

Visit Dean Wye

Press Release

Top Places to Cool Off

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**Top Places to Cool off this Summer in the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley**

It's hotting up as we approach the height of summer. As the temperatures start to soar are you the kind of person who seeks out a shady spot? Need somewhere to escape the heat, don't you worry we have plenty from cool caves to woodland walks. Here are our top tips for keeping cool in the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley this summer.

### **Hopewell Colliery**

Hopewell Colliery allows you access to a working Free mine in the Forest of Dean. Join Rich Daniels your tour guide as he leads you into the depths of the mine and shows you how the mine operates and tells you about its fascinating history. Not only is this a top spot on TripAdvisor boasting lots of 5-star reviews it's also a top spot to keep cool. The mine stays a steady 10 degrees centigrade which feels mighty chilly when the weather is up in the 20s. The perfect place to cool off whilst learning about some of the Forest's incredible industrial past.

### **Clearwell Caves**

Clearwell Caves is a vast labyrinthine maze of underground tunnels with a fascinating history. The caves are man-made remains of the iron ore and ochre mining industry which has been occurring at this site for thousands of years. As you descend into the cave system the temperature drops down to a cool 10 degrees centigrade, take your time through the caves and enjoy the chill.

### **Nature in Art**

This art gallery is dedicated to the majesty of the natural world. You can enjoy wandering around the artwork and spotting your favourite animals and discovering a new favourite artist. The gallery and museum are housed in the exquisite architecture of Wallsworth Hall, a Georgian Mansion, the high ceilings and low light levels as well as the temperature-controlled galleries make Nature in Art the perfect choice for a chill afternoon out of the sun.

### **Dean Heritage Centre**

Located on the banks of its very own pond and under the canopy of the woodland that surrounds it Dean Heritage Centre is the perfect shady spot to cool off this summer. They have a fabulous cafe overlooking the water serving freshly made scones and fabulous locally brewed coffee and of course ice-creams. The climate-controlled exhibition space tells the story of the Forest of Dean from the Ice Age up to the present day. One of our favourite cool spots (in both senses of the word) is the reconstructed Foresters cottage complete with its cottage garden.

### **Cool Cathedrals**

To the North and East of the destination, we have two wonderful cathedrals, Hereford and [Gloucester Cathedral](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/gloucester-cathedral-p1312441). Gloucester Cathedral often features as one of the topmost Instagrammed cathedrals in the UK and it's not hard to see why. Enjoy the gothic architecture and spend some time in the cool cloisters. Why not try and spot the places where the famous scenes from Harry Potter and Dr Who were shot?

[Hereford Cathedral](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/hereford-cathedral-p1898071) is home to home to the Mappa Mundi & Chained Library which draws visitors and scholars from across the world. The Hereford Mappa Mundi is the largest medieval world map to survive and records how scholars interpreted the world over 700 years ago. Sitting alongside the Mappa Mundi is the fascinating Chained Library which holds over 1,500 rare books, including 229 medieval manuscripts. These cathedrals' stone walls and high ceilings keep them slightly chilly in summer - the perfect places for respite from the heat.

### **Take to the Water**

We all know there's nothing quite like splashing about on the river and we highly recommend the Wye as the river of choice, mainly for the vast array of activities you can undertake on there. We have some brilliant Paddleboarding instructors and hire such as [AdAstra Paddleboarding](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/adastra-paddleboarding-p1785741) they offer SUP hire, SUP lessons, and SUP Kids Clubs on the Wye and at Mallards Pike.

Or want something a bit more chill why not have a [canoe](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/activities-and-experiences/canoeing-kayaking-and-watersports/canoeing-on-the-river-wye) along the River Wye? Enjoy a gentle canoe and relax in spectacular scenery. Some amazing things can be spotted from the river too, fishes, birds overhead, and nature along the river banks.

### **Gorge Walking and Caving**

Want something a bit more active, an adrenaline rush, maybe a bit of a workout but without the heat? Why not have a go at Gorge Scrambling with [Way2GoAdventures](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/way2go-adventures-ltd-p1856071)? The Wye Valley has plenty of ravines and tributaries which are perfect for getting your feet wet and your knees dirty whilst clambering up mini waterfalls.

Or why not join experts at [Borderlands Outdoor](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/borderlands-outdoor-p1311731) and experience the underground? Borderlands offer caving experiences for all levels so why not have an underground adventure, squeezing through ancient passageways in the dark. The perfect cool spot for an adventure.

### **Escape to Castle Walls**

### The Forest of Dean and Wye Valley have some of BEST castles of any destination. Just like our cathedrals and the cool stone walls, these behemoth structures create the perfect shady spot to chill out in. [Raglan Castle](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/raglan-castle-p1312421) pictured above is a spectacular example of a fortress-palace used as both a stronghold of defence in the early medieval period and then as a palace by King Henry VIII in the later medieval era. [Chepstow Castle](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/chepstow-castle-p1312411) benefits from its beautiful river-side situation and its towering great walls make it ideal for sitting in the shade by the cool breeze of the river. [Skenfrith](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/skenfrith-castle-p1474331), [Grosmont](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/grosmont-castle-p1474321), and the [White Castle](https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/white-castle-p1474311) form a lordship known as the "Three Castles", which continued to play a role in defending the region from Welsh attack for several centuries. Between them, the Three Castles controlled a large area of the confrontational border country between the River Wye and the Black Mountains, with Skenfrith occupying a strategic spot on the banks of the River Monnow overlooking one of the main routes between Wales and England. Not only do they have a fascinating history and the romance of being ruined these fortifications are also great shade casters for picnics or to read a book under as the sun beats down.

### **Woodland Walks**

Of course, the wonderful thing about the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley is how much of it is covered in woodland and forests. The dappled light under the canopy of the trees casts a shadow on the ground below keeping it cool despite being outdoors. Here are a few of our top woodland walks to enjoy this summer.

We hope this article gives you some well-earned respite from the heat whilst inspiring you to still get out and experience some of the fabulous things to do in the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley.

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For more information and pictures please contact marketing@visitdeanwye.co.uk

All information was correct at time of writing.