

Escape to South Somerset's Gardens



Forde Abbey Gardens

South Somerset is perfect for a long weekend or mid-week break, blessed with extraordinary gardens to inspire everyone. Drive through beautiful natural landscapes where historic houses and manors are the backdrop to discovering both quintessentially English gardens – and those of imagination and vision.

DAY 1

Forde Abbey

Start your voyage of discovery by heading off to a garden rich in history – the award-winning Forde Abbey and Gardens. The gardens showcase year-round formal and informal areas including topiary, a bog garden, walled vegetable garden and arboretum – and boast the country's highest powered fountain. Catch your breath with a break at the lovely Undercroft Tearoom.

Lunch

When it's time for lunch, friendly local cafes such as The Kitchen at Jordan's Courtyard or Monks Yard are good spots to recharge.

Hestercombe

You may think Forde Abbey can't be beaten but an afternoon spent immersed in Hestercombe's magnificent fifty acres may change your mind. Garden design spans four centuries - a Georgian landscaped garden, Victorian terrace and shrubbery and Lutyens and Jekyll's Edwardian garden - all surrounded by stunning views across Somerset. If you want to stop, afternoon tea and snacks, or meals are served in The Stables Café or in the Bampfylde Hall Restaurant.





DAY 2 - Option 1 - A day exploring some of the glories of the National Trust

South Somerset is the setting for unique, characterful National Trust houses and gardens all of which have cafes and plant nurseries. Barrington Court, Tintinhull and Lytes Cary are small and close together, making it a fascinating tour for a day. In contrast, Montacute House is larger and surrounded by a garden and extensive parkland. If that appeals, one or two of the following properties could be swapped for a visit to Montacute.

Barrington Court - The Lyle family, of Tate and Lyle fame, made this a productive garden – a philosophy which continues. In addition to the kitchen garden there's a walled white garden plus rose, iris and lily gardens – all influenced by Gertrude Jekyll.

Tintinhull Garden – a charming, peaceful garden with pools, manicured lawns, beautiful borders, a working kitchen garden and orchard. Created initially by Phyllis Reiss, who was an untrained amateur with a vision. It was one of the UK's most distinguished garden designers and writers – Penelope Hobhouse who built on Reiss's imagination and experimental spirit to make it the special garden we see today.

Lytes Cary Manor - The magical Arts and Crafts inspired garden was created in the early 1900's. Designed with yew topiary and stone walls to create a series of rectangular 'rooms' which are planted to suit every mood. Today, enjoy a magnificent herbaceous border, sweeping lawns, the restful sound of a water fountain, an orchard and walks along the River Cary.

Dinner

As well as lunches and snacks at any of the National Trust properties there are lovely welcoming pubs for hearty meals. The Barrington Boar, a country pub, restaurant and rooms is close to Barrington House, The Crown & Victoria can be found virtually opposite Tintinhull Garden. The Kingsdon Inn at Kingsdon is just a few miles from Tintinhull and Lytes Cary.



DAY 2- Option 2 – A day exploring small, unique gardens

These gardens are close together giving the opportunity to take in the lovely Saxon market town of Somerton as well as driving through numerous hamstone villages with their beguiling ancient cottages, manor houses and farmyards.

East Lambrook Manor Gardens

East Lambrook Manor Gardens is the iconic and quintessentially English cottage garden created by the celebrated 20th century plantswoman and gardening writer Margery Fish. It was here that she developed her own style of gardening, combining old-fashioned and contemporary plants in a relaxed and informal manner to create a garden of immense beauty and charm.

The English Heritage Grade 1 listed garden is characterised by many winding paths through abundant borders and is renowned as the premier example of the English cottage garden style. It has noted collections of snowdrops, hellebores and hardy geraniums and there is an excellent specialist hardy plant nursery in the garden.

Lunch

There's a little café at the gardens or the lovely Rose and Crown pub opposite. A little further afield is a café on a working farm - The Old Dairy at Bower Hinton. The menu is varied, often using produce from the farm and they have a delightful farm shop too.

National Trust Gardens

We suggest you spend a relaxing afternoon enjoying one of the characterful National Trust gardens listed in Day 2 (Option 1) - you are spoilt for choice!

Dinner

Great food can be enjoyed at Somerton's White Hart or 28 Market Place or the Devonshire Arms - a former hunting lodge in the lovely village of Long Sutton.



DAY 3 – A Modern Twist

Spend the day visiting two of South Somerset’s ambitious, exciting new creations – both enhanced by stunning countryside. Or, if you’d rather take it a little easy before heading home, choose just the one. There is plenty to keep you busy at both.

The Piet Oudolf Field, Hauser & Wirth

The internationally renowned landscape designer plants swathes of perennials and grasses with year-round interest to stunning effect. The Oudolf Field is a garden for all seasons from fresh spring blooms to rich colours of summer and finally to the delicate seed heads of autumn and winter. The Chilean architect Smiljan Radić’s pavilion is a striking backdrop to the garden.

Lunch

The Roth Bar and Grill at Hauser & Wirth offers a vibrant and convivial eating place. Enjoy a gastronomic lunch surrounded by contemporary art. Open for lunch, afternoon drinks and snacks and evening meals. Also in Bruton, try At the Chapel for a Mediterranean style lunch or a takeaway wood-fired pizza.

The Newt in Somerset

You’ll find The Newt just a few miles from Hauser & Wirth – a country estate with fabulous gardens to explore as well as acres of woodland and farmland. You can lose yourself on wild woodland walks, admire both formal planted gardens and stunning, innovative design. There are lakes, ponds and cascades and a walled parabola concealing an apple tree maze. Enjoy the tree walkway, visit The Story of Gardening Experience and stroll in the Deer Park. Take a garden tour if you’d like to learn more about the garden’s history. Cyder tours are also on offer. There’s The Garden Café, Cyder Bar or Gelateria for refreshments.

Dinner

There are some lovely informal restaurants for dinner in Bruton. Osip is a Michelin star farm to table restaurant presenting delicious local dishes using whatever is in season on the day. Matt’s Kitchen opens for supper with an ever-changing imaginative menu. You can also have supper at Hauser & Wirth’s Roth Bar and Grill or dinner at The Newt’s, The Botanical Rooms.

Useful Information

Disclaimer – please check individual places for latest opening times and guidelines.

Gardens

Forde Abbey & Gardens, Chard TA20 4LU

T: 01460 221290

www.fordeabbey.co.uk

Hestercombe Gardens, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton TA2 8LG

T: 01823 413923

www.hestercombe.com

Barrington Court (NT), Barrington, Nr Ilminster TA19 0NQ

T: 01460 241938

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/barrington-court

Lytes Cary Manor (NT), Nr Somerton TA11 7HU

T: 01458 224471

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lytes-cary-manor

Montacute House (NT), Montacute, Nr Yeovil, TA15 6XP

T: 01935 823289

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house

Tintinhull Garden (NT), Nr Yeovil TA11 7HU

T: 01458 224471

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/tintinhull-garden

East Lambrook Manor Gardens, East Lambrook, South Petherton TA13 5HH

T: 01460 240328

www.eastlambrook.com

Hauser & Wirth, Durslade Farm, Dropping Lane, Bruton BA19 ONL

T: 01749 814060

www.hauserwirth.com

The Newt in Somerset, Bruton BA7 7NG

T: 01963 577777

www.thenewtinsomerset.com



Suggestions for Nearby Places to Eat & Drink

At the Chapel, 28 High Street, Bruton BA10 0AE

T: 01749 814070

www.atthechapel.co.uk

Crown and Victoria Inn, 14 Farm Street, Tintinhull, Yeovil BA22 8PZ

T: 01935 823341

www.thecrownandvictoria.co.uk

Matt's Kitchen, 51 High Street, Bruton BA10 0AW

T: 01749 812027

www.mattskitchen.co.uk

Monks Yard, Horton Manor, Horton Cross, Ilminster TA19 9PY

T: 01460 200020/259286

www.monksyard.co.uk

Old Dairy Café, Bower Hinton Farm, Back Lane, Martock TA12 6LH

T: 07801 639937

www.theolddairycafe.co.uk

Osip Restaurant, 1 High Street, Bruton BA10 0AB

T: 01749 813322

www.osiprestaurant.com

Roth Bar & Grill, Durslade Farm, Dropping Lane, Bruton BA10 0NL

T: 01749 814700

www.rothbarandgrill.co.uk

The Barrington Boar, Barrington, Ilminster TA19 0JB

T: 01460 259281

www.thebarringtonboar.co.uk

The Botanical Rooms, The Newt in Somerset, Bruton BA7 7NG

T: 01963 577777

www.thenewtinsomerset.com/botanical-rooms

The Devonshire Arms, Long Sutton TA10 9LP

T: 01458 241271

www.thedevonshirearms.com

The Kingsdon Inn, Kingsdon TA11 7LG

T: 01935 840543

www.kingsdoninn.co.uk

The Kitchen Café & Terrace at Jordans Courtyard, Horton Cross, Ilminster TA19 9PY

T: 01460 298608

www.jordanscourtyard.co.uk

The Rose and Crown, Silver Street, East Lambrook, South Petherton TA13 5HF

T: 01460 240433

www.roseandcrowneastlambrook.com

The White Hart, Market Place, Somerton TA11 7LX

T: 01458 272273

www.whitehartsomerton.com

28 Market Place, Somerton TA11 7NB

T: 01458 333444

www.28marketplace.co.uk