

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.

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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.

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

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.

First village: Burford →

Burford

An old market town and church

Your route ↓ | Toilets ↓ | Food ↓



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.

Your route

Walk it in this order. The orange number is your time so far: stop when it reaches your tour's time here.

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.

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.

Next village: Bibury →

Compare the tours that stop in Burford

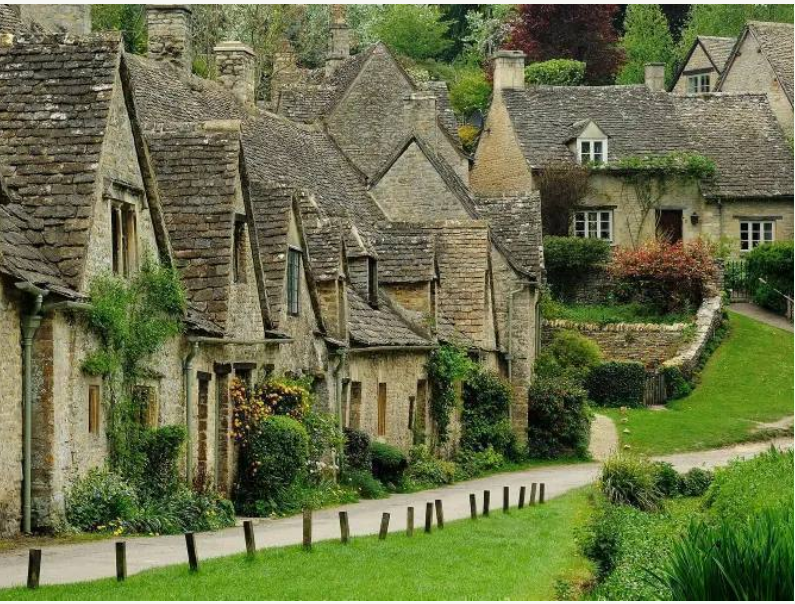
Full guide:
seebeyondthecity.com/london/places/burford/
Facts checked 20 October 2026

Bibury

The famous row of weavers' cottages

Your route ↓

Toilets and food ↓



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.

Your route

Walk it in this order. The orange number is your time so far: stop when it reaches your tour's time here.

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.

Next village: Bourton-on-the-Water →

Compare the tours that stop in Bibury

Full guide:
seebeyondthecity.com/london/places/bibury/
Facts checked 20 October 2026

Bourton-on-the-Water

A riverside village with attractions

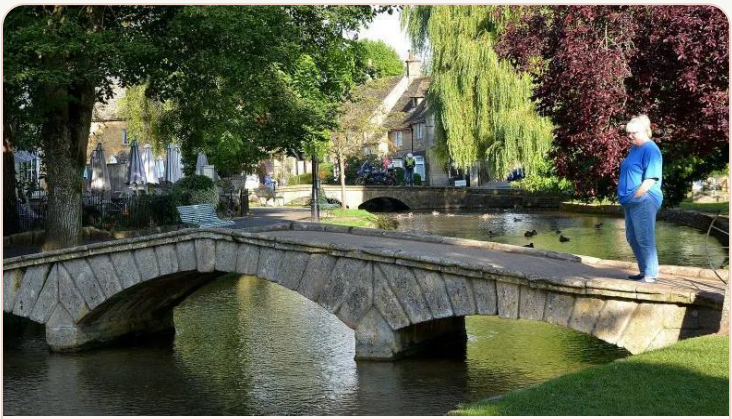
Your route ↓ | Toilets ↓ | Food ↓



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.

Your route

Walk it in this order. The orange number is your time so far: stop when it reaches your tour's time here.

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

Independent boutiques, craft shops, galleries and gift shops, with cafés and tea rooms where you can have coffee or afternoon tea by the river.



Birdland Park and Gardens

90 min · **own ticket**

More than 500 birds in nine acres of garden and woodland beside the river, including penguins, flamingos and owls. Birdland says it has England's only breeding group of king penguins.



The Cotswold Motoring Museum

45 min · **own ticket**

Cars, motorbikes, caravans, toys and memorabilia from 20th-century motoring.



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.

Next village: Stow-on-the-Wold →

Compare the tours that stop in Bourton-on-the-Water

Full guide:
seebeyondthecity.com/london/places/bourton-on-the-water/
Facts checked 20 October 2026

Stow-on-the-Wold

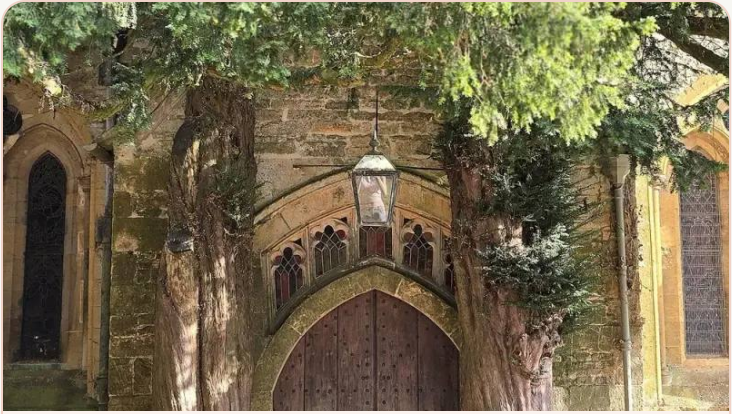
A market town with a story

Your route ↓ | Toilets ↓ | Food ↓



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.

Your route

Walk it in this order. The orange number is your time so far: stop when it reaches your tour’s time here.

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.



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.

Next village: Snowshill →

Compare the tours that stop in Stow-on-the-Wold

Full guide: seebeyondthecity.com/london/places/stow-on-the-wold/
Facts checked 20 October 2026

Snowshill

A quiet hill village

Your route ↓ | Toilets ↓ | Food ↓



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.

Your route

Walk it in this order. The orange number is your time so far: stop when it reaches your tour’s time here.

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**

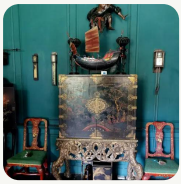


A garden laid out as a series of outdoor rooms, in the Arts and Crafts style, which prized handmade work. Look for a painted 24-hour clock called the Nychthemeron, and Wolf's Cove, a model Cornish fishing village.

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 village pub. The National Trust says it serves traditional British food and a range of ales and wines.

The Cotswold Lavender fields, in summer

10 min · free



In summer, rows of lavender cover the hills near the village. The farm says you see acres of purple as you drive out of Snowshill towards it.

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.

Next village: Broadway →

Compare the tours that stop in Snowshill

Full guide:
seebeyondthecity.com/london/places/snowshill/
Facts checked 20 October 2026

Broadway

A long village street to browse

Your route ↓ | Toilets ↓ | Food ↓



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.

Your route

Walk it in this order. The orange number is your time so far: stop when it reaches your tour's time here.

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**



Gordon Russell grew up here. His father bought the Lygon Arms in 1904, and the family workshop made its furniture. Gordon went on to build a well-known furniture company and was knighted in 1955. The museum, in one of his old workshops, tells his story.

Broadway Tower, seen on the way

5 min · free



A hilltop folly (a building made for show) finished in 1798, with turrets, battlements and balconies. The designer William Morris, the painter Edward Burne-Jones and their friends used it as a holiday retreat.

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 →

Compare the tours that stop in Broadway

Full guide:
seebeyondthecity.com/london/places/broadway/
Facts checked 20 October 2026

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.

Compare The Cotswolds day trips



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Up to about 180 km · 111 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.

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

Sources

BURFORD

Burford Church: the Levellers

Burford Church: visitors

Visit Cotswolds: Burford

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Historic England: The Great Almshouses

West Oxfordshire District Council: public toilets

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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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