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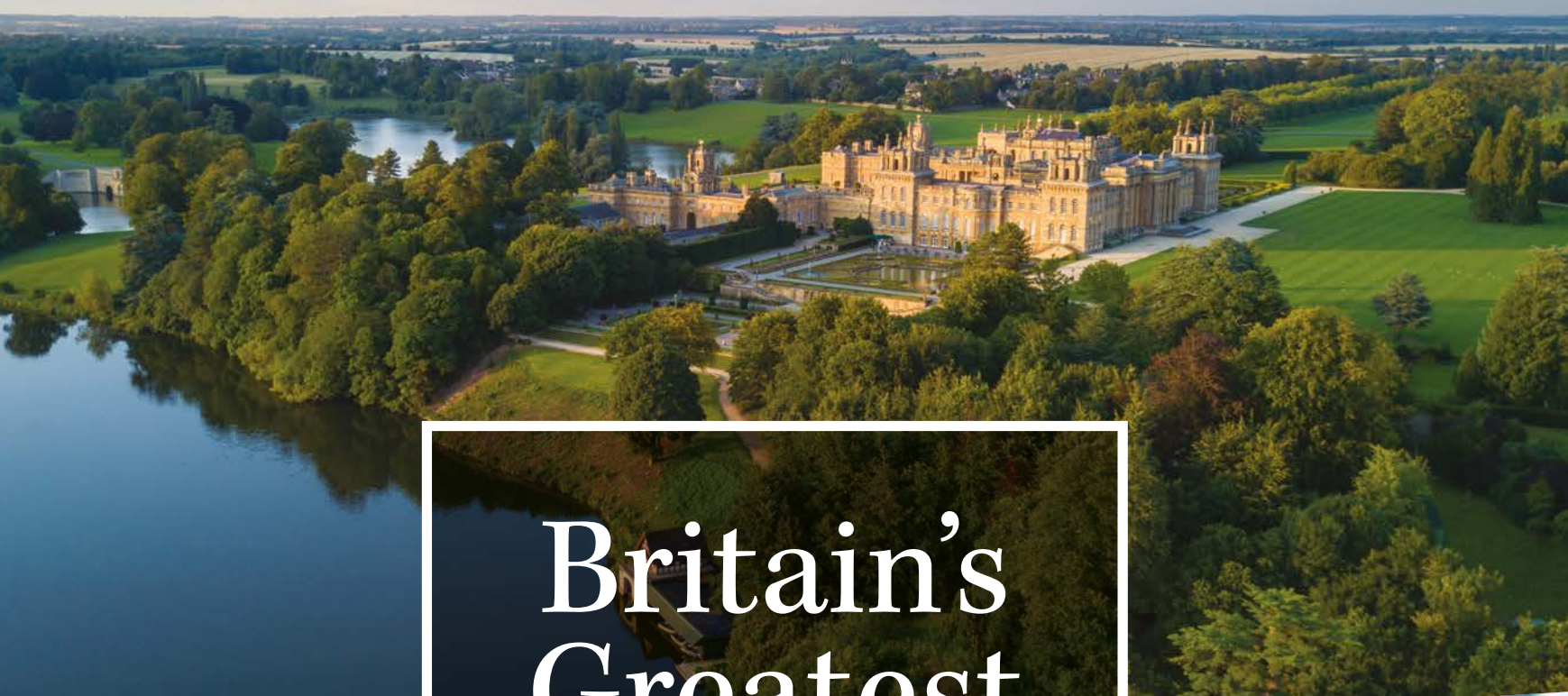


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Welcome



The Cotswolds: a dreamy, lost-in-time landscape of honey-stone villages nestled in rolling hills. This very English region is so famous for its small-scale architecture that many imagine it as a small cluster of villages. In fact, those famous ‘wolds’ (hills) cover nearly 800 miles and span five counties (Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire).

Must-sees abound. Over the next 32 pages, we cherry-pick the highlights: picture-perfect villages built in the local creamy stone, stately homes to swoon over, and special places to stay: for a real flavour of the Cotswolds, it has to be a cosy inn or grand country house.

Finally, these lovely landscapes haven’t escaped the attention of filmmakers. We’ve tracked down some of the locations you might just recognize – yet more places to add to your must-visit list.

NATASHA FOGES, Editor



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Six stunning Cotswolds locations that have been caught on camera

PHOTO: © VISIT ENGLAND/JAMES KERR/NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/CHRIS LACEY



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Prettiest VILLAGES

A more consistently beautiful region would be hard to find anywhere: houses of golden stone nestled in gently rolling hills. Here's our pick of the Cotswolds' loveliest corners

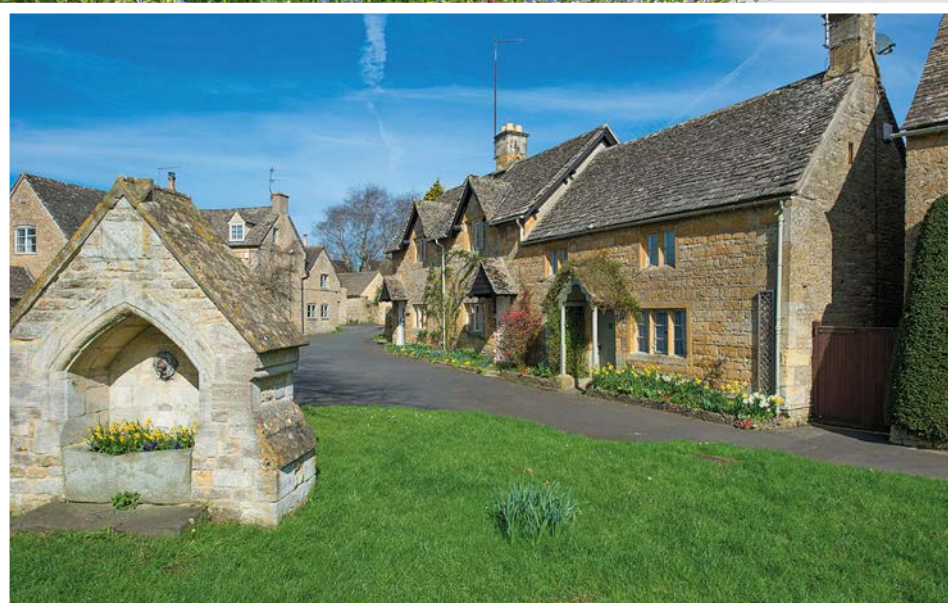


CASTLE COMBE

On the southernmost edge of the Cotswolds is Castle Combe in Wiltshire, named after a Norman Castle that once stood above the village. Arranged around the 14th-century Market Cross and old water pump, this quintessential Cotswolds village has a picture-perfect high street of honey-stone houses and cosy tearooms. Wander through the village and you may find the locals selling bunches of flowers or cakes outside their homes.

Look out for St Andrew's Church, where a Norman monument to a knight depicts him with his legs crossed, a sign that he fought in the Crusades. Also here is a medieval faceless clock, one of the oldest working clocks in England.

The village was an important centre of the wool industry in the Middle Ages – hence names such as 'Weaver's House'. The nearby river that powered the mills now provides the Cotswolds' prettiest spot for a photo: head down to the little bridge spanning the brook at the bottom of the village, and snap away.



PHOTOS: © SHUTTERSTOCK/VEIT COTSWOLDS

LOWER SLAUGHTER

Banish all gory thoughts: the 'Slaughter' (Upper and Lower) take their name from the Old English word 'slothre', meaning 'muddy place'. The two Gloucestershire villages are linked by the River Eye – really more of a stream, a tributary of the River Windrush; the hour-long walk between the two is perhaps the Cotswolds' loveliest.

Upper Slaughter (a 'sainted' village, meaning it lost no lives in the First World War) is attractive by any standards, but the smaller Lower Slaughter manages to outshine its twin. The village is a wonderfully peaceful place, comprising a collection of stone cottages gathered around the stream, a lovely church and two splendid seventeenth-century houses (now converted into luxury hotels). Don't miss Copse Hill Road, which has been voted the most romantic street in England.

An old water mill, which appears in the Domesday Book, completes the picture of rural tranquility and is now a museum and tearoom, with a perfectly positioned terrace where you can sit and watch the river flow by.

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BIBURY

Designer and master craftsman William Morris called Bibury ‘the most beautiful village in England’, and it’s easy to see why. Sitting pretty on the banks of the River Coln in Gloucestershire and home to what is surely one of England’s most photogenic streets, this is a Cotswolds must-see. Arlington Row, protected by the National Trust, is a line of houses originally built in the 14th century as a wool store, and converted into weavers’ cottages in the 17th century. If the timeless row of stone cottages seems familiar, it might be because this iconic site features on the inside cover of British passports. The expanse of water meadow nearby is known as Rack Isle: this is where wool was hung out to dry after it was washed in Arlington Row.

Bibury also hosts a trout farm, an attraction in its own right: home not only to the rainbow trout that are reared here but also an array of wildlife, from swans to water voles. You can take in the peaceful surroundings, learn about trout farming, or even catch your own dinner.



PHOTOS: © ADAMI BURTON/ROBERT HARDING/NICK TURNER/VISIT ENGLAND/VISIT COTSWOLDS



CHIPPING CAMPDEN

In a dramatic setting on the northern edge of the Gloucestershire Cotswolds, Chipping Campden has more bustle about it than the sleepier Cotswolds villages, with a lively high street (look out for its seven sundials, dating back to a time when clocks and watches were luxuries).

There’s plenty here to detain you for a leisurely few hours. Seek out the beautiful wool church, the almshouses and the 17th-century covered marketplace. Connections to the Arts and Crafts movement provide further interest: the Guild of Handicraft moved here from London in 1902. The workshops of the Guild once huddled round the 18th-century silk mill on Sheep Street; upstairs in the mill, you can visit the workshop of Hart Silversmiths, complete with antique tools, which dates back to this time and is still going strong. If this whets your appetite, the Court Barn Museum on Church Street tells the story of the Arts and Crafts movement.



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BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER

The clue's in the name of this Gloucestershire gem: Bourton-on-the-Water's stream flows through the village, with five little footbridges, an abundance of ducks and a village green completing the idyllic picture. Its 'Venice of the Cotswolds' nickname might be stretching the truth somewhat, but it's certainly got plenty of charm.

The stream is central to life here. At Christmas a tree is placed in the river, and if you visit over the August Bank Holiday you'll witness an unusual tradition dating back over a hundred years: the local football team playing a game in the river itself. You can appreciate the compact beauty of the village all the more at Bourton's Model Village – a meticulously crafted one-ninth scale replica that has been awarded Grade II status.



PAINSWICK

‘The Queen of the Cotswolds’, Painswick in Gloucestershire has a timeless beauty. In a lofty position above the Severn Valley, this important wool town has retained many of its handsome old buildings, and its narrow, winding streets hold some gems. Grade I-listed St Mary’s church is famous for its grand tombs and 99 yew trees (it is said that the devil would destroy the 100th if it was ever planted). Every September local children take part in an age-old ceremony here known as ‘clipping the church’, in which they wear flowers in their hair, join hands and, in a ring, embrace the church.

Time-honoured traditions also persist at the town’s historic bowling green, England’s oldest and still in use by the local bowls club. Seek out too the stunning Rococo Garden, designed as a gentleman’s pleasure garden in the early 18th century, and full of whimsical nooks, with lovely views from every corner. For a more dramatic panorama, head for the Painswick Beacon, three miles out of town; climb to the top of the hill and you’ll be rewarded with a head-spinning view over Gloucestershire, and even Wales on a fine day.



PHOTOS: © VISIT COTSWOLDS/NICK TURNER / TONY PLEAVIN / VISIT BRITAIN/PAUL WESTON/LAWY



BROADWAY

The beautiful honey-stone and creeper-clad buildings of Broadway, Worcestershire are straight out of a period drama. The high street is lined with boutiques and cafés, and there’s a cultural slant to its museums. The workshop belonging to the furniture designer Gordon Russell is now home to a design museum, while the Broadway Museum and Art Gallery inhabits a splendid Tudor mansion on the high street.

It’s an easy walk to local landmark the Broadway Tower, the vision of landscape designer ‘Capability’ Brown. This 18th-century turreted folly offers scenic views over the surrounding countryside: you can see an astonishing 16 counties from its rooftop platform. Inside is an absorbing exhibition on William Morris, who used to holiday here. The tower must have made quite an impression: while staying here, Morris started his campaign for the preservation of historic monuments.





PHOTOS © ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL / CHRIS LACEY / NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES

Castles & MANORS

The Cotswolds is blessed with some beautiful stately homes, from grand Jacobean manors to romantic Tudor castles

CHARLECOTE PARK

Charlecote was visited by Elizabeth I on one of her many ‘progresses’ around the country; the impressive porch was built in her honour and you can still visit the suite of rooms she stayed in.

The manor was home to the Lucy family in Victorian times (they still live in a wing of the house today), and the interiors have survived intact: visit the Drawing Room, Billiard Room and Library and lose yourself in their faded charm.

The house, between Stratford and Warwick, is open March to October, Friday to Tuesday. www.nationaltrust.org.uk



VISIT THE COTSWOLDS RETREAT OF WILLIAM MORRIS

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Explore William Morris's "Heaven on Earth" and view the iconic collection of artwork and objects owned and designed by the Father of the Arts & Crafts Movement. Discover why the Cotswold home became an inspiration for him and his family and explore the gardens, enjoy homemade food from our licensed tearoom and visit our gift shop.

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BERKELEY CASTLE

This fairytale castle, complete with turrets and a magnificent 14th-century Great Hall, has been home to the Berkeley family for a staggering 850 years and 27 generations. Its claims to fame are numerous: King Edward II was murdered by his captors here in 1327; the chest carried by Sir Francis Drake on his voyages on the *Golden Hinde* resides here; and somewhat more prosaically, Queen Elizabeth I's bedspread was left here after a visit in 1572 (you can still view it today). *Berkeley Castle, in Gloucestershire, is open April to October, Sunday to Wednesday.* www.berkeley-castle.com.



CHASTLETON HOUSE

Chastleton House is a handsome Jacobean manor built by a prosperous wool merchant between 1607 and 1612 as a statement of his wealth and standing. Owned by the same family until the National Trust took over in 1991, Chastleton is an incredible time capsule of a bygone age, considered one of the finest examples of an early 17th-century house. Wander the untouched interiors, stroll the various 'rooms' of the glorious garden or, in summer, play croquet on the lawn; this most English of games was invented in this very spot. *Chastleton House, in Oxfordshire, is open March to October, Wednesday to Sunday.* www.nationaltrust.org.uk



SNOWHILL MANOR

Snowhill Manor was once owned by one Charles Paget Wade, an Edwardian gentleman who amassed a huge quantity of artefacts and curios, restoring his Broadway home as a showcase in which to display them. Some 22,000 fascinating items – from clockwork toys to suits of armour – cram every corner of this stately manor, now protected by the National Trust. It is an astonishing display of the dedication and passion of one man, and well worth visiting. *The house, in Gloucestershire, is open daily mid-March to October, with guided tours on November weekends.* www.nationaltrust.org.uk

A Heritage Railway rebuilt and run by qualified volunteers

Known as "The Friendly Line in the Cotswolds," The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway offers a unique opportunity to experience train travel as it was over fifty years ago.

The world was changing rapidly then, and on your 28 mile round trip you can sample the glory of steam and those "new" diesel railcars offering panoramic views - and for the children (young and old!) those seats right behind the driver let you see what he sees.

Large diesel locomotives also haul some services throughout the year.

With either mode, you pass through glorious Cotswolds scenery - to the north the fertile Vale of Evesham, and to the west Malverns and Wales.

To the east, right at the side of the track, the Cotswolds climb steeply uphill.

On your journey you can travel over the famous 15-arch Stan-



way viaduct and through the 693 yard Greet Tunnel too.

Do have a look in at Broadway Station that is being rebuilt from the ground up by our volunteers.

This station was totally obliterated by British Railways when it was closed in the 1960s and reopened in 2018.

All our stations have modern facilities with Broadway, Toddington and Winchcombe stations providing refreshments.

There is a café at Broadway, hot food in 'The Flag & Whistle' at Toddington and a delightful 1950's cafe at Winchcombe.

On-train catering includes our

legendary bacon baps!

Broadway has a pay-and-display car park just over the road from the station and there is ample free car parking at Toddington and Cheltenham Racecourse, plus a few spaces at Winchcombe.

All stations are suitable for disabled passengers, who are also catered for in specially adapted carriages. For further details about accessibility, please see our website.

Special events are held throughout the year - Wartime in the Cotswolds, Steam and Diesel Galas, a Food & Drink Fayre, Santa Specials - and many more.

Rover tickets give you unlimited travel all day - and our volunteers will be very pleased to welcome you and ensure that you have a great day out.

Trains run throughout the season - full details and prices are on our website www.gwsr.com or by calling 01242 621405.

Special Events in 2019

WARTIME IN THE COTSWOLDS

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th April

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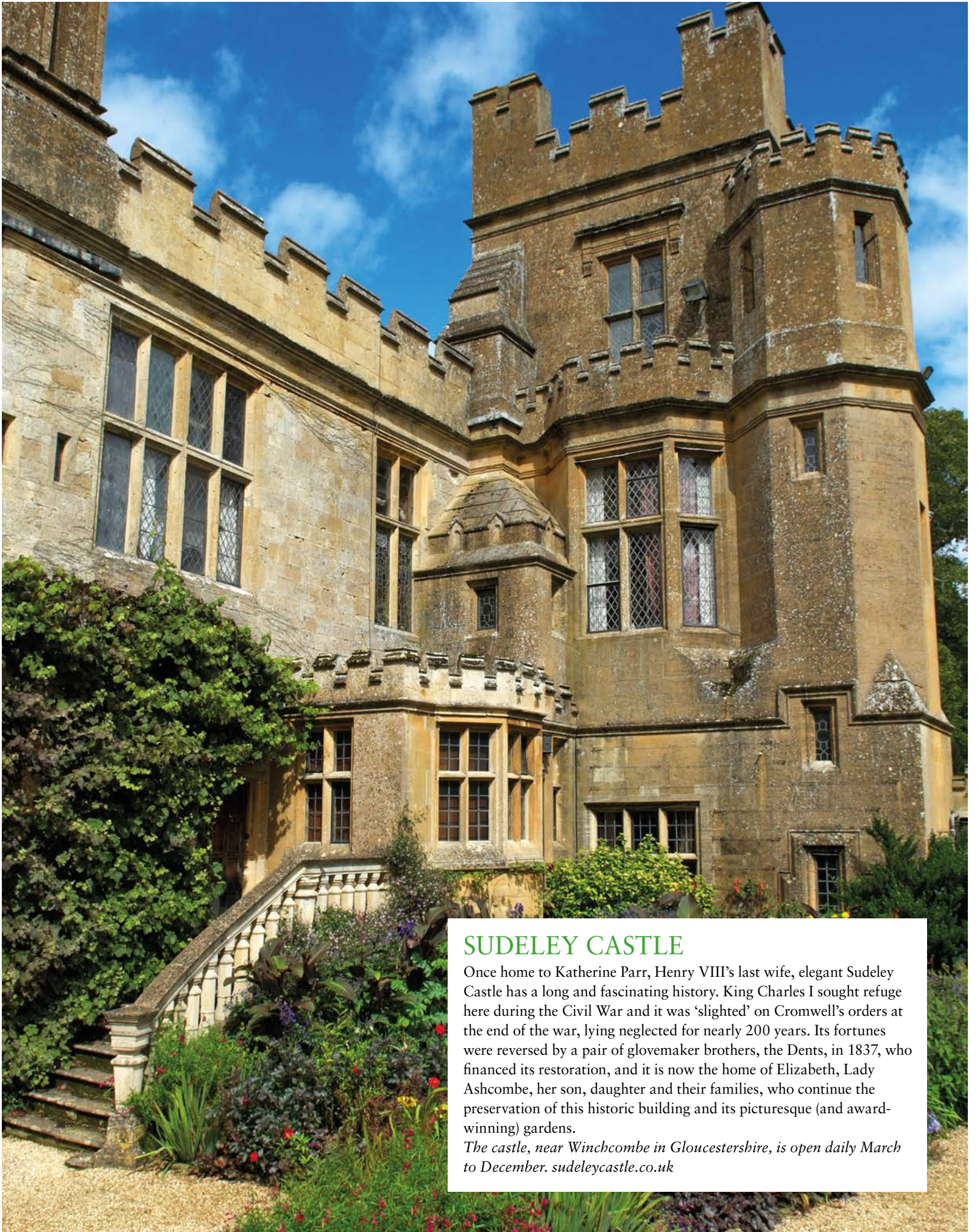


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SUDELEY CASTLE

Once home to Katherine Parr, Henry VIII's last wife, elegant Sudeley Castle has a long and fascinating history. King Charles I sought refuge here during the Civil War and it was 'slighted' on Cromwell's orders at the end of the war, lying neglected for nearly 200 years. Its fortunes were reversed by a pair of glovemaking brothers, the Dents, in 1837, who financed its restoration, and it is now the home of Elizabeth, Lady Ashcombe, her son, daughter and their families, who continue the preservation of this historic building and its picturesque (and award-winning) gardens.

The castle, near Winchcombe in Gloucestershire, is open daily March to December. sudeleycastle.co.uk



WOOL & STONE

The golden stone cottages and the sheep dotting the hillsides are enduring signs of the Cotswolds' historic trades, as Diana Woolf explains

The landscape and history of the Cotswolds has been shaped by two main ingredients: stone and wool. Seemingly a strange pair, the two are central to the area's unique character: while its gorgeous chocolate-box villages were built from the local limestone, they were paid for by the medieval wool trade. Sheep farming is so integral to the area's heritage that it even gave the area its name: a combination of 'cot' meaning sheep pen or enclosure and 'wold', meaning hills. When the wool trade slumped the money moved elsewhere, leaving the Cotswolds relatively untouched by the modern world.

The Cotswold Hills are formed out of oolitic Jurassic limestone, which created the conditions for the fertile grassland so suited to sheep-rearing. Known as Cotswolds Lions because of their shaggy

fleeces, Cotswolds sheep were highly prized for their wool during the Middle Ages. It was exported to countries such as Italy and the Netherlands in a highly lucrative trade which made fortunes for local merchants and farmers. One such merchant was William Grevel, and the grand house he built on the High Street in Chipping Campden shows just how much money there was to be made. His house faces the equally impressive Woolstaplers Hall, built in 1340, where the fleeces were collected before being sent abroad.

Grevel died in 1401 and there is a brass monument to him in nearby St James's, one of the many Cotswold 'wool' churches. These churches were financed by men such as Grevel who hoped to ensure a place in heaven – and in local memory – by donating money to their parish church. The results were often architecturally splendid



with elaborate, cathedral-like churches dominating relatively small villages. At Northleach the wool merchant John Fortey, who died in 1458, left £300 to make the church ‘more lightsome and splendid’. His memorial and that of his fellow merchants is still displayed in the church today.

By the 18th century the cloth trade had taken over from the wool trade. Wool was woven in towns such as Stroud and Bradford on Avon where water was available to power the mills. Many of Bradford’s historic houses date from its heyday, with 18th-century weavers’ cottages and grander clothiers’ homes clinging to its steep streets. Stroud built itself a reputation for producing the broadcloth used for military uniforms, billiard tables and, bizarrely, tennis balls. Stroud’s Museum in the Park explores this heritage, and the Stroudwater Textile Trust manages several old mills, including the fascinating 19th-century Dunkirk Mill.

While you have to look carefully for traces of the Cotswold wool trade, the area’s famous stone is harder to miss. Visit any of one of its villages, and you will see rows of houses from every period, all built out of the same mellow stone. Painswick in Gloucestershire, with its mix of Georgian houses and medieval cottages, is a good example of

how the almost universal use of the stone creates a sense of gentle architectural harmony. It’s part of the unique charm of these villages which have settled so peacefully into their surroundings that they seem to be a natural extension of the landscape.

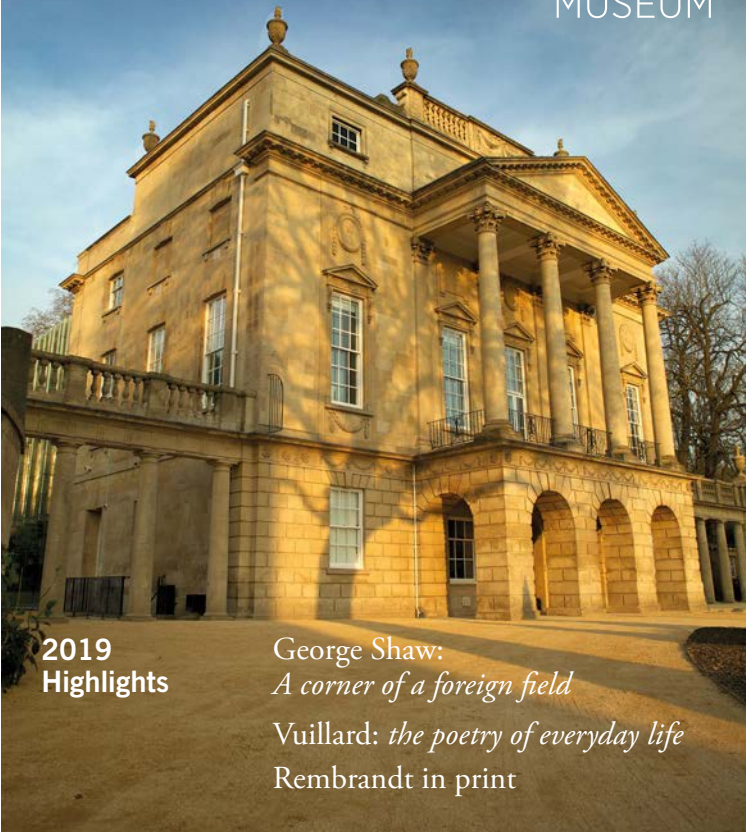
The stone is normally described as honey coloured, but it varies slightly in tone. Stone from the quarries at Corsham, used to build Georgian Bath, tends to be slightly creamier than that from the more northerly quarries, while the stone used for the Radcliffe Camera in Oxford, quarried near Burford, is perhaps a little more golden. This elegant circular library at the heart of the university certainly seems to glow in the sunshine.

Cotswold stone also dominates the countryside, as an impressive 4,000 miles of traditional dry stone walls criss-cross the landscape. The earliest example of dry stone walling in the area is at the Neolithic long barrow at Belas Knap, but the majority of the walls date from the 18th and 19th centuries, when many of the open fields were enclosed. Like the Cotswolds villages, these walls were built to last, and today visitors can still appreciate the skill that went into building them, and the way they enhance the natural beauty of this lovely landscape.

This page, left to right: St James’s Church, Chipping Campden; Painswick; countryside near Stroud; an old Cotswolds Mill; a ‘Cotswolds Lion’

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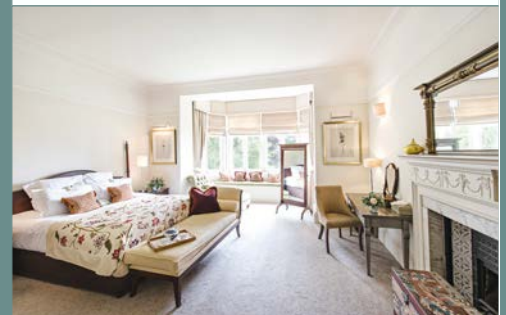


LORDS *of the* MANOR HOTEL

Revered amongst hotels in the Cotswolds "Lords" is one of the most acclaimed hotels in this wonderfully timeless corner of England. The hotel is set in Upper Slaughter, a beautiful village near Bourton-on-the-Water and Stow-on-the-Wold. It is often said that arriving at this honey-coloured stone former rectory is like stepping into a very good friend's house.

Guests come to 'Lords' for a relaxing and luxurious get away and perhaps above all, for the highly acclaimed cooking of Head Chef Charles Smith, who delights with a combination of classically French and British influenced menus.

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Boutique BOLTHOLES

For country-house hotels and quaint, cosy inns there's nowhere
better than the Cotswolds, says Natasha Foges

1 DORMY HOUSE

Stepping into Dormy House, near the village of Broadway, you immediately feel at home. Log fires crackle in their grates, a comfy sitting room is stocked with games for lazy afternoons, and the creamy Cotswold stone on the walls is offset by elegant country-house furnishings: a patterned rug here, a tasselled throw there. The guest rooms, too, are wonderfully cossetting, with excellent beds and luxurious bathrooms.

An award-winning spa is tucked away at the heart of the hotel. With an impressive choice of treatments and a decent-sized pool, this is the place to soothe your weary limbs after a day of sightseeing, before you embark on the main event: dinner. The Potting Shed restaurant, dotted with antique farm implements and rural prints, conjures an informal and warmly inviting atmosphere, while the food – anything from a (gourmet) pie and a pint to venison wellington – is superb.

www.dormyhouse.co.uk

2 THE HOWARD ARMS

For the ultimate pub-with-rooms experience look no further than the Howard Arms. In the little village of Ilmington in the North Cotswolds, a stone's throw from Stratford-upon-Avon, this flagstoned pub dates back centuries and is at the heart of the local community. Sip a pint of the local ale at a leather armchair in front of the roaring fire before tucking into hearty bistro fare, such as ale battered haddock and chips or Evesham asparagus risotto. When it's time for bed, the eight spacious country-styled rooms promise a good night's sleep; our favourite is the Village Room, with a handsome tartan-bedecked canopy bed.

howardarms.com

3 THE RECTORY HOTEL

This country house manor is ideally placed between the gorgeous market town of Cirencester and Malmesbury, with its beautiful abbey. Stylishly furnished – the airy rooms decorated in heritage tones, the elegant restaurant and conservatory simple and unfussy – this is the sort of place where you can imagine yourself relaxing as a guest during a country-house weekend. Shelves of books, squishy velvet sofas and well chosen antiques enhance the home-from-home feel (if home is a stately Georgian manor, that is). The lovely garden that surrounds the house is ideal for post-prandial strolls, and the outdoor pool a welcome bonus on a warm summer's day.

therectoryhotel.com

4 OAK HOUSE NO.1

This luxury bolthole, in the market town of Tetbury, is a kaleidoscope of colour: an electric

blue sofa is paired with canary yellow lights and splashy art in the sitting room – though the three suites are a little more muted. The soothing Garden View Suite is a restful space, the warm red Prince's Suite is antiques-filled with a wooden four-poster bed, but our pick is the Cavalier Suite, with its cocoon-like feel, fine antiques and its own little library. Husband-and-wife hosts Gary and Nicola cultivate a relaxed, welcoming feel and guests' comfort is paramount. The beds are laid with the finest Frette sheets and a pillow menu ensures a blissful night's sleep; Hunter wellies are available for winter walks; and afternoon tea, included in the rate, can be taken whenever you wish.

oakhouseno1.com

5 LYGON ARMS

In the beautiful village of Broadway, the 16th-century Lygon Arms is one of the Cotswolds' most historic places to stay. King Charles I and Oliver Cromwell both stayed here, and a sense of history pervades its appealingly creaky rooms to this day. Vast open fires, antiques and wood beams galore create a relaxed, lived-in feel, while tartan headboards, comfy furnishings and sleek bathrooms are the order of the day in the guestrooms. The restaurant, with its marble-topped tables and barrel-vaulted ceiling, makes a dramatic backdrop to the classic British cuisine, while a series of inviting lounges are the perfect place to unwind with afternoon tea or a cocktail (their lavender Negroni, perhaps). A luxurious spa completes the experience.

www.lygonarmshotel.co.uk

6 BARNESLEY HOUSE

Picture the ultimate Cotswolds country manor. It probably looks a lot like Barnsley House, a honey-stone stunner draped in trailing foliage, set in a picture-perfect rambling garden in the heart of Barnsley village, Gloucestershire. The garden is famous in its own right, as the creation of garden designer Rosemary Verey, who owned the house for several decades. Four magical acres of gardens include the laburnum walk, knot gardens and a vegetable garden, where much of the hotel restaurant's produce is grown.

Inside the main house, the rooms have an air of understated luxury, decorated in soothing tones. The grounds hold further hideaways, with converted stables transformed into split-level suites and outbuildings such as The Potting Shed, complete with wood-burning stove and roll-top bath.

Enjoy dinner at the Potager restaurant, or stroll through the grounds to The Village Pub, a relaxed option with stone floors, open fires and plenty of cosy nooks.

www.barnsleyhouse.com







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The image shows the interior of Gloucester Cathedral, featuring intricate fan-vaulting in the ceiling and a series of tall, narrow stained glass windows. The architecture is Gothic, with detailed stone carvings and a high, vaulted ceiling. The floor is made of large, light-colored stone tiles. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the stone and the colors of the stained glass.

Gloucester Cathedral

This impressive piece of architecture is not only famous for being the burial site of royalty, but the medieval cloisters, distinctive for their intricate fan-vaulting, have also been transformed into the corridors of Hogwarts. *Harry Potter* fans may recognise the entrance to the Gryffindor Common Room, a corridor from the Chamber of Secrets and the pillars where Harry and Ron hide from the troll.

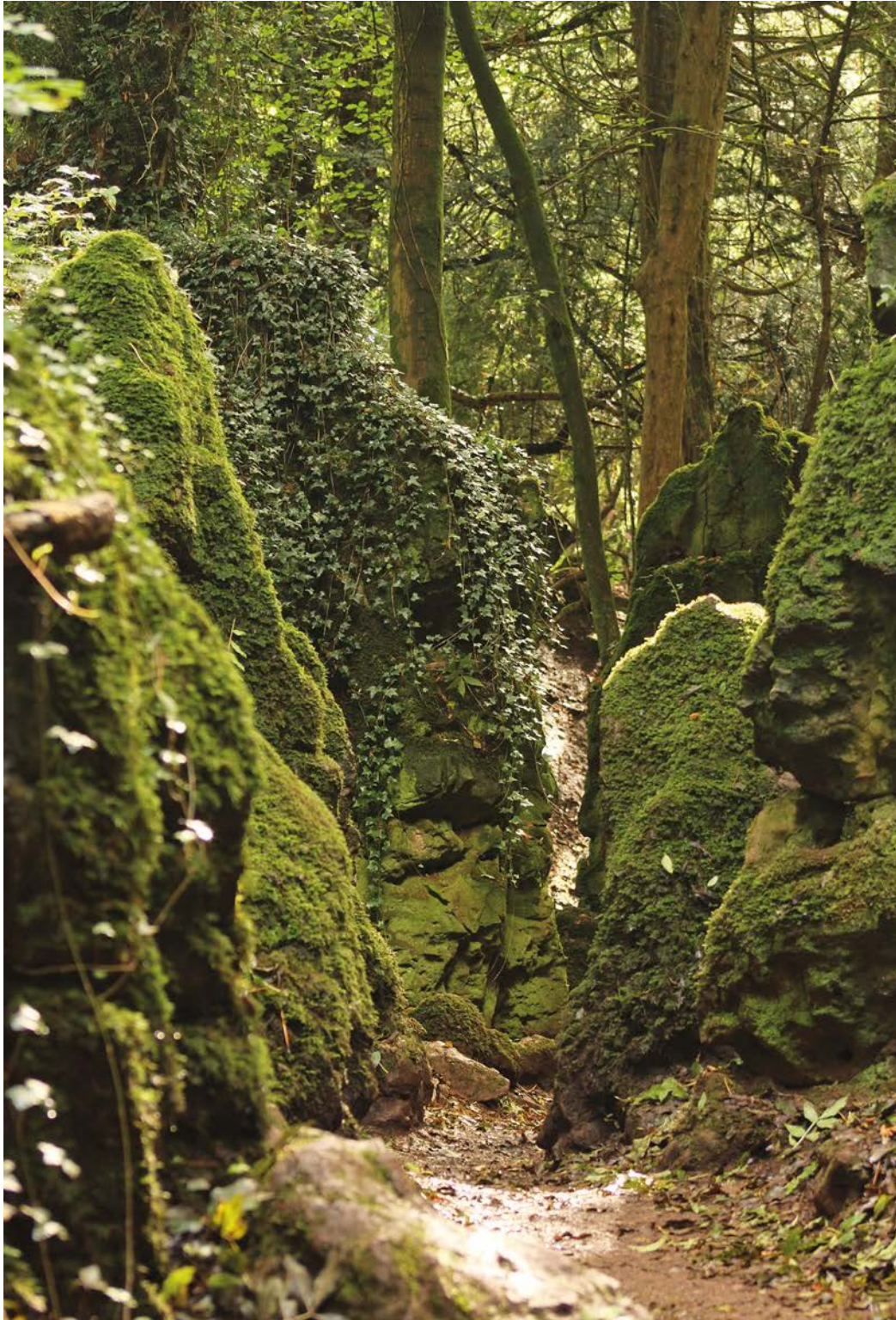
Built over 1300 years ago when Osric, an Anglo-Saxon prince, made it a place of worship, it is here that Henry III was crowned and where Edward II was buried.

Gloucester Cathedral exhibits every kind of medieval style from Norman to Perpendicular and Romanesque, so it is no wonder that this stunning venue is a popular filming location. Scenes from *Wolf Hall* and *Doctor Who* were also filmed here.

gloucestercathedral.org.uk

Sites of the SILVER SCREEN

With its picturesque honey-stone villages and breathtaking countryside, the Cotswolds is the perfect backdrop for blockbuster films and period dramas. Zara Gaspar visits six stunning locations that have been caught on camera



Puzzlewood

The Cotswolds is not only made up of picturesque villages. Just outside Coleford, in the Forest of Dean, lies Puzzlewood, an ancient woodland that was said to be the inspiration for JRR Tolkien's 'Middle Earth'. Puzzlewood never made it into the *Lord of the Rings* films, but this enchanted forest can be seen in *Star Wars*, *Merlin* and *Atlantis*. The 14-acre historic ground was used in Roman times to mine iron ore, but a mile of pathways, built in the 19th century, now forms a winding maze. These pathways twist and turn around deep mossy gullies, bridges and rock formations – providing an incredible adventure playground for moviemakers.

www.puzzlewood.net

Dyrham Park

This graceful baroque mansion doubled as 'Darlington Hall', the main setting for *The Remains of the Day*, the 1993 drama starring Anthony Hopkins. It was also used to represent 'Allenham' in the 2001 adaptation of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

Dyrham Park was built in stages between 1669 and 1704 for William Blathwayth, the Secretary of State for King William III. A mix of French and Italianate style, it is one of the best surviving Baroque interiors in the country. And to top it off, it's set within 270 acres of parkland where a herd of 200 fallow deer roam.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk





Stanway House

This charming Jacobean manor house has been used in a number of period dramas, including the 1996 adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma* and the 2004 film *Vanity Fair*, and it is not hard to see why. Located near Winchcombe, set in a sheltered hollow at the bottom of the Cotswold Edge, the estate is one of the first things you notice when driving through the village of Stanway. The house, which is made from golden yellow Cotswold stone, was owned by Tewkesbury Abbey for 800 years, but is now the home of James Charteris, Earl of Wemyss.

The most notable features of the estate include the impressive Baroque gatehouse built in 1630 and the water garden's magnificent 300-foot jet, the highest fountain in Britain. stanwayfountain.co.uk





Snowhill

When Bridget Jones visits her parents' home and meets Mark Darcy, she's actually in the quaint little village of Snowhill, near Broadway. As its name suggests, Snowhill is always the first place in the Cotswolds where snow settles, but *Bridget Jones' Diary* was filmed in June so the crew had to cover the whole village in fake snow to make it look like Christmas. Snowhill may not get many visitors, but it's got plenty of character, with stone cottages over a hundred years old and the Victorian St Barnabas Church. The main attractions are 16th-century Snowhill Manor (p16) and nearby Cotswold Lavender, a working lavender distillery – both of which add to the village's idyllic charm. www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Bampton

Anyone who has watched *Downton Abbey* will recognise the village of Bampton, as all of the outdoor scenes were filmed here. St Mary's Church is known in the series as St Michael and All Angels, and Downton Hospital is the Old Grammar School building.

Bampton is one of the oldest towns in the country. It was a major Anglo-Saxon settlement and a market town in the mid-19th century. Now a village, it is home to some beautiful 17th- and 18th-century houses, a few inns and an early 19th-century Italianate town hall. bamptonoxon.co.uk



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Kathy & Kent Scott at Blenheim Palace

If we had to choose a word to describe our experience with The Cotswold Tour Guide it would be PERFECTION! From the first inquiry to our tour ending good-byes in London, David was prompt, intuitive, and professional. He truly listened to our desires, and customized a tour through the Cotswolds that went beyond our expectations. Our only regret is that we didn't schedule a longer trip. Oh well, there's always next year! David, thanks for a brilliant time! We simply cannot thank you enough!

Kent & Kathy Scott

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David with clients at Sudeley Castle

David has built up a solid reputation with clients who were so pleased with his service that they have written to him saying so, as did the Scotts and Seebergs.

David works with many international tour companies and appears on The Official Cotswold Tourism website 2019.

YOUR BESPOKE ITINERARY

David will liaise with you about what you would like to see and where you would like to go and then create a bespoke itinerary that will exceed your expectations. David prides himself on the individuality of his tours. He can do so because each one always incorporates all of the following:-

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**Mark & Patty Seeberg & friends
at Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey)**

We could not have been more pleased with the terrific personal attention David gave us. He was professional, personable, witty, and most importantly listened to the experience we desired and delivered in every way possible.

David is incredibly knowledgeable about the Cotswolds and all things English, and truly worked over-time to make our four days with him a real joy.

He took us to several places off the beaten path where we experienced things the regular tourist would never get a chance to see.

I would highly recommend him to future travellers to England. Since returning to the States we're still talking about our drive through the English countryside with David.

As we Americans might say, "he's the real deal." Thanks again for helping arrange such a delightful experience

Mark & Patty Seeberg





Discovering the Cotswolds

Just 90 minutes from London and featuring many of England's most picturesque towns and villages, the Cotswolds are full to bursting with honey-coloured stone cottages, beautiful scenery, gorgeous places to stay and a whole host of fabulous things to do.

Whether your passion is strolling through the rolling hills and countryside, browsing unique boutiques and markets or learning more about how history shaped this picture-perfect part of England, you'll find it all – waiting to be discovered.

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GLORIOUS GARDENS - from Hidcote to HRH Prince Charles's Highgrove garden and hidden gems waiting for you to discover and explore.



HISTORY AND HERITAGE – discover Blenheim Palace - the birthplace of England's best known Prime Minister or walk in the footsteps of Tudor kings and queens at Sudeley Castle. There's history around every Cotswold corner.



TOURING THE COTSWOLDS - hear the little known stories and get off the beaten track with knowledgeable expert guides. Many guides offer collections from local train stations, your hotel or even from the airport – let them take the strain out of your Cotswold adventure, giving you time to sit back and relax.