



CLOCKWISE FROM
ABOVE: Kiftsgate Court
Gardens, the creation of
three generations of
women gardeners;
spend a soothing day
at Calcot Spa

Petals, plates and Pilates
**A GUIDE TO
 THE COTSWOLDS**

From rural rambles to field-to-fork dining, take a slow route through one of England's prettiest areas with our guide to the top 20 things to see, taste, try or buy this season and beyond

HOMES AND GARDENS

You can spend hours wandering around the Cotswolds' collection of stunning gardens at historic homes. Rousham, for instance, was designed by William Kent in the 18th century and remains untouched since it was first designed. Kiftsgate Court Gardens is the creation of three generations of women gardeners and features rare plants and the oversized Kiftsgate rose.

Snowhill Manor and Garden, meanwhile, is the unconventional home of the eccentric Charles Wade and boasts a beautiful Arts and Crafts-style garden.

rousham.org; kiftsgate.co.uk;
nationaltrust.org.uk

SPA AND SHOP

With its scented gardens and outdoor pool, Calcot Spa, found at the historic Calcot

Manor in Tetbury, is just the spot for a day spent focusing on yourself, especially if you book one of the Proverb therapies, intended to help with stress relief and recovery. To continue the indulgent theme, why not head to the British tailoring brand, Moloh, also in Tetbury, for a spot of retail therapy? Its military-style jackets will have you marching in tune to the latest trends.

calcot.co; molah.com >





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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The neighbouring villages of Deddington and North Aston have risen to become foodie hotspots due to their organic farms, dairies and monthly farmers' market. Pop into Eagles Fine Food, an emporium that dates back to 1950, to stock up on locally-made produce – from artisan breads to Cotswolds lamb. The new Quince and Clover on the Square in Deddington is a petite deli and coffee shop. You'll find delicious handmade bakes and small-batch ice cream made by the North Cotswold Ice Cream Company (watch out for its pop-up van this summer). Meanwhile, grab a coffee while you discover the freshest organic meat, vegetables and dairy at the North Aston Dairy and Farm Shop, which has an ethos of supporting local producers. Also in North Aston is the Yurt at Nicholson's – the rustic restaurant has been awarded an AA Rosette for its menu featuring seasonal ingredients, most grown in its own Yurt Kitchen Garden.

eaglesfinefood.co.uk; quinceandclover.co.uk; thenorthcotswoldicecreamcompany.co.uk; northastonfarmshop.co.uk; nicholsonsgb.com

COTSWOLDS COOK OFF

Book in for a cookery class at Thyme in Southrop (known for its beautiful boutique rooms, cottages, spa and pristine gardens) and you'll learn all about how to create inventive dishes to impress. Whether you are a novice or a pro, all classes celebrate the area's ingredients.

thyme.co.uk

SOULFUL STRETCHING

Newly opened fitness studio Chloe's Pilates is all about holistic wellbeing. Run by Chloe Hodgson, the charming space offers yoga, barre and Pilates classes, as well as retreats and sound healing sessions, all designed to make you feel balanced.

chloespilates.com

DELICIOUSLY DAYLESFORD

Perhaps one of the most famous addresses in the Cotswolds is Daylesford Farm, near Kingham. It was one of the first brands to set the blueprint for sustainable living and champion artisanal craftsmanship. You can spend hours browsing in the farm shop, but don't miss the Green Michelin-starred café and its award-winning plates. daylesford.com

DON'T HOG THE BED

Found in an archetypal Cotswolds' honey-stone property, The Pig in the Cotswolds not only offers the cosiest place to stay, but its menus tell a story of the landscape around it. Found in the pretty village of Barnsley, the hotel is carved out of a Grade-II listed, 17th-century house, with gardens designed by renowned gardener Rosemary Verey. Celebrating the best British produce, you can sample dishes such as Garden Leek Risotto, Dorset Blue Vinny and King Oyster Mushrooms or Thornback Ray Wing, Pickled Chard and Parsley Brown Butter Sauce.

thepighotel.com

BRANCHING OUT

Immerse yourself in nature with a stay at Treedwellers at Cornbury. These fun, architect-designed tree houses are sustainably built within the canopy of ancient woodland, so you'll wake up to the sound of birdsong and serene forest views. While there, explore the picturesque trails across Cornbury Park and pop into one of the characterful pubs – such as The Bell at Charlbury, which dates back to the 17th century, or beautiful gastro pub The Bull, which has been in existence since 1500.

treedwellers.co.uk; thebellatcharlbury.com; thebullcharlbury.com

PURPLE HAZE

Reopening in June, Cotswold Lavender is like a tiny slice of Provence. Visit in July when the lavender fields are at their best – heady with scent and all shades of purple. Stretching across 45 acres, you can picnic in the fields, visit the distillery to see lavender oil extracted for the farm's products and amble through wildflower meadows.

cotswoldlavender.co.uk

BARKS AND BITES

Set in the Gloucestershire countryside, the Fox at Oddington may look stylishly curated, but it remains a solid village pub at the heart of the community. Perfect for a post dog-walk or overnight stay, you can settle down with a pint next to a crackling log fire and order from a menu that uses produce from the inn's sister farms at Daylesford Organic and Wootton.

thefoxatoddington.com >



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: Be sure to have a browse in Daylesford's extensive farm shop; try a cookery class at Thyme; the beautiful surrounds of The Pig in the Cotswolds; live the high life at Treedwellers at Cornbury; find your inner balance at Chloe's Pilates; the historic Bell at Charlbury dates back to the 17th century; the Yurt at Nicholson's has been awarded an AA Rosette





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: Cotswold Lavender bursts into bloom; stay in a treehouse at The Fish; enjoy a great night's sleep at the Fox at Oddington; Painswick Rococo Garden is famous for its fantastical architecture; pop into Penelope Chilvers in Stow-on-the-Wold; this way to one of England's prettiest regions **OPPOSITE:** Enjoy the views at Lakes by Yoo



VILLAGE LIFE

Known as the gateway to the Cotswolds, the town of Burford is a quintessential Cotswolds village. With its steep high street, honey-coloured shops and historic pubs, this is the perfect place to browse for antiques and locally-crafted items. Worth seeing is the 12th-century Church of St John the Baptist and the nearby Burford Garden Centre, a family-owned store selling plants and seeds, homewares, outdoor accessories and contemporary art. burford.co.uk

LIGHTS OF BROADWAY

With its independent stores and 18th-century buildings, the village of Broadway has perhaps one of the most charming high streets in the UK. As well as art galleries and a shop by Susie Watson Designs (featuring pottery, delicate linens and fine art), there is also a new boutique hotel, the House of George W Davies, found in a restored 17th-century building. For ramblers, Broadway is also a pitstop on the epic 102-mile Cotswold Way National Trail. susiewatsondesigns.co.uk; houseofgeorge.uk; nationaltrail.co.uk

INDEPENDENT SPIRIT

Perched on an 800-foot hill, Stow-on-the-Wold is the highest town in the Cotswolds and oozes the sort of charm that makes Hollywood directors swoon. It has many independent shops, such as Penelope Chilvers' fashion and footwear store, and Scotts of Stow for homeware. It's also home to one of England's oldest inns, The Porch House, and Medieval St Edward's Church, with its ancient yew 'Tolkien door'. penelopechilvers.com; scottsofstow.co.uk; porch-house.co.uk

ON THE WATERFRONT

Found in a 850-acre estate in the Cotswolds, The Lakes by Yoo offers a collection of luxurious homes, holiday apartments and even a hotel for a lakeside stay set in wild nature. With 11 lakes and an abundance of activities, choices include canoeing on the water, cycling the trails or time in the spa. Best of all is the serene setting that is brimming with biodiversity. thelakesbyyoo.com



COMFORT EATING

Gourmet travellers will be spoilt for choice in the historic village of Clanfield. The 17th-century Double Red Duke has an atmospheric dining room with exposed beams and original fireplaces. Highlights are the dishes cooked over embers, such as Woodfired Celeriac and Aged Delica Pumpkin Pie. For more of a low-key foodie haunt, pop into Blake's Kitchen, set in a working post office. The café and bakery serves artisan breads, cakes, brunch and lunch. countrycreatures.com/double-red-duke; blakeskitchen.com

FLAMING HOT

Tapping into the open-fire cookery trend, Pit Kitchen in Moreton-in-Marsh offers Middle Eastern-inspired flavours wrapped up in street food dishes (think Sweetcorn and Green Chilli Fritters and Persian Chicken Shawarmas). Expect a laid-back vibe in an open-air setting. pitkitchen.co.uk

FAMILY FUN

At Dormy House and its sister The Fish Hotel in Broadway, not only will adults love the warm welcome and chic décor – all flagstone floors and quirky details – but both are intrinsically family-friendly. Stay in a treehouse or Hilly Hut at The Fish, or Farmhouse Suite at Dormy House. dormyhouse.co.uk; thefishhotel.co.uk

QUEEN OF HEARTS

Known as the 'Queen of the Cotswolds', the quaint town of Painswick has winding streets with golden stone cottages, shops and inns. Discover Painswick Rococo Garden nearby, in a hidden valley. Dating back to 1740, it's famous for its winter snowdrops and fantastical architecture. rococogarden.org.uk

DOWN ON THE FARM

Owned by Jeremy Clarkson, Diddly Squat Farm Shop is perhaps the UK's most famous such store. As well as Clarkson's own Hawkstone beer, there's Cow Juice Vodka and Bee Juice Rum for sale, as well as homemade jams, chutneys and oils. A café sells burgers and beer, and there's also a Clarkson x Emma Bridgewater collection of mugs – an unlikely collaboration that's lots of fun. diddlysquatchfarmshop.com

TRADITION AND TWEED

Taking place from 10-13 March 2026, the Cheltenham Festival at Cheltenham Racecourse is a must on the horse-racing calendar and features four days of world-class sportsmanship. Also in Cheltenham – and keeping with British tradition – is the Holland Cooper store, which is known for its contemporary take on tweed clothing. thejockeyclub.co.uk; hollandcooper.com wf