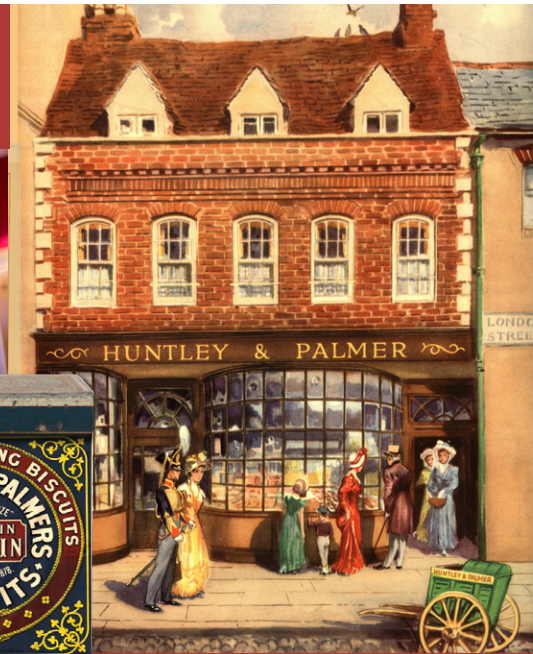


Savour the difference...

Visit Reading in 2022



Reading Biscuit Town – discover the 200 year old story of the largest biscuit manufacturer in the world.



The MERL



Reading Abbey



Thames River Cruises



St James' Way Walk

The 2020s are an exciting time to be visiting Reading. Fresh from 2021's Reading Abbey 900 celebrations, this year will see Reading mark two centuries as 'Biscuit Town'.

BISCUIT TOWN



In 1822, the first shop of what would become the largest biscuit factory in the world, opened in Reading. Huntley & Palmers biscuits were born and over the next 200 years became synonymous with Reading, creating such household names as the Nice biscuit and the Gingernut. This year, get a taste of Reading's baking heritage by delving into the amazing Huntley & Palmers collections at Reading Museum and The MERL, explore the impact of this rich history on Reading and enjoy your own Afternoon Tea, complete with biscuits, of course.



A WORLD OF HERITAGE



The surprising heritage story of Reading starts with Henry I's foundation of Reading Abbey in 1121. Exploring the ruins reveals the story of one of Europe's most important medieval buildings while the Abbey's Gateway, also in the Abbey Quarter, housed Jane Austen's school room. The walls of the neighbouring Victorian Reading Gaol held Oscar Wilde prisoner in the late 19th century and there is more recent heritage in the form of Reading's very own Banksy on the walls of the former prison.

A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND



Reading is a surprisingly green place. Its origins owe much to its location at the confluence of the rivers Thames and Kennet. Thames Rivercruise offer round boat trips and afternoon tea and dining cruises on the Thames. There is lovely walking along the river fronts, a heritage garden on the river banks at Caversham Court Gardens, riverside dining on the Kennet at The Oracle and Thames Lido offers open air swimming, spa treatments and dining by Caversham Lock.



Reading Abbey



Thames River Cruises



Tours2Order

UNIQUE MUSEUMS



Reading's museums will introduce you to a whole new world. Reading Museum boasts the only full-scale replica of the Bayeux Tapestry as well as the Huntley and Palmer Gallery; The MERL tells the story of food, farming and the countryside with interactive galleries, and has a lovely shop and delightful garden; the Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology has a unique collection of pottery while the Cole Museum of Zoology has just reopened in its new home on the University of Reading's Whiteknights campus.



Reading's very own Banksy



Abbey Gateway



Oscar Wilde



Reading Museum



The MERL

DISCOVER BISCUIT TOWN

May – September 2022

Suggested itinerary

As Reading celebrates 200 years of biscuit history, Museums Partnership Reading is offering groups a chance to explore collections relating to Reading's famous biscuit manufacturer.

1pm – Visit The Museum of English Rural Life (The MERL)

Start your visit at the beautiful Victorian former home of the Palmer family which now houses The MERL. Your Host will show you a new display of gems from the University of Reading's Huntley & Palmer archive, including original packaging, artwork, advertising materials, photographs, recipes and papers relating to the company's rich history (Biscuit Town: 200 years of Huntley and Palmers in Reading, 10 May - 25 September 2022).



2:00pm – Follow the 'Biscuit Crumb Walking Trail' through Reading to discover more of the town's biscuit heritage (30 minutes).

2:30pm – Visit the Huntley & Palmer Gallery at Reading Museum with your own guide

Visit the Huntley & Palmer Gallery at Reading Museum with your Host. The gallery displays almost 300 decorative biscuit tins and includes the earliest surviving film of a British factory. You can also see a biscuit supplied to Captain Scott's ill-fated Antarctic expedition, and the rude 'Kate Greenaway' biscuit tin that embarrassed the biscuit company in 1980!



Add to your visit

- Take Afternoon Tea at the nearby 5-star The Roseate Reading, complete with biscuits inspired by Reading's rich biscuit heritage.
- Book Terry's Walkabouts' special Biscuit Walkabout celebrating the 200th anniversary of Huntley & Palmer biscuits in Reading.
- Have your afternoon tea aboard Thames River Cruise circular cruise on glorious stretch of the Thames through Reading.
- Book your own walking tour of Reading with Blue Badge Guide Graham Horn (Tours2Order).
- Book a guided tour of Reading's Abbey Ruins through Reading Museum.



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BE A MODERN-DAY PILGRIM



A new walking route for modern day pilgrims has been waymarked for 2022. Reading is the departure point for the St James' Way, a long-distance walking route which links Reading to the world-renowned Camino de Santiago which concludes in north-west Spain. Before setting off from Reading towards the south coast (and maybe onto Spain), pilgrims and walkers can spend a day exploring Reading's own pilgrim heritage, before getting a good night's sleep ahead of their journey.



Pilgrim map



St James' Way passport

SHOP TIL YOU DROP



Reading is an incredible place to shop with a massive variety of retailers from large high street chains to the town's beloved independents. With two big shopping centres in the heart of the town centre – The Oracle and Broad Street Mall – everything is within a short walking distance.



Broad Street Shopping

STAY A WHILE



Reading has the widest array of accommodation in the area, from 5-star luxury at the The Roseate Reading to mid-range options like the Novotel Reading as well as budget options. Many of Reading's hotels are in the town centre offering easy access to Reading's attractions, as well as the region's best shopping, centred around the pedestrianised central retail district.

Reading is one of the best-connected towns in the UK. Easy to get to and easy to get around.

Coach parking

Coach parking can be booked in advance at Reading Buses depot on Great Knollys Street, RG1 7HH by calling 0118 959 4000. Coach drop off/pick up is available in the town centre next to Reading Museum on Valpy Street. The MERL can also provide drop off and parking at the University of Reading.

By road

Reading is on the M4 and is served by junctions 10-12. The centre is two miles north of junction 11.

By rail

Reading is linked north, south, east and west by rail. GWR operate the mainline service between London and the west with Reading 22 minutes first stop on fast trains from London. The station is in the town centre and Reading's attractions are a matter of minutes' walk. Reading will also soon be the western terminus on the new Crossrail Elizabeth Line.

GWR has a substantial group product that gives a 26%+ discount on group of 10 or more travelling and a dedicated team that handle the requests to enable group seating and ease of booking. GWR have also developed a GWR Great West Way Discoverer Pass.

Southwest Trains operate services to the south and CrossCountry Trains operate services between the south coast and the Midlands/North.

livingreading.co.uk/traveltrade

Contact information

- Reading Museum
readingmuseum.org.uk • 0118 937 3400
- [The MERL \(Museum of English Rural Life\)](http://The MERL (Museum of English Rural Life))
merl.reading.ac.uk • 0118 378 8660
Email: merlevents@reading.ac.uk
- Thames River Cruise
thamesrivercruise.co.uk • 0118 948 1088
- The Roseate Reading Afternoon Tea
roseatehotels.com • 0118 952 7770
- Tours 2 Order Contact Graham Horn
tours2order.com • 07827 715353
- Terry's Reading Walkabouts
facebook.com/terrysreadingwalkabouts
07505 351517
- Abbey Ruins Tours/ Abbey Gateway visits
readingmuseum.org.uk • 0118 937 3400
- Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology
collections.reading.ac.uk/ure-museum
- Cole Museum of Zoology
collections.reading.ac.uk/ure-museum
- St James Way / Reading Modern-day Pilgrims
collections.reading.ac.uk/ure-museum
- Thames Lido
thameslido.com
- Caversham Court Gardens
home.fccg.org.uk
- Reading UK
livingreading.co.uk/traveltrade • 07860 779166

Reading is a great base for exploring the region; the heart of the Great West Way, a multi-modal route from London to Bristol, which can be travelled by bike, road, rail, canal or on foot, making it the first of its kind.



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