

## ENGLAND - THE COTSWOLDS

8-days / 7-nights self-guided inn-to-inn cycling

This holiday is intended to appeal to those who want a gentle introduction to cycling in the English countryside, as the Cotswold's are hilly rather than mountainous. A week of marvelous rides will take you through one of the most beautiful and historic parts of England. Honey coloured stone villages, open wolds, wooded valleys and Roman roads are the background to pretty villages, "wool" churches, famous gardens, a Roman villa and welcoming inns. Your tour starts in elegant Cheltenham with its Regency buildings, beautiful gardens, and fashionable centre. Then a delightful ride takes you over the top of the Wolds and through Duntisbournes, crossing the River Dunt's pretty fords. The route passes exquisite village churches with Saxon and Norman features.

This is followed by an easy ride to Tetbury, an important medieval wool market town. You can stand inside the old market house and walk down the ancient Chipping Steps - the course for the Woolsack Races. The ride then continues through the Cotswold Water Park.

From Barnsley you ride along the River Coln to Bibury - described by William Morris as the most beautiful village in England - and its famous row of weavers' cottages. Then down the scenic Windrush Valley, past Windrush village's Norman church to Burford, an elegant town with its steep main street leading down to the river. Your ride also takes you to the Eastleach villages with their fine churches and historic footbridge, and to the Barringtons. After a visit to Chedworth Roman Villa, one of the best-exposed Romano-British villas in Britain, the ride takes you through Northleach, another attractive wool town with a magnificent church, to the Slaughters, surely the most delightful villages in England. You stay two nights in a superb guesthouse in Guiting Power, a typical upland Cotswold village. On the final day you will visit the historic 15th century Snowhill Manor, take lunch at Broadway and enjoy the wonderful views from Broadway Tower. In the afternoon you can visit Sudley Castle once home to three of Henry VIII's wives, Katherine Parr, Ann Boleyn and Lady Jane Grey. Finally, free wheel down Cleeve Hill and back to Cheltenham.

**Grade:** Easy - Moderate. There is a choice of two routes each day 25 miles (moderate) or 15 miles (easy)

**Cost:** Ask for details

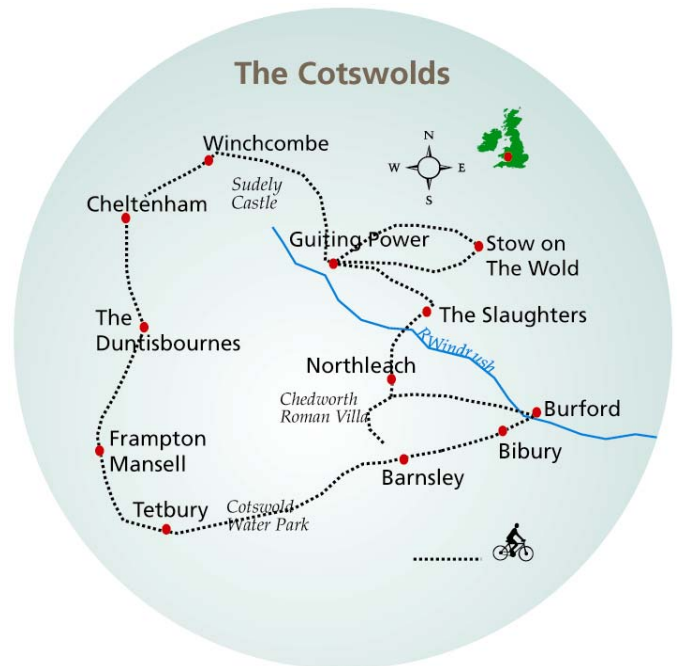
**Included in price of tour:** Bed and breakfast with ensuite facilities. Luggage transfers from Inn to Inn. Full route notes and map package.

**The Bikes:** Hybrids, suitable for road / off-road use with 18-21 gears. They are provided with a helmet, pannier, lock, water bottle and holder, a spare inner tube, tyre levers & repair kit. Bike hire £105, paid locally.

**Departs:** Daily from April to October

**Start & end point:** Cheltenham (nearest airport: London Heathrow or Gatwick).

**From London to start point:** By train from London Paddington to Cheltenham, then taxi to hotel.



**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**



## General Information

**Single Room Supplements:** are payable on most of our tours. 1) The single supplement guarantees the privacy of your own room, however, rooms can at times be small and in some places may not enjoy the same facilities as double/twin rooms. 2) You are not just paying a supplement on the room but the luggage transfer costs you are paying in full. The cost of moving 1 bag or 2 bags etc remains the same. On some of our trips it is possible to reduce the cost of the single supplement if you happen to be a 3<sup>rd</sup> person travelling, or have chosen a date when other clients are booked.

**Breakfast:** in the UK it will generally consist of sausage, bacon, eggs etc, cereals and fruit will also be available. It is important for you to tell us if you have any dietary requirements when you book your holiday so that we can inform everyone that you are staying with.

**Baths:** it is not normal for your room to have a bath, the main reason being that it takes up a lot of space, some hotels/guesthouses may have a separate room in the house where a bath is available to guests, but in the main it is showers.

**Luggage:** When staying in hotels, sometimes your luggage will have been taken to your room awaiting your arrival. However don't be surprised if your luggage is waiting for you to take it up to your room.

## Accommodation:

**Nights 1 & 7:** Your 5 crown accommodation dates back to 1824, a gracious age of enlightened and generous architecture, close to Cheltenham centre and all its amenities. Our cycle hire company is located at Cheltenham train station.

**Night 2:** A 16th century stone inn overlooking the beautiful, wooded, Chalford Valley.

**Nights 3 & 4:** Your accommodation (4 crowns) tonight is a regency style property which was totally refurbished in 1990 and now offers its guest purpose-built facilities in a friendly family atmosphere.

**Nights 5 & 6:** Guiting Power: (5 crowns Highly Commended). A tastefully restored 16th century Cotswold stone farmhouse in the centre of a small and isolated typical Cotswold village that has allowed time to pass it by. Our accommodation, formerly an inn, now an attractive guesthouse in a picture postcard setting, offers every comfort and a particularly welcoming atmosphere.

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is generally normal practice when staying in hotels that you check-in on or after 2pm and checkout by 10am the following morning. Guesthouses/bed & breakfast establishments are normally check-in on or after 4pm and checkout by 10am.

## Suggested itinerary guide

### DAY 1: CHELTENHAM CIRCULAR RIDES

Ride 1: a short ride to Churchdown Hill - distance = 13.4 miles: This is a gently undulating, easy ride until you get to Churchdown and the steep hill to St. Bartholomew's Church; but it is worth the push up the hill - it's peaceful, and there is a good view over the vale.

Ride 2: to Deerhurst and Wainlodes via Boddington and Churchdown = distance = 29.4 miles: This is a fairly flat and easy ride but because part of it is in the area between Gloucester and Cheltenham even the unclassified roads can be busy; the quietest area of the ride is to the west of the A38. Deerhurst is well worth visiting for its Saxon churches and Wainlodes for its magnificent view of the river Severn.

### **DAY 2: CHELTENHAM TO FRAMPTON MANSELL**

Ride 1: via Elkstone, the Duntisbournes & Daglingworth - distance = 19.8 or 16 miles: This lovely ride is uphill at the beginning, but from Elkstone goes through easier, undulating countryside. The ride down the Duntisbourne valley is a treat. The churches at Elkstone, Duntisbourne Rouse & Daglingworth are particularly worth visiting.

There are not many pub stops in the middle of the ride; you will need to visit The Green Dragon at Cockleford or the Highwayman on the A417. There are no other shops in Cheltenham.

Ride 2: via Cowley, Sheepscombe, Painswick & Slad - distance = 30.4 or 27.3 miles: This is an interesting, varied but hilly ride with attractive countryside and scenery and some famous towns and villages. You visit Painswick an elegant wool town, Slad, the home of Laurie Lee, the famous Cotswold author. Stroud, the industrial centre of the valleys and Bisley another beautiful wool town.

Although there are several steep hills the destinations are worth the effort.

### **DAY 3: FRAMPTON MANSELL TO BIBURY**

Ride 1: via South Cerney & Meysey Hampton - distance = 22.2 or 17.5 miles: This easy bike ride circles through South Cerney & the Water Park. It passes through several quiet villages & the flat south Cotswolds countryside. It finishes in Barnsley where the church & Barnsley House Garden are worth visiting.

Ride 2: via Tetbury, Cherington, Ashton Keynes & Down Ampney - distance = 33.1 miles: This easy ride visits Tetbury an attractive Wool town, then goes east to Ashton Keynes & the Cotswold Water Park. It goes through several quiet villages south east of Cirencester before going north back into the Cotswolds to the beautiful stone village of Barnsley.

### **DAY 4: BIBURY CIRCULAR RIDES**

Ride 1: a short ride to Cirencester - distance = 14.7 miles: This easy ride goes to Cirencester via Welsh Way & Whiteway, & returns via Preston & Ampney

Ride 2: Fairford via the Coln Valley & the Eastleaches - distance = 30.6 or 26 miles: This beautiful ride goes down the Coln Valley, which has several typical, pretty, Cotswold villages. The Woollen Mill at Filkins is interesting, & you can buy some real Cotswold souvenirs.

Fairford is a good place for tea, & the stained glass windows are a must.

### **DAY 5: BIBURY TO GUITING POWER**

Ride 1: via Chedworth Roman Villa, Northleach & Notgrove - distance = 22.1 or 16.4 miles: This is an enjoyable ride over undulating countryside. The Roman Villa is very interesting, and Northleach is an attractive 'wool' town with a lovely church.

Ride 2: via the Windrush Valley, Burford, Bourton on the Water & the Slaughters - distance = 33 or 27 miles: This is an interesting, enjoyable and fairly easy ride. It goes through many picturesque Cotswold villages - Windrush and the Slaughters are particularly delightful. Burford is an attractive town & Bourton a busy tourist centre.

### **DAY 6: GUITING POWER CIRCULAR RIDES**

Ride 1: A short ride to the Slaughters & Lower Swell - distance = 14.3 miles: This undulating ride goes through beautiful countryside & attractive quiet villages. Upper Slaughter is a lovely place to picnic & spend time by the ford on a fine day.

Ride 2: to Snowhill & Chipping Campden via Blockley & Sezincote - with extensions to Broadway & Hidcote Manor Gardens - distance = 26.3, 27.9 or 35 miles: The lovely ride goes across rolling countryside to Snowhill & Chipping Campden - two classic Cotswold towns. It can be extended to visit Broadway & Hidcote Manor Gardens. The ride is quite hilly, & even the minor roads round Chipping Campden get very busy at holiday weekends.

### **DAY 7: GUITING POWER TO CHELTENHAM**

Ride 1: via Winchcombe & Brockhampton - distance - 17.8 or 13.5 miles: This ride covers some beautiful countryside, with good views from the hills. It is quite hilly, particularly down into & up from Winchcombe, but it gives you a good knowledge of the Cotswold scarp! Winchcombe is well worth visiting, & it is easy to spend several hours there.

Ride 2: via Northleach, Chedworth Roman Villa, Withington & Seven Springs - distance = 25.5 miles: This ride goes through beautiful countryside, some attractive villages, and to Northleach - an important 'wool' town - with an interesting 'wool' church. The Roman Villa is fascinating.

### **DAY 8: TOUR ENDS AFTER BREAKFAST.**

**Extend your stay:** In Cheltenham or at any other overnight stop along the route - please ask us for details

These are just a few of the many small group guided or self-guided inn-to-inn cycling tours we offer in Europe - including river rides from Passau to Vienna along the Danube or from Vienna to Budapest.

Other cycling holiday destinations include several areas of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, England & Scotland, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, New Zealand & Australia.

Outdoor Travel also offer group guided Bike & Barge cruises in many destinations including France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Italy, the Dalmation Coast of Croatia, the islands of Greece, the Lycian coast of Turkey or in Vietnam.

### **Contact Outdoor Travel for more itinerary details and reservations**

- Call toll free on 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: [info@outdoortravel.com.au](mailto:info@outdoortravel.com.au)
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741, Australia
- Travel Agent Licence No 31102