



West Herefordshire Cider Circuit



Porter's Perfection

TOTAL DISTANCE - 48.5 MILES

The west of this lush county is patchworked with apple orchards and studded with artisan cider producers. Lacing the rolling hills and glorious Golden Valley is a network of peaceful backroads perfect for cycling. Tackle a rewarding 48.5-mile double loop from Dorstone, visiting the tastiest spots to try the adult apple juice, as well as a series of fine country inns, historic villages and ancient monuments, and even some of Herefordshire's most lip-smacking luxury ice cream. For a shorter ride, choose from either the north or south sections of this route.

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|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Dorstone | 7 Rowlestone Court Farm |
| 2 Bredwardine | 8 Ty Gwyn Cider |
| 3 Orgasmic Cider Company | 9 Temple Bar Inn, Ewyas Harold |
| 4 Artistraw Cider | 10 Dore Abbey |
| 5 Pandy Inn, Dorstone | 11 Gwatkin Cider |
| 6 Fair Oak Cider | 12 Dorstone |

1 - Dorstone

From the triangular village green of this winsome settlement, scoot east along Chapel Lane, then left to reach the B4348. Turn right onto the main road and, where it bends sharp right, go straight ahead onto Pentre Lane, signed for Bredwardine and Arthur's Stone. Gird your loins for a sharp, steep 100m climb — one of several really testing ascents on this lumpy loop. Thankfully, much of the haul is well shaded, and, from the top, you're rewarded with far-reaching views northeast across the Wye Valley.

2 - Bredwardine

As you start your descent, if you've puff to spare take a short detour left to Arthur's Stone. This hulking dolmen — a Neolithic burial chamber constructed of huge stone slabs — has been associated with legends of King Arthur since at least the 13th century. Today it's an atmospheric spot to take a breather and drink in the dramatic vistas. Return to Pentre Lane and continue to Bredwardine, where St Andrew's Church — dating from the 11th century — houses a massive stone font and an impressive medieval effigy. For thirsty cyclists, though, it's the Red Lion Hotel, with its selection of refreshing real ales and ciders, that might hold particular appeal.

3 - Orgasmic Cider Company

Turning right onto the B4352 at Bredwardine, cross the Wye and turn left immediately after the bridge to reach the A438 at Letton. Take care joining this busy route to head left (northwest) through the hamlet, with its attractive black-and-white Tudor-style houses — so typical of this region — continuing straight ahead where the road becomes the A4111. Three miles after joining the main road, just after a lovely orchard, turn right onto the A4112, following the sign for the Orgasmic Cider Company. This sparky, family-run producer at Great Parton farm creates single-variety ciders with the likes of Brown Snout, Foxwhelp and Balls Bitter apples, as well as Parton perry, from the fruits of its 100 acres of orchards. Call to arrange an orchard tour and tasting.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/orgasmic-cider-company

4 - Artistray Cider

Returning to the A4111, continue north to Eardisley, taking the left-hand fork (signed for Woodseaves) at the Tram Inn — first of a cluster of black-and-white houses lining the Woodseaves Road. This quiet lane winds southwest to meet the Wye again at Whitney. Here, turn carefully right onto the A438 again for 1km, turning left at the Whitney Bridge campsite onto another sleepy backroad to Clifford. At the end of the village, just past Lower Court farm, turn left for a short, sharp climb to St Mary's Church, where you head right for the equally steep downhill to Artistray Cider. Here, Tom and Lydia nurture old-variety orchards and produce a small but perfectly formed range of largely handpicked, wild-fermented ciders and perry. Call to arrange a tasting and to browse the bottle shop.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/artistray-cider-and-orchard

5 - Pandy Inn, Dorstone

Carry on south to a T-junction, turning left onto the B4348 for 500m before turning right, signed to Dorstone. It's an undulating, four-mile stretch back to this lovely little village and the cosy Pandy Inn. Reputedly the county's oldest, with parts dating from the 12th century, it's a fine spot to refuel and perhaps sample some of the ciders and perries from producers on this route. If you'd prefer a shorter ride, you could end here and tackle the longer southern loop another day. If continuing, don't indulge too heartily — there's a challenge around the corner...

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/pandy-inn

6 - Fair Oak Cider

At the southeastern edge of the village, take the third right after the Pandy Inn, signed to Snodhill. Continue through a four-way junction to Urishay, along sometimes gravelly lanes with a few fierce ascents to test those gears. Five miles south of Snodhill, take the left turn signed to Newton, Bacton and Pontrilas, continuing largely downhill to a junction by a red postbox, where you turn right into Fair Oak Farm. Heart of this truly traditional cider outfit is the 17th-century stone mill — probably the country's only surviving commercial horse-drawn mill, now powered by calm, good-natured Tommy. Wonderful old apple varieties create delicious ciders that change year to year, according to what's good — look out for the tippie made with Brown's Apple: slightly scented, sharp and clean, with a fruity aroma. Call to arrange a visit.

7 - Rowlestone Court Farm

Turning north (left) out of the Fair Oak drive, go back along the ridge and down a steep hill to a crossroads (with a red phone box). Turn left here and follow this road as far as it goes, past Newton Church, to a T-junction, where you need to turn left. After a mile or so you reach another T-junction. Turn left here and you will soon reach a right turn marked Ball's Cross. Then, after two-thirds of a mile, take the right turn to Rowlestone, quickly followed by an unsigned left turn. At another junction with a postbox, fork left — signed Pontrilas and Hereford — past the intriguing 12th-century Norman St Peter's Church to find Rowlestone Court Farmhouse. With views southwest to the Black Mountains, the café is a tempting spot to stop and indulge in one of the 50-plus flavours of luxury ice cream, made fresh daily with milk from the farm's cattle.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/rowlestone-farmhouse-ice-cream

8 - Ty Gwyn Cider

Just half a mile beyond Rowlestone Court, look out on the left for Pen-Y-Lan Farm — home of Ty Gwyn Cider. Passion project of former 90s pop musician Alex Culpin, Ty Gwyn combines modern technology — including a belt press that's believed to be the only one of its kind in the country — with very traditional methods and varieties to produce award-winning ciders and perry. Check online for current opening times of the on-site bar and shop.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/ty-gwyn-cider-ltd

9 - Temple Bar Inn, Ewyas Harold

Freewheel downhill to briefly join the busy A465 at Pontrilas for 100m before turning left, signed for Hay-on-Wye. In Ewyas Harold, thirst might detour you into the village centre and the ivy-clad, stone-built Temple Bar Inn — a haven for local ales and ciders.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/temple-bar-inn

10 - Dore Abbey

The final miles are a thankfully gentle but long, undulating climb back along the Golden Valley — the lovely, secluded vale of the River Dore — between fields and beneath wooded hills. Make a historic halt at the heart of Abbeydore: its namesake Dore Abbey, accessible through the signed lychgate on the right-hand side of the road. Dore Abbey was founded in 1147 as a Cistercian monastery, but was dissolved in the 16th century. From the 1630s, the abbey's main house of worship was restored and converted into what must be one of England's most striking parish churches. Today you can visit its soaring interior, admiring grotesque and beautiful medieval roof bosses — look for the gurning Green Man — and 17th-century stained glass.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/dore-abbey

11 - Gwatkin Cider

Continue along the B4347 as it winds north through the Golden Valley, drinking in the glorious views to either side. Keep an eye out for the left turn to Morehampton Park Farm, just after a stretch flanked by the orchards, signalling another award-winning family-run cider producer. Gwatkin creates a range of more than 30 traditional farmhouse ciders and perries — pick up a selection at the shop, and look out for regular music and cider festivals.

www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/discover/gwatkin-cider-co-ltd

12 - Dorstone

Continuing north from Gwatkin Cider, you're on the home straight now. At the T-junction, turn left onto the B4348 onto Peterchurch; on entering the village, take the first left — signed Urishay — to cross the River Dore, then right at the school. It's a peaceful, meandering few miles along country lanes back to Dorstone and the Pandy Inn — last-chance saloon for a final draught ale or cider to salute your efforts.