

TRAVEL TRADE GUIDE TO The River Thames



www.visitthames.co.uk/traveltrade

Delightful riverside towns and villages

The towns and villages along the River Thames are ready to welcome your customers



Abingdon

Here's a selection to include in your itineraries.

ABINGDON

Abingdon is recognised for special architectural merit with over fifty, 17th century or older buildings. Visit County Hall Museum, one of Abingdon's oldest and most beautiful buildings. Admire St Helen's Church, England's second widest church with 14th century painted ceilings.

01235 522711

www.abingdon.gov.uk/discover-abingdon

FARINGDON

A beautiful market town, on the edge of the Cotswolds, close to the Thames. Climb to the top of Folly Tower, built in 1935 by Lord Berners, set within a four-acre woodland to see the breath-taking views over five counties. All Saints' Church has a rich interior with monuments that reveal the intriguing history of Faringdon including the Civil War.

01367 240281

office@faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk

www.faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk

HENLEY ON THAMES

This 13th century market town is one of the most beautiful towns in England. Henley enjoys a wonderful stretch of river with delightful independent shops, brilliant pubs and great restaurants. It hosts internationally

renowned sporting events and festivals. Henley-on-Thames, aka Causton, In Midsomer Murders, has appeared in numerous episodes.

01491 578 034

vic@henleytowncouncil.gov.uk

www.visit-henley.com

MARLOW

Set in the river valley and alongside the Chiltern Hills, it is a vibrant Georgian market town with a landmark suspension bridge which spans the River Thames. Residents have included: Jerome K. Jerome, T.S. Eliot and Mary Shelley. Follow a 17 mile Midsomer Murders trail.

marlow_office@wycombe.gov.uk

lib-mar@buckinghamshire.gov.uk



The riverside, Marlow

LONDON AND GREENWICH

The 2,000-year-old river flows through London and provides a stunning backdrop to many of the city's top tourist attractions. Discover London on sightseeing river tours with City Cruises. Cruises depart every 30 minutes to Greenwich. GREENWICH is where to find the Meridian Line, the famous tea clipper Cutty Sark, the Royal Observatory, National Maritime Museum and the Old Royal Naval College.

trade@visitgreenwich.org.uk

www.visitgreenwich.org.uk

OXFORD

The 'city of dreaming spires' is world-renowned for its university and the Ashmolean Museum and Bodleian Libraries. There's lots more to Oxford: 800 years of royalty and scholars and Oxford Castle and Prison.

www.visitthames.co.uk/towns/oxford-p196351

READING

Reading is surprising in so many ways: Michelin Star restaurants; over 800 listed buildings and monuments; boutique hotels; family friendly museums and the monumental ruins of Reading Abbey; two National Trails and two great rivers, the Thames and the Kennet on its doorstep. Famous as one of the UK's top ten retail destinations, it also offers . It is also a great base to explore the River Thames and the Great West Way.

visit-reading.com/traveltrade



Abbey Ruins, Reading

RICHMOND UPON THAMES

One of London's most attractive boroughs, possessing a timeless charm. Henry VII named Richmond after his favourite Earldom, Richmond in Yorkshire. The borough of Richmond spans both banks of the river here, linking Hampton Court Palace, Richmond Town Centre and Kew Gardens with London.

www.visitthames.co.uk/towns/richmond-upon-thames-p801901

RUNNYMEDE

The Borough of Runnymede includes Egham and Chertsey and its famous monuments; the most famous commemorates King John sealing the Magna Carta in 1215 and the JFK Memorial to the celebrated president. Along the water meadows, near the National Trust's Magna Carta tea-room and car park, stand The Jurors, twelve intricately worked bronze chairs, representing the jury system, which has its origins in Magna Carta.

www.visit-egham.uk

WALLINGFORD

There's a wealth of independent shops, antique shops, historical connections and traditional English architecture and it features many times in the Midsomer Murders. With its royal charter, Wallingford hosts plenty of markets. Visit Wallingford Museum, home to the permanent exhibition of Agatha Christie with memorabilia of Agatha and her life in Wallingford.

01491 826972

queries@wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/visitors

WINDSOR

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead combines over 1,000 years of history, contemporary shopping and fine dining with sports, leisure activities and events. Explore the landscapes, the buildings and fine arts and crafts. It is home to 13 attractions including Windsor Castle, Eton College, Changing the Guard and LEGOLAND Windsor. The River Thames flows through the whole of the Royal Borough and it is along the river that its towns and villages can be found including Bray, Eton and Maidenhead. Visit Windsor and beyond for the perfect day trip or short break.

01753 743920

julia.white@rbwm.gov.uk

www.windsor.gov.uk/travel-trade



Windsor Castle view from Long Walk

Exploring: Sightseeing boat trips and walks

Enjoy a walk along the
Thames Path National
Trail or a cruise on
the River Thames



Thames Path National Trail, Henley on Thames

Sit and relax as beautiful River Thames scenery glides by on a passenger boat trip!

River Thames Passenger boat operators offer a selection of different options including round trips, stopping or one-way services. As well as the scheduled services, you might enjoy a themed cruise. Choose from wildlife watching, Jazz or seasonal trips, to name but a few! The main cruising season is Apr-Sep, but each operator may have sailings outside of this time including special events, please check availability with the business. The locations for the operators below are their main base but they may offer other pick-up points.

HENLEY Hobbs of Henley (charters 6-125)

Jonathan Hobbs
01491 572035
charter@hobbssofhenley.co.uk
www.hobbssofhenley.com

LONDON City Cruises (charters 30-600)

020 77 400 400
info@citycruises.com
www.citycruises.com

OXFORD Salter Steamers (charters 4-128)

Paul Salter 01865 243421
info@salterssteamers.co.uk
www.salterssteamers.co.uk

READING Thames Rivercruise (charters 40-140)

Tim Deaton
0118 9481088
timd@thamesrivercruise.co.uk
www.thamesrivercruise.co.uk

WINDSOR French Brothers (charters 20 – 180)

Don Yates 01753 827345
sales@boat-trips.co.uk
www.frenchbrothers.co.uk

Further information:

www.visitthames.co.uk/boat-trips-on-the-river-thames

Information on local guided walks can be found at www.visitthames.co.uk/walking-tours

Take a walk along the 184 miles (294kms) Thames Path National Trail, from the source of the River Thames in the Cotswolds to the sea.

This gentle long-distance walking trail along the banks of the Thames, passes through peaceful water meadows rich in wildlife, unspoilt rural villages and historic towns and cities. Finally, it cuts through the heart of London, passing some of the best-known London landmarks, to finish at the Thames Barrier in Greenwich. Combine a walk with a boat trip back or with a local town or village and attraction, near to the Thames Path. A selection of walks combining rail travel are being developed, these are also suitable for group walks. These include:

Reading to Shiplake (7 miles) - The route of the Thames Path is surprisingly quiet once Reading is left behind, you'll enjoy a landscape of gentle wooded hills and fine houses. Return with **Thames Rivercruise**.

Henley to Marlow (9 miles) - This walk starts and finishes in attractive historic towns, offering plenty to do once you've finished your walk. The path has the backdrop of the Chiltern Hills and you may see a red kite. **www.visitthames.co.uk/ThamesValley-GWR**

City, Town and Village Walking Tours

The riverside cities, towns and villages cry out to be explored.

Graham Horn, www.Tours2order.com can provide tours for groups or individuals whether walks, town tours or coach tours along the Thames.

Discover: Museums, gardens and historic houses

A perfect day out! Combine
a cruise on the river with
an attraction visit



Stonor Park



River & Rowing Museum

Not far from Henley is **Stonor Park**, a hidden gem. A family home for over 850 years, with impressive art and treasure collection and Italianate gardens and deer park. In Henley the **River & Rowing** Museum tells the story of the river, rowing and the history of Henley.

Enjoy the gardens of the Thames: Cliveden National Trust's Guided House and Garden Tours. Savill Garden, near Windsor offers a joint package with a Thames cruise with French Brothers.

Don't miss **Windsor Castle** or **Hampton Court Palace** the jewels in the crown, or explore 1000 years of history and politics with the **Houses of Parliament** audio and guided tours.

www.visitthames.co.uk/attractions

Film, TV and Literary Connections

The Thames seems to have inspired murderous thoughts with TV shows such as Morse, its pre-sequel Endeavour and spin off Lewis, Poirot and Midsomer Murders. Christchurch College Oxford is a setting for Harry Potter. Shepperton Studios is only 2 miles from the Thames and the iconic Pinewood Studios home to the legendary 007 stage is only 7 miles away, no wonder the Thames and its towns and villages appear. Authors have been inspired by the Thames: Jerome K Jerome's 'Three Men in a Boat'; Kenneth Grahame 'Wind in the Willow'; E H Shepard found inspiration in this stretch of the River Thames for his illustrations for Grahame's book. Oxford has inspired JRR Tolkien and Philip Pullman to CS Lewis and Lewis Carroll.

www.visitthames.co.uk/film-and-tv-connections

Great places to stay and eat

The Runnymede on Thames Hotel

Here's a selection of hotels along the Thames: from five star luxury to group-friendly hotels, or there's a choice of excellent pub and restaurant with rooms accommodation.

EGHAM **The Runnymede on Thames** - Close to Heathrow Airport, near the M25, this stunning hotel offers luxury accommodation, along with an award-winning spa and riverside dining.
www.runnymedehotel.com

HENLEY **Henley Greenlands Hotel** - Set within the 30-acre Henley Business School estate, this magnificent Grade II listed building is steeped in history dating as far back as 1480.
www.hospitalityuor.co.uk

HENLEY/MARLOW **Danesfield House** - Between Marlow and Henley, Danesfield House, set within acres of formal gardens, overlooks the Thames and has an award-winning spa.
www.danesfieldhouse.co.uk

NR MAIDENHEAD **Cliveden** - A grand stately home, now a luxurious hotel. Surrounded by National Trust managed Grade I listed formal gardens and parkland with views of the river.
www.clivedenhouse.co.uk/homepage

MARLOW **Macdonald Compleat Angler Hotel** - Stylish, luxurious, romantic; the award-winning Macdonald Compleat Angler Hotel is a magical riverside retreat.
www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/our-hotels/south-england/marlow/macdonald-compleat-angler

MARLOW **Crowne Plaza Marlow** - Stunning lakeside location near the River Thames, offering 168 spacious contemporary bedrooms.
www.cpmarlow.co.uk

READING **Crowne Plaza Reading East** - Minutes from M4, newly refurbished, near the River Thames, offers 174 luxurious bedrooms.
www.cpreading.co.uk

Or stay at a smaller pub or restaurant with rooms:

• **Miller of Mansfield**
www.millerofmansfield.com

• **Beetle & Wedge**
www.beetleandwedge.co.uk

• **Brakspear pubs with accommodation**
www.visitthames.co.uk/brakspear-pubs

Most of these provide dining options with stunning views over the Thames. Another option for group dining is **Bill's Restaurant and Bar**. They offer a Group Set menu. Bill's can be found at Marlow, Oxford, Reading, Windsor and London: Greenwich, London Bridge, Putney, Richmond, Kingston. Bill's Greenwich, Putney and Reading also offer private dining rooms.
www.bills-website.co.uk

*Crowne Plaza
Reading East*

Inspiring Itineraries along the River Thames

The River Thames provides the perfect backdrop for your trip, whether you have a few days or just a morning.



Salters Steamers

Follow the Thames over a few days and join public cruises at different parts of the river, with visits to the attractions and city and market towns along the way. Or why not combine it with a visit to London, you can get a cruise from Runnymede that takes you to Kew Gardens. Or if your group is visiting London consider a London sightseeing cruise with **City Cruises**. **Reading** makes a perfect base to visit the upper and lower Thames.

Team Activity Group (TAG Events) can organise activities on the River Thames, outdoor activities on the land, indoor activities and evening entertainment for you at various locations and works closely with many of the hotels.

www.tag-events.com

Some suggested itineraries:

- River Thames Treasures: Exploring the Thames from Oxford to Twickenham
- Cruising the Thames: 4 and 5 day itineraries
- Themed Cruises: Add a themed cruise to your itinerary

www.visitthames.co.uk/groups-venues/itineraries



Gin Tasting Cruise, Hobbs of Henley



French Brothers

THAMES PATH

COACH PARKING

ABINGDON

It is essential to book as the coach park is locked. Please phone 01235 470118 or switchboard 01235 422422 in advance during weekday office hours. There is a drop off point for one coach at Hales Meadow at Abingdon bridge.

GREENWICH

Pick up/drop off point in Stockwell Street, opposite St Alfege church where there is a waiting time limit of 20 mins. Two coach parking spaces in Park Row car park on Trafalgar Road/Park Row. Free parking for coaches on Charlton Way near Blackheath gate to Greenwich Park and on Norman Road in the town centre.

HENLEY ON THAMES

Spaces for coaches are available at the Henley Station car park. There is a drop-off point at the bus stop in Hart Street close to Barclays Bank. Sat Nav RG9 1AY; 10 Spaces.

MARLOW

There are 2 coach parking bays located in the car park. Parking charges apply 7 days a week (coaches pay triple). Drop off point and parking: Court Garden Car Park, Pound Lane, Marlow SL7 2AE.

READING

Drop off in Central Reading next to Reading Museum on Valpy Street. Coach parking at Reading Buses depot (9am-5pm) by prior arrangement (0118 959 4000).

RUNNYMEDE

Coaches can park at the Runnymede Pleasure Grounds Car Park. Coaches can park for up to one hour for £2. Windsor Road, Egham TW20 OAE.

WALLINGFORD

Coach passenger pick-up/drop-off on the High Street, opposite Wallingford Museum. Coaches can park at Hithercroft Sports Park (OX10 9RB) with permission, except weekends and the Queens Head pub (OX10 8ER) in Crowmarsh by appointment in advance, telephone 01491 839857.

WINDSOR

Windsor Coach Park - charges apply Mon-Sun 9am-6pm (Incl Bank Holidays). Pay and display for coaches only with 74 spaces. Entry is allowed up to 6.30pm, exit at any time. Alma Road, Windsor SL4 3HY.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Visit Thames can offer support in creating itineraries, images and product.

Karen Roebuck, Visit Thames Project Manager
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Thames Path National Trail

Hannah Gutteridge
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Windsor coach park

www.visitthames.co.uk/traveltrade

The Royal River Thames offers a superb backdrop for any meeting or conference, however large or small.

Take a look at visitthames.co.uk/conferences