



ITINERARY

Follow in the Footsteps of Jane Austen

A Great West Way journey to celebrate one of the most famous, and quintessentially English novelists of all time, Jane Austen (1775-1817).

2025 marks 250 years since this remarkable author was born and throughout her life she lived, travelled and visited destinations along or within easy reach of the Great West Way. These locations inspired the authors work and have been brought to life in film and tv adaptations of her books. Today, visitors can follow in the footsteps of Jane Austen to explore the route for themselves.

Day 1. Visit Bath, home of the Jane Austen Centre

Where better to start than in the World Heritage City of Bath and a visit to the Jane Austen Centre. It offers a snapshot of life during Regency times and explores how living in this magnificent city affected Jane Austen's life and writing. The famous costumed guides take visitors on an entertaining and educational journey. Dress up using their extensive collection of dresses, bonnets and coats or have a go writing with a quill pen and ink.

No1 Royal Crescent provides visitors with an insight into what life was like for the wealthy and their servants in eighteenth-century Bath. Each room is an exquisite example of Georgian interior design with authentic furniture, paintings, textiles and carpets.

Stop for lunch at The Pump Rooms and if time allows visit The Roman Baths where the Romans built a magnificent temple and





Winchester Cathedral

bathing complex on the site of Britain's only hot spring, which still flows with natural hot water today.

In the afternoon explore the city with **Bath Curious Strolls** where costumed guides recount tales of the fashionable gentry and low life of former times, seen through the eyes of former residents and visitors. Walk through streets and alleyways admiring the magnificent Georgian architecture. Why not join in wearing a costume of your choice to add to the authenticity?

If time allows take a detour to **National Trust's Dyrham Park**, Gloucestershire, a 17thC baroque country house mansion that sits in an ancient deer park, and whose exterior was featured in the filming of the Sanditon adaptation.

Overnight: In Bath at the **Hampton by Hilton Bath City** or **The Roseate Villa Bath** or travel to Bradford On Avon to stay at **Woolley Grange Hotel**.

Day 2. Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Stourhead and Warminster

Explore the market town of **Bradford on Avon**.

Have morning refreshments at **The Bridge Tea Rooms** – with waitresses in costume and delightfully delicious tea and cakes!

Take a walking tour of the town with **Tour & Explore** or **In & Beyond Bath**. The River Avon and Kennet & Avon has beautiful walking routes. The town is full of character with meandering alleyways, small weavers' cottages, Georgian architecture and clothiers' houses. Check out the medieval Tithe Barn and a Saxon Church a truly ancient place of worship.

Travel a short distance to Trowbridge to visit **Parade House**, a beautifully furnished Grade 1 Listed Georgian Townhouse. Pre-booked visits include a tour of the Regency themed rooms and a 'Bridgerton style afternoon tea experience' in the Ballroom. Requested experiences include costumed performances by the Jane Austen Dancers of Bath and Georgian or Regency costume hire for visitors.

In the afternoon detour off the route to visit **National Trust's Stourhead House & Gardens**, a breathtaking 18th century landscape garden and Palladian mansion with lakeside walks, grottoes and classical temples. It was also the filming location for the *Pride & Prejudice* adaptation (2005), where Darcy made his first unsuccessful proposal to Elizabeth at the folly - Temple of Apollo - in the pouring rain.

Overnight: The Old Bell Hotel, Warminster.

Day 3. Explore Salisbury

Within easy reach of the route is **Salisbury**, a famous Cathedral city of timeless beauty and fascinating history, that has been welcoming travellers since 1227. Visit **Salisbury Cathedral** with its tallest spire in Britain (123m/404ft), the oldest working clock in Europe (AD 1386) and the world's best preserved original Magna Carta (AD 1215).

The Cathedral Close is home to a number of attractions including **National Trust's Mompesson House**, 18th Century townhouse with magnificent plasterwork, fine oak staircase, period furniture and important collection of drinking glasses and a tranquil walled garden. The house was one of the major locations for the 1995 film adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*, where it featured as Mrs Jennings' London townhouse.

INSIDER TIP

To celebrate the 250th Anniversary of Jane Austen, many attractions will be holding events and activities relating to the author and the filming adaptations that have taken place along or within easy reach of the Great West Way. Check these out at GreatWestWay.co.uk/JaneAusten250



Stourhead



The Royal Crescent Bath

Overnight: In central Salisbury at **Milford Hall Hotel, Mercure White Hart Hotel, Merchants House, or The Riverside**, or on the outskirts at **Rollestone Manor or Holiday Inn Salisbury Stonehenge**.

Day 4. Hampshire & Winchester

Detour off the route to Winchester, Hampshire to visit Winchester Cathedral – the final resting place of Jane Austen. Jane is buried in the north nave aisle of Winchester Cathedral under a memorial stone, which mentions 'the extraordinary endowments of her mind' but which fails to pay tribute to her extraordinary achievements as a novelist. To celebrate the anniversary a new life-size outdoor memorial statue is being made.

Journey onto Chawton, near Alton, where from 1809-1817 Jane lived. Jane's brother owned Chawton House, but offered Jane, her sister and mother a house in Chawton Village, now known as Jane Austen's House. It was here that Jane revised previous drafts of *Sense & Sensibility*, *Pride & Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey* and created *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*. Now an unparalleled museum of her life and works, it is the most treasured Austen site in the world featuring her furniture and writing table, personal letters, jewellery, paintings and clothing.

Nearby Chawton House, referred to by Jane as the 'Great House', is also open to the public and houses an extensive collection of early women's writing, with regular events and exhibitions. The house features Austen heirlooms, such as the dining table at which Jane would have enjoyed family meals, and the gardens are open for visitors to saunter through the grounds.

Detour off the route to Hampshire, where in a quiet corner of the county is the village of Steventon. This is where Jane Austen was born and where she spent her childhood. In 1823, 5 years after Jane's death, the Austen's Rectory was demolished. The family home would have faced the road to Steventon Church and today the only sign of the Rectory that remains is a small grassy clump in a field, where the well is located. Although a Lime Tree planted by Jane's oldest brother James sits in the corner of the meadow. The church where Jane worshipped dates from the twelfth century

DON'T MISS

JANE AUSTEN  250

For the first time, during the summer of 2025, visitors will be invited to step inside the house in Winchester, 8 College Street, where Jane Austen spent her final days. The cathedral, where Austen was buried, is also planning events over the summer season. Winchester's official tourist guides will be running special themed tours on "Jane Austen's Winchester" and offering some costumed drama walks called "My Dear Cassandra". There will also be a new Jane Austen trail around the city which will highlight key locations and connecting them with events and exhibitions, including a special exhibition at The Arc.

INSIDER TIP

Interested in following in the footsteps of Jane Austen? There is a **Jane Austen Trail Walk** from the market town of Alton to Chawton village and an **audio Walking Tour of Bath** to help visitors discover Jane Austen's world, seeing it come alive with every step.

DON'T MISS

To celebrate this momentous year in Austen history the **2025 Jane Austen Festival** will take place from **Fri 12 - Sun 21 Sept 2025** and in 2026, **Fri 11- Sun 20 Sept**. The **Jane Austen Centre** will be holding some extra special events in Bath throughout 2025.



and is open to the public. It has changed little since Jane's day and features memorial tablets to James Austen, his nephew William Knight and their families.

Overnight: Oakley Hall Hotel, where Jane Austen was a regular visitor.

Day 5. Hungerford, Reading, Windsor & Surrey

Return to the Great West Way through Berkshire's beautiful countryside on the Kennet & Avon Canal, to the pretty village of Kintbury near **Hungerford**. The Austen family visited Kintbury to see their friends known as the Fowle family. Take a trip on the **Kennet Horse Boat** which operates public horse-drawn barge trips for visitors. Freddie and Monty, the shire horses are bedecked in traditional harness and the boat is purpose built to the traditional style of canal boats in the 1800's and decorated in the bright colours of the 'roses and castles' canal style.

An afternoon trip to **Reading** to see the Abbey Gateway a Grade I listed Gateway overlooking the Forbury Gardens and is a substantial part of what remains of Reading Abbey. The Abbey Gateway was once part of the Reading Ladies Boarding School which was famously attended by Jane Austen and her sister Cassandra. The Reading Museum is also a fantastic visit and will arrange group visits to see Reading Abbey Gateway. You could also book a walking tour of the town or off the beaten track experience with a Blue Badge Guide from **Tours2Order**.

A few miles to the west of Reading is the National Trust's **Basildon Park**, a gorgeous 18th century mansion house, which famously was the star of the 2005 blockbuster film of *Pride and Prejudice*, starring Keira Knightley and Matthew Macfadyen.

If you're returning to London and have some extra time, consider making a stop in **Windsor**. Travel with **Windsor Carriages** (licensed since 1849) in a horse-drawn carriage, much like Jane Austen would have. Enjoy a ride with coachmen who share their stories and local knowledge of Windsor Great Park.



Jane Austen would have travelled through **Richmond-upon-Thames**, from Hampshire, to visit her brother Henry's house in Henrietta Street, London. If time allows, take a moment to stop and explore **Richmond Park**, **Marble Hill House** and nearby **Strawberry Hill House** and Syon House & Gardens, all of which are worth a visit.

If you're developing and distributing a Jane Austen 250 itinerary please contact Flowallace@GreatWestWay.co.uk for the latest news, help and advice.

DON'T MISS

Throughout 2025, Basildon Park has a special exhibition on the film and TV series filmed on-site, including *The Crown*, *Bridgerton* and of course *Pride and Prejudice*. There will be a series of Austen events in Reading, including a Jane Austen Afternoon Tea at the **Roseate Reading Hotel**, guided walks of the Abbey Quarter and Jane Austen's Reading and the world premiere of *Death Comes to Pemberley*, an Austen-themed thriller at the **Mill at Sonning**.

Places	Miles by road*
Bath to Bradford on Avon	7.2 miles
Bradford on Avon to Trowbridge	3.3 miles
Trowbridge to Stourton	19 miles
Stourton to Warminster	10.7 miles
Warminster to Salisbury	21.4 miles
Salisbury to Winchester	25 miles
Winchester to Chawton	16.2 miles
Chawton to Steventon	15 miles
Steventon to Hungerford	26.2 miles
Hungerford to Reading	28.1 miles
Reading to Windsor	20.8 miles
Windsor to Richmond	20.1 miles

*These are the total distances for the day.