

# Competition

## My Perfect Day in the Cotswolds

### WIN AN OVERNIGHT STAY AT THE THREE WAYS HOUSE HOTEL

To celebrate the release of Bradt Travel Guides' new *Slow Travel The Cotswolds* guide by Caroline Mills, we are running a special competition to find the most perfect day in the area.

To enter, simply write a description of your perfect day in no more than 500 words. Your day might have really happened or be something imagined: it might include investigating the birthplace of the Bard in Stratford-upon-Avon, hiking a section of the Cotswold Way or sipping on a cold ale from one of the north Cotswolds' many breweries. Whatever shape your perfect day might take, we want to hear what makes the Cotswolds special to you.

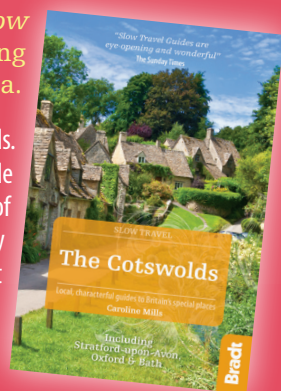
The entries will be judged by Caroline Mills, who will choose her favourites based on passion, colour and originality. See overleaf for Caroline's description of her own perfect day.

#### The prizes

The winner will receive an overnight stay for two at the Three Ways House Hotel – home of the world famous Pudding Club! (<http://www.threewayshousehotel.com/>) You'll be staying in one of their wonderfully quirky pudding themed rooms – will it be the Oriental Ginger or Spotted Dick and Custard? Three runners-up will each win a free copy of *Slow Travel The Cotswolds*. The winning entry will also be published in an edition of the Wilts & Glos Standard newspaper, as well as Cotswold Living magazine.

#### Entry requirements

Your description must be no **longer than 500 words**. The deadline for entry is **31 May 2017** and winners will be notified by **30 June 2017**. Either email your entry to [competitions@bradtguides.com](mailto:competitions@bradtguides.com) (with the subject line 'Cotswolds competition') or send it to Holly Parsons (Cotswolds Competition), Bradt Travel Guides, IDC House, The Vale, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks SL9 9RZ. Please be sure to include your name, email address and/or a daytime telephone number. For full terms and conditions, see [www.bradtguides.com/my-perfect-day](http://www.bradtguides.com/my-perfect-day)



# 'MY PERFECT DAY IN THE COTSWOLDS'

by Caroline Mills, author of *Slow Travel The Cotswolds*

I'm up early, watching the sky turn dusty pink as the sun rises over Ilmington Downs. The soft sound of gentle toe-tapping is heard from Ilmington Morris Men as they welcome the May Day dawn. I have a flask of tea and a hot sausage butty, the sausages bought from Todenham Manor Farm.



Wide awake, I venture to Whichford Pottery to choose one of the magnificent handmade flowerpots to adorn my garden. It is a lovely feeling to buy locally made products. The visit is rounded off with a delicious frothy coffee in their quirky Straw Kitchen, sat at one of the mismatching tables while admiring the building made from straw bales and lime plaster.

Refreshed and raring to go, I set off on a family walk along the Cotswold Way. The trail starts in Chipping Campden though we might begin at the top of Dover's Hill to allow time for the magnificent views. I'll be lingering as I wander my favourite section of the trail through the sheep-filled Clump Farm, close to Broadway Tower, to photograph the wild orchids, cowslips and hawthorn blossom there before we descend into the village of Broadway.

At Broadway Deli, we pick up treats to load into rucksacks, ready for a walk through beech woods at Woodchester Park where we delight in the total immersion of the hidden valley. A picnic lunch will overlook the string of lakes there, basking in the silent summer sunshine, watching electric-blue damselflies dart among the King Cups. We'll finish the walk with an enjoyable nose around the captivating never-to-be-finished Woodchester Mansion.

It's only a short hop across the Nailsworth Valley to reach Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons where we say 'hello' to the roaming herd of rare-breed cows, and appreciate the beauty and quantity of wildflowers and butterflies. We stop at Winstone's for a homemade ice-cream – my scoop is Blackberries and Cream.

In the afternoon I'm at Kelmscott Manor, soaking up the creative vibes and appreciating the craftsmanship on display at Arts and Crafts Movement founder William Morris, his family and friends.

It precedes a stop at the Eastleaches, where we sit on the tiny clapper bridge, remove our socks and dip our toes in the diminutive River Leach. A family of ducklings visit and a scent of wild mint pervades the air.

Early evening and I'm soaking in the open-air rooftop pool of the Thermae Bath Spa. The bells are chiming from the neighbouring abbey, its walls and the surrounding hills illuminated under the spotlights as dusk falls. Rubbed dry, a magic carpet has whisked me the length of the Cotswolds to Stratford-upon-Avon where I meet up with friends to enjoy a heart-rending performance by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Swan Theatre.

Feeling peckish, we chat about the production over a post-theatre dinner at The Vintner. I'm tired but with a sense of fulfillment. Almost ready for bed, I snuggle up beside a roaring log fire and open up Laurie Lee's Cider with Rosie. His lilting poetry occupies my dreams as I drift off. My perfect day is over.

