



Royal Chilterns Way

This August we're launching our latest long-distance bikepacking route: Royal Chilterns Way. It will be our ninth multi-day route and the seventh in our newly created Adventure Series. Full details, including the GPX file, will be available on 18 August when it's officially launched, but we can give you an exclusive preview here.

Royal Chilterns Way is the creation of ride guide and route planner Max Darkins in conjunction with Cycling UK. It's 280km long in total, and was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Gill Foundation and our many route donors.

The route runs through the stunning scenery and picture-postcard villages of the Chiltern Hills and the surrounding area. It's a hilly ride, with 4,700m of elevation, but every climb offers a great view and a thrilling descent. We've created an itinerary in our guidebook to help you break it up into sections.

As well as rolling hills and ancient woodland, there's plenty more to see along the way. There are stately



homes and historic buildings, such as the Royal Abbey in Reading, the semi-fortified Chennies Manor House and the remains of Berkhamsted Castle, which dates back to the 11th century. It's this regal heritage that accounts for the Royal of the route's name. There's also lots of wildlife to spot, ranging from lizards, deer and red kites through to wallabies, which have thrived after escaping from local zoos and private collections.

As well as marsupials and medieval mansions, there's an abundance of cafés and pubs. Stopping at them to refuel makes a big difference to these local



Back to my roots

Route designer and local Max Darkins gives his take on Royal Chilterns Way.

Growing up in the Chilterns sparked my passion for cycling and inspired a lifelong love of the area. Having had the benefit of cycling all over the UK, these chalk escarpments, beautiful beech woodlands and quirky eateries still provide some of my favourite adventures.

This lesser-known part of the South-East has so much to offer and explore. On this route you will get to experience everything that the Chilterns has to offer, ranging from verdant landscapes to historic market towns, medieval earthworks and majestic rivers. And to top it off, the area is just bursting with farm shops, cafés, vineyards, breweries and country pubs. There is a wide range of accommodation to choose from – hotels, B&Bs, campsites and even churches!

