

# Treasures, History & Heritage in every Nook, Cranny & Landscape



**This itinerary is perfect for a long weekend or mid-week break and will take you into the heart of some of the area's fascinating history and heritage, discovering the largest historic towns of Crewkerne and Yeovil and their surrounding areas.**

South Somerset has countless charming villages, many with thatched cottages, picture postcard village greens and centuries old inns that still beat at the heart of their communities. Whatever your particular passion for the past, whether it's taking in the traditional farming and woodland landscapes, exploring grand old houses, gardens, museums, follies and churches, hillforts, or sampling our traditional food and drink, there is plenty of choice on offer.

## **Day 1, Heritage in every Nook & Cranny...**

Start your day in the historic, attractive stone built market town of Crewkerne (TA18) which has its origins in Saxon times. The name derives from 'cruc' – a hill, and 'aern' – a house or storehouse. The 15th century church, St Bartholomew's, overlooking Bincombe Valley, was built with the wealth of the flourishing medieval wool industry. The town centre is a conservation area with some fine examples of 19th Century Georgian houses.

A visit to the **Crewkerne & District Museum & Heritage Centre** will provide a fascinating insight into the town's heritage. It once had the status of being a Saxon royal mint, an important stopping place for travellers, and benefitted from great prosperity based on the textile industry. Founded in 1988 the museum illustrates these things and equally shows how ordinary people lived and worked at various periods in time.

The town is famed for its **Antiques Trail** which takes you around the town, visiting 13 antiques outlets. The trail leaflet is available to download at [www.aboutcrewkerne.co.uk/antiques-trail](http://www.aboutcrewkerne.co.uk/antiques-trail). If you are passionate about antiques you may like to pick up a copy of 'The Antiques Tourist' which provides information on many antique, vintage and reclamation services across the South West. Copies available from the **Antiques Bazaar**, at The Old Textile Mill, South Street TA18 8AG, to download from [www.theantiquetourist.co.uk](http://www.theantiquetourist.co.uk) or from our South Somerset Visitor Information Centre.



If you have the time, explore the beautiful walks from the town centre, details of the historic Blue Plaque Trail and 5 town walks are available from the **Local Information Centre** at the Town Hall or you can download in advance from [www.aboutcrewkerne.co.uk/town-trail](http://www.aboutcrewkerne.co.uk/town-trail). There are further walks to enjoy along the River Parrett Trail, or at the beautiful **Bincome Beeches Nature Reserve** on the north side of the town. Maps available to download from Crewkerne Walks ([gps-routes.co.uk](http://gps-routes.co.uk)) and [www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com).

Back in the town **The Crooked Swan** is a good choice for some post walk refreshment. The cosy 18th century coaching inn has a fine interior with exposed steel beams and open fire. Outside there's a lovely garden area to relax in on warmer days. Alternatively, a short drive away **Haselbury Mill** at Haselbury Plucknett provides a beautiful setting surrounded by acres of breathtaking gardens and countryside. Sample the chef's specials at the Lakeside restaurant or enjoy pub favourites at the Windy Miller's. The traditional, stylish **Lord Poulett Arms** in picturesque Hinton St George is also a great choice for traditional local ales and delicious locally sourced lunches. All these establishments also offer excellent accommodation.

After enjoying your lunch venture north through the scenic landscape and pretty hamstone villages to **Somerset Cider Brandy & Burrow Hill Cider** at Kingsbury Episcopi. Depending on the season you may see harvesting, cider making or distilling. Follow the orchard trail where the trees are in blossom in May and in autumn are laden with apples. Visit the cider house shop where you can sample cider and the unique Somerset cider brandy among the oak vats, barrels and presses – all the paraphernalia associated with 170 years of cider making. (Guided tours can be arranged.) There is a fantastic range of ciders and brandy to purchase and take home to remember this wonderful area. We thoroughly recommend you cross the road and walk to the top of Burrow Hill to admire the incredible views of the Somerset Levels. On a good day you can see Glastonbury Tor in the distance.

### **Evening Entertainment – a haven for culture vultures**

Music and culture are an important part of life in South Somerset and we're lucky to have a great variety of theatres and art centres where you can enjoy everything from national touring productions at Yeovil's **Octagon Theatre** to Shakespeare's plays and live bands and festivals across the region.

**Westlands Entertainment Centre** in Yeovil also hosts local amateur dramatics shows and many famous comedians on their UK tours. **Ilminster Arts Centre** at the Meeting House has a vibrant programme of art exhibitions and music performances and **The David Hall** in South Petherton is known locally as 'The small hall with the big reputation' offering concerts, theatre and film. **The Swan Theatre** in Yeovil is an outstanding example of non-professional theatre produced professionally with a range of amateur productions. Check out events on [www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com) or [www.facebook.com/WhatsOnSomerset](http://www.facebook.com/WhatsOnSomerset)



## Day 2, Discover Treasures & Secret Gems...

### Option 1: Montacute, Ham Hill Country Park & Cadbury Castle

Head to the beautiful hamstone village of Montacute where you can visit the breathtaking Elizabethan mansion, **Montacute House** owned by The National Trust. Built to flaunt both wealth and power, today its glittering façade shelters nationally important collections of furniture and textiles, 500 year old tapestries and more than 50 portraits on loan from the National Portrait Gallery. Outside you can walk in Elizabethan footsteps through the beautiful formal garden and discover the parkland. Visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house) for details. Café, gift shop and plant sales.

Also in the village is the **Montacute TV Radio Toy Museum** where you can walk back in time from the birth of TV and radio to the modern day. The museum is like a 'Tardis'. Their charming tearoom is also worth a visit.

Only 1.5 miles away is the Green Flag award-winning **Ham Hill Country Park**. People have been drawn to Ham Hill for thousands of years, and it's easy to see why. Offering incredible views of the South Somerset Moors, Exmoor and the Mendip Hills, Ham Hill is a 390 acre open access country park centred on a huge Iron Age hill fort. Meals and snacks are available at **The Prince of Wales** throughout the day – sit outside and take in the amazing scenery. There are many free Ham Hill trails to download available on our website [www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com) and you can also use OS Explorer Map 129, available to buy at our South Somerset Visitor Information Centre & Gift Shop.



Heading slightly further afield is another secret South Somerset gem, **Cadbury Castle**, South Cadbury BA22 7HA. Cadbury Castle has been associated with King Arthur and Camelot since at least the 1500's when John Leland, a renowned British author wrote about it in his account of Ancient British History. An archaeological investigation took place at Cadbury in the 1960's and evidence suggests that the original site which was an Iron Age camp, was refortified with timber and earth during the 6th century, which is the time King Arthur is believed to have been there and had prominence. The foundations of an extensive timbered hall, and what appears to be the beginnings of an unfinished church, add further to the speculation, as does the closeness of the site to Glastonbury Tor. Follow the footpath to enjoy amazing views from the earthen ramparts to Glastonbury Tor and the Somerset Levels.

**The Camelot** pub, situated in the heart of the village of South Cadbury offers a wide range of traditional pub food throughout the day and also hosts a range of events from themed evenings to live music. Also nestled amidst this stunning countryside, is the award-winning **Queens Arms** at Corton Denham, offering a very dog-friendly welcome, fantastic pub gardens and a wonderful place to enjoy a meal or stay a night.



## Option 2 – Marvellous Museums, perfect for a rainy day

Situated just off the A303 near Ilchester is the **Fleet Air Arm Museum** housing Europe's largest naval aircraft collection. See legendary aircraft that you can touch up close when you visit the four incredible museum halls and galleries. Highlights are the award winning Aircraft Carrier Experience and the first British Concorde. The museum advises allowing four hours to see the whole museum. There's a gift shop and Swordfish Restaurant. Discount tickets are available online.

The prestigious **Haynes Motor Museum** located at Sparkford is a must visit for motoring enthusiasts. Packed with more than 400 beautiful and historic supercars and bikes displayed in stunning style, dating from 1885 to the present day, it's the largest international motor museum in Britain. Gift Shop and cafe. Advance discount tickets available from our South Somerset Visitor Information Centre. Tickets valid for 12 months.

There are also plenty of town museums here in South Somerset where you can delve into the archives of bygone eras. For more information, visit our website [www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com).





### Day 3, Explore Past & Present...

Head to Yeovil to follow our heritage walking trail 'Explore Yeovil Town Centre', free to download from our website: [www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com). Taking around an hour it will give you a fascinating overview of the busy market town, past and present. A useful town guide and map is also available to download at [www.yeovil.gov.uk](http://www.yeovil.gov.uk).

Have you ever wondered where artefacts and objects are stored? If you would like to see anything from gloves, industrial machinery and paintings to poison bottles and guns, you can make an appointment to visit the **South Somerset Heritage Collection** in Yeovil. Traditionally Yeovil has had a rich past in industry and an important role to play in the history of South Somerset. At SSHC you will be given the rare opportunity to go behind the scenes and see the extensive photo archive, local history, archaeology and even an internationally significant firearms collection.

The town has a good range of cafes and restaurants providing snacks or lunch to suit all tastes. **The Emporium Café** in Princes Street is great value, serving home cooked meals. As part of your visit you can also browse the 3 floors with over 80 independent retailers and artisans selling antiques, vintage clothes and collectables. Alternatively you could check out **The Winking Frog** in Princes Street or **Ninesprings Café** situated in the peaceful Yeovil Country Park. A short drive from the town is **The Trough Farmshop & Cafe**, 'a foodie's heaven' offering delicious homemade dishes.

### If time permits, you'll enjoy this too...

A short drive from Yeovil is the scenic village of East Coker. The village is named in TS Eliot's famous Four Quartets poem and his ashes are buried in the churchyard where you can see the memorial plaque 'In my beginning is my end – in my end is my beginning'. Inside St Michael & All Angels' Church there is also a memorial to William Dampier who was an English explorer, pirate privateer, navigator and naturalist who became the first Englishman to explore parts of what is today Australia, and the first person to circumnavigate the world three times.

In neighbouring West Coker it is possible to explore the only surviving rural twineworks with its original machinery in England. **Dawes Twineworks** has origins dating back over 600 years, including fixtures and fittings, representing all stages of the manufacture and finishing of twine. Famous also for 'Coker Canvas' the Royal Navy's premium sailcloth. With limited opening hours and times, please check their website in advance. Guided tours are available.

## Useful Information

Crewkerne & District Museum & Heritage Centre, The Heritage Centre, Market Square, Crewkerne TA18 7LP  
T: 01460 77079  
[www.crewkernemuseum.co.uk/](http://www.crewkernemuseum.co.uk/)

Antiques Bazaar, The Old Textile Mill, South Street, Crewkerne TA18 8AG  
T: 01460 77121  
[www.antiquesbazaar.co.uk](http://www.antiquesbazaar.co.uk)

Crewkerne Local Information Centre, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne TA18 7LN  
T: 01460 260051  
[www.aboutcrewkerne.co.uk](http://www.aboutcrewkerne.co.uk)

The Crooked Swan, 4 Church Street, Crewkerne TA18 7HR  
T: 01460 208414  
[www.crookedswan.com](http://www.crookedswan.com)

Haselbury Mill, Haselbury Plucknett, Crewkerne TA18 7NY  
T: 01460 77095  
[www.haselburymill.co.uk](http://www.haselburymill.co.uk)

Lord Poulett Arms, High Street, Hinton St George TA17 8SE  
T: 01460 73149  
[www.lordpoulettarms.com](http://www.lordpoulettarms.com)

Somerset Cider Brandy & Burrow Hill Cider, Pass Vale Farm, Burrow Hill, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock TA12 6BU  
T: 01460 240782  
[www.ciderbrandy.co.uk](http://www.ciderbrandy.co.uk)

Ilminster Arts Centre at The Meeting House, 35 East Street, Ilminster TA19 0AN  
T: 01460 54972  
[www.themeetinghouse.org.uk](http://www.themeetinghouse.org.uk)

The David Hall, Roundwell Street, South Petherton TA13 5AA  
T: 01460 240340  
[www.thedavidhall.org.uk](http://www.thedavidhall.org.uk)

The Octagon Theatre, Hendford, Yeovil BA20 1UX  
T: 01935 422884  
[www.octagon-theatre.co.uk](http://www.octagon-theatre.co.uk)

The Swan Theatre, 138 Park Street, Yeovil BA20 1QT  
T: 07500 376031  
[www.swan-theatre.co.uk](http://www.swan-theatre.co.uk)

Westlands Entertainment Centre, Westbourne Close, Yeovil BA20 2DD  
T: 01935 422884  
[www.westlandsyevovil.co.uk](http://www.westlandsyevovil.co.uk)

Montacute House (NT), Montacute, Nr Yeovil TA15 6XP  
T: 01935 823289  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house)

Montacute TV Radio Toy Museum, 1 South Street, Montacute TA15 6XD  
T: 01935 823024  
[www.montacutemuseum.co.uk](http://www.montacutemuseum.co.uk)



## Useful Information

Ham Hill Country Park, Ham Hill Road, Stoke sub  
Hamdon TA14 6RW  
T: 01935 823617  
[www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com)

The Prince of Wales, Ham Hill, Stoke sub Hamdon TA14 6RW  
T: 01935 822848  
[www.princeofwaleshamhill.co.uk](http://www.princeofwaleshamhill.co.uk)

The Camelot, Chapel Road, South Cadbury, Yeovil BA22 7EX  
T: 01963 441685  
[www.camelotpub.co.uk](http://www.camelotpub.co.uk)

The Queen's Arms, Strawberry Hill, Corton Denham DT9 4LR  
T: 01963 220317  
[www.thequeensarms.com](http://www.thequeensarms.com)

Fleet Air Arm Museum, RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester BA22 8HW  
T: 01935 840565  
[www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com)

Haynes International Motor Museum, Sparkford BA22 7LH  
T: 01963 440804  
[www.himm.co.uk](http://www.himm.co.uk)

South Somerset Heritage Collection, 7 Artillery Road, Yeovil BA22 8RP  
T: 01935 462855  
[www.visitsouthsomerset.com](http://www.visitsouthsomerset.com)

The Emporium, 39 Princes Street, Yeovil BA20 1EG  
T: 01935 579482  
[www.theemporiumyeovil.co.uk](http://www.theemporiumyeovil.co.uk)

The Winking Frog, Princes Street, Yeovil BA20 1EN  
T: 01935 508151  
[www.facebook.com/TheWinkingFrogCoffeeShop/](https://www.facebook.com/TheWinkingFrogCoffeeShop/)

Ninesprings Cafe, Yeovil Country Park, Brunswick Street, Yeovil BA20 1QZ  
[www.facebook.com/Ninesprings-Cafe-Yeovil-Country-Park-BA20-1QZ-684789788302310](https://www.facebook.com/Ninesprings-Cafe-Yeovil-Country-Park-BA20-1QZ-684789788302310)

The Trough Farmshop & Cafe, Stone Lane, Yeovil BA21 4NU  
T: 01935 413027  
[www.troughfarmshop.com](http://www.troughfarmshop.com)

Dawes Twineworks, 94 High Street, West Coker BA22 9AU  
T: 01935 862938  
[www.westcoker.net/home-page/ropewalk/](http://www.westcoker.net/home-page/ropewalk/)

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

