

Hiking the Cotswold Way and Wales

HONEY-STONE VILLAGES, COASTAL TRAILS, AND MEDIEVAL CASTLES



Wilderness Travel



Hiking the Cotswold Way and Wales

TRIP DATES

2024

May 26-June 5, 2024

August 18-28, 2024

September 22-October 2, 2024 Added
Departure

2025

May 27-June 6, 2025

August 11-21, 2025

September 22-October 2, 2025

The idyllic villages of the Cotswolds and wild seascapes of Wales' Pembrokeshire Coast Path grace this spectacular journey. On the Cotswold Way, we'll hike between honey-colored 17th century wool villages tucked among ancient forests and emerald-green meadows. After exploring Jane Austen's beloved city of Bath, we hike right into Wales to reach romantic Tintern Abbey, then along the banks of the lush River Wye and cliff paths of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. Overnights are in historic manor houses, a Georgian townhouse, and traditional inns, and our culinary delights range from local Cotswold lamb to Welsh mussels straight from the sea.





Itinerary

TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length:	11 days
Arrive:	Stratford-on-Avon, England
Depart:	Cardiff, Wales
Lodging:	10 nights comfortable hotels
Meals:	All except 1 lunch and 1 dinner (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity:	Archaeology, Cultural Adventures, Hiking / Trekking, Walking
Trip Level:	1 2 ③ 4 5 6 10 hiking days on moderate trails with some short steep sections 2-5 hours a day, van support

DAY 1 STRATFORD ON AVON, ENGLAND / COTSWOLD WAY / CHIPPING CAMPDEN / STANTON / BROADWAY

Welcome to the Cotswolds! We meet in the morning in the beautiful Cotswold village of Stratford on Avon, and head to Chipping Campden, a classic English market town renowned for its historic architecture. The town made its wealth through the wool trade in the 13th century, and many buildings from this era are still present today. We'll explore the town on foot, then walk through the 17th century Market Hall, the "official" start of the Cotswold Way walking trail, then head up along grassy paths to Dover's Hill, our first fine viewpoint along the Cotswold escarpment. We eventually reach Broadway Tower, an 18th century folly and at 1,089 feet, the highest point of the Cotswold Way. We'll stop for lunch here in a delightful café and, if weather permits, we'll eat outside. Nestled below this ancient beacon hill is the popular village of Broadway, often called the "Jewel of the Cotswolds". We'll descend slowly through fields of quietly grazing sheep into the afternoon bustle of the town. The main street, lined with golden stone cottages, some clad in wisteria and with lush colorful gardens, leads us to the Lygon Arms Hotel, originally a 16th century coaching inn and our home for the next two nights. Both King Charles I and Cromwell stayed here during the 17th century English Civil War, but not at the same time! After checking into the hotel, we'll have time to explore the village before we gather for a Welcome Dinner and overnight at Lygon Arms Hotel...LD

Hiking Details: 6.2 miles, 3 hours, 690 feet ascent, 880 feet descent

DAY 2 HAILES ABBEY / BELAS KNAP / CLEEVE COMMON

Today's hike begins at the tranquil ruins of Hailes Abbey, founded in 1246 by the Earl of Cornwall and set in open countryside. Our trail brings us to the town of Winchcombe, set above the River Isbourne on an escarpment overlooking the Severn Valley, and onward to the archaeological site of Belas Knap, a Neolithic chambered tomb that was first excavated in 1863. We'll have a picnic lunch here, then finish our hike at Cleeve Common, a unique grassland environment that is of national importance for its geologic and scientific interest. We'll take a walk through the Common with a park ranger. Dinner tonight is at a historic pub dating back to the 15th century. Overnight at the Lygon Arms Hotel...BLD
Hiking Details: 8 miles, 4-5 hours, 1,340 feet ascent, 890 feet descent

Driving Time: 1 hour

DAY 3 PAINSWICK / HARESFIELD BEACON / STANDISH PARK FARM / FALCONRY

From the little hilltop village of Painswick, we follow the Cotswold Way through typical English forests of ash, birch, oak, sycamore, and maple, then into the wide-open expanses of Haresfield Beacon, a National Trust property with glorious views over the River Severn. After our picnic lunch, we continue along the Cotswold Way to Standish Park Farm, on the edge of the Cotswolds Hills adjacent to the stately Norman church of St Nicholas Standish, with its imposing spire. At the farm, artisan cheesemaker Jonathan Crump has

been producing award-winning Single and Double Gloucester cheese from the farm's herd of Old Gloucester cows, a rare heritage breed. Both the Single and Double Gloucester Cheese have won first prizes at the Annual Farming Awards—and so did Jonathan's cows! We'll taste the wares before heading to the welcoming Painswick Hotel for dinner and overnight. This former 18th century vicarage is part of the award-winning luxury group the Calcot Collection, with a kitchen overseen by Michelin-starred chef Michael Bedford. Before dinner, however, we have a real treat in store for you—the opportunity to fly hawks and owls. The ancient sport of falconry will be introduced within the hotel grounds. You'll be presented with a gauntlet, and these magnificent birds will fly and perch on your leather clad outstretched arm. To be so close to such beautiful creatures is something you'll remember and treasure...BLD

Hiking Details: 5 miles, 3.5-4 hours, 1,150 feet ascent, 1,200 feet descent

Driving Time: 1.5 hours

DAY 4 WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE / WORTLEY / ALDERLEY

Hiking through green countryside bring us to Wotton-Under-Edge, where we stop to visit its rows of historic "almshouses" created by local benefactors in the 18th century to house poor families. After lunch, we head over the fields to link up with the Cotswold Way path in Wortley and follow it to the pleasant village of Alderley. Like many sites in the Cotswolds, Alderley was a center of the wool trade starting in the medieval period and by the 17th century, had several wool



mills. Returning to Painswick, we have the opportunity to explore the village. The wool trade brought much prosperity to Painswick, with as many as 30 mills producing superfine broadcloth. Today a range of artisans have moved into former weavers' cottages in town. Overnight at the Painswick Hotel... BLD

Hiking Details: 11.3 miles, 4.5-5.5 hours, 1,860 feet ascent, 1,845 feet descent

Driving Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

DAY 5 HIGHGROVE GARDENS / BATH

Today we'll take a rest from hiking and visit the colorful and imaginative gardens at Highgrove. Built in the late 18th century in Georgian neo-classical style, this house was purchased by HM King Charles III in 1980. He inherited a very unkempt and overgrown garden. Over the years many people have helped in creating an interlinked series of gardens, reflecting the King's interests and passions, including the aromatic Thyme Walk, and the strange universe known as the Stumpery. We'll take a 90-minute tour with an expert guide and learn more of its history and development. Once we've taken too many photos of flowers, we'll head to our hotel in the spectacular World Heritage city of Bath. Lunch is on your own in Bath (the Trip Leader will be happy to make recommendations, depending on how local or fancy you want to go), with some free time to explore the ancient streets. With its imposing Georgian architecture, regal connections, and the "healing" waters of its Roman Baths, it's easy to see why the city inspired Jane Austen. We'll gather together

at about 5 pm for a walking tour of Bath with a specialist, starting our walk at the famous Roman baths, one of the best preserved Roman spas in the world, surrounded by stunning 18th and 19th century buildings. Bath is also brimming with farm shops, artisanal coffee houses, bistros, and brasseries, and we'll be welcomed for dinner at Clayton's Kitchen, a local foodie favorite where Chef Robert Clayton creates dishes with the freshest local ingredients. Overnight at the Windsor Townhouse, a guest house near the center of Bath...BD
Driving Time: 1.5 hours

DAY 6 TO WALES / OFFA'S DYKE / TINTERN ABBEY / CRICKHOWELL

A short morning drive brings us to the start of our hike across the historic Anglo-Welsh border and into the enchanting Wye Valley. With its tranquil farmlands, quaint villages, and limestone gorges, the Wye Valley has long been a source of inspiration to artists, writers, and poets (Wordsworth and Coleridge among them). At Devil's Pulpit, a rocky outcrop set at the edge of the river gorge, we savor views of the meandering River Wye and magnificent 12th century Tintern Abbey below. From here, legend tells, the devil attempted to lure the monks from their calling. Our trail follows the ancient border between kingdoms by following Offa's Dyke, the 8th century earthen barrier that once separated King Offa's Saxon kingdom from the warring Welsh Celtic tribes to the west. Descending to cross the river into Wales (keep an eye out for herons, kingfishers, and river otters), we end our hike at Tintern Abbey, where we'll enjoy lunch in a bustling local pub,





our first opportunity to try Welsh ale. Afterwards, we enjoy a tour with a local scholar through these haunting halls, hearing stories from across the centuries that bring the ruins to life. Heading to the picturesque market town of Crickhowell in the heart of Beacons National Park, we reach The Bear Hotel, a historic coaching inn and the first of our Welsh lodgings. Before dinner we'll gather to hear a local storyteller (chwedleuwr) who continues this ancient Welsh tradition. Dinner is in the Bear's acclaimed restaurant—a chance to taste world-renowned Welsh lamb and other locally sourced specialties. Overnight at The Bear Hotel...BLD
Hiking Details: 3.7 miles, 2 hours, 460 feet ascent, 1,150 feet descent

Driving Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

DAY 7 RIVER WYE / HAY-ON-WYE

A hearty Welsh breakfast fuels us for our hike along and above the northern banks of the River Wye, the fourth longest river in Britain. The Wye Valley walk is 136 miles and is in a designated area of outstanding natural beauty. This wide river valley is lush, and the Wye is one of the most important rivers in the UK for nature conservation. A short drive brings us to the start of our hike in Glasbury, its name derives from “clas,” meaning church land, and is the burial site of St Cynidr, a 6th century bishop. Nowadays the village is a popular spot to fish and kayak. Keeping the river on our right, we walk east and pass under a row of aspen trees festooned with mistletoe.

These hemiparasites were used in pagan times as fertility symbols and in the later Christian era the plant became associated with Christmas; surely you've heard of being kissed under the mistletoe! The route climbs up and away from the river before heading down into Llowes, a tiny village with an important stone cross. St Meilig's Cross dates to the 6th or 7th century; Meilig is credited with founding a monastery in the area. Local legend recounts that the strong and powerful wife of William de Braose, lord of Hay-on Wye castle, while carrying stones in her apron to rebuild the castle, let one slip and it fell heavily on her shoe. The Lady Maud was so angry that she threw the stone over the River Wye where it landed in Llowes churchyard. The cross lovingly referred to as “Moll Walbee's Stone” is now safely housed in the church. We regain the riverbank, where we may see kingfishers and herons scanning the fresh water for fish as we go by. A 19th century stone arched bridge, originally a toll bridge, spans the river and is the entrance to a book-lover's mecca, Hay-on-Wye. Expect to see books in every direction—tiny Hay-on-Wye is home to more than 30 second-hand bookshops, with bookshelves lining the meandering lanes and treasured titles spilling forth. After some time to browse, we'll be treated to a guided tour through the history of the newly restored Hay Castle, opened in May 2022. The 12th century keep is Norman and played an important part in the buffer zone between Norman England and the princedoms of Wales. It's neighboring Jacobean mansion built in 1640, in more peaceful times, was a family



home of great elegance and wealth. After several owners, in 1960 the castle was bought by Richard Booth, the visionary and eccentric who came up with the idea of making Hay-on-Wye the first Book Town in the world. He lived in the castle and used it to store the truckloads of second-hand books he bought. In 1977 he declared Hay-on-Wye an Independent Kingdom with himself as King and his horse Goldie as Prime Minister! Dinner and overnight at the Bear Hotel...BLD
 Hiking Details: 5.5 miles, 3-3.5 hours, 700 feet ascent, 650 feet descent
 Driving Time: 1 hour

DAY 8 LAUGHARNE / ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL / PEMBROKESHIRE NATIONAL PARK

Today we head west to Pembrokeshire National Park, with a visit along the way to the coastal village of Laugharne and the Boathouse, final home of Dylan Thomas, Britain's highly celebrated, hard-drinking, and tragically short-lived bard. Joined by a local expert, we'll take a walk through Dylan's life and into his writing shed to share the serene views that inspired some of his finest verses. We arrive this afternoon at the westernmost tip of Wales, where magnificent St. David's Cathedral stands dramatically in a hollow, below the tiny city of the same name. The spiritual and ecclesiastical center of Wales, the shrine marks the birthplace of the country's beloved patron saint (Dewi Sant in Welsh) and has drawn pilgrims to the rugged Pembrokeshire Coast since its founding in 550

AD. Together with a local guide, we walk among its vaulted 12th century chambers, built of dusky purple sandstone from the nearby cliffs, and learn about the centuries of fine craftsmanship that created the grand cathedral. Our hotel, the St David's Cross Hotel, originally a large family house over 200 years ago, has been operating as a hotel since the late 1880s. Refurbished in 2015, it's now a cozy small hotel nestled in the center of St David's, Britain's smallest city with about 2,000 inhabitants. Dinner is at our hotel...BLD
 Hiking Details: 2 miles, 1 hour
 Driving Time: 3 hours

DAY 9 SOLVA WOOLLEN MILL / PEMBROKESHIRE COAST PATH TO ST. NON'S BAY

The Pembrokeshire Coast Path is one of the crown jewels of Britain's National Park system, winding along the spectacular seaside landscapes of the west coast of Wales for 186 miles. Some of the path's most dramatic and rugged stretches lie within St. David's Peninsula. But before we get to the hike we'll pop into Solva Woollen Mill, a hidden treasure on the banks of the River Solfach. Here, inside an old warping shed built in 1899, flat woven flooring and traditional Welsh blankets have been woven for over 100 years. We'll delight in seeing how the different patterns and colors are combined on the looms to make the high quality and hardwearing products that are sold worldwide. Our hike starts from Solva Harbour, a narrow sheltered anchorage that leads out into St



Brides Bay. Important as a trading center in the Middle Ages, it grew in prominence as lime was exported from the lime kilns that can still be seen at the harbor's edge. At one time it accommodated vessels of 500 tons and upwards; nowadays we'll just see small pleasure boats, paddleboards, and kayaks out on its clear waters. We strike out westward across the cliff tops, where our path meanders along the secluded inlets and sheltered sandstone coves. We'll watch for seals basking on the rocks below and in the air we may see peregrine falcons and choughs that make their nests on the nearby islands. If weather permits and you're feeling brave, there will also be an opportunity to swim in the refreshing but cool sea. At St Non's Bay we head inland to our hotel in St David's. Before getting there, we'll pass the ruins of St Non's Chapel, believed to be the birthplace of St David and the oldest Christian building in Wales. Legend has it that David's mother, Non, gave birth to him here under a ray of light surrounded by a raging storm, her pain so great that her fingers left marks on the surrounding rocks as she grasped for support. Close by there is a holy well, where in the past pilgrims came to drink its waters for healing and good luck. To this day it's still venerated and Pope Benedict used its waters during his visit to Britain in 2010. Dinner is on your own tonight. Before dinner, you may want to join in the 1,000-year-old tradition of evensong or evening prayer in St. David's Cathedral. Overnight at St Davids Cross Hotel...BL

Hiking Details: 5.6 miles, 3-4 hours, 1,030 feet ascent, 855 feet descent

DAY 10 CARREG CRENNAN CASTLE / CARDIFF

We head to Carreg Cennan for a counter-clockwise hike around one of Wales' most spectacularly located castles. Set in the Brecon Beacon National Park, Carreg Cennen dominates its surroundings, perched above the mountain farms that surround it. The castle's story goes back to the 13th century but there is archaeological evidence that the Romans as well as prehistoric peoples occupied this craggy hilltop site (Roman coins and prehistoric skeletons have been unearthed here). After our walk, we enjoy lunch in a local farm tearoom, then head for Cardiff, the Welsh capital. We'll have a tour of Cardiff Castle in the late afternoon and then gather for our Farewell Dinner at the Purple Poppadom, hailed as the best Indian restaurant in Wales. Overnight at the Hilton Hotel...BLD

Hiking Details: 3.5 miles, 3-3.5 hours, 840 feet ascent, 830 feet descent

DAY 11 CARDIFF / DEPART

Depart after breakfast...B

Trip Details

DATE AND PRICING INFORMATION

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$7195 (10-14 members)

\$7695 (4-9 members)

Single supplement: \$1595

2025 Trip Cost: Please call for details

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our trips in Britain by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the British Pound. In the late spring of 2023, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled 0.83 British Pounds. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Pounds, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Pound were to rise in value, the land price would rise less than might be expected, and if the Pound were to fall, the drop in trip cost would also be less than might be expected.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations in hotels
- All meals included except 1 lunch and 1 dinner
- Land transportation as noted
- Entrance fees to castles and historic sites as per the itinerary

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, transfers other than those provided for group flights, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessitated by airline schedule changes or other factors, travel insurance, and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, telephone calls).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details:

www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Our Guides

MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Our British Trip Leaders are wonderful hiking companions on the trail. They also have a great gift for bringing history to life, and their connections with local people bring you insights and authentic cultural exchanges as they welcome you into the natural beauty and rich heritage of the Cotswolds and Wales.



SKYE MCDONALD

Skye McDonald was born and raised in Scotland in a small village called Scone, the ancient crowning place of the kings and queens of Scotland, and is now based in the Highland capital of Inverness. She has worked as a Trip Leader in 27 countries since the millennium and lived in France. As a walking guide she has explored many areas, including the Pindos in northern Greece, the wadis of Jordan, the volcanoes of Cape Verde, the sentiers of the Dordogne and Pyrenees, the Sahara in Mauritania and Mali, the mountains of Cyprus and Lebanon, and most recently the levadas of Madeira and the slate villages and cultural sites of Portugal. “Bringing understanding between peoples of very different cultures and backgrounds is one of the joys of being a Trip Leader, and of course, the chance to make friends around the world.” Closer to home, she delights in sharing the glories of her native Scotland, and says that a good day scaling some of the beautiful Scottish mountains is hard to beat. Skye also loves revealing the glories and stories of the Principality of

Wales and walking the famous Coast to Coast trail across northern England. “I adore all the trips I lead for WT. When asked which is my favourite, my response is, all of them!” Skye speaks German, French, and unusually, a smattering of Swahili from earlier years as a volunteer agricultural officer in Tanzania.



TONY DEWES

Tony Dewes was born and brought up in Yorkshire, England, and spent more than 20 years as a college and university lecturer before becoming an outdoor instructor. He has traveled extensively in Asia, Europe, and Central and Southern America, and been a guide since 2002. “I love taking people to wild and remote places, and creating those special memories for people to treasure.” When not leading trips, Tony loves to cook, particularly cuisine from the Indian subcontinent, and play his ukulele. He lives in Cumbria, where he has dedicated many years of service to his local mountain rescue team and has been awarded both the Queens Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Queens Award for Voluntary Service for his work in training mountain rescue personnel.

Accommodations



LYGON ARMS HOTEL

Broadway, England

Days 1 to 2 (2 nights)

At the historic Lygon Arms, you can visit the suite that Oliver Cromwell stayed in the night before the Battle of Worcester in 1651! This grand Tudor coaching inn on the main street of Broadway has been expanded and somewhat modernized over the years but still has the open, log-burning fireplaces that hint at its 14th century roots. The hotel has 80 rooms, a lovely spa and pool, a plethora of cozy bar areas, and a very good restaurant.



PAINSWICK HOTEL

Painswick, England

Days 3 to 4 (2 nights)

The boutique Painswick Hotel has panoramic views over the lovely Painswick Valley from its perch above town. The house dates from the 18th century, became a hotel in the 1950s, and since 2015 has been part of the Calcot Collection of luxury hotels. The 16 guest rooms are individually designed and warmly inviting, and the restaurant offers a blend of traditional and unconventional in a kitchen overseen by Michelin-starred chef Michael Bedford.



WINDSOR TOWNHOUSE

Bath, England

Day 5 (1 night)

The Windsor is a Georgian townhouse converted into a comfortable 15-room bed and breakfast. It has a welcoming staff and is just a five-minute walk from the historic center of Bath.

Accommodations (cont'd)



THE BEAR HOTEL

Crickhowell, Wales

Days 6 to 7 (2 nights)

Located in the heart of the Brecon Beacons National Park, this former coaching inn is brimming with charm and old world hospitality, yet has all the necessary modern comforts. With 30 rooms decorated in unique style, an award-winning restaurant—the ideal place to have your first taste of world-renowned Welsh lamb, and an antique-filled bar serving an array of single malts, The Bear is the ideal base for exploring the Wye Valley.



ST DAVIDS CROSS HOTEL

Pembrokeshire, Wales

Days 8 to 9 (2 nights)

This 16-room hotel offers a warm, cozy atmosphere. Originally a large family home, it became a hotel in the late 19th century and was fully renovated in 2015. Guest rooms are comfortable, with a TV, coffee and tea-making facilities, and free Wi-Fi.



CARDIFF HILTON

Cardiff, Wales

Day 10 (1 night)

The Cardiff Hilton is on the edge of the city center's Castle Quarter, just two blocks from Cardiff Castle. There is an indoor pool and sauna, and the hotel is close to shops and restaurants.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Hiking the Cotswold Way and Wales* webpage and click on the “Accommodations” tab.

Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

The Shakespeare Hotel
Chapel Street
Stratford on Avon, England

Suggested Airport: Birmingham International Airport (BHX), London Heathrow (LHR), or London Gatwick (LGW)

Suggested Date & Time: Anytime prior to Day 1

Suggested Arrival Train Station: Stratford on Avon. Taxis from the train station to the hotel cost approximately £5. The hotel is just 1 mile away.

Meeting Place: The Trip Leader will meet group members in the lobby of The Shakespeare Hotel on Day 1 at 9:30 am for the transfer to our first hike. If you are staying elsewhere in Stratford on Avon, please take a taxi to the hotel for the group meeting.

DEPARTURE

Cardiff, Wales

Suggested Airport: Cardiff Airport, Wales (CWL)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 11, after 9:00 am

Suggested Departure Train Station: Cardiff Central Train Station. Trains from Cardiff depart for London's Paddington Station about every 30-45 minutes beginning around 5:15 am. The journey takes 2-2.5 hours.

On Day 11, the Trip Leader will assist with calling taxis to facilitate onward travel for trip members. Taxis from the hotel

to the train station (1.5 miles away) cost approximately £7. It is recommended to pre-book all your train tickets online to ensure a seat.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from England. There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once tickets are purchased, please forward a copy of your email flight confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

What the Trip is Like

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated a Level 3 (Moderate) according to our trip grading system. You will need to be comfortable hiking 10 miles a day and being on your feet for up to 7 hours a day. You will need to be able to keep up with the moderate but steady pace of the group as there are no alternative hiking options available. Trail conditions, weather, and the group's level of fitness can affect hiking times and pacing.

Average Hiking Day

- 7 miles
- 4-5 hours
- 1,000 feet gain and 700 feet loss

Challenge Days

- Day 7: 9 miles, 6 hours, and 2,000 feet gain/loss

TERRAIN

The trails along the Cotswold Way are generally well-marked and wide, and they include earthy tracks, grassy paths through fields, wide tractor routes through woodlands, and some short sections on quiet roads. With the exception of the hike in Brecon Beacon National Park where there is a continuous 2,000 foot climb (trip members can elect to be driven halfway up), most days have gentle elevation change throughout the hike. There are sections on some of our hikes that are rocky and rugged, but we will not get too close to the cliff edge. With rainfall, some areas can be muddy.

GETTING IN SHAPE

We strongly urge you to train for your trip, as your enjoyment will be highly dependent on your level of fitness. The best training for a hike is to hike, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling, or other cardiovascular exercises. Stair-climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy, comfortable, and thoroughly broken-in.

WEATHER

Even in the summer, the weather in England and Wales can change quickly due to their maritime climate. However, summers are generally mild and fresh with average daytime temperatures around 70°F. Wales tends to be wetter than England, with slightly less sunshine. Showers are usually short lived, but as the weather is unpredictable, it is necessary to bring raingear on every hike.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Our accommodations are in small, quaint hotels that have been selected for their local history and charm. Since they are often in historic buildings, the rooms are not always of uniform or international size. Our leaders do their best to assign rooms in a fair way so that all participants experience an equal advantage throughout the trip as a whole. There are no elevators and many buildings have low beams. Single rooms can be requested but are not always available, due to the limited space in the hotels. If you prefer a single room, please make your request as early as possible.

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY				DRIVING DETAILS
DAY	HOURS	MILES	ELEV. GAIN/LOSS	HOURS
1	3 hours	6.2 miles	+690'/-880'	20 minutes
2	4-5 hours	8 miles	+1,340'/-890'	1 hour
3	3.5-4 hours	5 miles	+1,150'/-1,200'	1 hour 30 minutes
4	4.5-5.5 hours	11.3 miles	+1,860'/-1,845'	1 hour 20 minutes
5				1 hour 30 minutes
6	2 hours	3.7 miles	+460'/-1,150'	1 hour 45 minutes
7	3-3.5 hours	5.5 miles	+700'/-650'	1 hour
8	1 hour	2 miles		3 hours
9	3-4 hours	5.6 miles	+1,030'/-855'	
10	3-3.5 hours	3.5 miles	+840'/-830'	

What the Trip is Like (cont'd)

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Bath	45/37	46/37	50/39	54/41	61/46	64/52	70/55	68/55	63/52	55/46	50/41	45/37
St. David's	46/37	46/36	49/39	52/41	57/45	62/50	65/54	65/54	62/51	56/47	51/42	47/38
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Bath	2.0	1.39	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.2	2.0	2.1	1.8
St. David's	4.5	2.9	2.3	1.8	2.3	1.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	4.0	4.6	4.1

CUISINE

Lunches will either be at local cafes and pubs or picnic-style during one of our hikes. Dinners will be at a local restaurant or at the hotel. We will have a chance to experience a range of local cuisines, and one of our hotels includes a restaurant with locally-sourced products. Please note that in Europe, the dinner hour is considerably later than what it is in the US. We do our best to secure early reservations for our groups, but most often the evening meal will be at 7:30 pm.

TRANSPORTATION

Our van will transport the group's luggage, so you only need to carry a daypack for items you need for the day (rain gear, sweater, camera, water bottle, etc.). Trip members are always free to skip a day's hike and travel to the next destination in the support vehicle (or remain at the hotel if we are not transferring that day).

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Europe Manager or email us at europe@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

TOUCAN CLUB

We're proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business! The Wilderness Travel Toucan Club was established to reward our travelers for their loyalty. For details, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club.



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner
Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Condé Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row
Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row
Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*
Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner
50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row
Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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