

UK – Exploring The Cotswolds 8 days

Self-guided walking holiday - 8 days (7 Nights)



Trip difficulty	1	2	3	4	5
Hotel comfort level	1	2	3	4	5

The Cotswold landscape is an entrancing mixture of parkland, cultivated fields with dry-stone walls of Jurassic limestone and patches of unspoilt woodland. With almost all of the cottages, farmhouses and villages passed on the trail made of stone, the scenery blends with the structures creating a delightful fusion of natural and man-made beauty. Staying in a selection of handpicked B&B's and guesthouses whose hosts welcome you each evening. This is a perfect introduction to walking in the English countryside.

We grade this walk as 'Easy - Moderate' in relation to our other U.K tours, the route is hilly, but not mountainous, the weather is rarely too bad for walking, and there are generally quite a number of villages enroute. Days of up to 20 km are not too long for most reasonably fit people.

Trip Highlights:

- Discovering the beautiful and quintessential English countryside
- Walking parts of the Cotswold Way
- Enjoying the flexibility of walking with a daypack from village to village

- Experiencing the hospitality in the warm family run B&B's and guesthouses

Program Overview

Day	Itinerary	↔	🚶 km	M ↑	M ↓	Hrs.
1	Arrival in Stratford Upon Avon	Stratford Upon Avon	-	-	-	-
2	Stratford Upon Avon to Mickleton	Mickleton	18	220	183	5
3	Mickleton to Broadway	Broadway	16	285	282	5
4	Broadway to Blockley	Blockley	17	378	313	6
5	Blockley to Bourton on the Water	Bourton on the Water	21	327	347	5-6
6	Bourton on the Water to Guiting Power	Guiting Power	11.5	147	90	4
7	Guiting Power to Winchcombe	Winchcombe	18.5	228	319	6
8	Depart					

Day-to-day program

Day 1 Arrival in Stratford-upon-Avon ↔ Stratford-upon-Avon

Make your own way by train or car to Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare. The town is on a local railway line though you can get connections to Birmingham and London.

The day is free to explore the town. You can visit Shakespeare's birthplace in the centre of town, the Holy Trinity Church where he is buried, and the thatched cottage where Anne Hathaway once lived.

Accommodation: Moonraker House is a traditional English 4-star licensed bed & breakfast with en-suite rooms, delicious home cooking, friendly service, and a cosy atmosphere.

Day 2 Stratford-upon-Avon to Mickleton ↔ Mickleton

Today's walk will bring you to Mickleton. We suggest that you stop off at the National Trust Gardens at Hidcote Manor, near Mickleton. Enjoy the wide views over the vales of Severn and Avon toward the Malvern Hills and Wales.

Accommodation: in Mickleton

Day 3 Mickleton to Broadway ↔ Broadway

Lovely walk to Broadway via Chipping Campden Fish Hill and the unique Broadway Tower, which offer remarkable views of the Cotswolds. Broadway is a beautiful and picturesque town, and the main street is lined with magnificent stone-built houses as well as some great antique shops.

Accommodation: in Broadway

Day 4 Broadway to Blockley ➡ Blockley

The walk to Blockley you will pass Buckland where you can take a little time to explore, the church is interesting and has medieval painted roof timbers. Laverton, Stanton and Snowhill. A visit to the Tudor Snowhill Manor, with its collection of art and artefacts from all over the world, may be of interest. Blockley bears some resemblance to the villages of the Stroud Valley, but the stone is much more golden in colour. During the 18th century when the wool industry was in decline Blockley turned to silk production. The village is a unique collection of buildings reflecting its past glory of mills and silk production and is quite different in character to other north Cotswolds villages.

Accommodation: in Blockley

Day 5 Blockley to Bourton on the Water ➡ Bourton on the Water

A beautiful walk in which you will be able to explore some of the prettiest villages of the Cotswolds. To the medieval wool town of Bourton on the Water, the walk will take you via Batsford, Stow on the Wold, and Lower Slaughter. The river Windrush flows down the main street of Bourton on the Water. Bourton is well known for its footbridges over the river Evenlode and for its scale model of the village.

Accommodation: in Bourton on the Water, sometimes due to availability it is a 2-night stay in Bourton on the Water instead of Blockley.

Day 6 Bourton on the Water to Guiting Power ➡ Guiting Power

Today you will walk to the tiny village of Guiting Power. Nestled in the hills above a small valley, Guiting Power is a perfect example of a Cotswold village. Our accommodation tonight is situated in the small and isolated typical village that has allowed time to pass it by. Due to limited accommodation in Guiting you may be staying in the small village of Naunton which is located 1/2 hour walk before Guiting. If so, you will walk through this village enroute.

Accommodation: Due to the limited accommodation in Guiting Power you will have a Two-night stay at Winchcombe with transfers included.

Day 7 Guiting Power to Winchcombe ➡ Winchcombe

There are a few walking route options today.

- a. via Sudeley Castle (18.5 km/11.5 miles, 5 h)
- b. via Warden's Way & Sudeley Castle (10.46 km/6.5 miles, 2.5 h)

The walk today leads you to the atmospheric ruins of Hailes Abbey, destroyed under Henry VIII, and the still inhabited Sudeley Castle, where Henry VIII's last wife Katherine Parr lived. Winchcombe is a delightful town nestling in a deep valley near the regency town of Cheltenham.

Accommodation: Same as the night before in Winchcombe

Day 8 – Trip concludes after breakfast

Accommodation

There is a variety of accommodation along the route ranging from bed and breakfasts, lodges, pubs, and small hotels. They are run by walker friendly hosts offering en-suite or private facility rooms with

a tasty breakfast to get you ready for the walk ahead. Further facilities such as washing and drying facilities, packed lunches and packed lunches are available in some accommodations, you will be advised on your listing of what is available.

Meals

The overnight accommodations are on a bed & breakfast basis, you will have a selection of cold and hot options each morning to choose from.

Packed lunches can be booked and paid for on arrival at your accommodation. They offer a good selection of sandwiches, snacks, and drink for you to then take with you for that day's walk. On most days you will also pass a café and/or shop.

For evening meals, you will have a variety of lovely pubs and restaurants to choose from or your accommodation will provide a tasty meal.

Getting there and away

You can make your own way by train or car to Stratford-upon-Avon. The town is on a local railway line though you can get connections to Birmingham and London.

Route Information

We will provide a digital mobile app through GUIBO with every booking. This will include a personalised itinerary, GPX files, and detailed route information. You will also receive a personalised link to download your customised PDF roadbook and trip information.

Luggage transfer

Luggage transfer of one bag weighing up to 20kg per person is included in the package and is managed by Compass Luggage. Luggage tags will be provided by the luggage company on the first bag move. Please ensure your bags are clearly labelled with the lead booking surname before the first move. Your bags will be collected in the morning—check with your accommodation for the required time and location for bag collection.

We recommend using a soft backpack or holdall, as these travel better. Please avoid tying or strapping additional items to your main bag, as they are difficult to handle and may become detached. The maximum bag weight is 20kg.

Alternative accommodation

On rare occasions we may need to change your accommodation due to unforeseen circumstances such as a burst pipe, therefore we will provide alternative accommodation of the same standard. Full details will be passed on to you.

Practical Information

Group size:	Minimum 1 person
Trip Grade:	3

Activity characteristics:	The walks are mostly unsurfaced tracks and footpaths across fields.
Closest airports:	Birmingham, London Heathrow
Closest port:	Southampton
Trip availability:	Late Mar-mid Oct
Remarks:	
Trip documents:	We send a digital copy of route notes and destination manual to all agents. The agent is responsible for the printing of the road book, destination manual and maps and will need to send a full information pack to the guests. It is up to the agent to send this digitally or printed by post. All documentation needs to be printed in A5 booklet.

Additional Services
