Walking the Cotswold Way in England - Part 1

October 2-11, 2020

AT# 2028
Join us as we begin our exploration of the Cotswolds by walking the northern half of the 102 mile long national trail called the Cotswold Way. (We’ll hike the southern half in 2021!) It traces the escarpment marking the western edge of the Cotswolds, stretching north to south between Chipping Campden and Bath, and taking in Broadway, Winchcombe, and Painswick, among other villages. The trail has incomparable views across the Severn Vale to the Malvern Hills and takes us through varied scenery: limestone grasslands crossed by drystone walls, beech woodlands, and stone-built villages with ancient churches.

The gentle Cotswolds countryside, designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ONB), is threaded with more than 3,000 miles of pleasant walking routes that enables us to appreciate these upland tracts at their best. A gently undulating area of limestone uplands, the Cotswolds are among England’s best preserved rural districts, and the quiet but lovely grays and ambers of the stone buildings here are truly unsurpassed. The valleys are lush and rolling, and cozy hamlets appear covered in foliage from church tower to garden gate.

We fly into London’s Heathrow airport and transfer by private charter bus to our base, for the first part of the trip, in Chipping Campden. Enroute we make a stop in Windsor to tour this quaint medieval village and visit Windsor Castle. This is the largest inhabited castle in the world and the only royal residence in continuous use by the British Royal Family since the Middle Ages.

Undoubtedly one of the most beautiful towns in the area, Chipping Campden is the Cotswolds in a microcosm. It has St James, the region’s most impressive church; frozen-in-time streets; a silk mill that was once the center of the Guild of handicraft; and pleasant untouristy shops. This market town, once the home of the richest Cotswold wool merchants, has some incredibly beautiful thatched roofs. This will be our base for the first 4 days. We’ll travel each day by private charter bus as we explore the area and walk along the Cotswold Way. One day will be devoted to exploring nearby villages and the World Heritage Site of Blenheim Palace, England’s Versailles. Both the inside and the outside of the palace are luxurious and the gardens are amazing.

During the second half of the trip our base will be the cosmopolitan town of Cheltenham which has
excellent restaurants, fashionable shops and a thriving cultural life. Its primary claim to fame, however, is its architecture, rivaling Bath’s in its Georgian elegance, with wide, tree-lined streets, crescents, and terraces with row houses, balconies and iron railings. We’ll also have the opportunity to visit the nearby Gloucester Cathedral with its soaring and elegant exterior. Its tower, with 269 steps is open for tours as well as having guided tours of the interior of the cathedral.

Similar to our more northern base of Chipping Campden, we’ll have a private coach at our disposal to take us to and from our daily walks on the Cotswold Way. During the course of our trip we’ll have the opportunity to walk along the northern half of the trail, as well as visiting a number of cultural sites and quaint villages.

Except for the transfer days, participants will have the option of not walking on any particular day if they so choose even if it is not a designated NON hiking day.

Detailed Itinerary:

Day 1 Friday 2nd Oct. Leave USA for London Heathrow

Day 2 Sat. 3rd Oct. (L, D)

Arrive at Heathrow airport and transfer to Chipping Campden and overnight for 4 nights. Stop in Windsor enroute to Chipping Campden for visit of Palace and old part of town.
Accommodation: Noel Arms Hotel [https://www.bespokehotels.com/noelarmshotel]

Day 3 Sun. 4th Oct. (B, L, D)

Walk to Hidcote Manor gardens, 7 miles circular. Walk to Hidcote in the morning and then travel by mini-bus to Blenheim for the afternoon for a guided tour.
Accommodation: Noel Arms Hotel [https://www.bespokehotels.com/noelarmshotel]

Day 4 Mon. 5th Oct. (B, L, D)

Mini-bus all day hire. Visit Stow on Wold, then The Slaughters for a short walk and then heading to Bibury which William Morris considered the most beautiful village in England. We will do a short walk along the river from Coln St. Aldwyns back to Bibury for 2.5 miles. After lunch (included in trip cost) in Bibury we will visit the Cotswold Woollen Centre to learn about the
wool trade in the Cotswolds; http://www.cotswoldwoollenweavers.co.uk/ Coming back via Burford and a traditional ‘Wool Church’. Accommodation: Noel Arms Hotel https://www.bespokehotels.com/noelarmshotel

Day 5 Tues. 6th Oct. (B, D)

Walk from Chipping Campden to Stanton, 10.5 miles and transfer back to Chipping Campden. Ascent 436m Descent 469m max. alt. 310m min. 83m
Accommodation: Noel Arms Hotel https://www.bespokehotels.com/noelarmshotel

Day 6 Wed. 7th Oct. (B, D)

Transfer back to Stanton and walk to Cleeve Hill, 13.5 miles and transfer to Cheltenham for 3 nights. Ascent 657m Descent 543m max alt. 300m min. alt. 79m

Day 7 Thur. 8th Oct. (B)

Visit Gloucester Cathedral in the morning, then rest of the day free to pursue your favorite activity. We will have an all-day bus pass for the local bus.

Day 8 Fri. 9th Oct. (B, D)

Transfer to Cleeve Hill and walk to Crickley Hill, 13 miles and transfer back to Cheltenham. Ascent 677m Descent 637m max. alt. 311m min. alt. 108m

Day 9 Sat. 10th Oct. (B)

Walk for 9 miles to Painswick which is approx. half-way along the Cotswold Way trail and then transfer to Heathrow airport
hotel. Luggage will be collected from our Cheltenham hotel and transferred with us to our Heathrow airport hotel. Crickley Hill to Painswick, 9 miles **Ascent 443m**
**Descent 283m**
max. alt. 283m min. alt. 140m

**Accommodation: Holiday Inn Express or similar**

**Day 10 Sun 11th Oct (B)**
Transfer to Heathrow airport at your own expense for flight home.

**Leaders’ right to change itinerary:**

While the itinerary in this prospectus is what the leaders have planned at the time of writing, various factors may require changes for reasons of safety, transportation or lodging availability, and unforeseeable circumstances (such as weather considerations, natural disasters in areas to be visited, or recommendations of governmental agencies). The leaders reserve the right to make such changes as necessary, both before and during the trip.

AMC Adventure Travel trips are led by volunteers on a non-profit basis. Any monies left over after trip expenses are covered will be refunded to the participants. As leaders our goals for the group are to have fun, stretch your skills, and savor a foreign culture at reasonable cost and in the company of other adventurers with similar interests. We encourage your individual contributions, cooperation and good humor to enrich the group’s experience. We expect you to participate as part of a group and abide by the leaders’ decisions, and work towards the group having a good time. Be prepared to help your fellow hikers and spend time with other participants on the trip. In doing so, you will enjoy the trip to the maximum. **Leaders have provided a list in this prospectus of the required gear. In the interests of group safety, trip leaders retain the right to deny participation in any hike if participants are not properly equipped.**

**SAFETY, RISKS AND HAZARDS:**

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have
been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with the leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. Aside from any personal medical problems, participants should be aware of the possibilities of bug bites and possible exposure to Lyme disease, dehydration, sun burn and other heat or cold related problems. You should regularly use sun screen, take care to be adequately hydrated and bring water on all day trips as well as wind/rain gear, warm hat and gloves. Please carefully read and sign the AMC Participant Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and contact us if you have any questions. Participants’ understanding of these risks and adherence to our policies and procedures can contribute to making this experience rewarding.

RESERVING A PLACE AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

The land cost of the trip is $2970, plus estimated airfare of $500-800. To reserve your place, please contact the trip leader or co leader for an application , the Confidential Medical Form and the Acknowledgment & Assumption of Risks & Release and Indemnity Agreement (or download them from our website at ginetteandannaamctrips.weebly.com), then send these forms to the leader along with deposit of $1000.00 made out to: Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC). $100.00 of this initial $1000.00 deposit is a non-refundable administration fee. Once we receive your application and other forms and have approved you for the trip, we'll send you additional information on the trip, including planned hikes, equipment lists, and travel tips. The maximum number of participants is 16, so apply early to reserve your place.

The cost of the trip is based on price quotes given in the December of 2018. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a trip refund is more likely than a price increase. Note that we will use your deposits to lock in the price quotes as early as possible.

Airfare is not included in the cost of the trip. It is impossible to predict prices a year in advance. For this trip we estimate a range of $500-800. Sometimes there are bargains, depending on the airline and when you book, or you may want to use frequent flier miles. You should note that the trip begins on a Friday (the day you leave the USA). You may wish to arrive early and/or
stay later to have more time in the area. We will give participants a time and place to meet the group. Please do not make plane reservations until you hear from leaders that the trip is “GO”.

Leaders’ expectations of participants:

When you participate in this activity, you should be in proper condition for the challenges outlined in this prospectus and equipped with the appropriate gear as stated. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety. Prior to your acceptance as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. We may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities.

This trip is designed so that everyone may experience our adventure in England through shared participation in activities and tasks in an organized group environment. AMC travelers are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants will be considerate of others sharing this AMC Adventure Travel experience.

It may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it will be of the group or of the individual. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant’s being unable to perform one or more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

Tying trip to AMC mission:

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run in a manner supportive of and consistent with the conservation, recreational and educational principles and mission of the Club. Trip leaders encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles and local regulations.
Required Gear:

Gortex (or equivalent) rain jacket, hat & pants
Wide brimmed hat for sun protection
Sunglasses
Sunscreen
Camelback or bottles sufficient to hold at least 2 liters of water
Personal first aid kit
Fleece or down jacket
Polypro, polyester, nylon or coolmax tops and pants for hiking; NO COTTON!
Trail shoes or boots; NO SNEAKERS or CROSS TRAINERS
Hiking socks
Warm hat and gloves
Electrolyte powder, tablets, gel or “gummy blocks”
Day Pack with padded shoulder and waist straps/belt sufficiently large to carry all of the above items plus your lunch, camera and personal items

What trip price of $2970 includes:

Price includes:
- 8 nights overnight accommodations based on shared double occupancy in 3* hotels
- All breakfasts and other meals as stated in itinerary
- All group land transportation
- Local guide for Stow on Wold and Bibury on Day 4 and 5
- Entrance fee for Blenheim Castle
- Entrance fee for Windsor castle with private guide
- Entrance fee for Gloucester Cathedral
- Tip for bus driver and local guide
- Medical Evacuation Insurance
- AMC Adventure Travel Program fee
- Luggage Tag
- Costs for 2 AMC tour leaders (accommodation, entrance tickets, transfers)

Price does not include:
- Meals not included in itinerary and snacks
- Travel Insurance for lost luggage, trip cancellation, medical expenses, etc
- Flights to/from London, England
- Items of a personal nature
- Beverages other than tap water at included lunches and dinners
- Housekeeping Tips
Please be aware that, in accordance with AMC policy, you are subsidizing the leaders' costs. Beyond this, the leaders are not allowed to realize any profit from this excursion. The trip price also includes an AMC overhead fee to cover the administrative expenses of offering Adventure Travel excursions. The trip fee includes emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage, which is required by the AMC. **It does not include insurance for travel delay, interruption, or cancellation, or for baggage loss.** If these possibilities concern you, individual travel insurance is recommended. More information about included emergency medical and evacuation insurance, as well as about optional and recommended travel insurance, will be provided to participants in their formal acceptance letters.

**Cancellation Policy:**

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the fact that your cancellation may not raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. The published minimum penalty schedule is $100 from February 1st, 2019 to January 1, 2020, and $200 after January 1, 2020. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant. Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced or zero penalties. This will generally not be determined until after the trip.

**How air travel is to be handled:**

While participant airfare is not included in the trip price, leaders may assist participants in making suitable reservations. Participants will be told when and where they must join the group for the official start of the trip’s planned activities. Once your air tickets are purchased they are your responsibility – **Do not make any non-refundable travel plans until told to do so by the leaders.** The leaders will send out a document with a list of suggested flight from your home airport which will work to get you to London in time for the start of the trip.

The price for this excursion is based on quotes or estimates obtained at the time the trip was submitted to the Adventure Travel Committee for approval (January, 2019). The final price of the trip will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make. If the
trip’s financial position is strong enough at the start, the leaders may make partial refunds during the trip, in the form of payments toward some meals and/or free time activities which would otherwise not be included. Any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases we incur, will be shared by trip participants. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a refund is considerably more likely than a price increase. All Adventure Travel trips are run on a non-profit basis and refunds, if any, are issued after the trip’s financial accounting is complete.

**Conditioning and activity/fitness level:**

Participants should be comfortable walking up to 6 hours and 13.5 miles per day with elevation gain of up 1000 feet.

**Application process or how to apply:**

To apply, you must complete and submit the Participant Application, Confidential Health Questionnaire, and Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk and Release form, enclosing a registration deposit of $1000. You will be considered qualified for the trip when the leaders have determined by conversation with you that you and the trip seem to be a good match. You will be formally accepted, and your check will be deposited. Deposit checks from wait-listed applicants will not be cashed until we offer them a spot on the trip AND they accept.

**Payment Schedule:**
Deposit due with application $1000
Final Payment of $1970 due by April 1, 2020

Please make payments by check payable to the “Appalachian Mountain Club” and mail to:
Ginette Beaudoin
66 Graham Street
Biddeford, ME
04005

**Risks of trip activities:**
Participants should be adequately prepared for cold and windy weather hazards such as wind chill, hypothermia, sun exposure, wet/rainy conditions by ensuring they have sun protection and extra layers in their day pack during each day’s activities.
YOUR LEADERS:

**LEADER:** GINETTE BEAU DOIN

Ginette has been a member of the AMC since 1988 and has led several day and weekend trips in the White Mountains of NH, as well as various parts of Maine. She lead an Austrian Alps adventure trip with co-leader Don Parker in July of 2011, with Jenni Blumenthal in August of 2012 and co lead the same trip with Terry Peters in July 2009 with 19 participants. She has also lead Adventure travel trips to Yosemite National Park, Easter Island, Peru, Minnesota, Tuscany, Dolomites, Spain, Australia and New Zealand for the AMC. She has participated in numerous AMC Major Excursions to Switzerland and Austria, involving hiking and cross country skiing. She has hiked in the Stubai valley as part of a 2006 Major Excursion and hiked to 20 high Alpine Huts throughout Austria, Germany and Switzerland. She has hiked the NH 4000 footers. Her interests include hiking, photography, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, travel, information volunteer for AMC and introducing others to outdoor activities.

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**CO-LEADER:** ANNA PANSZCZYK

Anna is a Boston Chapter INTRO (AMC) Leader. Anna has co lead AMC Adventure Travel trips to New Zealand, Australia, Dolomites – Italy, Austria, Azores, Southern and Northern Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Yosemite National Park, Minnesota, Peru, Easter Island, and Morocco. Anna leads hiking trips in the White Mountains and most recently led an excursion to Waterville Valley and Craftsbury Vermont for snowshoeing and cross country skiing. She has also co led the Claybrook ski trip on previous years. During the summer of 2014, she and the trip leader backpacked the Haute Route from Chamonix France to Zermatt Switzerland as well as Kepler Track in
New Zealand. This is in addition to trips that she takes to all corners of the world! Anna has completed SOLO Advanced Wilderness First Aid course as well as CPR training.

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