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Welcome!

The British Isles is a relatively small landmass, about a twelfth the size of the United States, yet it never ceases to amaze me how many new and interesting places there are to discover. In this new issue, we were keen to draw your attention to just a few of these lesser-known delights.

We kick things off with the Cinque Ports (p12), a confederation of five coastal towns that were key defences in the reign of King Edward I. Aside from Hastings, the ports are unlikely tourist destinations, yet filled with maritime history. Our cover feature looks at Little Moreton Hall (p68), a Tudor manor so rickety that it looks like it might collapse like Buster Keaton’s house at any moment.

Elsewhere there are in-depth guides to Yorkshire’s bohemian Calder Valley (p76) and the Angus town of Arbroath (p46), famous for its smoked fish and a 700-year-old declaration of national importance.

STEVE PILL  Editor

Letters

Taking good care

Each week I visit a charming 90-year-old friend in a care home and her greatest pleasure is talking about England where she was born in Kent and lived until she came to Australia as a young girl with her parents. Even though most of her life has been here, her loyalty to her homeland never wavers.

Her joy is me reading Discover Britain to her and we discuss all the beautiful places featured in your excellent magazine. Days are re-lived as she tells me about her nights in air-raid shelters during the war, being “evaporated” and so on. I have learnt so much about Britain from her stories. In issue 211, we enjoyed the Dorset villages [above].

Thank you for giving me and an old lady so much pleasure with every issue.

JV Corriden, via email

Catch of the day

I have been a reader of your delightful and informative magazine for the last couple of years. I have a tendency to start reading from the back of a publication and, on opening issue 213, there was a photograph of a serving of fish and chips. As I read paragraph three, the words “The Fish Friers Review” and there was the name of a former editor, BW Ashurst.

I felt thrilled and delighted – the name took me back years to when Brian was editor of the Otley Parish Church magazine in West Yorkshire. My late husband was then senior curate at the church. Brian would be delighted to have a quote highlighted in your article.

Margaret Gibson, Worthing, England

What a lovely coincidence Margaret! I wonder if any other readers are still in touch with Brian? As writer of our star letter, you win a copy of The Crown – 1956-1977 by Robert Lacey (Bonnier).

Discover Britain

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Inspiring postcards from around the British Isles

St Paul’s Cathedral, London

*Romantic great’s final work projected on the historic dome*

William Blake was an artist, activist and poet who remained largely underappreciated when he died in 1827. Nevertheless, he had created some of the most enduring works of the Romantic era. It wasn’t until the centenary of Blake’s death that his work was given due recognition and a memorial was made to him in the crypt of St Paul’s Cathedral.

That same place of worship has paid tribute to Blake once more. To coincide with Tate Britain’s exhibition, an image of the artist’s final painting, 1827’s *The Ancient Days*, was projected on the dome of St Paul’s for four consecutive wintry nights. It was a fitting tribute to one of Britain’s most illuminating talents. [www.stpauls.co.uk](http://www.stpauls.co.uk)
Alderney, Channel Islands
Guided walks abound across the archipelago this spring

There is plenty of incentive to explore the natural beauty of Britain’s Channel Islands this spring. Guernsey’s annual Spring Walking Festival returns (16-31 May 2020) with guided tours of sister islands of Sark and Alderney [Essex Castle, pictured]. Meanwhile, Heritage75 (27 March to 9 October 2020) is a programme of 75 heritage-themed events to mark 75 years of liberation since the end of the Second World War. Choose from cycle tours, history talks, garden parties and more. www.visitguernsey.com

GULLANE, SCOTLAND
Head to the Edinburgh coast for Britain’s most popular afternoon tea

Britain is home to many culinary specialities that may seem rather eccentric to outsiders, from Welsh rarebit to steak-and-kidney pies. Now the hotel chain Premier Inn claims to have determined the best places to sample these tasty treats across the British Isles. More than 10,000 reviews were consulted on the website TripAdvisor and a map has been compiled listing the top three destinations for each dish.

Some surprises emerged, with Renfrew’s in Manchester proving best for fish and chips, while Blackwell’s in Devon was rated top pasty. To sample the best-reviewed afternoon tea in Britain, however, one must head to the Lutyens-designed Greywalls Hotel on the coast near Edinburgh. The hotel’s summerhouse tearoom is a gorgeous setting for tea, scones and finger sandwiches. www.greywalls.co.uk
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DUNVEGAN, ISLE OF SKYE
Clan stronghold wins restoration prize

Dunvegan Castle has been the ancestral home of the chiefs of Scotland’s MacLeod clan for more than 750 years – in fact, it claims to be the oldest continuously inhabited castle in the country. Anywhere this old needs a little TLC and the castle has recently undergone a decade-long, £4 million restoration programme, which scooped the Restoration Award 2019 from Historic Houses. As the 30th clan chief, Hugh MacLeod, collected the award, he spoke of the need to transform Dunvegan from a “medieval fortress designed to keep people out, to a place focused on welcoming people in”. The romantic castle and formal gardens are open from April to October each year. www.dunvegancastle.com

Hatchlands Park, Surrey
Composer celebrated in musical house

Less than an hour west of London, the grade II-listed redbrick house at Hatchlands Park is something of an overlooked gem. With Humphry Repton parkland and Robert Adam interiors, the jewel in the crown here is the music room, pictured, which was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield in 1903. On 26 March it will host a special event in celebration of Beethoven’s 250th anniversary. The house has a music connection all year round, as it displays the impressive Cobb Collection of historic instruments, many of which have been played by the world’s leading composers, from Bach and Mozart to British greats like Purcell and Elgar. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatchlands-park
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The Last Defence

Nancy Alsop explores the Cinque Ports, a confederation of five coastal towns created by King Edward I and once presided over by Winston Churchill.

When, in 1924, Winston Churchill took up residence at Chartwell, his beloved country house near Westerham in Kent, he soon discovered the existence of an obscure ancient rivalry between a faction from the west of the county going by the name “Kentish Men” and another from the east who rejoiced under the similar moniker “Men of Kent”.

The Oxfordshire-born Churchill doubtless did not share the fervour of feeling on either side; he did, however, years later, come to lay unique claim to both sides when, in 1941, he was appointed to the lifelong post of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, with the role’s attendant right to take up residence in the county’s Tudor artillery fort, Walmer Castle. That he united both rival factions in mutual approval of this non-native of the “Garden of England” is testament to Churchill’s knack for pulling off the impossible, more than anything else.

In the event, Churchill was somewhat preoccupied by the Second World War, and therefore delayed until further notice the usual installation ceremony at Kent’s other great fortress, Dover Castle, particularly given that it was within range of German attack from the skies.

Nonetheless, he was enchanted by the historic appointment, even if the proper celebration would have to wait until 1946. He made up for it later by wearing the Lord Warden’s ceremonial outfit at any given opportunity, including at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, and by hoisting up the role’s heraldic flags at Chartwell after the war.

And no wonder. For as Lord Warden, Churchill continued a tradition that stretched all the way back to 1100, by which time the Norman French term Cinque Ports (literally “Five Ports”) was in documented use. Although today entirely nominal, the Cinque Ports encompass five historic towns: Hastings, New Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich, each dotted along the Sussex and Kent coastline at the point at which the English Channel, separating England from France and mainland Europe, is narrowest.
King Edward I presided over the creation of the Cinque Ports. He struck a symbiotic agreement that was both highly beneficial to his own ambitions and also to each of the Cinque Ports (which were supported by the “ancient towns” of Rye and Winchelsea). The idea was that the string of strategic coastal towns, already busy fishing and trading centres, would always maintain some 57 ships at ready disposal for the Crown, a vital commodity at a time when the king was busy developing the Royal Navy. Neighbouring towns and villages eventually joined the original five towns and were known as the “limbs”; together they would help to fulfil the quotas of ships and crew.

In return, the towns were granted the local profits of justice, and it was officially settled that they would receive “exemption from tax and tolls; self-government; permission to levy tolls, punish those who shed blood or flee justice, punish minor offences, detain and execute criminals both inside and outside the port’s jurisdiction, and punish breaches of the peace; and possession of lost goods that remain unclaimed after a year, goods thrown overboard, and floating wreckage.”

The Cinque Ports were, then, permitted to bring goods into the country without the burden of taxes, so long as the King was furnished with both ships and men at any time of need. The upshot? Perhaps inevitably, the lenient

As Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Winston Churchill continued a tradition that stretched back to 1100
attitude towards taxes and tolls led to smuggling of goods from across the Channel. It was, as the Crown saw it, a price worth paying, and the King agreed further to the ports also having the privilege of sending two MPs per town to Westminster, as well as to creating the office of the Lord Warden, whose automatic privilege it was to dually be named the Constable of Dover Castle. It was and remains a prestigious role; Churchill was preceded by the likes of various Princes of Wales, and succeeded by Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother and the current incumbent, Baron Boyce.

The confederation of the Cinque Ports has in effect, however, been in some kind of decline – at least from a military perspective – since the 13th century. Their strategic creation allowed them to stand firm against
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raids from overseas, including attempts by the Danes and the French, but natural silting of the harbours, as well as advancement of the navy itself, and the call for larger ships than the Cinque Ports could accommodate, saw a certain amount of relocation to the larger Southampton and beyond. By the time that Queen Elizabeth I acceded the throne, they had already begun their downward trajectory and, during her reign, efforts were already underway to save the crumbling Cinque Ports from ruin, as larger shipbuilding towns, such as Bristol and Liverpool, were on the rise.

The ports were not, however, defunct, even if their original purpose had shifted. They continued to supply transport ships through the centuries and, today, while their strategic and naval importance has dwindled to nil, they still lure people who come both for the history and the fresh south coast air. While there have been some major changes since the foundation of the Cinque Ports – namely that swathes of Hastings have been swept into the sea and that New Romney and Sandwich are now both more than a mile from the seafront – there is still much of charm and wonder to see.

Those curious about the Cinque Ports will find much in the way of heritage to discover. Dover – with its famous white cliffs that were of great symbolic significance to the great 20th-century Lord Warden Churchill – is a great place to start. Of the five towns, it is alone in remaining a hugely busy passenger port. While here, visitors should explore Dover Castle, its great grey walls encasing a Saxon church and even a ruined Roman lighthouse. Known as “the Key to England” on account of its defensive significance, it is also part of the Cinque Port story, thanks to the Lord Warden’s dual role as Constable of Dover Castle until 1708.

Also worth a visit is the Maison Dieu, a 13th-century wayside hospital under the auspices of English Heritage, where visitors can see, among other things, a 17th-century Cinque Port banner.

A short journey to the north of Dover takes Kentish coast travellers to the pretty town of Sandwich, where the centre may no longer be on the very seafront, but the streets constitute one large area of conservation; indeed, Sand Street is considered to be the longest stretch of timber-framed buildings in existence. Do pay a visit to Sandwich’s four historic churches (St Peter’s is perhaps the most impressive) and unearth a wealth of history at the Elizabethan era Guildhall, which was built in 1579 – it’s worth it for the building alone.
Hopping down the coast to the southernmost Cinque Port of Hastings, head straight for the old town with its proliferation of half-timbered buildings; it is packed with attractions, from the Hastings Contemporary art gallery to Alistair Hendy’s Edwardian-style hardware shop and the delightful fish market in shacks on the seafront.

For the Cinque Port-focused traveller, opt for the town’s two maritime attractions. At the wonderfully named Shipwreck Museum, one can admire artefacts from many of the vessels wrecked in the English Channel centuries ago, as well as exploring how these amazing wreckages have been preserved. Meanwhile, the Fishermen’s Museum is set inside a former chapel used by local sailors and managed by the Old Hastings Preservation Society; discover model boats, maritime artworks and more.

Lying in between Sandwich and Hastings are the smaller Cinque Ports of Hythe and New Romney. The former became a borough in 1026 when King Canute signed the documents conveying the lands of Hythe to the Church at Canterbury. It is home to one of only two ossuaries in the country, housed within St Leonard’s Church and containing bones pre-dating the Norman Conquest. Hythe lost its harbour during the Middle Ages, but it remains a charming place. History buffs: do note that you can clap eyes on the Charter of 1278 in the town’s archives.

The “ancient towns” of Winchelsea and Rye are drowsily charming places to visit too. For fans of absurdist humour, the former should rank high on the list of pilgrimage destinations thanks to one accolade alone: the beautiful St Thomas’ Church is the final resting place of comedian Spike Milligan, whose headstone was voted the UK’s favourite thanks to his self-penned epitaph: “I told you I was ill”.

Rye, meanwhile, is notable for the 18th-century Lamb House, which today is home to a National Trust-run writer’s house museum on account of it being the former home of both American-British author Henry James and the under-appreciated Mapp and Lucia creator EF Benson. The Cinque Ports’ original function may long have been rendered obsolete, but our enduring love affair with this stretch of the English coast remains testament to their staying power.
WIN a trip to historic Hastings

Enter our latest competition for the chance to experience the very best of this seaside Cinque Port town

To celebrate our Cinque Ports feature which begins on page 12, Discover Britain has partnered with Visit 1066 Country to offer one lucky reader the chance to enjoy a jam-packed two-night stay for two on the south coast, allowing you to fully explore and enjoy the seaside town of Hastings.

Be welcomed by The Old Rectory, a boutique townhouse hotel with its own walled garden. Each room is named after streets within Hastings Old Town – you’ll be in the Sinnock or Crown room. During your stay you can enjoy breakfast a la carte and a spa treatment each.

During your stay you can also dine at the award-winning Maggie’s Fish & Chips, which is nestled among old fishermen’s net shops, as well as indulging in a three-course meal at Webbe’s at Rock-a-Nore, a restaurant that is literally a stone’s throw from the Hastings fleet on the beach that catch their fish.

Your entertainment will be provided in the form of tickets to the 17th-century house of Bateman’s, the National Trust-run former home of The Jungle Book author and poet Rudyard Kipling and his family until 1936 in the stunning nearby landscape of the Sussex Weald. You’ll also get the opportunity to take a trip on the UK’s steepest funicular, the East Hill Cliff Railway, to Hastings Country Park, with incredible views over the Old Town.

All readers can also save 10 per cent at The Old Rectory thanks to our partnership. Single occupancy starts at £90 and doubles from £110 per room, just quote “Discover Britain offer”.

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One lucky winner drawn at random from the entries received will enjoy the following:

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- A two-course meal for two at Maggie’s Fish & Chips restaurant
- A three-course dinner for two at Webbe’s
- Entry for two to Bateman’s
- Return tickets on the East Hill Cliff Railway

Visit www.discoverbritainmag.com/hastingscomp or complete and return the form below with your answer to the following question:

Which English poet lived at Bateman’s?

a) Rudyard Kipling
b) William Wordsworth
c) Ted Hughes

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A Tale of Two Cities

As teams from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge prepare for the annual boat race, Florence Sheward compares the relative merits of a visit to both cities.
Queens’ College’s Mathematical Bridge in Cambridge

Left: The Radcliffe Camera in Oxford
History

The University of Oxford is the oldest university in the English-speaking world – so old, in fact, that no one knows precisely when it was founded. Teaching began as far back as the 11th century and the institution grew rapidly after 1167 after King Henry II banned English students from going to Paris to study instead.

The town of Oxford was established in the 9th century when Alfred the Great created a fortified network of burghs across England. Sitting at the junction of the rivers Cherwell and Thames, it soon became one of the largest in England and King Charles I briefly moved parliament here during the English Civil War in 1644.

For centuries, Cambridge was a far smaller settlement, only finally gaining city status in 1951, even though it has a much longer history. A prehistoric farmstead was uncovered on the site of Fitzwilliam College and both Roman and Viking settlers lived here prior to the Middle Ages. The university famously began in 1209 when a number of Oxford scholars were driven out by angry townsfolk and duly settled in Cambridge instead.

Verdict: Oxford

Alumni

If a university is only as prestigious as its best graduates, both Oxford and Cambridge are clearly world beaters. Oxford alumni include Elizabethan explorer Sir Walter Raleigh, philosophers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, and the noted wordsmiths Oscar Wilde, Dr Seuss and JRR Tolkien (the latter was an expert punter and buried in the city’s Wolvercote Cemetery).

Cambridge meanwhile boasts scientists Sir Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin, political leader Oliver Cromwell, Romantic poet Lord Byron and Bloomsbury Group author Virginia Woolf, among its most celebrated former students. In more recent years, wildlife broadcaster David Attenborough, heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles and Oscar-winning actress Olivia Colman also attended.

While Cambridge clearly edges it, Oxford does at least have a
much stronger political pedigree. Dating back to the Second World War, 10 of Britain’s last 15 Prime Ministers were Oxford graduates, whereas none attended Cambridge.

And ultimately, the really smart ones attended both – like cosmologist Stephen Hawking. **Verdict:** Cambridge

**Museums**

Any respected seat of learning needs a venue in which to display its findings and collections, so it is no surprise to find Cambridge and Oxford are both home to world-renowned museums. Oxford kicked things off on 24 May 1683 with the opening of the world’s first university museum, the Ashmolean. This cabinet of curiosities was amassed by Elias Ashmole and moved to its current Beaumont Street home in the mid-19th century. Elsewhere in the city, the Museum of Oxford is dedicated to local history, the family-friendly Story Museum reopens after a major transformation in April 2020, and the Pitt Rivers Museum is filled with archaeological and ethnographic gems, from African pottery to Hawaiian feather cloaks.

The Fitzwilliam is Cambridge’s answer to the Ashmolean, although it regularly welcomes half a million fewer visitors each year (352,416 vs 882,494 in 2018).

Nevertheless, the institution still houses a 500,000-plus collection of art and antiquities, many of them bequeathed in 1816 by Trinity Hall graduate Richard, the 7th Viscount Fitzwilliam. Other Cambridge highlights include the Museum of Classical Archaeology with its Roman and Greek casts, the homely contemporary art gallery Kettle’s Yard, and the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, home to some two million fossils, minerals and rocks.

**Verdict:** Oxford
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Architecture

Victorian poet Matthew Arnold dubbed Oxford “the city of dreaming spires” in tribute to the many gorgeous college buildings. The Radcliffe Camera, opened in 1749, is arguably the most famous, a rotunda now housing a Bodleian Library reading room that can be accessed as part of a guided tour. If you only visit one college, make it Christ Church College, however, famed for its monastic cloisters and the intricate ceiling of the Bodley Tower staircase – both key Harry Potter filming locations. The city’s oldest building, Oxford Castle, has nothing to do with the university – it served as a prison after being partially destroyed in the English Civil War and can now be explored via lantern-led guided tours.

Highlights of the Cambridge university campus include Queens’ College’s Mathematical Bridge, a wooden structure that describes the arc of the bridge in timber tangents, and the lauded King’s College Chapel, which was founded in 1441 by Henry VI and is still in regular use today.

Both cities boast a Bridge of Sighs, a covered walkway built in tribute to the early 17th-century original in Venice. Cambridge triumphs here, not only because the 1831-built bridge at St John’s College spans the River Cam making it closer in spirit to the canal-straddling original, but also because Queen Victoria claimed it was her favourite spot in the city. The Oxford equivalent on New College Lane was only built in 1914, yet retains much of the Renaissance atmosphere.

Verdict: Tied

City Life

Cambridge is the more rural of the two cities, blessed with countless green spaces including the central Jesus Green and the ancient Midsummer Common, which is particularly beautiful on a frosty winter morning. Cows can often be spotted grazing from King’s College Chapel. The food in Cambridge is great too; try the Oak Bistro or Trinity Restaurant to sample elegant British food.

Oxford is a more bustling proposition, with the often-packed Eagle & Child pub something of a tourist attraction given its historical links to authors CS Lewis and JRR Tolkien, while the Randolph Hotel offers the city’s best afternoon tea.

Punting is a favourite way to see both cities, as you glide along the river watching the world go by. Oxford’s River Cherwell is strewn with shady shallows and blossoming trees, but Cambridge arguably edges it here as a punt on the Cam takes in many of the colleges. The views from The Backs are particularly stunning.

Verdict: Cambridge
No breakdown of Oxbridge rivalries would be complete without making reference to the Boat Race, the inter-university rowing race that takes place along the River Thames. It was first staged on 10 June 1829 when two Old Harrovians (ex-pupils of Harrow School), Charles Merivale and Charles Wordsworth, challenged each other to a race. Extra spice was added by the fact that Merivale was studying at St John's College, Cambridge, while Wordsworth (a nephew of Romantic poet William Wordsworth) was at Christ Church College, Oxford. Run irregularly for the next 27 years, it has been an annual fixture since 1856.

Cambridge won last year’s men’s race by a length, extending their overall record to 84-80, while the women’s team boasts an even better record, leading Oxford 44-30 to date. Cambridge also holds the record for the fastest winning time, as the Light Blues’ 1998 team completed the 4.2-mile course in 16 minutes and 19 seconds.

**Verdict:** Cambridge

May Morning in Oxford is one of the most magical days in the Oxbridge calendar. At 6am on May Day (the 1st of the month), Magdalen College’s choir sings a hymn from the top of the Great Tower. Large crowds gather for the centuries-old tradition and the day continues with bell ringing, Morris dancing and much revelry. Other more regular traditions include the bells of Tom Tower being peeled 101 times every day at 9:05pm, a tribute to the number of founding scholars of Christ Church, Oxford.

Oxford’s St Giles’ Fair (7-8 September 2020) dates back to 1625, though the traditional feast has been replaced with a lively funfair, while Cambridge has the star-studded Folk Festival (30 July to 2 August 2020) and the Strawberry Fair (6 June 2020), a village-style fete on Midsummer Common.

**Final verdict:** Oxford wins this one, making it 3.5 points each. Like all good boat races it was too close to call, proof that a visit to either city will never disappoint.
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The former homes of Britain’s Prime Ministers not only reveal much about political life but also changing tastes and fashions, as Adrian Mourby discovers.

Sir Robert Walpole’s former home of Houghton Hall
These days the British Prime Minister (PM) is an almost presidential figure. Yet in the 18th century, the king or queen was sovereign and being PM was something of an insult.

That all changed in 1721 when Robert Walpole, the new First Lord of the Treasury, became so important that the German-speaking King George I clearly relied on him. Walpole rebuffed those who accused him of being the “prime” minister, yet within a generation the concept had become a fact.

Prime Ministers have tended to live well and many of their homes are now open to the public, providing a fascinating insight into how British politics has changed over the years.

Robert Walpole
Houghton Hall, Norfolk

Sir Robert Walpole was a Whig politician and de facto Prime Minister for Kings George I and II. He was also a member of Parliament (MP) who championed peace, moderation and religious tolerance, while lowering taxes and increasing exports. Walpole’s tenure as First Lord of the Treasury from 1721-1742 is the longest ever in British politics and he is credited with teaching the Hanoverian monarchy and British Parliament to harmoniously coexist.

Walpole commissioned his Norfolk country residence, Houghton Hall, in 1721. In order to build the mansion and its park, he had to move the whole of Houghton village to a position outside the park gates. The hall’s original design was pure Palladian but when completed, Walpole had the four corner towers replaced by fancy domes.

At Houghton, Walpole amassed one of the biggest art collections in Europe but after his death much of it was sold to Catherine the Great of Russia (where it remains) to cover debts. The house is now owned by the Marquesses of Cholmondeley, who are descendants of Robert Walpole. Their collection of 20,000 model soldiers is on display in the stable block, while the walled garden remains a particular draw.

www.houghtonhall.com

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PRIME MINISTERS
Charles Grey
Howick Hall, Northumberland

The 2nd Earl Grey, after whom the tea blend was named, was Prime Minister under William IV from 1830 to 1834. As Prime Minister, Grey introduced the Reform Act of 1832, which got rid of a lot of corrupt practices in British politics. The following year he oversaw the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. Historians have credited Earl Grey with avoiding revolution in post-Napoleonic Britain and ushering the stability that allowed the nation to prosper in the Victorian era.

Howick Hall has been owned by the Grey family since the 14th century. It was entirely rebuilt in a sturdy neoclassical style by the Earl’s uncle in 1782, before Grey himself inherited the house and employed the architect George Wyatt to considerably enlarge it. A fire destroyed the whole of the interior in 1926 and so it was rebuilt on a more modest scale. Today Baron Howick of Glendale, a descendant of the Grey family, lives in the west wing. Meanwhile, the hall’s old ballroom is now The Earl Grey Tea House, which serves the former PM’s famous bergamot-flavoured brew.

Thomas Pelham-Holles
Claremont, Surrey

A Whig protégé of Walpole, Thomas Pelham-Holles served as Prime Minister twice, in 1754-56 and 1757-62, under both George II and his grandson George III. As 1st Duke of Newcastle, Pelham-Holles was an effective deputy to PMs like Walpole and William Pitt the Elder, but he was less successful in office, having to resign for precipitating the Seven Years War.

In 1714, aged 21, Pelham-Holles bought Claremont House, which had been created by the architect and playwright Sir John Vanbrugh. He brought in the designer Charles Bridgeman to create a garden and a three-acre turf amphitheatre, carved into Bridgeman’s Hill. When formal gardens went out of fashion in the 1730s, Pelham-Holles employed landscape architect William Kent to turn the grounds into parkland.

The Duke of Newcastle loved his estate and still walked round it every day into his mid-70s. When he died in 1768, his widow sold everything to cover debts. Since the 1930s, the house has been a school but the grounds found their way to the National Trust where they are now known as Claremont Landscape Garden. Today the amphitheatre is well preserved and visitors can climb up the Belvedere Tower, built by Vanbrugh for the Duke, to get the best views of his arcadian estate.
Like Disraeli, David Lloyd George, a successful lawyer from North Wales, did not come from the usual gentrified Prime Ministerial stock. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Asquith’s Liberal government from 1908 and was responsible for putting the British economy on to a war footing.

When the First World War went badly for Britain, Asquith was forced to resign and, in 1916, Lloyd George took over, energetically leading a coalition government that lasted six years. For many, Lloyd George was “the man who won the war”.

As George V’s Prime Minister, he was also responsible for many social reforms, the initial enfranchisement of women, and the treaty that set up the Irish Free State in 1922.

Twenty years after his leadership ended, Lloyd George bought Ty Newydd, a large old stone farmhouse close to where he had grown up in the village of Llanystumdwy. He employed the architect Clough Williams-Ellis to remodel the house. Lloyd George moved in with his wife in 1944, but died the following year at the age of 82. He was buried nearby alongside the River Dwyfor. Today, the house is a writer’s centre and a monument designed by Williams-Ellis is next to the grave.

www.tynewydd.wales
Winston Churchill

Chartwell, Kent

Britain's best-known Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill was in office twice, serving George VI in a coalition government from 1940-1945 and Elizabeth II from 1951-1955.

Churchill was first elected a Conservative MP in 1900 as a young military hero after the Boer War. Four years later, he defected to the Liberal Party, where he became a protégé of David Lloyd George, before rejoining the Conservatives in 1924 and became an outspoken advocate for British rearmament.

His finest hour came in 1940, when he became Prime Minister after Britain's early defeats in the Second World War and inspired the British people to victory against the odds.

In 1922, Churchill had purchased the brick-built manor house of Chartwell in Kent, charmed by the view from its gardens. While repeatedly out of office in the 1930s he spent time here writing, painting (he was an accomplished painter of landscapes in oils) and even bricklaying. He also invited to dinner at Chartwell anyone who could assist his campaign against German rearmament and the British government's policy of appeasement.

In Churchill's study at Chartwell, his large mahogany desk is preserved, although he actually dictated standing up to a seated typist.

The room also contains a Union Jack hoisted in Rome in 1944, the first British flag to fly over a liberated European capital.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Sir Edward Heath
Arundells, Salisbury

Edward “Ted” Heath was Prime Minister under Elizabeth II from 1970 to 1974. Having served as an artillery officer in the Second World War, Heath was a committed European. In January 1973, he succeeded in his ambition to take Britain into the European Community (now the EU). Despite an innovative approach to government, most of Heath’s other aspirations foundered as a result of Britain’s economic difficulties, high inflation, and debilitating industrial strikes. After losing a second 1974 election to Labour’s Harold Wilson, Heath was replaced by Margaret Thatcher as Conservative leader. He refused a peerage and remained in the House of Commons as a staunch critic of Mrs Thatcher.

Unusually for a Conservative Prime Minister, Sir Edward Heath came from a lower middle-class background, but he enjoyed a much more affluent lifestyle as yachtsman, orchestral conductor and as the owner of Arundells, a beautiful, essentially Queen Anne-style house in the close of Salisbury Cathedral. Never having married, Heath wanted the house, garden, and his art collection to be made available for members of the public to enjoy after his death, so a charitable trust was set up. Today this house feels the most lived-in of the Prime Ministers’ homes. The lid of his Steinway piano is covered with photos of Heath’s many meetings with world leaders and yet one leaves with the impression that Sir Edward could be back at any moment.

www.arundells.org
With a history spanning 2,000 years, Exeter has much to show off, and there are important buildings around every corner. You can find out more about the city’s turbulent history on a free guided walking tour with the Red Coat Guides, running daily throughout the year. A must-see for anyone interested in the city’s history is the award-winning Royal Albert Memorial Museum, housed in a beautiful Victorian building with 16 galleries of exhibits to explore, and free admission.

Exeter Cathedral stands majestically in the centre of the city. It has the longest stretch of unbroken Gothic vaulting in the world, and is a wonderful place in which to worship, marvel at the acoustics of a classical concert or discover fascinating historical features. The cathedral’s twin Norman towers dominate the skyline, and it’s possible to take a guided tour up one of the towers for spectacular 360-degree views of the city and out towards Dartmoor National Park.

Explore beneath the city’s streets on a guided tour of Exeter’s Underground Passages, a remarkable network of medieval subterranean passages originally built to bring fresh drinking water into the city. Designated a unique ancient monument, this is the only attraction of its kind open to the public in Britain today.

Exeter’s location in Devon, with coast and countryside just a stone’s throw away, lends it a relaxed feel, with plenty of opportunities for adventure. Just a short walk from the city centre is the Quayside, a hub of activity where you can browse in antiques shops, go cycling, have a go at canoeing and climbing, or simply sit back and watch the world go by from one of the attractive waterside pubs or cafés.

The city’s special location, surrounded by fertile farmland and close to miles of coastline, has other benefits: the quality of food and drink produced here is second to none. You’ll find local produce proudly featured on menus across the city, with

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wine and beer coming from nearby vineyards and breweries. Many of Exeter’s pubs have been serving visitors and locals for hundreds of years – you can taste real ales and fine wines in the historic pubs around the Cathedral Yard and High Street, once frequented by the likes of Sir Francis Drake and Charles Dickens.

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www.visitexeter.com

HOW TO ENTER

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We care for over 400 sites, but I have recently been spending a lot of time at Boscobel House in Shropshire. Our most prized “object” is the Royal Oak, a descendent of the tree inside which a future Charles II hid to escape the Parliamentarians in 1651. It represents one of the best parts of my job: bringing pivotal points in this island’s history to life.

We’re currently working on a complete re-representation of the house. Its role in the Civil Wars is only one snapshot in time and we want to tell more of its fascinating story by drawing from its other lives as a hunting lodge and a farmhouse.

My favourite English Heritage sites are those that I visit with my family. I live near Ludlow in Shropshire so we can easily get to Stokesay Castle and Mitchell’s Fold, a bronze age stone circle on high ground with 360-degree views. I find prehistoric sites particularly magical.

I grew up in the Yorkshire Dales in the small village of Marske. My brother and I were the only children there and had the run of the place. I remember it being snowy every winter and having lots of time out of school because of it.

The industrial landscape of nearby Grinton Mines captured my imagination. There was a long narrow chimney leading from a derelict stone building that wound through the hills to a stack at the top that I would play in as a child. I’d love to go back there again now.

I’ve been to the Solway Firth almost every year since 1976. We’ve climbed every hill and seen every castle countless times, but it’s this combination of finding familiarity far from home that makes it the perfect holiday.

www.english-heritage.org.uk

“My BRITAIN

Portrait by Gareth Iwan Jones

Matt Thompson
Head Collections Curator, English Heritage

“One of the best parts of my job is bringing pivotal points in history to life”
English Heritage curator Matt Thompson inside Shropshire’s Boscobel House, a 17th-century hunting lodge.
On 24 February 1855 an artist’s engraving was reproduced in the Illustrated London News that captured the public imagination. It showed Florence Nightingale, the “Lady with the Lamp”, tending to stricken soldiers of the Crimean War. Newspapers like The Times quickly took up the theme: “She is a ‘ministering angel’ without any exaggeration in these hospitals, and as her slender form glides quietly along each corridor, every poor fellow’s face softens with gratitude at the sight of her... with a little lamp in her hand, making her solitary rounds.”

Songs and poems sang Florence’s praises as Nightingale-mania swept across the country. Yet the iconic Lady with the Lamp image was to overshadow so much else that Florence did in a long career that broke with social expectations, as she pioneered nursing and training as well as hospital reform. As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Lady’s birth this year, it’s time to shine the lamp on her wider work and legacy.

Named after the Italian city where she was born on 12 May 1820 – her parents, William and Fanny, were on a Grand Tour – Florence received a privileged upbringing on the family’s English country estates at Lea Hurst, Derbyshire and Embley, Hampshire, with an extensive home education from her father interspersed by continental travel. She was clearly gifted and, as her elder sister Frances Parthenope noted “worked patiently to the pith and marrow of every subject”; mathematics in particular was her passion.

From an early age Florence also wrestled with religious matters and, on 7 February 1837, she recorded, “God spoke to me and called me to His Service.” Already imbued with a strong sense of moral duty – she regularly visited the poor and sick – she nurtured a growing belief that nursing was to be her vocation.

Florence’s parents opposed any such idea: nursing was considered the work of lowly, poor people and was beset by negative images of drunken, loose behaviour. Upper middle-class women were expected to marry well, a prospect of genteel domesticity that filled Florence with a horrified sense of pointlessness, as revealed by her novel-turned-essay, Cassandra, published much later. Tall, slender, eligible; she attracted at least one marriage proposal but declined. “I have no desire now but to die,” she noted on 30 December 1850.

In the end Florence’s determination won through and, in 1851, her parents allowed her to undertake three months’ nursing training at an inspirational hospital and school in Kaiserswerth, Germany. Two years later, aged 33, she honed her administrative skills as superintendent of the Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness in London’s Harley Street.

Above: Florence Nightingale on a ward round at during the Crimean War in 1855.
Right: Florence in the 1860s.

More than just the “Lady with the Lamp”, Florence Nightingale was a Victorian pioneer who saved the lives of countless people. As her 200th anniversary approaches, Diana Wright explores the famous Briton’s legacy.

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In the wider world, Britain was becoming embroiled in the Crimean War against Russia and Florence, like the public at large, was shocked by newspaper reports of appalling conditions in British army hospitals. When Sidney Herbert, a friend and Secretary at War (a government position in charge of the War Office), asked her to oversee the introduction of female nurses into military hospitals in Turkey she needed no second bidding.

In November 1854, Florence arrived with 38 nurses at Scutari near Constantinople (now Istanbul) to discover a vermin-ridden hospital lacking even in basic equipment, and more soldiers suffering from disease and dysentery than battle wounds. While many male army doctors resented her and her nurses, they were so over-stretched that they accepted help.

For her part, Florence could be prickly with anyone who hindered her, but progress was soon made as she procured linen and other supplies, and set nurses to work cleaning the hospital and ensuring the soldiers were properly fed and clothed. “I am really cook, house-keeper, scavenger… washerwoman, general dealer, store-keeper,” Florence reported to Herbert, while by night she became the “Lady with the Lamp”. A Sanitary Commission sent out from England repaired the sewers over which the hospital sat, ventilation was improved, and mortality rates dropped.

In 1855 Queen Victoria awarded Florence a jewelled brooch, designed by Prince Albert, “for her devotion towards the Queen’s brave soldiers”. At the end of the Crimean War in 1856, an exhausted Florence returned to England a national heroine.

By now Florence’s parents were proud of their daughter’s vocation and Parthenope (as she was known), who had earlier struggled to accept her sister’s hard-won independence, revelled in dealing with the mountains of adulatory letters. By contrast, Florence dismissed the “buz-fuz” around her name but was quick to put “Nightingale Power” to good use, setting herself up in London’s Burlington Hotel – nicknamed the ‘Little War Office’ – as the great and the good came to speak with her.

Haunted by the terrible loss of soldiers’ lives in the East – in January 1855 alone more than 2,700 died from preventable diseases spread by poor sanitation compared with around 83 who died from battle wounds – Florence worked behind the scenes to influence a Royal Commission into army healthcare: marshalling complex statistics on the causes of mortality and sanitary solutions into attention-grabbing “rose diagram” form (similar to pie charts) “to affect thro’ the Eyes what we may fail to convey to the brains of the public thro’ their word-proof ears”. In light of her work, army healthcare was overhauled.

She later investigated the welfare of British soldiers in India for an official report that urged sanitary, economic and agricultural reform for the country as a whole.

Over the next five decades of her long life, Florence campaigned relentlessly to reform nursing practice and hospitals, championing ideas that have influenced modern healthcare to this day. She published more than 200 books, reports and pamphlets, most famously 1859’s Notes on Nursing: What It Is and What It Is Not with its timeless principles, not least that prevention is better than cure. From the same year, Notes on Hospitals set out how the design of buildings, including good ventilation, affects patient recovery.

Florence’s greatest achievement lies in transforming nursing into a respectable profession for women and in 1860, using money from the Nightingale Fund raised by well-wishers, she set up the Nightingale Training School at London’s St Thomas’ Hospital. Its nurses took her ideas to hospitals across the country and indeed the world.

It is ironic that throughout her years of campaigning Florence was often bedridden due to ill health – she probably contracted chronic brucellosis in the Crimea, a bacterial infection causing fever, depression and debilitating pain – yet she worked on from her sickbed. She urged the introduction of trained nurses into workhouses, established a specialist School of Midwifery at King’s College Hospital, encouraged district nursing.
Florence Nightingale campained relentlessly to reform nursing practice and hospitals

and promoted preventative healthcare to ordinary folk in their homes. Mellower in later life, she also enjoyed visits to Parthenope and her family at Claydon House in Buckinghamshire, which is now a National Trust property. Far from her early anxieties over an existence with no purpose, Florence wrote on her 75th birthday: “There is so much to live for.”

In 1858, Florence was the first woman elected to the Royal Statistical Society, in 1883 she was the first person to be awarded the Royal Red Cross for exceptional services in military nursing, and in 1907 she became the first woman to receive the Order of Merit, Britain’s highest civilian decoration. When she died on 13 August 1910 at the age of 90, she was buried, as she had wished, in the family plot at St Margaret’s Church, East Wellow in Hampshire.

Two hundred years after her birth, however, her influence lives on: through the Nightingale Medal awarded by the International Red Cross to exceptional nurses, through the Florence Nightingale Foundation, and the Florence Nightingale Museum at St Thomas’ Hospital.

This year, a Florence Nightingale commemorative service will take place on her 200th birthday on 12 May at Westminster Abbey, while an exhibition, Nightingale Comes Home, runs at the Weston Gallery in Nottingham (25 April to 23 August). Her biggest legacy lives on, however, through the wonders of modern nursing.
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The Declaration of Arbroath sowed the seeds for modern democracy in Britain. Janice Hopper visits Angus to celebrate the 700th anniversary of this historic document.

Arbroath is a small, unassuming Angus town on the east coast of Scotland that is set to become a focal point for visitors in 2020. This year marks the 700th anniversary of a historic political document called the Declaration of Arbroath. It originated in 1320 when eight earls and around 40 nobles gathered in Arbroath Abbey to add their seal to a letter addressed to Pope John XXII in Avignon. The Declaration notably called for Scotland’s autonomy from England, with its own legitimate king, yet, as a political document, it was much more far reaching than that.

In a time when people truly believed in God, heaven and hell, the Declaration was a plea to the Pope to lift the sentence of excommunication imposed on Robert the Bruce (or Robert I). The Scottish king had stabbed his political rival, John Comyn, within a Dumfries church in 1306 and then breached the papal truce with England. Excommunication of the king extended to every soul in Scotland, so placating the Pope would have positive benefits for every signatory of the document. Being ostracised by the Pope also left Scotland vulnerable and isolated in the international community.

The timing of the document was astute. The Pope was gathering international support for a forthcoming crusade and had approached the Scots on this matter. The Declaration gave them the chance to request a little something back in return. It argued that the Scots would only be able to support the crusades if the King of England left them in peace, otherwise the Scots would be too occupied defending themselves to focus on anything further. It was a smart argument.

Of course, Scottish independence was key. This document is celebrated for its clear rejection of English rule over the Scots, as this passage demonstrates: “For as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule. It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom.”

Certain nobles who signed the Declaration would have believed such sentiments with a burning ferocity, but many were fickle, swapping allegiances as it suited them. Several went on to fight alongside the English or plot against Bruce, so their strong words shouldn't necessarily be taken at face value.

The document did introduce modern and democratic ideas, outlining the idea of a king who ruled with the approval of his people, rather than by divine right alone. It even suggested that Robert I could be replaced if he failed the Scottish people, but it seems unlikely he’d relinquish the throne without a bloody fight.

Today, Robert the Bruce is a national hero for many in Scotland. He violently dispatched of his rivals to the crown, seizing the Scottish throne in 1306. It’s fair to say that he did not tread gently. Robert wanted his status as king to be officially recognised by the Pope, so the Declaration was an attempt to solidify his position. Equally, the men who rose to the top...
Clockwise from this image: Lunan Bay, Angus; Arbroath Abbey; The Declaration of Arbroath at the abbey; Robert the Bruce
of Scottish society were tough, surviving in a
dog-eat-dog world. But perhaps they were also
fearful of Robert the Bruce, or wished to access
his inner circle. Each noble who added their
seal to the Declaration of Arbroath would have
had several reasons for doing so – and declining
to sign could have been viewed as a betrayal.

The Declaration of Arbroath was dispatched
to the Pope, but the Scots drafted and retained
their own copy of this important document.
Head to the National Museum of Scotland in
Edinburgh to see this original copy, which will
briefly go on public display for the first time in
15 years (27 March to 26 April 2020).

A modern copy of the historical document is
on display at Arbroath Abbey. The abbey was
founded by King William I in the 12th century,
and the Declaration was signed and sealed here
because it had been drawn up by the Abbot
of the Arbroath Abbey and Chancellor of
Scotland, Bernard de Linton. Today visitors can
still see the ruined abbey’s impressive, twin-
towered west front, the remains of the south
transept, the nave, presbytery and choir, and
step inside the sacristy and the Abbot’s House,
which is spacious even by modern standards.
It’s hard to imagine these ruins, bedecked
with colourful interiors, lit up with the sparkle
of sacred vessels and the rich fabrics of the
vestments – it must have been a staggering
sight for peasants of the 14th century.

Following the Scottish Reformation of 1560,
when the country broke with the papacy, the
abbey fell into its current ruinous state, as
much of the stonework and timber was used by
locals to build or repair buildings in the town.
Despite this, the abbey’s historic significance
has not dwindled. For example, when Scottish
students removed the Stone of Destiny from
Westminster Abbey in 1951, it was symbolically
placed by the high altar in Arbroath Abbey.

For more local history, walk along the
shorefront to the Signal Tower Museum where
you can uncover the story of the Bell Rock
Lighthouse. Built by Robert Stevenson and
first exhibited in 1811, it’s the world’s oldest
surviving sea-washed lighthouse. The Signal
Tower Museum itself is housed within the
original shore station, where the keepers’ wives
and children lived. The museum tells the wider
story of Arbroath’s nautical and fishing history,
with highlights including the unlikely attack
on the town by Captain William Fall. In 1781,
Captain Fall raised the French flag off the coast

The Declaration of Arbroath is celebrated
for its clear rejection of English rule over
the Scots
of Arbroath and demanded an astonishing £30,000 – a huge sum at the time. The council was understandably unprepared for the situation but managed to stall the aggressor until they could summon the assistance of the militia in Montrose and evacuate the women and children. Captain Fall proceeded to open fire on Arbroath, and a selection of the cannonballs that rained down on the town are on display within the Signal Tower Museum. When it became clear that the townsfolk weren’t prepared to hand over the money, Captain Fall abandoned his cause and the situation dissipated as quickly as it had arisen.

For a true taste of Arbroath explore the old harbour side to sample the town’s renowned “Smokies” – locally-caught North Sea haddock that are salted and smoked over a wood fire. Suppliers M&M Spink go back generations, and it’s still possible to visit the company’s simple smokehouse on the waterside, which continues to produce Smokies in the traditional way. Here, visitors can chat to the owner, Martin Spink, about how the haddock is salted in brine before watching the catch being gently smoked over the embers. Arbroath Smokies have a pure, natural flavour and have been granted PGI status (Protected Geographical Indication) by the European Union, meaning that only fish smoked within a five-mile radius of Arbroath can carry the name.
Auchmithie has been claimed as the original home of the Smokie. Around three miles north of Arbroath, this small clifftop fishing village looks down onto a small pebbled beach and the old harbour. Hikers can opt to walk from Arbroath to Auchmithie, along the sandstone cliffs, taking in collapsed sea caves, blow holes and sea stacks. Others visit Auchmithie to dine at renowned but informal restaurant, The But ‘n’ Ben. Guests tuck into traditional and warming hearty Scottish meals, and it’s an ideal venue to try a Smokie. Dishes include home-made cream of Arbroath Smokie soup and hot buttered Arbroath Smokie.

To venture slightly further afield, and perhaps walk off any indulgences, make the 15-minute drive north of Arbroath to the sweeping white sands of Lunan Bay. The south end of the bay is overlooked by the ruins of the 12th-century Red Castle, built to defend against Viking invaders, while to the north lies Dunninald Castle. The garden of the privately-owned gothic revival home is open to the public, with Spring snowdrop walks, carpets of bluebells in May, and a Walled Garden that sells plants, fruit and vegetables throughout the summer.

This year is a particularly good time to consider a visit to Angus and catch a series of specially organised events commemorating Arbroath’s rich history. They include a people’s procession marching from the abbey to the harbour, an atmospheric re-enactment of the Declaration’s voyage to France in 1320, and a festival concert with a 300-strong choir singing within the walls of the abbey.

Ultimately, this is a fascinating anniversary to explore because Robert the Bruce succeeded where others had failed. Scottish independence was granted in 1328 and Robert’s excommunication was lifted on his death bed. Despite a life filled with passionated struggle and violence, this Scottish folk hero achieved the seemingly unachievable.
Separated by sea, but with an unbreakable bond—a shared heritage, a similar character and a remarkable beauty—the counties of Wicklow, Wexford and Waterford in Ireland and Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire in Wales each bear the imprint of their Celtic past.

Celtic Routes takes you to the parts of Wales and Ireland where the Celtic heart beats strongest. Thousands of years of history have shaped these lands and the people who call this part of the world home.

Wales gave St Patrick to Ireland, with his initial landing point the Three Mile Water in County Wicklow; and Irish migrants settled in Wales in the 5th century and left their mark via the Ogham stones that still dot the coastline.

These lands teem with myth and legend. Pembrokeshire’s Pentre Ifan is full of mystery. Generally considered to be a communal burial chamber, it’s constructed from the same Preseli bluestones used at Stonehenge.

For more mythical tales, head to Devil’s Bridge in Ceredigion, where three separate bridges span the waterfalls of the River Mynach—one built on top of the other. The story goes that the original was built by the Devil as it was too difficult a task for mortals, but only on condition that he take the first soul to cross it. Luckily, a canny old woman outwitted him and banished him from the country forever.

As the Celts were challenged by invading Vikings, history took a turn on both sides of the sea. It is said that there is “1,000 years of history within 1,000 paces” at the Waterford Viking Triangle, while a visit to the Irish National Heritage Park in Wexford is a chance to explore recreations of the earliest settlers’ homes and stay the night in a medieval ringfort.

You’ll explore untamed landscapes that inspire everyday adventures. You’ll meet people with time for you and experience a culture that has always given a warm welcome to travellers and a fond farewell to new-found friends. Welcome to Celtic Routes. Come and discover this Celtic spirit at celticroutes.info.
MAJESTIC FACES

A new exhibition at Royal Museums Greenwich is set to explore five centuries of royal portraiture. *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits* is a collaboration with London’s National Portrait Gallery and will collect together more than 150 paintings and photographs of the kings, queens and heirs of five major dynasties.

While the exhibition runs up to the present day with portraits by leading modern photographers such as Annie Leibovitz and the late Cecil Beaton, it also collects together a number of powerful statement pieces from some of the leading British painters of the Tudor, Georgian and Victorian eras, including Allan Ramsay and Sir George Hayter.

Interestingly the exhibition will also provide a rare chance to see paintings of Henry VIII [above left] and Elizabeth I [above right] in their birthplace of Greenwich – the latter is represented by the so-called “Ditchley portrait”, as it was apparently commissioned by Sir Henry Lee to commemorate a rather memorable event attended by the queen at his home in Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire. The painting shows her majesty standing on a globe with her feet planted firmly in the English county. *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits* opens in April 2020 at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. www.rmg.co.uk
Word on the Street

London's Fleet Street was the spiritual home of British journalism. Jenny Rowe pays a visit today to find the ghosts of the area's glory days still haunting its pavements.
The noise and ambition of Fleet Street at its most industrious must have been an overwhelming experience. Author Charles Dickens was a former editor of *The Daily News* (a position in which he lasted only a couple of weeks), yet that didn’t stop him from marvelling at the place in *A Tale of Two Cities*. “Who could sit upon anything in Fleet-street [sic] during the busy hours of the day, and not be dazed and deafened by two immense processions, one ever tending westward with the sun, the other ever tending eastward from the sun, both ever tending to the plains beyond the range of red and purple where the sun goes down,” he wrote.

The author left an impression on the street in return too. His name is now inscribed upon a pavement outside Wine Office Court, one of eleven courts in this enclave of central London that once housed either printing presses or newspaper offices at the industry’s pinnacle.

These now anonymous-looking courts run off the north side of Fleet Street, earning it the name “double street” due to there being as much going on in its alleys and passageways as on the main thoroughfare itself. Protruding signboards were once mounted above every doorway and, before Dickens’ time, one of these fell down in 1718 and killed four people, including the king’s jeweller.

Chaotic and claustrophobic though it may have been, Fleet Street was privy to 500 years of printing developments and its journalistic pulse still beats today, albeit weakly – advertising staff from publishing company DC Thomson still occupy their historic London offices, though their main headquarters is in Dundee. The plaques paving your way eastward read like a history of the street’s accomplishments, which include *A Dictionary of the English Language* compiled by local lexicographer Dr Samuel Johnson (Johnson’s Court); *The Daily Courant*, which was Britain’s first daily newspaper when it debuted in 1702 (Crane Court); and the production of the first sans-serif printing type by William Caslon IV in 1816 (Red Lion Court).

Fleet Street’s association with printing goes back further than this though. It all began circa 1500 when the German-born printing pioneer Wynkyn de Worde joined William Caxton on Shoe Lane, a side street on the northern side of Fleet Street. Hailed as “England’s first typographer” and the “father of Fleet Street”, de Worde is credited with popularising Caxton’s press.

While Caxton had depended upon patronage to sustain his business, de Worde shifted his emphasis to creating more products at lower prices. This was the start of the “modern” model of print publishing, but change does not happen overnight. Though De Worde published more than 400 books (his most popular being Robert Whittington’s Latin grammar book), some would have just been single copies.

Dr Samuel Johnson took things a step further when he published his dictionary in 1755. Johnson lived in nearby Gough Square – reached via a maze of backstreets off Fleet Street – from 1748 until 1759. His former home has now been restored to its original condition by Dr Johnson’s House Trust, with panelled rooms, a pine staircase and a collection of period furniture, prints and portraits. Outside there’s a statue of the lexicographer’s most famous friend: his cat, Hodge. Paid 1,500 guineas (the equivalent of £240,000 in 2019) for the job, Johnson completed the dictionary in just over eight years with the aid of six helpers. Though this was five years longer than he had
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originally (perhaps arrogantly) planned, it was a major achievement considering that the French equivalent had taken 55 years to compile and required 40 dedicated scholars. Perhaps his haste was abetted by the appetite for print that surrounded him on Fleet Street? A second edition was later published in 165 weekly parts, while the abridged version of 1756 sold a thousand copies a year for the next 30 years.

As “popular” as this was by standards of the time, this highbrow beginning did not continue as daily newspapers gained momentum. The Morning Chronicle quickly followed The Daily Courant, while the publisher John Murray, whose authors have since included Jane Austen, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Darwin, also set up shop at No 32 Fleet Street in 1768.

The growth of these new enterprises was stilled by laws known as “taxes on knowledge”. The Stamp Act of 1712 was the first of these, a demonstration of how concerned, possibly frightened, the government were about the freedom of the press and the power of the mass market that it was now tapping into. Stamp tax was paid per paper and therefore affected cheaper papers with popular readership harder. The tax steadily increased until a new act in 1814 set it at four pence a copy. From the start, dissent brewed, most famously from writers such as Jonathan Swift, Daniel Defoe and Joseph Addison.

The grumbling continued until the Society for Repealing the Paper Duty successfully abolished the tax in 1861 and lead to the dramatic expansion of newspaper production. The “penny press” was finally economically viable and the phenomena drove out most of Fleet Street’s other businesses, especially after regional newspapers such as The Yorkshire Post, The Manchester Guardian and Liverpool Echo began to open London offices here, the latter in the aptly-named Mersey Building.

By the early 19th century, Fleet Street’s newspapers had achieved massive national circulations among both the working and middle classes. Publications ranged from William Cobbett’s polemical Political Register to The Times, which increased its size to eight pages in 1827 – still a far cry
from what we expect for our money today. The Daily Telegraph arrived in 1855 but soon outsold The Times. At its peak, there was around two dozen national newspapers based in and around Fleet Street.

That number fell in the first half of the 20th century. Survivors included the Daily Express, which relocated to No 121-128 Fleet Street in 1931. The title built an imposing printing works, which remains one of the finest, with its cinema-style foyer and art deco-style cladding in black glass. It was the first curtain wall building in London, which means that its outer walls are non-structural. Having survived the departure of the newspaper in 1989, the building was restored at the turn of the century and now it, as well as The Daily Telegraph’s former home at No 135–142, are both grade II-listed and occupied by the global banking firm Goldman Sachs.

Fleet Street wasn’t all work and no play. The grade I listed St Bride’s Church is known as the “Journalists’ Church”, as it was the local place of worship, while the beautiful Temple Church dates back to 1162. With less reverent intentions, Dr Johnson and his friend and biographer, James Boswell, often mixed business and pleasure in Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese at No 145, a Fleet Street inn that has changed little since it was rebuilt after the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Reporters had a penchant for coffeehouse culture too. The Society for Repealing the Paper Duty chose Peele’s Coffee-House at No 177-178 Fleet Street as their main committee room. In fact, as a principle route leading to and from the City of London, Fleet Street became renowned for its taverns and cafés, many of which survive today. The symbiotic relationship between pens and pints is well demonstrated by The

Punch Tavern at 99 Fleet Street, named for its association with Punch magazine, whose offices were close by. Journalists would regularly meet in the shady, smoky spaces to trade stories, drink in hand, as you can easily imagine within the wood-panelled grade II-listed Ye Olde Cock Tavern.

Most major newspapers left Fleet Street in the 1980s. News agency Reuters was one of the last to up sticks, hanging around at No 85 until 2003. Though the street is a ghost of the journalistic juggernaut it once was, its influence has been eternalised on the original London edition of Monopoly. Its impact on the popular British boardgame goes further still, having inspired one of the scenarios written on the Chance cards: “You have won a crossword competition – collect £100” is a throwback to the rivalry of Fleet Street-based newspapers in 1930s, particularly the Daily Mail and Daily Express, which would use competitions and promotions as a way to sway consumers towards their title. And so, from Latin textbooks to tabloid crosswords, the “street of ink” has printed it all. When visiting today, it’s still hard to kick the feeling that a young reporter may be lurking down a dingy alleyway or in a shadowy pub corner, ears pricked to catch the scoop of the day.
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QUEEN & COUNTRY

As royal watchers around the world enjoy the latest series of *The Crown*, Florence Sheward explores the many grand filming locations that you can visit for yourself.
The grounds of the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London features in the latest series.
Never believe everything you watch on TV. Whoever first said this old adage probably wasn’t thinking about season three of *The Crown* at the time, but it certainly applies. The popular Netflix TV historical drama series traces the life of Queen Elizabeth II from her marriage to Prince Phillip in 1947 through to the present day. So far, the first season took us up to Prince Margaret’s engagement in 1955, and the second season charts the Queen’s reaction to the Suez Crisis and the birth of Prince Edward. The third series covers the period 1964 to 1977 and hit our screens in November to rave reviews with Oscar-winning British actress Olivia Colman taking over the role of Her Majesty from Claire Foy. And while we’ll never know for sure how true to life some of the private interactions between the various members of the royal family are, we can say for sure that the creators of the show have played fast and loose with the reality of the settings.

Take, for example, perhaps the most important setting in the entire series: Buckingham Palace. While the real Queen was never likely to grant permission for filming to take place in her official London residence, several different grand British buildings have been used as substitutes for scenes supposedly taking place at the palace. Many of them were apparently filmed at Lancaster House, a grade I-listed mansion that was commissioned by the Duke of York in 1825 and is now run by the Foreign and Commonwealth office. It is just minutes away from the palace it has doubled for on screen on many occasions, including in *Downton Abbey* and *The King’s Speech*.

While Lancaster House is sadly not open to the public, *The Crown* has used several other stand-ins for Buckingham Palace that welcome visitors and are just a short day-trip from the British capital. They include the 19th-century Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire, which was used to replicate the palace’s facade, and Wilton House in Wiltshire, which has been the home of the Earls of Pembroke for almost 500 years. The latter is open from May to September and boasts grand interiors that have been largely unchanged since the 17th century, including a number of masterpieces from that time by the likes of Rembrandt and Van Dyck. Other highlights include a 19th-century Italianate garden, a Palladian bridge and the so-called Double Cube...
In The Crown, several different grand British buildings have been used as substitutes for Buckingham Palace

Room, a grand, 60-foot long space adorned with gold leaf and a painted ceiling.

In season three of The Crown, the scene in which Lord Mountbatten delivers some bad news to Prince Charles in the courtyard of Buckingham Palace was in fact filmed in the courtyard of the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, south London. This UNESCO World Heritage site, deemed the “finest and most dramatically sited architectural and landscape ensemble in the British Isles” by the UNESCO team, was designed by St Paul's Cathedral architect Sir Christopher Wren and built on the south bank of the River Thames between 1696 and 1712. It was originally intended to serve as a hospital for disabled sailors and one can’t imagine a grander, more spacious surrounds in which to recuperate.

Talking of Wren, Buckingham Palace isn’t the only one of London’s iconic buildings to seemingly appear in The Crown that was in fact recreated outside the capital. The first episode of the third season features the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill, which actually took place at St Paul’s Cathedral on 30 January 1965 – the Prime Minister was one of only a few non-royals to be granted a full state funeral.

Given St Paul’s remains a very busy attraction, the funeral was recreated instead at Hampshire’s Winchester Cathedral. Consecrated in 1093, it is an impressive building in its own right with remarkable fan vaulting in the nave and the 15th-century Great Screen on the high altar, with empty niches from which statues were stolen during the Reformation – even if it doesn’t look much like St Paul’s. Also of note are the mortuary chests, which contain the bones of many early kings of England, as well as the grave of the writer Jane Austen.

Westminster Abbey is another London location that is freely open to the public outside of services and private events, yet The Crown's production team chose to relocate the action to Ely Cathedral in Cambridge for the scene of the royal wedding between the Queen and Prince Philip. This magnificent Norman structure has also appeared on screen in The Other
Boleyn Girl and The King’s Speech.

While many iconic London buildings were recreated elsewhere, there are still plenty of places in the capital among the estimated 400 filming locations used in The Crown. Eltham Palace in Greenwich was one of the more appropriate choices, given that it was originally a royal residence in Tudor times and a childhood home of King Henry VIII. This is a palace of two halves, split between the original 600-year-old palace and the modern – and rather modernist – home that was built beside it in the 1930s for Sir Stephen and Lady Virginia Courtauld. The philanthropic couple held regular cocktail parties, with guests including Queen Mary.

Suitably enough for a dual-function palace, it has appeared on screen many times during the three seasons of The Crown. In episode eight of the first season alone, it doubled as Bermuda Government House, the HMS Queen Mary and the interior of the Royal Yacht Britannia. The sleek wooden interiors of this dazzling art deco mansion proved versatile indeed.

The Lyceum Theatre, a highlight of London’s theatre district, also cropped up in a previous season of the show, with a young Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip looking rather suave in their post-war outfits. The theatre dates back to 1841 and still stages productions today, looking every bit the royal hangout with its grand neoclassical columns out front.

Just outside London, the Essex stately home of Audley End House was used as an imitation of Balmoral Castle, one of the
monarchy’s official residences since Queen Victoria’s era. It seems an odd fit, however, as Balmoral was largely rebuilt in the 1830s, whereas the Jacobean manor of Audley End was built two centuries earlier.

It wasn’t the crew’s first visit to Audley End either. In the earlier seasons, the house’s decadent great hall and library were used as stand-ins for Windsor Castle and a debating hall during the princess’s time at Eton.

Many of The Crown’s foreign locations aren’t what they seem either. Prince Philip’s visit to Antarctica was actually filmed in a London quarry, while the Duke of Windsor’s French mansion was in fact the National Trust-run West Wycombe House on the outskirts of London in Buckinghamshire. American viewers may also be surprised to discover that the scene in which Helena Bonham Carter’s Princess Margaret is entertained at the White House by President Lyndon B Johnson was not shot in Washington DC after all. In fact, this was filmed less than an hour outside of London at Hylands House in Chelmsford, Essex. The elegant villa in the Queen Anne style was built for local lawyer Sir John Comyns and completed in 1730, meaning that it predates 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue by more than 60 years.

Far from detracting from the success of the TV series, the substituting of historical venues is a testament to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of The Crown’s production team. Not only that, but by choosing many more accessible venues, it also gives us license to live like a king or queen when we visit them for ourselves. All three seasons of The Crown are available to stream on Netflix.
Edinburgh is the official capital, yet Glasgow lays claim to be Scotland’s biggest and best city in many ways. The population is greater, the city centre more sprawling, and the arts scene more vibrant too.

A recent European Commission report named Glasgow the UK's top cultural and creative city, while UNESCO has designated it one of the world’s “Cities of Music”. Many major national institutions are based here, including the Scottish Ballet, Scottish Opera and the National Theatre of Scotland. Local heroes such as designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh and art collective The Glasgow Boys further bolster the city’s reputation.

Demand for their wares is high. Glasgow’s museums welcome more visitors than any other British city outside of London – and that is before the Burrell Collection completes a £66-million refurbishment in 2021. Admire art outdoors with the help of www.citycentremuraltrail.co.uk, a map of 25 of the city’s most striking murals.

The city came of age after the 1707 Acts of Union opened up the Glasgow docks to the furthest reaches of the British Empire. By the late Victorian era, the “Merchant City” was producing a quarter of the world’s locomotive trains and trading in everything from coal and oil to textiles and cigarettes. Much of the city’s best-loved architecture was established at this time, from the sandstone terraces to the Beaux Arts-style Glasgow City Chambers, unveiled by Queen Victoria herself in 1888.

Morning

Live the park life
Begin in Glasgow Green, the oldest of the city’s parks, dating back to the 15th century. It is home to the Doulton Fountain, a terracotta water feature donated by ceramics magnate Sir Henry Doulton in 1888. Opened a decade later, the People’s Palace opposite is a social history museum with a recently restored glasshouse. www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums

Explore a medieval home
Fondly known by locals as the “auld hoose”, Provand’s Lordship was built in 1471 and remains one of Glasgow’s last surviving medieval buildings.

The rooms are decked out in period furniture while a stroll around the cloisters allows you to look out on St Nicholas Garden, landscaped in a Tudor style. www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums

Get in the spirit
Across the street lies the St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art, filled with objects relating to all faiths. In keeping with the reverential mood, pop next door to Glasgow Cathedral, first consecrated in 1197. The adjacent Necropolis has 50,000 interments and includes monuments designed by many noted Victorian architects and sculptors.

www.glasgowcathedral.org.uk

Afternoon

Take tea in style
Charles Rennie Mackintosh is one of Glasgow’s favourite sons, an architect, designer and artist who left his imprint across the city. Admire his attention to detail in the House for an Art Lover, raise a cup to him at the Willow Tea Rooms and explore his legacy in The Lighthouse, a centre for architecture and design in Mackintosh’s Glasgow Herald building. www.houseforanartlover.co.uk, www.willowtearooms.co.uk, www.thelighthouse.co.uk

Step back in time
There’s a jar of plum jam in the Tenement
museums (including a top zoology collection), a gallery and the Mackintosh House. 
www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums,  
www.gla.ac.uk/hunterian

**Evening**

**Eat in the West**

Staying in the West End at dinnertime is a smart move. Argyle Street is dotted with bars and restaurants including The Gannet’s stylish seasonal menus and The Finnieston’s cocktails. Pick of the bunch is Ox and Finch on Sauchiehall Street, which specialises in putting international twists on dishes. www.oxandfinch.com

**Watch historic concerts**

The Old Fruitmarket is one of Britain’s most atmospheric concert venues, as it retains the cast-iron balconies and signs bearing the names of fruit sellers from its former incarnation. It sits next to City Halls, a shoebox-shaped recital room that is more than 175 years old and specialises in classical music performances today. www.glasgowconcerthalls.com

**Toast Victorian industry**

The exterior of the Old Toll Bar is largely unremarkable and situated on the busy Paisley Road, but the inside is every bit the quintessential Victorian pub. The dark wood-and-gold styling is cozy and atmospheric and the fixtures nod to Kinning Park’s shipbuilding history. www.oldtollbarglasgow.com

**Night**

**Race to sleep**

Ideally situated between the bustle of the city centre and the creative hub around the School of Art, the five-star Kimpton Blythswood Square Hotel nests in a series of Georgian townhouses that was once the headquarters of the Royal Scottish Automobile Club. The club’s former ballroom houses the Bo & Birdy brasserie. www.kimptonblythswoodsquare.com

**Book a grand stay**

15Glasgow is a B&B at once grandiose and homely. It is set in a quiet 19th-century terrace, with the Doric columns around the entrance matched by Corinthian columns in the hallway. The five comfy bedrooms are maintained by a friendly team that includes Otis the dog and Marag Dhubh the cat. www.15glasgow.com

Enjoy art in the park

The West End is home to two of Scotland’s finest venues. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is Glasgow’s answer to the V&A, displaying art, sculpture, taxidermy and other artefacts in a series of grand vaulting halls. Nearby, The Hunterian is the University of Glasgow’s umbrella for three House that was made in 1929. While most places would dispose of a 90-year-old foodstuff, this National Trust for Scotland venue preserved the preserve along with countless other everyday items from the early 20th century. Shorthand typist Agnes Howard lived in the house that survives today as a museum-cum-time capsule. www.nts.org.uk
With its black-and-white, half-timbered Tudor frontage standing in stark contrast to the surrounding lush green Cheshire countryside, Little Moreton Hall is certainly distinctive. But what is particularly remarkable is that it’s still standing at all. For this 500-year-old house is buckling under the weight of its own stone-slabbed roof and a Long Gallery perched precariously atop it.

Standing on marshland near the historic market town of Congleton, about 30 miles due south of Manchester, this curious building was built and owned for more than 400 years by successive generations of the Moreton family. However, the family were gentry, not aristocracy, and their societal standing went on to define both the design and the history of the house.

Not much is known about the Moretons, as their acquired wealth means there is little in terms of archives. ...
This image:
The Long Gallery
Far right: The altar in the Chapel
or records, as there would be for an aristocratic family. We know they were powerful local landlords from the 13th century onwards; indeed, the name Moreton derives from the Old English for “a farm at the marsh”. It is likely they made their wealth through purchasing land after the Black Death of 1348 and the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536–41, the latter an attempt by Henry VIII to sell off church-owned lands. By the mid-16th century, the Moretons had acquired 550,000 hectares.

The oldest part of the house – the east range and the Great Hall – was built by William Moreton I between 1504–8. The building was added to over the following century or so by his successors, three of which were also called William. It was then handed down through the family before being let out to tenant farmers and eventually passed into National Trust care in 1938.

That this house was built to impress is apparent upon entering the central courtyard. The half-timbered walls are covered in highly-decorative carvings – including greyhounds and a wolf’s head, from the family’s shield and crest respectively – and four-leaf clover quatrefoils. Carved dragons allude to the Welsh dragon on the Tudor coat of arms. But what is the most impressive is the sheer amount of glass, in both the lower bay windows and the windows above. Glass in the Tudor era was extremely expensive and, with an estimated 30,000 leaded panes (known as quarries) found across the hall, there is little doubt the family was highlighting its good fortune.

Above the windows, inscriptions in Tudor English declare: “God is Al in Al Thing: This windous whire made by William Moreton in the yeare of Oure Lorde MDLIX. Richarde Dale carpeder made thies windows by the grac of God.” The words serve as a nod to both the house’s owner and the carpenter who made them.

Through the porch is the Great Hall. This high-ceilinged room would once have been the hub of the household and used for a range of purposes. The large table, or “board”, which was made from one piece of 16th-century oak and still stands here now, would have served as the centre of family life and business alike. Indeed, many common phrases in the English language – such as “board games” and “chairman of the board” – descend from such a set-up.

The heart of domestic life eventually moved away from the Great Hall into more private quarters and, in 1559, William Moreton II hired Richard Dale to carry out a fashionable remodelling of the building, which included the addition of the bay windows seen in the Great Hall and the Grand Parlour. A second floor was also added above the Great Hall, the sawn-off beams of which can still be seen halfway up the wall. Nearby stands the Little Parlour, which was deemed so insignificant thanks to its Georgian windows and 1950s flooring that it remained unopen to the public for the first few decades of National Trust ownership. But in 1976 a remarkable discovery was made while attempting to turn it into an office.

Behind the wood panelling elaborate decorations were hidden, some painted directly on to the plaster and others on to paper pasted on the wall. Across the top, panels tell a biblical tale, while a frieze featuring the Moretons’ wolf’s head and a series of alternating red and green painted panels run underneath. The paintwork has been dated back to the end of the 16th century, when such decor was fashionable.

South of that is the grander Great Parlour, whose bay window and moulded ceiling beams indicate it too may have been Dale’s handiwork. One window displays a clever, stained-glass visual pun. The open mouth (or “maw”) of the wolf’s head crest is shown above a small barrel (or “ton”) making it a play on the visual language of heraldry by spelling out “Moreton” phonetically.

There’s also a grand 18th-century fireplace in the parlour, but the overmantel featuring Elizabeth I’s royal coat of arms is a 1500s original. It is assumed to have been hidden during the English Civil War, when the Moretons supported the Royalists – a loyalty which eventually cost the family its fortune and led to the house being rented out to tenant farmers for more than 200 years.

Two original items of furniture – a 16th-century octagonal table and 25-drawer oak “cupboarde of boxes” – are also to be admired. Look up to spot a 12-petal daisy wheel carved in the wood, one of hundreds of ritual protection marks and “witch traps” scattered around.

The nearby Chapel hints at the house’s more recent past. A rare example of a domestic chapel that survived... The dramatic nature of the candlelit Long Gallery is undeniable... It must have shone like a beacon for miles at night...
the Reformation largely intact, it was deconsecrated after suffering years of neglect when the hall was rented out. It was later restored and re-consecrated by Sister Elizabeth Moreton, who inherited the then-decaying hall in 1892. Above is the Chapel Chamber, which is so named due to once being connected to the Chapel below by a squint. This room, which served as a bedroom in the 17th century, would have enabled the family to observe religious services, though its exact use remains a mystery as it was covered up around 1580.

The neighbouring Great Chamber is in the wonky south range of the hall and its massive carved consoles—one of which’s wood dates to about 1660—and panelled partition help support the unstable Long Gallery above. The lime-ash flooring served as a Tudor form of fireproofing, while the burn marks on the wall, like the daisy wheel, served as a a form of protection at a time when there was a genuine fear of all things evil. Also on this floor are the functional South and Brewhouse Chambers, as well as two garderobes—toilets that led directly outside and were typical for a wealthy Tudor household. But the real gem of the house is up the stairs.

The wood-panelled Long Gallery is certainly the most impressive room of the house but was also nearly responsible for its literal downfall. Significantly narrower than the rooms below, perhaps in an attempt to make it look longer, the room has no direct support and therefore has been the cause of much-needed structural work throughout the centuries. It’s not entirely clear when it was built, although a hall for games and exercise was the height of fashion in the Elizabethan era. Indeed, 17th-century tennis balls have been found here. Regardless, the dramatic nature of the Long Gallery is undeniable. Lined with expensive leaded windows, the candlelit hall must have shone like a beacon for miles at night. Its grandeur is emphasised by the painted plasterwork depicting Destiny and Fortune at either end.

Yet going into the neighbouring Gallery Chamber, with its askew fireplace and sliding floor, acts as an immediate reminder as to how close Little Moreton Hall came to collapse. In fact, it was the scale of restoration work required that led to it being passed on to the National Trust more than 80 years ago, a decision that has continued to preserve its timbers ever since.
Scotland

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SALISBURY CATHEDRAL

Facts, figures and stories about Wiltshire’s remarkable 800-year-old landmark

**IN NUMBERS**

38
Years taken to complete construction of the cathedral

70,000
Amount of stone (in tons) used in the cathedral’s construction

73
Number of statues (above) along the cathedral’s west front

404
Height (in feet) of the cathedral spire, the tallest in Britain

80
Size (in acres) of the cathedral precinct, the largest in Britain

**STRANGE BUT TRUE**

William Golding’s fifth novel, *The Spire*, was loosely based upon Salisbury Cathedral. The Lord of the Flies author had taught at Bishop Wordsworth’s School in the 1950s and watched the rebuilding of the cathedral spire’s tip from his classroom window.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Salisbury Cathedral’s spire is the tallest in the UK, but only since 1561. It was previously bested by Lincoln Cathedral, which lost its largest spire in a storm in 1549, and the old St Paul’s Cathedral, where the main spire caught fire 12 years later.

The foundation stone for Salisbury Cathedral was laid on 28 April 1220, making this year the 800th anniversary of this remarkable building. Not only does it boast the tallest spire in Britain and the world’s oldest working mechanical clock, but also it is notable for being one of the most complete examples of early English gothic architecture.

Whereas many other buildings of a similar vintage had extra elements added or redesigned over the centuries, the entire of the main structure here was built in the first century of its existence. The main body of the cathedral was consecrated on 29 September 1258, while the west front, cloisters and chapter house were completed eight years later. Even the spire was finished by 1320. The result is a rare, cohesive architectural statement.

Even older than the cathedral itself is the copy of the Magna Carta that is on display in the chapter house. Salisbury has one of only four surviving copies of the “great charter”, a sort of constitutional document or bill of rights for medieval England that was issued by King John in June 1215. Several of the key clauses are still part of English law today.

The cathedral clock is a rather unusual proposition, given that it doesn’t have a face or even a proper home, ever since the bell tower was demolished in 1792 and it was removed from the cathedral tower a century later. The clock was built in around 1386, when clocks only chimed the time, and the bells still sound every 15 minutes.

Repairs have been made over time, but they’ve tended to be sensitively done. The Bishop of Salisbury, Seth Ward, appointed St Paul’s Cathedral architect Sir Christopher Wren to create “one of the first objective appraisals of a medieval building” in 1668, while another noted British architect, Sir George Gilbert Scott, was employed to reverse a number of unsympathetic renovations in the 1860s. This care and appreciation for such a historic structure has helped to maintain Salisbury Cathedral’s unique status.

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HAPPY VALLEY

Calderdale is the beating heart of England’s largest county and an oft-overlooked destination. Ravneet Ahluwalia visits the quaint yet progressive Yorkshire enclave.
It’s been raining and blowing and sunning all at once, all day, with the most incredible huge crowded brilliant skies,” the poet Ted Hughes once wrote from the corner of Yorkshire he called home. Those “brilliant skies” belonged to Calderdale, the southernmost of the Yorkshire Dales’ valleys, which sits in the heart of England’s largest county. It is a place bursting with both natural beauty and local pride in its rich culture and history.

Set between the northern English cities of Manchester and Leeds, Calderdale is a series of towns and villages bound together by the picturesque hills, moors and valleys that surround them. It takes its name from the River Calder which runs through it: “Calder” means “swift stream” in Celtic.

The area has long been a magnet for walkers and cyclists, drawn to the varied terrain and stunning views. Surveying the valley from Stoodly Pike, a 1,300-foot hill and the area’s highest point, you can see chapels, cloughs and cottages crowded together. But zoom in on this picture-perfect image of England and you’ll find quirky corners and creative hubs too, each of which add to Calderdale’s charms.

Since the 12th century the area has been synonymous with textile weaving – a pair of shears graces an 1150 grave in a Halifax Parish Church – but it was the Industrial Revolution that put it on the map. Woollen mills helped Halifax become a focal point of the textile industry, the town’s growing wealth reflected in its elegant Georgian mansions and extravagant public buildings. Take a walk around Halifax and you can still see many architectural gems, including Halifax Town Hall, designed by Houses of Parliament architect Charles Barry.

Calderdale’s most famous son, Ted Hughes, was born in Mytholmroyd in 1930 and he wrote many poems about the area’s powerful, rugged landscape. His wife, Sylvia Plath, the recipient of his letter quoted above, is buried in the churchyard in Heptonstall. The couple often returned to visit Hughes’ family and he chose to bury her here, stating that it was the place that they were most content together.

Plath described the Calder Valley in a letter to her mother as “wild and lonely and a perfect place to work”. The iconic writer’s grave has become a magnet for literary fans, who often leave floral tributes by her
headstone, which is inscribed with the words “even amidst fierce flames the golden lotus can be planted”.

Visitors craving contemporary culture won’t be disappointed either, as Calderdale continues to attract artists, writers and bohemian types drawn by the area’s beauty, as well as the affordable housing made available when the mills began to close.

Take in an exhibition at one of the museums (find local history at the Bankfield Museum or Victorian art treasures at the Smith Art Gallery) or dip a toe into the thriving live music scene.

Thanks to its range of independent and unique venues, Calderdale punches above its weight in attracting international stars alongside homegrown acts. Halifax boasts the smallest venue in the UK, The Grayston Unity (with a capacity of just 17), while Hebden Bridge has the legendary Trades Club, a co-operative run venue opened in 1924. All of this along with a range of options for foodies – there are weekly food markets, high-end restaurants with local sourced seasonal menus and several food festivals across the year – means Calderdale is calling.
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Five things to do in Calderdale

1. The Piece Hall
A grade I listed, 66,000 square foot Italian-style plaza surrounded by 300 chambers, this monumental structure is the UK’s only surviving 18th-century cloth trading hall (weavers referred to their woven measures of cloth as ‘pieces’).
After years of neglect, a £19-million renovation restored the hall to its former glory. It is now home to independent bars, shops and restaurants and a heritage centre with stories of Georgian era Halifax and regular guided tours. It also hosts an ever-changing programme of art exhibitions, concerts and theatre performances.
Since its re-opening in 2017, the hall has welcomed more than five million visitors and has won many awards, including Building of the Year at the Royal Institute of British Architects’ Yorkshire Awards.

2. Hebden Bridge
Possibly the coolest little market town in the world, Hebden Bridge has been drawing attention since the 1970s when it was colonised by writers and artists looking for cheap housing and a sense of community.
The town retains its bohemian spirit 50 years on, with its cobbled lanes containing artisan craft shops, galleries and organic cafés, as well as a beautiful 1920s art deco cinema, the Hebden Bridge Picture House.
Hebden Bridge developed in the 19th century, as a combination of fast-flowing water supplies and a location on several prominent Victorian rail routes made it a perfect place for textile mills, earning it the nickname “Trouser Town”. It gained a second nickname in 2014, after the BBC drama series Happy Valley was set here.
4. Dean Clough

Once one of the world’s largest carpet mills, Dean Clough, is now a huge arts and business complex on the edge of Halifax town centre. The 22-acre site is home to some 150 businesses, including a hotel, shops and restaurants.

It is also home to a number of artist studios and galleries, including the Crossley Gallery, one of the largest in Yorkshire. The Viaduct Theatre also hosts everything from stand-up comedy and Shakespeare to productions from the in-house Northern Broadsides theatre company. Also look out for the Lego model of the Dean Clough building, made up of more than one million bricks.

4. Dean Clough

5. Calderdale Way

Celebrating its 40th anniversary last year, the Calderdale Way is a 50-mile walking circuit around the hills, moors and valleys of Calderdale. The well-established trail encircles Halifax, Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, following old packhorse ways with sections of traditional stone causeway, passing through hillside villages and old mill towns on the banks of the River Calder.

If you aren’t able to attempt the full walk, it is helpfully split into manageable sections to while away a few hours on a sunny afternoon. There are also an ample number of pubs along the route if rest and refreshment are needed, including the Old White Beare at Norwood Green. Other highlights include the wooded valley at Hardcastle Crags and medieval settlements at Lumbutts and Mankinholes.

5. Calderdale Way

3. Shibden Hall

First built in 1420, this sprawling, Tudor mansion was the home of Anne Lister, the Halifax-born explorer, entrepreneur and landowner often referred to as “the first modern lesbian”. From the age of 15 she kept an extensive diary, written in code, detailing her affairs with various aristocratic women.

Lister rejected the traditional role of women at the time and, after inheriting Shibden Hall, worked to create a substantial income and undertook renovations of the property to shore up the family’s standing.

Her fascinating story has been developed into the hit HBO/BBC series Gentleman Jack, which was filmed on location here. The entire estate is open to visitors as a public park and museum, where Anne’s impact can still be felt.
Defence of the Realm

Step back and experience for yourself how the Allied forces played a critical part in defending the realm by guarding the crucially important defence frontline in WW2, a section of the coastline between Folkestone and St. Margaret's. This coastline was the closest point to France, only 21 miles away, which was under Nazi occupation. It is where Spitfires and Hurricanes took off and where the Battle of Britain took place in the skies. This is also the area, where preparations for D-Day began with the Operation Fortitude. Today, this part of the coastline is a unique place where coast meets country, beauty meets history and England meets the Continent.

The excursion begins with a tour of Folkestone. Folkestone is a seaside resort made fashionable by the Victorians, which played a very important role in both wars with thousands and millions of troops and others, including nurses, passing through its port. For many soldiers who left from Folkestone, its harbour was the last sight of home.

Next visit the Battle of Britain Museum in Hawkinge followed by a shorter visit to the Battle of Britain Memorial, which overlooks the English Channel from the cliff top at Capel-le-Ferne. The Memorial is dedicated to Churchill's famous "Few" who fought in the skies overhead to keep this country free from invasion.

After lunch in a traditional local tea-room that also houses a Museum dedicated to the history of the area during WW2, we will continue to Dover Castle.

The highlight of our excursion is Dover Castle, the largest of all English fortresses commanding the gateway to the realm for nine centuries. Founded in the 11th century, the castle has been described as the "Key to England" due to its defensive significance throughout history. You can discover centuries of history at Dover Castle from the Romans to the Cold War and delve deep within Dover's White Cliffs to witness the drama in the Secret Wartime Tunnels. The tunnels were used as a hospital in WW2 and were also where Operation Dynamo was masterminded by Vice Admiral Ramsay. There is a lot more to see in the complex including the Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment Museum.

www.englandplustours.com
GREAT ESCAPES

High Five

Choose from this quintet of historic five-star hotels

1 Inverlochy Castle
Inverness-shire

Two miles from the ruins of the original 13th-century Inverlochy Castle lies this Victorian baronial mansion. In fact, this is not only a building constructed in the Victorian era, but also one that was given the royal seal of approval by the Queen herself. During an 1873 visit to her Balmoral estate, she spent a week sketching and painting here, claiming she had never seen “a lovelier or more romantic spot”.

The 17 rooms have a cosy grandeur, combining waterfall showers and Egyptian cotton bed sheets. Meanwhile, Father-and-son team Albert and Michel Roux Jr cook up modern British meals with a French twist in three dining rooms decorated with gifts from the King of Norway.

www.inverlochycastlehotel.com

2 Claridge’s
London

This grand British institution has humble origins, beginning in 1812 as a small hotel owned by James Mivart. He was bought out 42 years later by ambitious couple William and Marianne Claridge, who expanded the business into neighbouring properties.

Yet it wasn’t until the hotel was bought by Savoy owner Richard D’Oyly Carte in 1893 that it truly gained cachet. Architect CW Stephens, fresh from his work on Harrods, was charged with a refurb that ended up being a full rebuild. Highlights included an attendant-operated lift, thought to be the oldest in the country. One man reluctant to step into the lift was Sir Winston Churchill – he moved in to a penthouse suite in 1945, but he objected to living high up. Thankfully Lady Clementine approved.

www.claridges.co.uk

3 Rosewood
London

Less historic perhaps, having only opened seven years ago, Rosewood London was nevertheless sensitively developed within a grade II listed building that dates back to 1914. Factor in the fact that it is sandwiched between the literary enclave of Bloomsbury and Sir John Soane’s Museum on Lincoln’s Inn Fields and this is truly one of the British capital’s grandest locales.

Two additional wings help the hotel take flight. The Garden House Wing boasts a rooftop terrace, while the private, six-room Grand Manor House Wing is so large that it has its own postcode. Head to the low-lit Mirror Room for a range of art-inspired afternoon teas – the latest addition to the menu was inspired by the work of Royal Academy sculptor Antony Gormley.

www.rosewoodhotels.com

4 The Grand
York

Despite being the largest county in England, Yorkshire is home to just a single five-star hotel: The Grand in York. It began life as the headquarters of North Eastern Railway, built as a “palace of business” in 1906 to advertise the company’s success.

The converted hotel maximises the period details left behind, so visitors can enjoy sweeping down the original stone staircase, swishing through grand marble hallways and peering through lattice windows onto the adjacent York Minster.

A new wing was added in 2018, providing more modern options alongside the heritage suites. For a truly decadent time, relax into the red leather armchairs in the 1906 Bar and peruse a menu filled with cocktails or a “library” of whisky.

www.thegrandyork.co.uk

5 The Headland
Cornwall

If Cornwall is the county at the edge of the Atlantic, then nowhere is it more apparent than The Headland. Perched on a rocky outcrop near Fistral beach, it is a truly bracing place to stay.

It started life in heady circumstances too, as fishermen protested the location and the building project was completed by 200 out-of-work miners. By the time King Edward VII visited, the locals acquiesced, and the coil-sprung ballroom soon became a favourite with orchestras. The Armstrong family took over in 1979, improving facilities and adding a series of cottages-for-rent. The new Aqua Club leisure complex is set to open in May, providing guests with five pools, a new restaurant and a sun terrace overlooking the ocean.
1: The plush lounge at Inverlochy Castle
2: Tea at Claridge’s is the height of sophistication
3: Rosewood has marble bathrooms and a roof terrace
4: A former “palace of business” houses The Grand
5: The Headland boasts a dramatic seafront location
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Visit www.scotlandmag.com/scotlandsbest
BOOK REVIEWS

Anglophile's will enjoy these great new hardbacks

*Cruickshank's London* by Dan Cruickshank
Join the beloved architectural historian for 13 guided walks around the British capital. He is predictably excellent covering tourist favourites, though a true measure of his skill as a tour guide comes when looking at seemingly more mundane subjects. His tour of Blackheath's domestic architecture is fascinating, while you will look at Dagenham Civic Centre with new eyes. (Random House Books, £30)

While the Netflix TV series *The Crown* may play fast and loose with the dialogue, all of the key events covered occurred in real life. This second volume is written by the show's historical consultant so he brings key insight into important events like the Suez Canal Crisis, yet also rich incidental detail, like the origins of Prince Philip's nickname "Bubbikins". (Bonnier, £20)

*Studio Lives: Architect, Art and Artist in 20th-Century Britain* by Louise Campbell
With artists being such visual people, it makes sense that they care deeply about the appearance of their workspaces. Thirteen British studios created for leading artists between 1892 and 1938 are looked at in depth here, from William Orpen's grand London atelier to Henry Payne's Arts & Crafts home. (Lund Humphries, £35)

Crossword

**Across**
1 Romanic medieval house on the steep banks of the River Tamar (8)
2 Youngest of the Brontë Sisters (4)
3 *The Return of the____*, a novel by Thomas Hardy (6)
4 ______ Sterne, author of *Tristram Shandy*, who lived at Coxwold in Yorkshire (8)
5 Home of Sir Walter Scott near Melrose in the Scottish Borders (10)
6 John ______, author of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (6)
8 The Somerset ______, wetland area of South West England (6)
13 Colourful butterfly (3,7)
16 Plantagenet ______, principal character in several novels by Anthony Trollope (8)
18 Resort town in Strathspey (8)
19 Order of the ______, the highest order of English knighthood (6)
21 Whitstable in Kent has an annual festival honouring this edible bivalve (6)
22 Black ______, a classic children's book by Anna Sewell (6)
24 Another name for young foxes, commonly found across Britain (4)

**Down**
7 English county that includes the Isles of Scilly (8)
9 A retreat or bower of trees or climbing plants (6)
10 The London ______, tourist attraction constructed in 1999 (3)
11 Ruined 13th-century castle near Fort William in Scotland (10)
12 England's patron saint (6)
14 The westernmost point of the English mainland (5,3)
15 Range of hills in south-west England, located mainly in Somerset (7)
17 Youngest of the Mitford sisters, who became Duchess of Devonshire in 1950 (7)
20 The youngest daughter of King Lear (8)
22 ______ Moor, moorland area in which the River Fowey has its source (6)
23 Popular house plant from late Victorian times to the 1920s (10)
24 Tributary of the Great Ouse, part of which is also known as the Granta (3)
25 Wensleydale market town that has had a weekly market since 1251 (6)
26 A small town in Northumberland, a tourist centre surrounded by forest (8)

*Solutions to crossword 213*

Across: 1 Alston, 4 Taming, 8 Clarice, 9 Althorp, 11 Barometers, 12 Hunt, 13 Crest, 14 Pearmain, 16 Finchale, 18 Gules, 20 Peel, 21 Chatsworth, 23 Deanery, 24 Hilaire, 25 Lillie, 26 Pendle

Down: 1 Ailsa, 2 Scrooge, 3 Orchestra, 5 Atlas, 6 Ightham, 7 Gerontius, 10 Temple Bar, 13 Clive Bell, 15 Augustine, 17 Colonel, 19 Leonard, 21 Corgi, 22 Tiree
Trooping the Colour

The Queen’s Birthday Parade is both a practical tradition and a rousing celebration

If there is one thing the British can be relied upon to do well it is pomp and pageantry. Trooping the Colour is among the finest such events in the calendar, as more than 1,400 soldiers and 200 horses execute a grand display of military precision. This inspection of the British and Commonwealth armies’ leading regiments actually takes place across three subsequent weekends, with the Major General’s Review and the Colonel’s Review (lead respectively by Major General CJ Ghika and Charles, the Prince of Wales) preceding the most prominent public event, a state ceremonial parade in the presence of Her Majesty which is now known as the Queen’s Birthday Parade.

Queen Elizabeth II was born on 21 April 1926, yet Trooping the Colour takes place on her “official birthday”, which falls on the second Saturday of June (13 June 2020). King George II was the first British monarch to enjoy a double birthday, on account of his actual birthday falling in November – a month with weather hardly suitable for a big public celebration. He began the ceremony in 1748.

Trooping the Colour begins with the Sovereign’s Escort of the Household Cavalry along the Mall from Buckingham Palace. In her younger days, the Queen would lead this parade on horseback, yet since 1987 she has travelled by state carriage.

Upon arrival at the Horse Guards Parade in Whitehall at 11am, the Queen receives a Royal salute and then begins an inspection of the troops, beginning with the Foot Guards dressed in the ceremonial uniform of red tunics and bearskin hats.

In the past, a regiment’s “colour” – or flag – was an important symbol of a regiment’s unity and success. Trooping was a way of both other soldiers familiarising themselves with the various regiment’s colours and also to prove the colours remained intact. For the benefit of the modern parade, a different regiment’s colours are trooped each year – in 2020, it will be the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards. While visitors can watch the parade for free at key points along the Mall, you can also apply for tickets via an online ballot at qbp.army.mod.uk to gain access to the seating area at Horse Guards Parade. Be warned, however: formal dress codes apply.

The next stage sees the military bands lead a musical performance, before the year’s chosen regimental colours are carried down the ranks of soldiers in line with the directions called by the Officer in Command of the Parade. The Queen then watches the Foot Guards march past, before she rejoins the Sovereign’s Escort back to Buckingham Palace for another salute.

The event concludes with Her Majesty reappearing on the palace balcony alongside fellow Royal Family members to watch a Royal Air Force flypast and gaze back down the Mall at the waving crowds and the “Union Jack” flags lining the street. It’s no ordinary birthday celebration, but one to which we are all invited.
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A supplement to Discover Britain
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Welcome

Ask someone to describe a quintessential English scene and it is likely they will be picturing the Cotswolds. From the golden cottages and stately homes to the rolling hills and winding roads, the best of our green and pleasant isle is here in a largely rural corner of the country.

This Discover Britain supplement is designed to help you make the most of a visit to this sprawling and endlessly beautiful area. We begin with a bucket list of sorts, and profiles of the essential places to visit, before uncovering some lesser-known gems. There’s a history of the best churches in the Cotswolds and a look at the area’s “twin cities”, which are quaint market towns by any other standard. We conclude with a look at the best accommodation in the most popular villages because, let’s face it, seeing the very best of the Cotswolds will take you much more than a single day.

STEVE PILL Editor
Over the next 10 pages we present the seven must-see attractions for anyone planning a visit to the Cotswolds, from princely gardens to Arts & Crafts homes.
Queen Anne was a generous sort. To celebrate the military achievements of John Churchill, the 1st Duke of Marlborough, who led the British army to victory over the French in the Battle of Blenheim on 13 August 1704, she went all out. Not only did she grant Churchill a considerable amount of land near Woodstock, Oxfordshire, but she also dedicated around £240,000 of funds to the building of a country home for him and his family.

Of course, the 1st Duke is no longer the most famous Churchill to be associated with Britain’s only non-royal, non-episcopal palace. Our wartime Prime Minister Sir Winston was born at Blenheim in 1874, grew up here and eventually proposed to his future wife Clementine in the palace’s Temple of Diana summerhouse. The Churchill family remains in residence today, though large parts of the palace and gardens are open to the public. These include the ostentatious Palace State Rooms, which even Louis XIV might have considered a little OTT, and a series of majestic water terraces. Book a place on the frequent “Upstairs Tours” to view the family’s private quarters, thought to have inspired the hit TV series *Downton Abbey.*

www.blenheimpalace.com
Highgrove Royal Gardens

Prince Charles has a reputation as a critic of modern architecture. The heir to the throne has famously traditional tastes, as seen in his pseudo-Georgian housing development of Poundbury and his infamous description of a planned extension to London’s National Gallery as “a monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much loved and elegant friend”.

With this in mind, it is little wonder that his Highbury estate is an exercise in classicism. The late 18th-century house (complete, apparently, with a steel-lined panic room) remains the private family residence of the Prince and his wife, Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, yet the Royal Gardens are open all year round.

Visit in May to see the four-acre wildflower meadow in full bloom, while the older half of the cottage garden, all colourful shrubs and herbaceous borders, was designed in conjunction with the late Rosemary Verey. Look out for a large urn resting on its side in which Prince Harry was once found hiding as a toddler.

www.highgrovegardens.com
Situated between the quintessential Cotswolds villages of Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Norton lies this stunning example of grade I-listed Jacobean architecture. The house was built for lawyer Walter Jones, completed in 1612, and remained in his family for almost 400 years. Today the National Trust-owned house acts as a museum for its own 17th century heyday. It contains many items from the era, including the so-called Juxon Bible, which was apparently used at the execution of Charles I in 1649. The house itself played a small role in the English Civil War two years later when Jones’s grandson Arthur fled from Oliver Cromwell’s army by hiding in a closet here and his wife aided his escape by lacing the soldiers’ beer with Laudanum.

No trip to Chastleton is complete without a visit to the nearby Rollright Stones – not a Jagger and Richards tribute band but rather three groups of mystical limestone monuments that date back to the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.
Painswick Rococo Gardens

The Gloucestershire village of Painswick boasts England's last surviving public garden from the rococo era – that fanciful and rather sophisticated period in the mid-18th century when asymmetrical ornamental curves and natural motifs were all the rage. In garden terms, this meant creating a theatrical backdrop to decadent parties, as guests promenaded around admiring frivolous details, such as statues, ironwork and whimsical buildings.

Painswick encapsulates that flamboyant atmosphere to perfection. An 1748 painting of the original garden by local artist Thomas Robins was used as the basis for a major restoration begun in the 1980s. Gardens were replanted around the many architectural highlights found throughout, including the Exedra, a sort of curving folly that looks like the remains of a crown or a wedding cake. Careful planting ensures interest all year round too, as February sees the emergence of an estimated five million snowdrops, wisteria drapes the coach house in late spring, and the Exedra Garden provides a colourful highlight during the autumn.

www.rococogarden.org.uk
Broadway Tower

The lights are certainly not bright on this particular Broadway. This remarkable Georgian folly, built on the top of Broadway Hill in 1799, is so far from the bustle of city life that climbing up here as the sun sets remains a truly haunting and spiritual experience. It is said that 16 different counties can be viewed from the ramparts of this three-storey structure, as views extend for miles over the tree-laden Cotswolds countryside.

The legendary English landscape garden designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown first had the idea for the building, and the beacon hill was chosen, as it featured on a pre-medieval trading route. Today the tower and surrounding 50-acre estate is owned by the Will family and a small museum inside is dedicated to the place's links with William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement. In a cute touch, the resident herd of red deer outside is led by a stag named William Morris too.

www.broadwaytower.co.uk
Hidcote

The Cotswolds’ honey-stone cottages and rolling countryside may feel like England in a nutshell, yet one of the area’s most remarkable gardens exists solely thanks to two Americans.

Gertrude Winthrop bought the Hidcote Manor Estate in 1907 and her Boer War veteran son Lawrence Johnston set about turning the fields into landscape gardens, inspired by the English Arts & Crafts designers living and working in the area.

With a dozen gardeners in his employ, many of whom were resident in the quaint nearby hamlet of Hidcote Bartrim, Johnston conceived a series of outdoor “rooms”, including the hedge-lined Bathing Pool and the Pillar Garden, planted with 22 yew tree pillars.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hidcote
William Morris was a man with exquisite taste. The Arts & Crafts designer, writer and activist collaborated with the artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, created gorgeous textiles and wallpapers, and lived by the tenet that one should “have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful”. It is little wonder then that his former Oxfordshire residence, now in the care of the Society of Antiquaries, is one of the most delightful homes in the Cotswolds, if not Britain.

He first clapped eyes on Kelmscott Manor in 1871, around 300 years after it was first built. Deeming it the “loveliest haunt of ancient peace”, he signed the lease with artist Dante Gabriel Rosetti and spent his final 25 years living here during the summers. Kelmscott will only open to the public for a limited season in 2020 as the house and gardens undergo a major conservation programme courtesy of a £4.3 million lottery grant. The gardens in particular, including an orchard and a topiary dragon inspired by his travels to Iceland, evoke elements found in Morris’s finest decorative designs.

www.sal.org.uk/kelmscott-manor
Explore the best of the Cotswolds via guided and self-guided walks at www.cotswoldwalks.com
Fabric of the Hills

Wool churches appeared all over the Cotswolds as tributes to the wealth of the medieval wool trade. Florence Sheward takes us on a tour of the most fascinating examples.

As tempting as it is to imagine that a “wool church” is a place of worship knitted from a sheep’s coat, this is actually a far grander feature of the Cotswolds landscape and beyond. Wool churches are in fact religious buildings financed by medieval English farmers and merchants who had made their money in the wool trade. Generous donations were made in the hopes of securing their place in heaven (we can neither confirm nor deny whether they were just being fleeced). As a result, the construction of new churches became a rather competitive endeavour, with ever more grand designs created.

Money was not in short supply either. English wool was prized by weavers from Florence to Flanders. At its peak at the beginning of the 14th century, England was exporting around 40,000 sacks of raw wool every year, making it the backbone of the national economy at the time. It was overseen mostly by the Company of the Merchants of the Staple, which was granted a monopoly over the trade by King Edward III. “No form of manufacturing had a greater impact upon the economy and society of medieval Britain than did those industries producing cloths from various kinds of wool,” according to John H Munro’s Medieval Woollens book.

Wool churches mostly appeared in East Anglia and the Cotswolds where much of the wealth resided. Start a tour of the Cotswolds most impressive wool churches a few miles north-east of Cheltenham and Gloucester in the village of Winchcombe.

Many wool churches were in fact upgrades or replacements for existing churches, as is the case here. Christian worship began in Winchcombe back in Anglo-Saxon times – there was a St Peter’s Church as far back as the 9th century – yet the current building wasn’t constructed until the 1450s.

Funds were supplied by Ralph Boteler, the 1st Baron Sudeley, who had served as the Lord Treasurer of England. He had his father and brothers interred in the chapel, but their tombs were destroyed during the English Civil War. Embroidered vestments from the time have fared better and can be seen on display in the north aisle. Aside from a comprehensive restoration that repaired the roof in 1873, St Peter’s remains much as it was in the 15th century. Visitors should look out for the 40 or so stone grotesques (the proper name for gargoyles) that adorn the exterior – delightfully ugly faces that won’t fail to prompt a smile.

At the northern tip of the Cotswolds lies Chipping Campden, one of the area’s most popular villages and home to St James’ Church. This particular wool church was slow to emerge, after the original Norman church was added to over a period of around 250 years, culminating in the addition of the 120-foot west tower with its sky-piercing pinnacles in 1500. Several of the key elements of the original church are now preserved behind glass, including the 500-year-old pair of altar frontals that were copied for Westminster Abbey in 1912 at the request of King George V’s wife, Mary of Teck.

Head up Stow Hill to the quintessential Cotswolds town of Stow-on-the-Wold, which was once at the heart of the local wool trade. More than 20,000 sheep were sold each year in the popular annual market that was founded by King Edward III and centred around the old Market Square. St Edward’s Church has sat to the west side of the square since before the Domesday Book, with elements added as late as the 1600s.
to house Royalist prisoners during the English Civil War and was subsequently partly restored in the 17th century. The highlight of St Edward's Church is the arched wooden door, topped with miniature stained glass windows and set between two ancient yew trees that have seemingly grown out of the walls. *Atlas Obscura* dubbed it “more like a portal to a fairy realm than a church entrance” and locals have long speculated that the Doors of Durin in JRR Tolkien’s books were inspired by this.

The beginnings of St Mary’s Church in nearby Chipping Norton sounds like the plot to a lost Tolkien story too, after a wandering Celtic evangelist known as Diuma first brought the Christian faith to the area in the 7th century. The original parish church was replaced in the 15th century, when the rich merchants of the Guild of the Holy Trinity also paid for a guildhall, almshouses and a grammar school.

St Mary’s Church is in a quiet spot, down the hill from the rest of the town, and the highlight is surely the nave, designed by Eton College Chapel architect John Smyth. Our tour of the wool churches heads south now to St John the Baptist’s Church, situated on the banks of the River Windrush in the Oxfordshire town of Burford. Construction began on the church as far back as 1160, yet it continued to grow as the wool trade itself flourished. The remarkable spire was added in the 15th century.

The churchyard of St John’s not only pays respect to lost loved ones, but also the wool trade itself – look out for the many “bale” tombs with rounded edges, which are said to represent bales of wool. Inside, the carved stone tombs of the former Lord and Lady of the Manor, Sir Lawrence and Elizabeth Tanfield, are also noteworthy.

Next take a detour west to Northleach and the Church of St Peter and St Paul. It is known as the “cathedral of the Cotswolds”, which indicates the sheer scale and grandeur of many of these wool churches. Northleach was a particularly wealthy centre with much of its woolen output being traded.
in London by the Cely family. Local merchants rich off the rewards included John Fortey who left £300 in his will to the Church of St Peter and St Paul – an extraordinary sum at the time, which allowed the nave to be raised and new windows to be installed.

Windows are also the highlight of the St Mary’s Church in Fairford. It was consecrated in 1497 and boasts a complete scheme of stained glass windows that date from that time. This is particularly rare, given that many churches were forced to remove similar imagery during the reign of Edward VI, England’s first Protestant monarch. No one knows why Fairford’s remained intact.

Our circuit concludes with a second church dedicated to St John the Baptist: the Parish Church in Cirencester. It is one of the largest of its kind in England with seating for more than 500. One of its most remarkable features are the fan vaults, which were added in the 16th century and remain a beautifully intricate example of late perpendicular gothic architecture – one that would never have been made possible were it not for the generosity of the wool trade. As the Merchants of the Staple put it, “it is the Sheepe hath payed for all”.

Clockwise from far left: Church of St Peter and St Paul in Northleach; the entrance to St Edward’s; St Peter’s of Winchcombe; the great west window in St Mary’s of Fairford.
The Cotswolds is the perfect year-round destination with its blend of stunning scenery and picturesque, honey-coloured villages alongside cosmopolitan towns and world-class food, accommodation and attractions.

The real Cotswolds
Away from the more visited Cotswold towns and villages are a whole host of equally beautiful gems, rich in history and heritage and surrounded by stunning countryside.

Why not consider staying in Cirencester? A beautiful market town dating from Roman times with gorgeous independent shops, a museum, theatre, and fantastic eateries. If you love walking then head to Winchcombe, with its Walkers Welcome status, or stunning Painswick, which are both on the Cotswold Way National Trail walking route.

A visit to the bustling market town of Witney will delight with its unique blend of shops, history and beautiful green spaces, whilst those with a passion for antiques should head to Tetbury with its wide range of antique and boutique shops.

For history lovers, Malmesbury, with its abbey and the oldest hotel in England, and Northleach, which is rich in history and architectural interest, are a must see.

Seasonal delights
The Cotswolds is a 365-day destination, so why not visit in the quieter months?

Wander through woodlands turning blue with swathes of bluebells in the spring or savour nature’s own spectacular firework display provided by the ancient woodlands and arboreta during the autumn months. There’s nowhere more magical than the Cotswolds at Christmas, with a whole host of festive markets and spectacular light displays.

Discover lesser-known destinations with the help of Cotswolds Tourism
TWIN TOWNS
Intimate neighbours but distinctly non-identical, Cheltenham and Gloucester are the charismatic urban counterparts of any Cotswolds tour, says Jenny Rowe.
Pedestrianised. To step back in time, Northgate and Southgate, now largely four “Gate Streets” – Westgate, Eastgate, Northgate and Southgate, still survive today in the spirit of the Anglo-Saxons and the core layout of the settlement of Roman Britain, the town of Cheltenham offers a patchwork appeal. Once one of the chief spa towns of Regency Britain, Cheltenham is a particularly winding part of the River Severn. To this day Gloucester harbours one of the most inland shipping ports in Britain. These were bolstered further in the Victorian era when the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal was completed to bypass a particularly winding part of the River Severn. To this day Gloucester harbours one of the most inland shipping ports in Britain. At its busiest, the docks would have been filled with dust, clanging hammers and the continuous commotion of ferrying goods to and from waiting narrow boats, steam ships and barges.

Nowadays the National Waterways Museum and the towering converted Gloucester Cathedral are twin towns if it weren’t for the fact that Gloucester is actually granted city status thanks to its 1,300-year-old cathedral.

This makes it the considerably elder sibling, too; it was established as a Roman fortress around 68 AD. Positively youthful in comparison and a little further upstream, Cheltenham sprang (literally) to life in 1788 as a spa, and is now dubbed “Britain’s most complete Regency town”, though its roots are more humble and often traced back to a proliferation of pigeons, of all things.

The story goes that in 1716 a local farmer named William Mason purchased the once rural plot of land where Cheltenham Ladies College now stands, having noticed that pigeons were regularly flocking to the area to peck at salts accumulating at a surface spring. Convinced of its healing properties (or just an astute businessman who had seen the success of other nearby spa towns like Bath), Mason dug out the spring, fenced it off, built a thatched cottage next door and started charging the public half a penny for a glass of mineral water. It was not until King George III suffered a bilious attack in 1788 and was recommended a cup of the good stuff from Mason’s farm – by now owned by the farmer’s daughter and son-in-law – that Cheltenham really boomed.

Cheltenham’s heyday as a spa town from around 1790 to 1840 exactly corresponded with the lifespan of the Regency style. Examples adorn the streets everywhere you look with striking cohesion. The aura of refinement is in no small part due to the town’s gleaming townhouses, terraces and squares, often embellished with delicate ironwork balconies. The impressive Promenade is its most obvious highlight.

In contrast, Gloucester has a far more patchwork appeal. Once one of the chief settlements of Roman Britain, the town was re-planned and re-fortified in the hands of the Anglo-Saxons and the core layout they contrived still survives today in the four “Gate Streets” – Westgate, Eastgate, Northgate and Southgate, now largely pedestrianised. To step back in time, visit the viewing chamber in Eastgate Street, which reveals Roman remains, the base of a 13th-century tower and the Tudor “horse-pool” where wagons and livestock were washed before market. To this day these streets make up the city centre and the main shopping district, which is where you’ll find many museums and attractions, including the Gothic masterpiece that is Gloucester Cathedral.

Founded as a religious house by an Anglo-Saxon prince in 678-679 AD, it showcases all periods of medieval church architecture with a magnificent fan-vaulted ceiling that will take your breath away. Just a stone’s throw from here, be sure to pop into Beatrix Potter’s House of the Tailor of Gloucester, the very building that inspired her Tailor of Gloucester story back in 1894 and later featured in the illustrations. More than 125 years later, the building houses a shop and museum devoted to the much-loved children’s author.

The market town continued to thrive under the patronage of the Plantagenet kings. To prove it, a nine-year-old Henry III was crowned here at St Peter’s Abbey (now the cathedral) in 1216 – the only time the coronation of an English monarch has taken place outside of Westminster. Medieval Gloucester’s fortunes peaked again when Abbot Thokey accepted the body of King Edward II to be buried at St Peter’s Abbey in 1327, attracting pilgrims – and their open purse strings. The proceeds were spent on expanding and beautifying the abbey, and, by 1470, it had started to resemble the cathedral we see today.

Elizabeth I was also kind, granting Gloucester Royal Port status in 1580, thus opening up trade links with the rest of the world. These were bolstered further in the Victorian era when the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal was completed to bypass a particularly winding part of the River Severn. To this day Gloucester harbours one of the most inland shipping ports in Britain. At its busiest, the docks would have been filled with dust, clanging hammers and the continuous commotion of ferrying goods to and from waiting narrow boats, steam ships and barges.

Nowadays the National Waterways Museum and the towering converted Gloucester Cathedral; the docks during the Tall Ships Festival; House of the Tailor of Gloucester.
Victorian warehouses that remain sufficiently bring the city’s industrial past back to life. This is just one of many historic locations in Gloucester to have hit the silver screen, having appeared in the 2016 Disney blockbuster *Alice Through the Looking Glass* starring Johnny Depp. (The Cathedral’s cloisters were also a feature of *Harry Potter & the Philosopher’s Stone*).

With such strong infrastructure, Gloucester has functioned as a local centre to the surrounding market towns and villages of the Cotswolds such as Stow-on-the-Wold, Witney and Chipping Norton since the middle ages. Raw wool would have been transported here and then woven, cleaned (or “fulled”), dried and dyed. The wool market was held in the Boothall, which once stood on the south side of Westgate but was demolished in 1957. Thankfully, Gloucester has retained its strong market tradition, with the daily Eastgate Indoor Market and the Cherry and White Market on Northgate, which takes place every Friday and Saturday. Every Friday also sees the Gloucester Farmers’ Market occupy all four Gate Streets, as it would have done hundreds of years ago.

The Promenade is the closest thing that Cheltenham has to this hustle and bustle, albeit a more laidback, leafier version. While none of the town’s regular craft and food markets rival those found in Gloucester, little sister Cheltenham has other advantages. Walk beyond the commercial heart and you will come across the fashionable Montpellier District. Large caryatid figures grace a semi-circular building on Montpellier Walk, daring you to peruse its charming row of shops and cafés. Beyond there, an area known as The Suffolks has a more Cotswolds village-feel with quiet, period streets. It is so-called because the Earl of Suffolk acquired the land briefly in the early 19th century, leaving his name on several streets and the Suffolk Arms pub. The Daffodil Restaurant, meanwhile, is housed in an original 1920s Art Deco cinema and appeared in an episode of Benedict Cumberbatch’s *Sherlock* TV series.

On the other side of town – and the other end of the architectural spectrum – the grandest survival of the town’s many spa buildings is the Pump Room at Pittville. Bizarrely, it was built to rival Cheltenham’s own spa, and in the longevity it obviously succeeded. (Other survivals include Montpellier Baths on Bath Road – now The Playhouse Theatre – and the grander Sherborne Spa at what now is the Queens Hotel.) Dreamt up by banker Joseph Pitt in the 1820s, the imaginatively-named Pittville project cost £40,000 – a small fortune at the time. When he later ran into financial difficulty, it was sold for just £5,400 to the Borough of Cheltenham.

Having once hosted all manner of balls and royal receptions, the Pump Room’s doors are now open to the public, who can “take the waters” (bitter tasting though they may be) in the hopes of curing all their ills. Picnickers are also welcome in the park, which has its own lake and boathouse. The rest of the district, spotted with imposing Italianate villas and picturesque gardens, is enjoyable to wander through afterwards.

If you’re heading back into town, stop off at the Holst Birthplace Museum, a tribute to composer Gustav Holst who was born here in 1874. Alternatively, continue north to the 360-acre Cheltenham Racecourse and the bucolic views that stretch beyond its gleaming green tracks. There are 16 race days throughout the season, which runs from October until early May, with quieter events for the more discerning spectator being October’s The Showcase and The April Meeting.

If you prefer books to bookies, make a date with the Cheltenham Literary Festival, one of the oldest literary events in the world, having been established in 1949. The 10-day event welcomes esteemed speakers from across the world, including not only authors but philosophers and politicians too. Coinciding your trip with the next festival on 2-11 October 2020 will allow you to enjoy Cheltenham in its prime, particularly as the town’s motto, *Salubritas et Eruditio* – or “Health and Education” – puts just as much emphasis on its healthy credentials as it does its educational ones.

Indeed, experiencing these not-so-twin towns as they exist now, proudly distinctive and autonomous, may be more difficult in the future. Irrespective of their starkly contrasting personalities, rumour has it that a group of local “visionaries” are hoping to merge their rambling suburbs into one “super city” by 2050. Whether this comes to pass or not, the respective histories of Cheltenham and Gloucester are surely set in stone and will doggedly defy homogenisation. Like two posts supporting the gateway to the Cotswolds, they will forever be popular with tourists looking to complement a quaint village tour with a dose of docklands buzz or a cup of reviving spa waters.
Clockwise from this image: Pittville Pump Room; Cheltenham Racecourse; Neptune Fountain and the Promenade.
Martha Alexander takes a tour of the quaintest villages in the Cotswolds in search of the best places to stay throughout this delightful corner of England.
There are five beautiful bridges in Bourton-on-the-Water, under which the River Windrush flows. The oldest, Mill Bridge, dates back to 1654, while the newest, Coronation Bridge, was built in 1953. With this in mind, it’s easy to see why this idyllic Gloucestershire village has been dubbed “the Venice of the Cotswolds”.

But there’s more to it than this, including a delightful high street and some extraordinary buildings, including Bourton Manor, which is notable for its royal connections. King Charles I and his son were thought to have stayed here during the English Civil War in 1644; the royal household’s chaplain at that time was Thomas Temple, vicar of Bourton-on-the-Water.

While the manor isn’t open to the public, we recommend staying at the The Mousetrap, a traditional 18th-century inn: think low beams, open fires and delicious British grub. It is also the only pub in Britain with this name. Locals like to say Agatha Christie, the world’s best-selling author who also penned a play called The Mousetrap that has been running for almost 70 years in London, once visited this lovely little watering hole.

www.themousetrapinn.co.uk
**Painswick**

Painswick is technically a town, but its narrow streets and higgledy-piggledy cottages of pale tan stone speak to sleepy quaint villages rather than bustling hives of business. However, in the 15th century it was once a place famous for its wool trade and it was then that the high street was built. Here you’ll be able to have a peek at the country’s oldest bowling green. It is beautiful with a certain grandeur, which might be why it is known to many as “the queen of the Cotswolds”.

A must-see is Painswick Rococo Garden, the UK’s only complete surviving garden from that late baroque period. Originally designed in the 1740s, the garden was an overgrown wasteland by the 1980s, when work on its restoration began. It is now an oasis of frivolity: follies, ornate monuments and plenty of colour make this a landscape like no other. Croft House Guest Suites, right in the heart of Painswick, make for a fabulous place to stay. It is part of a handsome, beautifully maintained and decorated Georgian property but with independent access for guests.

www.crofthouseguestsuite.com

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**Slad**

Slad is one for bookworms, namely fans of Laurie Lee, whose much loved novel *Cider With Rosie* is set in and around this tiny village. Lee, who died in 1997, remains the focus of life in Slad. Visitors can have a pint at The Woolpack Inn, where Lee used to drink (his favourite seat is still there) and the writer is buried in the Holy Trinity Church, where a stained glass window commemorates him.

Peglars Barn is the choice place to stay in the village. One side of this private converted barn is floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking a most verdant of valleys. It’s isolated and hidden here – perfect for a romantic escape away from everything.

www.manorcottages.co.uk

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*STEF KIDD/ERIC CARTER/EYE35.PIX/ALAMY/TONY PLEAVIN/VISIT BRITAIN*

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*STEVE KYDD/ERIC CARTER/EYE35.PIX/ALAMY/TONY PLEAVIN/VISIT BRITAIN*
Bibury

Once declared to be the most beautiful village in England by none other than William Morris, Bibury is showing no signs of letting the lauded British Arts & Crafts designer down. This diminutive village straddles both banks of the River Colne and the pace of life is wonderfully slow here. Visitors can wander from tearoom to pub, or set off for a walk through the surrounding countryside.

Arlington Row, a terrace of ridiculously quaint cottages, is perhaps Bibury's biggest draw and is often cited as the most photographed attraction in the Cotswolds. They were initially built as a wool store in the 14th century before being converted to weavers' cottages in the 17th century. Number 9 Arlington Row is available to rent through the National Trust – it's cute, quaint and boasts a wood burner for cosy nights curled up with a good book.

The Swan Inn right on the river is the other place to stay in Bibury. A prettier hotel you'd be hard pushed to find anywhere in the Cotswolds or beyond. There's a boutique feel to the place; each room is individually designed while the food and service manages to be excellent without being ostentatious.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/holidays;
www.cotswold-inns-hotels.co.uk

Broadway

Shrouded by gently rolling hills and boasting a handsome high street, Broadway truly is the “jewel of the Cotswolds”. And there is much to recommend it, aside from an obvious beauty.

In years gone by the wide main road from Worcester to London passed through Broadway, giving the village its name. One of the main draws of the village is the Broadway Tower, a 65-foot structure that stands on an ancient beacon site. It was built in 1798 so that the Countess of Coventry could ensure that her Cotswolds seat could be seen from her Worcestershire estate, Croome Court. In fact, on a clear day, you can see up to 16 counties from the top of the Tower.

By the late 19th century, the tower had become a hub the Arts & Crafts movement, as it served as a retreat for the likes of Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris. Broadway remains a spot for antiques aficionados, with plenty of little shops bearing unusual fruits from yesteryear.

Another must-visit is Snowshill Manor, a three-storey Tudor house which can only be described as a vast cabinet of curiosities. Architect Charles Wade was something of a hoarder from the tender age of seven and he packed his former home to the rafters with all sorts of weird and wonderful objects – from bicycles and coats of armour to toys, masks and clocks.

The Crown & Trumpet Inn in the middle of the village offers heaps of tradition. The 17th-century property was built from Cotswold stone and it is what you might call “a proper pub”. Its five en-suite bedrooms upstairs mean you don't have to travel far when retiring for the evening.

www.crownandtrumpet.co.uk
Castle Combe

Not a single house has been built in the diminutive village of Castle Combe since the 17th century. Not only this, but there are no streetlights nor television aerials here, which goes some way to explain why it’s easy to feel you’ve travelled back in time when you arrive.

Castle Combe’s name refers to a Norman fort that is unfortunately no longer standing. The cottages are picturesque, as are the vistas that take in a verdant Wiltshire valley complete with the winding Bybrook River. In the heart of the village stands the Market Cross, a monument built in the 14th century when Castle Combe was given royal permission to hold a weekly market.

Also in the market place is The Castle Inn, a charming place to stay that dates all the way back to the 12th century – think four-poster beds, roaring fires and cream teas.

www.thecastleinn.co.uk

The Slaughters

Don’t let the name disconcert you: “Slaughter” is actually derived from the Old English “slough”, which means “muddy place”. There are two Slaughters, Lower and Upper, both of them equally pretty. They are joined by the River Eye and there’s only a mile between them.

The Old Mill in Lower Slaughter is steeped in history. The current structure was built in the 19th century, yet a mill on this very site was recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. Now a café and museum, it is well worth a visit thanks to the working mechanisms of the mill being on display.

Upper Slaughter is the sleepier of the two villages and one of very few British settlements known as a “Doubly Thankful Village” – no one from here died in either of the World Wars. Visitors should keep their eyes open for the almshouses, originally built in the medieval period but restored in the early 20th century by Edwin Lutyens, the architect who designed the Cenotaph in London. The result is charming. As such, the only way to stay here is in one of the many cosy cottage lets such as Thimble Mill, a homely honey-coloured stone building in Lower Slaughter.

www.luxurycotswoldholiday.co.uk
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Main image: Cotswold Way Valley from Barrow Wake Viewpoint

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