

Foot Trails®
Crafted hikes. English soul.

Discover Self-Guided Hiking Tours of England



Explore the collection

→ The Howell Way
→ The Cotswolds

→ Land of Kings
→ Coastal Hikes

→ Heritage & Gardens
→ Family Groups



Welcome

In 2002, we created Foot Trails with a simple ambition - to share our way of exploring in our beautiful little corner of the world.

Hiking, walking, wandering the landscape brings connection to ourselves, to stories, to each other. It is a quiet power; the healing rhythm of a footpath, feeling the way nature restores something in us. We call this 'The Howell Way'.

In the following pages each hiking experience is an invitation to come and explore, unwind and reconnect, hiking the local paths and byways of South West England. A region of diverse landscapes and a wealth of human stories that span 6000 years. It's our home and the most special place.

We hope you find inspiration and accept the invitation to explore in 2027.

Warm regards,

Alison & David Howell



Featured itineraries



Complete Cotswolds

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Kings & Kingdoms

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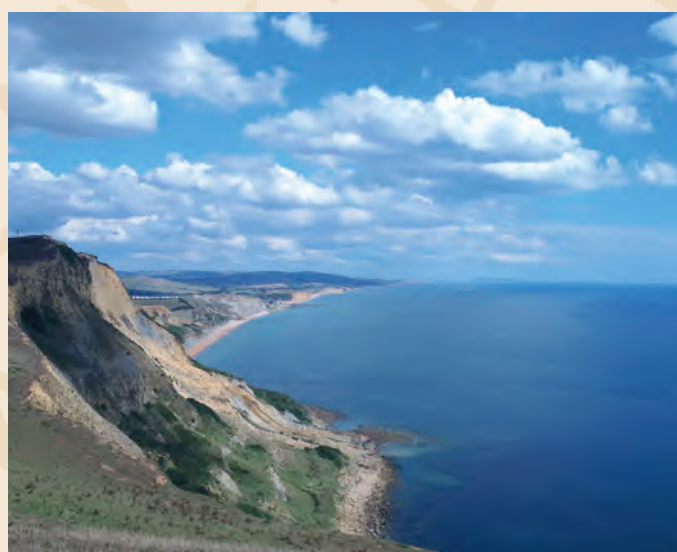
Country Gardens

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“The South West of England offers a wide variety of unique landscapes and experiences for you to return year after year.”

– Alison Howell



“We believe that rural South West England deserves to be seen - not for crowds & landmarks - but through landscapes, hedgerows, history and the stories of those that live(d) here, past & present.”

– Alison & David Howell

The Howell Way

Our way of hiking & walking. Our way of caring.

It all began with a walk. A 680-mile journey from the English Channel to the Mediterranean coast. Combining Alison & David's two passions: the curiosity of discovery and the joy of hiking & walking.

Determined to change the way hiking was viewed (in 2002), an image of distance, of A-to-B goals with basic accommodation, Alison & David set out to create walking & hiking tours that reflected their beliefs. We call this the 'Howell Way'.

We believe that there is a quiet power in walking and in the healing rhythm of a footpath. In the way nature restores something in us. We show our guests rural South West England as we know it. Not the crowds or tick-box landmarks, but the landscapes, hedgerows and history. The stories of those that live here, past & present.

Our routes are designed with purpose. Not to just get you somewhere, but for you to be somewhere. To be connected to landscapes, to stories and to each other. Making sure, at all times, you feel seen and looked after.



Principles of the Howell Way

- **We avoid the crowds.**
A to B National Trails are not our routes. We seek the quiet ways - the ones you'd never find on your own.
- **We choose beauty over convenience.**
Our paths are picked for joy, rhythm and peace - not just practicality.
- **We tell stories as we walk.**
Every route carries its own history, folklore and meaning - shared through our printed trail guides, so guests can read, pause and notice as they go.
- **We walk towards a welcome.**
Each trail leads to a warm welcome, a good meal, and a room where you'll feel at home.
- **We use local knowledge not guidebooks**
Our hikes are built on lived experience - from years of hiking, talking and listening to those who know the land best.
- **We hike without screens**
No apps, no tech. Just printed trail guides (step-by-step instructions), proper waterproof maps and the world in front of you.
- **We take care of the details**
Every trip includes a personalised itinerary with all the details taken care of, luggage transfers, refreshment stops and more, so you can hike care-free.



Self-guided hiking trips

Self-guided hiking & walking is for individuals, couples, friends & family groups who enjoy exploring on their own terms. The rhythm of a hiking & walking trip offers the perfect balance of achievement, curiosity and relaxation.

We've been crafting bespoke hiking journeys here in South West England for over 2 decades. Its unique character, landscapes, pretty villages and history make it the perfect place to explore on foot.

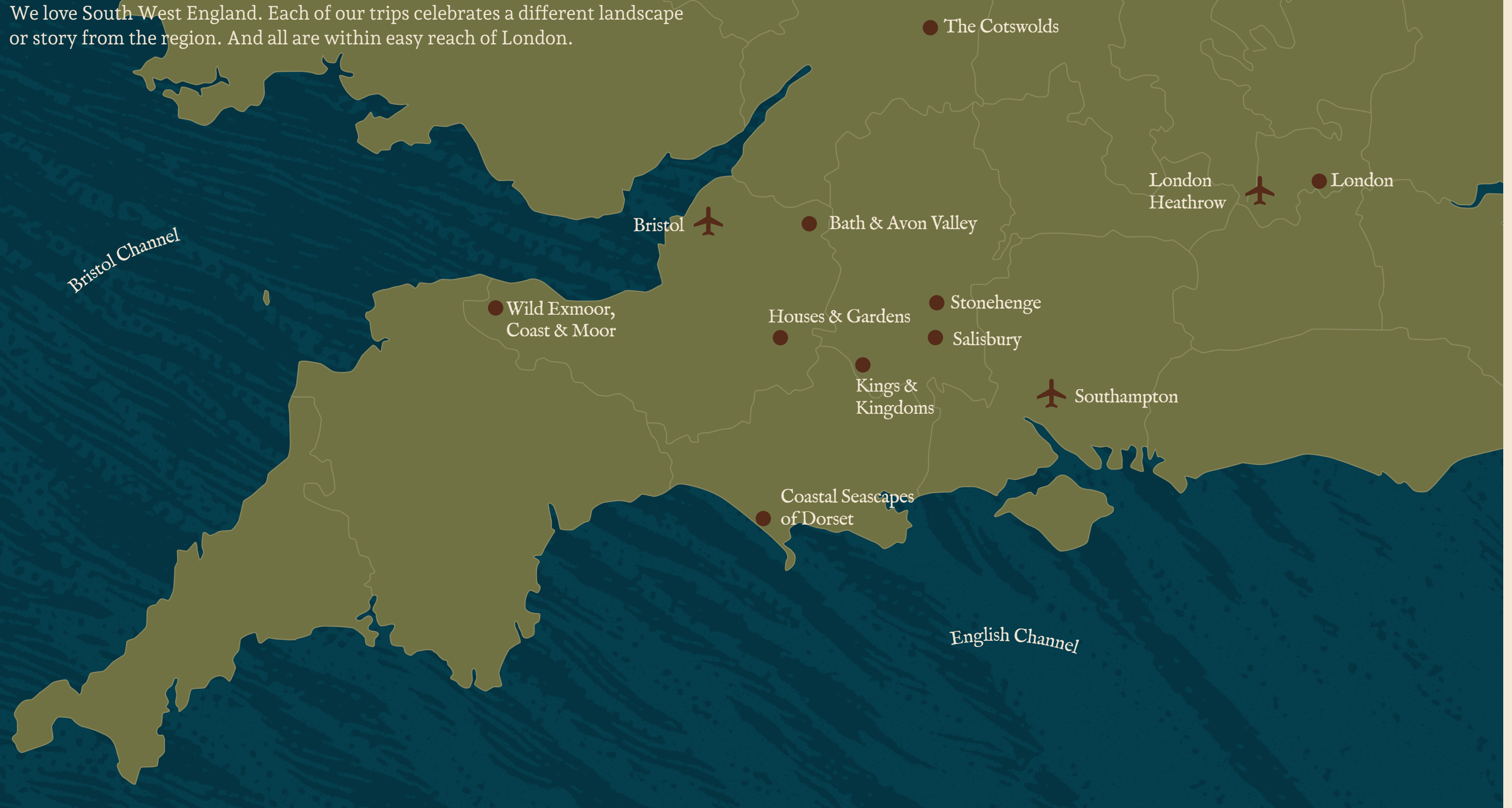
From the top of The Cotswolds to the south coast, west to the border of Devon, and all in between, there's a wealth of different landscapes and stories to explore.

We hike without screens – no apps, no tech. Just printed trail guides (step-by-step instructions), proper waterproof maps and the world in front of you.



Our trips in South West England

We love South West England. Each of our trips celebrates a different landscape or story from the region. And all are within easy reach of London.



The Cotswolds

Alison and David Howell's families have a long history in The Cotswolds; several of Alison's family still farm the land, and David grew up here. Needless to say we have a huge passion for the area.

With our intimate local knowledge we would love to show you everything that is wonderful about the Cotswolds. Pretty villages with charming cottages, ancient market towns and medieval churches, amongst the rolling pastoral landscape.

We have designed walking trips to take you off the beaten track, away from the crowds where you can discover villages and views that are quiet and little known.

Explore these example itineraries

- **The Complete Cotswolds**
10 to 14 night trips
- **Journey Across The Cotswolds**
7 to 9 night trips
- **Taste of the Cotswolds**
4 to 6 night trips
- **Explore The Cotswolds & Bath**
6 to 12 night trips



The Complete Cotswolds

The Complete Cotswolds leads you on an adventure from timeless Chipping Campden to the Georgian splendour of Bath. To set out with a destination in mind but not know the twists and turns along the way is a magical experience.

Alison & David Howell have crafted this journey to explore away from the beaten path of The Cotswolds Way, so you soak up crowd-free villages and scenery.

Pretty cottages & villages aplenty, ancient market towns to explore, gardens formal and informal; dabble in the Roman story and explore woollen mills. This is a deep exploration of all things Cotswolds.

Your destination: the stunning country city of Bath. Famed for its Georgian architecture, it is beautifully nestled amongst wooded hills and beside the River Avon. It's the perfect cosmopolitan end to your trip.

At a glance

- Inn to Inn journey
- Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire & Avon
- 10 to 12 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

**From £2950 per person
(10 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive & soak up Cotswolds village life [**2½ mile trail**]
- **Day 2** - Markets, Canterbury Tales & gardens [**10 mile trail**]
- **Day 3** - All roads go via Stow-on-the-Wold, classic Cotswolds [**12 mile trail**]
- **Day 4** - England's best preserved Jacobean manor house [**9½ mile trail**]
- **Day 5** - Arrive in the spiritual heart of The Cotswolds & its 'cathedral' [**10½ mile trail**]
- **Day 6** - Tread in Roman footsteps & explore a 3rd century villa [**7½ mile trail**]
- **Day 7** - Quiet valleys & hidden manor houses & gardens [**9 mile trail**]
- **Day 8** - Wander canals and explore the industrial story [**10½ mile trail**]
- **Day 9** - Arrive on foot to the city of Bath [**9 mile trail**]
- **Day 10** - Explore the story of Bath [**3½ mile trail**]
- **Day 11** - Depart with memories made

Your accommodation

The Complete Cotswolds trip includes stays in centuries-old country inns & pubs in small villages. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include a 16th century cider house, a rambling 15th century coaching inn, flagstone bars, conservatory restaurants, and village pubs with a local atmosphere.



Journey Across The Cotswolds

Take a wandering Journey Across The Cotswolds to really discover the story and beauty of this area. David grew up here, beneath the Cotswolds Hills and created this trail to celebrate a favoured journey over the rolling wolds to the edge of The Cotswolds Hills and the huge views they offer.

Starting either on the eastern edge of The Cotswolds, or in the classic heart of The Cotswolds, you can enjoy walks amongst pretty pastoral landscapes that were at the heart of the medieval wool industry. Enjoy charming villages, pretty cottages and amazing histories.

Pause in the market towns that once traded in 'golden' fleeces, before finding yourself standing on the edge of The Cotswolds, the view before you. Descend the hill to the town below, founded in the 8th century and once the capital of Saxon Mercia.

At a glance

- Inn to Inn journey
- Oxfordshire & Gloucestershire
- 6, 7 & 8 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

**From £1600 per person
(6 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive & soak up Cotswolds village life [**2 mile trail**]
- **Day 2** - Medieval market town and riverside walk [**8 mile trail**]
- **Day 3** - Time-warped manor house, rose garden and tales of Jane Austen. [**9 mile trail**]
- **Day 4** - Cotswolds' highest and largest market town, Stow-on-the-Wold [**10 mile trail**]
- **Day 5** - Arrive in the spiritual heart of The Cotswolds & its 'cathedral' [**10½ mile trail**]
- **Day 6** - Tread in Roman footsteps & explore a 3rd century villa [**7½ mile trail**]
- **Day 7** - Stand on top of the Cotswolds escarpment for the view! [**10 mile trail**]
- **Day 8** - The town and its 'Royal' castle, wander the halls & gardens [**8 mile trail**]
- **Day 9** - Depart with memories made

Your accommodation

The Journey Across The Cotswolds trip includes stays in centuries-old country inns & pubs in small villages. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include a rambling 15th century coaching house, ancient wooden beams and Cotswold stone village pubs with a local atmosphere.



Taste of The Cotswolds

The ‘Taste of The Cotswolds’ is a short Cotswolds adventure crafted from our other Cotswolds trips to give you a little taste of the area based on your wishes.

You could, for example, explore classic Cotswolds country and the iconic market towns, hike & walk off the beaten path through hidden gems and character villages, dwell & dabble with hikes that tell the tale of the Romans. Stay in several of our selected country inns, or stay in just one and use it as a base for your hikes.

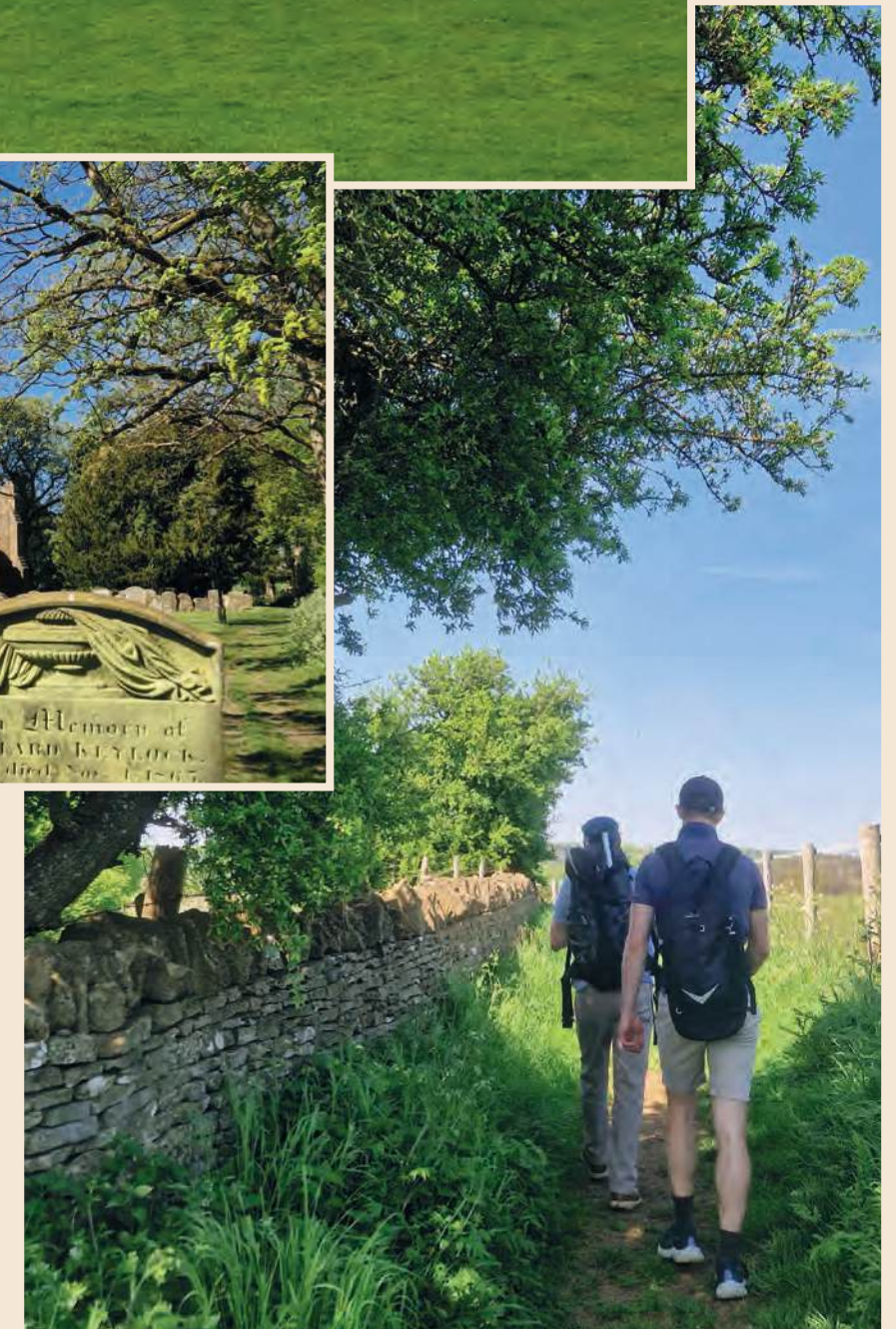
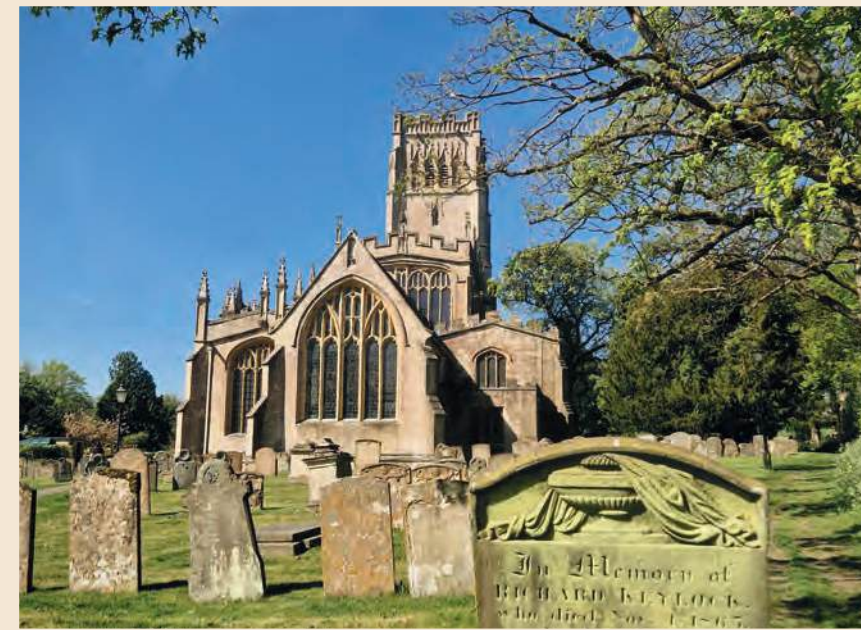
Alison & David have spent a lifetime living and visiting The Cotswolds, let them guide you to the best Cotswolds experience for a short stay.

At a glance

- Inn to Inn journey or stay in one place
- Oxfordshire & Gloucestershire
- 4 or 5 night stays suggested
- Screen-free walk & explore pack
- Luggage transfers included

**From £1200 per person
(4 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)



Explore Bath & The Cotswolds

This 'explore' style trip slows the pace a little with fewer changes of inns, allowing a little more holiday / vacation and a little less hurry. You will still have a carefully created walk to enjoy everyday, and lots of sites to visit too.

Start your trip by arriving at the city of Bath, a country city at heart, surrounded by wooded hills and the River Avon meandering through. Your walks and hikes will lead you through the green countryside that surrounds the city, uncovering pretty villages, stories and a rich history. Highlights include landscaped gardens and tucked-away gems in Bath.

A chauffeured car (included) will transfer you across the flatter plain of the south to an ancient market town founded by the Romans, with a short walk into the town.

As you explore further into the countryside of The Cotswolds, you will explore a Roman Villa, charming villages, the beautiful 'Slaughters', Stow-on-the-Wold and Chipping Campden.

At a glance

- Explore style
- Avon & Gloucestershire
- 7 or 9 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included

From £2170 per person
(7 nights)

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive and soak up a little cosmopolitan Bath [**3½ mile trail**]
- **Day 2** - The river valley, 18th century canal and hilltop views over Bath [**8 mile trail**]
- **Day 3** - Green valleys, Prior Park Landscape Garden and the hidden city [**8 mile trail**]
- **Day 4** - Transfer to the country, pause to walk in Cirencester and its great park [**5 mile trail**]
- **Day 5** - Tread in Roman footsteps & explore a 3rd century villa [**6 mile trail**]
- **Day 6** - The character Cotswolds villages of The Slaughters beside a peaceful river [**9½ mile trail**]
- **Day 7** - The bustle of Stow-on-the-Wold, shops, cafes & history, and classic country scenes! [**6 mile trail**]
- **Day 8** - Blissful Chipping Campden, Arts & Crafts tales and Hidcote Gardens [**8 mile trail**]
- **Day 9** - The gardens, explore 2 gardens and an arboretum in one walk! [**6 mile trail**]
- **Day 10** - Depart with memories made

Your accommodation

The Explore Bath & The Cotswolds trip includes stays in character country inns and a town house hotel. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include a 17th century Cotswolds coaching inn and an 18th century Georgian town house hotel.



Land of Kings

All our Foot Trails' journeys include beautiful landscapes. The South West of England is wonderfully varied, but Wiltshire, Dorset & Somerset will always be dear to us.

Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset are three counties of South West England where you can soak up diverse landscapes, tread in the footsteps of ancient kings and be inspired.

Ancient farmland, summits with 360° views, chalk grasslands clothed in wildflowers, lush and green river valleys, spring-time bluebell woods, all mixed with human stories - from the ancient stones of Stonehenge, through humble thatched cottages, to tales of the mythical (maybe) King Arthur. Wow!

This is where Foot Trails was born and it still inspires Alison & David today.

Explore these example itineraries

- **Kings & Kingdoms**
6 to 12 nights
- **King Arthur's Trail**
6 nights
- **Thomas Hardy's Dorset**
4 to 6 nights
- **Stonehenge & Salisbury**
+ 2 night extension



Kings & Kingdoms

Alison & David spent a decade living and exploring here, the landscapes and stories were the inspiration for Foot Trails. The Kings & Kingdoms trail is a celebration of that time.

Wonderfully crowd-free, you can enjoy a wide variety of landscapes over just a few days. Not forgetting some of the most charming villages in South West England (it's home, we're biased!).

Starting in the lush river valleys to the west of Salisbury, the villages and thatched cottages here have a distinctly medieval feel. It's beautifully refreshing and great for wildflowers too.

From the valley you climb the chalk downs that fringe north Dorset. A 'National Landscape' and 'Dark Skies' reserve, the Cranborne Chase has beauty and peace.

Next you descend into the Blackmore Vale with its rich grazing grounds, wandering rivers and patchwork of fields and hedgerows. Saxon Wessex, Kings & Kingdoms were forged here. Onward it's one more step down to Somerset, land of the summer people, and cider mystique.

At a glance

- Inn to inn trip
- Wiltshire, Dorset & Somerset
- 10 or 11 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

**From £2910 per person
(10 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive & go for a short walk to get the lie of the land. [4.5 mile trail]
- **Day 2** - Moss-covered thatched cottages & views over the vale. [10 mile trail]
- **Day 3** - A country idyll, lakes, long-gone follies and the great barn. [9 mile trail]
- **Day 4** - The most romantic castle ruin, and its neoclassical neighbour. [9.5 mile trail]
- **Day 5** - Leaving the river valleys for the high ground, sweeping views. [12 mile trail]
- **Day 6** - Thatched Dorset cottages and views that inspired Thomas Hardy. [10 mile trail]
- **Day 7** - Slow day in the Saxon hilltop town of Shaftesbury & its famous Gold Hill. [3.5 mile trail]
- **Day 8** - Down by the river, mills, cottages, watery scenes and ancient market town. [9.5 mile trail]
- **Day 9** - Archaeological delights, iron-age & Roman forts, barrows & nature reserves. [7 mile trail]
- **Day 10** - Two castles, a deer park, a country town, an abbey & Alfred the Great's ancestors. [8.5 mile trail]
- **Day 11** - Views of Somerset & the Yeo valley, an ancient hill fort that could be Camelot? [7.5 mile trail]
- **Day 12** - Depart with memories made.

Your accommodation

The Kings & Kingdoms trip includes stays in centuries-old country inns & pubs in small villages. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include a 14th century coaching house, character thatched buildings and village pubs with a local atmosphere.



King Arthur's Trail

The legend of King Arthur is a story that has resonated through time. Gallant knights & quests, wizards & dragons, a love story & betrayal, it's a tale that has a little of everything!

On King Arthur's Trail, you will explore the landscape that has inspired these stories and legends. Along the way, you'll stand atop an ancient hill fort, rumoured to be Camelot. You'll journey across the Somerset Levels to the famous Tor and ruined Abbey at Glastonbury, a place that some claim to be Arthur's resting spot.

Pretty villages and ancient churches, country views, apple orchards & cider farms, Elizabethan houses and gardens all complete the scene. The area resounds with mystique and legend, or maybe it's just the vintage cider(!). Either way, this is a trail that's big on story.

At a glance

- Inn to inn trip
- Somerset
- 6 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

From £1790 per person
(6 nights)

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive & take a walk to the beacon for a 360° view [1.5 mile trail]
- **Day 2** - An ancient hill fort, is this Camelot? Stories of knights, legends and ghosts along the way. [7.5 mile trail]
- **Day 3** - Somer town, Somer people, the very essence of Somerset. Did Arthur set foot here? [10.5 mile trail]
- **Day 4** - Take a pilgrimage to Glastonbury. The legendary burial place of King Arthur. [6 mile trail + Glastonbury]
- **Day 5** - The mysterious Somerset Levels. Pass characterful cottages and cider orchards. Time for a taste! [9 mile trail]
- **Day 6** - Beautiful stone cottages, majestic churches, and delights of Elizabethan Montacute House. [6 mile trail + gardens]
- **Day 7** - Depart with memories made.

Your accommodation

The King Arthur's Trail trip includes stays in delightful country inns & pubs in small villages. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include a thatched inn that dates back to 1680 and a 19th century lodge, all with a local atmosphere.



Thomas Hardy's Dorset

Dorset has a timeless feel, captured in Thomas Hardy's writings, many of the scenes and views are still evident. Whilst there are few happy endings in his books, Hardy's love of the South West and sense of place is evident in his novels.

This trail explores North Dorset and Tess of the d'Urbervilles country. Amongst the Blackmore Vale are the villages of where Tess spent her younger years, views of the hilltop town of Shaftesbury above.

Shaftesbury, Shaston in the novel, is the bridge between the farms of the green valley and the sculptured hills of the 'Chase', the domain of the big landed estates and the gentry.

Your trail leads onto the 'Chase', an ancient Royal hunt, it's a land of sweeping chalk downs with a sense of the remote. On your walks, you will enjoy a wonderful variety, from rivers and mills, sweeping chalk downs, the small and the high up, with 360° views to enjoy.

At a glance

- Inn to inn trip
- North Dorset
- 6 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

**From £1650 per person
(6 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

Stonehenge & Salisbury

Complete your visit to South West England with a 2 night stay exploring the ancient wonders of Stonehenge & Avebury and the medieval grandeur of Salisbury Cathedral.

Our Foot Trails trips all connect easily to Salisbury, which also has direct travel connections to London.

Salisbury has a distinctly medieval feel, still dominated today by its 13th century cathedral & spire, an architectural masterpiece. The surrounding Cathedral Close and green is crammed full of interesting buildings and stories.

From Salisbury you can easily explore Stonehenge, either independently or with our own private guide who can also take you a little further afield to Avebury, the largest megalithic stone circle in the world.

At a glance

- Itinerary add on
- Wiltshire
- 2 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Independent or guided

**From £570 per person
(independent, 2 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

Coastal Hikes

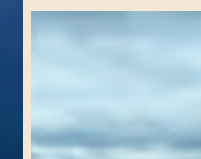
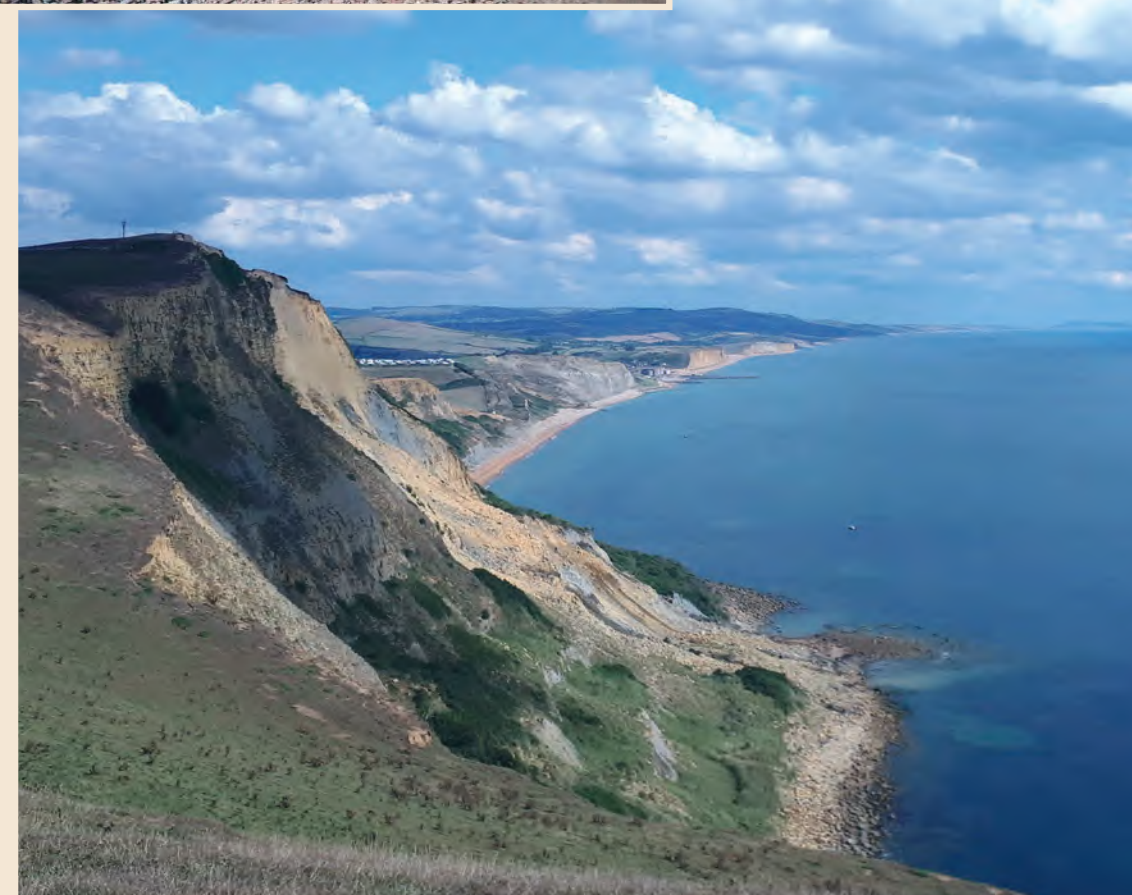
Walking by the coast and water is one of those special uplifting experiences. Views over water are uniquely calming, the movement and light always changing, the sea air on the breeze.

South West England offers wonderfully diverse coastal hiking, from the rolling green countryside and golden cliffs of Dorset to the beautifully rugged coastline of Exmoor with its pebble beaches, steep-sided river valleys and open wild moor.

Alison and David have personally created these coastal trips to weave in the story of each area, giving you both landscapes and coast, distant views to the sea and the drama of being where the land meets the sea.

Explore these example itineraries

- **Coastal Seascapes of Dorset**
8, 9 or 11 nights
- **Taste of the Jurassic Coast (Dorset)**
4 or 5 nights
- **Wild Exmoor, Coast & Moor**
6 or 7 nights



Coastal Seascapes of Dorset

The Dorset Coast, a natural landscape that’s a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is famed world wide for its geology & fossils. Alison & David have explored this area for over 3 decades, a favoured escape with their children.

Dorset is where the rolling green landscape meets the coast. With little modern development, it offers inspiring hiking, and views upon views.

The trail starts towards the west end of Lyme Bay, first mentioned in a Saxon charter of the 8th century, it is today known as the gateway to the Jurassic Coast and the centre of fossil hunting. From here your trail will lead you eastward towards the ‘Purbecks’, an area with over 6000 years of human stories.

Along the way all the ingredients of a Foot Trail; charming Dorset villages with that feeling of being a million miles from anywhere, clear running streams and ancient mills, old hill forts that tell of a much earlier time, the barrier beach of Chesil and the icons of Durdle Door & Lulworth cove.

At a glance

- Inn to inn trip
- Dorset
- 8, 9 or 11 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

From £2760 per person
(8 nights)

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here’s an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive, explore the seafront and legendary harbour. [2.5 mile trail]
- **Day 2** - Out on the coast path, what makes this the ‘Jurassic’ Coast (fossils). [8 mile trail]
- **Day 3** - The highest seacliff on the south coast. Big views and tucked away hamlets. [8 mile trail]
- **Day 4** - Sunken holloways, ancient smugglers routes and mythical tales of the Greeks. [8 mile trail]
- **Day 5** - The ancient ridgeway, views of the coast from afar and a character market town. [9 mile trail]
- **Day 6** - Very fine manor house with a hidden garden. Secret valleys and lushness. [8 mile trail]
- **Day 7** - Tack back to the coast, old rural churches & farms, over the last hill rise to the beach. [8.5 mile trail]
- **Day 8** - The best view in Dorset? Views of the full sweep of Lyme Bay, and the iconic chapel on the hill. [11.5 mile trail]
- **Day 9** - Hidden valleys, character villages, a dramatic hill fort. Transfer to Lulworth. [9 mile trail]
- **Day 10** - Sunrise walk to Durdle Door & Lulworth. Breakfast at the cove. On to the dramatic stronghold of Corfe Castle. [4.5 mile trail + 2.5 mile trail]
- **Day 11** - Marble mines, dramatic cliffs, St Aldhelm’s lookout, walk into the view before you. [11 mile trail]
- **Day 12** - Depart with memories made.

Your accommodation

The Coastal Seascapes of Dorset includes stays in coastal hotels with sea views. Enjoy fine dining and walking on the beach when everyone else has gone home. Stays include a Georgian dower house on a cliff, an Edwardian-feeling beachside hotel and a pub where smugglers once drank.



Taste of The Jurassic Coast (Dorset)

The ‘Taste of The Jurassic Coast’ is a short coastal adventure crafted from our other Coastal Seascapes of Dorset trip to give you a little taste of the area based on your wishes.

You could, for example, combine beachside stays and evening beach strolls, with coastal walks by day. Or enjoy a more historical experience, with ridgeway walks, hill forts and sea views. Or soak up a quintessential seaside resort with stories of fishing, ship building and fossil hunting.

Stay in several of our selected coastal inns, or stay in just one and use it as a base for your hikes.

Alison & David have spent time here with their young family and several of the inns have family bedroom options. Let them guide you to the best Dorset Coast experience for a short stay.

At a glance

- Inn to Inn journey or stay in one place
- Dorset Coast
- 4 or 5 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

**From £1460 per person
(4 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)



Wild Exmoor, Coast & Moor

It's easy to feel that you have to travel further afield to find 'wild' landscapes, but South West England boasts the evocative and inspiring landscape of Exmoor.

Exmoor is a unique landscape of stone, tumbling rivers, prehistoric-feeling woods and open heather-clad moors. It was England's first National Park.

This trail starts deep in the heart of the National Park beside a centuries-old river crossing where woods, tumbling water and peacefulness greet you.

The open moor is home to roaming ponies and deer. Tens of thousands of years of human history is etched into the land too. Standing stones, cairns and burial mounds all add to the moody character of the scene.

Shadowing rivers and crossing the moor, you arrive at the coast where you'll explore coastal scenery with sensational views over the Severn Estuary. There are wooded cliffs, wild moors of heather, salty marshes & small harbour communities, once hubs for trade along this coastal inlet.

At a glance

- Inn to Inn journey
- Somerset (& a little Devon)
- 6 or 7 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

**From £1710 per person
(6 nights)**

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive in wild Exmoor, tumbling water and the sound of birdsong. **[2 mile trail]**
- **Day 2** - Glimpse moor & river on the way to an old market town, a sense of community life in the midst of the wild. **[7 mile trail]**
- **Day 3** - Cross the clapper steps, where a river cuts through the moor, evocative views, old stones and lost castles. **[12 mile trail]**
- **Day 4** - Strike out for the coast. Cross the moor; a fast-flowing river in a rocky ravine, the mouth of the river opens to the Severn sea. **[11 mile trail]**
- **Day 5** - The highest point in Somerset and a view like no other. The only way is down, all the way to the harbour. **[8.5 mile trail]**
- **Day 6** - Charming villages, wooded combs, abandoned coastguard lookouts and the wide coast; cross the bay & a salt marsh. **[8.5 mile trail]**
- **Day 7** - Depart with memories made.

Your accommodation

The Wild Exmoor, Coast & Moor trail includes stays in delightful country inns & pubs in rural locations. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include an inn that dates back to the 1600's, a purpose built hunting lodge and harbour side hotel.



Heritage & Gardens

The South West of England is a treasure trove of history. Since our ancestors embraced farming some 6000 years ago, the landscape has been influenced by our hand.

From iconic structures like Stonehenge and Salisbury cathedral to the more ordinary such as old field systems and rural cottages. With all periods of history reflected in the landscape, there is much to explore and uncover.

These trails include walking & hiking in areas rich in heritage and culture. Your Foot Trail's trail cards, authored by Alison & David, include stories and histories to help bring each of your days to life and to give you a sense of discovery along the way.

Explore these example itineraries

- **Country Houses & Gardens**
6 to 12 nights
- **Bath & The Avon Valley**
4 to 7 nights



Country Houses & Gardens

The South West of England is home to some of the country's great houses & gardens, and this Foot Trail is about celebrating them, some well known and others less so. Country Houses & Gardens offers two pleasures in one; walking & hiking and classic houses & gardens.

This 'explore' style trip slows the pace with fewer changes of inns, allowing a little more holiday/vacation and a little less hurry. The walks are shorter to give you time to explore the houses & gardens along the way.

From the world-renowned landscape garden at Stourhead, ruined castles in Capability Brown designed settings, to the humble home of English cottage gardening, there's a real mix of options on this trail.

Customised to you, but, typically, trails start in the idyllic countryside of South Wiltshire with its wealth of 18th century houses and gardens. Onward to South Somerset with Elizabethan houses along the way there are castles to explore too. The trail concludes in the Georgian splendour of Bath.

At a glance

- Explorer style
- Wiltshire, Dorset & Avon
- 6 or 9 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

From £1950 per person
(6 nights)

[Make a booking enquiry](#)

No two itineraries are the same; here's an example (trail distances are examples too)

- **Day 1** - Arrive and enjoy soaking up a little of village life, optional short walk if you wish.
- **Day 2** - A majestic landscape once known as 'The Splendens', pause at the lake, the ancient barn & gallery. **[9 mile trail]**
- **Day 3** - A Capability Brown landscape with one of the most romantic ruined castles at its heart. **[6.5 mile trail + castle]**
- **Day 4** - The world renowned landscape garden at Stourhead & a fairytale tower. **[4 mile trail + gardens]**
- **Day 5** - Country town with shops & cafes. Start in the castle grounds by the lake, admire the abbey and 1000 years of history. **[3.5 mile trail + gardens]**
- **Day 6** - The honey-coloured hamstone of Elizabethan Montacute, tree-lined drive, gorgeous cottage gardens and a curious tale. **[6 mile trail + gardens]**
- **Day 7** - Explore a ruined castle, an Italianate inspired Peto garden and medieval manor house, wow! **[5 mile trail + gardens]**
- **Day 8** - Prior Park Garden, inspired by the 18th century poet Alexander Pope. Wander through and on into the city of Bath. **[3.5 mile trail + Bath]**
- **Day 9** - Charming little gardens created from old mill ponds, a 15th century manor and an Arts & Crafts garden. **[5.5 mile trail + gardens]**
- **Day 10** - Depart with memories made.

Your accommodation

The Country Gardens & Houses trail includes stays in delightful country inns & pubs in small villages and a riverside hotel. Oozing character and comfort, and good dining, they include a 14th century coaching inn and a riverside hotel formed from an old woolen dye house.



Bath & Avon Valley

Bath is a country city at heart, surrounded by wooded hilltops and the meandering River Avon flowing through the valley. Bath has been Alison & David's 'home' city for nearly 2 decades and this trail explores the less-trodden routes in the valleys and villages beyond the city.

Lord Bath's country estate sits just to the south of Bath and is the peaceful and rural place from which to start the trail. Dreamy thatched cottages, sweeping chalk downs and big views.

Wandering through the valley, everything becomes a little more Cotswoldsy (our own word!), pretty cottages of Bath stone, old mills and the wealth of the wool industry. There are castles and celebrated gardens to explore.

Into 'mini' Bath, beside the River Avon, Bradford on Avon is a wonderful mix of mills, old weaver's cottages and Georgian houses. The historic town traces its history back to Saxon times.

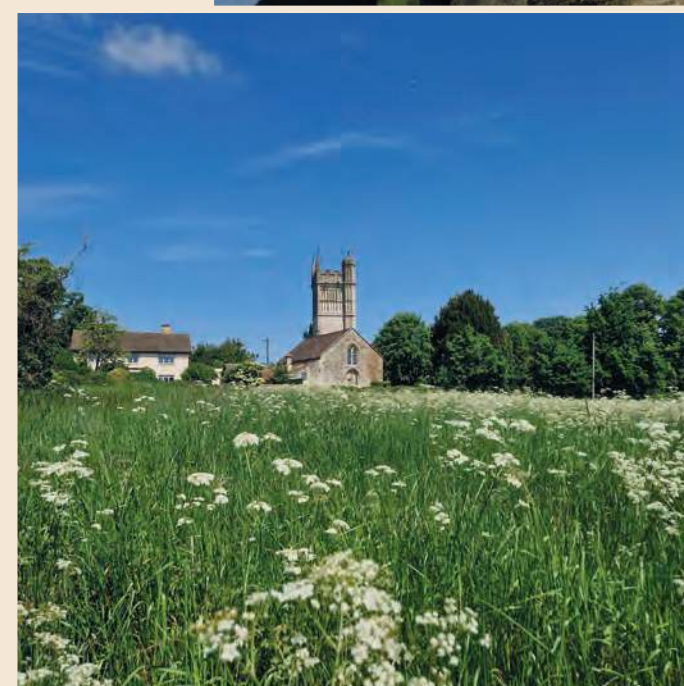
Into the city of Bath itself to spend a few nights in Georgian splendour. Bath needs little introduction, a worthy world heritage site; it has a wealth of history from Celtic times to the Romans.

If you have time, leave the bustle of the city to make your way into a secret valley and the tranquil quiet of the countryside. There's stunning views and tales of the Neolithic (c. 3000 BC).

At a glance

- Inn to inn journey
- Somerset & Wiltshire
- 5-9 night stays suggested
- Luggage transfers included
- Screen-free walk & explore pack

[Make a booking enquiry](#)



Family Groups

Spending time with family, and making memories for our children and grandchildren, is immensely rewarding. And there's no better place to do this than in nature.

The gentle rhythm of walking, time apart, time together, social evenings, it is a luxury of time well spent. A hiking tour in the English countryside is perfect for family holidays with interesting and varied landscapes, fascinating country houses, Roman villas and prehistoric monuments waiting to be explored.

Whether you're a small family, an extended multi-generational family or a group of friends, we can bespoke an itinerary that you can all enjoy. There's also the opportunity to have dual itineraries; 2 synchronised itineraries but with different hiking lengths and timings.

“For children it presents the ideal opportunity to indulge in non-digital learning and navigation, to discover castles, histories and stories that fire the imagination, and to simply reap the benefits of time in nature.”

– David Howell



“It was a perfect walking holiday for a family of 4... tailored to our desires. It was great. Very informative communication. Adapted the plan to our family. The inns were lovely.”

– Beth, USA



Practical things

How difficult are the hikes & walks?

We create our trails with a day out in mind; around 3 hours to hike in the morning, a nice place to pause for lunch or an historic site to call in, followed by a couple of hours to walk in the afternoon.

We would describe our trips as 'easy moderate', except for our coastal trips which due to the terrain are 'moderate'. A Foot Trails experience is best for those that feel comfortable walking at least 7 miles (11 km) over a whole day.

We offer a range of walks from 7 to 9 miles (11 to 14 km), and for those that wish to go further hikes from 10 to 12+ miles (16 or 19+ km). Your itinerary consultant can help to find the most suitable walks & hikes for you.

How will I find my way?

We provide you with a physical trail guide which explains your hike in step-by-step instructions, and a waterproof map with your route highlighted.

There's a joy to walking screen-free and we aim to find the right balance between giving you the sense of exploring whilst at the same time knowing where you are.

What should I bring with me?

You will receive a packing list within your pre-trip information. Essentials include a waterproof pair of walking boots, a waterproof coat or jacket, comfortable socks and suitable clothing for the season. Other essentials include a reusable drinks bottle, a small day-sac (backpack) to carry things you need for a day in the country.

“There's a joy to walking screen-free and we aim to find the right balance between giving you the sense of exploring whilst at the same time knowing where you are.”

– Alison Howell

Getting here

Your arrival & departure to the trip is not included in your trip price (all transport & luggage transfers during your trip are included) but we are here to help with your plans, and can arrange taxis to/from local train stations, or airport cars. Generally these details can be arranged nearer to your trip.

→ **Arriving by air** - for long-haul international travel the most convenient option is **London**

Heathrow as it has the best onward connections for South West England. **Bristol & Southampton Airports** are regional airports here in the South West that offer short-haul flights (or 1-stop long-haul).

→ Our trips are typically within **2 to 3 hours travel time of London**. We can advise you on the best options as well as the train stations closest to your trip, coach travel and chauffeured airport cars.



Best time of year to walk?

In SW England we are blessed with four distinct seasons. Each has its own characteristic and flavour.

From mid-April to mid-October the climate is quite even with similar average sunshine hours and rainfall. Naturally at all times of year, it is good to be prepared for unseasonably warm, cool, dry, or wet conditions.

We offer Foot Trails throughout the year, just ask for more details on what you can expect and any special clothing you may need.



Early Spring

As February turns to March, early warmth in the sun stirs the bulb flowers, with daffodils and crocuses awakening after winter. As April gathers pace, it is the time of the woodland flowers, bluebells, and wild garlic. The trees have yet to leaf but the year has started



High Spring

In May, spring reaches a crescendo, flowery May and the green man of the wood in union. By the end of May, it's green and lush, the meadows full of the joys of new life. It is time to celebrate May Day and a time of plenty!



Summer

June is meadow time, grasses swaying in the breeze, a time of plenty, nature is happy and content, all is good. As July arrives, the countryside turns from greens to the mellow tones of yellows. Harvest is about to start and long summer days for making hay!



Autumn & Fall

This seasonal change is glorious! The first hints of change are September's damp, misty mornings. In the air is the smell of ripening fruits and berries, mid to end of October, the trees turn with their burnt oranges, red and yellows.

Bookings

Your daily itinerary will be bespoke to you giving you choice and flexibility for your adventure in South West England.

You can choose your preferred arrival date, how many nights / days you wish to stay, and how challenging you would like the daily hikes to be. We can also help with additional nights, combine more than one trip for longer stays, include rest days and options for seeing nearby attractions.

To start your enquiry, simply get in touch via enquire@foottrails.co.uk, or click the booking enquiry button below.

A Foot Trails itinerary consultant will then be in touch to guide you through creating your bespoke / personalised itinerary.

You will receive a full daily itinerary personalised to you and including the details for all your accommodations, and the daily hikes & distances. Once you are happy with your itinerary a 25% deposit secures your trip. The remaining balance will be due 8 weeks before you arrive.

[Make a booking enquiry](#)



Guest Testimonials

“If you are looking for a walking tour that is tailored to your preferences like a good suit look no further than Foot Trails. Their client support is unwavering and ever present.”

— Maria, Australia

“The written instructions are great, especially the footnotes with extra info. We loved hearing about the details in the churches etc. Thank you so much for providing us with a wonderful trip!”

— Helen, Canada

“Perfect way to disconnect and see the beauty of England. We saw views, locations, and areas that only locals know. It was truly spectacular to walk along a path and all of the sudden there is a tremendous view or a castle. It really was a tremendous vacation.”

— Devrey, USA

“This family owned company went above and beyond to make our entire trip so worthwhile. We handed them a wish list of exactly what we wanted - small, high quality inns, some with multiple night stays, mile limits/ walking day, off the beaten track experiences, diverse trail experiences, worthwhile points of interests, not to mention great pubs and lunch options along the way. And they checked off every box for us.”

— Stephen, Canada

“Tailor made to me, on the terms and in the places I requested. The walking routes and the beautiful architecture and natural scenery were a continuous pleasure.”

— Diane, USA

“The inns chosen by Foot Trails are charming, well-appointed and very comfortable. The food at each inn was without exception superb, and the staff were friendly and helpful.”

— Julie, USA

Our Story

It all began with a walk

Alison & David Howell met at university. Later, whilst Alison was working for IBM and David in IT, they both knew that life behind a desk wasn't for them.

So they packed a tent, headed for France and walked 680 miles together - asking questions about freedom, place and what a different life might look like.

In 2002, that journey became Foot Trails – a walking travel company

rooted in South West England, shaped by people, not mass tourism. From day one they focused on comfort, curiosity and connection, not mileage or markets.

Today the tents are packed away (mostly), but the trails continue to grow. Foot Trails still chooses its own paths, guided by instinct, local knowledge and a quiet philosophy called 'The Howell Way'.



Foot Trails®

Crafted hikes. English soul.

Get in touch

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Pictures: Alison Howell, David Howell, Matt Lincoln