

Cotswolds Festive Discovery Tour

Trip style: Festive breaks

Destination: 📍 Cotswolds

Trip code: BTN04-HCX03



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Spend the Christmas period enjoying daily excursions that explore all the winter delights of the Cotswolds with our Festive Discovery Tour.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Admiring the festive lights of Blenheim Palace
- Taking a wander through Shakespeare's life in Stratford-upon-Avon
- Exploring the historic city of Oxford
- Staying in Grade II-listed Harrington House
- A celebration dinner with all the trimmings on Christmas Day and New Year's Eve

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided sightseeing with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

Please note - Entrance fees are not included. See more information tab for details.

TRIP SUITABILITY

Trip suitability

Our Discovery holidays give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of the local area through **active sightseeing**.

On each Discovery day, you will be walking throughout the course of the day as you explore the venues and locations we visit. You'll also be hopping on and off the coach throughout - you should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Most of this walking will be at attractions but some may be across country tracks or footpaths so be sure to **bring sturdy shoes**. There will also be stairs to climb in the majority of the venues you visit, though other more accessible options may be available. At some venues, there may also be uneven surfaces, such as cobbles or rocky paths.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Enjoy a warm welcome over afternoon tea from 4pm.

Day 2: Stratford upon Avon

At Stratford-upon-Avon, we can visit the houses associated with William Shakespeare and his family. Enjoy a gentle stroll along the river or enjoy the Christmas atmosphere in this picturesque town. You can also join our optional walking tour around the town.

Day 3: Christmas Day

In the morning, why not take a gentle countryside walk to a local village using one of our easy-to-follow self-guided walking routes. Alternatively, you may wish to attend a service at one of several churches in Bourton-on-the-Water. For those who prefer a more relaxed start to the day, there will be games and puzzles for you to enjoy with your fellow guests, before a light lunch. In the afternoon, you can watch our Christmas film played in the lounge or bar area, take time to stroll around the village, or simply relax. In the evening, there'll be a tasty Christmas dinner served with all the trimmings.

Day 4: Blenheim Palace & Oxford

We visit impressive Blenheim Palace, where there are themed displays and decorations throughout the rooms to get us into the Christmas spirit! Enjoy some of the extensive grounds before lunch, then head to Oxford for an optional walking tour of the city or take free time to just wander around this architectural and historical delight.

Day 5: Departure Day

Depart after a leisurely breakfast and a fabulous holiday.

Harrington House

You get the best of all worlds at this Grade II-listed retreat just a skip away from the heart of Bourton-on-the-Water – the impossibly pretty Cotswolds town with chocolate-box cottages, old-fashioned tearooms, and low-arched stone bridges that span the River Windrush. Not only will you be within walking distance of the Cotswold Motoring Museum, the Model Village, and Birdland Wildlife Park & Gardens, but it's an easy drive from village beauties Broadway and Bibury. For walkers and hikers, there's no shortage of thrills, especially for those keen to explore the well-trodden trails and paths around the Windrush Valley, Lower and Upper Slaughter, Gloucestershire Way, Cotswold Way, and Monarch Way.

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays walk leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on guided walking holiday arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's guided walks (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.