

THE FESTIVAL TOWN



**VISIT
CHELTENHAM**
THE FESTIVAL
TOWN



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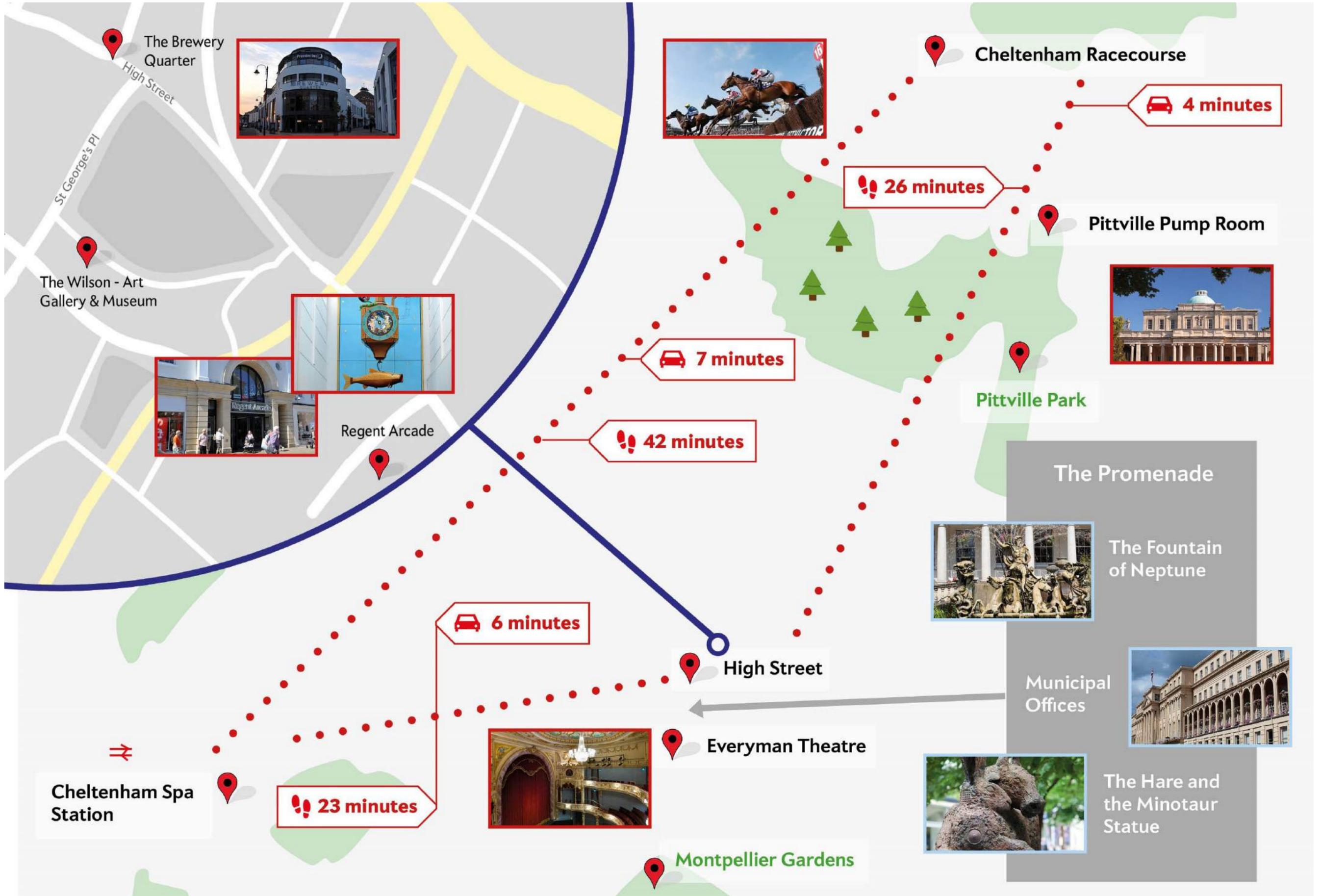
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Cheltenham is a town of all seasons. Whatever the time of year, it's Instagram-ready

EXPLORE CHELTENHAM



HISTORY OF THE RACES

1860



The idea for the Festival stemmed from the National Hunt Chase, a steeplechase for amateur riders, when it was first held in 1860. Initially titled the 'Grand National Hunt Meeting', the Cheltenham Festival took place at several locations although it was mostly held at Warwick Racecourse.

1904



The Festival was primarily staged at a new racecourse that had been built at Prestbury Park two years prior.

1911



After improvements were made at Prestbury Park, such as tar paving, extended paddocks and installed drains to prevent unstable racing ground, the National Hunt Committee decided the 'meeting' would be held permanently in Cheltenham where it remains today.



1987



On 17th March 1924, 21-year-old Gee Armytage became the first female jockey to win a race at the Festival on a horse aptly named Gee-A.

1924



The Gold Cup, which was originally used as a supporting race for the first day's main event the County Hurdle, soared in popularity and quickly became a championship race for the following seasons. However, trainers still used it as a preparation race for the Grand National for many years.

1912



The Stayer's Hurdle, the oldest current championship race, was first run in 1912.

2001



Due to an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Britain, the Festival was cancelled in 2001. It had originally just been postponed until April until a confirmed local case caused the entire event to be called off.

2005



To accommodate a champion race for every day of the Festival, a fourth day was introduced – with the Gold Cup ending the event on the final day. Five new races were also introduced to ensure each day had six races. Since then, more have been added and the event currently hosts 28 races in total.

2019



The first day of the 2019 Festival welcomed a record-breaking crowd of 67,934 attendees.



SLEEP IN STYLE

CHELTENHAM HAS A HOST OF GREAT ACCOMMODATION TO SUIT ALL BUDGETS AND TASTES

With thousands of visitors arriving in Cheltenham for the Festival every year, it's just as well the town is packed with fantastic accommodation options – including boutique hotels, wallet-friendly chains and up-scale B&Bs.

One of the town's most popular retreats during Race Week is the stylish and contemporary No. 131 – frequently ranked as one of the best boltholes in the Cotswolds. Owned by the hugely successful Lucky Onion group, No. 131 is a Georgian Grade II villa located on the busy Promenade in Montpellier. It boasts 36 beautifully designed rooms, as well as a stunning new addition, Kings House, next door.

Laura Egan, Head of Marketing for No. 131, says the ethos of the hotel is simple: “We like to ensure that every guest has an individual experience when they step through the door. As a team, we believe it's important to ensure that the service our customers receive is above and beyond.” She adds that all bedrooms have high-quality fixtures and fittings – “from the best bathtubs to the most luxurious toiletries.”



At the helm of No. 131 and its parent Lucky Onion group is Julian Dunkerton, one half of Cheltenham's most famous couple, and founder of clothing brand Superdry. Julian and his wife Jade pride themselves on always sourcing ultra-chic décor, and No. 131 itself is home to some of the UK's finest art pieces – including works by Banksy and David Hockney.

As well as its statement bedrooms, No. 131 has an acclaimed restaurant and the newly-launched Gin and Juice bar – destined to be one of the most buzzing venues during the Festival. With more than 350 gins to choose from, there's something to wet every whistle!

For more information, see www.no131.com.

WHERE ELSE TO STAY IN CHELTENHAM

There are plenty of other choices of accommodation to suit all budgets. Check out some of these winners:

Five-star boutique B&B: <https://thebradleyhotel.co.uk>

Boutique townhouse from the Lucky Onion: www.no38thepark.com

Regency glamour in the heart of town: <https://queenshotelcheltenham.co.uk>

Style on a budget: www.citrushotelcheltenham.co.uk



IT'S GINETIC

ONE BRAND HAS REALLY PUT CHELTENHAM ON THE GIN MAP; SIBLING DISTILLERY. WE'VE FOUND OUT EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS FAMILY RUN GIN BUSINESS

Independent businesses can be found in many nooks and crannies around Cheltenham. Sibling Gin is one of them and it's got the bustling cotswold town at its very core. Sibling isn't just a name to this business, but it is in fact owned and run by four siblings, Felix, Clarice, Cicely and Digby Elliott-Berry. Inspired by their parents' Cheltenham based micro-brewery, the four decided it was their destiny to delve into the world of distilleries. So, in 2014, Sibling Distillery was born.

Over the last six years, Siblings has created a variety of unique gins, boasting luxury ingredients with a local flare. It's the flavours and botanical ingredients they incorporate that make their gins so different, particularly in their seasonal editions. With a winter gin comprised of cranberries and clementine peel, to their strawberry and

black pepper syrup summer offering, they've surely got all bases covered.

If you're local to Cheltenham, or planning to visit the festival town, you might be interested in their distillery tours. The highly popular tour of Sibling Distillery includes a talk about gin, it's history including the distilling process and a pub-quiz followed by the all-important tastings as well as nibbles and bottomless G&T's throughout.

At the site on Coxhorne Farm, you can also have a gander around the shop where you can buy some of their seasonal spirits and gift-sets. Oh, and don't worry, you can try before you buy at their tasting table!

You can find Sibling Distillery at Coxhorne Farm, London Rd, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham GL52 6UY

THE FESTIVAL TOWN GIN

Ingredients:

- 50ml Sibling Gin Spring Edition with Lemon zest and rosemary
- 50ml Fever-tree Premium Indian Tonic Water
- 50ml Soda Water

To garnish:

- A wedge of lime
- Sugar to rim the glass
- Plenty of ice

An exotic, refreshing and luxurious G&T recipe to accompany you on this festival week.

Method:

1. Put sugar in a bowl or saucer. Wet the rim of the glass with water or some lime juice, then dip in sugar to coat.
2. Pack a large glass with lots of ice, add a wedge of lime, then pour over 50ml of Sibling Gin. Top with 50ml soda water and 50ml tonic water.



THE FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS

45,000

Bread rolls were eaten at the Festival in 2015.

36,500

Vehicles parked over the four days.

5 TONS

Amount of cheese consumed.

£100 MILLION

Amount of money the Festival brings Gloucestershire every year.

6,000

Number of staff employed over the Festival.

22

Fences jumped during the Cheltenham Gold Cup.

134,600

People use Cheltenham Spa train station over four days.

71,500

Attend Cheltenham Gold Cup Day on average.

20,000

Bottles of champagne drunk during the Festival.

8,000+

Gallons of tea and coffee served.



The Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham is the epitome of both design and performance. Take in the decor as you check out one of their award-winning shows

RELAX AND UNWIND

ONE OF CHELTENHAM'S MOST SOUGHT AFTER SPAS, ELLENBOROUGH PARK IS THE PERFECT PLACE FOR A PAMPER BREAK

Who can resist a bit of pampering after a long journey, a night of partying or an exciting day at the races? A spa session for a massage, facial, or perhaps just a bit of peace and quiet is the perfect tonic for every age and gender. Luckily, there's plenty of choice in Cheltenham for some real relaxation – after all, it is a spa town...

Handily located near the racecourse, Ellenborough Park is a haven of serenity and wellbeing, and it has a reputation as one of the most picturesque hotels in the Cotswolds. With a range of rejuvenating treatments and top-notch facilities, its spa blends Eastern and Western techniques which reflect the hotel's Indian heritage.

Don't miss the pioneering Eleemis BIOTEC machine, which works to effectively switch your skin back on, increasing its natural cellular energy. Its turbo-charged touch gives a clinically proven result of healthy, nourished and energised skin.

With a tempting array of facials, massages and beauty treatments, Ellenborough Park also offers a range of spa days and breaks, which you can easily fit in around a busy Festival schedule. So to indulge yourself in a bit of quality 'me' time, check out www.ellenboroughpark.com/spa where you'll find more information on treatments and offers available.



SPA SCENE

Cheltenham has a host of other spas and hotels where pampering is the order of the day. Check out some of these for starters...

Cowley Manor
www.cowleymanor.com

Hatherley Manor
www.hatherleymanor.com

Chapel Spa
www.chapelspa.co.uk/

FESTIVAL FASHION

HOME TO THE FINEST FASHION STORES, CHELTENHAM CATERS FOR ALL YOUR RACE WEEK NEEDS

Cheltenham's bustling town centre is not just home to cosy bars and quality eateries; it is also a hub for all your fashion and shopping needs.

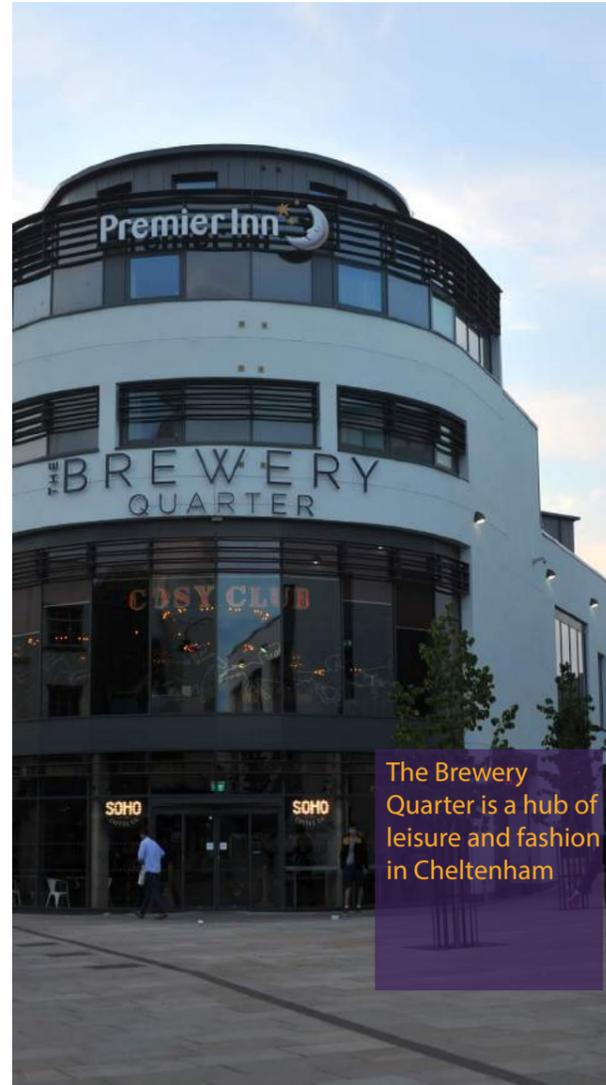
As you might expect, all the usual high-street stores can be found if you are looking for the essentials - including the likes of Anthropologie, H&M, TopShop and a stunning new branch of John Lewis. The Brewery Quarter also offers favourites such as Urban Outfitters and Luke 1977.

But if you're after something a little more unusual or luxurious to tie in with Festival Week, you're in the right place. Cheltenham is home to some gorgeous independent boutiques that offer refreshing takes on the world of fashion. Olive, Vinegar Hill and Caroline Charles are just some of the stores to make a beeline for. After all, the last thing you want is to wear the same outfit as a friend to Ladies Day!

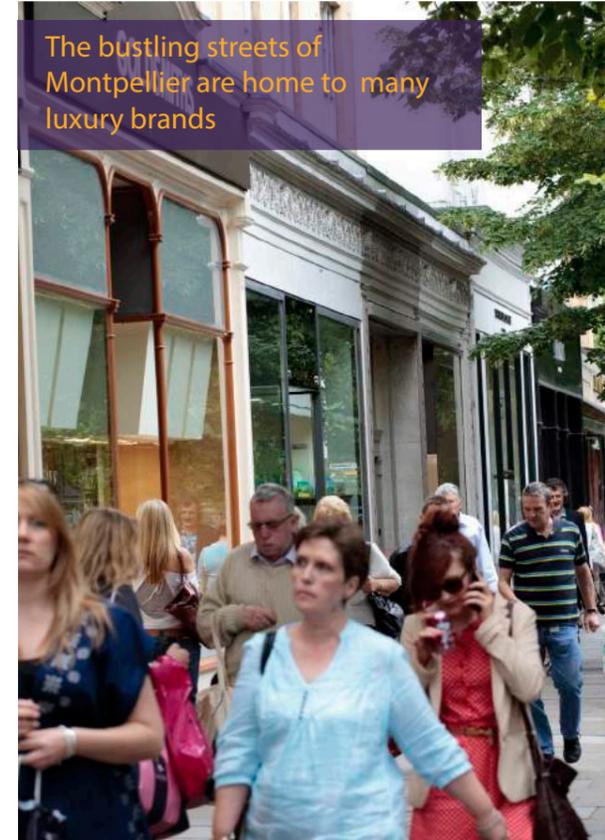
Dubarry, an Irish company specialising in heritage style outerwear, is one such hidden gem. As the perfect outfitters for the Festival, the store's website itself says: "Comfort and country elegance is the name of the game for the serious race goer and Dubarry will take you from parade ring to track side."

Cheltenham's year-round markets are also full of bustling stalls offering individual clothing and gifts. Embroidered shirts, leather gloves and animal printed coats are often spotted on the stalls that line Montpellier throughout the spring months.

One thing is for sure, you aren't short on options for Cheltenham shopping. Whether you want high-end labels, individual accessories or warming garments for the racecourse, this town has got you covered and prepared for the coming days.



The Brewery Quarter is a hub of leisure and fashion in Cheltenham



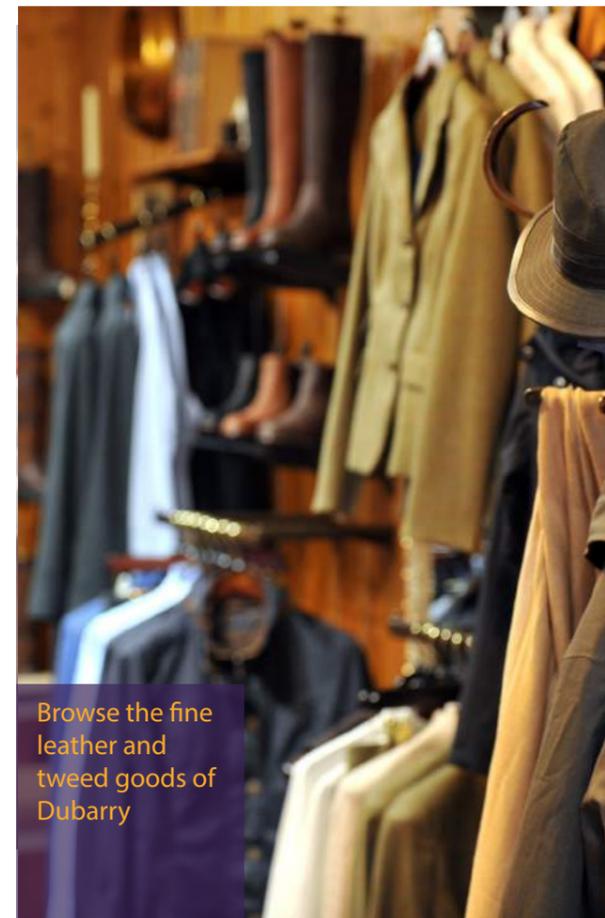
The bustling streets of Montpellier are home to many luxury brands



The Regent Arcade is at the heart of the high street



Dubarry is an Irish heritage company that combines practicality with fashion



Browse the fine leather and tweed goods of Dubarry



Year round markets offer unique takes on classic looks



Cheltenham :
The Cotswold
capital of style



BRUNCH AND GO

THE PERFECT MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN BREAKFAST AND LUNCH, BRUNCH IS AN ENJOYABLE WAY TO FUEL UP FOR THE DAY AHEAD. FROM A HEARTY FULL ENGLISH TO FLUFFY VEGAN PANCAKES, THESE ARE SOME OF THE BEST SPOTS IN CHELTENHAM.



TRADITIONAL

Woodkraft
13 Regent Street, GL50 1HE
Served all day

Located in the heart of Cheltenham, Woodkraft is a self-described “artisan eatery” owned by 2015 MasterChef winner Simon Wood. The vast menu features classic brunch dishes such as the Woodkraft Breakfast and Eggs Benedict, as well as more unusual options like the WK Rarebit and Eggs Royale. For anyone avoiding gluten, they have a separate menu with a whole host of dishes, including alternative versions of the classics.

Website: <https://woodkraftcheltenham.com/>

Baker and Graze
48 Suffolk Road, GL50 2AQ
Served 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8:30am-3:30pm Sat

For anyone craving something a little bit different, Baker and Graze offer some unique brunch options. The bakery-turned-restaurant will tempt your taste buds with house-made granola, Greek yoghurt and berry compote, as well as ricotta pancakes, plums in pomegranate molasses and crème fraiche.

Website: <http://www.bakerandgraze.com/>

VEGGIE AND VEGAN

Vinnie’s Eatery
3 Crescent Terrace, GL50 3PE
Served all day

For those in search of meat-free dining, look no further. Vinnies Eatery offers a healthy and wholesome menu full of plant-based and vegetarian dishes. Choose from options like the pea and spinach fritter topped with red pepper hummus, roasted flat mushrooms, smoky bean sausage and in-house baked beans.

Website: <https://vinnieseatery.uk/>

Boston Tea Party
48 Suffolk Road, GL50 2AQ
Served all day

While it’s not 100% veggie, Boston Tea Party offers a wide range of both vegetarian and vegan options on the main menu. Dishes include the vegetarian full English and banana French toast with clotted cream. There’s also a long list of delicious smoothies to complement your meal including the breakfast option with banana, chia seeds and maple syrup.

Website: <https://bostonteatparty.co.uk/>

BOTTOMLESS BRUNCH

Malmaison
Bayshill Road, GL50 3AS
Saturdays 12-3pm

Well known for its stylish dining experience, Malmaison offers a Liquid Brunch with a choice of unlimited prosecco or Heineken for two hours. To soak up the booze, indulge in the Chez Mal baked eggs with roast tomato sauce or perhaps the Eggs California with smashed avocado and chilli.

Website: <https://www.malmaison.com/>

The Fire Station
St James’ Square, GL50 3PU
Served Saturdays 11am-4pm

Built in 1906 as Cheltenham’s original fire station, the building reopened in 2016 as a quirky and vibrant bar. If you’ve got a big appetite you’re in luck, as you can choose either two or three courses from a menu packed with choices. Options include grilled scallops to start, a main of shakshuka baked eggs and lemon curd semifreddo to finish. You can wash it down with either unlimited prosecco or bellinis.

Website: <http://thefirestationcheltenham.co.uk/>



Images courtesy of Unsplash

THE ART OF DINING

AS ONE OF CHELTENHAM'S HOTTEST RESTAURANTS, THE IVY MONTPELLIER BRASSERIE IS HOME TO OPULENT INTERIORS AND DELECTABLE FOOD INSPIRED BY THE FESTIVAL ITSELF

The Ivy opened for the very first time in Covent Garden in 1917. The restaurant has become an iconic fixture of London's west end, which since its birth has been popular with celebrities and theatregoers alike. Since then, over 30 restaurants across the UK have opened, spanning from Edinburgh down to Brighton. A hundred years after it first stepped onto the food and drink scene, The Ivy Montpellier Brasserie in Cheltenham opened its doors.

The restaurant sits in the beautiful Grade I listed Montpellier Rotunda building, situated in the town's stylish Montpellier district. It's seen as one of Cheltenham's most important buildings with the dome being inspired by the ancient Pantheon temple in Rome. Opened in 1809, the building was firstly a pump room. It was home to the original 'Montpellier Spa' and replaced by the current building in 1817 with the dome added in 1825-6. It has since served as a concert and dance hall, a bank from 1882 including Lloyds Bank from 1926.

In 2017, The Ivy took over this iconic Cheltenham landmark which included all of its charming fixtures. It took around six months to revive the building, including much-needed restoration to the ceiling and cornicing around the pillars in the original Rotunda. As a former bank, two of the safes remain as well as the old vault doors.





Where to find The Ivy:

Rotunda Terrace,
Montpellier Walk,
Cheltenham
GL50 1SH

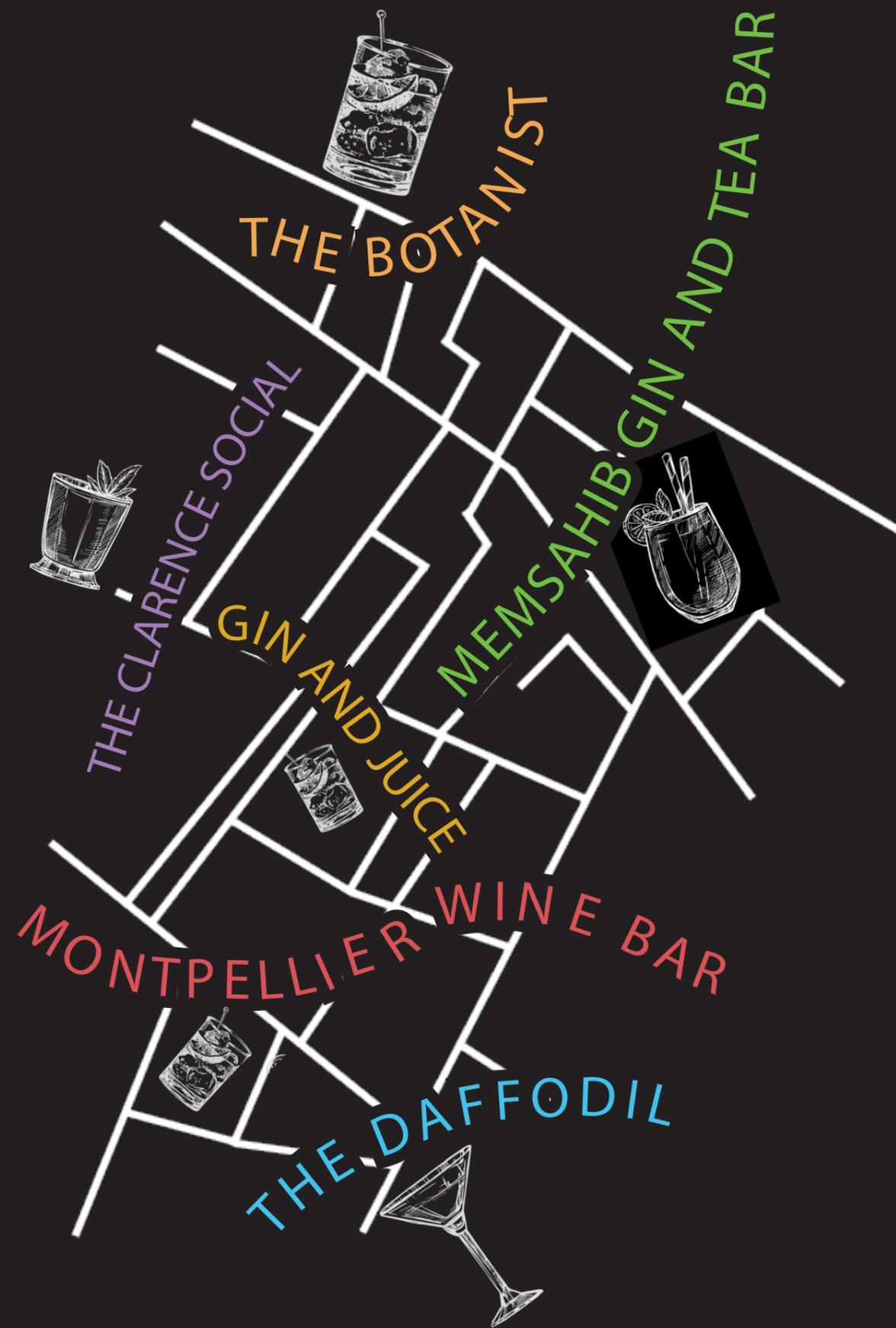
While they do expect some walk ins, it's best to book ahead to guarantee a table.

Steven Wilmer, General Manager of The Ivy Montpellier Brasserie, gives us an insight into the work that went on to create such beautiful interiors for the Cheltenham branch. He points out that each of the brasseries across the collection are uniquely tailored to the community in which it sits. "When designing the interiors for The Ivy Montpellier Brasserie, the team were keen to incorporate artwork depicting local topography and links to the area," he says. "Horse racing and Cheltenham Racecourse are certainly important local features and are included within many pieces of artwork throughout the brasserie". Adam Ellis Studios, a fine art and design practice specialising in the creation of unique and vibrant spaces, was commissioned to create the majestic wall paintings and other works of art here. Such intricate design makes for an overall grand setting which matches the persona of the building in which it sits.

According to The Jockey Club, the average attendance over the four days of race week is 65,000, so it's no wonder that this event is one of the most important dates in the calendar for The Montpellier Brasserie. "Race week is our busiest week of the year, seeing guests visit from all over the UK and further afield," Steven says. "We average between 2,000 to 2,500 covers within race week. There are of course other busy periods within the year, but race week is one of my personal favourites due to the atmosphere in the restaurant and throughout the town in general".

Across the year, The Ivy introduce various special menus, cocktails and other promotions to coincide with the various holidays and celebrations that take place. Unlike other locations, Cheltenham Race Week is just as important here as Valentine's Day is to any other restaurant. Steven Wilmer reveals what can be expected from the restaurant this year: "We will have racing-themed cocktails over the week, Guinness on draft, a few specials on the menu and we will also be hosting an intimate speaker event with racing pundit, Mike Cattermole, in our private dining room".

SHAKEN AND STIRRED



1. The Botanist

Located within Cheltenham's vibrant Brewery Quarter, The Botanist is a great place to start – or end – any night out. For starters, there's live music, a wall made entirely from plants and wacky cocktails served in plant pots. With a team of skilled mixologists, the Raspberry Disaronno Sour is a highlight, and for regulars there are even cocktail-making masterclasses throughout the year, so you can try your own hand at the craft. <https://thebotanist.uk.com/>

2. The Clarence Social

Just off of the Promenade, The Clarence Social is a must-visit. With a secret basement bar and a stylishly decorated restaurant, you can sample innovative cocktails and savour an experience unlike any other in Cheltenham. Twinkling fairy lights strewn across the ceiling greet you as you walk through the grand doors, and the whole vibe is like a sophisticated speakeasy or a gentleman's club of old. As for the cocktail list, the classic mojito comes highly recommended – but there are plenty of favourites to work your way through! <https://theclarence.socia>

3. Memsahib Gin and Tea Bar

A relatively new bar in Cheltenham, this is a hot spot for those seeking another unusual drinking experience. The speakeasy-style bar features portraits of Victorian women to illustrate empowerment during that era, so the effect is like taking a step back in history. The expert bar staff infuse 15 different types of gin, which they then pair with tea for a unique flavour combination which you'll be hard pressed to find anywhere else. Specialising in a variety of 55 gins, all products are ethically sourced and Fair Trade, and the team even craft their own gin, resulting in refreshing and fragrant flavours. Tucked away off the Promenade, the Indian Summer cocktail is a customer favourite – with its tantalising taste transporting you right back to the British Raj period. <https://memsahibginandteabar.com>

4. Gin & Juice

An extension to the beloved No.131 at the end of Cheltenham's Promenade, Gin & Juice is the newest addition to Cheltenham's lively drinking scene. The motto is simple: "by day, we brunch, and by night, we

dance," and this seems like the best way to summarise the experience at this beautifully decked-out bar. With a pulsating soundtrack, you can enjoy sophisticated tipples in a relaxed and friendly environment, and there's seating inside and outside, making it a perfect pitstop all year round. Our top tip? Don't miss the Chocolate Martini, which will reflect your experience here: fun, unique and delicious. www.no131.com/eat-drink/gin-juice

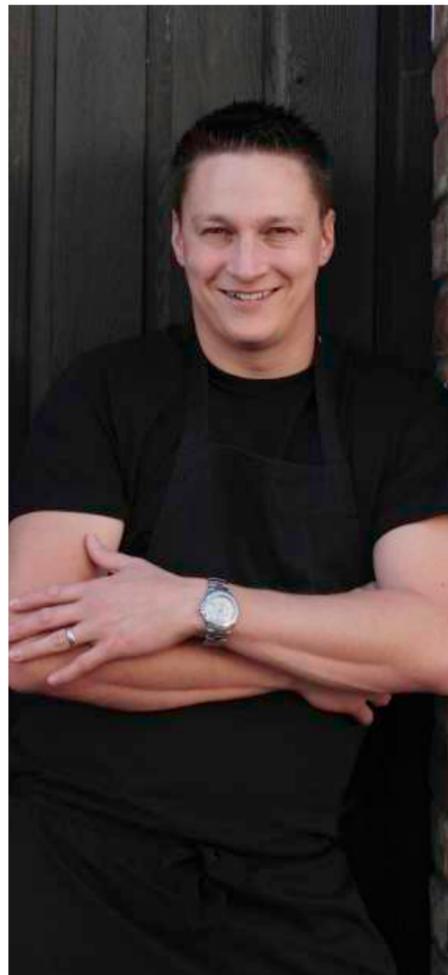
5. Montpellier Wine Bar

Established in 1977, but still one of the places to be seen in Cheltenham. Not many establishments can match the warm and inviting atmosphere at this privately owned and highly acclaimed bar. While probably best known for its wide selection of international wines, the delicious cocktails also hit the spot. Try the English Summer, made with smooth Neptune Barbados rum, to see what we mean. <http://montpellierwinebar.co.uk>

6. The Daffodil

Not only is this bar-restaurant in Suffolk Parade one of the most sophisticated nightspots in Cheltenham, it is also TV approved. Having featured on the BBC's acclaimed drama Sherlock, the stunning décor makes for a refined drinking experience. The upstairs bar is where to head, with its high ceilings, vast walls and windows. Inside, the atmosphere is bustling while intimate at the same time, and the art deco venue feels like it's stepped right out of the Roaring Twenties. The service is unmatched, and you'll be greeted at the door and whisked into the heart of the action, as the sounds of sophisticated jazz fill the air. With a great choice of cocktails, the Grape Gatsby is a true beauty which will help you embrace the retro theme. www.thedaffodil.com/

There are over 80 bars and pubs in Cheltenham, so you'll never run out of choice. During The Festival, many have live music, late licences and special events, so heading into town after a day at the racecourse is a must. Many of the venues offer delicious food too, so there's no need to go hungry!



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

JONAS LODGE OWNER AND HEAD CHEF AT CHELTENHAM'S LATEST RESTAURANT TALKS HESTON, POTATO FOAM AND HIS LOW WASTE POLICY

Tucked away in the heart of Cheltenham by St Mary's Minster, you'll discover a beautiful new restaurant, called GL50. A welcome new addition to the town's flourishing culinary scene, the eatery sees owner and Head Chef Jonas Lodge – formerly of Heston Blumenthal's Hind's Head – focus on creating a fine-dining experience, using humble ingredients.

While he changes his menu weekly depending on what he can get hold of, you can usually expect to see Jonas' personal favourite dish: chocolate torte with cabbage ice cream – a nod towards his time at the Hind's Head. "Working for Heston makes you realise that these things are not ridiculous," he smiles.

Jonas' suppliers herald mostly from the Cotswolds, including the award-winning Waghorne's butchers in Prestbury. While his fish is caught in Cornwall, his supplier is from Cirencester, and this close relationship is linked to the way he treats produce in his kitchen. "What I do in a weird way is respect the death of an animal. I try to do the best thing I can do with it."

This kind of respect runs throughout his entire restaurant. GL50's website mentions a zero-waste target, and while this isn't yet possible, Jonas acknowledges "a horrific amount of waste" in nearly every restaurant he's worked in. Instead of throwing out vegetable scraps and

ends of meat, he tells his chefs they "need to do something with them", so they roast and pickle cauliflower stalks or make foam from potato skins. "It takes everyone to be thinking the same way," he adds.

With his first Race Week fast approaching, Jonas admits he's nervous, since "no one in the racing world knows us yet." But as well as serving a special brunch all week, dinner is set to be a big new hitter in town. As a hint, you can always ask about the secret tasting menu, where for £75, diners receive six courses, as well as canapés and sweet treats. Jonas also changes things up by having the chefs bring the dishes out to the tables – the idea being that customers can meet and ask questions of the people preparing the food there and then.

So, make sure to book at GL50 if you want a dining experience you're likely to remember longer than any winning bet.

Book a Table:

8 Norfolk House, Chester Walk, Cheltenham,
GL50 3JX
01242 228555
restaurantgl50.com



SURROUNDING STROLLS

SITTING IN THE HEART OF THE COTSWOLDS, VISITING CHELTENHAM GIVES YOU THE PRIME OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE THE SURROUNDING AREA

During your visit to Cheltenham, don't miss seeing what the rest of the Cotswolds has to offer. Famed for its honey-coloured stone buildings, you'll discover a stunning collection of lively villages, market towns and country houses - as well as rolling green hills and woodland. Luckily, Cheltenham is perfectly located as a gateway for visiting the surrounding area, and transport links through road and rail will enable you to explore this area of natural beauty. There are plenty of short excursions to choose from, many within a short 30-minute drive of Cheltenham. Here are some of the best places to walk, grab a view and experience the Cotswold way of life.



CLEEVE HILL

Located in Cheltenham's north-eastern edge, the top of Cleeve Hill remains the best place to see breathtaking views of the town, the surrounding areas - and the racecourse itself. At 330 metres above sea level, or 1,083 feet, Cleeve Hill is the highest point of the Cotswold hills and the whole of Gloucestershire. Countless footpaths criss-cross its 1,000 acres, including the Cotswold Way National Trail, while its panoramic views extend to the Malvern Hills and, on a clear day, to the Black Mountains of Wales. Popular pub the Rising Sun, located on the brow of the hill, provides a handy spot for a post-stroll pick-me-up.

BOURTON ON THE WATER

Widely known as the Venice of the Cotswolds, Bourton on the Water is well worth a visit. Located just 15 miles from Cheltenham town centre, the quaint village is lined with shops, cafes and pubs. It is also home to the Cotswold Motor Museum, Birdland, Cotswold Perfumery, the Cotswold Brewery and Model Village - where you'll see a one-ninth scale replica of Bourton on the Water in local stone.



CIRENCESTER

Around 15 miles from Cheltenham, Cirencester is a bustling town with distinct Roman links. Its market square is dominated by the picture-postcard Parish Church of St John the Baptist, as well as a line-up of handsome golden buildings. Full of cafes, eateries and a good range of shops, the town's famed weekly market was even mentioned in the Domesday Book. Don't miss Cirencester Park either, where you can take a leisurely stroll, or explore on horseback.

STOW ON THE WOLD

North of Bourton on the Water, Stow on the Wold is approximately 18 miles from Cheltenham. A quintessential chocolate-box Cotswold village awaits you, with streets crammed with traditional stone houses. There are also elegant shops, cafes, bistros and pubs to linger in for a couple of hours, while other nearby attractions include Broadway Tower and Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park.



Images courtesy of Unsplash



GET FESTIVAL READY: YOUR RACE ESSENTIALS

FESTIVAL SEASON BRINGS PLENTY OF DILEMMAS. WHAT ON EARTH SHOULD YOU WEAR, FOR STARTERS? WITH ORGANISATION BEING KEY, HERE'S THE LOWDOWN ON SOME OF THE MUST-HAVE ITEMS TO KEEP YOUR RACE WEEK FULL OF JOY (AND WARMTH)

Cheltenham Festival is the ideal time to make a fashion statement. For a whole week in March, the town is alive with casual chic by day and eclectic style by night.

For both men and women, the details really matter, so it's only right to select everything from hats to cufflinks with care. As the Races are held in very early spring, the weather is always near impossible to predict. And with this in mind, racegoers should be prepared for rain, shine and everything in between - while still aiming for effortless glamour, of course!

Since staying warm and dry is a must for all day-time action, a hat is one of the most essential pieces to pack. Not only do they help tame even the wildest hair in the elements, they also add a finishing touch to any outfit. Anything from a beret to a fedora works, and bright colours will help elevate your overall look.

Another fashion staple is the right coat; one that's warm, but that also offers a flattering shape for both men and women. Don't forget, while your coat is a bodyguard against the weather, it's also there to lift your outfit underneath, so coordinate where possible.

The Festival inevitably involves a lot of walking, so your

choice of footwear will determine how you end your day. Heels should be worn with great caution to any race event - save them for the evening! Instead, opt for a comfortable boot with a heel, which offers easy elegance and warmth. It also brings an opportunity to add texture to your look: go for a subtle snake print or a knee-high length if you're not confident with eye-popping colours.

As for the men, a smart and study boot is a great pairing with a pair of tapered trousers. However, a dress shoe can elevate every outfit - especially into the evening. With a navy suit, a tan brogue or loafer really stands out, while a black dress shoe complements a grey suit perfectly.

The Festival has a strict policy prohibiting all large bags, so it's vital that ladies pack small for racing events. Your bag needs to be big enough to hold your keys, phones and lipstick, whilst also harmonising with your outfit. For example, try twinning the colour of your bag with your shoes or accessories for a balance overall look. Additionally, it might be wise to pick a clutch which has a detachable strap, so as time presses on, you can wear it across your body.

Whatever you pack, be sure to have fun with your look - Race Week is but once a year after all!



THE CHELTENHAM CALENDAR

WIDELY KNOWN AS THE FESTIVAL TOWN, CHELTENHAM OFFERS A FANTASTIC ARRAY OF EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

LIGHT UP CHELTENHAM

HELD EVERY FEBRUARY
Monday - Sunday 15:30 - 01:00
Where: Landmarks and Regency buildings



THE FESTIVAL

10TH - 13TH MARCH 2020
Various times
Where: Cheltenham Racecourse



CHELTENHAM WINE FESTIVAL

4TH APRIL 2020
12:00 - 19:00
Where: The Pittville Pump Room



CHELTENHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL

5TH - 10TH MAY 2020
Various times
Where: Various venues



CHELTENHAM POETRY FESTIVAL

16TH - 25TH APRIL 2020
Various times
Where: The Pittville Pump Room



CHELTENHAM SCIENCE FESTIVAL

2ND - 7TH JUNE 2020
Various times
Where: Various venues



CHELTENHAM FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL

19TH - 21ST JUNE 2020
Various times
Where: Montpellier Gardens

CHELTENHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

3RD - 12TH JULY 2020
Various times
Where: Various venues



PRESCOTT BIKE FESTIVAL

18TH - 19TH JULY 2020
SAT 12:00 - 17:00 SUN 09:00 - 17:00
Where: Prescott Hill Climb



CHELTENHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL

2ND - 11TH OCTOBER 2020
Various times
Where: Various venues

For more information on all of Cheltenham's world-renowned events, see <https://www.visitcheltenham.com/whats-on/festivals>



Unveiled in 1893, the Neptune Fountain sits at the heart of Cheltenham