

Bolthole  
RETREATS

YOUR GUIDE TO  
Northleach  
& Bibury

# Historic Lanes to Riverside Rows

Welcome to a corner of the countryside where Roman history, medieval wealth, and postcard-perfect rivers effortlessly intertwine. This curated guide uncovers the very best of [Northleach](#) and [Bibury](#), two distinct neighbours that capture the true essence of local life.

In Northleach, you will find a historic market town shaped by the ancient Fosse Way and architectural grandeur, while nearby Bibury offers riverside strolls along the crystal-clear waters of the River Coln. Beyond the famous landmarks, this patch of the hills is alive with vibrant independent eateries, wood-fired saunas, and quiet walking trails. Whether you are looking to delve into ancient history, sample a standout Sunday roast, or catch the last evening light on the historic weavers' cottages, use this insider directory to uncover the ultimate regional experiences.

Read on to find all the best local insider tips and suggestions – we hope you enjoy your stay!

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# Quintessentially Cotswolds

## BIBURY TROUT FARM, BIBURY

Founded in 1902, this is one of the oldest working trout farms in the country. Fed by the crystal-clear waters of the River Coln, it's a beautiful 15-acre site where you can feed the fish, explore the springs, or catch your own dinner.

## THE CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, NORTHLEACH

Often called the 'Cathedral of the Cotswolds', this magnificent 15th-century wool church is a testament to medieval wealth. Its soaring nave and intricate stone carvings are world-class, but the real highlight is the famous collection of wool merchant brasses.

## ARLINGTON ROW, BIBURY

Perhaps the most photographed street in England, these 14th-century weavers' cottages are the ultimate Cotswold icon. Preserved by the National Trust, the grey-stone gables and climbing plants look exactly as they have for centuries. Arrive early or late to enjoy the view without the crowds.

## LODGE PARK & SHERBORNE ESTATE, SHERBORNE

Located just five minutes from Northleach, this exceptional National Trust property is home to England's only surviving 17th-century deer park grandstand. Beyond the historic grandstand, the wider working estate offers a beautifully peaceful escape, with miles of waymarked walking trails winding through pristine water meadows, ancient woodland, and a unique local sculpture trail. Whilst the estate is open all year round, Lodge Park is only open on selected weekends through the year, notably in August.

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# Connect with Culture

## CHEDWORTH ROMAN VILLA, YANWORTH

Tucked away in a secluded wooded valley, this is one of the largest and most impressive Roman sites in Britain. You can walk along modern suspended walkways to see remarkably well-preserved mosaics and 1,700-year-old bathhouses.

## ST MARY'S CHURCH & THE SECRET VALLEY, HAMPNETT

Just a mile up the ancient Fosse Way from Northleach lies the tiny hamlet of Hampnett. Its exquisite 12th-century Norman church is a hidden cultural masterpiece, famous for its rare and breathtaking Victorian stencilled wall paintings that cover the entire chancel, offering a quiet, deeply atmospheric look into local artistic heritage.

## THE ARTS & CRAFTS HERITAGE TRAIL, CHEDWORTH VALLEY

While the Roman Villa captures ancient history, the surrounding valley is steeped in the late 19th-century Arts and Crafts movement. The quiet lanes between Northleach and Bibury are dotted with beautifully designed cottages, local stone carvings, and traditional drystone walling installations created by the historic craft guilds that revived the region's artistic identity.

# Wine and Dine

## THE WHEATSHEAF INN, NORTHLEACH

A local institution and a classic coaching inn. Known for its incredible Sunday roasts, roaring log fires, and a hidden courtyard garden, it's the go-to spot for a high-quality Cotswold meal.

## THE SHERBORNE ARMS, NORTHLEACH

Recently reimaged by a talented local team, this pub focuses on simple, seasonal, and incredibly well-executed food. It's the perfect blend of a traditional local and a destination gastropub.

## ROOTS & SEEDS CAFE KITCHEN FAR PEAK, NORTHLEACH

Housed in a beautifully converted, light-filled barn on the Far Peak estate, this sustainable dining hub offers fantastic breakfast, brunch, and lunch menus with a clear 'field to fork' focus. Alongside great coffee and artisan bakes, there is a dedicated taproom serving the full range of locally brewed Hawkstone beers and ciders.

## LYNWOOD & CO, NORTHLEACH

Sitting right in the heart of the Market Place inside the historic Island House, this independent favourite brings a slice of vibrant Australian café culture to the hills. Drop in for an exceptional, expert-level coffee, freshly baked artisan pastries, and their famously delicious organic sourdough brunch plates.

## THE CATHERINE WHEEL, BIBURY

A 15th-century gem with low beams and a massive stone fireplace. It's a warm, welcoming spot for a pint of local ale or a hearty pub classic after a stroll along the river.

## THE SWAN HOTEL, BIBURY

Offering refined dining right on the banks of the River Coln, The Swan is the place for a sophisticated lunch or a glass of wine while watching the river life glide by.

## ELEVEN, BIBURY

Sitting directly opposite the iconic Arlington Row, this stunning café, lifestyle gallery, and multi-tiered terrace garden celebrates the finest local, seasonal ingredients. Drop in for an artisan coffee and freshly baked pastry, or enjoy a relaxed lunch surrounded by beautiful bespoke design.

## THE TWIG, BIBURY

Breathing new life into the historic former village store, this stylishly rustic deli and coffee hub is a must-visit daytime hangout. Run by the clever team behind [The Stump](#), it is the ultimate spot for world-class artisan coffee, incredible loaded sourdough toasties, house-made focaccia sandwiches, and seasonal bakes.

# Revive & Relax

## THE SCENIC SAUNA, NORTHLEACH

Located at Far Peak, this wood-fired sauna and ice bath experience offers stunning views over the Cotswold countryside. It's a fantastic way to reset and soothe your muscles after a day of walking.

## TREATMENT ROOMS AT THE SWAN HOTEL, BIBURY

If you are looking for classic pampering without leaving the valley, the private treatment rooms tucked away inside The Swan Hotel offer a beautiful, peaceful sanctuary. They provide a range of soothing massages, facials, and holistic therapies using premium, natural products—perfect for a post-walk unwind right by the river.

## THE SHANTI SPACE, NEAR NORTHLEACH

For a deeply restorative and mindful experience, this beautiful wellness sanctuary located just outside Northleach offers small-group yoga sessions, sound healing, and meditation workshops. Set within a tranquil, beautifully converted stone barn, it is dedicated to slow wellness and mental reset.

## ARLINGTON ROW AT SUNSET

For a deeply restorative experience that costs nothing, visit Bibury's famous row as the sun begins to fade. The golden light on the stone and the sound of the river make for the ultimate peaceful stroll.

# Family Days Out

## FAR PEAK, NORTHLEACH

The ultimate outdoor activity and adventure hub. While the historic indoor walls have made way for exciting new developments, the site is now a premier destination for outdoor sports, boasting fantastic, state-of-the-art padel courts, a climbing tower, low ropes course, and a dedicated bike hire centre. It's perfectly positioned for exploring the network of quiet lanes that connect the local villages.

## THE OLD PRISON, NORTHLEACH

This fascinating 18th-century building was once a model house of correction and even served as the inspiration for prison designs across the globe, including London's Pentonville. Today, it is a brilliant cultural stop where you can explore the original courtroom and cells, learn about rural social history, and enjoy a fantastic coffee at the on-site café.

## NORTHLEACH PLAYGROUND & KING GEORGE'S FIELD, NORTHLEACH

If you have younger children who just need a classic, high-quality play park to run around in, the hidden community playground just off the town centre is brilliant. It features excellent modern climbing frames, swings, and zip lines, surrounded by a massive open field perfect for kicking a football around or setting up a family picnic.

## THE SECRET STEPPING STONES & RIVER DIPPING, BIBURY

A lovely, traditional way for children to experience the village away from the main crowds. Just a short wander down the river paths away from Arlington Row, you will find the historic stone bridges and shallow gravel beds of the River Coln. It is the ultimate local spot for children to safely paddle, spot wild ducks, and try a bit of traditional river dipping on a warm afternoon.

# Cotswolds Explorers

## THE BIBURY & RIVER COLN LOOP

A gentle 4-mile circular route that takes you through the heart of the village and out into the surrounding water meadows and woodland. It offers some of the best elevated views over the Coln Valley.

## THE FOSSE WAY WALK, NORTHLEACH

Follow the ancient Roman road out of Northleach on a circular walk to the tiny, beautiful hamlet of Hampnett. It's a quiet route that feels a world away from the busy tourist spots.