

TRANSCRIPT UK TRAVEL PLANNING PODCAST EPISODE 62

**** NOTE - AI generated**

Tracy Collins [00:00:37]:

Hi, and welcome to episode 62 of the UK travel planner podcast. In this week's episode, I have the lovely Victoria from Cotswold tea cup tours here to talk all about the Cotswold in the winter. Victoria has been on the podcast before in episodes 33, 27, and 20. So once you've listened to this episode, I know you are gonna wanna go back and listen to those episodes with Victoria if you haven't already. And, obviously, the question is why would you not want to visit the Cotswolds I ask you because, honestly, it is one of my favorite places to visit, so it really should be on your itinerary. Anyway, let me introduce Victoria to you. Victoria, would you like to tell us a little bit about yourself and your company, please?

Victoria [00:01:18]:

Oh, hello, Tracy again.

Tracy Collins [00:01:20]:

Hello. Hello.

Victoria [00:01:21]:

Thanks for having me back again.

Tracy Collins [00:01:23]:

Oh, it's always a pleasure.

Victoria [00:01:26]:

Oh, so, yes, my my little company is about

Tracy Collins [00:01:29]:

a year and a half old now.

Victoria [00:01:31]:

and I'm having a very busy summer. And, lots of booking booked every day at the moment.

Tracy Collins [00:01:37]:

Fantastic. So off

Victoria [00:01:38]:

we go out flowing all sorts of different areas of the cotswolds.

Tracy Collins [00:01:41]:

And it's brilliant. And I I know, quite a few people from their Facebook group and who've looked on the website and who've listened to the podcasts have booked your tours, absolutely love them. And, Doug and I were very lucky to meet up with you a few months ago when we were in the cotswolds and had a lovely day out. so I highly recommend it if you're listening to this podcast and thinking, I really would like to have a a tour of the cots words with Victoria that you pop over to her website. There will be a link in the show notes and book because she is, as you heard, extremely busy. So even next year, it's not too not too early to book. Is it Victoria?

Victoria [00:02:15]:

No. Actually, they're already coming in.

Tracy Collins [00:02:17]:

There you go. You see? So but we thought we would talk about, because we do get questions about the cotswolds and in winter. Okay. So you know, is it worth visiting the cotswolds in winter? Well, I'm gonna say it's one of my favorite times to visit visit the cotswolds, but the best person really to talk about the cotswolds in winter is Victoria. so first of all, I'd ask you about when is winter in the cotswolds.

Victoria [00:02:41]:

Right. Okay. So, really, wintertime begins November. November, December, January, February. Those kind of 4 months are the coldest.

Tracy Collins [00:02:51]:

And and what what's it like? So what's the weather generally like during that time?

Victoria [00:02:56]:

Well, usually the temperatures drop down to, kind of freezing.

Tracy Collins [00:03:01]:

I can never remember what that is in Fahrenheit, but it but it's freezing. It's cold.

Victoria [00:03:05]:

And it's it's cold. It's cold. It's It's the thick coats, cozy jumpers, hats, and gloves, and base layers. Yeah. Really thick socks. layers. That's the key.

Tracy Collins [00:03:18]:

I see. It is. It is. And now I have got photos of me standing in in front of Arlington Road in January 2020. Very layered up. Yeah. Good. So, what about hours a daylight? because obviously, we're not in the summer, so we don't have those great, big, long, fantastic days of daylight. So, you know, when does it start getting light and dark? Is it?

Victoria [00:03:39]:

Oh, it's it's usually about sort of, 7, 8 o'clock in the morning, I suppose, and then it gets dark by about 5 o'clock. Yeah. Sometimes the deepest winter, it might even be 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Tracy Collins [00:03:52]:

Oh, sort

Victoria [00:03:52]:

of 4, 5. Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:03:54]:

But, obviously, the thing is about the cotswalls in winter is that it is less busy. Is that right?

Victoria [00:04:00]:

Oh, yes. It is. It's it's it's completely different to the summertime when you have somewhere like busy, like, walking on the water. which I might try and avoid at this time of the year, unless I've got the timings right in the day. but when you go at winter time, it's transformed magically, and all the little shots have all the fairy lights lit. And they put a huge Christmas tree in the river. So all the lights of the tree reflected to the river. It's so pretty, Tracy.

Tracy Collins [00:04:29]:

Oh, well, I'm I'm gonna be going there this year, so I'm really excited. about visiting. And, so that's obviously the the run up to to Christmas period that they've have all those lights on.

Victoria [00:04:39]:

That's right. They keep that there through you. I think it only goes up beginning of, you know, December, through after Christmas, usually most Christmas decorations stay up. through January these days. We all like to keep on having all of the lights for longer.

Tracy Collins [00:04:53]:

Yeah. Was it making everything so pretty, don't they? So it's really nice.

Victoria [00:04:56]:

Yeah. Exactly.

Tracy Collins [00:04:57]:

So so it's a little bit quiet there. So that that's an advantage because I know how busy it can be in the summer, particularly in some of those villages like Black ball and water, in particular, seems to get really crazy busy. We were in, Stowe in June, and it it was busy, but it was it was okay. It was fine. The roads are crazy, though. You know, you can kinda sit and queues it for a little bit to to get anywhere in some of those places, specifically around Stowe, I think, they can get busy. Okay. So if I'm planning to visit the Cotswold, and I'm thinking, well, I'm in the UK, and it's gonna be over the winter period, and I wanna go to Cotswolds, for sure, What would I do and where would I go? What would be your top places that you'd recommend?

Victoria [00:05:34]:

Oh, well, so I I always recommend going to places where you can if it's cold, you can nip in and out of cozy shops, warm up, or pop into a cozy pub, And, you know, you don't always have to drink alcohol in pubs. It's completely fine to go in and have a nonalcoholic drink. And often, they'll serve tea and hot chocolates. or little tea rooms. And and so we will often pop into those. So so then, Burford and Stowe and winch Curm, siren's sister, all the small towns, a great place, and bar, great places in the wintertime, because there's lots of little shops to go into in T bins.

Tracy Collins [00:06:18]:

Oh, so nice. And I I think about, when when we stayed in Bolton and the water in in January 2020 and going to the mouse trap in and they have the fire going. And, it was so lovely. And then we we went out to, strong pope. I can't remember. It wasn't. I just outside born. Got a taxi. Oh, no. No. We had the car. That's right. We drove out there. But, and there was I remember a lovely black Labrador, sitting in front of the fire at that pub. It was just so cozy. Lovely. And that's what I miss actually about the UK, so it's lovely to have that.

Victoria [00:06:49]:

I know. I I think that is the unique quality that maybe the Cotswolds has, is that there are all these gorgeous little country pubs. with the log fires going. And we're so we're so open here to having dogs in pubs now that, you know, you've you've got all these dogs lying down by the fireside about the feet in the pub, and it all adds to the atmosphere. And there's people standing around the bar, they look chat, the locals, and the barman's chanting away, and it's friendly. And it is like, it is like that film, the holiday.

Tracy Collins [00:07:21]:

Yes. Have you seen them? Yes. I have. But -- -- talking

Victoria [00:07:24]:

about. And where you've got this beautiful countryside, cottage scenes, and then the cozy pub and, That, you know, I think I think, I think we have scenes exist. I think they aren't real.

Tracy Collins [00:07:38]:

Oh, absolutely. And, if you get a bit of snow, it all the better. Now I know you were last year, you sent me some photos of, a Broadway Tower with, Beautiful snow scene. It's a Broadway tower. So -- Yeah.

Victoria [00:07:51]:

That's right. Yeah. Get a bit of snow.

Tracy Collins [00:07:53]:

Yeah. So it's, fingers crossed it snows when I'm there. I also love it when it snows. How's it? Well, you know, so, I mean, obviously, we can't guarantee snow, but it kinda it is even more magical if it does snow. What's it like for driving around the Cotswolds when when it's in winter, especially if it's kind of icy or snow? Is it under the grip, I guess, to get grip the roads, or is it a little bit have to be careful.

Victoria [00:08:14]:

Yeah. So the big gritters go out on the main roads, but on the smaller roads, they're less likely to be gritted So you need to take it easy. you know, often the if this is this is particularly bad area where there may be black eyes, often there's a sign by the road that's permanently there warning you. So, you're just gonna take it easy.

Tracy Collins [00:08:36]:

Yeah. Oh, book to go with you because you know the road. Yeah. In big red of a of a

Victoria [00:08:42]:

vehicle, big red, who, and she's geared up for that kind of weather. But, But also if it's not snowy, because often people always ask me, you know, how often does it snow in the Cotswolds? And, really, It's about 1 or 2 days a year. And then the snow, melts pretty quickly, and it just becomes lush. But on a bright sunny day, you know, when it's frosty and cold, it's just it's so beautiful. It's not always gray and rainy. What do you mean?

Tracy Collins [00:09:10]:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. The well, I love that. The blue sky is a cold crisp air and the blue skies. That's also absolutely yeah. I love it. And Actually, the last time was in the cottuals in winter. And in January 2020, it was it was like that. We had beautiful blue sky, and it was

cold. Wrapped up, and I've got my hat on on my scarf on and my gloves on and, you know, my boots, and I was very wrapped up for the for the cold weather, but but it was lovely. And it is very it is magical, to visit at that time of the year, for sure. And what about Christmas markets? I'm thinking about in the run up to Christmas, if you're visiting kinda December time. Are there I know there's Christmas market in Bath, and there's one in Oxford. can you talk about that?

Victoria [00:09:49]:

Yeah. That's right. Yeah. Yeah. Bath's got a lovely, Christmas market. They've got about 200 stores there now.

Tracy Collins [00:09:56]:

Wow.

Victoria [00:09:56]:

And so that's quite fun to go and spend a decent amount of time. Maybe it's of half a day who's in the market. Oxford has a that has a Christmas market smaller than bars. But, you know, you you're in you're in Oxford and you're exploring Oxford in the old city, and then you go to the Christmas market and you have a hot chocolate and you sort of wonder about those amazing old buildings. That's that's a really nice thing to do. Some of the little towns are, creating their own Christmas markets now. So Broadway Village has a Christmas market, and I think they do like a late night shopping. I think they might be on Thursdays. and so they'd that's quite fun. All the all the shops open up and stop until late, and they're all brightly lit.

Tracy Collins [00:10:41]:

Oh, lovely. Lovely. Yes. I'm adding that into my itinerary for this for this year. Definitely a lovely place to visit. And I know, obviously, it's just Stratford. Stratford's also pretty Nice in in the, with the lights and everything in the road to Christmas. Yes. Yeah. And then my mom took my daughter there because they lived not too far from but when when she visited last year, I think it was probably the one day that they got over that it wasn't raining actually. It was a bit rainy last year. I remember what Toma daughter was saying. It's just raining all the time. But that is the English weather. It's one of those things, isn't it? You can't you can't guarantee it. Hopefully, you're gonna get beautiful, those cold crisp days, but, you know, you have to kinda pack 4 potentially having a little bit of rain as well when you're out and about, but it's all part of the, all part of the fun of visiting the UK, though.

Victoria [00:11:27]:

I know. It's what keeps it green, Tracy.

Tracy Collins [00:11:29]:

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. So so how are your, bookings looking for the winter? So you're gonna take into us out over the winter? Is it gonna be a daily, every day you're offering to us, or, obviously, I assume you won't be doing that on Christmas day and boxing day in New Year's day, but otherwise, what, you know, what how are you looking?

Victoria [00:11:47]:

Yeah. So, you're right. I'll I'll be taking off, time over the festive period with my family. But, I I am running, so it's Christmas shopping days or just I I like to take people to all

Tracy Collins [00:12:02]:

the independent businesses in the area.

Victoria [00:12:05]:

There's so many little shops with little, you know, they make their own chocolate or they have their own homemade blankets and things. They're just all sorts of products that are unique to the area. Or just, you know, unique to England. And, and so it's fun to take people from those kind of little shopping experiences as well.

Tracy Collins [00:12:23]:

Okay. So visiting the cotswolds, obviously, in the winter is a wonderful thing to do, whether you wanna go and sit in a pub, around a cozy fire, whether you wanna go and do some of the, shop with Victoria and buy some fantastic, Christmas presents or presents for yourself, or whether you want to do a lovely walk through the countryside because it's there's some lovely places to walk out of Victoria.

Victoria [00:12:49]:

Oh, yeah. There's so many great walks,

Tracy Collins [00:12:51]:

but and, you know, I I pay live walks depending on How people how long people wanna work for? Yeah. How cold it is? About 5 minutes for me. Yeah. Maybe not for you, Tracy. Well, I'm determined to do the walk from, lower slaughter to to Bolton. That that's on my list to do. I need to do it. It's not very long.

Victoria [00:13:12]:

No. That's good work. Fine.

Tracy Collins [00:13:13]:

Yeah. I I'm gonna dare myself because I'm not a I'm not a hiker in any way, shape, or form. So I'm a dare myself that I am gonna do that walk. This went to

Victoria [00:13:25]:

a lovely walk.

Tracy Collins [00:13:25]:

Yeah. Maybe you'll draw me. or I'll see you in the pub at the end. Okay. That way. Yeah. That way. Alright then. Or you could drop me off at 1 and meet the other side. See, there's there's a there's a drink waiting for you at the other side when you get there, Tracy. We're on the road and fire so it can sit and and have a chat. That would that sounds good, and you're on for that. Definitely. So if people wanna book a a tour with you this winter, the cotswills, Victoria, how do they go about that? Well, Barb, my website, please. Uh-huh.

Victoria [00:13:56]:

So my booking page

Tracy Collins [00:13:57]:

is still there with my availability on it. And that's by far the easiest way. It's super common. Would you like to share the URL for your website? Oh, yeah. That would help. And that's [www. cotswilleteacuptours.com](http://www.cotswilleteacuptours.com). Perfect. And if you didn't get that, don't worry, because there will be a link in the show notes, And as Victoria is one of our preferred partners, you'll also find a listing for Victoria in our directory on the website. So don't worry. The only thing I would say to you is that if you want to do a tour of Victoria, and why wouldn't you, you need to pop over and book because she is extremely popular and gets. hooked up rapidly, don't you? You do. You do. I was like, okay. Yeah. Because people love going around the cotswolds and their love is staying with you because you know all the places to go, you know, lots of people and you are able to do the driving for them so they can relax and enjoy the scenery without having to worry about I knew those little lanes to get down or find in parking anywhere. And, and you can introduce people to, shop owners, for example, when I went to owned popped into the chocolate shop, but I went, I know Victoria, and they were like, oh, she's so lovely. So, you know, people know you. that'd be brilliant. So, and also I'm gonna be visiting the Cotswolds this winter. So look out for in our Facebook group and on our Instagram and hopefully YouTube if I can get to it. for some videos. And, obviously, we'll be meeting up with Victoria again, so you'll be able to see some pictures and some hard recent video of Victoria when we're there. If you don't go a tour with her, but as I say, I guarantee that you will have a fantastic day. So do book with her. I love it. But thanks so much, Victoria, for coming on to the podcast again. It's always pleasure to talk to you. Oh, thank you so much. Thank you for having me. Thanks for joining us on episode 62 of the UK travel planning podcast. As always, all the information to different places that we have talked about and Victoria's tours are in this week's show notes. So do pop across there to [UKtravelplanetdot com](http://UKtravelplanetdot.com) forward slash episode

Intro [00:16:00]:

62.

Tracy Collins [00:16:00]:

That just leaves me to save for this episode. Happy UK travel planning.