
Bath Guide



Not surprisingly Bath is warm, bubbly and soothing. 'Taking the waters' at Bath means diving into not just the UK's only natural thermal spa, but experiencing a Jane Austen dream of smocks, bonnets and Mrs. Beveridge's Maggot (it's a type of minuet, if you must know). If you still haven't come to your senses about the wonder of Bath, the fine dining and multifarious shops will soon help you lose your prejudices with little persuasion (oh stop it – it's that sort of town).

Transport

Trains depart from London Paddington to Bath Spa every half an hour. The journey takes approximately one hour and 25 minutes.

The must sees

Bath is dominated by not one but two important baths: the historic Roman baths and the Thermae Bath Spa, and both are unmissable. Hit the Roman Baths first, a stunning complex that includes ancient pools, changing rooms, caldariums (hot tubs) and frigidariums (the opposite) within a Victorian superstructure. The apple green waters can't be swum in safely, but you can taste a version of the spa water in the Pump Room restaurant after the tour (with 43 minerals, it's an odd tipple). After lunch take a dip at the Thermae Bath Spa at the Cross Bath or the New Royal Bath, which has a rooftop pool with views across the caramel rooftops.



Local delicacies

For such a small town Bath has a number of unique delicacies. First is the Sally Lunn bun, a brioche type snack created by Huguenot baker Sally, and best sampled at Sally Lunn House, one of the oldest abodes in town. These local treats are not to be confused with Bath Buns, which are a sweeter variation and can be found at the daily markets. You'll also find Bath Olivers here, a hard, dry biscuit invented by Bath physician William Oliver around 1750 as a healthy nibble. Since the 1930s however a chocolate covered variation has become equally popular. For Michelin star indulgence don't miss The Park Restaurant at the Lucknam Park Hotel and Spa: herbs from the garden adorn local produce in a setting so serene it's almost fictional.



Why I love

"It's a truth universally acknowledged that any girl handed a copy of *Pride and Prejudice* at the age of 14 will love Bath: and that's me. I was obsessed with Jane Austen and Bath is full of 'familiar' sights, from the Assembly Rooms where the dances were held, to the fabulous Jane Austen Centre and the Royal Crescent. Of course every true fan knows that Jane didn't like Bath, but I think she was kidding herself. After all, Elizabeth didn't fancy Darcy at first!" Kate, Cabin Crew.



All play and no work

Abbey Ales have been brewed in Bath for more than 40 years, so it's important to try this in appropriately historic surrounds. The Star Inn (a licensed house since 1760), proudly serves the beer, along with 'no games machines, no music, no pool table and no cordon bleu food'. Bath Ales are somewhat younger (established 1995 AD) and can be sampled across town at cute pubs like The Hare on the Hill.



A great place to watch the world go by

Bath is best seen from above and Coffee at Camden offers a winning combination of stunning views and yummy cupcakes. Five minutes from the centre of town, the café also holds cupcake classes for grown ups and cupcake parties for smaller fry. Take a walk further up the steep hill and visit Perfect View, arguably the best address in Bath where locals have kindly provided benches outside for climbers to rest their feet.

