

Press Release

June 2014

Big Skies Make for Grand Adventures In Wiltshire this Summer



For over 10,000 years Wiltshire has been recognised for its big skies, celestial and earthly vistas and stunning landscapes. It is home to wide open plains, ancient henges, open air white horses and mystical crop circles. So now the summer is upon us [VisitWiltshire](#) has compiled a roundup of the best places to see the changing skies, experience some heart pumping activities, enjoy food and drink outside and sleep under the stars.

Dawn, Dusk and the Heavens

- The world famous Stonehenge, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is a must visit when travelling to Wiltshire. Now, with the addition of a multi-million pound visitor centre there is nowhere better to stop over and see the changing skies at one of the world's most ancient monuments.
[Salisbury and Stonehenge Guided tours](#) offer dawn access to the site. Contact on +44 (0) 7775 674816
- [Salisbury Cathedral](#), Britain's finest 13th century cathedral is a magnificent example of early English Gothic architecture and boasts the tallest Cathedral Spire in England. Climb. Enjoy a guided tour of the Cathedral floor or book a tower tour and climb 332 steps to the base of the spire to enjoy magnificent views across Salisbury's famous water meadows Tickets available [online](#) in advance or on site on the day.
- For incredible views of Wiltshire climb the 205 stairs to the top of King Alfred's Tower on the [Stourhead Estate](#). The Estate is also home to Stourhead House, an iconic Palladian Mansion which has an incredible art collection and a regency library. The breath-taking 18th century estate is also full of great lakeside walks, grottoes and classical temples.
Call for Stourhead House and King Alfred's Tower opening times on 01747 841152
- At the heart of a prehistoric landscape in Wiltshire is [Avebury Ring](#), a world-famous stone circle. Originally erected about 4,500 years ago, the stones surround the

charming village of Avebury. Walk amongst the stones and be immersed in the mysticism that they bring to the area.

The Stone Circle is open 24 hours and the Visitor Car Park (pay and display) is open 09:30 – 18:30 in the summer.

- [Salisbury Plain](#) is at the heart of Wiltshire, 12 miles north of Salisbury. The landscape lends itself to incredible open skies in an area with many species of wildlife. Many great walks are on offer most notably the 30 mile Range Perimeter Path which provides some spectacular views.

Extreme Skies

Nearly half of Wiltshire is a designated Area of Natural Beauty, spread across three stunning areas: [The Cotswolds](#) to the north of the county, [Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs](#) in the south west of Wiltshire and the [North Wessex Downs](#). For a unique perspective on the magnificent landscape, why not take an aerial adventure?

- To really get the heart pumping, Wiltshire's skies are the perfect location to go skydiving. See Salisbury Cathedral and Stonehenge from above by taking part in a tandem jump with [GoSkyDive](#), the newest UK dropzone located at Old Sarum Airfield.
Open all year. Contact number: 01722 568664
- To experience the views from above but in a leisurely fashion then the [Aeorsaurus hot air balloon tour](#) is a great option. Sip champagne in either the dawn or dusk trip over natural wonders of the south west of England.
Open all year. Contact number 01722 507102
- The [Razorcat Tour](#) is a supercharged, adrenaline-filled, trip on a trike that has all the fun of a motorcycle with the stability of a car. The chauffeur takes up to two passengers and has an outstanding knowledge of the area, via country lanes and off the beaten track to show the very best of the county.
Tours and rides are available daily, all year round, 9am - 9pm. The minimum ride is 20 minutes, and the maximum ride is a full day. For prices, please refer to <http://www.razorcattours.com/> or call 01225 745708.
- Wiltshire is famous for its horses. Carved into the chalk hills are the famous White horses; some are up to 250 years old. There are also some well-established riding schools: [Pewsey Vale Riding Centre](#) near Marlborough caters for all abilities and [Rein and Shine](#) near Purton offers private, semi-private and group sessions.
Contact Pewsey Vale on 01672 851400. Rein and Shine on 01666 860068

Outdoor Eating

It's the time of the year for alfresco dining, so where better to enjoy it than in Wiltshire's best outdoor dining spots?

- Relax in Wiltshire's stunning scenery by taking a picnic, during the [Iford Arts festival](#), to the Grade I Italian-style [Peto Garden](#): famous for its tranquil beauty. The garden is open on Tuesday to Thursday, and weekends from 2-5pm. Entry is £5 for adults; children under 10 free. Contact on 01225 863146
- [The Dove Inn](#) in the heart of the Wiltshire countryside is tucked away in the village of Corton on the path of the ancient Wessex Ridgeway, a popular walking route. The pub has the perfect garden in which to enjoy a local brew and food from the seasonal menu. Contact on 01985 850109
- Discover an unspoilt part of Wiltshire at the world-renowned [Red Lion Freehouse](#) in the village of East Chisenbury. Tucked away on the edge of the Salisbury Plain the pub has a Michelin Star and been named Pub of the Year 2014 by the Good Food Guide. The pub is open from 12pm every day. Lunch 12:30pm-2:30pm, Dinner 6:30pm-8:00pm Monday-Saturday and 6:00pm-8:00pm Sunday. Contact on 01980671124.
- [The Harrow at Little Bedwyn](#) east of Marlborough offers al fresco dining in the summer months and has been awarded a Michelin start each year since 2006. With outstanding food sourced from 'real farmers' they offer an outstanding wine list sourced from all around the world, assembled to make sure the wine can match the food. Lunch is served from 12-3pm and Dinner 7-11pm Contact on 01672 870871

Sleeping Under the Stars

Wiltshire has over 70 campsites, and for the less intrepid traveller there's a wealth of luxurious glamping sites, boutique hotels and charming guesthouses. Wiltshire's big skies and clean air mean that aspiring astronomers will be in for incredible celestial experience.

- Unwind surrounded by nature in a luxurious canvas lodge at [Mill Farm Glamping](#). Camping will never be the same: relax and unwind amongst nature without compromising on comfort. The super-chic canvas lodges are fabulously spacious and well furnished, with a generous master bedroom, a twin bedded room and a children's bunk barn complete with stable doors windows and cosy bunk beds. Open 15/03/2014 - 08/11/2014 Contact on 01380 828351

- [The Rook Shepherds Hut](#) near Marlborough is set in its own private woodland and offers the perfect couples retreat in a self-catered hut that sleeps two. Whilst staying at the hut there is access to the tennis court, swimming pool and private woodland. Open all year round. Contact 01672 511022 for pricing and availability.
- [The Lodge Farmhouse](#) is a comfortable, welcoming farmhouse bed and breakfast. Perched high on the most southerly ridge in Wiltshire, guests can enjoy incredible view of the whole of the South of England. Hosts Janet and Michael Roe are always delighted to help with tour planning and local eating guidance. Bed and breakfast, £40 per person per night. Contact on 01725 519 242.

For more suggestions, route guides and information to help plan a break in Wiltshire this summer, visit: www.visitwiltshire.co.uk

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For further information please contact:

Sophy Norris 01392 248 934
Josh Voulters 0207 886 8452
visitwiltshire@flagshipconsulting.co.uk

Note to editors

Further information and images of the above attractions available upon request.

VisitWiltshire

VisitWiltshire was established in August 2011 and is the official Tourist Board for Wiltshire. It is a private sector membership organisation representing over 550 members. VisitWiltshire's priority is to grow the county's Visitor Economy by raising awareness of the destination and generating additional tourism visits and spend. Wiltshire's Visitor Economy currently generates an estimated £1.4billion and supports over 27,000 jobs.