

Based on one of the first Great Roads commissioned by the Kings of England, the Great West Way winds its way through landscapes filled with the world-famous and the yet-to-be-discovered.

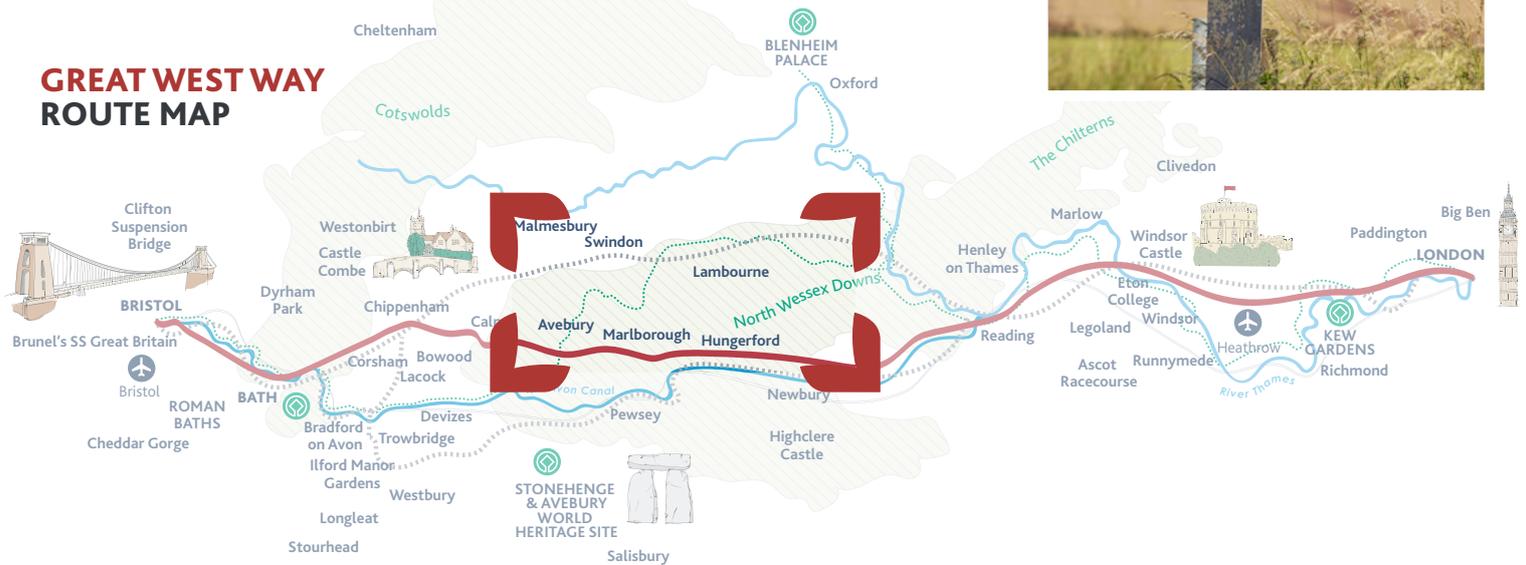


GUIDE TO WALKING IN THE NORTH WESSEX DOWNS

Enjoy the fabulous views on a hiking break on the Ridgeway national foot trail; used since prehistoric times it is effectively Britain's oldest road, passing through the north of the glorious North Wessex Downs.



GREAT WEST WAY ROUTE MAP



PLACES OF INTEREST IN THE NORTH WESSEX DOWNS

North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Barbury hill fort

White Horse at Uffington

Liddington hill fort

Uffington Castle

Segsbury Camp hill fort

West Lockinge Farm

PLACES TO EAT

Avebury Manor Tea-room

Silks on the Downs

Parklands Hotel

Royal Oak

White Horse Inn

Bear

PLACES TO STAY

Avebury Lodge B&B

Parklands Hotel

Sanctuary B&B

DAY ONE

AVEBURY & OGBOURNE ST GEORGE



Avebury

Spend the night before the start of the walk in Avebury – it's an amazing village surrounded by three rings of Neolithic standing stones that together make up the largest stone circle in Europe. **Avebury Lodge B&B** offering stunning views over the megaliths, which are all around the village; there's no entry charge to see them, and many sit in fields pastorally grazed by sheep. Wander as you like among the megaliths then have a mid-morning coffee at **Avebury Manor Tea-room** in the old library of the village manor house then set off on the walk, covering a distance of about nine miles (14.5km) on this first day. After about five miles, stop at Iron Age **Barbury hill fort** for a picnic then continue walking, taking in tremendous panoramas from the Ridgeway's vantage point. It's a photo-op haven and a geologist's paradise – the chalk of the landscape started to form 100 million years ago. Dinner at gastropub **Silks on the Downs** or **Parklands Hotel**.

Overnight Sanctuary B&B or **Parklands Hotel**.



Ogbourne St George

DAY TWO

LIDDINGTON & UFFINGTON

Continue hiking east along the Ridgeway, heading for the **White Horse** at Uffington. The views become ever-more remarkable as the going gets steeper, particularly around **Liddington hill fort**. A few miles further on, turn off along a footpath to Bishopstone for lunch at the **Royal Oak** pub, set on the organic farm of Helen Browning – advocate of food sustainability.

Rejoin the Ridgeway and continue along the undulating trail to the Iron Age hill fort of **Uffington Castle**, and just beyond it the iconic landmark of the Uffington White Horse. The enigmatic, prehistoric figure was carved into the chalk hillside some 3,000 years ago. No entry ticket is required; visitors freely wander around it. Why it was created remains a mystery although there's a theory that the image was supposed to be a dragon – this is upheld by the presence of Dragon Hill nearby, said to have been the place where St George killed the menacing beast of legend.

Overnight White Horse Inn, Woolstone.



Royal Oak pub

DAY THREE

SEGSBURY CAMP

Buy picnic provisions at **Uffington Stores** then set off for **Devil's Punchbowl**, deeply infolded downland sculpted by the flow of water millennia ago. Stop for a scenic picnic here or a little further on at **Segsbury Camp** hill fort. About two miles further east, cross the B4494

and almost immediately turn off north on a footpath to Wantage. This is very much equestrian country and you'll pass the gallops of **West Lockinge Farm**. The path then runs to Wantage – an ancient market town was the birthplace of King Alfred in 849AD. Finish the walk at the **Bear** in **Wantage**, a handsome coaching inn offering good brasserie fare, then catch a bus to Didcot station (last service is 20.45 on weekdays) or stay at the Bear.

The ancient Ridgeway footpath is just one of the striking trails off the Great West Way; there are many other walking routes in the area that run through some of Britain's most appealing countryside.



The Ridgeway

The order of experiences included in this itinerary is intended to be a guide only; you can choose to visit these wonderful experiences at your own pace and in your own way. Devising your own route is all part of discovering the Great West Way!

DISCOVER BRISTOL
THE GREAT WEST WAY

Clifton Suspension Bridge, Bristol

Advertising based on a £24 Great West Way Discoverer one-day pass for the West zone. Correct as of 1 May 2020. Selected routes only. Visit GWR.com/GreatWestWay for full terms and conditions.

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GREAT WEST WAY GWR DISCOVERER PASS

Get around the Great West Way on the rail and bus network using the **Great West Way GWR Discoverer pass**. It includes unlimited Off-Peak train travel from London Paddington along the route to Bristol Temple Meads via Reading with options to branch off towards Oxford, Kemble and Salisbury via Westbury (or London Waterloo to Salisbury with South Western Railway). It also includes unlimited travel on the bus services along the route. Choose from a one day or seven days ticket to enjoy your Great West Way adventure. gwr.com

To reach the start of this walk arriving at Avebury on the first evening, take a GWR service to Swindon station and then catch the 49 bus to Avebury (note the last bus leaves at 19.25). From Wantage at the end of the walk, take the X32 or X33 bus to Didcot station (note there is no bus service on Sundays).



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