



Great Britain



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Itineraries



2
WEEKS

Best of Britain

This circular whistle-stop tour ticks off Britain's greatest hits in an action-packed fortnight.

Start with at least three days exploring Britain's greatest city, **London**, seeing the world-famous sights: Buckingham Palace, Tower Bridge, Trafalgar Sq, the British Museum and more. From the capital, head west for the dreaming spires of England's oldest university city, **Oxford**, before touring the lovely villages of the **Cotswolds**.

Detour south to see **Stonehenge**, the nation's most celebrated stone circle, and its lesser-known counterpart **Avebury**, then head onwards to the Georgian city of **Bath**. From here, skip across the border through two Welsh national parks: the **Brecon Beacons** and **Snowdonia**, where you can climb Wales' highest mountain. Head back into England and travel north to walk the fells of the **Lake District**, beloved by William Wordsworth and Beatrix Potter.

From here, it's easy to explore Roman Britain's most ambitious engineering project, the 73-mile **Hadrian's Wall**, before the drive north to Scotland's capital, **Edinburgh**. On the long journey back south, drive through the rolling hills and valleys of the **Yorkshire Dales**, visit the handsome city of **York** and its medieval minster, marvel at the majesty of **Chatsworth House**, or wander around the colleges and punt along the Backs of **Cambridge**.



The Full Monty

This is the big one: covering all points of the compass and all three mainland nations, it's the full-blown round-Britain adventure.

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 Wales, via the energetic little cities of **Bristol** and **Cardiff**. Head west to fall in love with the scenery of the **Pembrokeshire Coast**, and backtrack through to the whaleback hills of the **Brecon Beacons** to reach the quirky book-mad town of **Hay-on-Wye**.

Then it's back into England to visit Shakespeare's birthplace, **Stratford-upon-Avon**, and impressive castles at **Warwick**, **Ludlow** and **Shrewsbury**. Cross back into Wales via the stunning mountains of **Snowdonia**, then round the coast via the dramatic castles of **Caernarfon** and **Conwy**.

Back in England once again, have a wander round the medieval walls of **Chester** en route to **Liverpool**, with its famous musical heritage and revitalised waterfront, or **Manchester**, for a taste of northern nightlife. Cross over the moors and hills of the **Peak District**, admire the marvellous York Minster in **York**, and finish your English adventure in **Newcastle-upon-Tyne**, with its galleries, museums and Antony Gormley's monumental Angel of the North sculpture.

Hop over Hadrian's Wall en route to the historic abbey towns of **Jedburgh** and **Melrose** in Scotland. Stop off for a few days in **Edinburgh**, then head west via **Stirling Castle** to good-time **Glasgow**. Then trek to **Fort William** (and maybe up **Ben Nevis**, Britain's highest mountain), from where it's easy to reach journey's end on the beautiful **Isle of Skye**.



10 DAYS

Island Hopscotch

This route is usually done by car, but it also makes a brilliant cycling tour (270 miles, including the 60 miles from Ullapool to Inverness train station, making both start and finish accessible by rail).

From **Oban** it's a five-hour ferry crossing to **Barra**; plan to spend the night here (book ahead). On day two, after a visit to Kisimul Castle and a tour around the island, take the ferry to **South Uist**. Walk the wild beaches of the west coast, sample the local seafood and perhaps go fishing on the island's trout lochs. Continue through Benbecula and **North Uist**, prime birdwatching country.

Overnight at Lochmaddy on North Uist (if you're camping or hostelling, a night at **Berneray** is a must) before taking the ferry to **Harris**, whose west coast has some of the most spectacular beaches in Scotland. The road continues north from **Tarbert** (good hotels) through rugged hills to **Lewis**.

Don't go directly to Stornoway, but loop west via the **Callanish Standing Stones** and **Arnol Blackhouse** museum. Spend your final night in **Stornoway** (eat at Dig-by Chick), then take the ferry to **Ullapool** for a scenic drive to **Inverness**.

3 WEEKS

Urban Odyssey

Take this ride through some of Britain's less well-known and revitalised cities.

Kick off in **Bristol**, a city with fierce pride and a rich historical 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 water-side, energised museums and a space-age shopping centre. Onwards to **Leeds**, where run-down 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 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. Finish your tour in **Manchester**, a long-time stage for artistic endeavour, with dramatic architecture and a rather well-known football club.

TRAVELLIGHT/SHUTTERSTOCK ©



Top: Callanish Standing
Stones (p935)

Bottom: Beaumaris
Castle (p740)

TIM SNOW/SHUTTERSTOCK ©





Highland Fling

This itinerary is a tour of Scotland's finest and most famous sights.

Naturally it starts in **Edinburgh**, where highlights include the renowned castle, as well as the Royal Mile and the haunts of the Old Town. 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 hills and lochs of the **Trossachs**.

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** (and another day to recover!) before taking the 'Road to the Isles' past glorious **Glenfinnan** to the fishing harbour of **Mallaig**.

Take the ferry to the **Isle of Skye**, then head back to the mainland via the Skye Bridge to reach pretty **Plockton** and magnificent **Glen Torridon**. Travelling onwards, via **Ullapool**, takes you to the remote mountain landscape of Scotland's far northwest, then continue to Highland capital **Inverness**. Conclude with a memorable drive through the **Cairngorms** and a tour of the whisky distilleries of **Speyside**.



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 **Colchester**, 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 North Sea, and spend some time in the atmospheric seaside town of **Whitby**.

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

1
WEEK

Welsh Wander

The coast and countryside of Wales has long been a favourite with visitors, and this tour includes most of the hot spots. Continue along England's southwest coast for a longer jaunt along 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 Davids** – 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** (for another stunning castle) and the seaside resort of **Llandudno**.

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

2
WEEKS

Way Out West

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** – 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 the walking trails of heathery **Exmoor**, then it's south to Dorset, where highlights include picturesque **Shaftesbury** 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 biodomes of the **Eden Project**. Nearby, but in another era entirely, is the legendary birthplace of King Arthur, the castle at **Tintagel**. Depending on your tastes, you can hang-ten in surf-flavoured party-town **Newquay** or browse the galleries at artistic **St Ives**.

The natural finish to this wild west tour is **Land's End**, where the British mainland comes to a final full stop – but it's well worth visiting the amazing island abbey at **St Michael's Mount**.

Behind the Scenes

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

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Oliver Berry

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THIS BOOK

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Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

**Damian Harper**

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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 Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, 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



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