


DAY TRIPS FROM LONDON

# The Cotswolds day guide

One page for each of the six villages: what it is, what to see, what fits in 30, 60 or 90 minutes, and where to find toilets and food.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

**1**

Check how long your tour stops in each village. Your tour's page lists the stops and the time at each one.

**2**

On the village's page, pick the plan that fits: 30, 60 or 90 minutes.

**3**

Set a phone alarm 10 minutes before you need to be back at the bus.

INSIDE PAGE

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Times are typical visit lengths, not a timetable. Opening hours and prices change: check the full guide online before you go.

**See Beyond the City**
seebeyondthecity.com/london/cotswolds/

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE · READ THIS ON THE WAY

# The Cotswolds in two minutes

## Why the stone is golden

Almost every village here is built from the same local stone, a limestone laid down in the Jurassic period, around 210 to 140 million years ago. Its colour runs from silvery cream through grey to a golden ochre, depending on how much iron oxide (a kind of rust) the stone holds.

**Look for:** The colour of the walls. Some are pale and creamy, some deep gold.

## Walls built without cement

The fields and lanes are edged by dry stone walls, made from the same stone with no cement. The Cotswolds National Landscape counts more than 6,000 km of them. Most date from the 1700s and 1800s, when open land was fenced into fields.

**Look for:** How each stone is fitted to the next, and how the wall matches the nearest cottage.

A LITTLE HISTORY

OVER 6,000 YEARS AGO

### People shape the hills

The Cotswolds National Landscape says people have lived in and shaped this landscape for more than 6,000 years. Burial mounds, hill forts and the Rollright Stones are still there to see.

ROMAN TIMES

### A road to Stow

Roman engineers built the Fosse Way from Bath to Stow-on-the-Wold and Moreton-in-Marsh. The road let people and goods travel quickly between towns, farms and villas.

THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

### Wool builds the towns

Money from the wool trade paid for grand churches, manor houses and market towns. The wool churches are the best-known sign of that wealth, and local stone gave the towns their look.

1966

### A protected landscape

The Cotswolds was made an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1966. At 790 square miles it is the largest in England and Wales, and it stretches from Bath to Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

# Burford

An old market town and church

**WHY STOP HERE**

A medieval market town whose High Street runs down to the River Windrush. Look for the large wool church, where Leveller soldiers were held prisoner in 1649, and the Tolsey, the old market house. Antiques and independent shops line the street.

**DON'T MISS**

### The Levellers locked in the church, 1649

Anthony Sedley's name and the date 1649, carved by a prisoner into the lead of the font. Also look for the plaque on the church wall.





| SO FAR | YOUR ROUTE · STOP WHEN "SO FAR" REACHES YOUR TIME |
|---|---|
| **15** min | **The church of St John the Baptist** · 15 min here · free — A very large church paid for by the wool trade, with a 12th-century tower and west doorway, a carved stone ceiling in the porch, many tombs and stained glass. The Harman tomb has carved people from the Americas, the earliest known in Britain, the church says. |
| **20** min | **The Levellers' marks in the church** · 5 min here · free **DON'T MISS** — In 1649 Leveller soldiers, who wanted a more equal society, were held prisoner in this church. One of them, Anthony Sedley, carved his name in the lead of the font. A plaque on the church wall remembers the soldiers who were executed. |
| **25** min | **The Great Almshouses** · 5 min here · free — Almshouses are charity homes for poor people. A tablet over the central door says Richard, Earl of Warwick founded these in 1457 and that they were rebuilt in 1828. They stand on Church Lane. |
| **40** min | **The High Street** · 15 min here · free — A street of stone houses and historic shops that runs downhill to the River Windrush. Burford is known for antiques, independent shops and small boutiques. |
| **60** min | **The Tolsey** · 20 min here · free — The 16th-century market house, a timber frame raised on stone piers (columns), with a clock on the front. Traders paid tolls here, and the Borough Court met. It is now the town museum. |

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|---|---|
| **TOILETS** | Yes. West Oxfordshire District Council lists two public toilets in Burford, one on the High Street and one at Guildenford Car Park. Both are open 7.30 am to 7.30 pm and have baby changing. The disabled toilets need a Radar key. The council's page was checked on 28 October 2026. |
| **FOOD** | Visit Cotswolds lists traditional pubs, tearooms and restaurants in Burford. Huffkins has a café and bakery on the High Street, in a listed building with original beams. |

# Bibury

The famous row of weavers' cottages

### WHY STOP HERE

A small village on the River Coln, best known for Arlington Row, a lane of old stone cottages owned by the National Trust. You see the row, the water meadow and the river from public paths. It is a short tour stop, so expect a walk and photographs, not a visit inside anything.

DON'T MISS

**A church with Saxon stones**

The Saxon gravestone set into the north wall of the chancel, the square stone font and the Norman doorway.





| SO FAR | YOUR ROUTE · STOP WHEN "SO FAR" REACHES YOUR TIME |
|---|---|
| **10** min | **Arlington Row** · 10 min here · free — A row of old stone cottages with a wavy roofline and steep gables, beside the mill stream. It is the best-known view in Bibury. |
| **20** min | **Rack Isle water meadow** · 10 min here · free — A boggy meadow between the river and the row, once used to dry cloth. Look for water voles, kingfishers and dragonflies. |
| **30** min | **St Mary's church** · 10 min here · free DON'T MISS — A church protected at the highest level, with carved stones from Saxon times (before 1066), a Norman doorway from soon after, and a square stone font from the 1200s. |
| **35** min | **The Swan Hotel** · 5 min here · free — An old coaching inn, where travellers by horse and carriage once stopped, recorded as an inn from 1672. |
| **80** min | **Bibury Trout Farm** · 45 min here · **own ticket** — A working trout farm in the village, with ponds, a café and a gift shop. The farm says it was founded in 1902 and is England's oldest working trout farm. |

**TOILETS AND FOOD** The National Trust lists pubs, restaurants and tea-rooms in the village, and public toilets opposite the roadside parking. None is run by the National Trust. The Trout Farm has a café open daily.

# Bourton-on-the-Water

A riverside village with attractions

### WHY STOP HERE

The River Windrush runs through the middle of this Cotswold stone village, under five low bridges and beside a wide green. Shops, cafés, a model of the village, a bird park and a motoring museum are close by. It is often very busy at weekends, so check how long your tour stays.

DON'T MISS

**Five low bridges over the Windrush**

The footbridge called High Bridge, in the middle of the green, and how low the sides of every bridge are.





| SO FAR | YOUR ROUTE · STOP WHEN "SO FAR" REACHES YOUR TIME |
|---|---|
| **15** min | **The River Windrush and its bridges** · 15 min here · free **DON'T MISS** — Clear water running between wide grass banks planted with trees, crossed by five low, slightly humped stone bridges. |
| **60** min | **The Model Village** · 45 min here · **own ticket** — A one-ninth scale copy of Bourton in Cotswold stone, in the garden of the Old New Inn. |
| **80** min | **The Cotswold Perfumery** · 20 min here · free — A family perfume maker on Victoria Street, started in 1966, with a shop and perfume-making courses in its own teaching room. |

**Also here, with more time:** Shops and tea rooms by the river (30 min, free) · Birdland Park and Gardens (90 min, own ticket) · The Cotswold Motoring Museum (45 min, own ticket)

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| **TOILETS** | Yes. Cotswold District Council lists two public toilet sites in Bourton, at the Church Rooms and on Rissington Road. Both have disabled facilities and baby changing, and both charge a small fee. |
| **FOOD** | Visit Cotswolds says Bourton has cafés, restaurants and tea rooms, and lists The Chestnut Tree, a tea room and licensed restaurant in the village. You can have coffee or afternoon tea by the river. |
| **QUIETER TIME** | Earlier or later in the day. The Parish Council says the village can be as busy as a seaside resort on holidays and sunny weekends, and that the earlier or later in the day you visit, the quieter and calmer it is. |

# Stow-on-the-Wold

A market town with a story

### WHY STOP HERE

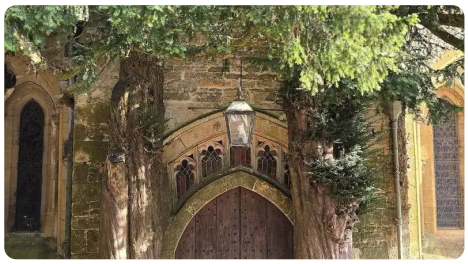
Stow-on-the-Wold is a hilltop market town built around a big square. Medieval fairs once sold thousands of sheep here, and narrow lanes still lead off the square. A Civil War battle ended on its streets in 1646.

DON'T MISS

**A church door and a Tolkien story**

The north door under its small porch, with a yew tree on each side.



| SO FAR | YOUR ROUTE · STOP WHEN "SO FAR" REACHES YOUR TIME |
|---|---|
| **10** min | **The Market Square and its cross** · 10 min here · free — A wide square with a medieval market cross at its heart. The four panels at the top of the cross show the crucifixion, Edward the Confessor (an English king before 1066), the Civil War and the wool trade. |
| **20** min | **St Edward's Church and its north door** · 10 min here · free DON'T MISS — A church first built in Saxon times (before 1066), with a 15th-century tower, on the west side of the square. Look for the north door between two yew trees. |
| **30** min | **The lanes called tures** · 10 min here · free — Several narrow lanes lead off the square between the buildings. Local tradition says sheep were counted as they left the market through them. |
| **60** min | **Antique and independent shops** · 30 min here · free — Stone townhouses round the square hold independent shops, antique centres, galleries and cafés. |
| **65** min | **The old stocks** · 5 min here · free — Part of a wooden frame with iron straps, once used to hold a person's feet as a public punishment. Historic England notes that the foot holes are uncomfortably far apart. |
| **70** min | **The Porch House inn** · 5 min here · free — A building from the 15th or early 16th century at the bottom of Digbeth Street. The inn calls itself England's oldest inn. |

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| TOILETS | Yes. Cotswold District Council lists a public toilet on Market Square. It charges 50p and has disabled facilities and baby changing. The council's page was checked on 28 October 2026. |
| FOOD | Visit Cotswolds lists cafés, a bakery and inns around the square, such as Huffkins Cafe & Bakery and the Old Stocks Inn. Tours do not always include meals, so check what yours covers. |

# Snowshill

A quiet hill village

### WHY STOP HERE

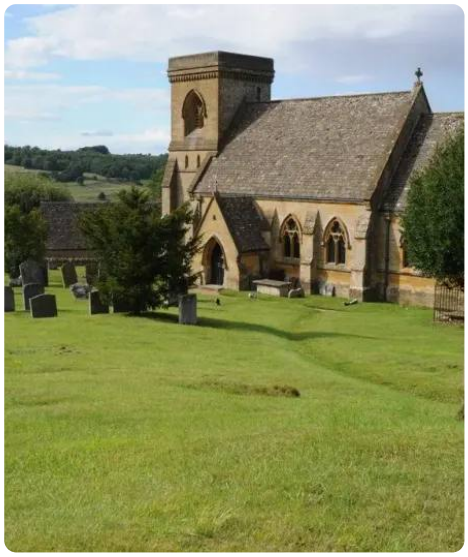
A small hillside village of Cotswold stone cottages around a Victorian church, with wide views over the countryside. Snowshill is best known for the National Trust manor where Charles Wade gathered thousands of handmade objects. The tour stop is short, so it suits visitors who want atmosphere and views more than a house visit.

DON'T MISS

**Snowshill in Bridget Jones's Diary**

The stone cottages and lanes round the church. The tourist board does not name the house the film used.





| SO FAR | YOUR ROUTE · STOP WHEN "SO FAR" REACHES YOUR TIME |
|---|---|
| **15** min | **St Barnabas church and the cottages round it** · 15 min here · free **DON'T MISS** — A small stone church built in 1864, with a clock on its tower and a font from the 1400s. Old stone cottages stand around it. |
| **60** min | **The garden and Wolf's Cove** · 45 min here · **own ticket** — A garden laid out as a series of outdoor rooms, in the Arts and Crafts style, which prized handmade work. Look for a painted 24-hour clock called the Nychthemeron, and Wolf's Cove, a model Cornish fishing village. |

**Or, with 90 minutes:** Snowshill Manor and its collection (90 min, own ticket) — The home of Charles Wade, an architect and collector, filled with handmade objects, from suits of armour and mechanical doorbells to musical instruments and old bicycles. Each room is arranged like a stage set (the scenery for a play).

**Also here, with more time:** The Snowshill Arms (30 min, free) · The Cotswold Lavender fields, in summer (10 min, free)

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| **TOILETS** | Yes, at visitor reception, the café and the garden. Accessible toilets are at visitor reception and the café only. |
| **FOOD** | The National Trust café serves hot and cold drinks, snacks and light meals, with indoor and outdoor seats and views across the valley. There is also a picnic area nearby, in Pipers Orchard. |

# Broadway

A long village street to browse

### WHY STOP HERE

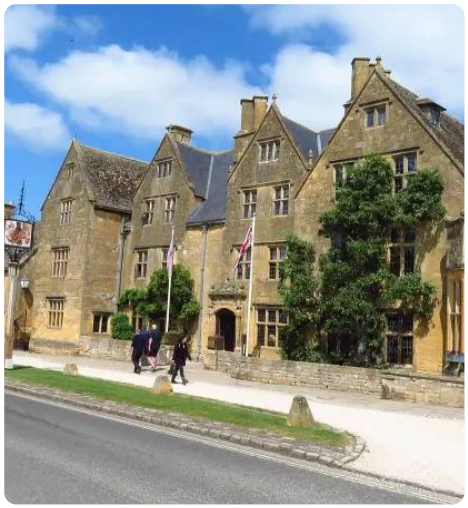
A very wide High Street of honey-coloured Cotswold stone, with independent shops, tea rooms and an old coaching inn. In the 1880s American and English artists came here each summer. Two small museums tell the story. It is a village for wandering, in Worcestershire on the edge of the Cotswolds.

DON'T MISS

**The Lygon Arms and its royal stories**

The carved arch above the front door. The Lygon Arms is a working hotel, so look from the High Street.





| SO FAR | YOUR ROUTE · STOP WHEN "SO FAR" REACHES YOUR TIME |
|---|---|
| **5** min | **The Lygon Arms** · 5 min here · free **DON'T MISS** — The old coaching inn on the High Street, where travellers by horse and carriage once stopped. A carved arch over the front door shows the name John Trevis and the date 1620. |
| **25** min | **The High Street and the Green** · 20 min here · free — A very wide street of honey-coloured Cotswold stone buildings, shaded by chestnut trees, with the grass of the Green at its heart. |
| **55** min | **Independent shops and galleries** · 30 min here · free — Art and antiques, handmade jewellery, gifts, fashion and food shops line the High Street, with tea rooms, cafés and pubs between them. |
| **85** min | **Broadway Museum & Art Gallery** · 30 min here · **own ticket** — A museum in Tudor House on the High Street, a 17th-century building that began as an inn for travellers by horse and carriage. It shows the story of the artists, the coaching days, the railway and the wool trade. |

**Also here, with more time:** The Gordon Russell Design Museum (45 min, own ticket) · Broadway Tower, seen on the way (5 min, free)

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|---|---|
| **TOILETS** | Yes. The Cotswolds National Landscape lists toilets at the short-stay car park in Church Close and at Broadway Park. Ask your guide which is nearest. |
| **FOOD** | There are tea rooms, cafés, a deli and pubs on and around the High Street. The village guide lists Broadway Deli and The Cotswold Larder among them. |

# More days out from London

Each region has its own page, with every tour's stops and how long you get at each one.

### Ready to choose a tour?

See every The Cotswolds day trip side by side: the stops, the minutes at each one, and what is included.
seebeyondthecity.com/london/cotswolds/#compare




BATH AND STONEHENGE

## Stonehenge & Roman Bath

Stonehenge · Bath · Castle Combe
Up to about 180 km · 111 miles

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KENT

## Cliffs, castles & Canterbury

White Cliffs of Dover · Canterbury · Leeds Castle
Up to about 120 km · 75 miles

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### Spotted a change?

Opening times and prices change. Reply to the email this guide came in and tell us what you found.

### Travelling with someone?

Forward the email, so they have the guide on their phone too.

# Sources

Where each page's facts come from, by stop. Each name is a link to the source.

### BURFORD

- Burford Church: the Levellers
- Burford Church: visitors
- Visit Cotswolds: Burford
- Burford Tolsey Museum and Archive
- Historic England: The Great Almshouses
- West Oxfordshire District Council: public toilets

### BIBURY

- A Church Near You: St Mary's Bibury
- National Trust: Bibury
- National Trust: things to do in Bibury
- Bibury Trout Farm
- Historic England: Swan Hotel

### BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER

- Cotswold District Council: Bourton-on-the-Water Conservation Area Statement
- Visit Cotswolds: Bourton-on-the-Water
- The Old New Inn: the Model Village
- Birdland Park and Gardens: admission prices and opening times
- Cotswold Motoring Museum
- Cotswold Perfumery
- Cotswold District Council: public toilets
- Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council: Visiting Bourton

### STOW-ON-THE-WOLD

- Historic England: Parish Church of St Edward
- Historic England: market cross in Market Square
- A Church Near You: St Edward's, Stow
- Victoria County History: Parishes, Stow-on-the-Wold
- Historic England: The Stocks
- Visit Cotswolds: Stow-on-the-Wold
- Cotswold District Council: public toilets

### SNOWSHILL

- VisitBritain: picturesque Britain on the festive silver screen
- Historic England: Church of St Barnabas, Snowshill
- National Trust: things to do in Snowshill Manor
- National Trust: things to do in the garden at Snowshill
- National Trust: Snowshill to Littleworth Wood circular walk
- Cotswold Lavender: the lavender fields
- National Trust: planning your visit to Snowshill
- National Trust: eating and shopping at Snowshill

### BROADWAY

- The Lygon Arms: our history
- Broadway Cotswolds: the village guide
- Broadway Cotswolds: shopping
- Broadway Cotswolds: Broadway Museum & Art Gallery
- Gordon Russell Design Museum: plan your visit
- Broadway Tower: history
- Cotswolds National Landscape: Broadway and the Tower walk
- Broadway Cotswolds: tea rooms and cafés

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| 3 | **Burford** | 1224560 The Former George Inn, Highstreet Burford 20240601 0137 | Tilman2007 | CC BY-SA 4.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 3 | **Burford: The Levellers' marks in the church** | Burford, St John the Baptist Church, The Norman font with Decorated carving | Michael Garlick | CC BY-SA 2.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 4 | **Bibury** | Arlington Row Bibury | Saffron Blaze | CC BY-SA 3.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 4 | **Bibury: St Mary's church** | Bibury, St. Marys Church-Saxon gravestone set into the north wall of the chancel | Michael Garlick | CC BY-SA 2.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 5 | **Bourton-on-the-Water** | Bourton-in-the-Water River Windrush | Kmtextor | CC BY-SA 4.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 5 | **Bourton-on-the-Water: The River Windrush and its bridges** | Bourton on the water (Explored) - Flickr - M McBey | Mike McBey | CC BY 2.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 6 | **Stow-on-the-Wold** | Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold | David Yap | CC BY-SA 2.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 6 | **Stow-on-the-Wold: St Edward's Church and its north door** | Doors of Durin | MorganMilesi | CC BY-SA 4.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 7 | **Snowshill** | Snowshill Church Barnabas | Saffron Blaze | CC BY-SA 3.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
| 7 | **Snowshill: St Barnabas church and the cottages round it** | St. Barnabas Church, Snowshill | Philip Halling | CC BY-SA 2.0 | Wikimedia Commons |
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