

THE
GREAT INNS
OF BRITAIN

Exploring Trails, Hills and Tracks
throughout Britain

Cycling Guide

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Introduction

The Great Inns of Britain

The Great Inns of Britain is a hand-picked collection of traditional coaching inns and small independent luxury hotels with rich histories and charismatic owners, found in some of the most idyllic countryside and coastal locations across the UK.

Each room is unique, some offering antique surroundings that will transport you to another time, whilst others have modern stylings, both bursting with character and perfect for an indulgent escape. Our talented and creative chefs are proud to showcase their seasonal menus, using locally sourced produce to create fresh and delicious meals just for you. A great meal deserves a great accompaniment - and all of the Great Inns offer an extensive wine list and quirky local ales, a perfect way to end your day of cycling the trails that surround the inns.

After a long day of peddling through the countryside, stop off at one of our Great Inns and we'll make sure you're rested and recovered with our heart-warming hospitality, and staff who go out of their way to ensure you have an unforgettable stay.

This guide includes beginner-friendly trails, to challenging mountain climbs, so whether you're an avid cyclist or still using your stabilisers, the Great Inns of Britain Cycling Guide is a fantastic place to start!

Top Tips

Choosing your Route

When choosing your cycling route, it is important to pick one that suits your interests, time frame, abilities and comfort zone. There are hundreds of routes to choose from across the country, you'll find some with hilly terrain and mountainous scenery and some that are gentle ambles through the countryside, a variety of which fall on the doorstep of our inns.

Navigation

Whilst most cycling trails from The Great Inns of Britain are well signposted, it is important to familiarise yourself with the route beforehand and have some basic navigation skills, to make sure you don't lose your way.

Type of Bike

You don't need a high end machine to get started, just something that you find comfortable and reliable – you're going to be sitting on it for a while! Mountain bikes are better for the thrill seekers interested in rougher terrain, but they can be heavier to operate. All-road bikes offer better versatility across different surfaces, and electric bikes will give you that extra push up the hill when you need it most! We recommend leaving it to the professionals - our guide tells you the closest bike hire to each inn, so when contacting them, be sure to let them know the types of trails you're interested in, and they'll point you in the right direction.

Consult the Weather Forecast

It's always a good idea to check the weather forecast ahead of your trip. The changeable UK weather also means packing for all weathers is crucial. And even if the forecast looks grey and overcast, it's always recommended to wear sun protection to shield your skin.

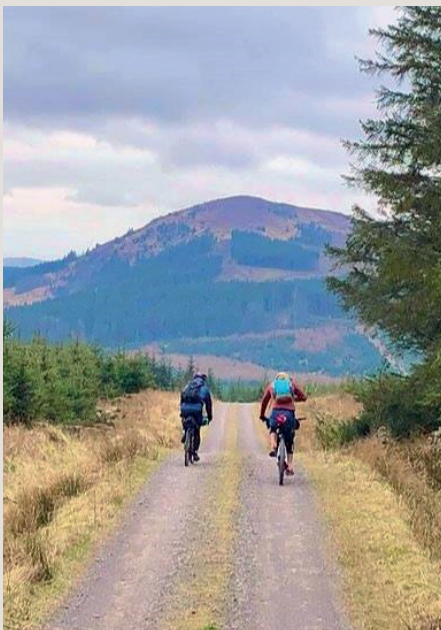
Staying Safe

Most of our routes steer you off the beaten track to discover some of the beautiful countryside and coastal locations that Britain has to offer, but avoiding cars and other traffic all together may be difficult. When on the road be sure to stick to the left side in the UK, and signal your intentions so those around you know what you are about to do, but always look over your shoulder before manoeuvring to make sure it's safe. It's also best practice to ride single file on busier roads, but if you're still unsure, look up your local cycling proficiency group, and brush up on your skills before heading off on your adventure.

Whilst Cycling

Consider the Countryside Code for Cyclists

It is important to familiarise yourself with the Countryside Code which provides guidance for how to have a great time while looking after nature and other people around you. Respect, protect, enjoy!



Where to Cycle

The Peacock, Derbyshire

The Peacock is nestled on the edge of the Peak District National Park with various cycling routes traversing the beautiful Derbyshire countryside nearby. Guests can visit the local town of Bakewell, home of the Bakewell pudding, or ride over to Haddon Hall, the home of Lord and Lady Edward Manners, owners of The Peacock.

Those wanting to hire bikes can do so from the nearby Hassop Station, where guests at The Peacock receive a 15% discount.

Routes

Beginner - Whitworth Park and cafe loop from Rowsley - This mostly paved route takes cyclists across Whitworth park and is suitable for all fitness levels. It also includes a café pitstop and can be accessed by public transport.

Intermediate - Monsal Trail - This route is completely traffic free following the former Midland Railway line for eight-and-a-half miles between Blackwell Mill, in Chee Dale and Coombs Road, at Bakewell. The journey will take you through the former railway tunnels, four of which are lit during daylight hours with sensors, although we would advise bringing a torch so you don't get caught out.

Expert - High Peak Trail loop to Chatsworth House - The High Peak Trail runs for 17 miles from Dowlow near Buxton to High Peak Junction at Cromford, with beautiful views of the Chatsworth Estate.



Where to Cycle

Shibden Mill Inn, West Yorkshire

The Shibden Mill Inn sits at the heart of the Shibden Valley, a beautiful example of natural beauty with various routes available to see what the Halifax countryside has to offer. Shibden Park and the home of world famous Anne Lister, Shibden Hall, is within cycling distance from the inn giving budding cyclists plenty of options. Bikes can be hired from Cycle Gear Halifax and The Bike Mill both of which are also happy to help to repair your bike.

Routes

Beginner - Shibden Valley Circular Via Shibden Mill Inn – This short journey can be started right from Shibden Mill Inn, and takes you on a brief ride through the Shibden Valley, with elevated sections giving you magnificent views of the Halifax countryside.

Intermediate - Brighouse and around Shibden Valley - This circular 26km route starts at Hove Edge sandwich shop before passing by Shibden Hall, through Shibden Valley, Spen Valley greenway and Wyke before returning to the sandwich shop.

Expert - Shibden Wall - This cycle route is not for the faint hearted, with a high gradient and some tough cobbles to tackle which is sure to test even the most experienced cyclist despite only being around half a mile. The route is well worth the effort as you will be rewarded with breath-taking views of Shibden on your journey.



Where to Cycle

The Selkirk Arms, Dumfries & Galloway

Kirkcudbright is renowned as one of the best cycle sites in the world, a perfect base to explore Dumfries and Galloway with secluded beaches, mountain trails and breath-taking Glens.

The Selkirk Arms has also partnered with Galloway Cycling Holidays who can help you plan your cycling break in Dumfries and Galloway, offering cycling packages and routes tailored to your specific interests.

If you need to hire a bike or require emergency fixes William Law on St Cuthbert Street stock bikes for hire, and also offers repairs.

E-bikes are also available from the inn to hire, as well as charging stations and secure storage if you are bringing your own bike.

Routes

Beginner - Galloway Cycling Holidays offers a 10 mile bike ride, starting and ending at Drumlanrig Castle, retracing the route the inventor of the bicycle, Kirkpatrick MacMillan may have taken in his life.

Intermediate - Visit the nearby Glentool trails and mountain bike through the Dumfries mountains. Various trails are available with moderate difficulty.

Expert - Galloway Cycling Holidays also offer a six day biking tour from Thornhill to Kirkcudbright, including sights such as Dundrennan Abbey, Maclellan's Castle and a number of other prehistoric sites.



Where to Cycle

The Rose & Crown, Teesdale

The Rose & Crown is situated in Teesdale, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and vivid wildlife to discover on two wheels.

Stunning scenery and quiet country lanes makes this a perfect area for cyclists. You can enjoy miles of peaceful roads including some challenging climbs if you so desire, and there are plenty of villages scattered around the dale with pubs and tea shops for refreshments. Bikes can be hired at Ride Hamsterley nearby.

Routes

Beginner - Romaldkirk Cycle Ride - This seven mile circular ride follows the Teesdale Railway Path, taking you through Mickleton and Romaldkirk with options to take a break at any of the local cafes and pubs.

Intermediate - Barnard Castle - Why not take a ride to Barnard Castle? You can go right from the inn, and also see Mickleton and Middleton in Teesdale on your two hour adventure.

Expert - Mountain Biking at Hamsterley Forest - For those looking for a more daring experience, try one of the many biking tracks in Hamsterley Forest, with rugged descents and steep technical climbs to test out your cycling prowess.



Where to Cycle

The Inn at Whitewell, Lancashire

Guests at The Inn at Whitewell have the opportunity to explore Ribble Valley and the local Lancashire countryside, with quiet lanes and roads for a relaxed holiday or numerous routes across the fells for those wanting to go offroad.

The inn also has three Electric Bikes for guests to hire for those that seek to take in scenery a more leisurely pace. Bikes can also be hired from the nearby Ribble Valley E-Bikes Ltd or Cycles Recycled.

Routes

Beginner - Clitheroe to Waddington - This short route is best for beginners, giving the cyclists a view of Waddow Hall and an introduction to the Lancashire countryside.

Intermediate Coffee – Route Planning loop from Tosside - The route is suitable for all skill levels, with mostly paved surfaces, taking an estimated hour and a half.

Expert - Clitheroe and The Forest of Bowland loop - This route is best tackled by experts, but those brave enough to tackle this four-and-a-half-hour journey will get a view of the Stocks reservoir, The Forest of Bowland and Rodhill top.



Where to Cycle

The Kings Head, Bledington

The Kings Head is surrounded by the rolling hills of the Cotswolds, and only a stone's throw away from idyllic historical Cotswold villages such as Westcote and Icomb. The inn is the perfect base to explore the surrounding countryside year round.

Routes

Beginner - The Swan Inn, Chalbury loop from Kingham is a near three hour route that takes you across the beautiful Oxfordshire countryside and through the village of Chalbury. Your journey will take you past Chalbury Deli and café - the perfect place for a mid-trip lunch break.

Intermediate - Tour along Asthall Parish Church – This three hour journey includes highlights such as The Church of St Mary, dating back to around 1249 and Ascot d'Oilly Castle.

Expert - Ancient Stones & Old Manors - Immerse yourself in local history with this circular route from Kingham station, the neighbouring village to Bledington. You will be able to visit the Rollright Stones, a site steeped in legend, and have beautiful views from Kingham Hill and Chastleton Camp, although this does mean there are a few steep climbs!



Where to Cycle

White Horse & Griffin, North Yorkshire

The White Horse & Griffin is the perfect base to start your cycling adventure, with secure on-site storage for up to 10 bicycles they also have an on-call friendly bicycle mechanic from the only bike shop in Whitby. There are miles of Yorkshire coast accessible by bike and longer routes inland for those looking for a more challenging adventure!

Routes

Beginner - The Cinder Track is a lovely traffic free coastal cycle way following the route of a disused railway line from Whitby to Scarborough . At 21 miles in length and relatively flat, it is fun without being too difficult. Passing through Robin Hood's Bay and a number of other small villages there is plenty to see and do along the way.

Intermediate - The nearby Dalby Forest (17 miles away by car) is a mountain biker's dream. All standards of ability and experience are catered for, from family rides and beginning cycles to expert routes on their colour coded trails. For experts there is even a Bike Park with table tops, berms and rhythm sections.

Expert - Route 165 crosses Route 65 - (Hornsea via York to Middlesbrough) Some 35 miles West of Whitby at Hutton Rudby. This route runs South to North along the Western edge of the Cleveland Hills before crossing the Moors to Whitby.



Where to Cycle

The Boar's Head, North Yorkshire

The Boar's Head sits on the Ripley Castle estate, surrounded by the Yorkshire countryside and within cycling distance to Harrogate and the market towns of Boroughbridge, Knaresborough, Masham and Pateley Bridge. If you are needing to hire a bike or repair a puncture, there's many cycle shops in neighbouring Harrogate that would be happy to help, with Chevin Cycles Harrogate being a well-regarded example.

Routes

Beginner - Nidderdale Greenway - Harrogate to Ripley Cycle Route - This route is perfect for beginners and in only four miles connects Bilton, North Harrogate, and Knaresborough with Ripley, completely traffic free.

Intermediate - Studley Royal Park loop from north Harrogate - This two-and-a-half hour route takes guests from Ripley Castle to Studley Royal park, giving them the opportunity to visit the ruins of Fountains Abbey.

Expert - Bilton Greenway – Ripley Castle loop from Bilton - This route starts at Ripley Castle and takes a circular route through Summerbridge and back through Darley. Guests can stop off at the famous Brimham Rocks for an added leg to the journey. The trip does include some steep hills so would be best for more expert cyclists.



Where to Cycle

The Hundred House, Shropshire

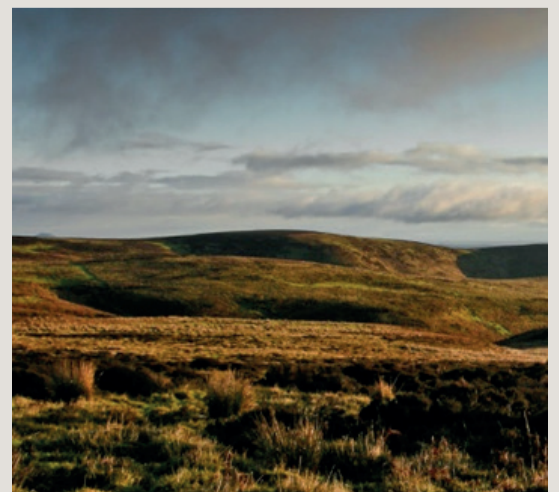
The Hundred House is nestled in the heart of Shropshire, with a varied landscape of sleepy market towns and nearby Telford waiting for you to explore. Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Shropshire's famous Severn Valley Railway and Wenlock are all within cycling distance of the inn. Need to hire a bike? The local Telford and Welkin council offers bike hire at competitive rates.

Routes

Beginner - Telford to Ironbridge Gorge - This route is a mixture of canal beds and disused railway lines. Passing through woodland, meadow and parkland, connecting Telford to the World Heritage Site of Ironbridge Gorge.

Intermediate - Shropshire Cycleway East - This 36 mile route starts from Telford to Cleobury Mortimer and takes guests past the Ironbridge, Bridgenorth, Severn Valley Railway, the Clee Hills and Rays farm. This journey is mostly on roads, and gives guests a whistlestop tour of the beautiful surrounding villages.

Expert - 185m Shropshire Cycleway - This route is around the perimeter of the county and is best for experienced cyclists. Those that do take on the route are rewarded with beautiful views of the best Shropshire has to offer.



What to Take

You've got your bike and helmet... but what else?

The Practical Items

It's important to carry a puncture repair kit and tyre pump at all times when cycling, there are plenty of pocket-sized options and you don't want to be walking back down the hill if disaster strikes, it's much more fun to ride down! Don't forget that you'll need a bike lock for when you want to leave your bike for any length of time, such as when you visit one of our Great Inns for some well-deserved, mid-ride refreshments.

Clothing

Flat, comfortable shoes are an essential for cycling, ones with good grip will give you more control, and make climbing those hills that little bit easier. Make sure you can be seen! Reflective clothing is important to make yourself as visible as possible to other traffic, and waterproof clothing will help with the unpredictable British weather. Our main recommendation is to make sure you're comfortable, wearing clothes you'd wear on a long walk, that you don't mind getting a little muddy in the great outdoors!

The Importance of Snacks!

When staying at one of The Great Inns of Britain, you can start your day the right way with a hearty cooked breakfast. But cycling is hungry work so making sure you bring snacks along for the journey is a necessity, especially when you want to stop and take in the breath-taking views for a while. Afterwards, you'll be warmly welcomed back to one of our Great Inns, where our talented and creative chefs will use locally sourced produce to create fresh and delicious meals just for you.



Explore more of the Great Outdoors

You may just want to go on a gentle ride to discover the local paths or villages during your stay at one of The Great Inns of Britain; but if you're keen to cover more ground, whether on foot, bike or horseback, then the hills, moors and valleys that surround many of the inns make the perfect place to start - and finish - your adventure.

You'll find the Inn Keepers and their teams are happy to offer advice on the best routes for hiking and biking, and are willing to answer any questions you may have about the local area.

The Great Inns of Britain also boast some excellent spots for private fishing and shooting, often very close by and, in some cases, on their own land. Many of the inns also warmly welcome visits by dogs, so your four-legged friends needn't be left at home.



Discover more of the Great Inns



Discover more of the Great Inns

The Great Inns of Britain is a collection of traditional coaching inns and small luxury hotels; our hand picked properties are located in Britain's best countryside and coastal regions - we can't wait to welcome you soon.

Find your perfect inn...

● The Selkirk Arms, Dumfries & Galloway

● The Rose & Crown, County Durham

● The White Horse and Griffin, North Yorkshire

● The Boar's Head, North Yorkshire

● Shibden Mill Inn, West Yorkshire

● The Inn at Whitewell, Lancashire

● The Peacock at Rowsley, Derbyshire

● The Hundred House Hotel, Shropshire

● The King's Head Inn, The Cotswolds



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