

Midsomer Murders Trail around the River Thames for groups



Pics: DCI Tom Barnaby and DS Ben Jones, Graham Horn (Tours2Order) and blue badge guides with Joyce Barnaby, Hobbs of Henley Cruise outside Henley Business School, The Argyll.

DCI Barnaby appears on television screens around the world, solving some bizarre murders, set in the midst of some of England's most beautiful and tranquil countryside. You can explore the real-life Midsomer Murders locations in towns and villages along the Thames.

DAY 1 Henley on Thames

Start in **Henley** with a one-hour walking tour. Henley often stands in for Causton, the HQ of Inspector Barnaby and has some iconic filming locations that lovers of the show will be sure to recognise during the walking tour, as well as learning a little about the history of this quintessential English market town. **The Argyll Pub**, where Barnaby & Jones meet up in 'Last Year's Model', has produced a guest Midsomer ale, stop off and pull a pint. Close by is, **Gabriel Machin**, a butcher's shop since 1861, renowned for the quality of its produce and featured in Rick Stein's Food Heroes programme. Retaining the façade it has had for over 60 years, it was the ideal location to become Anton Thorneycroft's butcher in The Magician's Nephew.

Then head down to the river passing Henley's historic bridge which dates from 1786, connecting the counties of Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Look out for the keystones representing the mythical figures of Tamesis and Isis. Take a Midsomer cruise with **Hobbs of Henley** and enjoy lunch or a traditional Afternoon Tea on board. In the episode Dead in the Water the locations and backdrops from Henley Royal Regatta are transformed into the Midsomer Regatta. The opening shot shows the river in all its sunlit glory while local Olympic legend Sir Steve Redgrave played a cameo role in the episode. Barnaby and his wife Joyce also visit the Regatta for a picnic. The cruise passes several murderous locations along the beautiful River Thames.

Your cruise will end at the jetty for the **River & Rowing Museum**. Take a stroll through the Wind in the Willows gallery and be reacquainted with the characters from your childhood. Find out about the Thames, rowing and the history of Henley.

Stay at **Henley Greenlands Hotel**, Henley Business School. The Business School was used as the Belvoir Hotel in the 2014 episode The Flying Club.

Day 2 Henley to Marlow

Head off this morning to **Stonor**, just 4 miles from Henley which has also featured in several Midsomer Murders' episodes: Blue Herrings, A Worm in the Bud, Death & Dreams, Electric Vendetta, Bad Tidings & Death & The Divas. Visit Stonor Park one of the local filming locations and discover the home of the Stonor family for over 850 years, Stonor Park is one of the oldest family homes still lived in today - but it's no museum. Discover art and treasures collected from across the globe and view historic maps and documents that reveal generations of service to the country. A stroll through this house is a vivid walk through history.

Lunch at Stonor.

Visit **Chiltern Valley Winery & Brewery**, an old pig farm which became a gin distillery for the episode 'The Curse of the Ninth'. There's a popular Cellar Shop plus tours and tastings on most days. This 'behind the scenes' tour

around our winery, brewery, liqueur production facilities, grape pressing, bottling and labelling plant, is followed by a tutored tasting of a selection of our wines, ales & liqueurs, fresh water and tasting notes provided and usually some cheese and crackers too. The tours take 1.5 - 2 hours in total. These exclusive tours are for a minimum of 10 people

Take Afternoon Tea at **Danesfield House**, former site of the Royal Air Force Officers Mess, featured in two episodes: Joyce Barnaby stayed here with the other judges of the Perfect Village Competition in 'Judgement Day' and the great hall appeared as Lawnside Nursing Home in 'Blue Herrings'.

Overnight: Henley Greenlands Hotel – Dinner at a Brakspear pub: The Angel on the Bridge or The Bull on Bell St. which also has a microbrewery.

Day 3 Marlow

Start the day with a walking tour of Marlow, St. Peter's Street, **Two Brewers** pub and the church gate, appear in 'King's Crystal', where the son of the first murder victim becomes a victim himself. It's only when Barnaby is watching Cully rehearse Hamlet at the Midsomer open-air theatre that he realises the murdered son has left a clue in the play. The pub appears again in 'Sauce for the Goose', where the victim is famously squashed to death under a tower of toppling relish bottles!

Finish your tour in Institute Road for the final Midsomer filming location, Causton Library (**Marlow Library and Visitor Information Centre**)! In 'The Black Book', a rich American bids £400,000 for a Hogson, then receives a blackmail demand for £2m from the holder of the infamous black book, showing it as a forgery. The money is to be placed in a shopping trolley by desk three at the library. A man collects the trolley and is apprehended outside by the full force of Causton police, who find nothing but groceries. We see the blackmailer sloping off in the background with an identical trolley, switched at the library, under the very nose of DS Jones (Jason Hughes). Marlow Library is home to the Visitor Centre.

Discover Marlow's secret walled garden opposite the Library. This is an ornamental walled garden containing the impressive Akeler Sundial, created by the acclaimed sculptor Edwin Russell FRBS. There is a splendid view of Marlow Place, at one time the Royal Military Academy, framed by annual bedding and mixed herbaceous borders. The **May Balfour Garden** is a quiet, peaceful garden.

OPTIONS

- Walk the **Thames Path** from Henley Bridge to Hambleton Lock, follow the winding footpath to the lock where the lock-keeper's cottage and the marine basin have been filming locations. Take the metal weir path to follow directly in the footsteps of John Nettles and Jason Hughes, who find the body of Rex Masters caught in the weir, in 'The Animal Within'. Stop off on the way at **Remeneham**, which was used extensively as the village of Elverden in "Country matters". In the summer, arrange for Hobbs of Henley to pick you up from Hambleton Lock.
- Wine tasting tour of **Harrow & Hope Marlow Winery**, award-winning producer of English sparkling wines.
- Book local **Team Activity Group** to organise a Murder Mystery evening at the hotel.

Book a Midsomer tour with local guide **Graham Horn, Tours 2 Order**, who can organise bespoke tours covering a wide range of Midsomer Murder locations, so if there are particular places you'd like to visit ask for details.

GROUP INFORMATION

Tours 2 Order - Blue Badge Tourist Guide South East England www.tours2order.com info@tours2order.com 07827 715353

The Argyll Pub, Henley on Thames RG9 2AA – featured in two episodes. Stop off for a drink or pre-book a lunch (max 20) quality home cooked food including ' Local Venison Sausages & Mash', vegetarian options, beer battered Cod & chips along with 'lite bites', doorstep sandwiches www.theargyllhenley.co.uk/ info@theargyllhenley.co.uk 01491 573400

Hobbs of Henley, Henley on Thames RG9 1AZ – Midsomer Murders cruises with afternoon tea with the will take you past several murderous locations, join a public cruise or charters 6-125, 2hrs www.hobbsofhenley.com charter@hobbsofhenley.co.uk 01491 572035

River & Rowing Museum, Henley on Thames RG9 1BF - Four permanent galleries dedicated to Rowing, Rivers, the work of British Artist John Piper and the history of Henley on Thames, plus the magical Wind in the Willows exhibition www.rrm.co.uk Mary.Arkinstall@rrm.co.uk 01491 415619

Henley Greenlands Hotel, Henley on Thames RG9 3AU – set within the 30-acre Henley Business School estate, the main Grade II Listed building is steeped in history dating as far back as 1480 www.hospitalityuor.co.uk/henley-greenlands-hotel/conferences@henley.ac.uk 01491 571454

Stonor, Henley on Thames RG9 6HF – a hidden gem and family home for 850 years with impressive art and treasure collection and Italianate gardens. www.stonor.com janelee@stonor.com 01491 638587

Chiltern Valley Winery & Brewery, Henley on Thames RG9 6JW – Private tasting tours, min 10/max ?, 1.5-2hrs www.chilternvalley.co.uk enquiries@chilternvalley.co.uk 01491 638330

Danesfield House Hotel, Marlow SL7 2EY - Set among 65 acres of wonderful landscaped gardens, between Marlow and Henley, with views across the Thames www.danesfieldhouse.co.uk enquiries@danefieldhouse.co.uk 01628 891010

Brakspear Pubs - Brakspear has been running pubs for over 200 years and is passionate about great pubs. Over 80 pubs can be found within 10 miles of the River Thames. Be sure to visit Henley on Thames, where the first brewery was located and today is home to a microbrewery. www.visitthames.co.uk/things-to-do/eat-and-drink/brakspear-pubs

Harrow & Hope Winery, Marlow SL7 3RD – Private tasting tours only available on weekdays and dates are limited, max 30, 1.5-2hrs, www.harrowandhope.com cat@harrowandhope.com 0162 8481 091

Team Activity Group – can organise activities on the river, along the river, indoors and evening entertainment at various locations along the Thames and works closely with many of the hotels www.tag-events.com events@tag-events.com 01189 402588

For further information and other River Thames itineraries for groups visit www.visitthames.co.uk/traveltrade Twitter @visitthamescouk Contact: Karen Roebuck, visitthames@krtourism.co.uk

Checkout the places on the map www.bit.ly/midsomermap

