

WARMTH & WONDER

at Garn Farm

Ideas for adventures

Local Shops & Pubs

Places to eat...

Things to do...

Where to visit...

Getting out and about...

We hope you have a lovely stay here at Garn Farm. You are welcome to explore the 48 acres of wildlife rich hillside and woodland on your doorstep, with **streams to paddle** in, **views to enjoy**, and plenty of **picnic, campfire** and **den-building** opportunities.

Start relaxing and you might not feel the urge to leave the site, but if you do you won't need to go far as there are plenty of wonderful things to do locally which we highlight in this little guide.

You can walk to our **three local pubs**, take a short drive to visit local farms for **ice cream** and **cider tasting**. Go for a mini adventure paddling in the **river at Clodock** or **explore the castle** remains in Longtown. Visit our local shop to get supplies before setting off to take in the immediate **Black Mountains** and **Golden Valley** areas.

The wider **Black Mountains** area and **Brecon Beacons** provide more outstanding **walking**, as well as **biking** and **pony trekking**. There are opportunities for gentle walks with not much hill climbing to the much more adventurous and challenging!

For those looking for pavements **Hay on Wye, Abergavenny** and **Hereford** are all within easy reach with their theatres, cinemas, art centres, shops and cafes – see our 'Guides to' for things not to miss!

If you're looking for a **course or treatment**, we give details of locally available breathwork, massage, yoga and reflexology sessions – as well as some attractions and activities a little further away.

There is an **OS Map** of the area for you to borrow, and **The Wild Guide to Wales book** on the bookcase is excellent with some fantastic suggestions. Despite the title it covers this valley and side of the border (Wye & Black Mountains – pg 276), as well as the surrounding areas (Brecon Beacons - pg 261 and Lower Wye & Usk – pg 289).

You may also find the **Visit Herefordshire website** helpful too - www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/things-to-do

Please do tell us about your highlights, and tag us when you share:

@warmthandwonder

#warmthandwonder

Enjoy your adventures...

Pubs & Eating Out

Three local pubs to explore on foot or with a very short drive, and plenty more a little further afield, listed on route to our main towns. They include some outstanding places to dine out - from fine dining to fish and chips on a bench!

Nearest Pubs

The Cornwall Arms, Clodock, HR2 OPD / 3 mins drive / 15 mins walk down road into Clodock / 01873 860677

Our local and much-loved pub, is a rare find these days - a lost-in-time parlour pub. Gloriously unchanged and simple, with serving hatch where you'll find bottled local ale and cider. A place you go for a drink and chat, and let the locals instruct you on how to play the bar games, which include darts, table skittles and quoits. There is a lovely enclosed pub garden, or two fires for the colder months. Isobel, the third-generation landlady, will let you take your drinks down to the river where you can paddle.

No food served, but crisps and known locally for its pickled eggs! Plus fish and chips are delivered on a Thursday - get your order in by 7pm for delivery later and enjoy it with a bottle of Butty. There are also regular events that visitors are very welcome to join in with, such as curry nights or bring and share bbq's. Scan code or search the web for 'Rainbows, Sheep - and a Pub' for a write-up on the Cornwall Arms in the National Geographic that describes it, and life here, fairly well!



The Carpenter's Arms, Walterstone, HR2 ODX / 5 mins drive / 45 min walk either along road or along field based footpath
01873 890353 / www.thecarpentersarmswalterstone.com

A quiet, cosy and friendly pub serving food most lunch-times and evenings. Vera the landlady will be by the fireside and her able team ready to serve you. Their Sunday lunches are a particular favourite, but you may need to book.

The Crown, Longtown, HR2 OLT / 5 mins drive / 30 mins walk along road or partially along field based footpaths from Clodock bridge / 01873 860217 / www.crowninnlongtown.co.uk

A larger pub in Longtown that serves food, and has a pool table. Food is available all-day Sat & Sun and most weekday lunchtimes and evenings (closed Weds).

More Pubs and places serving food nearby

These are a little further away. It isn't an exhaustive list and we list other places to eat in local towns in our 'Guide to' **Abergavenny**, **Hereford** and **Hay-on-Wye**.

It is advisable to **call ahead to check latest opening times** if you are planning to visit as they do change depending on the season.

Heading towards Hay-on-Wye...

The Bulls Head, Craswall, HR2 0PN / 20 mins drive
01981 510616 / www.wildbynaturellp.com/the-bulls-head-inn

Drovers inn serving amazing food and drink, and well worth booking ahead for a special meal. Cosy bar area, and garden overlooking the foothills of the Black Mountains, for a drink and bar snacks, and a separate restaurant with open fire for lunch and dinner. Go past the castle in Longtown, keep onwards to Craswall.

The Bridge, Michaelchurch Escley, HR2 0JW / 15 mins drive
01981 510646 / www.thebridgeinnmichaelchurch.co.uk/eat
Pub in a lovely setting on the river with food available. Go past Hopes Shop in Longtown, onwards to Michaelchurch Escley.

The Hub at St Peter's Centre, Peterchurch, HR2 0RT / 25 mins
01981 551143 / www.hubcommunity.org
Rural community hub serving teas, coffee, cake and light lunches. Usually open Tues- Fridays, 11am-2pm.

The Old Bank Hay, Hay-on-Wye, Broad Street, HR3 5DD /
www.oldbankhay.co.uk / Pop-up restaurant that serves a set menu for pre-booked sittings for dinner (Fri and Sat) and lunch (Sat).

Heading towards Hereford...

Kilpeck Inn, Kilpeck, HR2 9DN / 30 mins drive / Off A465 towards Hereford just after Wormbridge / 01981 570464 / www.kilpeckinn.com / Another great pub serving food from a locally sourced menu, including local game and vegetarian meals. Food available most lunchtimes and evenings.

Rowlestone Court, Rowlestone, HR2 0DW / 15 mins drive
01981 240322 / www.rowlestonecourt.co.uk
Café with a huge range of homemade ice cream! Serves light

lunches and snacks on a family farm with children's playground and Woodland Adventure Trail, including zipwire! Small charge applies. Generally open Apr–Sept.

The Temple Bar Inn, Ewyas Harold, HR2 0EU / 15 mins drive
01981 240 423 / www.thetemplebarinn.co.uk
Bar and restaurant, with food available most lunchtimes and evenings.

The Old Stables Fish and Chip Take Away, Ewyas Harold, HR2 0EX / 15 mins drive / 01981 240237 / www.the-old-stables.business.site / Open lunch and evening Weds-Saturday.

Heading towards Abergavenny...

The Crown at Pantygelli, NP7 7HR / 20 mins drive
01873 853314 / www.thecrownpantygelli.com
Pub and restaurant situated between the Sugarloaf and Skirrid peaks on Old Hereford Road.

The Walnut Tree Inn, Llanddewi Skirrid, NP7 8AW / 20 mins drive
01873 852797 / www.thewalnuttreeinn.com
Michelin Starred restaurant on Old Ross Road / B4521

Heading towards Monmouth...

The Bridge Inn at Kentchurch, HR2 0BY / 20 mins drive
01981 241 158 / www.thebridgeinnkentchurch.com
Lovely pub set on the banks of the River Monnow serving good pub food and local beers/ciders.

Under the Nut Tree, HR2 0DD / 25 mins drive
www.underthenuttree.co.uk
Friday and Saturday nights feature a 3 course set menu championing the finest in local produce cooked on their outdoor fire kitchen.

The Bell at Skenfrith, NP7 8UH / 30 mins drive
01600 750235 / www.skenfrith.co.uk
With the ruined castle opposite to explore and River Monnow to paddle in, this pub is worth the drive. It takes its food seriously and provides printed guides for six circular walks plus a family friendly detective trail around the castle and church.

We list other places to eat, restaurants and cafes in local towns in our 'Guide to' **Abergavenny**, **Hereford** and **Hay-on-Wye**.

Eating In

For **home-made pizza** we have a pizza stone that fits in the oven. There is also a wood pellet fired Ooni outdoor pizza oven you are welcome to borrow (it can be a bit tricky to light so please ask and we can explain how to set it up - it is usually stored in the bottom of the building - accessed by yellow door on opposite side of building to where you park).

A **barbeque** is provided for your use - and our local shop, Hopes of Longtown, sells locally produced charcoal (stored in the bottom of the building - accessed by yellow door on opposite side of building to where you park).

Local Food & shops

There are some great local food producers and shops to get your own supplies in and prepare a feast yourself.

Hopes of Longtown, Longtown, HR2 0LT / 5 mins drive / 30 mins walk along road or partially along field based footpaths from Clodock bridge / 01873 860444 / www.hopesoflongtown.co.uk

Our most local shop, Hopes of Longtown, is great whether you need to do a big shop or just top up. A family run independent shop and Post Office with a huge range of local food and produce, books, drinks & magazines/newspapers. Head to Clodock and turn right to Longtown - take the first right on entering the village, and it is on your right.

Skirrid Mountain Garage, Llanvihangel Crucorney, NP7 8DH
01873 890 275 / www.skirridmountaingarage.co.uk

Convenience store, diesel and petrol. Along road to Abergavenny and turn right signposted to Llanvihangel Crucorney and Llanthony.

Family Butchers in Ewyas Harold, Pontrilas and Abergavenny.

Nearest supermarkets are Morrisons or Waitrose in Abergavenny and Tesco's in Hereford.

Abergavenny has a regular farmer's market, deli and independent shops, plus supermarkets (Waitrose, Morrisons, Tesco Metro & Aldi) - for more details see our 'Guide to Abergavenny'.

Hereford has lots of independent shops and delicatessens, plus supermarkets (Waitrose, Sainsburys, Asda & Tesco) - for more details see our 'Guide to Hereford'.

Hay-on-Wye has lots of independent shops, a delicatessen, plus two butchers and a greengrocer - for more details see our 'Guide to Hay'.

Wellbeing & treatments

There are plenty of opportunities for switching off, retreating, experiencing something new and being pampered locally.

Breathwork sessions - www.mattfreer.info/breathe/

Your host Matt also facilitates breathwork sessions at Garn Farm, these can be one to one or group sessions, and can take place in the Barn, under canvas, on the land or in the woodland. Breathwork promotes self-awareness, emotional release, and a sense of presence, ultimately tapping into the body's innate ability to release stored trauma, reduce stress, and foster a sense of peace. Find out more and book before your stay using the website above.

Yoga and Reflexology - www.blackmountainsbarns.co.uk

Just over the fields is a fantastic yoga barn with daytime and evening classes, as well as occasional full days of yoga and private lessons. For latest info on sessions visit www.blackmountainsbarns.co.uk/wellbeing/wellbeing-what-s-on/51-yoga-classes (can change so feel free to ask us).

Monday am and Tuesday am: Yoga with Sophia Neil (plus private yoga and reflexology sessions available) - 01873 860358 or info@blackmountainsbarns.co.uk

Monday pm: Yoga with Rowena Harris (occasional full days) - 01873860493 or rowenaharris@btconnect.com

Wednesday am: Yoga with Lisa Wise - lisa@lisawiseyoga.com

Wednesdays pm: Yoga with Heather Zeale - yogawithheather@aol.com

Thursdays pm: Vary each week, focusing on de-stressing and healing relaxation, includes Restorative Yoga, Breathwork and Gong Bath.

Massage

Katrina Surya offers a range of massages here in The Barn. Her approach is empathic and intuitive, and includes a full body massage, reflexology, Indian head massage or a head, neck, shoulders and back massage. £70 for one hour, £90 for one and a half hours or £130 for 2 people, 1 hour each. To book contact Katrina direct via Text or WhatsApp on 07412269862.

Carina Jones also offers massage at her clinic in Dulas, a 10 minute drive - 01981 242044 / www.massageinhereford.org.uk

Things to do here and very nearby

Exploring Garn Farm

On-site you have 48 acres of **wildlife rich hillside** and **woodland to explore** and **views to enjoy**, with plenty of **picnic** and **den-building** opportunities. In the evenings enjoy a **campfire** whilst watching the **sunset** - and on a clear night make the most of the dark skies with some **star gazing**.

A map of Garn Farm shows the land and indicates paths, as well as **good spots for views, sunsets** and **campfires**. You are welcome to explore and follow the trails. Please ask if you'd like to know where to find signs of badgers and owls. There are also books with ideas for nature-based games and activities.

River and church at Clodock 15 min walk / 3 mins drive

One of our favourites - walk down to Clodock and **paddle and take a dip** in the River Monnow just upstream of the bridge. The Cornwall Arms Pub is just next door with drinks and crisps!

Next to the river is the 12th century **St Clydawg Church**, with a 17th century three decker pulpit, box pews and minstrels' gallery. Traces of wall paintings can be seen and a 15th century painting of the Virgin Mary in a window splay near the pulpit. The oldest possession is a 9th century tombstone.

Longtown Castle HR2 OLE / 30 mins walk / 5 mins drive

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/longtown-castle/

Ruins of a thick-walled round keep dating from around 1200, characteristic of the Welsh Borders, with views of the Black Mountains. Head to Longtown, bearing left at the first junction and up hill on left.

The Black Mountains

There are a number of **walking routes** from Garn Farm, around **Mynydd Ferddin** (Merlins Hill), along the **Monnow Valley** and up onto the **Black Mountains** - either straight from the door or with a short car drive. There are maps and **suggested routes in the separate 'Walking section'** - and advice is on hand so please feel free to ask before setting off!

With a short drive you can take a gentle walk up **Hatterrall Hill** or the **Black Hill** (known as The Cats Back from its Welsh name - Crib y Garth), both offer stunning views into England. A steeper popular walk

goes up the **Black & Red Darrens** and onto **Hatterrall Ridge**, whilst walks up the **Olchon Valley** are another favourite.

For those looking for a longer walk you can go up and over Hatterrall Ridge and down into the **Vale of Ewyas** for lunch at **Llantony Priory**, or you might prefer to drive there and explore further up that valley to **Capel-Y-Ffin** and **Hay Bluff**, or carry on west driving through the **Mynydd Du Forest** and walk to **Grwyne Fawr Reservoir**.

From Garn Farm you look south towards **The Skirrid** (also known as Holy Mountain or Ysgyryd Fawr) with its distinctive landslip, which is a popular walking destination with car park at its base (and nearby Copper Kettle Tea Room - 01873 851929 / NP7 8AP). Whilst a little further towards Abergavenny is **The Sugar Loaf**, another popular hillwalking destination with a number of routes up.

In his book *People of the Black Mountains*, Raymond Williams described the Black Mountains using your right hand, which is a nice way to understand them and get your bearings - we paraphrase and modify his description here:

Place your right hand palm downward. Spread your fingers, not widely. This is the hand of the Black Mountains. Your **thumb** is **Crib y Gath** (The Black Hill / Cats Back). Your **first finger** is **Hatterrall Hill** and ridge (where the Offa's Dyke Path runs along), with **Red and Black Darren** at its knuckles. Your **second finger** is Ffawyddog, with Bal Mawr at its knuckles. Your **third finger** is Gadair Fawr with Waun Fach behind its knuckles. Your **outside finger** is Pen Allt-mawr, with its nail being Crickhowell.

On the high plateau of the back of your hand are Twyn Llech, **Hay Bluff** and **Lord Hereford's Knob** / Twmpa.

The six rivers rise in the plateau towards your wrist. The first river is the **Monnow** and flows at the outside edge of your thumb. The second river, the **Olchon**, flows between your thumb and the first finger, to join the Monnow at the top of your thumb. The third river, the **Honddu**, flows between your first and second fingers and then curves to join the Monnow. The fourth river, **Grwyne Fawr**, flows between your second and third fingers and then curves the other way, south, to join the fifth river, **Grwyne Fechan**, that has been flowing between your third and your outside finger. The sixth river, now called **Rhiangoll**, flows at the edge of your outside finger and which joins the **Usk**.

The Golden Valley

To our east is The Golden Valley, which covers the valley of the River Dore and is a picturesque area of gently rolling countryside. The main villages are **Dorstone, Peterchurch, Abbey Dore** and **Ewyas Harold** which all have local pubs and are nearby **Arthur's Stone** and **Dore Abbey** (all detailed elsewhere in this guide).

Nearby attractions & activities

There are a whole host of attractions and activities nearby below we share a few very local favourites. Find more on our local area website at www.herefordholidays.co.uk – and in the Wild Guide to Wales book.

Rowlestone Court Ice-Cream, Playground & Adventure Trail

HR2 0DW / 15 mins drive / 01981 240322 / rowlestonecourt.co.uk

A little café with a huge range of homemade award-winning ice cream! Café serves light lunches and snacks on a family farm with wildflower meadows and children's playground and Woodland Adventure Trail, including zipwire! Small charge applies. Generally open Apr–Sept, 11am–4pm Wed–Fri, 11am–5pm weekends and bank holidays – but do check opening times.

Cider tasting

Herefordshire produces over half of the cider in the UK, so most local pubs serve a good selection, but nothing beats tasting it where it is made. The Herefordshire and Wye Valley cider route showcases the best producers (www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/cider-route) – and two of them are within easy reach:

Ty Gwynn Cider, Pontrilas / near Rowlestone / HR2 0DL / 15 mins drive / 01981 241181 / www.tygwyncider.co.uk

Try their cider and perry in the shop and bar, which is usually open for tastings 10–6 on Wednesday to Saturday and from 11–5 on Sunday and Bank Holidays. Run by a helpful team making it an enjoyable experience.

Gwatkin Cider, near Abbey Dore / HR2 0AL / 25 mins via Ewyas Harold / 01981 551 906 / www.gwatkinco.uk

With 35 ciders and perries on draught you better note before you start out that there are no card payments! Usually open every day from 9am–5pm.

Battle Lands Paintball / Viking Games / Laser Clayz

Ewyas Harold / HR2 0JH / 15 mins drive

www.battlelands.co.uk / thevikinggames.co.uk / www.laserclayz.co.uk

Offering paintball and splatmaster for younger ones. Viking Games offers Archery, Axe Throwing, Bull Rings, Kubb, Molky and Trappstege. Also offered is laser clay shooting.

Nigel Ward Auction House, Pontrilas / 20 mins drive / HR2 OEH

www.nigel-ward.co.uk / 01981 240140

A fun way to find a bargain - this friendly auction house holds an auction every 3 weeks, with a wide range of items - from renovation projects to high end furniture. It's open for viewing and commission bids on the Friday, with the auction on the Saturday morning.

Other notable attractions & activities

Blaenavon World Heritage Site Blaenafon / NP4 9XP/ 40 mins drive

www.visitblaenavon.co.uk / www.cadw.wales.gov.uk / Free Admission

Highlights are the **Big Pit National Coal**, where you can go down into the mine guided by ex-miners, followed by tea or lunch in the miners canteen, also **Blaenavon Ironworks** and **The Heritage Railway**.

Brecon Beacons National Park / www.breconbeacons.org

Further into the Brecon Beacons National Park you'll find lots of walks and things to do, including plenty of **good walking**, the **Waterfall**

Country Trails (www.breconbeacons.org/waterfall-country-walking-trails), **Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal** (canalrivertrust.org.uk), the towns of **Crickhowell** and **Brecon**, as well as the **Brecon Mountain Railway** (www.bmr.wales) and **Penderyn Distillery** (penderyn.wales).

Small Breeds Farm Park and Owl Centre Kington / HR5 3HF

01544 231109 / www.owlcentre.com / 50 mins drive

Get close to many rare and miniature animals, from pygmy goats and mini horses, to the worlds smallest breed of cow and lots of owls.

The Goat Company, Longtown / HR2 ONG / 15 mins drive

www.thegoatcompany.co.uk / 01873 860240 / Farm business producing textiles and clothes from Mohair of Angora Goats. Combine with walk up Red and Black Darren or up the Olchon Valley.

Active adventures and courses

Wild swimming

There are some good spots for a paddle or swim in the area – see the Wild Swimming book, and online maps at www.wildswimming.co.uk and www.wildswim.com. Be sensible and only swim if you are experienced and a confident wild swimmer. Our favourites include:

Clodock, River Monnow / 5 mins drive / by bridge a series of shallow pools and deep section above weir.

Grwyne Fawr Reservoir / 45 mins drive to Black Mountain (Mynydd Du) Car Park and Picnic Area (NP7 7LY) and then 60 mins walk up to redundant reservoir/lake with Victorian dam.

Llangynidr, River Usk / 40 mins drive to NP8 1NA / Beautiful river section a short 5-10 min walk downstream of the old bridge to a wooded crag there is a large pool below a waterfall and further on are more secluded pools. Upstream of the old bridge is also good apparently. Do not swim if fishermen present.

Skenfrith, River Monnow NP7 8UH / 30 mins drive
Grassy slopes for children to play, right alongside the River Monnow with an island, deep section and paddling. Pub and seasonal shop opposite - see Skenfrith Castle listing below.

Bredwardine Bridge, River Wye / 35 mins drive to HR3 6BT
Popular and easy spot for a swim. Footpath is on R before bridge, some parking by L turn on far side of bridge, beyond Brobury Hs.

The Warren at Hay On Wye, River Wye / 40 mins drive to Hay
Turn opp the Swan Hotel (HR3 5DQ), past St Mary's Church. After 500m, drive/walk down bumpy track R to car park at bottom. Or walk upstream from Hay 10 mins; footpath at end of Wyeford Rd (HR3 5BJ). Popular stretch of meadow owned by the community with beach, paddling and deeper sections.

Further into the Brecon Beacons National Park you'll also find the **Waterfall Country Trails** (see www.breconbeacons.org/waterfall-country-walking-trails) with lots of swimming spots - see Wild Guide to Wales Book - Brecon Beacons on pg 261.

Canoeing

The River Wye at Hay on Wye and Symonds Yat offers good canoeing, with full day and half day routes. Canoe hire from:

Want To Canoe? at Hay on Wye / HR3 5RS

01497 820604 / www.canoehire.co.uk

Half- or full-day rentals with launch sites at Glasbury or Hay.

Wye Valley Canoes / Glasbury, nr Hay / HR3 5NP

01497 847213 / www.wyevalleycanoes.co.uk

Half- or full-day rentals from Glasbury towards Hay.

Outdoors at Hay / Hay on Wye / www.outdoorsathay.com/canoeing / Half- or full-day rentals from Hay on Wye

Black Mountain Adventure / LD3 0SD /

www.blackmountain.co.uk / Half- or full-day rentals from Glasbury towards Hay and the Brecon Canal

Ross on Wye Canoe Hire Company, Symonds Yat / HR9 6BJ

01600 890470 / www.thecanoehire.co.uk / Half- or full-day rentals with launch sites at Ross On Wye and Symonds Yat.

Horse riding and Pony Trekking

Explore the Black Mountains on horseback.

Grange Trekking NP7 7NP / 40 mins drive / 01873 890215

www.grangetrekking.co.uk / Pony trekking and riding for beginners and experienced riders. Based at Capel-Y-Fin just up from Llantony in the Vale of Elywas.

Mountain biking

There are opportunities to explore the Black Mountains by bike, with some local routes detailed in the **Lost Lanes Wales Book** and **Cycling in Brecon Beacon National Park Info** on the bookshelf. Bike hire:

Drover Cycles, Hay-on-Wye / HR3 5EH / 40 mins

01497 822419 / www.drovercycles.co.uk

Based in Hay-on-Wye with a good selection of bikes, plus advice and cafe on site.

Wye MTB / Guided rides around Black Mountains / Monmouth

NP25 / wyemt看b.co.uk

Pedal A Bike Away, Forest of Dean, GL16 7EH / 60 mins
01594 860065 / www.pedalabikeaway.co.uk

If you're equipped and feeling adventurous the **Black Mountains Bike Park** is very nearby and provides downhill and freeride tracks for intermediate and advanced riders.

Dirt Farm / Black Mountains Bike Park / NP7 7PE / 10 mins drive
/ www.dirtfarm.wales

Outdoor Adventure Activities

Black Mountain Adventure / LD3 OSD /
www.blackmountain.co.uk / Half- or full-day activities

Longtown Outdoor Centre /
www.longtownoutdoorlearning.co.uk / During school holidays
Longtown Outdoor Learning Centre can sometimes run bespoke family sessions and day adventure sessions for children. Usually advertised at www.facebook.com/longtownoutdoorlearning/

Printmaking lessons at Skirrid Print Studio / www.helenarthur.art/blog/blog-post-title-workshops

You'll find a wonderful 'Warmth and Wonder' themed print in The Barn that was created by the talented Helen at Skirrid Print Studio. Based in Longtown, Helen runs bespoke lessons for families, friends or 1:1 session.

Historic Buildings, Ruins and Castles

Longtown Castle - HR2 0LE / 30 mins walk / 5 mins drive

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/longtown-castle/

Ruins of a thick-walled round keep dating from around 1200, characteristic of the Welsh Borders, with magnificent views of the Black Mountains, and with grassy areas for children to play in. Head to Longtown, bearing left at the first junction and up hill on the left.

Llantony Priory NP7 7NN / 25 mins drive signed from Pandy or good walk up over Hatterrall Hill and down into the Ewyas valley /

www.llanthonypriory.co.uk / www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/llanthony-priory/

Evocative remains of Priory founded early in the twelfth century in the beautiful Ewyas valley. Free admission. There is a bar in the grounds serving lunch and evening meals, plus local beers.

Arthur's Stone HR3 6AX / 30 mins drive

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/arthurs-stone/

Atmospheric Neolithic burial chamber made of great stone slabs, with views over the Golden Valley towards the Black Mountains. C S Lewis visited the area often, and Arthur's Stone is purported to be the inspiration for the Stone Table in the Narnia stories.

Skenfrith Castle NP7 8UH / 30 mins drive / www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/skenfrith-castle

Riverside ruins of a circular keep with a round tower at each corner – with lovely river swimming and paddling spots, good pub over the road, The Bell (www.skenfrith.co.uk), which serves food and provides info for six circular walks and detective trail loved by families with children.

Grosmont Castle NP7 8EP / 20 mins drive / www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/grosmont-castle

Substantial remains of thirteenth-century castle in village setting, and pub nearby, Angel Inn (www.grosmont.wales/the-angel-inn/).

Raglan Castle NP15 2BT / 30 mins drive, just off the A40 /

www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/raglan-castle

Welsh fortress-palace transformed into regal residence.

Lanvihangel Court NP7 8DH / 15 mins drive off main road towards

Abergavenny / www.llanvihangelcourt.com / Tudor manor house and

gardens open days in summer months, and atmospheric Christmas Fair

in December with lots of stalls of local crafts, food producers and Christmas activities.

Dore Abbey HR2 0AA / 20 mins drive via Ewyas Harold / www.doreabbey.org.uk / Founded in 1147, Dore Abbey is the only medieval Cistercian Abbey surviving in England. Today it is a church and community resource for the arts with regular theatre productions and choral concerts.

Gardens

The Garden of the Wind HR2 ODY / 5 min walk up Hunthouse Lane 01873 860359 / www.gardenofthewind.co.uk

A modern garden using swathes of herbaceous plants and grasses with stunning views. The garden is also the home of part of the National Collection of Contemporary Memorial Art. Open select weekends June to August. Go left out of our drive onto Hunthouse Lane and continue up road until you come to a large stone sign (alternatively the footpath on your right as you go up the road goes through part of the garden on route to Walterstone.

Nant y Bedd Garden NP77LY / nr Fforest Coal Pit towards Llantony, on road to Grwyne Fawr Reservoir / www.nantybedd.com

A 6.5 acre organic garden and woodland located at 1200 feet, with a wonderful mix of organic vegetables, imaginative planting, water, stone and timber features, and a natural swimming pond. Usually open July - Sept on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and Bank Holidays, from 2pm until 6pm.

Kentchurch Court HR2 ODB / nr Pontrilas / 20 min drive

www.kentchurch-estate.com/visit/gardens-plant-sales/

Stately home and gardens part of large estate. House open for special days and by appointment, gardens generally open April - Sept.

Whitfield Estate HR2 9DG / www.whitfield-hereford.com/garden-and-events/

Stately home and gardens part of large estate. House open for special days and events.

Local Festivals & Events

There are a surprising number of annual festivals and events in the borderlands... from film to food, walking to writing:

Feb & March

- Boderlines Film Festival - www.borderlinesfilmfestival.co.uk
- Crickhowell Walking Festival - www.crickhowellfestival.com

April

- Abergavenny Writing Festival - abergavennywritingfestival.com

May

- Talgarth Walking Festival - www.talgarthwalkingfestival.org
- Hay Festival of Literature and the Arts - www.hayfestival.com
- How The Light Gets In: Philosophy & Music - www.hay.htlgi.iai.tv

June

- Hay-on-Wye Summer Food Festival - www.breconbeacons.org/food-festivals

August

- Llanthony Valley and District Show - www.llanthonyshow.co.uk
- Longtown and District Show - www.facebook.com/longtownshow/
- Brecon Jazz Festival - www.breconjazz.com
- Talgarth Festival of the Black Mountains - www.talgarthfestival.org.uk
- Green Man Festival - www.greenman.net

September

- Abergavenny Food Festival - www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com
- Crickhowell Literary Festival - www.cricklitfest.co.uk

October

- Brecon Arts Festival - www.artbeatbrecon.org
- Hay Walking Festival - www.haywalking.org
- Monmouthshire Walking Festival - www.walkinginmonmouthshire.org

November

- Hay Festival Winter Weekend - www.hayfestival.com

Guide to Abergavenny 20 mins drive

A market town with lots of independent shops and a few regular high street names, lots of cafes and a Tesco Metro, Morrisons and Waitrose (out of town), plus a few tucked away favourites.

Bean & Bread Café for great coffee, all day brunch, pastries and cocktails. Closed Mon and Tues. 36 Lion Street / NP7 5PE / www.beanandbread.co.uk

Art Chapel Café for coffee & tea and good lunches from a seasonal menu. Also holds music events, art exhibitions and special suppers. Tucked away behind the Market Hall on Market Street / NP7 5NT / www.artshopandgallery.co.uk / 01873 736430 /

Local cheeses and brews at **Madam Fromage** tucked away at the bottom of Nevill Street off the main High Street / NP7 5AD www.madamefromage.co.uk / 01873 856118

Great bread, beer, sandwiches and pastries at **The Angel Bakery Deli** (opposite Angel Hotel on Cross St / NP7 5EU / theangelbakery.com).

Try **The Angel Hotel** for their **famous afternoon tea** (angelabergavenny.com) - or head over to **Shepherds Ice Cream** tucked away on Market Street NP7 5SD / www.shepherdsicecream.co.uk

The **Market Hall** hosts a range of markets, including general market (Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays), Flea Market (Wednesdays), Antique & Collectors Fair (3rd Sunday of the month), Arts and Craft Fair (2nd Thursday of the month), Craft Fair (2nd Saturday of the month) and a Farmers Market (4th Thursday of the month).

Abergavenny castle is one of the best examples of a motte and bailey castle in Britain, and is home to a museum. Usually open every day - free entry. NP7 5EE / www.abergavennymuseum.co.uk

There is also the small **Baker Street Cinema** and **Borough Theatre**, and the **Abergavenny Food Festival** takes place in September / www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com

Tourist Information Centre is at the Tithe Barn, NP7 5ND / 01873 853254. More info at abergavenny.org.uk / abergavennynow.com

Parking try Brewery Yard Short Stay (NP7 5SD) behind Morrisons/ beside Art Chapel Café or Fairfield Long Stay opp Morrisons (NP7 5SG)

Further into Wales is **Crickhowell**, if you're heading that way **Book-ish Bookshop and Café** is a good stop off (book-ish.co.uk / NP8 1BD).

Guide to Hereford

30 mins drive

A beautiful old market cathedral city with plenty of restaurants, cafes and independent shops, as well as most of the high street names, plus a Tesco, Asda and Waitrose.

Hereford Cathedral and Close (HR1 2NG) is worth getting away from the busy shopping streets for. There you can visit the **Mappa Mundi and Chained Library** exhibition to see the largest medieval map of the world in existence (www.herefordcathedral.org).

From the Cathedral find **Church Street** (HR1 2LR) for independent shops and local food supplies at **Fodder Health Food Shop** and local cheese at **The Mousetrap Cheese Shop** (www.mousetrapcheese.co.uk).

The bustling High Street and Commercial Street has many familiar shops and some independents. Also the **The Black and White House Museum**, a well preserved 17th Century timber-framed building. Tucked down Commercial Street you'll find our favourite café, **Sensory & Rye** which serves great coffee, brunch, lunches and dinner (north end of Commercial Street / HR1 2DE / www.sensoryandrye.co.uk).

A little further away is the **Old Market Shopping Centre** with Waitrose (HR4 9HX), high street shops and restaurants, such as Wagamama's, as well as Hereford's favourite burger restaurant **Beefy Boys** (www.thebeefyboys.com), plus a large **Odeon Cinema**. Beyond here you'll find the **Courtyard Arts Theatre** (HR4 9JR / www.courtyard.org.uk) which has a café, shows films and has lots of theatre performances and workshops – many family friendly.

North West of the Cathedral you'll also find the **Hereford Beer Shop** (West St / HR4 OBX / www.herefordbeerhouse.co.uk) to pick up an unusual brew, and popular **Burger Shop** and **Book Shop Restaurant** both run by www.aruleoftum.com (Aubrey St / HR4 OBU). The Left Bank Village is South West of the cathedral and is a venue by the river with bar and **De Koffie Pot Café** (theleftbankvillage.co.uk/de-koffie-pot / off Bridge Street / HR4 9DG).

For all things cider related visit the **Cider Museum** (HR4 OEF / www.cidermuseum.co.uk) set in a former cider making factory. For other things to do see www.visitherefordshire.co.uk

Parking try Wye Street (HR2 7RB / easy access to Cathedral side of town and avoids some of the traffic), Waitrose, Courtyard Theatre or see all council car parks at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/parking

Guide to Hay-on-Wye

40 mins drive

Known as the town of books, spend a lovely day exploring the river, castle, and lots of independent shops, with lots of lovely cafes too.

The weekly **Market Day on Thursdays** is a delight of creativity with food, crafts and vintage stalls - and there is a **monthly Saturday market** that runs seasonally on the first Saturday of the month, April to October. The monthly market focuses on speciality foods, artisan makers, local producers, gatherers and vintage resellers. Check details at www.haymarkets.co.uk.

Top on the list for many people is **Richard Booth's Bookshop** - which also has a cinema out the back (Lion Street, HR3 5AA / www.boothbooks.co.uk). Almost next door is the **Hay Deli** where you can stock up on local cheeses and supplies (www.haydeli.co.uk).

Then there is **Hay Castle** which is well worth a visit and tour, with exhibitions and a cafe with tables inside and outside, as well as nice gardens to sit in with a takeaway (off Oxford Road or Castle Street, HR3 5DG / www.haycastletrust.org)

Get a lunchtime takeaway from **Leaf (aka The Salad Project)** on Lion Street, HR3 5AA. Vegan salads and curries to take away and enjoy in the castle gardens or down by the river (or there are seats upstairs).

Don't miss the **Old Electric Shop** on Broad Street selling an eclectic mix of clothes, homeware and books, it is also a café serving coffee and cakes (10 Broad St, HR3 5DB / www.oldelectric.co.uk). The **Old Bank Hay** is a pop-up restaurant that serves a set menu for pre-booked sittings for dinner (Friday and Saturdays) and lunch (Saturdays) (Broad Street, HR3 5DD / www.oldbankhay.co.uk)

Stay on Broad Street and you'll find a butchers and access on your left down to the bridge and river. Take the path on your right and then bear left for a riverside walk to local swimming spot, **The Warrens**. Head over the bridge to find **The Treehouse Cafe** (www.instagram.com/treehousehay) a lovely riverside space serving coffee, cake, sandwiches and pastries - with walks along the river and children's play area.

Carrying along Broad Street will take you to **The Globe**, an arts centre with a kitchen serving lunch and dinners (check times) and films,

music, talks, workshops and art exhibitions (HR3 5BG / www.globeathay.org).

Near the covered market you'll find the **Hay Antique Market** (HR3 5AF / www.hayantiquemarket.co.uk) . Along Castle Street are more bookshops and gift shops, plus another butchers and greengrocers at the end.

Hay is also a good spot for **wild swimming** and **canoeing** - see Active adventures section. The famous literary **Hay Festival** (www.hayfestival.com) takes place in May - and running concurrently is the **How The Light Gets In**, a philosophy and music festival (www.hay.htlgi.iai.tv).

Parking try Oxford Road Car Park (HR3 5AJ) or by the river Wyeford Car Park (HR3 5BJ).

Top tip: When returning from Hay-on-Wye if you use the Craswall road you can take a quick detour up to the magnificent **Hay Bluff** and **Gospel Pass** for a walk, and then drop back to the Craswall road to round off the trip back with a stop at **The Bulls Head** in Craswall (Craswall, HR2 0PN / www.wildbynaturellp.com/the-bulls-head-inn) for a pint and bar snacks!

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A little further into Wales from Hay is **Glasbury** where you'll find the Wye Valley Canoes (www.wyevalleycanoes.co.uk/ HR3 5NP) and other canoe hire places.

Further on the other side of the Black Mountains is **Talgarth**, a little market town with **Talgarth Mill** a working mill, bakery and café serving coffee and lunches (LD3 0BW / www.talgarthmill.com), and **Crickhowell** where the **Book-ish** Bookshop and Café is a good stop off (www.book-ish.co.uk / NP8 1BD).

Your suggestions

We will **appreciate your feedback and suggestions** on things to you've done and adventures you have had. And if anything mentioned is dated or changed please do let us know.

Please also do **share your favourite's and tips for future guests** in the little turquoise hardbacked book on the bookshelf.

If you have enjoyed your stay we'd love you to **share your experience with your friends** too – you can find us on most social media channels, so please do tag us when you share:

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