



Alfa Romeo Owners Club Cotswold Section



Scenic drive to the barbecue

The route of this scenic drive will take you from the Puesdown Inn to the Roman Court Hotel, at Stow-on-the-Wold, past local landmarks and beauty-spots, via a combination of fast A and B roads and typically narrow, and often bumpy, Cotswold country lanes.

The route is designed as a leisurely drive, not a race. It is around 65 miles in length and can be done in about 2½ hours if you don't stop. But please take your time, the barbecue is not until 3pm, stop en route to explore some of the beautiful and interesting places that the Cotswolds has to offer. You will rarely be more than 10 miles from Stow.

The first section of the drive has a couple of challenges involving roads marked as 'unsuitable for motors'. It is up to you whether you take them or not. An alternative 'proper road' is always given. Some of the lanes are very narrow so please take care.

The Alfa Romeo Owners Club cannot accept responsibility for damage to vehicles or property, or injury to persons following the route. Drivers follow the route entirely at their own risk.

Information

The Puesdown Inn is the highest pub in the Cotswolds at 824 feet above sea level

Notgrove long barrow is a neolithic burial mound containing chambers for human remains opening off from a stone-built central passage.

Belas Knap is another neolithic long barrow. Here the mound is intact. The tombs of 31 Stone Age people were found inside. The path from the road is long and steep but the view on a clear day is well worth the climb.

Sudeley Castle was once the home of Catherine Parr, the sixth wife of Henry VIII. It was largely destroyed during the Civil War and not restored until Victorian times. It is open daily and today (17.7.05) holds a special 'Victorian Day'.

The route (all distances quoted are approximate)

PUESDOWN INN to WINCHCOMBE (approx. 16 miles)

- 1 Starting from the Puesdown Inn turn left out of the car park on to the A40.
- 2 After 1.5 miles turn left, at the crossroads. It is the first junction you will come to. After you have turned off the A40 follow the sign-post towards Turkdean. After 1 mile you will reach the hamlet of Lower Dean. The road bends sharp right.
- 3 Soon you will come to a junction. Turn sharp left sign-posted to Turkdean. Drive through Turkdean and continue on this road for roughly 2 miles until you reach a t-junction.
- 4 Turn left on to the A436. You will soon pass the site of Notgrove long barrow on the left. Continue on this fairly fast stretch of road for approximately 5 miles. Pass Cotswold Trailers (see map) and go under the disused railway bridge.
- 5 1 mile after the bridge turn right at the crossroads sign-posted to Brockhampton and Syreford.
- 6 Cross the disused railway and turn right, sign-posted to Brockhampton.
- 7 Take the next right, again sign-posted to Brockhampton. Stay on this road. Pass the villages of Sevenhampton, Brockhampton, and Charlton Abbots all on your right.
- 8 Eventually you will see the signs for Belas Knap long barrow. The road turns sharp right and descends steeply for 1 mile.
- 9 At the bottom of the hill cross the small bridge over the River Isbourne and turn right and then right again, opposite the hospital, on to the B4632 and enter Winchcombe.
- 10 The road narrows just before the Church and then opens out into a square. It soon narrows again and we turn right into Castle Street, sign-posted to Guiting Power.

If you turn off the route at the sign for Little Farmcote you will be confronted with wonderful views over Winchcombe and the Vale of Evesham. Continue down this road and you will reach, via a gated section, Hailes Abbey. This is the site of a substantial Cistercian monastery founded in 1246 and dissolved in 1539. As well as the Abbey ruins there is a collection of finds from the site on display.

Castlett Stream is the first 'major' tributary of the River Windrush.

Guiting Wood features in a long poem by D.W. Nash called the Fox's Prophecy which warns of England failure to take note of a rising foreign power. The poem has been adopted by some groups of pro-hunt supporters.

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Before attempting the fords at Kineton, stop, get out and have a good look. Be particularly careful if your car is low to the ground. These fords are only suitable for vehicles with good ground clearance.

If you have crossed the first ford but don't fancy the second one, reverse back to the junction where you turned sharp right. You can go through the first ford again, but if you want to avoid this, where you turned right before, go straight on instead. After 1 mile you will come to a t-junction. Turn right. Go past the Cotswold Farm Park. Another mile will bring you to a crossroads. Go straight on. Another 1.5 miles will bring you to another crossroads. Turn left onto the B4068. You have rejoined the route at number 19.

WINCHCOMBE to LOWER SLAUGHTER (approx. 15 miles)

11 Follow the road past the gatehouse of Sudeley Castle and up the hill. After about a mile turn left, sign-posted to Ford.

12 Continue up the hill. Pass the left hand turn to Little Farmcote.

13 *At the next junction you have a choice;*

*Straight on will eventually take you on to a road marked as 'unsuitable for motors'. However, **it is perfectly passable** and no worse than some other roads. It is free from large pot-holes but it is slightly rough. A 1972 Giulia Coupe has driven this route with no problem and will do so again today. The road winds alongside the Castlett Stream through Guiting Wood for about 2 miles.*

13a If you have decided to brave the 'unsuitable for motors' road go straight on, sign-posted for Ford and Cutsdean. At the end of the straight section of road fork right. Follow this road or track for about a mile until you reach a right-hand junction. Turn right. Follow this track for about a mile. You will come to a gate next to a cottage. If the gate is shut make sure you shut it again behind you. Soon you will reach a crossroads beneath a couple of horse chestnut trees. Straight on takes you into a car park but our route goes left.

13b If you don't fancy the 'unsuitable for motors' road (and really there is no reason to) turn right, sign-posted to Guiting Power and after 300 yards turn left, also sign-posted to Guiting Power. Stay on this road for roughly 2.5 miles until you come to a crossroads. Turn left, sign-posted to Kineton. This is a gated road. If the gate is shut make sure you shut it again behind you. Sheep and cattle roam free here so drive carefully. Having passed the manor house you will see the 'unsuitable for motors' road joining from the left. Keep straight on.

We should all be back on the same road now.

14 Pass through the gate closing it behind you if it was shut. Drive through the shallow ford (it's the Castlett Stream). Go past a turning on the right and continue for 0.5 mile.

15 You will reach a t-junction. This is Kineton.

You have a choice again here;

15a If you are feeling *really* brave turn right then immediately left. The road is marked as 'unsuitable for motors' and there is a sign warning of a ford. The ford (it's the river Windrush by the way) is usually quite shallow in summer. But do get out and have a look before attempting to cross. It should be passable. The bottom is a little stony and uneven so take care. Once across follow the road as it curves to the left under the trees. You will soon reach a junction, turn right. It is a sharp turn and the ground is uneven so go carefully. Now there is another ford! This one is a bit deeper, but should be passable. Again stop and have a look at it before attempting to cross and watch out for rocks! Assuming you made it across go up the hill and at the t-junction turn left.

15b If you don't fancy the fords turn right and go through the village, passing The Halfway House. The road up from the fords is just past the pub on the left.

We should all be back on the same road again now.

16 We leave Kineton. The road crosses the Windrush between two sharp bends at Barton, and continues past the turning for Guiting Power on the right, and then the gates for Guiting Stud and a turning for Stow and Naunton on the left. Then it crosses the Windrush again, and goes up hill through woods.

17 As you emerge from the woods turn left, sign-posted for Naunton and Stow. After half a mile you come to a crossroads.

18 Turn left onto the B4068. Pass the golf club. This is quite a fast road with sweeping bends.

19 After 3 miles you will pass a crossroads sign-posted right to Bourton-on-the Water and left to the Cotswold Farm Park but we go straight on.

20 400 yards further on there is a right turn, sign-posted to the Slaughters, take it.

Staying on the B4068 will take you to Stow, but our route continues...

Look out for the 15th century Upper Slaughter manor house on the left just past the turn for the village.

The river flowing through Lower Slaughter is the River Eye, one of larger tributaries of the Windrush. Note the Old Mill which is now a museum.

The Fosse Way is one of Britains longest Roman roads. It links Lincoln with Exeter. The word 'Fosse' is derived from the Latin Fossa meaning 'ditch' and it is possible that the ditch formed the western frontier of Roman Britain in the decades following the invasion of Britain in AD43.

The quarries in this area are some of the last remaining upland quarries in the Cotswold still producing the famous honey coloured stone.

Sezincote means 'hillside of oaks'

'Chipping' comes from the ancient word 'cheping' which means buying and selling sheep. So a town with Chipping in it's name was famed for it's sheep market.

Just before you enter Chipping Campden there is a small square stone building on the right. This is the 'drunks gaol'.

The Lygon Arms, formerly the White Hart, is the oldest inn in Chipping Campden and was given it's current name when the former butler of Major General Edward Pyndar Lygon, who fought at Waterloo, took over the inn in 1840.

- 21 Having turned right stay on this road for 1 mile. At the first junction keep straight on, sign-posted for Lower Slaughter. Go past the manor gates on the left and a turning on the right to Winchcombe. 150 yards further on follow the road as it bends left, sign-posted for Lower Slaughter.
- 22 As you enter Lower Slaughter watch out for pedestrians. Drive alongside the river. Cross the bridge and turn right. Follow the road until you come to a t-junction with the A429 Fosse Way.

The Roman Court Hotel can be reached by turning left on to the A429 Fosse Way. It is approximately 1.5 miles distant and is on the right just before the traffic lights.

If you are happy to continue with the drive follow the instructions below...

LOWER SLAUGHTER to CHIPPING CAMPDEN (approx. 16 miles)

- 23 Turn right on to Fosse Way. This is a very busy junction. Go past the Coach and Horses and straight on at the traffic lights.
- 24 After another 0.5 mile turn right, sign-posted to Naunton and the Cotswold Farm Park.

If you wish to visit the tourist mecca of Bourton-on-the-Water, instead of turning right towards Naunton, turn left into Lansdowne. Bourton has lots to offer the visitor including Birdland, a Model Village, a Model Railway, lots of gift shops, pubs, restaurants and tearooms, all arranged around the green and along the banks of the Windrush, which is crossed by a series of small bridges. But best of all is the Motor Museum. It's exhibits are mainly vintage and veteran cars, but it also has a superb collection of automobilia. There are no Alfas unfortunately but of course it is the home of Brum!

The Motor Museum is situated on the right over the first of the bridges. There are two main car parks; one on Rissington Road near Birdland and another behind the Texaco filling station in Station Road.

- 25 After two miles you will come to a crossroads with the B4068, go straight across.
- 26 After approximately 2 miles turn right at the crossroads, sign-posted to Stow and Lower Swell. And after another 300 yards turn left.

*The road between points 26 and 28 is narrow and a little rough but **it should pose no problems**. However if you are really worried about ground clearance rather than turning right at 26 continue straight on for about 2 miles until you reach a crossroads with the B4077. Turn right here and after just under 2 miles turn left at a crossroads. The crossroads is point 28. Having turned left you are now back on the route heading for point 29.*

- 27 Follow this narrow road for about 1.5 miles.
- 28 You will come to a crossroads with the B4077. Go straight across.

Turning right here will take you to Stow, but our route continues...

- 29 This road takes you through the beautiful woods of Sezincote Warren.
- 30 After about 3 miles you will meet the A424. Turn left.

Turning right here will take you to Stow, but our route continues...

- 31 Having turned left you will soon reach Troopers Lodge garage. Turn left on to the A44 (actually it is more like straight on). Continue along this straight section of road.
- 32 After 2 miles you will come to a crossroads. Turn right onto the B4081, sign-posted to Chipping Campden. There are fine views as the road descends to Chipping Campden.
- 33 The road into the town winds past thatched cottages and an Elf filling station before it reaches the High Street at a t-junction. Turn right.
- 34 Pass the famous Market Hall on your left and continue along the High Street. Pass the Lygon Arms on the right.
- 35 Turn right into Cidermill Lane which is one-way, sign-posted to Shipston-on-Stour. Keep right and at the next junction go right into Church Street which is also one-way. Pass the Eight Bells on your right.

Each summer at Dover's Hill the 'Olympick Games' are held. These games were first held in 1604 and consisted of swordplay, hammer throwing, wrestling, and bizarrely shin-kicking! The games were suspended during the civil war and later they were then held only intermittently until 1851 when they were stopped again due the 'riotous behaviour' of the navvies building the nearby railway tunnel! The games were revived in 1951 and since 1963 they have been held every year. Nowadays the games are more of a family orientated country fair, but shin-kicking still takes place!

Fish Hill takes it's name from the former Fish Inn which stands at the top. The Fish Inn takes it's name from the sign of the 3 fishes of Christianity as the inn was once a priest house.

Broadway Tower was built in 1797. It stands on the second highest point of the Cotswold escarpment, at 1024 feet above sea level, and is 65 feet high. It is said that 13 counties can be seen from the top.

Hill Barn Farm is the home of Snowhill Lavender. Here there is a shop and tearoom.

Snowhill Manor is owned by the National Trust and houses a fascinating collection of clocks, bicycles, toys, 26 suits of Samurai armour, and countless other curios.

The winter scenes of the film 'Bridgette Jones's Diaries' were filmed at Snowhill Manor.

There are several pretty villages at the foot of escarpment to the left of the B4632, notably Stanton, with it's fine pub, the Mount Inn.

The Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway runs steam trains eachweekend throughout the summer.

In the grounds of Stanway House is the tallest fountain in Britain. It is over 300 feet high.

36 Turn left into the High Street. Go back past the Market Hall, and continue past the turning on the left (Sheep Street) where you originally came from.

37 Go past the Volunteer Inn and stay on this road as it takes you out of the town.

CHIPPING CAMPDEN to STOW-ON-THE-WOLD (approx. 18 miles)

38 When you reach the crossroads at the top of the hill our route turns left. However, if the weather is good it is recommended that you go straight across and pull into the National Trust car park on the right. This is Dover's Hill and the view is spectacular!

39 Back at the crossroads, if you have been to Dover's Hill turn right. If you have just come up from Chipping Campden, turn left.

40 After 0.5 mile the road forks. Keep left.

41 Another mile and you come to a junction. Turn right and then immediately left, past a sign for Willersey Hill farm.

42 Follow this road to a t-junction on the A44 half way up Fish Hill. Turn left up the hill.

43 At the top of the hill there is a crossroads. Turn right, sign-posted to Broadway Tower.

...or keep straight on for Stow. Having turned right our route continues...

44 Follow this road past Broadway Tower Country Park which is on the right and continue alongside Broadway Wood.

45 At the t-junction turn right.

46 After 300 yards turn right, sign-posted to Snowhill.

47 Drive past the Lavender fields. At the crossroads turn right.

48 At the next crossroads go straight ahead into the pretty village of Snowhill.

49 Follow the road around the church, turn right and drive past the Snowhill Arms.

50 Snowhill Manor is on the left. Continue past a public car park and the National Trust car park for the Manor.

51 Follow this road down hill for approximately 2 miles into Broadway.

52 At the junction with Broadway High Street go left.

If you wish to visit Broadway turn right. Otherwise continue on our route...

53 After 300 yards, turn left again onto the B4632, sign-posted to Winchcombe.

54 Continue on the B4632 for 4.5 miles.

55 When you reach Toddington turn left at the roundabout onto the B4077, sign-posted to Stow. On the right is the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway.

56 Another mile takes you past the turning, on the left, for Stanway.

57 We've saved the best till last! You are now on one of the best roads in the Cotswolds as featured in Classic and Sports car Magazine. Follow the B4077 for 10 miles to Stow. Be careful on the hill and mind the bends in Ford and Upper Swell!

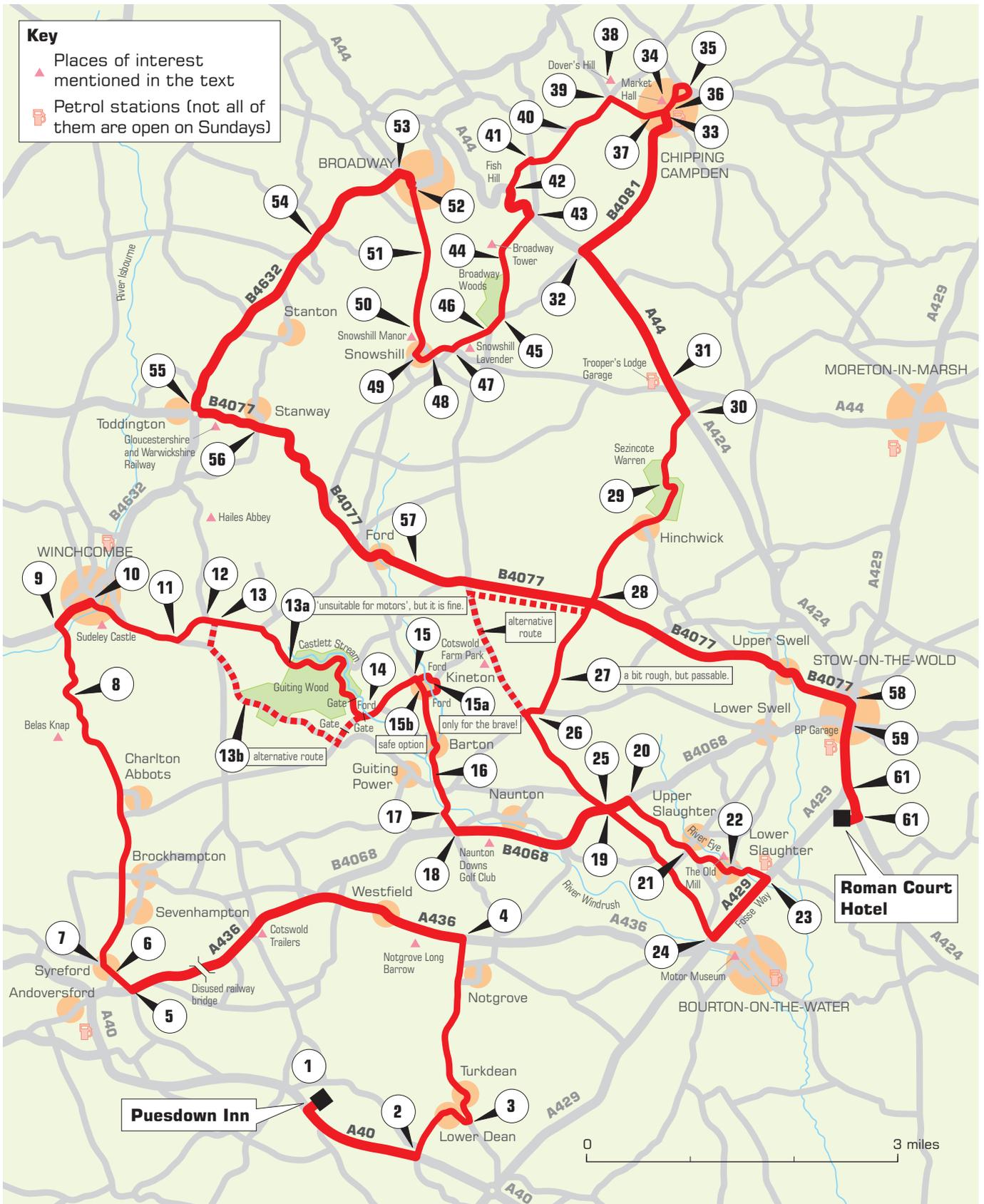
58 One mile beyond Upper Swell you will come to a junction. Turn right, and then right again at the traffic lights onto the A429 Fosse Way.

59 Go straight across at the next lights, past the BP filling station and down the hill.

60 At the traffic lights swing left, onto the A424, sign-posted to Burford.

61 The entrance to The Roman Court Hotel is just after the lights on the right.

You made it! Don't worry if you are late. And if you did the whole route (including the fords at Kington) get yourself a beer!



Just in case you get lost or breakdown or (heaven forbid) get stuck in a river(!), here are a few phone numbers that may be useful;

The Puesdown Inn 01451 860262

The Roman Court Hotel 01451 870539

Richard Morris (who will be popping up on the route to take photos) 07773 257671

Mark Grimshw (who will be setting up the bbq at the Roman Court) 07770 931759

Matthew Willmott (who will be seeing people off from the Puesdown) 07740 595793