



## LOVE IS IN THE AIR

**Treat your sweetheart to a Valentine's break on the Great West Way – a very English affair with 125 miles of ravishing countryside, luxury hotels and romantic experiences**

Celebrate your love with a Great West Way break, choosing from one of the many romantic hotels, landscapes and experiences along the 125-mile route that runs between London and Bristol.

Begin your journey at the **Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew** – one of the three UNESCO World Heritage Sites on the Great West Way – where you can say it with flowers (or temperate zone plants) in the magnificent Grade I listed Palm House. Then head west for **Windsor Castle**: founded by William the Conqueror in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Queen's weekend retreat has been home to 39 monarchs. Pay a visit (it's open to the public throughout the year) and relive memories of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's fairy-tale wedding.

Nine miles west of Windsor, **Clivedon House** in Berkshire is where Meghan spent the night before the ceremony and it was the hotel's long and winding drive that sent her off on the final stage of her royal marriage. Set in 376 acres of National Trust parkland, Clivedon is one of England's best-known country house hotels – a Grade I listed stately home that boasts 350 years of 'power, politics and parties' enriched by royal connections and a whiff of scandal (this is where politician John Profumo embarked on an ill-advised affair with Christine Keeler in 1961).

Fast forward to Bristol, at the west end of the Great West Way, and BBC is filming a six-part series *The Trial of Christine Keeler*.

Still in Berkshire, **The Roseate** in Reading is a luxury five-star that has earned a reputation as the UK's 'Sexiest Townhouse Hotel'. Combine champagne with vast beds, copper baths and a table at the Cerise Restaurant (**Roseate** also has hotels in London and Bath). Further west, in Newbury, **Donnington Grove** is a three-star hotel in a five-star setting: a fine example of 'Strawberry Gothic' architecture, set in 500 acres of beautiful grounds including an 18-hole golf course. Both hotels make a good base for exploring pretty Thames-side villages and walks on the **North Wessex Downs**.

In the direction of Malmesbury in Wiltshire, **Whatley Manor Hotel & Spa**, is a relaxed, indulgent country house in the Cotswolds, complete with Aquarius Spa, cinema and Grey's Brasserie dining experience. The hotel reopens following redecoration – just in time for Valentine's Day (12 February 2019). The hotel is less than 10 minutes from **Westonbirt Arboretum** – the Forestry Commission's magical tree garden with forest trails, thousands of species of tree and a treetop walkway.

At **Troutbeck Guest House**, near Pewsey in Wiltshire, check into, say, the Benjamin Room (among five glamorous rooms) which has its own private entrance, lobby, an outdoor deck with views of the River Avon and a roll-top bath in the bedroom; then nip across the road for dinner at sister inn, **the Red Lion**

(order the Valentine's Day tasting menu). Troutbeck is half an hour from **Avebury** and 20 minutes from **Stonehenge** – the two prehistoric stone circles that are co-listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Continue on to Bath, and its landmark hotel **Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa** with its 45 sumptuous suites, award-winning Dower House restaurant and elegant champagne and cocktail bar. Part of John Wood the Younger's iconic Grade I listed crescent, you can take afternoon tea in the garden or relax in the tranquillity spa while taking in the Georgian architecture that has helped make Bath a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Book a spa package for two at the **Thermae Bath Spa** where you can relax in the natural thermal waters of a rooftop pool while soaking up views of the city.

And finally, to Bristol: check into **Number 38**, a boutique townhouse which overlooks Clifton's rolling Downs from penthouse suites and sexy bathrooms. A short walk away, Brunel's **Clifton Suspension Bridge**, slung across the spectacular Avon Gorge, might be the perfect place to propose.

#### **While romancing the Great West Way:**

- *Let your love fly:* from Bristol or Bath with **Bailey Balloons** – a hot-air balloon ride with Champagne and beautiful countryside
- *Eat your heart out:* Try a Valentine's Day tasting menu at the **Three Tuns** in Marlborough. Canapes and sparkling wines are part of the four-course Valentine's Day dinner on offer at the **Angel Hotel** in Chippenham. Or book a table at **Koffman & Mr White's** at the Abbey Hotel in Bath (courtesy of culinary legends, Pierre Koffman and Marco Pierre White).
- *Something unusual?* Valentine's date night at **Bristol Aquarium** – after hours, with underwater creatures and no children.

Find out more about Valentine's Day offers at [Great West Way for Valentines](#)

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Find out more about the Great West Way at [www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/media](http://www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/media)

**Ends**

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**Note to editors:**

#### **About the Great West Way**

The Great West Way is one of a number of successful projects to receive funding from the UK Government's £40 million Discover England Fund, administered by VisitEngland. VisitWiltshire are the Destination Organisation leading the project. For further information go to

[www.discoverenglandfund.org](http://www.discoverenglandfund.org)

Further information and link to The Story of the Great West Way booklet, a guide for businesses and destinations, is available at [www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/greatwestway](http://www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/greatwestway)

The Great West Way Ambassador Network gives access to a wide range of additional Great West Way consumer, travel trade and media marketing activity; connecting businesses and destinations along the route

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For further information on or to join the Great West Way Ambassador Network please contact Claire Margetts, Head of Ambassador Network, [ClaireMargetts@GreatWestWay.co.uk](mailto:ClaireMargetts@GreatWestWay.co.uk) Tel: 07850 080679

For further information or to find out more about becoming an Official Tour Operator please contact Florence Wallace, Head of Travel Trade, [FloWallace@GreatWestWay.co.uk](mailto:FloWallace@GreatWestWay.co.uk) Tel: 01722 341309 or 07436 588860

### **About the Discover England Fund**

- In November 2015, the Government announced a £40 million Discover England Fund; an unprecedented opportunity for English tourism. The Fund aims to deliver world-class bookable tourism products joined up across geographies and/or themes; including integrated transport solutions to provide an end-to-end customer experience.
- The Fund supports the growth of one of England's most successful export industries, inbound tourism. Tourism is an industry that delivers jobs and economic growth across the English regions – contributing some £106bn each year to the economy and supporting 2.6 million jobs.
- The Fund supported a number of pilot projects in year one (2016/17) that tested product development approaches. In years two and three, 2017-19, the fund will support:
  - A number of large-scale collaborative projects to be delivered over the two year period 2017-2019 that will create a step-change in bookable English tourism product for international consumers,
  - A smaller funding pot for new one year pilot projects (in year two), and
  - Continuation funding for existing year one projects that demonstrated early learnings (in year two).

### **About VisitBritain/VisitEngland**

VisitBritain/VisitEngland is the national tourism agency – a non-departmental public body funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)

Working with a wide range of partners in both the UK and overseas, our mission is to grow the volume and value of inbound tourism across the nations and regions of Britain and to develop world-class English tourism product to support our growth aspirations. For further information and to access the latest in-depth market intelligence and statistics visit [www.visitbritain.org](http://www.visitbritain.org) or [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com) and [www.visitengland.com](http://www.visitengland.com) for consumer information.