A weekend with walks in Northleach

Northleach - Hidden Cotswold Wool Town

Merchants, music and markets...

Northleach is renowned for being the town with a workhouse at one end and a prison at the other. In between, you will find another treasure – Keith Harding’s World of Mechanical Music – with a unique collection of self-playing musical instruments and what has been described as the ‘best gift shop in the Cotswolds’.

The Old Prison is a fascinating house of correction, dating back to the 18th century, complete with an original cell block and court room. It is now home to the Cotswold Conservation Board’s ‘Escape to the Cotswolds’ Visitor Centre.

The magnificent church of St Peter and St Paul is sometimes called ‘the Cathedral of the Cotswolds’ and was restored by the wealthy wool merchants. This is a fine example of the 15th century Cotswold Perpendicular and houses some of the best wool merchant’s brasses in the country.

A walk along the High Street will unearth medieval burgage plots, the Market Place and the Green. Look out for the historic ‘cow passages’ between some of the properties around the Market Place.

King Henry III granted a charter in 1227 allowing a weekly market to be held, and an annual fair which still takes place on the last Saturday in June. The lively Charter Market is held every Wednesday from 8.30am to 2.30pm.

Over the hill, Eastington is one of a number of small settlements along the valley of the River Leach; delightful walking country and pure Cotswolds.

Walking in and around Northleach:

Short walks

Northleach, Hampnett and the Saltway approx 4.5 miles - An interesting circular walk from Northleach including the Old Prison, the beautiful Hampnett Valley and the Salt and Fosse Ways. Available from the Cotswolds Conservation Board (email: info@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

The ‘Walks Around Northleach’ booklet is available to purchase from most Northleach shops and includes the...
following three walks:

A walk to Hampnett and back approx 3.5 miles - After a short climb out of the town, this is a pleasant, fairly easy walk following footpaths and bridleways. Some of the footpaths could at times be difficult to see, due to standing crops or undergrowth. The small Church at Hampnett has an unusual decoratively painted interior and there are several pretty cottages around the old common, as well as some well-restored and converted farm buildings. Available to download.

Farmington Road, Bunkers Hill, Farmington Church and Upper End approx 4 miles - A good circular walk for a morning or afternoon with a chance to look around the nearby village of Farmington with its triangular green, peaceful cottages, large houses and pretty church. Available to download.

Oxens, Yanworth, Hangmans’s Stone approx 4 miles (plus possible to extension to Chedworth Roman Villa, approx further 4 miles) - The route takes you through a nature reserve, an estate village and over some high open farmland with excellent views of the Cotswold countryside. It is advisable to drive to the start point, 3 miles away, to avoid walking along the main A40. Or alternatively you can walk the whole thing.

National Trust Lodge Park approx 1 mile (approx 3 miles by road from Northleach) – Check opening hours of Lodge Park with National Trust beforehand. Explore the grounds of Lodge Park and the wider parkland, designed by Charles Bridgeman in the 18th century. You’ll pass the Lodge, a deer racing course and a Stone Age long barrow. There are also great views of the River Leach. Available to download.

Longer Walks
The Diamond Way - A roughly diamond shaped walk visiting many small villages using quiet footpaths. Imaginative and scenic route through Gloucestershire created by Ramblers Association North Cotswold group to celebrate the 60th Jubilee. Stretches from Northleach in the south to near Chipping Campden in the north. Guiting Power in the west and Bourton on the Water in the east. Available to download.

Accommodation that welcomes walkers

Bed & Breakfast
Harrington House, Bourton-on-the-Water
www.hfholidays.co.uk/holidays/harrington-house

Home Farm Holiday Cottages, Little Rissington
www.cotswoldshomefarm.com

Cottage
Easterleigh Cottage in Great Rissington
www.rentcotswoldcottage.com

Visitor Information Centre:
T: +44(0)1451 862000

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