

Secret Cottage – Magnificent old door in Burford

Secret Cottage recently passed this magnificent old door whilst on one of our Cotswold Day tours in Burford. The door is very ancient and has undergone restoration over the years, rather than being replaced. It's just one of the gems to be found in this sleepy town that is often referred to as 'The gateway to the Cotswolds.'

The name Burford is said to mean a defended settlement by a ford. This town is recommended by Secret Cottage, tourists come here on holiday because it's wealth of heritage and because it's like stepping back in time.

Burford is about 20 miles west of Oxford on the River Windrush and is surrounded by gentle rolling hills. It's one of England's prettiest small medieval towns with around 1000 residents. Fortunately Burford is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which means it is protected.

Burford has a gently sloping broad main High Street which seems to have changed little over time. Full of enticing alleyways and courtyards the town transports you back in time. You can find local arts, antiques, crafts and gifts. You'll even find the oldest chemist shop in the country!

Burford began as an agricultural village because it's surrounded by perfect sheep rearing countryside and over time changed to a market town where people could trade everything from wool to weaving to saddles and local stone. The wool trade made Burford one of the four wealthiest towns in the country; the funds of which were used to build one of the largest Cotswold 'wool churches' – St. John the Baptist. Work began on the building in 1175 and over the past 800 years the building has been added to, altered and expanded. It's now a

stunning piece of architecture that looks more like a cathedral than a church.

The Oxfordshire Cotswolds are full of beautiful villages such as Great Tew which is totally unique, because there aren't any new buildings. The pub in village is absolutely fantastic and we recommend booking well in advance.

Britain is full of hidden gems and Great Tew and Burford rank very high on the list. We'll talk about that another day, for now there are scones to bake in the AGA!