

Herefordshire's Northern Cider Circuit



The Newton Wonder

TOTAL DISTANCE - 49 MILES

North of the city of Hereford stretches an undulating swathe of farmland, orchards and forested hills, studded with renowned 'Black-and-White Villages' — settlements whose streets are lined with the traditional timber-framed houses so typical of the region. Complete a 49-mile loop from Hereford to visit a succession of alluring hamlets, historic sites and passionate producers creating fine ciders, perries and juices to refresh thirsty cyclists.

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HEREFORDSHIRE

A Visit Herefordshire Cycle Route.
October 2024



1 - The Apple Tree

Start and end your apple odyssey in the centre of Hereford's old city at The Apple Tree, an inspiring mosaic set into the pavement in front of Hereford Cathedral's West Front. Comprising 100 pieces of naturally coloured British stone, the image is encircled by inspiring lyrics from an 18th-century carol, a nod to the spiritual and natural heart of the county: "The tree of life my soul hath seen, Laden with fruit and always green; The trees of nature fruitless be, Compared with Christ the Apple Tree."

2 - Bulmers & Yazor Brook

As you cycle west from the city centre along the busy A438, look for the vast Bulmers site to the right — the company, founded in 1887 and now owned by Heineken, is the UK's largest cider producer. Just before the Bulmers site, a cycle path to the left leads through the Yazor Widemarsh and Eign Brook Restoration Area, a peaceful meadow where you might spot pied wagtails, herons and diverse butterflies.

3 - Tillington and around

Emerging from Hereford's outskirts, the road to Tillington snakes through a broad, orchard-speckled valley, with glorious views ahead to tree-clad hills. Tillington itself has a handy village store selling cold drinks, fruit and ice creams — stock up before the long ascent that's about to begin. The climb peaks near Wormsley at the Herefordshire Golf Club (herefordshiregolfclub.co.uk), whose restaurant — open to non-members — is a tempting option for Sunday lunch, and boasts spectacular views north and east across the verdant countryside towards Leominster.

4 - Weobley

A blessed descent, with splendid vistas ahead and to the right, brings you to the first and most substantial of the black-and-white villages on this route. Weobley's winding streets are studded with dozens of timber-framed buildings, some of them over 500 years old, overlooked by the slender russet spire of medieval St Peter and St Paul's Church. Pause to admire the wonderful

carved wooden porch of the Old Grammar School (1660), then take a stroll around the village centre — Broad Street and Portland Street, either side of the Rose Garden, are lined with cafés, restaurants and pubs.

5 - Luntley Court

Narrow lanes wind north of the A4112 to Luntley Court, a cluster of historic houses (now mostly self-catering accommodation) set around the eponymous 17th-century manor. Standing alone in a field is a picturesquely leaning, timber-framed dovecote dating from 1673 and restored last century; step inside to admire the most desirable dove accommodation in the county.

6 - Dunkertons Cider Mill & The Cider Barn

Susie and Ivor Dunkerton started making organic cider and perry from the apples and pears in their orchards near Pembridge in 1980. Four decades later, though production has shifted to Gloucestershire, you can still pick up their award-winning tipples from the Tudor-style barn (open Friday and Saturday only; dunkertonscider.co.uk). The old Cider Barn alongside the Dunkertons shop is now a sophisticated but friendly café-bar and restaurant (the-cider-barn.co.uk) with a wonderfully warm atmosphere.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/cider-barn

7 - Pembridge

The epicentre of north Herefordshire's black-and-white villages is Pembridge, a photographer's delight — and a cyclist's: among the timber-framed buildings lining High Street and East Street are several spots to top up caffeine and calories. The King's House (www.kingshousepembridge.co.uk/) is a more upscale affair, while Bloom & Grind offers hearty sandwiches and toasties, as well as marvellous fresh cakes and pastries. Visit the Old Chapel Gallery (oldchapelgallery.co.uk) which hosts regularly changing exhibitions of contemporary art and crafts. Behind the 17th-century New Inn is the Market Hall, dating from the previous century; stairs opposite lead to the medieval St Mary's Church and its curious, even older octagonal freestanding belltower.

8 - Eardisland

Small but perfectly formed, Eardisland is, if anything, even prettier than Pembridge, straddling the River Arrow as it meanders east towards its confluence with the Lugg. The Community Shop (01544 388984), housed in a 17th-century brick-built dovecote, is the place to pick up local treats, while The White Swan (thewhiteswaneardisland.com) serves more substantial fare. Venture south along the main street to admire the array of architectural styles before heading east towards your next stop.

9 - Monkland

The highlight of this little village, scattered across an attractive common, is the Monkland Cheese Dairy (monklandcheesedairy.co.uk). Within this little brick cottage lies an Aladdin's cave of cheese, with six artisan varieties produced on site. There's also a well-laden deli counter offering all sorts of other local and regional cheeses. Visit the tearoom for excellent coffee and a ploughman's lunch. Tuck into thick-cut Herefordshire ham and, of course, the house cheeses.

10 - Newton Court Cider

Passion for traditional craft methods overflows at this artisan producer (newtoncourtcider.com) south of Leominster, where Paul Stephens has been creating full-juice 'no-codswallop' cider and perry for two decades. Call at the tasting room and shop — "Honk for cider", proclaims the sign — or call ahead to join Paul on a tour of the orchards for the lowdown on how their fruits are used to ferment fine cider and perry.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/newton-court-cider

Don't miss close by:

The Orgasmic Cider Company
NT Croft Castle & Parkland
NT Berrington Hall

11 - Butford Organic Cider & Perry

The presence of a 300-year-old cider mill at Butford (butfordorganics.co.uk) is a constant reminder of the region's rich heritage. So it's no surprise that tradition is key in the creation of this producer's pure-juice and single-variety organic ciders and perries — a range now extending to a novel cider brandy. Call ahead to book a tasting or tour and, naturally, to meet that venerable cider mill.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/butford-organics

12 - The Black and White House Museum

Tour this compact but fascinating museum (<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/history-lives/hereford-museums-art-gallery>) housed in a remarkable example of the classic Herefordshire timber-framed building, dating from 1621. Rooms are furnished in period Jacobean style and there is also a display of cidermaking artefacts.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/black-and-white-house-museum

13 - Museum of Cider

Complete the Circuit with a visit to the Museum of Cider (cidermuseum.co.uk) set in the original 1888 Bulmer's factory. Follow the story of cidermaking as you walk through unique champagne cider cellars, peek into a cooper's workshop, see the vat house and explore the museum's extensive collection, from cidermaking equipment to advertising memorabilia. Choose from over 150 craft ciders and perries in the Bottle Shop and top up on cake in the tearoom.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/museum-cider

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