

## England: Bath & the Cotswolds

### Air Package Itinerary

They say the beauty of England's Cotswolds region is second to none—and nobody delivers the authentic Cotswolds like Country Walkers. Our local leaders bring you to hidden nooks that bring the English countryside to life. We'll take you through the magnificent Stanway House—a marvel of Jacobean architecture and ancestral home of the Earls of Wemyss. Experience the pleasure of English gardens during a tour of Kiftsgate Court—where you'll enjoy a delightful lunch surrounded by a splendid kaleidoscope of vibrant blooms. View the famous Broadway Tower and the picturesque village of Bourton-on-the-Water, sometimes called the “Venice of the Cotswolds.” Along the way, we'll put you up in quaint hotels dripping with English character—where you'll find splendid local cuisine, delightful walks, and the quintessential charm of English hospitality.



## Highlights

- Stroll the footpaths of Kiftsgate Court Gardens, one of England's most beloved gardens, tended by three generations of women.
- Marvel at breathtaking vistas along the famed Cotswold Way and Monarch's Way, traversing bucolic pastureland dotted with sheep and small wooded glens.
- Explore the fine 16th-century stone buildings of the village of Broadway, the “Jewel of the Cotswolds.”
- Walk into 17th-century market towns, where wool, yarn, and farm produce were traded and sold for centuries.
- Explore the UNESCO World Heritage city of Bath, with its stunningly well-preserved Roman

bathhouses and grand Georgian architecture.

## On all Fully-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



**Air Packages** include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

## Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate with an average of 3.5 to 7 miles of walking daily. There are daily ascents and descents of up to 1,200 feet. The walks feature a combination of paved roads and easy terrain, mixed with moderate hills, moorland, and uneven footpaths. Due to England's climate, the footpaths can often be wet and muddy. On this route, we will also encounter several stiles, which are typically steps that allow humans, but not livestock, to cross over a fence or wall.

## Flight Day

### Depart for Your Vacation

Your vacation is about to begin! Spend your first night aloft and arrive ready for an unforgettable trip.

## Arrival Day

### Arrive in London. Pre-Tour Hotel Night: Stratford-upon-Avon

A Country Walkers representative will greet you at the airport to start your adventure off right. A complimentary car service will whisk you to your centrally located hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon. From here, you are perfectly positioned to explore this charming city at your leisure.

## DAY 1

### Your Country Walkers Vacation Begins

*Kiftsgate Court Gardens to Chipping Campden; 4 miles, easy*

After enjoying an included breakfast, meet your leaders at 10:00 a.m. in the main lobby of The Arden Hotel for a welcome orientation. Then board your private motorcoach for a short 20-minute drive to Kiftsgate Court Gardens. Please be dressed for walking.

Upon arrival at Kiftsgate, enjoy lunch in the Gardens' tearoom. Later, take time to explore the hedge-lined pathways that lead to charming topiaries and rare trees. Tended by three generations of the Chambers family, these colorful and intricately designed outdoor "rooms" are always full of surprises.

This afternoon, begin your walk along the Monarch's Way footpath toward Chipping Campden. Though the full trail stretches 615 miles, you'll walk only a scenic portion. Early on, you'll pass through Hidcote Bartrim, a hamlet of traditional thatched-roof stone cottages once home to Johnston's gardeners. From there, continue into the open Cotswolds countryside.

Later, arrive in the small market town of Chipping Campden (with "chipping" derived from the Old English word for "market"). Enter via High Street, lined with golden-hued limestone buildings crafted from locally quarried Cotswold stone—a distinctive oolitic limestone. At the town center, admire the Market Hall with its

elegant arches, built in 1627 by Sir Baptist Hicks to provide shelter for farmers selling cheese, butter, and poultry.

Check in to the Noel Arms Hotel, one of the oldest inns in the Cotswolds. Charles II is said to have stayed here during the English Civil War in the mid-1600s.

Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner in the hotel's restaurant.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 2

### Walk to Broadway Tower. Independent Exploration of Broadway and Chipping Campden

*6 miles, easy to moderate*

After breakfast, step onto the Cotswold Way, a 102-mile UK National Trail that links Chipping Campden with the city of Bath. Your peaceful route—first envisioned by England's Ramblers, the largest walking group in Great Britain—passes quaint houses before ascending the Cotswold Edge escarpment to Dover's Hill. Here, enjoy sweeping views of the Malvern Hills to the west. Around 1612, Robert Dover established annual games on this spot, giving them the grand title of the "Olimpick Games." Remarkably, they continue to this day.

Your walk continues through bucolic pastureland dotted with sheep, small wooded glens, and a lateral valley, before gently rising to Broadway Tower. Built in 1799, this classic example of an 18th-century Gothic folly was commissioned by Lady Coventry of Worcester, who wished to know whether a beacon lit there could be seen from her home 22 miles away—it could, much to her delight. At 1,024 feet above sea level, the tower provides extensive views across the Worcestershire countryside. Pause here for a cream tea in a nearby converted barn as you ponder Lady Coventry's whimsical project.

Afterward, descend into the village of Broadway, often called the "Jewel of the Cotswolds" for its stunning 16th-century buildings constructed from warm-hued local stone. Broadway's High Street, lined with shops, cafés, and galleries, is ideal for a leisurely stroll. The village's name derives from this very feature—the broad, inviting "way" known today as High Street.

You'll have free time to explore Broadway at your own pace before returning to Chipping Campden. This evening is yours to unwind: relax at your hotel, enjoy a pint at a classic English pub, or book a massage at the Noel Arms' sister property, Cotswold House Hotel & Spa.

Dinner is on your own tonight—Chipping Campden offers several excellent options for a memorable meal.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 3

### Stanton to Snowhill

*Stanton to Stanway House; 2 miles, easy. Stanway House to Snowhill; 3 miles, moderate. Optional afternoon loop walk; 2 miles, easy to moderate*

A 20-minute morning shuttle brings you to the small rural village of Stanton—an idyllic place where little has changed in 300 years and the starting point for today's ramble. Walk past 16th- and 17th-century homes built in classic Cotswold style, featuring steeply pitched gables, mullioned windows, and warm honey-colored limestone. The village takes its name from *stan*, the Old English word for "stone," reflecting the material from which it was built.

Upon arrival, visit the grand Stanway House, an exceptionally beautiful example of a Jacobean manor. Owned by Tewkesbury Abbey for 800 years before passing to the Tracy family—ancestors of the current Earls of Wemyss and March—this stately home remains in the hands of the same lineage. Enjoy a private guided tour of the house and take time to explore its lovely gardens. Then, savor a traditional ploughman's lunch of local produce on the outdoor terrace before setting off on your walk.

Your route continues through the village of Stanway and ascends gently through mixed forest. Leaving the woodland behind, follow the footpath through gently rolling pastures before arriving in Snowhill, a tiny village perched atop the Cotswold escarpment. As its name implies—and as locals often say—if there's snow in the Cotswolds, it usually falls here first. After time to explore, shuttle back to your hotel.

Upon returning to Chipping Campden, you may choose to enjoy an optional walk through the surrounding fields to the nearby village of Broad Campden. Perhaps stop in at a traditional English pub to experience some local flavor. On your return, pass by the ruins of Campden Manor, a grand estate destroyed during

the English Civil War.

Dinner is on your own tonight.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 4

### Stow-on-the-Wold to Lower Slaughter and Bourton-on-the-Water

*5.5 miles, easy to moderate*

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and shuttle to Stow-on-the-Wold, a small market town in Gloucestershire. Founded by the Normans at the intersection of two major trade routes, this picturesque town sits atop an 800-foot hill and was once a major center of the Cotswold wool industry. In centuries past, enormous annual fairs drew farmers from across the region—some bringing as many as 20,000 sheep to sell. Today's walk begins in Market Square, flanked by an ancient cross at one end and the old town stocks at the other. You'll trace the footsteps of 21-year-old King Charles II, who in 1651 was defeated at the Battle of Worcester and pursued by Parliamentary troops along what is now known as the Monarch's Way. Today, you'll rejoin this historic footpath.

Descend from the escarpment through timeless pastureland. This is the Cotswolds of dreams—wide green fields edged with limestone walls and dotted with sheep. Your walk leads you to the idyllic village of Lower Slaughter, which straddles the River Eye. The name derives from the Old English word *slothre*, meaning “muddy place.” Admire the stone bridges spanning the river and the 16th- and 17th-century cottages built in traditional Cotswold style. Continue through a small wooded area and traverse more pastures to reach the Windrush River, which guides you into Bourton-on-the-Water. Known as the “Venice of the Cotswolds,” this charming village is famed for its low arched bridges spanning the river.

There will be time to enjoy lunch and explore the village's many craft shops before shuttling approximately 50 minutes to your home for the next three nights—the Hare & Hounds at Westonbirt, near Tetbury.

Dinner is included at the hotel tonight.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner



## DAY 5

### Walk to Tetbury. Westonbirt Arboretum. Independent Exploration of Tetbury or Westonbirt

*Westonbirt to Tetbury; 3 miles, easy. Afternoon Arboretum walk; up to 2 miles, easy*

After breakfast, set out on foot directly from the hotel along a meandering trail through tree-dotted pastureland toward the town of Tetbury, which developed on the site of an ancient hill fort. Tetbury is home to several impressive churches and is believed to be the location of Abbess Tetta's Monastery, first mentioned in a charter by King Ethelred of Mercia in 681. In medieval times, Tetbury thrived as an important market town for the Cotswolds wool and yarn trade. The town center is still dominated by the splendid pillared Market House, built in 1655. Many of the historic wool merchant houses lining the streets remain virtually unchanged from 300 years ago.

During your free time in Tetbury, you may wish to visit one of its inviting cafés or historic churches, or browse the many antique shops for which the town is known. Be sure to stop by the renowned Highgrove Shop, which offers thoughtfully curated English gifts and goods. All profits from Highgrove support the Prince of Wales Charitable Fund, promoting environmental initiatives and responsible business practices. You're sure to find a pleasant spot in town for an early lunch on your own.

Later, enjoy a short shuttle ride to the nearby Westonbirt Arboretum for a guided tour. Stroll through its extensive network of trails and admire 2,500 different species of trees from around the world, including five national tree collections.

After some time to relax back at the hotel, dinner is on your own. You may choose to dine at the hotel's restaurant or take a taxi back into Tetbury. With its historic architecture, charming boutiques, and scenic countryside, Tetbury is a joy to explore—day or night.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 6

### Bath

*7 miles, easy to moderate*

After breakfast, board your shuttle to Bath (approximately 50 minutes), a beloved travel destination for more than 2,000 years. This UNESCO World Heritage site is renowned for its grand Georgian architecture and for housing one of the world's best-preserved Roman bathhouses.

Today's walk begins just outside Bath and follows the final stretch of the Cotswold Way—the same trail you followed to Broadway a few days ago. Your route starts with a traverse of Lansdown Hill, the site of the bloody Battle of Lansdown during the English Civil War. From there, continue across a plateau, passing the famous Bath Racecourse. Shortly afterward, enjoy your first sweeping views of Bath nestled in the valley below. The trail continues through expanses of fertile farmland before reaching the suburban area of Weston. As you near the city center, glimpses of landscaped parks and elegant Regency architecture emerge, including the iconic Royal Crescent. Designed by John Wood the Younger in 1767, the Royal Crescent is a sweeping arc of 30 terraced houses that exemplifies Georgian elegance. Conclude your walk at Bath Abbey, where a round, carved stone set into the pavement outside the ornate west doors marks the official end of the Cotswold Way.

If you prefer more time to explore Bath, you may opt for a shorter city walk that highlights the city's main attractions and allows additional time to discover its shops, cafés, and cultural landmarks at your own pace.

Lunch is on your own in Bath before returning to the hotel. This evening, celebrate your memorable journey with a festive farewell dinner.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## DAY 7

### Your Country Walkers Vacation Ends. Post-Tour Hotel Night: Woodstock

After breakfast, check out of the hotel, bid farewell to your leaders, and travel to The Bear Hotel in Woodstock—approximately a 1.5-hour drive. This picturesque and historic market town offers a distinct contrast to the Cotswold villages you've visited so far. Woodstock is home to Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Winston Churchill and a true paradise for walkers.



Upon check-in, you'll receive an entrance ticket to Blenheim Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The palace is the principal residence of the Dukes of Marlborough and is the only non-royal, non-ecclesiastical country house in England to hold the title of "palace." Completed in 1722, it is one of the largest stately homes in the country. Its 2,000-acre grounds were designed by the famed landscape architect Capability Brown. Enjoy strolling along the great lake, wandering through the formal gardens, or venturing off the beaten path. You may even come across the Temple of Diana, where Churchill famously proposed to his future wife, Clementine. Blenheim offers an abundance of beauty and history well worth exploring.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Departure Day

### Departure

After an included breakfast early this morning, complimentary transportation will be provided to London Heathrow Airport for your departing flight.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## What's Included

### Air Package

### Tour Only

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓	✓
11 on-tour meals: 6 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners	✓	✓
Local leaders with you throughout tour	✓	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour	✓	✓
Roundtrip airfare	✓	
One extra night in Stratford-upon-Avon and one extra night in Woodstock	✓	
Airport car service for arrival and departure	✓	
Pre- and post-trip breakfasts	✓	
Business-class upgrades available	✓	