an exhibition on the evolution of the gardens, The Lace and Times of Emma Dent, a gift shop, plant centre, restaurant and adventure playground.

TODDINGTON



8 miles NE of Cheltenham on the B4632/B4077

 Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Railway

Toddington Station is the northern terminus of the restored **Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Railway** (see panel below) from where steam or diesel trains run a scenic round trip of 20 miles through delightful countryside by way of Winchcombe and Gotherington to Cheltenham racecourse. The line is open all year and there is a programme of special events and gala days.

STANWAY

9 miles NE of Cheltenham on the B4077

 Stanway House  Tithe Barn

A charming village clustered round Jacobean **Stanway House**, which is surely one of the most perfect of Cotswold mansions. Built

Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway

The Railway Station, Toddington, Gloucestershire GL54 5DT

Tel: 01242 621405

website: www.gwsr.co.uk

The railway offers a 20-mile round trip between Toddington and Cheltenham Race Course through some of the most spectacular scenery in the Cotswolds.

As you leave Toddington, once a major fruit distribution centre, the train passes the workshops where the steam and diesel locomotives are maintained and restored. The journey provides good views of the Cotswolds before arriving at Winchcombe station.

The Station which originally stood at Monmouth Troy and was painstakingly dismantled, moved and rebuilt by volunteers. This is also the headquarters of the carriage and wagon department. Shortly after leaving Winchcombe the train enters Greet tunnel which, at 693 yards, is the second longest on a preserved railway.

As the line approaches Cheltenham Race Course, views of Cleve Hill (the highest point of the Cotswolds) open up. The station once again fulfils its original purpose - bringing race-goers for important meetings such as the Cheltenham Gold Cup. A new 2 mile extension north towards Broadway opens in 2011.





Stanway House

using the warm, honey-coloured local stone, surrounded by gardens and landscaped grounds, Stanway is a dwelling-place at peace with the world and with itself. Its towering bay window looks across a scene where for centuries the only changes have been those ordained by the passing of the seasons.

The present house was built in the 1580s with the Great Hall at its heart, a glorious room whose function changed by the hour – from business room to manorial court to dining room. The raised dais on which the Lord of the Manor and his family took their meals is still in place as is a 23-foot-long 16th-century shuffleboard carved from a single piece of oak. The house's other treasures include fine paintings, two superb Broadwood pianos, and a Chippendale exercising chair on which keep-fit enthusiasts of the time would bounce for half an hour a day.

The grounds are equally interesting. Nearby stands an immense **Tithe Barn**, which was built in 1370 when the Manor of Stanway was a small satellite of Tewkesbury Abbey. Four monks dedicated themselves in prayer for the souls of the two Saxon nobles who had presented the land to the abbot in AD715.

Stanway's water gardens are regarded as the finest in England and their beauty has recently been enhanced with the installation of a 165-foot-high fountain – Britain's highest fountain and the tallest gravity

fountain in the world.

Also of note in Stanway is a thatched cricket pavilion resting on mushroom-shaped stones. The pavilion was a gift from J M Barrie, the author of *Peter Pan*, who was a regular visitor to the village.

STANTON

10 miles NE of Cheltenham on the B4632

Stanton Court Snowhill Manor

One of the prettiest spots in the Cotswolds, an attractive village of steeply-gabled limestone cottages dating mainly from the 16th and 17th centuries. The whole village was restored by the architect Sir Philip Scott in the years before the First World War; his home between 1906 and 1937 was **Stanton Court**, an elegant Jacobean residence built by Queen Elizabeth I's Chamberlain. The village church, dedicated to St Michael and All Angels, has many interesting features, including some stained glass from Hailes Abbey and a number of medieval pews with scarred ends caused perhaps by the leashes of dogs belonging to local shepherds. Most of the glass is the much more modern work of Sir Ninian Comper (1864-1960), the Aberdeen-born architect and prolific designer of church fittings and furnishings; stained glass was one of his specialities. John Wesley is said to have preached in the church.

Beyond Stanton, on the road to Broadway, the National Trust-owned **Snowhill Manor** is an elegant manor house dating from Tudor times; once the home of Catherine Parr, it contains a fascinating collection of crafts and artefacts assembled by the last private owner, Charles Paget Wade.

GUITING POWER

8 miles E of Cheltenham off the A436

Cotswold Farm Park

A neat collection of Cotswold stone cottages

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round a triangular green. Noteworthy features include the part-Norman St Michael's Church and a First World War memorial cross. Close by is **Cotswold Farm Park**, which was the first Rare Breeds Farm in England when it opened in 1971 and is now home to more than 50 flocks and herds of British farm animals. Using the hand-held audio guide, visitors can discover the animals' tales of survival. Among the many other attractions are shearing and spinning demonstrations, fleece sales, safari rides, an indoor tractor school, adventure playground, pets corner, woodland walk and a host of other activities guaranteed to keep children happy for hours.

Stow-on-the-Wold

Toy & Collectors Museum

At 800 feet above sea level, this is the highest town in the Cotswolds, and the winds sometimes prove it. The town's main source of wealth in earlier times was wool; twice-yearly sheep fairs were held on the Market Square, and at one such fair Daniel Defoe records that over 20,000 sheep were sold. Those days are remembered in Sheep Street and Shepherds Way. The square holds another reminder of the past in the town stocks, used to punish minor offenders. The

sheep fairs continued until they were replaced by an annual horse fair, which was held until 1985.

The Battle of Stow, in 1646, was the final conflict of the Civil War, and after it some of the defeated Royalist forces retreated to St Edward's Church, while others were cut down in the Market Square. The church, which suffered considerable damage at the time, has been restored many times down the centuries, not always to its advantage, but one undoubted treasure is a painting of the crucifixion in the south aisle, thought to be the work of the 17th-century Flemish artist Gaspard de Craeyer. The church is dedicated to King Edward the Martyr, who was murdered at Corfe Castle by his stepmother Elfrida. Other buildings of note in the town are the 15th-century Crooked House and the 16th-century Masonic Hall. On Digbeth Street stands The Royalist Hotel, said to be the oldest inn in England; an inn has certainly stood on the site since AD947. And outside the Town Hall, somewhat incongruously, is a medieval-style statue of Edward the Confessor. It cost £4000 but Stow's ratepayers didn't pay a penny of that – the funds came from unclaimed deposits in the local savings bank.

In Park Street is the **Toy and Collectors Museum**, housing a charming display of toys, trains, teddy bears and dolls, games and books,

TREEBUS TEA ROOMS

Digbeth Street, Stow on the Wold, Gloucestershire GL54 1BN
Tel: 01451 830151

The delightful **Treebus Tea Rooms** can be found in a lovely setting close to the market square in Stow on the Wold. It is well renowned for its home made cakes and scones, which can be enjoyed inside or in the walled garden on a warmer day. Barry and Carol are waiting to welcome you in and the aroma of home cooking certainly attracts people through the doors. Homemade soups, cottage pie and Sunday roasts are just some of the dishes on offer and there is a wide selection of cold and hot drinks to choose from.



along with textiles and lace, porcelain and pottery. Call 01451 830159.

Around Stow-on-the-Wold

UPPER & LOWER SWELL


1 mile W of Stow on the B4077 & B4068

A couple of Swells, neighbouring villages on the banks of the River Dikler. Lower Swell's focal point is the triangular village green, while the large mill pond is one of Upper Swell's many delights. Nearby, in Condicote Lane, is Donnington Trout Farm with a hatchery, smokery, farm shop and a lake for fly fishing.

MORETON-IN-MARSH

4 miles N of Stow on the A429

 Wellington Aviation Museum

 Batsford Park  Cotswold Falconry Centre

Moreton-in-the-Marsh is the scene, every Tuesday, of the biggest open-air street market in the Cotswolds. This attractive old town stands at the junction of the A44 and

the A429 Fosse Way, and was once an important stop on the coaching route between London and the West Midlands. Its broad main street is lined with handsome 17th and 18th-century buildings, while from earlier days are the old town gaol, The White Hart, where Charles I took refuge during the Civil War, and the Curfew Tower with its clock and bell dated 1633.

In Bourton Road, the **Wellington Aviation Museum**, dedicated to all who served or passed through RAF Moreton-in-Marsh on training courses for RAF Bomber Command. The airfield is now a fire training station. The little museum has a collection of Second World War aircraft paintings, prints and models and a detailed history of the Wellington bomber. Outside are the propeller and wheels of a Vickers-Armstrong Wellington.

One of the town's most popular amenities is **Batsford Park**, which offers a variety of attractions. There's an arboretum set in 55 acres of typical Cotswold countryside, which contains more than 1500 species and varieties of trees, shrubs, bamboos and wild flowers. Visitors can wander along meandering paths

RAILWAY COTTAGES AND APARTMENTS

Delabere House, New Road, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 0AS

Tel: 01608 650559

e-mail: emma@railwaycottages.net

website: www.railwaycottages.net

Whether it is a getaway weekend, holiday or business visit to the Cotswolds, the **Railway Cottages and Apartments** are the ideal solution. Located in the centre of Moreton-in-Marsh these sumptuous properties are ideally situated for touring the surrounding area by car, train or bus with Stratford upon Avon 30 minutes away, and London just 90 minutes by train. These stunning properties are tastefully furnished to the highest standards, with solid oak beams, handmade oak beds and heated flagstone flooring. Being owned and managed by the family ensures you will have a welcome stay no matter how long or short your break. Cottages sleep 1-8 people with group bookings of up to 25 for family reunions and special occasions. Awards: 4 Star Self Catering, Cotswold Tourism Award 2010 Silver, Cyclists Welcome, Families Welcome and Walkers Welcome.



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and discover surprises at every turn – a Japanese Rest House, a hermit's cave or a number of magnificent bronze statues from the far east. Also within the park, next to the arboretum, is the **Cotswold Falconry & Birds of Prey Centre**, home to a large collection of falcons, hawks, owls, kites and vultures, which are flown at regular intervals during the day. Other attractions in the park include a gift shop, tearoom and garden centre.

A mile east of town on the A44 stands the Four Shires Stone marking the original spot where the counties of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire met.

BLOCKLEY

7 miles N of Stow off the A44/A429

Mill Dene Garden

This pretty village was once a very busy place. Silk-spinning was the main industry and six mills created the main source of employment until the 1880s. As far back as the Domesday Book water mills were recorded here, and the village also once boasted an iron foundry and factories making soap, collars and pianos. The mills have now been turned into private residences and Blockley is a quieter place.

One of the chief attractions for visitors is **Mill Dene Garden**, set around a mill in a steep-sided valley. The garden has hidden paths winding up from the mill pool, and at the top there are lovely views over the Cotswolds. Also featured are a grotto, a potager, a trompe l'oeil and dye plants.

CHIPPING CAMPDEN

10 miles N of Stow on the B4081

Market Hall Cotswold Olimpicks

Old Silk Mill Court Barn

The Jewel of the Cotswolds, full of beautifully

restored buildings in golden Cotswold stone. Chipping Campden was a regional capital of the wool trade between the 13th and 16th centuries, and many of the fine buildings date from that period of prosperity. In the centre of town is the Jacobean **Market Hall**, built in 1627 and one of many buildings financed by the wealthy fabric merchant and financier Sir Baptist Hicks. He also endowed a group of almshouses and built Old Campden House, at the time the largest residence in the town; it was burnt down by Royalists to prevent it falling into the hands of the enemy. All that survives are two gatehouses, the old stable block and the banqueting halls. The 15th-century Church of St James was built on a grand scale and contains several impressive monumental brasses, the most impressive being one of William Grevel measuring a mighty eight feet by four feet.

Chipping Campden has important links with the Arts and Crafts movement. CR Ashbee set up his Guild of Handicrafts here in 1902 with 150 workers imported from London's East End. His workshop in the **Old Silk Mill** in Sheep Street is now a small museum. In 1990 a group of local people formed the Guild of Handicraft Trust and in 1998 it was offered the chance to take over **Court Barn** and to turn it into a museum of local craftsmanship and design from the Arts and Crafts movement onward. The centre opened in the summer of 2007.

Dover's Hill, a natural amphitheatre above the town, is the scene of the **Cotswold Olimpicks**, founded in the 17th century by Captain Robert Dover who lived at Stanway House. The Games followed the traditions of ancient Greece and added some more down-to-earth activities such as shin-kicking and bare-knuckle boxing. The lawlessness and



Chipping Campden Church

hooliganism that accompanied the games led to their being closed down in 1852, but they were revived in a modern form in 1951 and are still a popular annual attraction on the Friday following the Spring Bank Holiday. Call 01384 274041.

BROADWAY

10 miles NW of Stow on the A44

Broadway Tower Snowhill Manor Garden

Just over the border into Worcestershire, where the Cotswolds join the Vale of Evesham, Broadway is one of the glories of the Cotswolds, a showpiece village with an abundance of scenic and historic attractions. The renowned Lygon Arms entertained both King Charles and Oliver Cromwell, and **Broadway Tower** at the top of Fish Hill affords spectacular views over the Severn Vale.

A couple of miles southwest of Broadway,

Snowhill Manor and Garden (National Trust) is an Arts and Crafts garden designed to complement a handsome Cotswold manor house. Laid out by Charles Paget Wade as a series of outdoor rooms with terraces and ponds, the garden is now run on organic principles. The house has a spectacular collection of craftsmanship and design from around the world. Call 01386 852410.

HIDCOTE BARTRIM

13 miles N of Stow off the B4632

Hidcote Manor Garden

Hidcote Manor Garden is one of the most famous in the country, a masterpiece created in the first years of the 20th century by the eminent horticulturist Major Lawrence Johnston. A series of small gardens, each with a different character and appeal, Hidcote is renowned for its rare shrubs and trees, herbaceous borders and unusual plant species from all parts of the globe. Visitors can refresh themselves in the tea bar or licensed restaurant.

UPPER AND LOWER SLAUGHTER

2 miles SW of Stow off the A429/B4068

Old Mill

The Slaughters (the name means nothing more sinister than muddy place) are archetypal Cotswold villages set a mile apart on the little River Eye. Both are much visited by tourists, much explored and much photographed; they are also much as they have always been, since virtually no building work has been carried out since 1904. Francis Edward Witts, author of *The Diary of a Cotswold Parson*, was the rector here between 1808 and 1854.

At Lower Slaughter, the **Old Mill**, with its tall chimney and giant waterwheel, is a prominent feature by the river. This restored 19th-century flour mill, last used for its


original purpose in 1958, is open for visits and has a tearoom and organic ice cream parlour. The mill is owned by the well-known jazz singer Gerald Harris, so the gift shop has an extensive stock of jazz CDs.

BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER

4 miles S of Stow on the A429

 Model Village  Motoring Museum

 Bourton Model Railway Exhibition

 Perfumery Factory

 Birdland Park & Gardens



Bourton-on-the-Water

Probably the most popular of all the Cotswold villages, the willow-fringed River Windrush flows through the centre, crossed by several delightful low-arched pedestrian bridges, two of which date from the late 18th century. The golden stone cottages are pretty as a picture, and among the notable larger buildings are St Lawrence's Church, with its 14th-century chancel and rare domed Georgian tower, and a manor house with a 16th-century dovecote.

The famous **Model Village** is a 1:9 scale replica of Bourton hand-crafted from local Cotswold stone. It comes complete with music playing in the church and even a model of the model village in the model village.

Covering 400 square feet, **Bourton Model Railway Exhibition** has more than 40 British

and Continental trains running on three main displays in OO, HO and N gauge. There's also a large shop with a good range of quality toys, models, trains and accessories.

The **Cotswold Motoring Museum and Toy Collection**, in an 18th-century water mill, has a fascinating collection of antique toys, a display of historic advertising signs and 30 or so (full-size) cars and motorcycles, including James Hunt's last Formula 1 car, a Wolf WR7. Bourton is also known for its **Cotswolds Perfumery Factory**, where a guided tour includes the Perfume Garden, the Perfume Laboratory, the Compounding Room mixing raw materials to make the concentrate, and the Factory, where the processes comprise filtering, bottling, labelling, coding, cartoning and despatch.

LARKS RISE

Old Gloucester Road, Bourton on the Water,

Gloucestershire GL54 3BH

Tel: 01451 822613

e-mail: larksrise@virgin.net website: www.larksrisehouse.co.uk

Larks Rise is a delightful bed and breakfast located on the edge of one of the most picturesque villages in the Cotswolds.


Positioned at the heart of the Cotswolds the Edwardian B&B provides an ideal base for those touring the area. Owners Bill and Barbara have been here for four years and offer three luxurious guest bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities. The place is popular with keen walkers, many who come here for the peaceful setting and stunning scenery. The village centre, with its excellent choice of shops, pubs, restaurants and attractions, is just 10 minutes walk away.



A five-minute walk from the town centre brings visitors to **Birdland Park & Gardens** set in seven acres of woodland, water and gardens. The natural setting is home to more than 500 birds, including flamingos, pelicans, cranes, storks and waterfowl; there are over 50 aviaries of parrots, falcons, pheasants, hornbills, toucans, touracos and many others, and tropical, temperate and desert houses are home to the more delicate species. Open all year, Birdland has a café and facilities for children, including a play area, pets' corner and penguin feeding time.

NORTHLEACH

10 miles SW of Stow on the A429

-  Church of St Peter and St Paul
-  Chedworth Roman Villa
-  Keith Harding's World of Mechanical Music

A traditional market town with some truly magnificent buildings. It was once a major

wool-trading centre that rivalled Cirencester in importance and, as a consequence, possesses what now seems a disproportionately large church. The **Church of St Peter and St Paul**, known as the Cathedral of the Cotswolds, is a fine example of Cotswold Perpendicular, built in the 15th century with pinnacled buttresses, high windows and a massive square castellated tower. Treasures inside include an ornately carved font and some rare monumental brasses of which rubbings can be made (permits obtainable from the Post Office).

The town's most popular attraction is **Keith Harding's World of Mechanical Music**, which occupies a handsome period house in the main street. Keith's love of mechanical music goes back some 40 years and he has accumulated the finest collection of automata, both antique and modern, to be found anywhere. The exhibits range from a tiny singing bird concealed in a snuff box, to a

THE COTSWOLD ICE CREAM COMPANY

Hill House Farm, Farmington, nr Northleach,
Gloucestershire GL54 3NH
Tel: 01451 861425
e-mail: dani@cotswoldicecream.com
website: www.cotswoldicecream.com

Ice Cream lovers can enjoy delicious flavours from The Cotswold Ice Cream Company at the creamery where it is made. The company is owned by the Slatter family, who have farmed in Farmington for almost 90 years. Milk, the primary ingredient, is sourced from the family's organic dairy herd based at the farm.

The Cotswold Ice Cream Company use ingredients that are approved by the Fairtrade Foundation, wherever possible. So seven of their eight flavours are Fairtrade accredited. The ice cream is made in the artisan tradition, in small batches, giving a unique flavour. They also specialise in bespoke flavours tailored to the individual needs of their customers.

Ice cream is available in three sizes, 125mls, 500mls & 4.5lts and on Friday, Saturday & Sunday when the ice cream parlour serves cones and Fairtrade Coffee and Tea – 11 - 5pm (Easter to October).



mighty Welte Steinway reproducing piano of 1907. The instruments are introduced and played by the guides in the form of a live musical entertainment show and the tours include demonstrations of restored barrel organs, barrel pianos, musical boxes, polyphons, gramophones and antique clocks. Many of the clocks, musical boxes and automata on show are for sale.

Close to the pretty village of **Chedworth**, a couple of miles west of Northleach, is what must be the region's oldest stately home, the National Trust's **Chedworth Roman Villa**, a large, well-preserved Romano-British villa discovered by chance in 1864 and subsequently excavated to reveal more than 30 rooms and buildings, including a bath house and hypocaust. Some wonderful mosaics are on display, one depicting the four seasons, another showing nymphs and satyrs. The villa lies in a beautiful wooded combe overlooking the valley of the Colne. A natural spring rises at the head of the combe – probably the main reason for choosing this site.

BIBURY

15 miles S of Stow on the B4425

Arlington Row

William Morris, founder of the Arts and Crafts movement, described Bibury as “the most beautiful village in England” and, apart from the tourists, not a lot has changed since he made the claim. The Church of St Mary, with Saxon, Norman and medieval parts, is well worth a visit, but the most visited and most photographed buildings in Bibury are **Arlington Row**, a superb terrace of medieval stone cottages built as a wool store in the 14th century and converted three centuries later into weavers' cottages and workshops.

Cirencester

 Corinium Museum  Church of St John Baptist
 Brewery Arts House  Open Air Swimming Pool

The Capital of the Cotswolds, a lively market town with a long and fascinating history. As Corinium Dobonorum it was the second largest Roman town in Britain (Londinium was the largest). Few signs remain of the Roman occupation, but the award-winning **Corinium Museum** (01285 655611) features one of the finest collections of antiquities from Roman Britain, and reconstructions of a Roman dining room and garden give a fascinating and instructive insight into life in Cirencester almost 2000 years ago.

The main legacy of the town's medieval wealth is the magnificent **Church of St John Baptist**, perhaps the grandest of all the Cotswold wool churches, its 120ft tower dominating the town. Its greatest treasure is the Anne Boleyn Cup, a silver and gilt cup made for Henry VIII's second wife in 1535, the year before she was executed for adultery. Her personal insignia – a rose tree and a falcon holding a sceptre – is on the lid of the cup, which was given to the church by Richard Master, physician to Queen Elizabeth I. The church has a unique three-storey porch, which was used as the Town Hall until 1897.

Cirencester today has a thriving crafts scene, with workshops in the **Brewery Arts and Craft Centre**, a converted Victorian brewery that re-opened in 2008 after a £2.7 million refurbishment. Up to 18 resident craftworkers create or restore pieces of art on site; they include a basket maker, jeweller, textile weaver, ceramicist and stained glass artist. A shop in the centre sells the best in British work, and

ALL MY BEAUTIFUL THINGS

62B Cricklade Street, Cirencester,
Gloucestershire GL7 1JN
Tel: 01285 655719

e-mail: allmybeautifulthings@gmail.co.uk
website: www.allmybeautifulthings.co.uk

All My Beautiful Things is a fantastic gallery, home to mermaids, fairies, dragons and other magic and mystical creatures. Many people are drawn through its doors by the colourful pieces on display and others come here purely to take in the tranquil atmosphere and browse the shelves.



That said it is hard to leave this shop full of treasures without buying something to take home. It is an ideal shop for buying an unusual gift – so why not treat a loved one or spoil yourself? All My Beautiful Things has plenty on display including ceramic pieces and jewellery created by Chyna De La Mer, a talented sculptress who specialises in beautiful, intricate ceramic sculptures inspired by folklore, fables and changing moods and seasons of nature. The fine sculptures and objects d'art here are created especially to bring the magic back to any home or work place. If you want something totally individual then why not commission one of the shop's resident artists to create a piece of magic just for you.

The stock at All My Beautiful Things is forever changing and there will always be something new to browse – it is perhaps why so many people return time again.

THE THAMES HEAD INN

Teibury Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 6NZ
Tel: 01285 770259
website: www.thamesheadinn.co.uk

The Thames Head Inn is a charming establishment serving excellent food in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere with a large, well stocked central bar surrounded by various nooks and crannies and open fires.

This unique Gloucestershire pub has plenty of history and is renowned in the area for being one of the best in the county. With its extensive landscaped gardens and ample car parking, it has four guest bedrooms available in a beautifully converted barn. All of the rooms have en-suite facilities and are ideal for business accommodation or midweek and weekend breaks.

The fresh homemade food here is cooked by an award winning chef. It is absolutely delicious and the inn's specialities include fish, and perfectly cooked steaks, which can be enjoyed with a good selection of fine real ales. As well as the dishes listed on the printed menu there is a regularly updated specials board. The Thames Head Inn has a large function room with its own private bar and is available for fully catered private parties and corporate events. The inn is ideal for business meetings and regular club meetings.



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there are galleries, a coffee house, arts and crafts classes and workshops.

Cirencester Open Air Swimming Pool, next to the park, was built in 1869 and is one of the oldest in the country. Both the main pool and the paddling pool use water from a private well. Other sites of interest include St Thomas' Hospital – 15th-century almshouses for destitute weavers – the Barracks of 1857, and a Yew Hedge that was planted in 1720. It now stands 40 feet high and is reputed to be the loftiest in Europe. It can be found in Cirencester Park, a 3000-acre expanse, which was designed by the poet Alexander Pope.

Cirencester certainly lives up to its reputation as a market town with street markets on Monday and Friday, a craft market in the Corn Hall on Saturdays, and regular antiques markets on Fridays.

Around Cirencester

FAIRFORD

9 miles E of Cirencester on the A417

 Church of St Mary  Air Tattoo

A welcoming little town in the valley of the River Coln that has many fine buildings of the 17th and 18th centuries and an abundance of inns as evidence that this was an important stop on the London-Gloucester coaching run. John and Edmund Tame, wealthy wool merchants, built the superb late-Perpendicular **Church of St Mary**, whose greatest glory is a set of 28 medieval stained glass windows depicting the Christian faith in picture-book style. John Tame's memorial stone, along with those of his wife and son, are set into the floor of the church. In July, nearby RAF Fairford hosts the annual **Royal International Air Tattoo**, the world's

largest military air show, which attracts thousands of visitors. The date for 2011 is 16/17 July, and for 2012, 7/8 July.

INGLESHAM


12 mile E of Cirencester off the A361

 Church of St John the Baptist

The splendidly unspoilt **Church of St John the Baptist** dates mainly from the 13th century, with some notable later additions. The chief features are important wall paintings, 15th-century screens, 17th- and 18th-century pulpit and box pews and, perhaps its greatest treasure, a Saxon carving of the Virgin and Child blessed by the Hand of God. This is one of many churches in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, formerly known as the Redundant Churches Fund. The trust was established to preserve churches, which though no longer needed for regular worship, are of historic or architectural importance.

LECHLADE-ON-THAMES

12 miles E of Cirencester on the A417

 Halfpenny Bridge

Now part of the Cotswold Water Park, Lechlade is the highest navigable point on the Thames and head of the Thames towpath walk. In and around the town visitors can hire rowing boats, go sailing or windsurfing, and enjoy lake and river fishing.

A statue of Old Father Thames, originally created for the Great Exhibition of 1851, overlooks St John's Lock, where barges loaded with building stone bound for Oxford and London have given way to pleasure craft. This bustling market town, surrounded by green meadows, boasts a fine 15th-century church with a slender spire and a structure that has remained unaltered since the early

CUTLER AND BAYLISS

Oak Street, Lechlade, Gloucestershire GL7 3AX

Tel: 01367 252451

website: www.cutlerandbayliss.co.uk

Cutler and Bayliss is a traditional family butchers, deli and greengrocers located in Lechlade, Gloucestershire. There is a strong focus on sourcing traditional quality meat and a lot of the meat on sale here is sourced from local suppliers and farmers.

Traditionally reared beef, Gloucester Old Spot pork, Cotswold lamb, free range poultry and home cured bacon are just some of the meats that can be bought at Cutler and Bayliss. Owners Tony and Shane also have handmade sausages, burgers and seasonal products available for their customers.

This fantastic shop has a well stocked delicatessen counter serving a range of home baked pies and pasties, cheese, cooked meats, olives and antipastos. There is also a greengrocery section with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables to choose from.

Cutler and Bayliss is one of the Cotswold's best butchers and greengrocers and has been offering a personal and quality service for the past 15 years. It is well worth a look.



BATHURST ARMS

North Cerney, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 7BZ

Tel: 01285 831281

This lovely Cotswold pub serves some of the finest pub food in the area and has a fantastic selection of real ales on offer. **Bathurst Arms** has been owned by James Walker for the past eight years and he has built up a superb reputation here, having won numerous awards.

James has eight en-suite rooms available to guests and with the inn's close location to Cirencester and its adjacent restaurant, which serves top quality bar food it isn't hard to see why visitors to the area choose to stay here.

There is a wide selection of dishes to choose from including traditional favourites such as beer battered day boat haddock as well as more unusual dishes such as pan fried ox liver.

Meals can be enjoyed in the beautifully decorated restaurant, which can serve 40 diners, or in the bar area, which is traditionally decorated with wooden tables. On warmer days customers can enjoy refreshments or al fresco dining in the lovely garden.



THE ROYAL OAK

High Street, South Cerney, nr Cirencester GL7 5UP
Tel: 01285 860298 e-mail: gemjar99@hotmail.com

The **Royal Oak** is a traditional village pub, dating back in parts to the 16th century, and can be found in South Cerney. Owners Gemma and Tommy have recently taken over, and they are doing a splendid job. Inside this family-friendly establishment you will find traditional log fires, ideal for keeping you warm on a cold winter day. In the summer you can enjoy a relaxing drink in the garden area. There is a big focus on homemade food and among the most popular dishes are the homemade delicious pies that are made with locally sourced meat and vegetables.




1500s. In its lovely churchyard, in 1815, the poet Shelley was inspired to write his *Stanzas in a Summer Evening Churchyard*. The verses are inscribed on a stone at the churchyard entrance.

Another interesting building is the **Halfpenny Bridge**, built in 1792, which crosses the Thames in the town centre and has a tollhouse at its eastern end. The toll

was last charged for pedestrians in 1839, and for cattle in 1885.

SOUTH CERNEY

3 miles S of Cirencester off the A419

 Cotswold Water Park

 Keynes Country Park

Two areas of flooded gravel workings form

WILD DUCK INN

Drakes Island, Ewen, nr Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 6BY
Tel: 01285 770310
e-mail: wduckinn@aol.com
website: theduck.co.uk

A hidden gem in the little village of Ewen showcases what can be done with picturesque surroundings and passionate owners. The **Wild Duck Inn's** owners, Dino and Tina Mussell have successfully blended "16th century character and 21st century luxury", it possesses all the charm of a bygone age with modern all conveniences.

If you are looking to relax and unwind for a while this Inn has available twelve charming and individually designed en-suite bedrooms. The bedrooms are superior to that of many other inns due to the decadent addition of four-poster beds fit for royalty! The four-poster bed was originally designed to keep the draught off its slumbering inhabitants and the insects and dirt off their heads. Since medieval times are long past, we no longer have to worry about such things falling on our heads. All the same, the four-poster bed has remained popular.

With the emphasis on relaxed informality, lunch and supper can be taken in either the bar or the restaurant, or during much of the summer, in the delightfully enclosed courtyard canopied by a huge apple tree. The deep-red walls and soft high backed chairs all work to provide a truly tasteful, relaxing environment. The memorable quality of food, service and ambience is complemented with the very best wine from a well-stocked cellar and five real ales that are always on tap.





Cotswold Water Park, South Cerney

centre for water sports, fishing, bird-watching, walking and cycling.

KEMBLE

4 miles SW of Cirencester on the A429

Bristol Aero Collection

Located close to the source of the River Thames, Kemble is best known for the **Bristol Aero Collection** at Kemble Airfield. In a hangar given by Airbus UK, exhibits include Bristol helicopters, the only Britannia in working condition, Bloodhound guided missiles, aero engines, a full scale Giotto satellite, scale models of various military aircraft – and a small road transport collection featuring a Bristol tram, bus and lorry.

the **Cotswold Water Park**, an increasingly important wetland area with a greater expanse of water than the Norfolk Broads. The area, which includes **Keynes Country Park**, is a

WINSTONE GLEBE COUNTRY HOUSE

Winstone, nr Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 7LN

Tel: 01285 821451

e-mail: sparsons@winstoneglebe.com

website: www.winstoneglebe.com

Winstone Glebe is a delightful country property, a small Georgian rectory set in ten acres of gardens and paddocks, with glorious views over the Cotswold hills. Guests at this lovely rural retreat are assured of warm hospitality from hands-on owners Shaun and Susanna Parsons, making it an ideal base for enjoying a quiet break or discovering the many scenic and historic attractions of this beautiful part of the country.

The three guest rooms – one en suite, the others with their own private bathrooms – have large, comfortable beds, traditional furnishings and attractive floral fabrics. The day starts with an excellent breakfast (including eggs from their own hens) and afternoon tea can be taken in the cosy drawing room or outside when the sun shines. And by arrangement Susanna, a professional chef who once ran her own highly regarded restaurant, will prepare a superb evening meal.

The garden, where careful planting ensures colour all year round, has a tennis court and an aviary with budgies, finches and other pretty winged creatures.

Though quiet and secluded, Winstone Glebe is by no means remote – it lies 6 miles northwest of Cirencester 5 minutes from the A417, it's 15 minutes from J11 of the M5 and just half an hour from J15 of the M4.



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