



## UNCOVER WITNEY

Base yourself in the charming market town of Witney, which has one foot in the past and one firmly in the present. Discover its rich heritage and connections with the wool trade, before a spot of shopping in the many independent shops or twice-weekly market.

### DAY 1

The best way to explore Witney (despite the free parking!) is on foot. Start at the **Buttercross** in Market Square and look down **Church Green** to the impressive **St Mary's Church** with its 156-foot spire. Take time to explore the High Street with its mix of independent and nationally-known shops and cafés to the West End where many of the **former mills** are situated. **The Witney and District Museum** will give you a complete picture of the architectural heritage of the town.



### WHERE TO STAY

Stay in the heart of the town at the refurbished **Blue Boar**, a former 17th century coaching inn which has a choice of 20 boutique-style bedrooms. Or opt for the thatch and oak beams of **The Old Swan**, in its peaceful setting on the banks of the Windrush at Minster Lovell.

### HIDDEN GEMS

The historic **Witney Blanket Hall** is the place to purchase a beautiful blanket, throw or scarf. It also has the best pies in town! Tuck into one in the café or in the peaceful garden, or take one home for supper. Sample the legendary **Hobgoblin** beer on a **Wychwood Brewery** tour – a tasting session of Brakspear and Wychwood brews is included.

### TOP TIP

A wonderful array of antique and limited edition bears including Paddington Bear and Rupert Bear can all be found at fascinating **Teddy Bears of Witney**. Why not buy a bear or look around this very special collection in the free museum.



Witney is one of the larger 'wool towns' of the Cotswolds. Its famous blankets were known across the world, prized by Native Americans and cowboys alike. Evidence of the wool trade can be seen in some of the grander houses, the fullers' cottages and the now converted mills. Witney is also a **festival town**, hosting the traditional **Witney Feast** funfair, food, drink and music festivals and the annual **World Pooh Sticks Championships**.



## HIDDEN GEMS

Just outside Witney are the ruins of **Minster Lovell Hall**, a favourite spot for picnics and walks along the River Windrush. To the south of the town are **Rushey Common** and **Tar Lakes** which offer a variety of circular walks. The nature reserve has a bird hide to enjoy but you will need to buy a key online or in person at **The Red Lion** pub in Northmoor.



## TOP TIP

Cotswolds and crocodiles? Yes, more than 80 crocodiles – and lizards, turtles and chameleons – can be seen at **Crocodiles of the World**, the UK's only crocodile zoo, a few miles from Witney.

## DAY 2

Witney and its surrounds are full of surprises. From the centre of town there is a pleasant walk across **Langel Common** to **Cogges Manor Farm**, a beautiful 13th century manor house, with a walled garden and farmyard. The farm first appeared in the Domesday Book and its first owner was a Norman knight who is pictured in the Bayeux Tapestry. Cogges is now a cultural and educational centre, hosting activities and events throughout the year. **Downton Abbey** aficionados might recognise it as Yew Tree Farm.



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