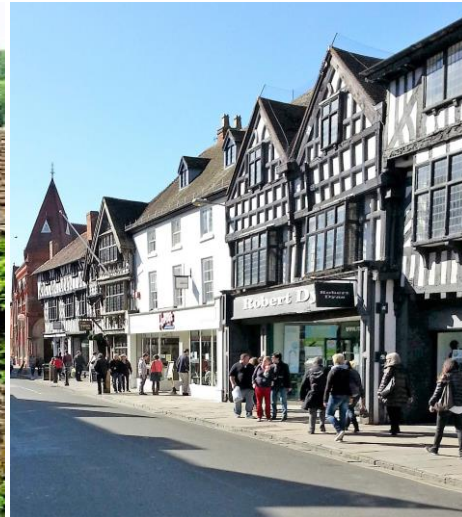


## ENGLAND – THE BEST OF THE COTSWOLDS

8-days/ 7-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn walking in the heart of England from Stratford to Broadway



The lush green Cotswolds provide an ideal introduction to walking in England. These gently undulating hills rise from the upper Thames valley to an escarpment above the Severn valley, with the highest point just over 300 metres above sea level. The landscape is iconically English – rolling green hills dotted with picturesque villages, medieval churches, stately country homes and ancient ruins. Opportunities for easy rambles, peaceful strolls, and hillside walks abound.

The cottages, farmhouses, villages, and small towns of the Cotswolds are largely built from limestone, weathered over centuries to a beautiful honey or golden colour. Pastures are partitioned by dry-stone walls, many from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, taking considerable skill to build without mortar. They represent an important historical landscape and a major conservation feature – and are of course still used today to enclose sheep and cattle.

You start in Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon, home to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and of course many sites linked to the famous playwright. Stay in larger market towns like Moreton-in-Marsh and Bourton-on-the-Water, with many restaurants, shops, cafés and traditional English pubs. Walk through picture-postcard villages nestled in verdant landscapes and spend time in smaller villages like Winchcombe or Broadway. Those with an interest in history can make time to visit Sudeley Castle, whilst Hidcote and Batsford Arboretum are nearly irresistible to garden enthusiasts. Easily reached from London, Oxford or Bristol, there is something for everyone in the Cotswolds.

**Departs:** Daily on demand March to October *availability may be limited in May, June & September*

**Cost from:** **\$2035** per person twin share  
Single room supplement from **\$1025** Solo traveller supplement **\$175**  
Supplement for weekend night stay in Moreton-on-Marsh from \$80 per person

**Starts:** Stratford-upon-Avon **Ends:** Broadway

**Includes:** 7 nights' twin-share ensuite accommodation in carefully selected guesthouses or small hotels; breakfast daily; inn-to-inn luggage transfers (1 bag per person, maximum weight 20kg); taxi transfer on Day 3; digital map and tracking app; information pack; route notes (1 set per room), telephone support.

**Not included:** Lunches or dinners, drinks, entry fees, personal expenses, unscheduled taxis/transfers during the trip, travel to/from the start/end of the tour.

**Grading:** Easy to moderate. Daily distances of up to 13 miles (21km) over gently undulating terrain, with stiles (little ladders) to climb over farm fences. The weather in the Cotswolds is typically milder than other areas of England; however, it is still unpredictable and changeable so be prepared for inclement weather.

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



## **Suggested itinerary:**

### **Day 1: Arrive in Stratford**

Make your way to Stratford-upon-Avon by mid-afternoon. Stratford-upon-Avon has a train station with frequent connections from London or Birmingham. You will stay here two nights. The Royal Shakespeare Company often performs at the Riverside Theatre – plan well in advance to book tickets for a performance.

### **Day 2: Free day in Stratford-upon-Avon**

**optional walking**

A day at leisure in Stratford-upon-Avon. Explore on your own or perhaps join a guided town walk (£10, paid locally). There is also an easy circular walk (3 miles / 5km) along both sides of the Avon River, passing the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Holy Trinity Church, where Shakespeare and wife Anne Hathaway are buried.

### **Day 3: Hidcote Manor / Chipping Camden to Moreton-in-Marsh**      **walking @ 11 or 8 miles (18 or 13km)**

After breakfast you are transferred by taxi to the start of the walk, either at Hidcote Manor (to visit the 10.5 acres of Arts & Crafts-inspired gardens prior to walking); or at Chipping Camden. Historic Chipping Camden is an attractive village, with honey-coloured buildings lining its wide high street, and the medieval 'wool church' of St James. Walk through rolling meadows to the old silk-producing town of Blockley, then on field paths to Batsford, where you may like to visit the arboretum or falconry centre. End in the thriving market town Moreton-in-Marsh.

### **Day 4: Moreton-in-Marsh to Bourton-on-the-Water**

**walking @ 12 miles (19km)**

A delightful day walking through some of the prettiest villages of the Cotswolds. Cross the high wolds to Stow-on-the-Wold, complete with village stocks and picturesque square. From here it is a leisurely stroll across meadows to Lower Slaughter and then to Bourton-on-the-Water, with its photogenic footbridges across the River Windrush, framed by weeping willows.

### **Day 5: Bourton-on-the-Water to Winchcombe**

**walking @ 13 miles (21km)**

Follow the River Windrush to the village of Naunton with its medieval dovecote and welcoming pub. Continue through fields and over stiles to lovely Guiting Power; its parish church dates to the 12<sup>th</sup> century and retains some Norman-era features. Walk through woods and fields and descend to the ancient Saxon capital of Winchcombe, near Sudeley Castle, where Henry VIII's last wife Katherine Parr lived. Winchcombe is a delightful town in a deep valley with a medieval church – its altar cloth is believed to have been stitched by Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first wife.

### **Day 6: Winchcombe to Broadway via Stanton**

**walking @ 9 miles (15km)**

Walk an undulating stretch of the Cotswold Way to the ruins of Hailes Abbey and the Iron Age hill fort Beckbury Camp. Weather permitting there are views across the Vale of Evesham towards the Malverns. Descend to Wood Stanway and the Jacobean-era Stanway House, with its magnificent gatehouse and medieval tithe barn, and on to the picture-postcard village of Stanton. Continue to Broadway, once a bustling coaching village on the stagecoach route from Worcester to London, now a centre for arts and antiques. You will stay here two nights.

### **Day 7: Snowhill circuit walk**

**walking @ 7½ miles (12km)**

Snowhill is a typically pretty Cotswold village above Broadway. Snowhill Manor is a National Trust country house with an elaborate Arts & Crafts-style garden, a quirky collection of crafted and handmade items acquired by the Manor's former owner, and a welcoming café. The walk offers views across the hills into Wales.

### **Day 8: Departure day**

Tour ends after breakfast. Take a local bus or taxi to Evesham or Moreton-in-Marsh for onward travel to London.

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

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