

Gloucester

Make the most of your West Country Rugby World Cup trip to Gloucester and take in the medieval history, glorious waterways and rolling landscapes.

Gloucester <http://www.visit-gloucestershire.co.uk/>, with its ornate cathedral, sits between the limestone villages of the Cotswolds and the River Severn. It enjoys a rich nautical history with rejuvenated Victorian quays and serene canal, which was once busy with cargo. Visitors can follow in the footsteps of the city's most famous merchant resident, Dick Whittington, through medieval side streets and courtyards in the central Westgate Quarter. Visit the neighbouring spa town of Cheltenham for its prestigious steeplechase meetings and grand Regency architecture.

Don't miss

Start your city pilgrimage at **Gloucester Cathedral** <http://www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk>, and marvel at medieval stained glass windows, the Norman nave and Gothic tower. Across from the cathedral at College Court, learn about Gloucester's famous literary resident Beatrix Potter at **The House of the Tailor of Gloucester** <http://www.tailor-of-gloucester.org.uk/>, a museum and shop inspired her sketches and favourite book *The Tailor of Gloucester*. Revisit the 1800s at the **Historic Docks** <http://www.gloucesterquays.co.uk/attractions/?Distance=2/> where merchants and sailors dropped anchor at the inland shipping port, and treat sporty types to a behind the scenes tour at the 16,500-capacity Kingsholm Stadium, home of **Gloucester Rugby** <http://www.gloucesterrugby.co.uk>.

Great for families

An easy way to explore the city's waterways, like the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal with its leafy towpaths and tiny bridgemen's houses, is by hopping on a cruise boat at the Victorian docks. Tours take 45 minutes and leave from the **Gloucester Waterways Museum** <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/gloucester-waterways-museum/boat-hire-and-trips>. Back on dry land, little cowboys can ride mini tractors and meet bison and deer in the 'wild west' at **Cattle Country Adventure Park** <http://www.cattlecountry.co.uk>.

Go shopping

Bargains galore can be nabbed at **Gloucester Quays** <http://www.gloucesterquays.co.uk> outlet shopping mall, filled with popular clothing and homeware brands. **Gloucester Antiques Centre** <http://www.gacl.co.uk/>, located in a former Victorian warehouse, is a three-floor treasure trove with curio like retro furniture, old jewellery and vintage clothes. Both outlets are open seven days a week.

Explore the area

Motor between pastel-coloured stone villages and hamlets in the Cotswold hills surrounding neighbouring Cheltenham on the aptly named **Romantic Road**

http://www.visitcheltenham.com/info/15/plan_your_visit/21/the_romantic_road. Around the time of the Rugby World Cup, those on the pulse will be able to experience a seasonal natural phenomenon. The **Severn Bore** <http://www.severn-bore.co.uk/> is a huge tidal wave that surges along the nearby Severn Estuary during the Autumn Equinox.

Get active

There's no need to wait for winter ski trips when you can hit the slopes on a ski lesson at **Gloucester Ski and Snowboard Centre** <http://www.gloucesterski.com>. All abilities are catered for, with ski lessons on request. For an indoor activity for all the family there's rock climbing at the **Warehouse Climbing Centre** <http://www.the-warehouse.co.uk>.

Did you know?

John Stafford Smith, who composed America's national anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*, was born in Gloucester in March 1750.

Where to stay

- Budget: Travel Lodge Gloucester Hotel <http://www.travelodge.co.uk/hotels/395/Gloucester-hotel>
- Moderate: Hatton Court <http://hatton-court.co.uk/>
- Luxury: The Greenway Hotel and Spa <http://www.thegreenwayhotelandspa.com/>
- Accessible: Hallmark Hotels Gloucester http://www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/our_hotels/gloucester/

Where to eat

- Budget: Lily's Restaurant and Tearoom <http://www.lilysrestaurant.co.uk/>
- Moderate: Café Rene <http://www.cafere.ne.co.uk/Core/CafeRene/Pages/Default.aspx>
- The Wharf House <http://www.thewharfhouse.co.uk/>
- Accessible: Prezzo <http://www.prezorestaurants.co.uk/restaurant/gloucester>

Events

Try to coincide your trip to Gloucester with one of these great events.

- Heritage Open Days <http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/directory/county/gloucestershire> [R1]
- Surfing on the Severn Bore tidal wave <http://www.severn-bore.co.uk/>
- Underground Festival <http://www.undergroundfestival.co.uk/>
- The Times Cheltenham Literature Festival <http://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/literature>
- Cheltenham Racecourse: The Showcase <http://www.cheltenham.co.uk/fixtures/the-showcase/about/>

Getting there and around

- Air: The nearest major airports are Birmingham Airport <http://www.birminghamairport.co.uk/> and Bristol Airport <http://www.bristolairport.co.uk/>. Both are just one hour away by car. Scheduled flights serve the Isle of Man, Belfast and Jersey from Gloucestershire Airport <http://www.gloucestershireairport.co.uk/>, a 15-minute drive from the city centre.
- Rail: Gloucester Station is two and a half hours from London Paddington Station.
- Road: Gloucester can be accessed from junction 11, 11A and 12 of the M5.

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