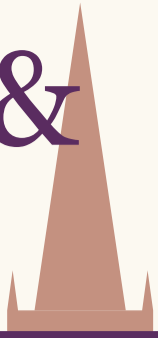


Towers & Spires



4 Gloucester

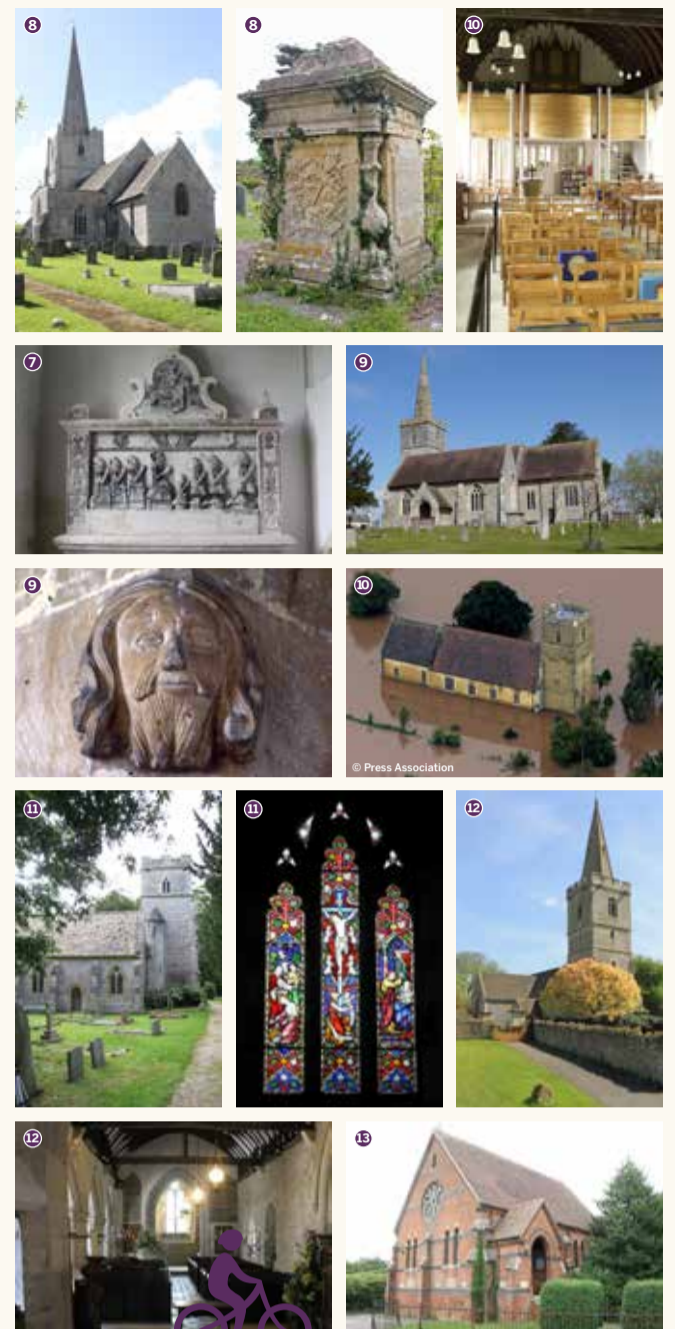
30 MILE LONG ROUTE OR 20 MILE SHORT ROUTE



A cycling tour of churches north of Gloucester



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If you would like to provide any feedback on this ride, please email rh@glosdioc.org.uk



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Towers & Spires

A 30- or 20-mile cycling tour of churches north of Gloucester

This is one of a country-wide series of cycle tours linking our magnificent cathedrals with some of the remarkable parish churches surrounding them. Each tour will use the cathedral as a start and finish point and take in a number of our most outstanding churches.

Enjoy gently cycling the quiet lanes of North Gloucestershire, riding beside the River Severn as you leave the City, absorbing the beauty of the countryside, taking breaks in each church and perhaps taking on fuel for the journey at one of the numerous pubs along the way. Wonder at the architecture, love and attention to detail which went in to building our network of parish churches and chapels. Ponder on the oddities, admire the craftsmanship of the bee shelter at Hartpury and the ongoing skill and inspiration of modern craftsmen and women in the restored church at Tirley. Travel safely and travel well; it's the journey not the arrival which matters.

1 Gloucester Cathedral

Gloucester Cathedral is one of the finest medieval buildings in the country. The extraordinary fan-vaulted medieval cloisters and Great East Window are national treasures and the Lady Chapel houses some of the finest Arts & Crafts glass in the country. The tomb of Edward II became a place of pilgrimage in the C14. It is the only monarch's tomb in the South West, one of only a few outside London and as such is of both historical and architectural significance.

www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk



Churches along the route

2 St Giles, Maisemore

The medieval church is set on a high point overlooking the village. It was largely rebuilt in 1851 and 1868-69 by Fulljames (see also St Mary, Hasfield) and Waller. Only the tower and south porch were unaffected. The font is reputedly cut down from a Norman tub font. The royal arms of George III can be seen above the south door.

3 St Mary, Hartpury – former Roman Catholic Chapel

The name Hartpury derives from the Saxon Hartpirige meaning hard pear tree. The chapel is immediately to the south of the parish church and was built in 1829 for expatriate Belgian nuns. By the turn of the twentieth century the building was dilapidated. Although restored in the 1930s, in more recent years it was used as a chicken shed. The Hartpury Historic Buildings Trust restored the building for community use in 2001.

4 St Mary, Hartpury

The church lies at some distance from the village. Its Norman origins are evident in the broad nave. Look out for carvings of the Green Man. The timber C14 west porch is a fine example of this type of construction. The unique bee shelter in the churchyard was relocated to this site when threatened with destruction. Opposite is the privately-owned C14 tithe barn, one of the largest in the country.

5 St Margaret, Corse

The "Church in the Orchards" as it is commonly known is built of Arden sandstone and dates from the C14. It has a simple limewashed interior with an attractive wagon roof to the nave. The nearby community of Snig's End was founded by Fergus O'Connor in 1848 for his National Co-operative Land Company. The purpose was to help working-class people to satisfy the landholding requirement to gain a vote in county seats.

6 St Mary the Virgin, Upleadon

Dating from 1080, this building of Norman origin retains some original features. The most notable of these is the north doorway with a tympanum (the panel within the arch) carved with a crude Agnus Dei flanked by lions. The most remarkable feature however is the very rare timber framed tower, dated c.1500.

7 St James, Staunton

Although of Norman origin, the church is mostly C14 but was heavily restored in 1860 by George Row Clarke. Note the four carved heads on the font, thought to represent a king, queen, bishop and rector. On the east wall of the nave is the magnificent Horton monument of 1612 with effigies of William Horton, his wife and six children. The large yew tree in the churchyard is thought to be as much as 2,000 years old.

NB: Access to St James must not be through the Business Park access road. Footpath access from the lay-by goes past the war memorial.

8 St John the Baptist, Eldersfield

This is the only church on this route that lies within the Diocese of Worcester. Not much remains of the original Norman building although there is evidence above the south doorway seen in the chevron decoration. The SW buttress of the tower has a standing figure of a knight set in a niche. The churchyard contains some good C18 chest tombs. The church is open at weekends and a list of keyholders is on the notice board for those who wish to visit during the week.

9 St John the Baptist, Chaceley

Apart from the Norman chancel arch and the lower stages of the C13 tower, the building mostly dates from the restoration of 1881-82 by Ewan Christian. Features of interest include the C14 aumbry (a small recessed cabinet for storing sacred vessels) to the right of the altar with its two unequal doors and the carved corbel heads, mostly of men with hair curled in the fashion of the C14.

10 St Michael, Tirley

The interior has been totally remodelled after the disastrous flood of 2007 (different flood levels are marked on the south wall between the nave and chancel). The external lime rendering was added because of the severe deterioration of the blue lias stone. Look out for the skull carved on the monument on the south wall.

11 St Mary, Hasfield

The atmospheric churchyard is the setting for this mostly C14-C15 building. Unusually the tower has a separate dedication – to St Peter. The north aisle was added in 1850 by the architect Thomas Fulljames who lived at Hasfield Court next to the church. His Gothic tomb can be found in the churchyard.

12 St Andrew and St Bartholomew, Ashleworth

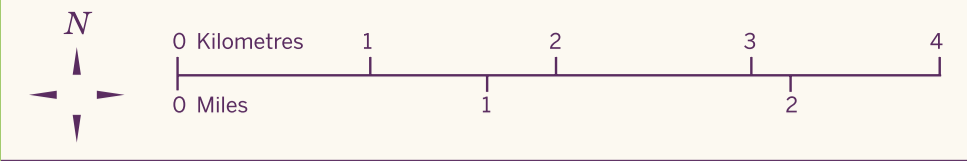
The herringbone masonry in the north wall of the nave is evidence of the church's C11 origins although work of most periods can be found. Note the gargoyles on the C15 tower. The lovely interior has much to admire; in particular the rare C15 wooden screen painted with the arms of Edward VI or Elizabeth I. The nearby C15 tithe barn owned by the National Trust is also worth a look.

13 Methodist Chapel, Hartpury

This former Wesleyan Chapel of 1887 is also located away from the village in a prominent position in the landscape. It is a typical small rural Methodist chapel. Notice the stones engraved with the names of donors. As it is built into the side of the hill, a schoolroom is incorporated at the lower level. The chapel is usually closed except for services.

4 Towers & Spires Gloucester

30 MILE LONG ROUTE OR **20 MILE SHORT ROUTE**



If proceeding to Staunton church and Staunton Garden Centre, ride along the A-road with care. The church should be accessed via the Public Footpath through the iron gate in the layby.

If you are proceeding to the Garden Centre, when you retrace your steps consider using 'Ledbury Road Crescent' to the south to avoid a 700-yard section of the main road.

At this junction to ride the full 30-mile route bear left signposted 'Redmarley'. To ride the shorter 20-mile option turn right along Oridge Street signposted 'Corse'.

You may wish to follow the Public Bridleway to Corse church, though this may be muddy in wet conditions.

Key

- Towers and Spires cycle route (30 miles) on-road / traffic-free
- Shorter route (20 miles) on-road / traffic-free
- Suggested direction of travel
- National Cycle Network on-road / traffic-free
- National Cycle Network route number
- Notable gradient (arrow points downhill)
- Church of interest
- Railway with station
- Take care location

Public Houses

- There are several pubs in Gloucester city centre.
- The White Hart**, Maisemore 01452 500763
- Swan Inn**, Staunton 01452 840323
- Butcher's Arms**, Lime Street 01452 840381
- Yew Tree Inn**, Chaceley Stock 01452 780333
- The Haw Bridge Inn**, Haw Bridge 01452 780316
- The Boat**, Ashleworth Quay 01452 700272
- The Queen's Arms**, Ashleworth 01452 700395
- Royal Exchange**, Hartpury 01452 700273

Cafés

- There are several cafés in the city centre, in particular the **Cloister Café** in the cathedral itself. 01452 410022
www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk/coffee-shop
- Staunton Garden Centre** 01452 840612

Please check opening times before you go.

Start & Finish of both Long & Short routes

From the main door of the Cathedral leave in a southerly direction and carefully follow the Sustrans National Route 45 signs out of the city towards Maisemore.