

CENTRAL WALKING TOUR

Cotswolds

England's Stonehenge & Countryside Villages

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



“

*Classic Journeys
provides unbeatable
access to experiences
around the globe.”*

|

TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Quintessential English Experience

Sometimes, Stonehenge steams at dawn. We know because we've stood there on Salisbury Plain among the great pillars—no crowds, no ropes to hold us back—on a private 'only with Classic Journeys' visit. Join us through Southwestern England, spending several days in the Cotswolds leading you along our favorite paths that crook through vivid cottage gardens, across sweeping meadows, and into the honeyed stone towns. Enjoy dining with friends in their manor house and visiting the tea-shop lady when her scones are warm and fresh. This is more than the superficially pretty England, it's the real thing with days full of rich cultural experiences, personal introductions and remarkable access to non-public places.

The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

What's Included

- All breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

→ INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

→ PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

Terrain

Easy trails through meadows and over rolling hills. At your option, 2 to 4 hours of walking per day.

CLASSIC JOURNEYS ITINERARIES MAY BE SUBJECT TO SLIGHT CHANGES, HOTEL SUBSTITUTIONS, AND OTHER MODIFICATIONS.

DAY 1 »

Oxford/Blenheim Palace

Your explorations of Oxford begin with a proper afternoon tea in the company of your expert local guide. Together, embark on a curated walk around the picturesque English town and through the famed campus. As you immerse yourself along the charming streets and marvel at the medieval architecture, you'll soon realize why this city was nicknamed the "City of Dreaming Spires".

Then you're off to Blenheim Palace to approach this iconic landmark on foot. Blenheim is most well-known as Winston Churchill's birthplace, but its colorful history goes back much further, to the early 18th century and the Duke of Marlborough. On an incredibly scenic and historic walk, you'll pass the lake created by famed landscape architect Capability Brown when he dammed the River Glyme, the Temple of Diana summerhouse where Churchill proposed to his wife, and sheep grazing in meadows before you ultimately arrive at the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Then, join your guide for an insider's exploration of the house itself and the fascinating Churchill exhibition.

MEALS: L, D

OVERNIGHT: BURFORD

DAY 2 »

Windrush Valley/Minster Lovell

What's a 'honeypot' and why do you want to avoid it? Find out for yourself on a cinematic footpath along the Windrush River Valley. Many of the villages in these parts have become 'honeypots', the locals' way of referring to a place that draws tourists like bees to honey. Happily, for you, your expert local guide is also your well-connected friend, and so able to lead you to postcard-perfect villages like Asthall and Swinbrook. These quintessential Cotswolds villages are filled with what you hope for in your explorations: technicolor gardens, cozy pubs, thatched cottages, and medieval churches.

Refreshed and refueled from lunch at a historic pub that you may want to augment with a pint, join your guide on an afternoon walk to the village of Minster Lovell. The beautiful old cottages in this part of the Cotswolds are photogenic beyond belief. Half-timbered homes with thatched roofs greet you as soon as you arrive. Ambling along the one lane in the village takes you back in time to the 11th and 12th centuries. On foot at eye level, you're perfectly positioned to learn about thatching, and how the roofs are made and maintained. A highlight of the day's explorations is a late afternoon visit to the picturesque ruins of Minster Lovell Hall, just a short footpath away in the countryside. Dating to the 12th century, the main part of the home was constructed by William, Baron of Lovell, who through marriage and good fortune was one of the richest men in England. He chose the location well and sited it in a beautiful rural setting beside the river Windrush.

MEALS: B

OVERNIGHT: BURFORD

DAY 3 »

British Bake Off/ Hidcote Gardens

Begin your way with a walk through the quaint neighborhood of Shipston-on-Stour to arrive mid-morning at the home of a baker who is a friend of ours. It's your chance to pretend you're in The Great British Bake Off. In a very fun, hands-on experience, you'll learn to bake scones, and then sit down for a delicious and classic English tea. Tell your Fitbit or smart watch to relax. For every scone you've tasted, you can walk it off on a scenic footpath that includes charming stone bridges and crosses a style or two as you pass through meadows filled with grazing sheep sheltered by the iconic honey-colored dry-stone walls.

Continue to Chipping Campden, which marks the northern edge of the famed Cotswold Way footpath that begins south in Bath. So, there is a sort of celebratory lift to every footstep today as you walk to Hidcote Manor. Hidcote is the world-famous garden created by celebrated horticulturalist, Major Lawrence Johnston. His name and 'Hidcote' have become synonymous with the best

forms of many plants, including Hypericum 'Hidcote', Lavandula 'Hidcote' and Rosa 'Lawrence Johnston'. Waiting for you among the 10+ acres is an expert on English gardens, who leads you through the formal garden 'rooms' near the house and natural areas that blend in with the surrounding countryside.

MEALS: B, L, D

OVERNIGHT: CHIPPING CAMPDEN

DAY 4 »

Chastleton Manor/Adlestrop

Jane Austen based her novel Mansfield Park on her visits to Adlestrop. If she went for a stroll, it's easy to imagine that the views she had were the same as you enjoy today on your country walk. Beforehand, make your way through some of the prettiest villages in the Cotswolds, including Bourton-on-the-Water and Upper and Lower Slaughter. You're headed for an organic farm to meet up with our close friend, who joins you on a walk to Chastleton Manor, a National Trust property. In the village church, enjoy a picnic lunch of local specialties like organic Gloucestershire ham, Bledington Blue and Penyston Brie cheeses, smoked salmon, biscuits, and fig chutney. Then, on a visit to the Manor, we'll share how the National Trust preserves English heritage.

This afternoon, your footpath immerses you in an idyllic setting of farms, fields and flowers of Dover's Hill. A natural amphitheater with sweeping views over the Vale of Evesham, this was also the site of the original English Olympic Games, started by Robert Dover in 1612. Spot local farm animals as they graze along a patchwork quilt of green meadows before arriving on foot at your perfectly-sited accommodations.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: CHIPPING CAMPDEN

DAY 5 »

Bibury / Chedworth

Savor a breakfast of local yogurt, fresh fruits and preserves on warm bread. Your morning walk begins in the village of Bibury. Originally built in the 14th century, it was first a location for the neighboring monasteries to store wool, then its row of weavers' cottages were restored and it's often been referred to as the 'most beautiful village in England'. From Bibury, the walk leads through small-scale farms separated by ancient stone walls and 'kissing gates', with landscapes rich with birds, wildflowers, and butterflies.

Your afternoon explorations take you to Chedworth Roman Villa, which is one of the grandest country houses of 4th century Roman Britain. The valley where Chedworth is located offers cinematic countryside views, with stands of poplar and chestnut trees separating fields where sheep graze and pheasants roam. Your footpath crosses a charming bridge over the River Cohn and passes through the estate which was built seventeen hundred years ago by wealthy Roman Britons. Now, Chedworth is an active archeological site. In 2014, workers uncovered splendid mosaic floors, and state-of-the-art walkways make it possible to get close to these relics. It's a terrific chance to see how excavations are being conducted.

End your day in Bath, where you'll be welcomed with afternoon tea and some downtime before dinner in town.

MEALS: B

OVERNIGHT: BATH

DAY 6 »

Stonehenge / Bath

When we talk about 'Only with Classic Journeys', we mean experiences like what you are about to have today. Because today is Stonehenge. About 4,000 tourists troop through on a typical day. Happily, we've arranged a private visit for you when the site is

not open to the public. Relax among the pillars of stone. Enjoy a picnic breakfast and champagne toast. Walk and wander among the stone circle as Bronze Age pilgrims did. Then walk away before the madding crowds ever arrive. It's one of those experiences that you'll be dreaming about... and bragging about... for years to come.

After, head to Bath, where this city has been a top walking destination since the Romans arrived in 60 AD. They found the hot springs and decided to build baths and a temple to worship the goddess Sulis Minerva. A few hundred years later, Bath Abbey was founded in the 7th century and the town became a religious center, and once again a walking destination for pilgrims. A thousand years after that, Jane Austen, arrived. Now, you'll follow in the footsteps of Romans, pilgrims, authors, and others. On a thoughtfully curated walk, admire the honey-colored Georgian architecture, and stroll with your expert guide from the iconic Royal Crescent to the majestic Circus and spectacular Pulteney Bridge, one of only two bridges in the world with shops built into it. (The other being the iconic Ponte Vecchio in Florence.) Your guide will share stories and anecdotes of Austen's novels, Northanger Abbey and Persuasion, and scenes from "Bridgerton" as you get up close to the city's namesake baths, which still flow with hot water today.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: BATH

DAY 7 »

Bath/ Departure

Savor your English breakfast before parting ways mid-morning with your guide.

MEALS: B

Tour Hotels



[Bay Tree Hotel](#)

Since its first guests in 1565, this perfect Cotswolds hotel has been a favorite. The details are remarkable, from the high-raftered hall to the oak-paneled rooms, tapestries and flagstone floors.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



[Cotswold House Hotel](#)

This award-winning luxury hotel, will appeal to travelers visiting the Cotswolds, looking for tranquility, sublime comfort. The contemporary style makes Cotswold House and Spa one of the most admired boutique hotels in the Cotswolds.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



[Bath Priory Hotel](#)

A luxurious country house nestled within award-winning gardens, The Bath Priory is a stunning hotel near the center of Bath. Enjoy its upscale accommodations, spa, restaurant as well as its charming English hospitality.

NIGHTS: 2 nights

Arrival & Departure

→ ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Lobby of The Randolph Hotel**
START CITY: **Oxford**
START TIME: **10:30 AM**

→ DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **Lobby of the Bath Priory Hotel**
END CITY: **Bath**
END TIME: **9:00 AM**