



# Hay-on-Wye & Mid-Wales

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## Why Go?

The big draw here is the magnificent upland scenery of Brecon Beacons National Park, with book-loving Hay-on-Wye within its confines and food-loving Abergavenny on its doorstep. By contrast the Ceredigion and Powys countryside is something of a well-kept secret and certainly worthy of a closer look. This is Wales at its most rural – a landscape of lustrous green fields, wooded river valleys and small market towns; it's the part that the Industrial Revolution missed. It's also thoroughly Welsh, with around 40% of people speaking the mother tongue (over 50% in Ceredigion). Apart from exuberant, student-populated Aberystwyth, you won't find a lot of excitement in the urban areas. It's the places in between that are much more interesting, criss-crossed as they are with cycling and walking routes, and plenty of country lanes to tootle about in.

## Best Places to Eat

- » Checkers (p709)
- » Walnut Tree (p702)
- » Felin Fach Griffin (p699)
- » Gwesty Cymru (p692)
- » Abdul's Tandoori Spice (p690)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Checkers (p709)
- » Start (p703)
- » Bear (p703)
- » Hardwick (p702)
- » Poppit Sands YHA (p689)

## When to Go

If you're planning on walking, you'll get the most rain-free days between April and July. In the midst of spring, in May, the world's intelligentsia gets Hay fever. In August, cap off the Green Man (p700) and Brecon Jazz (p699) music festivals with a spot of bog snorkelling. As the weather starts to cool down, in September, fill up at the Abergavenny Food Festival (p702). July and August are the warmest months, while January and February are the coldest.



## Hay-on-Wye & Mid-Wales Highlights

**1** Soaking up the tranquility of the remote Vale of Ewyas in the **Black Mountains** (p702)

**2** Experiencing charming **Hay-on-Wye** (p703), a town surrounded by nature but infatuated with books

**3** Settling into village life in Brecon Beacons National Park in **Crickhowell** (p700)

**4** Letting the sculptured yew paths of **Powis Castle** (p709) lead you through Welsh history

**5** Gazing up at **Carreg Cennen** (p695), Wales' most dramatically positioned fortress

**6** Revelling in the high culture and student-inspired high jinks that come

together by the seaside at **Aberystwyth** (p690)

**7** Exploring a countryside seasoned with Wales' best restaurants in the fields around **Abergavenny** (p701)

**8** Reliving the age of steam with a scenic ride to Devil's Bridge on the **Vale of Rheidol Railway** (p690)