

Great West Way®

Recommended trip length: 5-7 days

Uncover royal palaces, rollercoasters and Roman relics on this south-west England journey.



©Blenheim Palace

After exploring London, head west to discover King Henry VIII's home, visit Windsor's iconic palace, and ponder the prehistoric mysteries of Stonehenge. This trip delves into the Cotswolds, and then to Bath and Bristol – for the ultimate tour of England's south-west.

The route

- London • Kew • Windsor • Oxford • The Cotswolds
- Stonehenge • Bath • Bristol



Getting around

- The **Great West Way**® covers a distance of around 125 miles (200km), with a total of 500 miles (805km) of navigable routes.
- While hiring a car gives the greatest flexibility, most parts of the route are also accessible by **train** (except for Stonehenge and Avebury).
- The route can be completed in either direction, before returning directly to the starting point (Bristol to London takes 2.5 hours by car or 2 hours by train).
- Set aside seven days for a leisurely pace, though the itinerary can be shortened by omitting some destinations or ending in Bath.

Route highlights

- Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
- Hampton Court Palace
- Windsor Castle
- LEGOLAND Windsor
- Blenheim Palace
- Stonehenge
- Thermae Bath Spa
- SS Great Britain

Stop
1



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Kew Gardens and Hampton Court Palace

Leave London early this morning, heading to **Kew Gardens** and then **Hampton Court Palace**.



Morning: Be inspired by Kew Gardens.

Tuck into breakfast at Kew Gardens' Orangery restaurant, before rambling through its spectacular Temperate House, fragrant rose garden and woodland of 14,000 trees.



Afternoon: Trace Tudor history at Hampton Court Palace.

Step into the fascinating, scandal-filled world of the Tudors – with interactive exhibits and actors throughout King Henry VIII's magnificent home.



Evening: Spend the night in Hampton Court before heading to Windsor.

The historic 12-bed **Kings Arms Hotel** built in 1709 is ideally situated beside Hampton Court Palace. The hotel restaurant serves British cuisine made from locally sourced ingredients.

Windsor

It's a 30-minute drive from Hampton Court Palace to **Windsor**; choose your ideal day below.



Option 1: Explore royal history at Windsor Castle.

Spend a full day immersed in this royal town – with a guided tour of **Windsor Castle**, a **horse-drawn carriage ride** on the Long Walk, and an **afternoon tea cruise** on the River Thames.



Option 2: Let loose at LEGOLAND Windsor.

Travelling with kids? They'll love the LEGO-inspired rollercoasters, rides and brick-tastic entertainment at this theme park, with a choice of fun-filled accommodation too.



Evening: Culture and fine dining.

Catch a play at **Theatre Royal Windsor** or head straight to **The Waterside Inn** in nearby Bray, a Michelin star restaurant with guest rooms, headed by chef patron Alain Roux.

Stop
2



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Stop 3



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Oxford and Blenheim Palace

Leave Windsor early today. If time allows, spend a full day each in **Oxford** and **Blenheim**.



Morning: Get a fresh perspective on Oxford.

From **Harry Potter filming location tours** to **outdoor yoga in the Botanic Garden**, there are countless ways to explore this famously academic, picturesque city.



Afternoon: Be wowed by Blenheim Palace.

Depending on the season, you can explore festive markets, music festivals or dazzling light trails here – or simply tour the lavish interiors of Sir Winston Churchill's birthplace.



Evening: Rest like a Royal.

For more old-world luxury, stay at the nearby **Estelle Manor**, an award-winning country house hotel and private members' club set in a Grade-II listed house.

The Cotswolds

It's only a short drive from Blenheim Palace to **Bourton-on-the-Water**.



Morning: Hike, cycle... or spa!

Get active on the countless **trails** through rolling hills, ancient woodlands and sweeping valleys, or retreat to one of the **Cotswolds' excellent spas**.



Afternoon: Tour picture-perfect villages.

Your mission is to find the ultimate afternoon tea – and you'll be spoiled for choice. **Top villages** include Castle Combe, Bourton-on-the-Water and Chipping Campden.



Evening: Culinary Cotswolds.

From traditional country pubs like the historic **Butchers Arms** in Sheepscombe to Michelin star fine dining at **Le Champignon Sauvage** in Cheltenham, you are spoilt for choice.

Stop 4



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Stop 5



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Stonehenge and Avebury

Avebury is around a 40-minute drive from the Cotswolds; to **Stonehenge** it's 1.5-hours.



Morning: Hike Avebury's stone circles.

A short drive from Cotswolds, the charming village of Avebury is rich in **Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial sites**, which can all be explored on foot.



Afternoon: Feel the magic of Stonehenge.

Be awed by the scale and stories of this prehistoric UNESCO-listed stone circle, and its visitor centre packed with interactive exhibits.



Evening: Spend the night in Corsham for a more leisurely pace.

Stay at the 5-star **Methuen Arms** in this historic market town and popular filming location for productions including *The Remains of the Day* and TV show *Poldark*.

Bath

Leave the Cotswolds in the morning and continue to **Bath**.



Morning: Soak in soothing thermal waters.

Relax Roman-style at **Thermae Bath Spa**, whose hydrotherapy pools feature the city's naturally hot mineral-rich waters – famous for their soothing properties for over 2,000 years.



Afternoon: Explore history and Hollywood.

Take a **Brit Movies Bridgerton Tour** and explore the city and filming locations while listening to a soundtrack from the popular Netflix show.



Evening: Catch a show at The Forum.

Watch some of the biggest names in comedy, live music and dance at this former Art Deco cinema. Stay at **The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa**, a short stroll from the historic town centre.

Stop 6



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Stop 7



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Bristol

The Bath-Bristol train takes 11 minutes; you may wish to stay two nights in **Bristol**.



Morning: Seek out legendary street art.

Banksy is just the start: Bristol's street art scene is epic, with self-guided tours of its biggest, most powerful murals. Then create your own tag with a Spray Session at **Where The Wall**.



Afternoon: Get hands-on with history.

Climb the rigging of Brunel's mighty **SS Great Britain** ship, at the Great Western Dockyard – before delving into the famous vessel, museum and dockyard.



Evening: Play and stay.

Combine drinks and games at Bristol's many activity bars. After an evening of **axe throwing** and **electro-darts**, relax at the **Harbour Hotel** and Spa in the city centre.

For more resources visit

www.visitbritain.org/resources-travel-trade

