



BLOSSOM TRAIL

2025



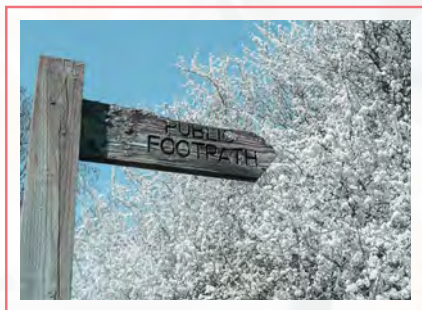
A delightful journey
throughout the Vale of Evesham

www.valeandspa.co.uk/blossom

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ABOUT THE BLOSSOM TRAIL

For over four decades the Vale of Evesham Blossom Trail has been recognised as one of the top 'wonders of spring' and can be experienced on foot, by bike, car or coach.



The term blossom is given to a cluster of flowers that bloom on any plant – this can include magnolia, hawthorn, blackthorn and ornamental cherry.

Blossom trees, however, tend to be associated with the fruiting (*Prunus* genus) varieties – these include cherries, plums, apples, pears, peaches and crab-apples.

The blossom usually appears between mid-March and mid-May with plum and apple blossom being the most common sight along the Blossom Trail. The white plum and damson blossom are the first to spring in this natural work of art, with the white pear and the pink apple blossom following later depending on the weather.

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Blossom provides pollen to pollinators such as bees who initiate the cross pollination necessary for the trees to reproduce by producing fruit. The colour of the blossom that can be seen throughout the Vale of Evesham range from the delicate white of pear, plum, orange, some cherry and most almonds; to the variable degrees of pink from apple, peach and cherry.





Blossom throughout the Vale of Evesham has been renowned for decades and so much has changed since 1983 when the Blossom Trail was officially launched with the route having been extended many times to incorporate not only the market towns of Pershore and Evesham, the Cotswold village of Broadway but many other delightfully picturesque villages and hamlets in the area. Additional orchards having been planted throughout the area – especially during 2023 to celebrate the Trail’s 40th anniversary.

The Vale of Evesham has been famous for its fruit and vegetable growing since medieval times and is known to be some of the most productive horticultural land in the country. For a few weeks in spring the landscape along the 55-mile AA signposted Blossom Trail route is at its best, with glimpses of blossom trees and orchards in shades of pink and white.

The Spring Blossom Trail can be enjoyed in many ways – as an adventure in your own time or as a fun-filled organised day out. To enhance your experience, this guide focuses on the horticultural highlights the area has to offer including award - winning parks, garden centres, nurseries and farm shops (many with cafés) with some embracing the Trail by producing “blossom themed” food and drink.



To know where the blossom is at it’s best, check out the website for the latest updates – www.valeandspa.co.uk/blossom



HISTORY OF THE BLOSSOM TRAIL

The orchards of the Vale of Evesham are a vital part of its history and identity. The blossom trees we see today are a reminder of the fields of fruit and vegetables that once covered the area in the eighth century when much of the land was owned by Evesham Abbey. The monks from the Abbey were skilled in growing fruit and vegetables, including orchard fruit.

In the late 19th century, fruit growing really expanded. The fertile soil supported a thriving market gardening industry, the growth of railways allowed crops to be sent far and wide, and the development of tenants' rights through 'the Evesham Custom' encouraged growers to plant long-term crops, including fruit trees.

The sloping clay hillsides were particularly good for plums and with the discovery of the famous Pershore Yellow Egg plum and Purple Pershore plum, the number of orchards grew. Soon, the land was covered in smallholdings, each with an orchard, and the area became famous for fruit growing.

Plum growing boomed during the First and Second World Wars when local jam and pulping factories turned the plums into food for soldiers abroad and civilians at home and the Vale grew and harvested fruit and vegetables for the nation.

By the 1970s, imported fruit caused the orchards to decline and by the end of the century, over three-quarters of the Vale's orchards had been lost.

However, recently, we've realised that the benefits of the orchards extend far beyond economics. Their contribution as wildlife habitats, their role in the landscape, and their place in the identity of the Vale are invaluable.

New orchards are now being planted to bring back the blossom and celebrate our local heritage.

We encourage you to do the same – check out the planting tips and guidance on page 14 for details.





1983

The 8-mile Vale of Evesham Blossom Trail was created with its main aim being to capitalise on the natural beauty and horticultural fame of the Vale of Evesham.

80'S & 90'S

However, during the late 1980s and early 90s it became apparent the traditional orchards were diminishing.

1993

To retain the viability of the Trail, an extensive survey was carried out to assess the opportunities available to extend it to 20 miles long. This allowed us to not only include new orchards but also to include the town of Evesham and the delightful villages in the Vale.

2000

Another survey was undertaken and this time it was decided to extend the route further to 40 miles to include Pershore and the surrounding area. This provided visitors greater access than ever before to experience more of what the area has to offer.

2001

Sadly, the Blossom Trail and the rest of the country was affected by the disastrous outbreak of Foot and Mouth causing the launch of the 40-mile route to be postponed.

2002

The new route was promoted and continued to attract thousands of visitors.

2008

To celebrate its Silver Jubilee, the Blossom Trail was extended once again to 55 miles – this time to include apple orchards and the charming village of Broadway.

2023

40th Anniversary of the Blossom Trail

PRESENT

Today the Blossom Trail takes in the towns of Evesham, Pershore and many villages including Broadway and the Lenches. With many 'branch offs' along the trail incorporating Broadway Tower and Croome there is now something for everyone.

THE BLOSSOM

APPLE

The blossom of apple is usually tinged with pink and an apple orchard in May is surely the most beautiful site in the farmed landscape. Apples are pollinated by all sorts of insects including long-horn beetles, malachite beetles, butterflies and solitary bees.



BLACKTHORN

A common shrub turning hedgerows white in early spring. The abundant blossom attracts many pollinators including hoverflies and bumblebees.

CHERRY PLUM

This is typically the first fruit blossom of the year. Often planted as hedgerow shrubs or as small trees on orchards. An important early nectar source for honeybees which will have used up their stored honey over winter.





DAMSON

The delicate blossom is not such a common sight in the vale nowadays, being mostly restricted to hedgerows and along water courses. All the old damson trees in the Vale are infected by a fungus *Taphrina insitiae* which causes twiggy growths known as Witches' Brooms.

PEAR

Large old pear trees can be seen along roadsides and in hedgerows dotted through the Vale. The majority of these big trees produce small pears used for making perry. The bark of a pear tree divides into small rectangular sections making it quite distinctive.



PLUM

The pure white plum blossom is on show for a very short period in April and attracts an assortment of pollinators including, hoverflies, dagger-flies, bee-flies and small beetles. Plum orchards once dominated the landscape around the Vale but only a few of these special places now remain.



BIG BLOOMIN' BLOSSOM

Keep a look out for this spring's best 'Insta Opportunity'

To shout about the area's Blossom Trail, don't be surprised if you do a double-take when passing our big blossom letters.

They'll be travelling around the Blossom Trail over the spring and provide a great chance to capture a unique photo for your Instagram or Facebook accounts.

Be sure to tag any photo with **#BlossomTrail** to help us get the word around about the beautiful spectacle on our doorstep.

To find out where the blossom letters will be throughout the spring, please visit

www.valeandspa.co.uk/blossom



BUSINESSES OF INTEREST

Witnessed the beautiful blossom?

Been inspired to create your own blooming haven?

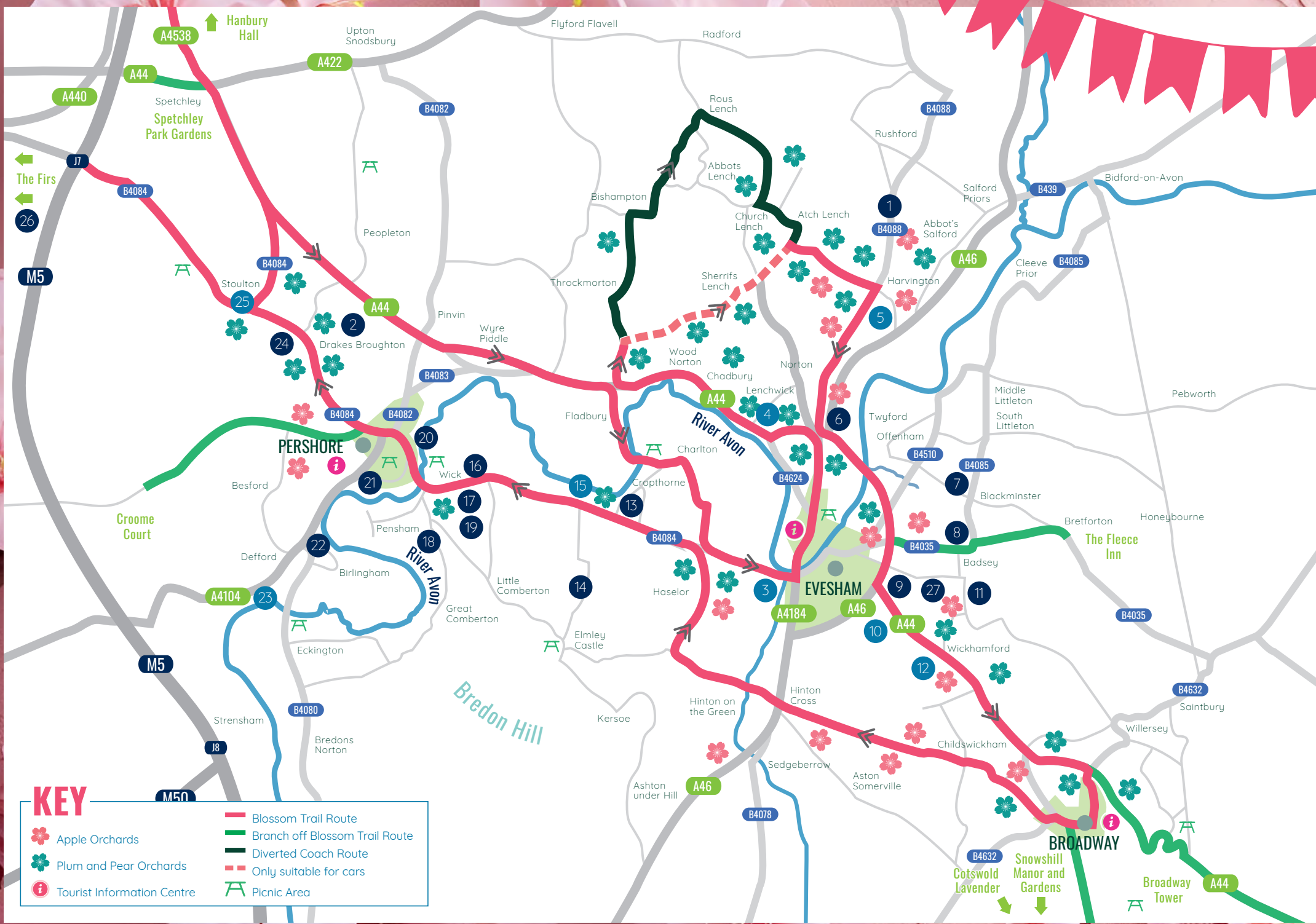
With numerous garden centres, nurseries and other points of floral interest along the route, make a day of it during your travels. If you need some refreshments before/during/after your shopping, check out the characterful farm shops. Many sell the local produce that is created from the fruit trees along the Blossom Trail.

GARDEN CENTRES & NURSERIES









- 1 **Golls Nurseries**
www.gollsnurseries.com
- 2 **Walcot Organic Nursery**
www.walcotnursery.co.uk
- 6 **Blue Diamond @ The Valley**
www.bluediamond.gg/evesham-garden-centre
- 7 **Station Garden Nurseries**
f Station Garden Nurseries
- 8 **Badsey Garden Centre**
www.valegardens.co.uk
- 9 **Broadway Road Nurseries**
www.broadwayroadnurseries.com
- 10 **Castle Nurseries**
f castlefarmshop
- 11 **Cotswold Garden Flowers**
www.cotswoldgardenflowers.co.uk
- 13 **W.J Rowlings Nurseries**
www.wjrowlings.com
- 14 **Wayside Nurseries**
f Wayside Nurseries
- 16 **The Real Flower Confetti Fields**
www.confettidirect.co.uk/flowerfields
- 17 **Pershore Garden Centre**
www.pershoregardencentre.co.uk
- 18 **Four Acres Nursery**
f Four Acres Nursery
- 19 **Hayloft Nurseries**
www.hayloft.co.uk
- 20 **The Secret Garden Centre**
www.brownshomehardware.co.uk
- 21 **Three Springs Garden Nursery**
f Three Springs Nursery
- 22 **Birlingham Nurseries**
01386 750668 / 07973 500921
- 24 **Mill Lane Nursery**
www.milllanenursery.co.uk
- 26 **St Peters Garden Centre**
www.stpetersgardencentre.co.uk
- 27 **Hutchings & Son Tree Nursery**
www.hutchingsandson.co.uk

FARM SHOPS

- 3 **The New Hampton Farm Shop**
www.hamptonfarmshop.com
- 4 **Chadbury Farm Shop and Café**
www.chadburyfarmshopandcafe.co.uk
- 5 **Ellenden Farm Shop and Café**
www.ellendenfarmshop.co.uk
- 10 **Castle Nurseries Farm Shop**
f castlefarmshop
- 12 **Wayside Farm Shop**
www.waysidefarmshop.com
- 15 **Clive's Of Crophorne**
www.clivesofcrophorne.co.uk
- 23 **Revills Farm Shop**
www.revillsfarmshop.co.uk
- 25 **Stoulton Farm Shop**
01905 840995



KEY

-  Apple Orchards
-  Plum and Pear Orchards
-  Tourist Information Centre
-  Blossom Trail Route
-  Branch off Blossom Trail Route
-  Diverted Coach Route
-  Only suitable for cars
-  Picnic Area

GETTING AROUND THE TRAIL

There are many ways to get around the trail on a gorgeous spring day.

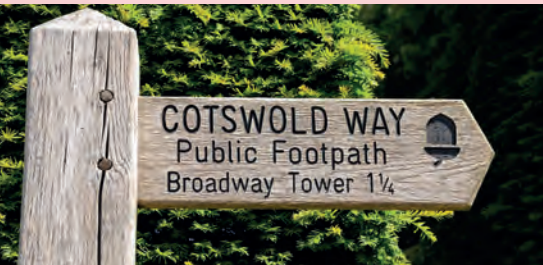
WALKING

If you would like to enjoy the wonderful countryside by foot, then Worcestershire's Vale and Spa makes an ideal location. By offering a range of routes, from long, short, easy or difficult, there is something that allows everyone the opportunity to enjoy the views.



The walking routes are easily accessible and can be located all around the trail - marked by a black walking sign. From here, you can follow the arrows and signs that will take you over stiles, along bridleways and through stunning blossom orchards filled with colour.

For more information visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/walking



Along the way you'll cross many other trails which you could find yourself exploring, including:

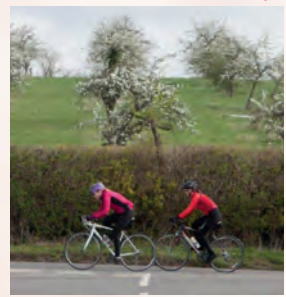
- The Wychavon Way
- The Shakespeare's Avon Way
- The Millennium Way
- The Cotswold Way

CYCLING

Cycling around the Blossom Trail couldn't be easier. The National Cycle Route 442 is perfectly situated to enjoy the blossom – the route travels from Worcester to Evesham via Pershore, taking you through quiet villages and country lanes. It really is the best way to get close to nature.

To help you get around the route, there are many blue Spring Blossom Trail signs to look out for on junctions. To assist, a GPX file of the route is available to download from our website -

www.valeandspa.co.uk/cycling



GUIDED TOURS

One of the best ways to explore the Blossom Trail is on a coach tour and having your own tour guide onboard is the perfect complement to your day as they will share fascinating historical and entertaining facts about the blossom and the area. The Springtime in the Vale Coach tour is arranged by Royal Motorways and this year will take place on Wednesday 9 April 2025. Visit www.royalmotorways.co.uk for more information and to book your seat.

If you would like to book a tour guide for either a coach tour of the Blossom Trail or a walking tour of historic Evesham, contact Helen Piper on 01386 765972 or email helen.piper@normandygite.org.uk



BY CAR

Travelling the Blossom Trail by car provides the opportunity to visit the many pubs, restaurants, cafés and farm shops within some of the most picturesque villages in the county. Serving fresh local produce, local beverages (including a specially created Blossom cider at Wayside Farm Shop) not to mention delicious blossom cream teas, these many and varied establishments offer gastronomic delights in relaxing and beautiful surroundings - you will definitely be spoilt for choice.

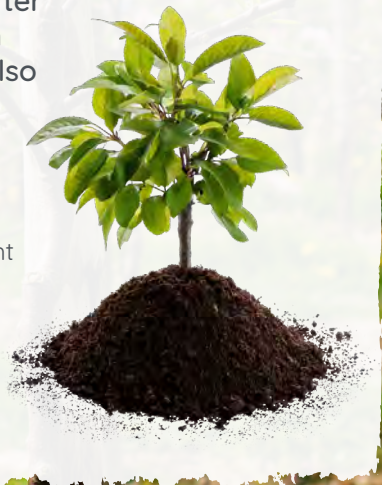


PLANTING AND CARING

WHY PLANT A FRUIT TREE?

Fruit trees are easy to care for and after a bit of patience, will provide you with beautiful blossom and fruit. They're also great for pollinating insects and help to store carbon so they're good for us and for the planet.

They come in all shapes and sizes, so whether your garden is large or small there will be a right tree for you. A visit to a good garden centre or nursery can help you find the right tree for your space and may also be able to provide you with reliable care instructions to look after your tree. Check out the businesses of interest on page 9 for inspiration.



PLANTING AND STAKING

Once you've chosen your tree, plant it in the ground or a large pot. Most trees need staking until their roots get established. To do this, place the stake on the side that typically experiences the most wind and tie it loosely to the tree as some movement is good to help roots develop.



PRUNING

After planting, some light pruning will help shape your new tree. For apples and pears, prune in winter and for cherries and plums, prune in spring. Remove any low branches that may obstruct mowing or for single stem trees, cut the top off at a height you want side branches to form, making sure they'll be low enough for easy fruit picking.



GENERAL CARE

Now you need to wait, making sure your tree is protected from predators such as rabbits and deer. Water it well in the summer and mulch around it. While you are waiting, plant a cheerful range of bulbs around your tree so that you have some bright, spring colour to enjoy before your tree crops and once you've tasted your own home-grown fruit, you'll find that planting a fruit tree is one of the most rewarding things you can do in a garden!



EXPLORE

BROADWAY

Broadway's unique location makes it the perfect base to visit Worcestershire's Vale & Spa. Home to one of the longest high streets in England, with horse chestnut trees and a mixture of period houses and picturesque honey-coloured Cotswold stone cottages, it is often referred to as "The Show Village of England". A visit to this delightful beauty spot is a MUST.

The village has an interesting artistic heritage which includes well known artists, writers and performing artists such as William Morris, John Singer Sargent, Capability Brown, J. M. Barrie and designer Gordon Russell.

Providing an array of attractions including Broadway Tower, Broadway Museum and Art Gallery and the Gordon Russell Design Museum, this "Jewel of the Cotswolds" is a perfect spot for a relaxing and entertaining short break.



DROITWICH SPA

Droitwich Spa is a town of great charm and offers visitors an abundance of things to do and places to visit. It has been the site of a settled community for over 2,000 years and owes its existence to the natural brine springs that emanate from beds of pure rock salt 200ft below the ground. Its proximity to the M5 and M42 makes it an ideal centre from which to explore the area.

Droitwich Spa's distinctive heritage is celebrated throughout the year, with the St Richard's Canal Festival paying homage to the significance of Richard de Wyche and the Droitwich Barge Canal; whilst Droitwich Spa's most famous commodity, salt, can be experienced at the town's Food & Drink Festival and Saltfest.



Other leisure activities available in and around the town include guided walks, an open-air lido and two award-winning parks. The Droitwich Canal network is a haven for walkers, cyclists and nature lovers. For those who love a retail experience, look no further than the wealth of independent shops and markets that take place on a regular basis.

EVESHAM

At the heart of the horticultural Vale, the historic market town of Evesham is set in the loop of the River Avon where fishing and boating are popular pastimes and also the foundation of admired events in the town; a nationally renowned angling festival, the colourful River Festival, the Battle of Evesham, and the exciting rowing regattas that take place throughout the year.



Evesham is an ideal base to tour Worcestershire's Vale & Spa and is easily accessible from anywhere in the country with its extensive links by road and rail. The site of the bloodiest battle in history (the Battle of Evesham in 1265), the Blossom Trail and the home to the much sought after Vale of Evesham asparagus (which has now gained PGI European protected food name status) are all magnificently depicted in the town's Almonry Museum and Tourist Information Centre.

Shoppers are well catered for in and around the town with a range of independent traders, outdoor markets and with something for all the family - The Valley, a shopping experience with a difference, located off the A46.

PERSHORE

Pershore is a small but thriving, picturesque Georgian market town situated on the banks of Shakespeare's River Avon. Renowned for its association with the horticultural Vale of Evesham and its famous Plum Festival, the town is also legendary for its beautiful 13th century Norman Abbey that sits majestically within the award-winning Abbey Park.

Pershore will entice you back time after time with its wealth of unique independent shops, quality restaurants, pubs and cafés serving up locally sourced produce. Events for all the family take place in the town throughout the year with a celebration of food, music and community fun to name just a few. Number 8 Community Arts Centre is the hub of the town as far as entertainment and the arts are concerned, and it's only a short drive to visit Tiddesley Wood and National Trust's Croome just out of the town.



EXPLORE

PARKS

Whilst enjoying your journey around the Blossom Trail, consider visiting one of the many award-winning parks or picnic areas. Most are set alongside tranquil waterways resulting in nature proudly presenting its greatest assets.

The Green Flag parks within the town centres are bursting with colour when in full bloom and offer a wonderful setting to also entertain children or simply relax in idyllic surroundings. For more information on all the parks and their facilities, including those not on the trail, visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/parks

Abbey Park, Pershore



Highlights include:

- Wetland area and boardwalk
- Community Orchard
- Children's play area, water play and skatepark
- Historic Abbey
- Avenue of mature trees

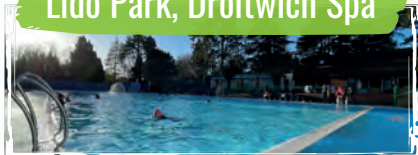
Abbey Park, Evesham



Highlights include:

- Ornamental herbaceous borders, shrub planting
- Historic Bell Tower
- Illuminated avenue of lime trees along the river
- Children's play area, water play and skatepark

Lido Park, Droitwich Spa



Highlights include:

- Fishing at Herriott's pool
- Tree carving
- Home to the Lido
- Sport courts
- Children's wet and dry play areas

Vines Park, Droitwich Spa



Highlights include:

- Canal-side picnic areas
- Children's play area
- Salt history mosaic
- Wych barge seating area
- St Richard's statue

DISCOVER

PICNIC AREAS

There are numerous picnic spots dotted along the Blossom Trail that provide a great opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the towns. These are marked on the route map and include:



Eckington Wharf

On the bank of the River Avon, delights awaiting you include narrowboats, graceful swans, willow trees and a medieval sandstone bridge.

Elmley Castle

Sitting at the foot of Bredon Hill, listen for the calming sound of the babbling brook and birdsong from the adjoining wildlife-rich wood.

Jubilee Bridge

A lovely quiet little spot on the River Avon near Fladbury. Consider taking a walk upriver towards the delightful Fladbury Mill.

Fish Hill

You will find wildflowers, colourful woods and Cotswold landscapes here. It is an old quarry, though only the most observant would guess that.

Pershore Bridges

Based around the beautiful medieval bridge, the River Avon is teeming with wildlife, boats, anglers, walkers and picnickers enjoying the outlook.



WATERWAYS

The river and canal don't only provide a beautiful setting to witness the blossom but also presents the opportunity for a wealth of activities to be enjoyed.

With numerous waterside pubs, cafés and restaurants, they are a haven for walkers and cyclists as the generally level footing provides a comfortable journey.

Consider a boat trip for a more relaxing exploration of the river or canal, whereas the adventurous can try canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddleboarding and more.



To find out everything that you can do on water, visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/waterways

Can you imagine spring without blossom?



For generations the Vale of Evesham has been synonymous with blossom. The Norton and Lenchwick area near Evesham had probably the largest block of plums in Britain, but sadly this treasured landscape is under threat. Worcestershire has lost 85% of its orchards since the 1950s and the majority of plum orchards have now gone from the Vale along with the beauty, cultural heritage and wildlife that thrived here.

Vale Landscape Heritage Trust have been working in partnership with Severn Waste Services (an FCC company) since 2004 to save a few of these very special places. Help us continue our work by supporting Vale Landscape Heritage Trust through a regular donation.



Find out more:
www.valetrust.weebly.com/become-a-friend
 www.facebook.com/valetrust