

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.

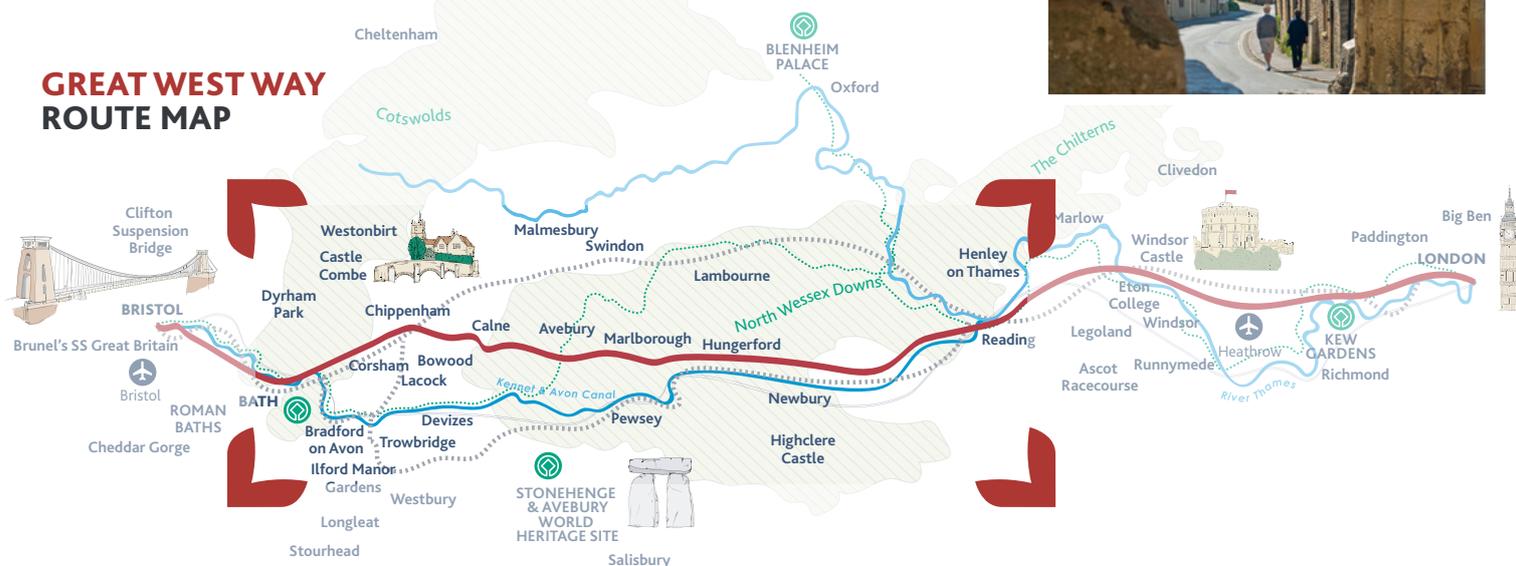


GUIDE TO TOWN AND COUNTRY

Discover the fine array of handsome old market towns within easy reach of bucolic countryside on the Great West Way. From Newbury to Malmesbury, take a short break combining these historic venues with nearby rural escapes.



GREAT WEST WAY ROUTE MAP



PLACES OF INTEREST IN THIS AREA

- [The Vyne & Cherhill White Horse](#)
- [Kennet & Avon Canal](#)
- [Merchant's House](#)
- [Jones's Mill reserve](#)
- [Bowood House](#)

- [Atwell-Wilson Motor museum](#)
- [Athlestan Museum](#)
- [Abbey House Gardens](#)
- [Westonbirt Arboretum](#)

PLACES TO EAT

- [The Hind's Head](#)
- [Waterfront Bar & Bistro](#)
- [Talbot Inn](#)
- [Horse Guards](#)
- [Whatley Manor](#)

PLACES TO STAY

- [The Hind's Head](#)
- [Landsdowne Hotel](#)
- [Buttle Farm](#)

DAY ONE

NEWBURY & KENNET & AVON CANAL



Newbury blends the old and the new with aplomb. This is a dynamic tech town; it also has bags of historic appeal and is home to one of the UK's most acclaimed horse racing venues. For top sights head to the Market Place, which is lined with splendid old buildings including the pedimented Corn Exchange, now a cultural centre for theatre, cinema and more. Then stroll west to The Wharf where the town's 17th-century Cloth Hall and an adjoining half-timbered granary today house the West Berkshire Museum.

Stop for lunch at **The Newbury**, a lively gastropub in the town centre then head south through rolling landscape to **The Vyne** – a magnificent country mansion. The village of Aldermaston, prettily lined with 17th and 18th-century workers' cottages, is on the **Kennet & Avon Canal** and from its once-industrial wharf you can take a leisurely stroll along the towpath – watching canal boats in spring and summer.

Overnight Aldermaston, at **The Hind's Head**, a 17th-century coaching inn.



DAY TWO

MARLBOROUGH & VALE OF PEWSEY

The elegant Georgian town of **Marlborough** is a 30-mile drive west of Aldermaston. Its remarkable High Street (the second widest in England) is lined with striking buildings

– colonnaded, half-timbered, balconied, gabled. Then head south through the beautiful **Vale of Pewsey** with its country lanes and thatched cottages. Honeystreet Mill Cafe on the Kennet & Avon Canal is a fine place to stop for a light lunch or cream tea. Then head past Pewsey village to walk at **Jones's Mill reserve** – a magical fenland area is home to kingfishers, water voles and herons. **Calne** is about a 35-minute drive west – a place of invention and discoveries – the English method of curing ham (known as the Wiltshire Cure) was developed here in the 18th century.

Overnight **Talbot Inn** at Quemerford or the **Landsdowne Hotel** in Calne. If you've scope to make this a longer break stay in a beautiful barn conversion at **Buttle Farm** for charcuterie tasting and tours of their rare breed pigs.



DAY THREE

MALMESBURY & COTSWOLDS

Malmesbury is a pretty little town with a terrific skyline dominated by the silhouette of its 12th-century abbey. Potter the high street and explore the abbey, complete with the tomb of Athlestan, the first king of England. Visit the (free) **Athlestan Museum** where you'll find a wonderfully eclectic mix from vintage bicycles to tales of townsfolk. Take in, too, **Abbey House Gardens** with spectacular borders and dramatic topiary.

Lunch at the **Horse Guards** pub in Brokenborough and enjoy the Cotswolds – from the nearby village of Sherston there's a walk through mellow landscape on footpaths either side of the River Avon to **Easton Grey**. For a final meal head to **Beaufort Restaurant** at the **Hare and Hounds Hotel**, Westonbirt.

Transport is an intrinsic part of the Great West Way – attractive market towns grew and thrived thanks to stage coach routes and canal boat haulage. Today, there's a wonderfully rich and absorbing legacy throughout the area.



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!



NEWBURY, THE FESTIVAL TOWN

Highlights of Newbury's roster of annual celebrations include:

- **Newbury Spring Festival**, May – a town-wide music event
- **Vegan Market**, June – a new celebration held around the Market Place
- **Jazz & Blues Festival**, July
- **Retrofestival**, August – an epic family-fun event with music and more from the 30s, 40s and 50s.
- **Real Ale Festival**, September
- **Horse racing** at Newbury Racecourse takes place throughout the year



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