

AOUP trip to South Wales – 12th – 16th May 2025 - Provisional Itinerary

The 2025 excursion will be a 5 day holiday (4 nights) based in Cardiff with excursions each day to areas of interest.

Hotel – We will be staying in the [Park Inn by Radisson Cardiff City Centre, Mary Ann St, Cardiff CF10 2JH](#)

Monday 12th May - Journey to Cardiff will take about 2 ½ hours and on our route we will stop at [Raglan Castle Caerphilly](#). A Welsh fortress-palace transformed into a regal residence. The unmistakable silhouette of Raglan crowns a ridge amid glorious countryside and is the grandest castle ever built by Welshmen. There will be time to wonder around the ruins and take on refreshments.

Tuesday 13th May – Today we will concentrate on travelling around the north west of Cardiff. First, we will visit [Llandaff cathedral](#). There has been a Christian presence on this site from the 6th century, under the first two bishops, Dyfrig (Dubricius) and Teilo. Pre-Norman architectural evidence for an early medieval church can be seen with the remains of a late 10th/early 11th-century cross in the south aisle, and by grave markers set in the fabric at the west end. We will be given a guided tour of the cathedral and there may be time to view the [Old Bishop's Palace](#) set in the grounds.

A short ride will take us to [St Fagans National Museum of history](#). Over forty original buildings from different historical periods have been re-erected in the 100-acre parkland, among them houses, a farm, a school, a chapel and a splendid Workmen's Institute. Here you can take in the sites at your own pace and take lunch in one of the cafes.

For the remainder of the afternoon we will travel back to the hotel to give you time to do your own thing in Cardiff City Centre such as visit [Cardiff Castle](#), [Welsh National Museums](#), [Principality Stadium](#) etc.

Wednesday 14th May – to begin today we will take a short journey east to near Newport to visit [Tredegar House](#). Described as a 'faire place of stone', records of Tredegar House date back to the medieval age. However, the iconic red brick house that we know today was built in the 1670s by Sir William Morgan and his wife, Blanche who combined their wealth to boast their high fashion and affluence, turning the stone manor house into an extravagant country mansion. Lunch can be taken here before we travel north via Merthyr Tydfil to the southern edge of the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park (Brecon Beacons) to take a return trip on the [Brecon Mountain railway](#). The 9.5mile return journey takes you into the National Park, through Pontsticill and along the full length of the Taf Fechan Reservoir before climbing to Torpantau high in the Brecon Beacons, the summit of the original line. Our journey back to Cardiff will take about 40 minutes.

Thursday 15th May – Our route today will take us through another of the old mining valleys to Blaenavon to spend the morning at the [Big Pit Coal Mining Museum](#). This was a real coal mine and is one of Britain's leading mining museums. Exhibits include galleries telling the history of mining in Wales, The Pit head Baths, Coalmining machinery and many more old buildings. There will be time to take the famous underground tour 300 feet down, which lasts about 50 minutes. (Please note: the underground tour involves low tunnels, stooping and uneven surfaces.) There are cafes for lunch after which we will take the coach to Rhonda to visit the [Royal Mint Experience](#). With a history spanning more than 1,100 years, The Royal Mint makes the coins for the UK and for many other countries around the world. We will take a guided tour of the facility and there will be time to browse in the museum shop which has many special souvenirs on offer.

Friday 16th May – On our journey back to Oxford we make an early stop to investigate [Castell Coch](#). It has highly decorated interiors and rich furnishings making it a dazzling masterpiece of the High Victorian era. Underneath the mock-medieval trappings you can still trace the impressive remains of a 13th-century castle, once used as a hunting lodge. There are facilities for a light snack before we set off back to Oxford.