

READING VISITOR GUIDE

incorporating
Group Visits



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Recognised among the Top 10% worldwide and awarded 2 AA Rosettes,
every plate celebrates local ingredients and modern European flair.



WELCOME TO READING

Our town was founded over 1,000 years ago at the confluence of the rivers Thames and Kennet and these waterways form part of any modern-day visit to Reading.

First-time visitors to Reading often say they are surprised by what they find and that there is so much more to do than they had imagined. From amazing heritage and green spaces to trendy bars and restaurants and vibrant events and the region's best choice of accommodation, we're sure you'll have a great time in The 'Ding'.

This guide is designed to give you ideas to make the most of your time in Reading, but for more detail like opening hours, contact details etc, scan the QR codes or visit our website visit-reading.com. We look forward to seeing you soon.

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**Watch our short
film to discover
what Reading
has to offer**



READING KEY FACTS



Reading Abbey
Ruins are the burial place of one of England's medieval kings, King Henry I.



The Reading Festival attracts 100,000 festival-goers every August.



Oscar Wilde was imprisoned in Reading, immortalised in The Ballad of Reading Gaol.



Jane Austen went to school in Reading Abbey Gateway.



A WATERSIDE TOWN

Reading could easily be called Reading-on-Thames or Reading-on-Kennet as these two rivers have flowed through the history of the town from the Vikings to the arrival of the canals and modern-day Reading.

A gorgeous stretch of the Thames separates Reading town centre from its northern-most area, Caversham (see page 18). The riverbank is a 2-minute walk from Reading Station, where you can join the **Thames Path National Trail**. Christchurch Bridge is Reading's striking new pedestrian bridge, offering fantastic views in both directions – from the cascading Caversham Weir to historic Caversham Bridge, which celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2026.



Enjoy Reading-on-Thames

Thames River Cruise

Enjoy a circular boat trip to explore the Thames from Caversham Pier. Thames River Cruise is a family business that has been offering scenic river trips for over 50 years. Explore upstream to Mapledurham through Wind in the Willows country and spot river birds as you watch the world go by. Or why not try their Cream Tea Cruise or Sundowner Cruise.

Caversham Boat Services

You can start your Thames boating holiday in Reading or just hire a boat for the hour.

Thames Lido

A sedate watery experience is on offer at the restored Edwardian bathing pool. Swim, enjoy the sauna and a treatment or take advantage of the fabulous poolside restaurant. Book a package to make a day of it!

Whittington Tea Barge

Moored on the north bank of the Thames by Reading Bridge, the traditional barge offers one of the best Afternoon Teas around (Fri-Sun).



Dive
deeper



The Mill at Sonning Theatre

Set majestically on the banks of the River Thames just east of Reading, the Mill is one of the only dinner theatres in the United Kingdom, providing a unique theatrical experience.

Get active on the river

You can hire paddle boards and kayaks from **Wokingham Waterside Centre** on a tranquil stretch of the Thames east of

the town centre. Or **Thames Canoe Hire** offer a similar service from their base near Tilehurst to the west of Reading.

Walk the Thames

Reading has a lovely stretch of the Thames Path National Trail for those walking from 'source to sea'. Or just walk to Sonning or Pangbourne for a picnic or riverside drink.

Enjoy being by the water in Christchurch Meadows, with its popular summer paddling pool or explore **Caversham Court Gardens**, a historic garden that runs down to the Thames on the north bank of the river. In summer, they have lots of great events with a Thames backdrop.

Village Hotel NEW

Just opened, the Village Hotel offers bedrooms with river views as well as a Health and Wellness centre with pool, buzzing pub and grill, pilates studio and Starbucks.



- Ticketed Events - During April to October (See Website for Details)
- Scheduled Boat Trips - Available Easter to October, Weekends and daily during School Holidays
- Private Charters - Tailored for you, all year around - between 20 - 120 guests



For details and to BOOK: www.thamesrivercruise.co.uk

On the Kennet

The River Kennet becomes the Kennet & Avon Canal (K&A) as it flows through Reading town centre passed **Reading's Abbey Ruins**, the start of the **St James' Way** and the former **Reading Prison** with its Oscar Wilde links. You can take narrow boat holidays on the K&A all the way to Bath from Reading.

Matilda Too

For a leisurely introduction to the K&A, board the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust's 12-seat narrowboat for a circular cruise around Reading.

Oracle Riverside

The canal flows alongside the Oracle Shopping Centre. Choose from its many eateries and cafes that overlook the canal. Take a seat on the terraces to enjoy the view.



Reading Riverside Museum

Reading Museum's small Riverside Museum at Blake's Lock tells the story of Reading's two rivers on the site of the former waterworks buildings.

Green Reading

Reading is a surprisingly green town with lots of parks, such as **Forbury Gardens** in the town centre, **Palmer Park** to the east and **Prospect Park** in the west. You can walk the green corridor from Tilehurst all the way into Reading town centre from park to park. If you follow the Thames east, **Thames Valley Park** is a popular picnic spot while **Bugs Bottom** in Caversham links the town with the Chilterns.

Lagoona Park – aqua park and paddle-boarding centre close to Junction 11 M4.

Dinton Pastures Country Park – 350-acre country park, an oasis of woodland, meadow, and lakes in nearby Wokingham. Walking, paddleboarding, sailing and fishing on offer.

The Harris Garden in the University of Reading's Whiteknights Campus is famous for its cherry blossom but the garden is an oasis all year round.



**Find your
nature
escape**



EXPLORE THE TOWN CENTRE

Reading town centre is easily explored on foot. Just a few hundred metres from the station, you'll find the main shopping, dining and entertainment areas as well as Reading's Abbey Quarter.

Reading's pedestrianised Broad Street is the beating heart of the town that links everywhere together. Begin your journey at the eastern end of town with a visit to **Reading Museum** and fascinating **Reading Abbey Quarter**. Then stroll west

along Broad Street for a shopping spree at **John Lewis**, **M&S** or one of top brands in the **Oracle Shopping Centre** or **Broad Street Mall**. Reading's independents, from hat shops to comic specialists and a dizzying array of small restaurants can be found in the Harris Arcade and Queen's Walk.

**Discover
shops, food
and fun**





Broad Street and the surrounding streets are always buzzing with people but the town centre is particularly lively on event days, such as Chinese New Year and Valentine processions at the start of the year to summer street food festivals, Diwali and of course Christmas.

Why not try?

The Biscuit Factory – for films, bar and community café.

Sweeney & Todd – a Reading pie shop institution.

The Ale House – real ale in cosy corners.

Flamingos Vintage – vintage clothes by the kilo.

Blue Collar Corner – street food container village with Reading beer.

The Pantry – Relaxed café for lunch in Reading Town Hall.

Dr Marten's – the iconic British shoe shop.

Madoo deli and café – all things foodie from Italy.

Notes – renowned London-based coffee roasters and bar at Station Hill.

Siren Bar – 28 ales are always on tap from Reading's own brewery.

Shed – independent café serving up doorstop sandwiches and toasties in an old forge.

Station Hill

Between the station and the town centre, a vibrant new destination has emerged. Station Hill is a thriving hub for community, lifestyle and business. You'll find stunning new public art, cafes, restaurants and **Siren Bar** on the corner of Reading's new pedestrianised thoroughfare Friar's Walk.





READING'S MUSEUMS

From the story of the Norman invasion of England in 1066 to planes, animals and medicine, Reading's museums offer a fascinating visit. And, they are nearly all free.

Reading Museum

The starting point for exploring Reading Abbey Quarter, Reading Museum takes you through medieval Britain to the world's biggest biscuit factory.

Reading Museum is home to Britain's **Bayeux Tapestry**, the only full-scale replica of the Norman original which tells the story of William the Conqueror's invasion in 1066. Stitched 140 years ago, the 70 metre-long work is identical in nearly every detail to the Norman original.



*Step into
Reading's past*



The Museum of English Rural Life

The MERL celebrates all things food, farming and the countryside. Very family-friendly with a lovely garden and café.

The Cole Museum of Zoology

The Cole Museum is home to thousands of specimens of great zoological significance, including taxidermy, skeletons, fossils and some superb models of extinct animals.

The Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology

Based in the University's Department of Classics, the museum boasts one of the largest collections of Greek ceramics in the UK.

The Museum of Berkshire Aviation

Located in Woodley, this museum celebrates local aviation history including a real plane to explore.

The Berkshire Medical Museum

Open two Sundays a month, the museum has a fascinating collection of artefacts and photographs relating to medicine, surgery, nursing, pharmacy and dentistry.



READING THROUGH THE AGES

Reading's story began 1,000 years ago as a Roman and Viking settlement. It has a rich medieval history and elegant Georgian and Victorian buildings alongside modern architecture befitting of a modern, thriving economy.

Reading Abbey Quarter

The heart of medieval Reading. Just 2 minutes from Reading Station but transporting you back over nine hundred years, Reading Abbey was founded by King Henry I of England in 1121. Find his burial place, see where the monks lived or visit the **Abbey Gateway**, the only remaining gate into the abbey complex. Free to visit and open every day.



Splendid Georgian architecture

Reading has a rich legacy of Georgian buildings from the 18th and early 19th century. Pick up a copy of the Georgian Reading self-guided walk leaflet to see for yourself. Jane Austen went to school in Reading during this period. Visit her schoolroom in the Abbey Gateway as part of an **Abbey Quarter tour**.

A Victorian metropolis

Reading's famous 3Bs (beer, biscuits and bulbs) were at the heart of Reading's development in the Victorian era. The wealth that these industries created can be seen in the fine buildings designed by the greats of British architecture, Alfred Waterhouse, Gilbert Scott and Sir John Soane. Oscar Wilde was the most famous inmate of Gilbert Scott's Reading Prison in the late 19th century following his famous trial.

See Explore on Foot (page 14) to get under the skin of Reading's heritage.



A FAMILY DAY OUT

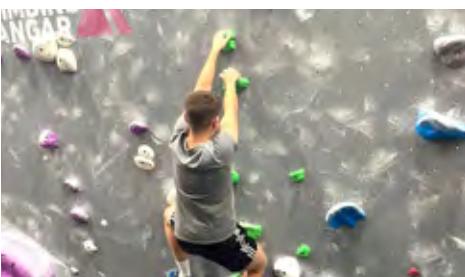
Reading offers a very varied and good value day out for families, from active indoors and outdoors to wildlife, trains, museum trails and Paddington Bear.

You can get in and on the water at **Lagoona Park**'s aqua park and two new swimming pools at **Rivermead** (with diving pool) and **Palmer Park**. Both pools also have indoor play areas for younger visitors. Paddling is the order of the day at **Christchurch Meadow** pool. You can do all manner of water-born activities at **Dinton Pastures** in nearby Wokingham.

Looking for an active experience indoors? **Reading Climbing Hangar** and **Parthian Climbing** offer climbing walls and bouldering. Or bounce at **Oxygen Reading**.



Wildlife and adventures outdoor can be found at **Beale Wildlife Park** just west of Reading or you can get to know alpaca at **Bozedown Farm**. **Wellington Park** has an animal farm and a miniature railway. **Reading's Prospect Park** miniature railway operates one Sunday a month.



Family fun this way!



Reading's museums (see museum pages) have family-friendly activities on Saturdays and during school holidays, from themed trails to craft and dressing up events.

The town centre is the place to be when school's out with themed trails at Easter, Summer and Halloween. And don't leave Reading without saying "Hi" to Paddington on Broad Street. His creator, Michael Bond, lived and worked in Reading.



There are lots of indoor options with games rooms **Urban Fun** and **Spinners** offering everything from crazy golf to air hockey and bowling. Reading also has two brand new bowling centres – **Hollywood Bowl** and **Bowl Central** for dedicated bowlers.

A UNIVERSITY IN THE PARK

Reading is home to a world-class, research-intensive university which is recognised as one of the greenest in the UK. Celebrating its centenary in 2026, the University of Reading isn't just shaping the sustainability leaders of tomorrow – it offers a range of hidden gems for local people and visitors to the town to enjoy.



Looking to get outside?

Get lost in **The Wilderness**, visit the ducks that call **Whiteknights Lake** home, discover butterflies on the **Meadows**, and stroll through its 'secret' **Harris Garden**, while exploring 320 acres of Green Flag Award-winning campus.

Drop in to three on-site museums, including the **Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology**, **Cole Museum of Zoology** (where you can say hello to Norman the elephant) and the outstanding **Museum of English Rural Life**, at its London Road campus.

With an extensive art collection, audio tours, and public art trails – recently updated with seven globes from The World Reimagined you'll want to take a break at one of its many bars and cafes, including local favourite, **Park House** – all while browsing a prospectus or the activities available to you at its SportsPark and TennisPark.

It's a University 'for' Reading – where nature, culture, and community meet.

**A campus
full of
surprises**



**100
YEARS**  **1926
2026**

UNIVERSITY OF READING

EXPLORE ON FOOT

Reading town centre is compact and easy to walk. It has grown up between the Thames and Kennet so there are lots of towpaths and riverbanks to wander and you can walk out into the surrounding countryside easily. However, with over a thousand years of history, you may well choose to explore Reading town centre – scratch the surface and you'll unlock a multitude of stories.

Be guided

A walking tour is the best way to find your feet and learn more about Reading's fascinating history.

- **Abbey Quarter tours** (including Jane Austen schoolroom) – Reading Museum. Every Saturday from April to September.
- **Walk Reading** offer a range of themed walks from Literary Reading to Reading the Home of Photography, as well as tours of the Silchester Roman settlement just south of Reading.
- **Terry's Reading Walkabouts** offer an amazing 22 different walks from the history of biscuits in Reading to Halloween, the famous women of Reading and walks over all of Reading's six bridges.
- **Tours2Order** are Reading's Blue Badge Guide offering an introduction to Reading's history as well as tours throughout the south-east of England.



- **Walks Work** host different social walks to help you explore Reading with a different route every Wednesday.
- **Reading Walks Festival 2026** takes place from 9 – 17 May.

**Let the
adventure
begin**





Do it yourself

There are lots of ways to explore Reading under your own steam.

Pick up a map guide:

- 4 wellbeing walking leaflets take you along the river, to Caversham and around the town centre.
- **Georgian Reading** is a new guide to the many amazing buildings around Reading from 1700 to 1840.
- **The Thames Path** along the Thames takes you east or west and you can get the train back to make it a circular day out.

St James' Way

Reading is the accredited start of one of the routes of the world-famous Camino de Santiago. The St James' Way follows the route that medieval pilgrims would have taken from Reading Abbey to the south coast, before they continued on to Santiago in north-west Spain.

Today, you can follow the 68-mile way-marked route to Southampton, collecting your pilgrim stamps along the way. Register at the Pilgrim Office in Reading Museum and take your selfie at the new 'camino' milestone marker by Reading Abbey Ruins.

Walk Reading

Discover the hidden gems of Reading on an unforgettable walking tour

See our walk programme



5 StarTripadvisor reviews

“Fun, informative and enjoyable”
“A genuine joy to walk and talk”
“Very enjoyable and informative walk”



www.walk-reading.co.uk

RAISE A GLASS OF READING'S OWN

One of Reading's famous 3Bs was beer and a new generation of micro-breweries are keeping the tradition going.

Double-Barrelled and **Phantom Brewing Company** both brew in Reading. Check out their taprooms and events programmes, perfect for beer enthusiasts looking to try the local produce.

Loddon Brewery is a short walk from Caversham and also has a taproom, shop and food. Local brewery

Siren Craft Brew is based in Finchampstead but you can try 28 different ales at their Bar in Reading town centre.

**Cheers
to that!**



Award-winning wines can be found at **Stanlake Park Wine Estate**, near Reading, one of the oldest wine producers in England. Trained guides lead engaging tours through the vineyard and winery with generous samples of the award-winning English wines included. The **Henley Gin Distillery** is just three miles east of Reading. They offer tours and tastings in an 18th century barn.



**Venue
Reading**

HOSPITALITY

at

the University of

Reading



MEET



FILM



STAY



VISIT



DINE



PARTY

Minutes from the town centre, the University of Reading award-winning 321-acre campus offers a unique setting for events. Venue Reading host anything from small meetings to large conferences, parties, exhibitions and concerts. In summer, over 2,000 bedrooms are available, for Reading Festival or large group travel.

With excellent transport links and lecture theatres for up to 400, the campus is ideal for most occasions. You can also visit the many cafés, or pub on campus. Plus, don't miss events in the Great Hall, search 'What's on Reading' for events.

info@venuereading.com 0118 378 5657 venuereading.com

GET INTO SPORT IN READING

Cheer on The Royals!

Founded in 1871, **Reading Football Club** is one of the world's oldest teams and still at the heart of the community. Enjoy the warm, family-friendly atmosphere and great-value tickets – fun without the Premier League price tag. They also offer tours of their Select Car Leasing Stadium, which is easy to reach from central Reading by train and bus.

Reading isn't just about football though! Rugby, basketball and hockey are all played to a high standard and Reading also has great rowing pedigree.

You will always spot rowers on the Thames in Reading – there are lots of rowing clubs and the GB Training Lake is based here. You can watch the regattas or have a go yourself by hiring paddleboards or canoes at **Wokingham Waterside Centre** or **Thames Canoe Hire**.



Rams men's rugby team play in National League One, **Reading Rockets** men compete in the British Championship Basketball while **Reading Hockey Club**'s women and men play in the English Premier Leagues. There are also lots of fantastic golf courses in the area, climbing centres and swimming pools, as well as a brand-new athletics track at **Palmer Park Stadium** and indoor courts for the latest craze in sport, padel.

Game on!



DISCOVER CAVERSHAM

Caversham is a ten-minute walk from Reading town centre across Christchurch pedestrian bridge on the north bank of the Thames.

You'll find beautiful riverside walks, parks and picnic areas along with lively independent and artisan shops, bars and restaurants. Caversham's high street has a delightful array of shops, including bougie clothes and gift shops, bakeries, vegan restaurants and cocktail bars, award-winning eateries and cafes.

Why not try:

Vegivores

Creative plant-based cuisine for flavourful vegan dining.

Clays

Critically reviewed South Indian flavours.

Nood Stores

Sustainable shopping for eco-friendly household goods and gifts.

The Last Crumb

Lively gastropub offering craft beers, creative cocktails and hearty pub fare.



The Collective

Trendy café offering artisanal coffee, homemade cakes and light meals.

Caversham Court Gardens

Picturesque riverside park featuring historic landscaped gardens.

Caversham Artisan Farmers Market

Sunday market showcasing local producers.

Bugs Bottom

Open meadows and woodland areas popular for dog walking and nature appreciation.

Tingdene Marina

Riverside moorings and a waterfront café.

Mapledurham Golf Course

Challenging 18-hole parkland course nestled in the picturesque Chiltern countryside.



**Find charm
just over the river**



ART ON EVERY CORNER

Reading is developing a reputation for the quality of its public art. From Elizabeth Frink to Banksy and light sculptures, you'll find art on almost every corner.

Highlights

- **Reading's Banksy.** 'Create Escape' on the wall of the former Reading Prison is a nod to Oscar Wilde's infamous imprisonment there.
- **Dame Elizabeth Frink's Robed Figure** is behind Abbot House, near the Abbey Ruins.
- **Rivers, Ruins & Regency and Royals, Residents & a Rock Festival** are 2 LED murals at Station Hill, created by artists Stuart Melrose and Kev Munday.
- **The World Reimagined** is a trail of globes on the University's Whiteknights campus exploring the legacies of slavery.



See Reading through its art



Attractions

- 1 Abbey Ruins, E3
- 2 Bowl Central, B1
- 3 Caversham Boat Services, B1
- 4 The Biscuit Factory, A4
- 5 Grosvenor Casino Reading, D4
- 6 Hollywood Bowl, C4
- 7 Medical Museum Royal Berkshire, F5
- 8 Reading Museum, C3
- 9 Riverside Museum, F3
- 10 Thames Lido, E1
- 11 Thames Rivercruise Reading, A1
- 12 The Museum of English Rural Life, F5
- 13 Vue Cinema, D4
- 14 Spinners, A4
- 15 St James' Way milestone marker, E3
- 16 Urban Fun, A4

Venues

- 1 Boom Battle Bar, C3
- 2 Hexagon, A4
- 3 Milk, B3
- 4 Oakford Social Club, C2
- 5 Reading Town Hall Concert Hall, C3
- 6 RISC, D5
- 7 Select Car Leasing Stadium
- 8 Siren Craft Brew, B3
- 9 South Street Arts Centre, D5
- 10 Sub 89, B3
- 11 The Purple Turtle, C4
- 12 University of Reading Great Hall, E5

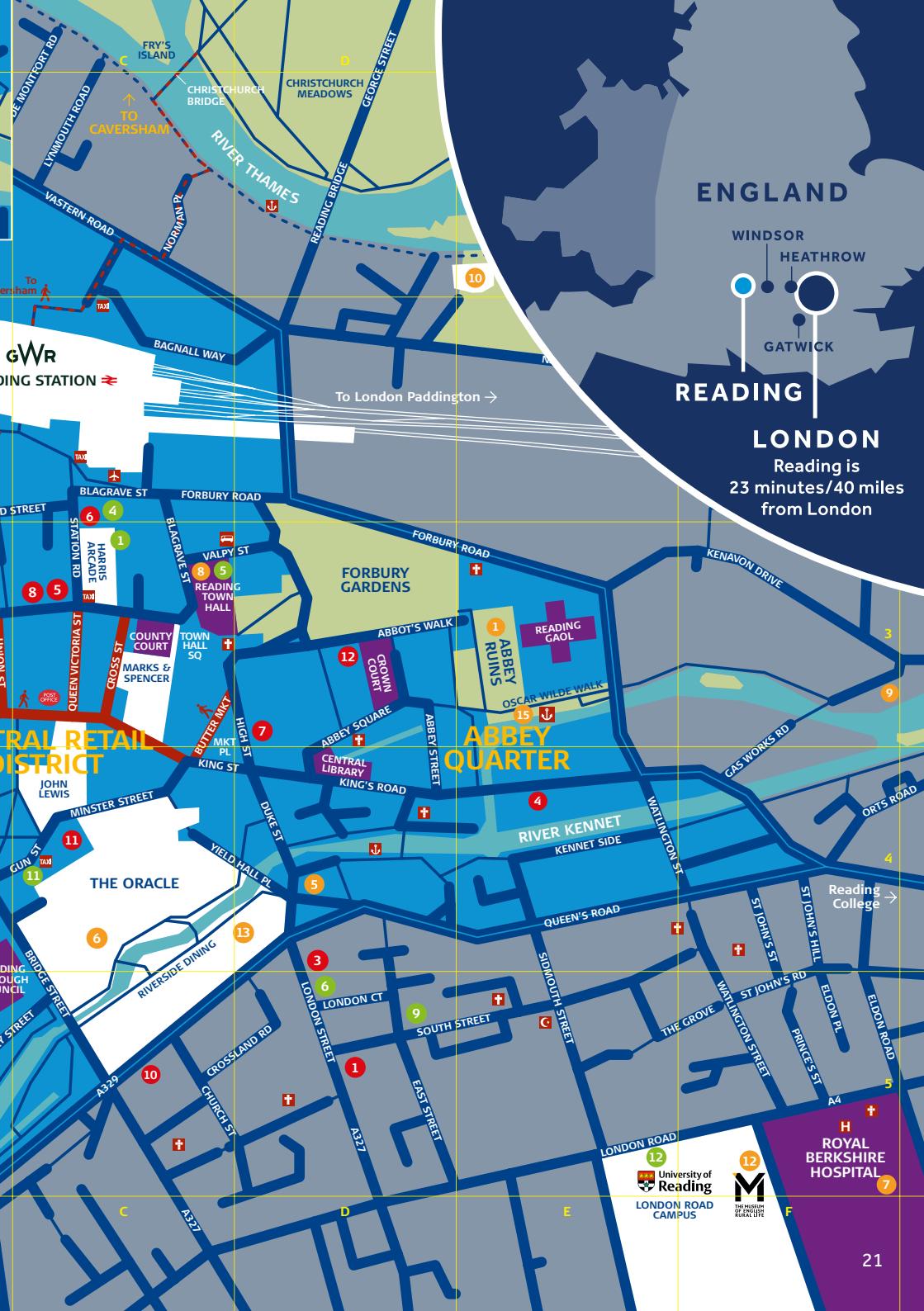
Hotels

- 1 Celador Apartments, D5
- 2 Easy Hotel, B1
- 3 Hotel 1843, D4
- 4 House of Fisher 100 Kings Road (serviced accom), E4
- 5 ibis Reading Centre, C3
- 6 Malmaison Reading, C2
- 7 Market House Reading, D3
- 8 Novotel Reading Centre, C3
- 9 Pentahotel, A4
- 10 Premier Inn Reading Central, C5
- 11 Premier Suites, C4
- 12 The Roseate Reading, D3
- 13 Travelodge Reading Central, A3
- 14 Village Hotel, A1



Key

- Coach Drop Off Point
- Hospital
- Taxi Rank
- Place of Worship
- Post Office



STAY UP IN READING

Reading's nightlife caters for all tastes and budgets. And the beauty of it is that each venue is within easy walk of each other. Whether you are looking for a student night out, a drink with work colleagues, a quiet pint or the best club night for miles around, Reading has the answer.





Purple Turtle – legendary music venue and bar, the Turtle is lively til late.

Cozy Club – a lush new all day dining experience for cocktails and chilling.

Oxford Social Club – live bands, DJs and quiz nights opposite the station.

Siren Bar – 28 beers on tap from the local brewery in a brand new premises at Station Hill.

The Hope Tap / Back of Beyond – two good value Weatherspoon pubs.

Be At One – hip bar for cocktails with friends and generous student discounts.

Boom Battle Bar – a new experiential bar offering axe throwing, karaoke, shuffleboard and beer pong.

Blagrave Arms – friendly bar popular with the LGBTQ+ community.



Milk – cosy bar specialising in rum and biscuit-inspired cocktails.

The Nag's Head – one of the best real ale pubs in the south of England.

Vino Vita – Italian wine bar overlooking Forbury Gardens serving great food.

Lola Lo – a classic nightclub – great for groups.

Grosvenor Casino – classic casino games, slots, poker, dining and live entertainment.

Spinners – entertainment complex serving pizza & beer alongside mini-golf, 10-pin bowling, darts and clayshot.

The Biscuit Factory – independent bar, eatery and café and community space alongside 3 cinema screens.



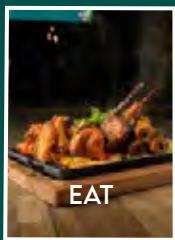
Best night out!



THE WORLD'S YOUR OYSTER

Eating out

Reading knows a thing or two about food and drink, not least thanks to its own beer and biscuit heritage. We have an exciting foodie scene that spans quirky cafes and lively pubs and bars to fine dining with food from every corner of the planet.



EAT



DRINK



CELEBRATE



STAY

Enjoy this festive season with **contemporary fusion dishes, craft cocktails, fun events, warm hospitality**, and a **29-room boutique hotel** offering personalised care for **travellers, staycationers and business guests**.

Book direct for a table or room to enjoy special festive offers

Ground Floor, 33 London St, Reading RG1 4PS, UK

Contact us on 0118 950 3925 or info@1843reading.com





Top tips for eating out in Reading

Yaylo – Reading's exclusively gluten-free coffee shop offering gorgeous cakes, sandwiches and quiches.

Reading Room – fine dining in The Roseate Reading Hotel's restaurant, including a luxury Afternoon Tea.

Clay's – award-winning Hyderabadi Indian restaurant in Caversham.

Picnic – independent cafe in the Butter Market serving fresh salads, sandwiches, soups and good coffee.

Thames Lido – Spanish/North African fine dining, tapas and bar alongside Reading's most glamorous water feature.

Blue Collar Corner – container street food village with bar and a favourite millennial hangout.



London Street Brasserie – fine dining overlooking the Kennet & Avon Canal.

Soju – authentic South Korean restaurant.

Rosa's Thai – a new arrival in the former Jackson's Corner building.

Zero Degrees – microbrewery and restaurant in one.

The Rising Sun – a new gastropub with great garden.

Good Old Days – "The Hong Kong expats of Reading have a Cantonese treasure house right on their doorstep" (The Guardian).

Hungry for more?



SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP

Shopping in Reading is vast and varied, from its brand-packed high street and renowned department stores to award-winning town centre shopping centres and varied mix of independents.

Areas to shop in Reading are split between easily walkable town centre shopping, retail outlets just beyond the town centre and the independent shops of Caversham. **The Oracle Shopping Centre, Broad Street Mall, John Lewis, M&S, Primark and Harris Arcade** are all in the town centre within 500 metres of each other. Pedestrianised Broad Street and its spur streets are home to much of the retail sector with lots of cafes and eateries dotted in between.

Looking for independents? Check out the shops in the Harris Arcade or the streets off Broad Street such as Union Street or Chain Street as well as Caversham, just across the river.



An A-Z of shopping in Reading

Apple – the tech brand has a large store in the Oracle.

Bread – try the amazing sourdough, sandwiches and cakes at Rise Bakehouse.

Comics – Crunch Comics is a specialist shop in Harris Arcade.

Deli – try Mama's Way or Madoo on Bridge Street for Italian specialities.

Electricals – John Lewis is in the middle of Broad Street with phones, music, TVs and much more.

Fair trade – the RISC world shop on London Street has fair trade and ethically sourced gifts and supplies.

Games – Eclectic Games is an independent games store for all your board games.

Hats – Reading's very own milliner, Adrienne Henry, is in Harris Arcade.



Independents – Flamingo Vintage (town centre) and Nood Stores (Caversham).

Jeweller – Jacob's independent jeweller has been in Reading for over 75 years.

Kiko Milano – cosmetics in The Oracle.

Luggage – the Bag Shop has a wide range of travel bags and accessories.

Men's fashion – Simon Dowling is a made-to-measure men's tailor.

Next – two floors of fashion inside the Oracle.

Oracle – Reading's biggest shopping mall is in the heart of the town centre and has 80 stores.

Post Office – upstairs at TG Jones on Broad Street.

Quirky presents – Flying Tiger.

Records – they're back in fashion – check out Sound Machine in Harris Arcade and Pop Classics in Caversham.

Sofas – Beadle Crome Interiors are a high-end furnishings store.

Toys – The Entertainer and Toys R Us (upstairs TG Jones) are both on Broad Street.

Unusual presents – try Reading Museum or The MERL museum shops for Reading-themed presents.

Value – Miniso offers good value gifts.

Waterstones – Reading's bookstore is in an historic chapel building on Broad Street.

Xylophones – Hickies Music Store has a wide range of musical instruments and sheet music.

Yours – plus size clothing for sizes 16–36.

Zara – the Spanish fashion chain is laid out over three floors in the Oracle.

**Find your next
favourite
buy**



READING

whatsonreading.com

What's On Reading is the ultimate listings guide for all things arts, culture and heritage in Reading - over 250 venues and organisations listing events, classes and activities all over town.



- Art & Exhibitions
- Cabaret & Variety
- Children
- Classical
- Comedy
- Community & Networking
- Dance
- DJ & Clubbing
- Family-Friendly
- Festivals & Special Events
- Film
- Food & Drink

- History & Heritage
- Interactive & Games
- LGBTQ+
- Music
- Natural Heritage
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- Teens & Young Adults
- Theatre
- Tours & Walks

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@RDGWHATSON

Photo credits: Reading Arts | Reading Rep Theatre/Harry Elliston/Muse Creative | Heavy Pop | Stand & Deliver Comedy | Jelly

WHAT'S ON?

The main event

Pancake Race 17 February	Chinese New Year Parade 1 March	Reading Half Marathon 22 March	Glow Lantern Parade Valentine's Day
Stagecraft Beer Festival 24 - 25 April	Reading Indie Comedy Festival May	Are You Listening Festival 8 - 9 May	Reading Food Festival 9 - 10 May
Reading Children's Festival 9 - 31 May	University of Reading Special Centenary Community Festival 16 - 17 May	Reading Amateur Regatta June	East Reading Festival June
Reading Town Regatta June	Thames Valley Park Regatta June	Whiteknights Studio Trail June	Water Fest 27 June
Bastille Day 11 - 12 July	Continental Market 9 - 12 July	Carnival of the World 8 August	Armed Forces Day 28 June
Reading Festival 27 - 30 August	Reading Pride 29 August (tbc)	Heritage Open Days 11 - 20 September	Reading Mela August
Vegan Festival 19 September	Diwali Parade October	Remembrance Sunday 8 November (Armistice Day - 11 November)	Christmas in Reading from mid November

*dates refer to 2026

SLEEP WELL!

Reading has the largest selection of hotels and serviced apartments in the region with over 2,500 bedrooms. Choose between the town centre close to the station or south of the centre but close to the University, football club and main roads.

Town centre



Penta Reading – style and comfort in the town centre with great games in the bar.



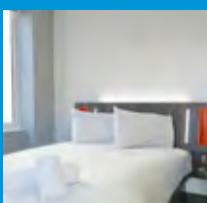
Novotel Reading – for business or leisure in the heart of Reading.



Ibis Reading Centre – close to everything from shopping to the station and nights out.



Market House – bar, boutique hotel and event space.



Easy Hotel – smart budget option close to river and town centre.



Malmaison Reading – stylish hotel in the original Brunel railway hotel.



Roseate Reading Hotel – Reading's 5-star boutique hotel in the Abbey Quarter.



Hotel 1843 – historic hotel in Reading with dining, bar and private event spaces.



Premier Inn Reading – ideally located opposite the Oracle shopping centre.



Village Hotel – new opening on the banks of the Thames.

South of the town centre



Hilton Reading – handy for film studios, University and the football stadium with spa/pool.



Holiday Inn Reading South – 2 minutes from M4 J11, 10 minutes from town centre, on-site parking.



Crowne Plaza Reading – fully refurbished 4 Silver Star 2 AA Rosette luxury.



De Vere Wokefield Estate – Classic country manor house with lovely grounds and own golf course.



Venue Reading – premium ensuite halls for group bookings during University of Reading vacation (July – September).

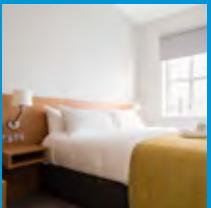
Serviced apartments



House of Fisher – town centre aparthotels for short and long stays.



Celador Apartments – high-quality serviced apartments in Reading town centre.



Premier Suites – modern town centre serviced apartments for leisure or business stays.

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READING FOR GROUPS

Reading is a great destination for groups thanks to easy access, convenient coach parking, group-friendly attractions and hotels that cater for that market.

A 2-day itinerary...

First stop is **Reading Museum** for a tour of Britain's Bayeux Tapestry. The Victorian replica was stitched by a group of ladies in the 1880s and is identical in almost every aspect to the original. You could also tag on a visit to **Jane Austen's schoolroom** and a short tour of **Reading's Abbey Quarter**, which includes the **Abbey Ruins**, the burial place of King Henry I.



Partner museum, the **Museum of English Rural Life** offers groups visits to its galleries dedicated to the history of food, farming and the countryside. Special mention – the Ladybird Collection of children's books.

Thames River Cruise offer private and scheduled cruises on the Thames from Reading. Book their 90 minute circular cruise to Mapledurham or the Afternoon Cream Tea cruise.



Bill's restaurant in the town centre can cater for groups of up to 56.

The unique dining theatre, the **Mill at Sonning**, offers a wonderful two-course meal ahead of a performance in their intimate theatre.

Reading is a very walkable town. **Walk Reading** and **Terry's Reading Walkabouts** offer themed walks of the town centre. Or book a Reading **Museum Abbey Quarter tour**.



Stay at...

Holiday Inn Reading South – lots of room for groups and coach parking on site. Well located for exploring the area.

Penta Hotel – central location with coach drop-off. Coach parking just 10 minutes away.

Hilton Reading – handy for M4, Shinfield Studios, Reading FC and the University.

Novotel Reading – town centre hotel close to station, shopping and entertainment. Coach drop off. Parking 10 minutes away.

Coach parking

Coach drop off/pick up on Valpy Street next to Reading Museum in the town centre.

Day and overnight coach parking at Rivermead Leisure Centre (10-minute walk).

Holiday Inn Reading South (resident and non-resident groups).

Bring your group here



202 bedrooms with air-conditioning

220 on-site parking spaces

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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE PENTA

PENTAHOTEL READING

One of the hippest hotels in Reading, our Pentahotel sits at the heart of Berkshire's Royal heritage surrounded by castles, churches and outstanding natural beauty. Pentahotel Reading is a 206-bedroom, six floor concept designed with style and comfort in mind. At the heart is the iconic Pentalounge: part bar, part restaurant and part chill-out area, it's an ideal place to unwind after a long day or get together to plan your next adventure.

PENTAHOTEL READING

Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7RH, UK
T: +44 1189586222 info.reading@pentahotels.com

**PENTA
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READING**

BEYOND READING

Reading is located at the heart of beautiful Berkshire, surrounded by rolling countryside and quaint villages with plenty to interest the visitor. We're also just a short distance to Windsor, Newbury and other Berkshire towns, as well as Ascot Racecourse, Legoland and Highclere Castle.

The National Trust has three properties within easy striking distance of Reading at **Basildon Park**, the **Vyne and Grey's Court**. Head to Twyford to take a tour of the **Stanlake Park Wine Estate** or Henley way for the **Henley Gin Distillery**.

Silchester Roman City Walls and Amphitheatre and **Wellington Country Park** are close by to the south of Reading, while **Didcot Railway Centre** is a great day out for young and old just a couple of stops west up the railway line. **Dinton Pastures** is a 350-acre country park, situated around lakes in the heart of neighbouring Wokingham.



A leading country house hotel and venue in Berkshire

De Vere Wokefield Estate, set in 250 acres of Berkshire parkland, is a leading 376-bedroom hotel and events venue.

Whether you choose to stay at Wokefield Place, or the Mansion House, you'll find attentive service recognised by Tripadvisor and its Travellers' Choice certificate for two years running.

Outside, you'll find an 18-hole PGA-standard golf course, tennis courts, all-weather driving range and outside gym. The newly refurbished Technogym and indoor pool offers leisure guests the ideal place to relax and invigorate.

There's no shortage of dining options either, with The View serving delicious Italian-inspired cuisine, Benedict's Bar for classic bar favourites and 1560 for indulgent afternoon tea.

Located just minutes from J11 of the M4 and a short taxi ride from Reading train station, escape to the country with ease.

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DE VERE

www.devere.co.uk



Reading is part of the **Great West Way** national touring route which runs from west London to Bristol. Reading is a great base for exploring the area and some of the quaint villages such as Goring, Streatley and Wargrave along the Way. They are all easily reached by train from Reading.

Gateway to London

Save money by staying in Reading and be in London in half an hour.

London is only 23 minutes on the train from Reading with **GWR** services. And trains are very frequent, so you'll likely not have long to wait at all, but please check your journey at GWR.com before you travel. Also, don't forget that contactless payments are now accepted from Reading and into Central London, so you can just tap on and off using a debit or credit card. You'll arrive at London Paddington Station, just a few tube stops or a 10-minute bus ride from Oxford Street and the West End.



Or you could take the Elizabeth Line stopping service direct to Central London. This is London's newest tube line and Reading is the final station to the west. You can travel direct to London's Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon, Liverpool Street or Canary Wharf without changing trains.

Staying in Reading will save you lots of money too and there are lots of hotels near the station such as the **Novotel, Malmaison, Penta, Roseate, Ibis** and others. You can be in London in no time.



**See what's
down the
road**



GETTING HERE

Reading is one of the best-connected towns in the UK, offering lots of travel options and excellent transport links, whether you're travelling by car, bus, train, coach, bike, on foot – or even on the water!



 **By train** – Reading is just 23 minutes from London on GWR Mainline Services and is often the first stop on many trains coming out of London. There are so many trains you can often just turn up and jump on the first train.

Reading is also on the Elizabeth Line (part of the London transport network), making it an ideal base to visit from the Capital. London residents over 60 with a TFL Freedom Pass can travel to Reading for free on the Elizabeth Line.

Reading is linked to Gatwick, Heathrow, Southampton and Birmingham Airports by train. A new station at Green Park also links Reading to Reading Football Club's stadium and Green Park business park by train.

 **By car** – Reading is just two miles north of the M4 and not far from the M3, M4 and A34 so we are very well linked into the road network. There is plenty of parking in and around Reading, with many multi-storeys right in the town centre. There are also a number of park and rides dotted around the edge of Reading.

 **By coach** – The Rail Air Link from Heathrow is a 40-minute journey from all Heathrow terminals to Reading station. National Express serves Reading from all parts of the country.

GETTING AROUND

Reading is a very walkable town with the station in the centre and the Thames, town centre and attractions within 500m.

 **By Bus** – Reading's award-winning Reading Buses serve every inch of the region, so travelling by bus is a great option for those looking to reduce their carbon footprint. Reading Buses have introduced tap on / tap off so you will never be charged more than the maximum daily fare.

Reading Buses cover all destinations in Reading, including the University, Royal Berkshire Hospital and business parks, as well as all of Reading's residential areas. Bus stops can be found outside the station and on Friar Street and other town centre main arteries.

 **Cycle** – Nowhere in Reading town centre is more than a 30-minute cycle and with plentiful cycle parking, travelling to and around Reading by bicycle makes an ideal sustainable travel option.

 **Walking** – With a fully walkable town centre and miles of Thames Path to enjoy on its doorstep, Reading is a great place for walking, catering for everything from afternoon shopping strolls right through to riverside rambles.

 **Taxi** – You can pick up black cab taxis at both sides of Reading Station at any time of the day or night.

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FIVE MESS ABOUT ON THE RIVER



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