

Based on one of the first Great Roads commissioned by the Kings of England, the Great West Way winds its way through landscapes filled with the world-famous and the yet-to-be-discovered.



GUIDE TO ENGLISH GARDENS

Spend three days on a trail around some of England's most compelling gardens and green spaces, from the ancient and bountiful Malmesbury Abbey House Gardens to the grand landscapes and labyrinths of Longleat.



GREAT WEST WAY ROUTE MAP



EXAMPLES OF GREAT ENGLISH GARDENS IN THIS AREA

- Abbey House Gardens, Malmesbury
- Great Chalfield Manor and Garden
- Iford Manor Gardens
- Longleat
- Stourhead

PLACES TO EAT

- La Campagna
- Whatley Manor
- Beechfield House
- The Mulberry

PLACES TO STAY

- The Old Bell
- Woolley Grange

DAY ONE

MALMESBURY & BOWOOD



Abbey House Gardens, Malmesbury

Arrive at **Abbey House Gardens, Malmesbury** in the early afternoon to wander the five immaculate acres, a mix of formal fountain-tinkled lawns, lovingly tended beds and riverside woodland. There are 10,000 different plants in all. Gaze at vast swathes of tulips, breathe in the scent of 2,000-odd different roses and trace the past: the paths and yew hedges in the upper garden have been laid along the original Abbey's old foundations.

Bowood House and Gardens near Calne is one of England's most striking manmade landscapes. It is the home of the Marquis of Lansdowne who still lives here – and who preserves 100 acres of grounds beautifully devised in the 18th century by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. For dramatic dining, head to Malmesbury's **La Campagna**, which serves delicious Italian dishes beneath a soaring, wood-beamed roof. Or treat yourself to the tasting menu at the elegant Dining Room at **Whatley Manor**.

Overnight **The Old Bell** in Malmesbury, said to be England's oldest hotel.



Bowood House

DAY TWO

GREAT CHALFIELD MANOR & IFORD MANOR

Saunter south through the wonderful Wiltshire countryside to the **National Trust's Great Chalfield Manor and Garden** – a delightfully restored 15th-century house, which has been

much seen on screen – in everything from *The Other Boleyn Girl* to *Poldark* – but it also has an enchanting Arts & Crafts garden, designed in the early 20th century but constantly evolving with the years and seasons. Continue the garden theme over a classy lunch at **Beechfield House**, a Victorian country pile with beautiful grounds of its own, then on to **Iford Manor** – a charming, Grade 1-listed garden created by Edwardian architect Harold Peto in the early 20th century and, with its tucked-away setting, secretive corners and Italianate style, feels plucked from the pages of *Romeo & Juliet*.

Overnight **Woolley Grange**, a glorious Jacobean manor-turned-hotel.



Iford Manor

DAY THREE

LONGLEAT

The historic family seat of the Marquesses of Bath, dating back to the 1580s, is now home to a drive-through safari park, where over 500 animals roam – from lions and tigers to rhinos and wolves. Longleat also has 900 acres of grounds designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown

between 1757 and 1762. He replaced the neat and ornate planting with a more naturalistic landscape of sweeping lawns, tree thickets and judiciously placed lakes. Longleat's formal gardens include the Secret Garden at the back of the Orangery and Love Labyrinth at the front.

Toast a terrific journey with a fine dinner at **The Mulberry** at Warminster's Bishopstrow Hotel, then start plotting your next horticultural adventure, because the gardens of the Great West Way aren't just great green spaces, they are – thanks to the region's deep history and abundance of protected places – living monuments of the past, where some of the most distinguished outdoor pioneers helped create the unique landscape you can enjoy today.



Longleat

The order of experiences included in this itinerary is intended to be a guide only; you can choose to visit these wonderful experiences at your own pace and in your own way. Devising your own route is all part of discovering the Great West Way!



Iford Manor Gardens

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Finds from a coffin** unearthed in the grounds of the Abbey House in Malmesbury in 1997 provided the first evidence that the Romans were present in the town.
- The **property of Longleat** was first purchased by Sir John Thynn in 1541 for the princely sum of £53.
- **Great Chalfield Manor** starred as Austin Friars, Thomas Cromwell's house, in the TV adaptation of Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*.
- Sir Richard Colt Hoare, who inherited Stourhead from his grandfather in 1785, made the **first recorded excavations at Stonehenge**, in 1798 and 1810.



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