



# UNCOVER WOODSTOCK

Stay a night or two in 'the clearing in the woods' or Woodstock as it is better known! Spend time in this delightful market town, with its individual shops and fascinating history, before exploring the magnificence of Blenheim and beyond...

## DAY 1

Pop into one of the galleries or craft shops in the market square in **Woodstock**, before visiting the **Oxfordshire Museum** to get an insight into the history of both town and county. On the same site is the **Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum**, fascinating for historians and families alike with its interactive exhibits. Stop for a coffee in the garden café (look out for the dinosaurs!) or at one of the other coffee shops in the town. Feeling a bit peckish? You are spoilt for choice – pick up a local speciality at the deli or stop for lunch at one of the many pubs and restaurants.



## WHERE TO STAY

Whether you choose a coaching inn dating from 13th or 15th century (**The Bear** or **The Marlborough Arms**) or a 17th century townhouse like **The Feathers** to rest your head, you will find all the mod cons you need, in a historic, atmospheric setting. And great dining too!

## HIDDEN GEMS

**St Mary Magdalene Church** has more than 200 hand-embroidered kneelers depicting subjects from wildlife to local history. The church clock plays a tune four times a day – and a different tune for each day of the week. **The Water Meadows** provide a haven for birds, small animals and aquatic plants. Extend your town walk with a stroll through this tranquil spot.



Woodstock has a long history stretching back to King Henry I's reign, when the Manor of Woodstock was a royal hunting lodge. **Henry II** spent time on the estate with his mistress, The Fair Rosamund, and **Elizabeth I** was imprisoned here by her sister Mary Tudor. More recently, **Winston Churchill** was born at **Blenheim Palace**, the former site of the Manor of Woodstock.



## TOP TIP

Follow Woodstock's **Historic Wall Plaque Trail** to learn how Simon Hatley inspired Coleridge's **Ancient Mariner** and about the towns' earlier industries of glove-making, printing and bell-making. Every stone tells a story.



## HIDDEN GEMS

**Rousham Gardens** is one of the best-kept secrets of this part of the Cotswolds. Completely unspoilt and uncommercialised, there isn't a tea or gift shop in sight. But you are welcome to bring your own picnic and savour the beauty of the 18th century landscaping. Not surprisingly this is one of Monty Don's favourite gardens.



## TOP TIP

Woodstock is a foodies' delight. Don't miss out on a visit to **Killingworth Castle**, an award-winning pub in nearby Wootton for more tasty treats.

## DAY 2

Walk to the top of Park Street and you will see the **Triumphal Arch** that marks one of the entrances to **Blenheim Palace**. The magnificent grounds were landscaped by 'Capability' **Brown** and the palace is a masterpiece of Baroque architecture. Allow at least half a day to explore the house, gardens and gift shop. After stopping for lunch in one of the restaurants, it's time to explore further afield. Visit the grave of Sir Winston Churchill in the village of **Bladon** or venture down the road to Hanborough where **The Oxford Bus Museum** is open on Wednesdays and Sundays. If you're lucky you might get a free ride on a vintage bus. Or book yourself in for a rural craft experience at **Combe Mill** on the banks of the Evenlode.



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