



Group travel in Wiltshire: It's Absolutely a UK must-do

Welcome to Wiltshire

With a history spanning more than 6,000 years and an array of events and festivities taking place in every nook and cranny of the county throughout the year, there has never been a better time for groups to visit the beautiful and fascinating county of Wiltshire.

As well as the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Stonehenge and Avebury, and magnificent Salisbury Cathedral, there are the renowned attractions of Longleat, Stourhead, and Bowood House and Gardens, as well as the retail delights of McArthurGlen's Swindon Designer Outlet and wonderful towns and villages to explore.

For making the most of your time in the county, many of VisitWiltshire's accommodation providers offer one free place for every thirty passengers booked, and there is a wide range of accommodation types to suit every budget – from cosy gastro pubs, to boutique bed and breakfasts and high-end hotels.

VisitWiltshire launch tourism App

Just last week VisitWiltshire launched the county's first ever tourism App, available to download for free from the Apple and Google Play stores, showcasing the best of the Wiltshire tourism offering.

The new App includes details of all VisitWiltshire's 480+ tourism partners, as well as sections on towns and villages, things to do, accommodation, shopping, food and drink, outdoor activities. Other features include interactive mapping – so visitors will be able to find places nearby, special offers, Wiltshire-themed games, and weather updates, whilst on the go!

Absolutely Mobile, who built the App, noted that this is the largest application they've ever produced, reflecting the breadth of the county's offering and the extensive range of tourism partners featured.

Groups visiting the county this year benefit from a whole host of new and exclusive deals, offers and updates from VisitWiltshire's tourism partners – here we look at the best events, accommodation and attractions that Wiltshire has to offer to group travellers for 2013:

What's on?

[Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival](#)

The 2013 Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival will run from **Friday 24 May to Saturday 8 June 2013**, bringing the best artists from around the world, commissioning and creating work unique to the region. Group trips should make the most of a stop-off in the city of Salisbury to experience the vibrant culture of Catalunya and a celebration of street arts.

[Trowbridge Museum](#)

A Textile and Weaving Festival will take place from **Saturday 17 August to Saturday 16 November 2013**. Guided walks, talks, weaving demonstrations and exhibitions of contemporary textile artists' work will be on offer, as well as textile related craft activities for children and adults. Groups can experience the first 'From Fleece to Fabric' event which encompasses sheep shearing, spinning, dyeing and blending, and weaving.

[Salisbury Cathedral](#)

This **December**, Salisbury Cathedral is hosting a special carol concert for group visitors which is guaranteed to sell-out fast. The Cathedral now has fast track entry for pre-booked groups, as well as new 'welcome materials' and virtual tours of the Cathedral now available on Google maps for group visitors.

[Salisbury Christmas Market](#)

From **28 November – 21 December 2013**, Salisbury Christmas Market returns for only its second year running in 2013 and features 71 delightful little wooden chalets where visitors can expect to find lots of tasteful, inspiring, high quality gifts and festive goods, with a strong emphasis on products coming from Britain – there will be specific 'made in Salisbury' and 'made in Wiltshire' chalets too. During the Christmas Market there will be a programme of local choirs and music groups performing festive music, with many retailers in Salisbury organising additional special events.

Where to visit?

[Bowood House and Gardens](#)

The magnificent house and gardens of Bowood are a must-see for visitors to the county. Bowood currently offers discounted entry for groups of 20 or more, with adult entry costing £9.00 and seniors £7.50.

Walled Private Garden Tours are exclusively available to groups, and are priced at £25.00 per person, including full entry into the House and Gardens as well as a two course lunch in Bowood House Restaurant.

[Stonehenge](#) and [Avebury](#)

No visit to Wiltshire is complete without seeing the mystical stone circles of Avebury and Stonehenge up close. A new route around Stonehenge is soon to be announced, and will coincide with the opening of the new visitor centre at Stonehenge later in 2013.

At Avebury, an Introduction to the Manor Reborn taster tours will be available for advance booked groups, including an exclusive tour of the Manor House with the chance to learn more about the project with the BBC to transform it.

Castle Combe Circuit

Groups are now welcome at Castle Combe Circuit! 2013 has seen the launch of group bookings for visits to the famous course – bring a minimum of 20 paying people and receive a 25% discount on any race meeting ticket during 2013. Applies to both adult and senior race meeting tickets (children under 17 go free). Pre-booking is essential.

Wadworth Brewery

Featuring an exhibition of Wadworth brewing memorabilia, and an insight into 'a year in the life of a Wadworth Shire Horse', this free, educational experience gives visitors the chance to understand all aspects of the busy, working brewery – from 1875 to the present day.

Brewery tours are available Monday to Saturday at 11am and 2pm and on Sundays by appointment. Stop for hot drink and a slice of beer fruit cake for £2.50 before your tour – exclusive offer for groups. Advance booking is necessary.

Bradford on Avon

Described by its residents as the 'jewel in Wiltshire's crown', the picturesque town of Bradford on Avon is a must-see for groups, with some stunning historic places to visit, such as the Saxon Church, Tythe Barn and of course the Kennet & Avon Canal and River Avon walks. The town has a garden tour and cream tea offer available for groups from £10.00 per person.

Where to stay

Best Western Mayfield House Hotel

A delightful country hotel - privately owned and operated and set in an acre of walled garden in the pretty Cotswold village of Crudwell. Group rates from £49 per person. Mayfield are now able to offer a complete afternoon tea service for up to 70 guests! Cotswold Cream Teas are priced at £4.50 per person, for groups of 20 or more, or Strawberry Fizz tea (with champagne) at £9.95 per head (minimum pre-order of 20).

There is also free coach parking for guests taking lunch or afternoon tea.

The Cathedral Hotel

Located in the heart of Salisbury centre, within a minute's walk of shops, restaurants and the famous Cathedral, The Cathedral Hotel offers guests comfortable, contemporary rooms and

group rates from £49 per person. They also have a special summer dining offer of two mains for £12 and two deserts for £5, exclusively for groups.

[Holiday Inn Salisbury - Stonehenge](#)

The closest hotel accommodation to the mystical Stonehenge - the 4 star Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge is located just off the A303 in the heart of picturesque Wiltshire. Group accommodation is available from £35 per person and they offer a fantastic selection of menus for tour groups

For more information on Group Visits, [download a copy of the VisitWiltshire Groups and Travel Trade guide for 2013](#), which includes the special offers for groups visiting the county

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