

UNCOVER THE COTSWOLDS

THE FOREST OF DEAN OF DEAN



MIX & MATCH ITINERARY OPTIONS AVAILABLE



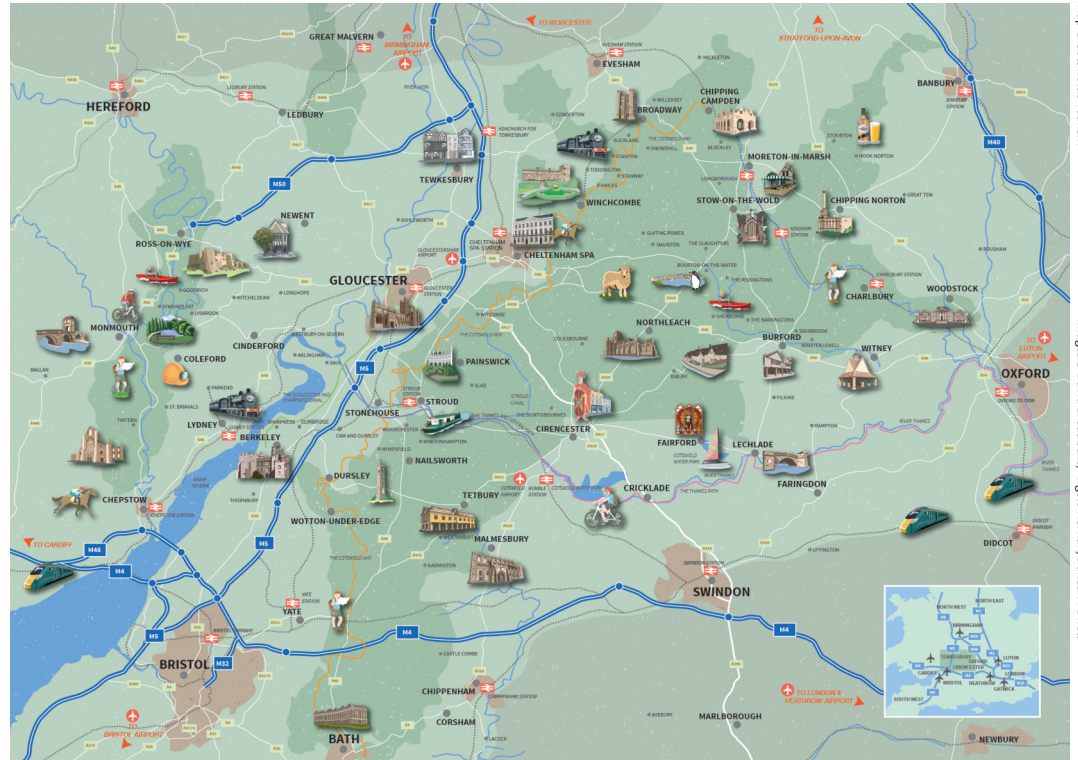
Gloucester Cathedral



Puzzlewood

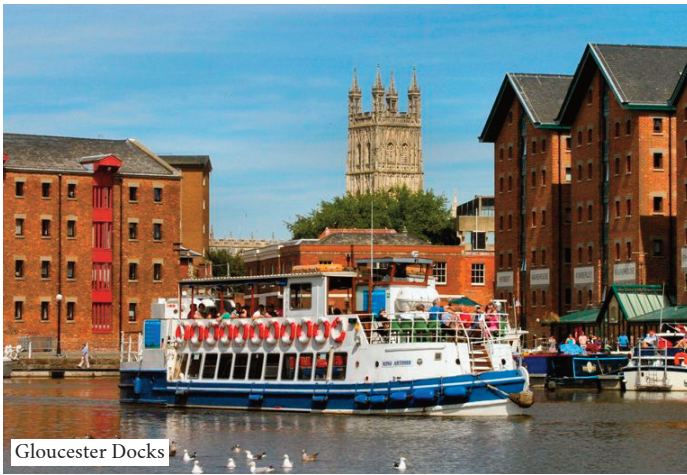
From the cultural and historic Gloucester Docks and city centre, its museums, arts, and Cathedral, travel out into the Forest of Dean to explore on foot, by bike or by vehicle.

Visit a magnificent castle, follow twisting biking tracks, take a brewery tour, climb to the trees, explore the caves, or walk an art trail through the woods. Beginning in Gloucester and finishing near Ross-on-Wye, this tour can be done in any order and requires transport by vehicle between many destinations. For the active and the adventurous – families, groups, friends and couples.



Map © Cotswolds Tourism
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Gloucester Docks

DAY 1 GLOUCESTER AND INTO THE FOREST

Set out to experience the city's cultural and heritage highlights, enjoy the docks and explore from the water, before heading towards the Forest of Dean to have experience a taste of the food and drink delights.

MORNING OPTIONS *The city of Gloucester – there is plenty to see and explore on foot or by water.*

EXPLORING GLOUCESTER Explore this renovated Victorian Port, its museums, including the **Gloucester Waterways Museum**, **Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum**, waterfront cafés and restaurants. Parking in Gloucester Docks car park or Gloucester Quays car park – 24 hours with pay and display.

RIVER BOAT TRIPS OR HIRE From the Gloucester Waterways Museum – 45 minutes - group trips at any time with 2 weeks notice, or private hire boats for up to 100 people (46 seated).

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL The Cathedral runs guided tours of its highlights, crypt, tower, library and stone masons' workshop or you can explore some of these on your own, from the breath-taking cloisters (which you might recognise as the corridors at Hogwarts in Harry Potter), to the chapel, tombs, whispering gallery and more. Groups must book at least 3 weeks in advance. With a coffee shop on site, 'The Monk's Kitchen', serving light bites, cakes and hot drinks. With regular art exhibitions, concerts, services and events, make sure to look at the Cathedral's calendar for what's on.

NATURE IN ART MUSEUM AND GALLERY For all art lovers this museum and gallery is a must. Located 2 miles outside of Gloucester – best accessed by vehicle, or the **Number 71 bus** (10 minute journey). It was the world's first museum and art gallery dedicated to fine, decorative and applied art inspired by nature. With permanent and rolling exhibitions, housed within a fine Georgian Mansion. Suitable for groups and individuals. Running 'Dare to Dabble' art taster sessions morning and afternoon daily throughout the year. Suitable for groups, families, and individuals.

Head out from Gloucester into the Forest of Dean by vehicle for lunch / coffee stops.

LUNCH & COFFEE BREAK STOPS

■ **Severn & Wye Smokery:** Towards south Forest of Dean. Severn & Wye Smokery specialise in the finest quality fresh and smoked salmon and other smoked fish and poultry products. Their café, lead by head chef, Mark Stinchcombe, serves classic breakfast dishes using many of their own smoked products.

From midday the café serves light bites which includes delicious hot and cold sandwiches, fish and chips, smoked platters, cakes, puddings and cream teas. The restaurant offers an extended menu and is open for lunch Monday to Sunday and dinner Thursday to Saturday.

■ **The Farmers Boy:** Towards Ross-on-Wye, serving excellent quality home comfort dishes in addition to being the home of the 'Mad About Pies' brand.

■ **Tierra & Mar:** A fine dining Spanish restaurant. Perfect for tapas and light bites, with local suppliers.

■ **The Kilcot Inn:** Towards Newent. Perfect place to sample good quality home made products in a mixture of styles. Open every day.

AFTERNOON OPTIONS *Into the Forest of Dean.*

NOT JUST ABOUT THE OUTDOORS Harts Barn Cookery School is all about cooking, all ages and skill levels are catered for, and we teach everything from banquets to basics. Provide a huge range of regular classes, workshops, supper clubs and events plus we welcome group bookings, parties, corporate and private hire.

HILLSIDE BREWERY 'The Hillside Experience' – for some it is having a wander up our little driveway, taking a look at our latest beers or the local range of products and then heading off with their loot, for others enjoy a brewery tour and sample some of our beers or stop for a well earned ale after a day with our friends at Hillside Archery Tag.

THREE CHOIRS VINEYARD This is England, but not as you know her. Vines rustle here instead of oak leaves. There are no ancient castles, but our historic vineyards still have stories to tell.

DINNER OPTIONS

■ **Butchers Arms:** Pretty pub situated in the centre of Clearwell offering wholesome home cooked favourites.

■ **Amici:** Delicious Italian restaurant in the centre of Coleford, very popular so booking essential.

■ **Verderers @ Speech House:** Fine-dining restaurant within The Speech House Hotel. The historic beamed Verderer's Court reflects the rooms continuing use as a courthouse for the Forest of Dean Verderers.

■ **The Ostrich:** A lovely scenic old pub situated in Newland, a beautiful village which lies on the western edge of the Forest of Dean and adjoins the Wye Valley, both areas of outstanding natural beauty.



Nature in Art

DAY 2 ADVENTURE IN THE FOREST OF DEAN

From canopy to caves, cycling to canoeing, enjoy the variety the forest has to offer.

MORNING OPTIONS

CLEARWELL CAVES These extensive **caves** are spectacular and here to be explored! With different levels of caving available to explore this hidden world, for groups large and small. This unique space has played host to the filming of numerous programmes such as *His Dark Materials*, *Cursed*, *Britannia: Series 1 & 2*, *Doctor Who*, *Merlin*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Da Vinci's Demons*, *Kidnapped* and many others – explore yourself and see what you can recognise.

PUZZLEWOOD **Puzzlewood** is an ancient woodland, described as "The most magical forest on the face of the earth!". From aliens to ancient Scowles and wizards to wildlife the unique and atmospheric woodland is a natural stage that's more than a home to history and nature. It's an inspiration for authors and storytellers, where Stormtroopers and Time Lords have rubbed shoulders with dragons and unicorns.

PERRYGROVE RAILWAY **Perrygrove** is a fantastic family attraction, a miniature railway offering a great day out on their railway lines, picnic facilities and treetop adventure.

DEAN HERITAGE CENTRE The **Dean Heritage Centre**, Coffee Shop & Gruffalo Trail. With five acres to explore, the centre has something for everyone to discover including history, culture, art and a variety of interesting and unique attractions set against a spectacular backdrop. The centre has five museum galleries, various outside displays and exciting arts and crafts demonstrations.

LUNCH & COFFEE BREAK STOPS

All the above have cafés.

■ **Forest Deli:** Picnics to take away and so why not take the opportunity to Dine al fresco in the forest.

AFTERNOON OPTIONS

BIKE HIRE OR BIKE GUIDING Bike hire from **Pedal A Bike Away** through the forest trails. **Coaching and guiding** are also on offer, from 1 hour to 3 days – for different levels of ability

(with trails from beginner to advanced and Enduro), and also with activities for younger children. The **café** on site is open year round serving everything from breakfasts to burgers, cakes, coffees and more.

Wye-bikes provide a range of leading brand bikes that include 2021 E-bikes from **Cube** and also the latest children's bikes from **Frog**. Our E-bikes give you the opportunity to experience the Forest in an environmentally friendly and fun way regardless of your age or fitness level.

Dean Cycles hire bikes cater for the whole family from babies and toddlers right through to grandparents. We aim to provide you with the perfect bike and everything you need to make sure you have an awesome time.

INTO THE FOREST Beechenhurst in the heart of the Forest of Dean, one of Britain's oldest and largest woodlands. It is the ideal place for families to start their forest adventure, with a Gruffalo Spotters Trail, Sculpture Trail, play area, **Go Ape Tree Top Adventure** and climbing tower.

At **Forest of Dean Adventure Archery** unleash your inner Robin Hood! Enjoy a 30-minute taster session or spend a little more time to learn technique in our Introduction to Archery session. All our activities are great for grown-ups and kids too.

DINNER OPTIONS

■ **The Kings Head Hotel:** Pub food in conservatory surroundings in the pretty town of Ross-on-Wye.

■ **The Old Court Hotel:** Symonds Yat – retains the feel of an authentic and inviting Old English Inn, full of 16th century character.

■ **The Potting Shed:** Whitchurch near Symonds Yat – has a retro styled, garden themed café with a welcoming atmosphere, wonderful food and in beautiful settings.

■ **Saracens Head Inn:** Symonds Yat – an old-world timber framed B&B offers locally sourced seasonal fare in its restaurant or waterfront patio.



Bike hire



Perrygrove



DAY 3 EXPLORING THE WYE

An active day, exploring the beautiful River Wye, either on the water or above as well as taking in atmospheric Goodrich Castle and Tintern Abbey .

MORNING OPTIONS

ONTO THE WYE Canoeing and paddling are fantastic activities to do in this area, with a variety of companies to choose from with many trips beginning from Symonds Yat or Ross-on-Wye.

Discover some of the most stunning areas the UK has to offer! **Inspire2Adventure** provides a multitude of outdoor adventure activities in the natural playgrounds of the Wye Valley. Whether you want to climb, bike, fly through the air or mess about on the river, they have got something for everyone.

From Canoe Hire to Guided River trips and professional tuition, **Wye Canoes** also offer Stand-Up Paddle Boarding, Bushcraft, Gorge Scrambling, Archery, Climbing and Abseiling, Orienteering, and Barrel Rafting. Choose your favourite activity or have a multi-activity day out.

Canoe the Wye offer ½ day to 2 day trips along the Wye, follow their routes and enjoy your lazy journeys along the river.

KINGFISHER CRUISES Daily trips last about 40 minutes and a full commentary is provided, telling of the natural beauty and history of the area. The Kingfisher, which seats 32 and the Wye Pride which seats 50 offer a range of facilities to both day visitor to Symonds Yat and those looking for an unusual and pleasant setting for dinner parties and buffets, or simply an evening cruise on the river.

GOODRICH CASTLE This castle has towered over the River Wye since the 11th century. Rebuilt in the late 13th century by William de Valence and surviving sieges during the Civil War, this now ruined castle is one of the Wye Valley's most iconic historic monument and a great morning out for all.

TINTERN ABBEY The abbey is a national icon — still standing in roofless splendour on the banks of the River Wye nearly 500 years since its tragic fall from grace. A Gothic masterpiece that became a Romantic symbol of the sublime.

SYMONDS YAT VIEWPOINT This stunning viewpoint is managed by Forestry England. Well known as the best places in the country to watch Peregrine Falcons, as well as other birds including Goshawks or Sparrowhawks, Ospreys, Owls, Ravens

and Kestrels. Discover the ancient hill fort, spot birds of prey and enjoy a snack from the log cabin café. There are waymarked trails linking to the River Wye and a choice of circular walks into the forest itself. RSPB volunteers are on hand from April to September to help you spot the Peregrine Falcons which nest nearby.

LUNCH & COFFEE BREAK STOPS

■ **The Potting Shed:** Whitchurch near Symonds Yat – a retro styled, garden themed café with a welcoming atmosphere, wonderful food and in beautiful settings.

■ **The Filling Station Café:** Tintern – a family run café, delicious freshly ground coffee, fine teas, scrumptious cakes, tasty filled baguettes, traditional favourite cakes and tray-bakes.

■ **The Old Court Hotel:** Symonds Yat – retains the feel of an authentic and inviting Old English Inn, full of 16th century character.

■ **Saracens Head Inn:** Symonds Yat – an old-world timber framed B&B offers locally sourced seasonal fare in its restaurant or waterfront patio.

AFTERNOON OPTIONS

WYE VALLEY VISITORS CENTRE The Centre operates the **aMazing Hedge Puzzle, Wye Valley Miniature Golf, Wye Valley Butterfly Zoo** and **Wye Valley Warfare**. An ethos of the Wye Valley being inclusive, accessible, and educational, but above all visitors should be able to have fun in the countryside, not just look at it.

RETAIL THERAPY Truffles Delicatessen, Labels, Tudor Sweets of Ross, Baileys Home & Garden, Tudorville Express and Post Office, Made in Ross, Pots & Pieces, Ross Old Books & Print Shop.

FOXTAIL DISTILLERY At Foxtail, make your own unique customised Gin. Learn about the medicinal origins of Gin; the craft production process and then through blind tastings and learning what your taste preferences are, you will go on to create your very own bespoke Gin blend.

EXTEND YOUR TRIP Continue your ongoing journey from Ross-on-Wye, stay a day longer to see, walk or cycle more of the forest, take part in more adventure activities or visit the county town of Herefordshire.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR THIS ITINERARY

ACCOMMODATION SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FOREST OF DEAN

CAMPING:

Whitemead Forest Park: How about a log cabin or glamping pod? A woodland lodge or modern apartment? Whichever you go for, you'll be able to use our indoor pool, gym and sauna. And, if you're touring or under canvas, our caravan and camping pitches make the most of our beautiful surroundings in the heart of the magical Forest of Dean.

HOTELS:

Tudor Farmhouse: Rural retreat is a former working farm dating back to the 13th century, lovingly converted with 20 luxurious bedrooms and suites.

The Speech House: The Speech House Hotel is a former 17th century royal hunting lodge set in the heart of the idyllic Forest of Dean. Nestled in the centre of a tranquil forest environment.

SELF CATERING:

Forest Barn Holidays: Private hamlet of 5 luxury properties in a rural idyll. Private hot tubs, falconry experiences, treetop dining, free electric vehicle charging and more on site.

Forest Holidays: Sheltered beneath the protective canopy of ancient oak woodland or situated in the open meadow at the forest edge, our cabins at Forest of Dean offer an escape from everyday life in one of Britain's most amazing forests.

YOUTH HOSTEL:

YHA St Briavels: Full of character with amazingly well-preserved castle features, original stone walls and features from the Medieval to Victorian period.

ACCOMMODATION SUGGESTIONS FOR ROSS ON WYE AND TOWARDS SYMONDS YAT

GLAMPING:

White House Glamping: At How Caple the River Wye winds its way for a mile through the farm, giving you the perfect setting for your glamping getaway.

HOTELS:

The Old Court Hotel: As well bed & breakfast we also offer self-catering accommodation in our holiday apartments and 3 bedroom holiday cottage. The Old Court Hotel sits within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and just a short walk of the hotel is the majestic River Wye, which meanders through Symonds Yat and the magnificent Wye Gorge, providing some of the best views in Herefordshire.

SELF CATERING:

Wharton Lodges: Located in the glorious Wye Valley, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and just 3 miles from the delightful market town of Ross-on-Wye.

YOUTH HOSTEL:

YHA Wye Valley: Ross on Wye – set in 25 acres, on the banks of the River Wye, this hostel even has its own canoe landing station. With private unfussy rooms, dorms, glamping bell tents and camping options all available. It is also available to be hired out on an exclusive basis.

AIRPORTS, TRAINS, BUSES: Easy access to Gloucester by train, bus or vehicle from Bristol, Cheltenham, Birmingham, London and further afield. For all train times, **The Trainline** is an online booking platform with up to date schedules and prices.

THINGS TO DO NEARBY: If your time is flexible and you want to see more of the Cotswolds, or further afield, here are some ideas. We'll happily provide more information and ideas tailored to your needs.

Cardiff: From intimate gigs to global sporting events, museums, a spectacular castle, harbour, and more.

Bristol: From the historic docks to Clifton Suspension Bridge, bustling independent shops, cafés and bars, and the M Shed, to hot air balloon rides, bike hire along the canals and a zoo, there is something for everyone here.

Hereford: Visit Hereford Cathedral to see some fine examples of architecture from Norman times to the present day. View the famous Mappa Mundi and the world's largest Chained Library. The cathedral also hosts regular exhibitions, recitals and concerts; once every three years it hosts the Three Choirs Festival, the world's longest-running classical music festival.

Stratford-upon-Avon: Shakespeare's birthplace and the perfect place to see one of his plays.

Bath: Home to the Roman Baths, and a World Heritage City, with stunning walks, included guided walks by Laugh at Bath or a Jane Austen Tour, arts, culture and even kayaking trips along the River Avon.

Oxford: Walking and cycling tours of the 'City of Dreaming Spires', key sites to visit including the Bodleian Library, quirky cafés, galleries, museums and even ghost tours are all on offer in this vibrant city.

Great West Way route: Linking London to Bristol along canals, the Thames, countryside paths, bike trails, back country driving lanes and more, through Windsor, taking a side trip to Stonehenge, and into Bristol.

Cycling and Walking Tours: Throughout the Cotswolds from a range of companies including **Active England Tours, Carter Company, Hikes and Bikes, Compass Holidays** and **Wild Carrot**.



Speech House Hotel



Wye Valley

Find out more at: www.cotswolds.com/trade

For further information, advice, itinerary ideas, images and contact details: Contact cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk

www.cotswolds.com