

PLAN YOUR TRIP

YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT

Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions to help you put together your perfect trip

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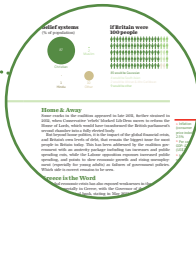


UNDERSTAND GREAT BRITAIN

GET MORE FROM YOUR TRIP

Learn about the big picture, so you can make sense of what you see

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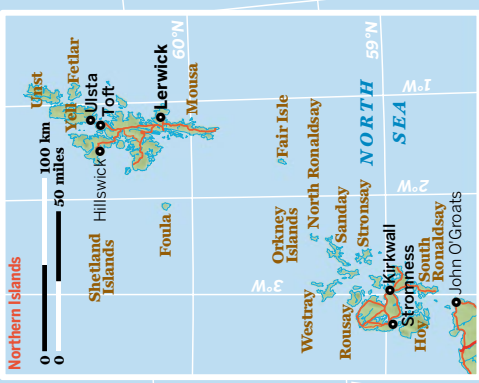


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Belinda Dixon, Peter Dragicevich, Damian Harper, Anna Kaminski,
Catherine Le Nevez, Fran Parnell, Andy Symington, Neil Wilson**



Snowdonia
Rugged peaks,
glacier-hewn valleys (p713)

The Cotswolds
Classic chocolate-box
countryside at its best (p199)

Bath
Britain's belle of the ball
(p282)

Pembrokeshire
The best of wild and
wonderful West Wales (p675)

Cornwall's Coast
Rugged cliffs, sparkling bays,
surf and sand (p327)

Stratford-upon-Avon
Shakespeare's birthplace, a
shrine to the Bard (p409)

Oxford
Beautiful architecture,
archaic traditions (p184)

Cambridge
Ancient colleges, gliding
punts, dreamy spires (p357)

London
Britain's famous capital –
the world in one city (p58)

Stonhenge
Britain's iconic prehistoric
site (p266)



See Channel Islands inset

itineraries

Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat with other travellers.



Two Weeks Best of Britain

Start with a full day in Britain's greatest city, **London**, simply walking the streets to admire the world-famous sights: Buckingham Palace, Tower Bridge, Trafalgar Sq and more. Then head southwest to the grand cathedral cities of **Winchester** and **Salisbury**, across to the iconic menhirs of **Stonehenge** and its less well-known counterpart **Avebury Stone Circle**, then onwards to the beautiful historic city of **Bath**.

Loop over to **Chepstow** for its impressive castle, and then continue to **Cardiff**, the Welsh capital. Retrace slightly, then cruise across the classic English countryside of the **Cotswolds** to reach the university city of **Oxford**. Not far away is **Stratford-upon-Avon**, for everything Shakespeare.

Strike out north to Scotland's capital, **Edinburgh**, for another great castle, before crossing down to **York** for its glorious cathedral and historic city walls. Keep going south to reach **Cambridge**, another landmark university city. Then enjoy the last few days back in **London**, immersed in galleries, museums, luxury shops, street markets, West End shows, East End cafes – or whatever takes your fancy.



One Month The Full Monty

This is a trip for those with time, or an urge to see everything. So brace yourself, and let's be off.

After a day or two in **London**, head southeast to **Canterbury**, then along the coast to hip and happening **Brighton**. For a change of pace, divert to the **New Forest**, then up to historic **Winchester** and **Salisbury** with their awe-inspiring cathedrals. Next, religion of a different kind: the ancient stone circles at **Stonehenge** and **Avebury**.

Go west to **Bath**, with its grand Georgian architecture, Roman remains and famous spas, and then over the border to reach Wales. Stop off at the energetic little city of **Cardiff**, then head north through to the whaleback hills of the **Brecon Beacons** to reach the quirky book-mad town of **Hay-on-Wye**.

Then it's back to England, and east into the **Cotswolds**, with its rolling hills, quintessential rural scenery and chocolate-box towns like **Chipping Norton**. Not far away is the famous university town of **Oxford**, as well as the ancient town of **Warwick**, with its spectacular castle, and Shakespeare's birthplace **Stratford-upon-Avon**.

Continue north to **Chester**, for its famous city walls, diverting into North Wales for the grand castles at **Conwy** and **Caernarfon**, and the stunning mountains of **Snowdonia**. If time allows and the weather's good, you can take a train to the top of the highest peak.

Then ferry across the Mersey to **Liverpool**, with its famous musical heritage and revitalised waterfront, or to **Manchester** for a taste of big-city life, followed by a total change of scenery in the tranquil mountains of the **Lake District**. To the north is the sturdy border town of **Carlisle**, and one of Britain's most impressive Roman remains, **Hadrian's Wall**.

Hop across the border to Scotland, via the tranquil **Southern Uplands**, to reach good-time **Glasgow**. Then trek to **Fort William** (and maybe up **Ben Nevis**, Britain's highest mountain), from where it's easy to reach the beautiful **Isle of Skye**.

Then it's time to head south again, via **Stirling Castle** to **Edinburgh**, and on through the historic abbey towns of **Melrose** and **Jedburgh**.

Back in England, you can marvel at the castle and cathedral of **Durham** and the ancient Viking capital of **York**, before taking in the ancient university city of **Cambridge** and enjoying the last few days of your trip in **London**.



Three to Four Weeks Britain's Wild Side

This tour takes you through the best of Britain's natural landscape. Start in the **New Forest**, then go west via Dorset's fossil-ridden **Jurassic Coast** to reach granite-topped **Dartmoor**. Stop off at **Land's End**, then traverse the stunning **Cornwall** coast and rich farmland of **Devon** to reach the gorse-clad hills of **Exmoor**.

Cross into Wales to hike the **Brecon Beacons** or stroll the beaches of **Pembrokeshire**, then head north to explore mountainous **Snowdonia** and the nearby **Isle of Anglesey**. Then it's back to England, through the hills and moors of the **Peak District** and **Yorkshire Dales** to reach the peaks and grand scenery of the **Lake District**.

Head north again, across (or along) the Roman remains of **Hadrian's Wall**, and over the border into Scotland. Saunter through the delightful **Southern Uplands**, then continue via **Loch Lomond** to the mountain wilderness of the **Cairngorms**.

The top of Britain is crowned by the famous highlands and islands of **Northwest Scotland**, where jewels include peaks like **Ben Nevis** and remote mountain ranges such as **Torridon**, while out to sea the lovely isles of **Skye** and **Mull** bask in the afternoon sun.

Two to Three Weeks Urban Odyssey

To dig a little under Britain's skin, take this ride through some of its less well-known and revitalised cities. Kick off in **Bristol**, a city with fierce pride and a rich historic legacy, then cross over to **Cardiff**, once a provincial backwater but now the lively Welsh capital.

Next stop is **Birmingham**, oozing transformation, with a renovated waterside, energised museums and a space-age shopping centre. Onwards to **Leeds**, where rundown factories and warehouses have been turned into loft apartments, ritzy boutiques and stylish department stores.

Shopping not your thing? No problem. Head for **Newcastle-upon-Tyne** and twin-city **Gateshead**; both have given up on heavy industries in favour of art and architecture – and are famous for to-the-hilt partying.

Still want more? It's got to be **Glasgow**, Scotland's other great city, boasting fabulous galleries and welcoming pubs. Then it's south to **Liverpool**, which has reinvented itself as a cultural hot spot, with a famous musical heritage and very lively current scene. Finish your tour in **Manchester**, a long-time stage for artistic endeavour, with dramatic new architecture and a rather well-known football club.



One to Two Weeks Highland Fling

This itinerary is a tour of Scotland's finest and most famous sights, and naturally starts in **Edinburgh**, where highlights include the renowned castle, as well as the Royal Mile, the new parliament and the haunts of the Old Town. For a change of pace, hop over to **Glasgow** for a day or two as well. Then head northeast to see Scotland's other great castle at **Stirling**. Next stop is **Callander**, a good base for exploring the **Trossach mountains**, part of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, for a first taste of Highland scenery.

Continue north and the landscape becomes ever more impressive, culminating in the grandeur of **Glen Coe**. Keen hill-walkers will pause for a day at **Fort William** to trek to the top of **Ben Nevis** (plus another day to recover!) before taking the 'Road to the Isles' past glorious **Glenfinnan** to the lovely little port of **Mallaig**.

Take the ferry to the **Isle of Skye**, then head back to the mainland to reach pretty **Plockton** and magnificent **Glen Torridon**. Onwards, via the outpost of **Ullapool**, takes you into the British mainland's furthest reaches, the remote mountain landscape of Scotland's far Northwest, before looping south to finish your tour at **Inverness**.

One to Two Weeks Edge of England

If you like the outdoors, and prefer flocks of birds to crowds of people, try this backwater route along England's eastern fringe. Start in **Ipswich**, then head out into the sleepy county of **Suffolk**, where quaint villages and market towns such as **Sudbury** and **Lavenham** dot the landscape, while along the coast are wildlife reserves, shingly beaches, fishing ports such as **Aldeburgh**, and the delightfully retro seaside resort of **Southwold**.

Things get even quieter in **Norfolk**, especially around the misty lakes and windmill-lined rivers of the **Broads**. For beach strolls or historic country pubs, head for the coastal villages near **Wells-next-the-Sea**.

Across the border in Lincolnshire lies the eerie, pan-flat landscape of the **Fens**, now a haven for otters and birdlife.

Continue into the heather-clad **North York Moors** where humpbacked hills roll all the way to the coast to drop dramatically into the choppy waters of the North Sea.

Enjoy a blustery stroll on the wild coast of Northumberland near the landmark castles of **Bamburgh** and **Dunstanburgh**, then end your tour at the historic island of **Lindisfarne**.



One to Two Weeks Welsh Wander

The coast and countryside of Wales has long been a favourite with visitors, and this tour includes most of the hot spots. Combine it with the Southwest Meander for a longer jaunt along part of Britain's Celtic fringe.

Start in **Cardiff**, with its fantastical castle, gigantic rugby stadium, revitalised waterfront and stunning Millennium Centre. Head west via the beautiful **Gower Peninsula** to reach the clear waters and sandy beaches of **Pembrokeshire**. Don't miss the ancient cathedral at **St David's** – Britain's smallest city. Continue up the coast to **Aberystwyth**, then through 'alternative' **Machynlleth** to reach **Harlech** and its ancient castle. Divert to the tranquil **Isle of Anglesey** and historic **Beaumaris Castle**, then strike through the mountains of **Snowdonia** to reach **Conwy** (another stunning castle) and the seaside resort **Llandudno**.

Southwards takes you to **Llangollen**, with its jolly steam trains and vertiginous aqueduct, then along the England-Wales borderlands to book-mad **Hay-on-Wye**. Loop inland to peaceful **Brecon** and foodie **Abergavenny**, then saunter down the **Wye Valley** to finish at the frontier town of **Chepstow** – and yet another amazing castle.

One to Two Weeks Southwest Meander

The southwest of England takes a bit of effort to reach but repays in full with a rich green landscape dotted with hills and moors, surrounded by glistening seas.

Start in **Bristol**, the capital of the West-country, then saunter south to reach **Glastonbury**. It's famous for its annual music festival and the best place to stock up on candles or crystals at any time of year.

West leads to heathery **Exmoor**. South leads to **Dorset**, where highlights include picturesque **Shaftsbury** and the fossil-strewn Jurassic Coast.

Onwards into **Devon**, and there's a choice of coasts, as well as **Dartmoor**, the highest and wildest hills in southern Britain.

Cross into **Cornwall** to explore the space-age biodomes of the **Eden Project**. Nearby, but in another era entirely, is **Tintagel Castle**, the legendary birthplace of King Arthur. Depending on your tastes, you can hang-ten in surf-flavoured party-town **Newquay**, or browse the galleries at **St Ives**.

The natural finish to this wild west tour is **Land's End**, where the British mainland comes to a final full stop. Sink a drink in the First and Last pub, and promise yourself a return trip some day...

Every listing is recommended by our authors, and their favourite places are listed first

Look out for these icons:



Our author's top recommendation



A green or sustainable option



No payment required

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Catherine Le Nevez

Birmingham, the Midlands & the Marches Catherine first roadtripped around Great Britain aged four and she's been roadtripping here at every opportunity since, completing her Doctorate of Creative Arts in Writing, Masters in Professional Writing, and post-grad qualifications in Editing and Publishing along the way, as well as dozens of Lonely Planet guidebooks and newspaper, magazine and online articles covering the UK, Europe and beyond. Roaming castle ruins and corridors of stately homes were highlights of researching this book, as was discovering idyllic countryside pubs.



Fran Parnell

Snowdonia & North Wales Early family holidays in Wales ignited Fran's love of the country, undimmed even after being dismissed from a B&B for sneaking in fish and chips. Studying for a Masters degree in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic fanned the flames: the romance of the medieval Welsh stories and poems has never left her. A particular highlight of this research trip was watching the sun set from the lofty ruins of Castell Dinas Brân.



Andy Symington

Inverness & the Northern Highlands & Islands; Glasgow & Southern Scotland Andy's Scottish forebears make their presence felt in a love of malt, a debatable ginger colour to his facial hair and a love of wild places. From childhood slogs up the M1 he graduated to making dubious road trips around the firths in a disintegrating Mini Metro and thence to peddling whisky in darkest Leith. Whilst living there, he travelled widely around the country in search of the perfect dram, and, now resident in Spain, continues to visit very regularly.

Read more about Andy at:

[lonelyplanet.com/members/andy_symington](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/members/andy_symington)



Neil Wilson

Inverness & the Northern Highlands & Islands; Edinburgh; Stirling & Central Scotland; Yorkshire Neil has made many cross-border forays into 'God's own country' from his home in Edinburgh, as well as regular expeditions to every corner of Scotland. It's a toss-up whether the hiking, mountain-biking and beer is better in Yorkshire or north of the border. Neil is a full-time travel writer based in Edinburgh, and has written around 60 guidebooks for various publishers.



Belinda Dixon

Southwest England Belinda made a gleeful bolt for the sunny southwest for her post-grad, having been drawn there by the palm trees on campus. Like the best Westcountry limpets she's proved hard to shift since and now writes and broadcasts in the region. Research highlights for this book included kayaking up (and riding the tide down) the River Dart, hugging sarsen stones at Avebury, tasting freedom on the Isle of Wight, and oh-so-diligently testing the pick of Plymouth's newest eateries.



Peter Dragicevich

Cardiff (Caerdydd); Hay-on-Wye & Mid-Wales; Pembrokeshire & South Wales Wales has held a fascination for Peter ever since he was sent to write about Welsh castles for one of his first ever newspaper travel features. Since then he's co-authored dozens of Lonely Planet titles, including the stand-alone *Wales* guidebook and *Walking in Britain*, where he got to trek around the entirety of the beautiful Pembrokeshire coast. And while his name may not be Welsh, it does have more than half a dragon in it.



Damian Harper

London Born in London and growing up in Notting Hill, Damian went to school in Hampshire for a decade, cultivating a sense of affection for both city and country. Writing for Lonely Planet for more than 15 years, Damian recently turned his attention from far-flung cultures to his lush and well-watered homeland, revelling in England's diversity, good looks, insular charms, awe-inspiring sense of history and entirely intelligible local tongue (in the main).



Anna Kaminski

Cambridge & East Anglia; Oxford, the Cotswolds & Around Anna's love affair with England began in 1991 once she got over the shock of moving from the Soviet Union to Cambridge – her home for the next 20 years. Since budget flights hadn't been invented at the time, her parents tirelessly tried to instil some culture in her by taking her to every museum, castle, church and stately home in a 250-mile radius, most of which she revisited with great pleasure during this research trip. Memorable moments from her most recent trip include slurping fresh oysters in Aldeburgh, driving along some impossibly narrow country lanes in the Cotswolds and getting acquainted with Oxford's ghosts.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



David Else

Coordinating Author As a professional writer, David has authored more than 40 books, including several editions of Lonely Planet's *England* and *Great Britain* guides. His knowledge comes from a lifetime of travel around the country – often on foot – a passion dating from university years, when heading for the hills was always more attractive than visiting the library. Originally from London, David has lived in Yorkshire, Wales and Derbyshire, and is now a resident of the Cotswolds. For this current edition of *Great Britain*, David's research took him from the Isle of Wight in the south to the Isle of Skye in the north – via most of the bits in between.

Read more about David at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/davidelse



Oliver Berry

Southwest England; The Lake District & Cumbria Oliver is a writer and photographer based in Cornwall. Among many other projects for Lonely Planet, Oliver has written the first editions of *Devon*, *Cornwall & Southwest England* and *The Lake District*, and worked on several previous editions of the *England* and *Great Britain* guides. You can see some of his latest work at www.oliverberry.com and follow him at [www.twitter.com/olivertomberry](https://twitter.com/olivertomberry).

Read more about Oliver at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/oliverberry



Fionn Davenport

Manchester, Liverpool & Northwest England; Newcastle & Northeast England Fionn has been traipsing about Northern England's bigger burbs for over a decade and has found that the cities of the north are simply fantastic; a rich repository of culture, fine museums, terrific restaurants, bucolic landscapes and – most importantly – peopled by a few million lovable gruffs that exude a no-nonsense warmth. Fionn is a full-time travel writer and broadcaster based in Dublin, Ireland – you can catch him on Newstalk 106-108 (www.newstalk.ie).

Read more about Marc at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/madidu



Marc Di Duca

Canterbury & Southeast England Originally from Darlington, County Durham, Marc has been a northerner-gone-south since 2000 and covered his adopted corner of weald and down for the past two editions of Lonely Planet's *England* and *Great Britain*. A travel author for eight years, Marc has updated and written the Lonely Planet guides of Ukraine, Russia, Trans-Siberian Railway, Poland and Germany, though he can usually be found in Sandwich, Kent, where he lives with his Kievite wife Tanya and their two sons.

OVER MORE
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