

time
for us

48 hours in...

...Maidstone

Historic Maidstone, surrounded by a gentle landscape of orchards and hop gardens, is the stylish County Town in the Heart of Kent. Despite many changes throughout the centuries, this flourishing town combines eclectic arts and culture, specialist shopping and lively entertainment. Shaped by a colourful history of battles, revolts, and witches, the ambience of old Maidstone is still captured today. This is the perfect starting point for exploring the beautiful Kent Downs and the scattered villages of unspoilt charm.

Getting to Maidstone by car

Maidstone is situated in the centre of Kent, just one hour from London via the M25 and M20. There are plenty of car parks in the town centre or, alternatively use the award –winning Park and Ride service. There are three inexpensive and convenient Park and Ride car parks situated on the main roads into Maidstone. Both the main shopping centres have their own car parks . Details of the many parking locations can be accessed from www.visitmaidstone.com

Top 5 must see places

Leeds Castle - Magnificent castle and gardens set in 500 acres, described by Henry VIII as ‘the loveliest castle in the world’.

www.leeds-castle.com

Maidstone Museum & Bentsley Art Gallery - Award winning regional Museum with impressive collections from Japanese Art, to Maidstone’s own dinosaur!

www.museum.maidstone.gov.uk

Kent Life - Kent’s premier heritage farm attraction, with historic buildings to explore and café’s to relax in.

www.kentlife.org.uk

Yalding Gardens - Explore the history of gardening through five acres of stunning organic gardens designed along a historical theme.

www.yaldinggardens.org

River Medway Boat Cruises - Charming boat trips through the scenic Maidstone Millennium River Park.

www.kentishlady.co.uk or
www.allingtonbelle.co.uk

the Beautiful South

48 hours in Maidstone



Day one

Maidstone Museum, in its Elizabethan Mansion, is the perfect place to start, as it is right in the centre of town and explains the town's quirky history. More intriguing though are some of the galleries with a superb collection of Japanese art, some wonderful exhibits from Polynesia and an Egyptian mummy.

Head down to the River Medway and join a peaceful boat trip to Allington Lock, where you will find Kent Life with its fruit growing heritage and 'hopping', a historic, delightful and important industry for rural Kent. Right on the River, next to the boat moorings is the Malta Inn which is perfect for a drink or coffee under the weeping willows. Enjoy a walk back into Maidstone along the tow path or unwind on the return boat trip.

Alternatively if you like gardening then a trip to Yalding Gardens is 'perfik'. The Darling Buds of May was filmed in the Yalding area with its orchards and oast houses. The gardens themselves run through a historic theme of gardening and the café sources all its food, either from their gardens or locally, making this an excellent place for a meal or for a cream tea.

Day two

A visit to Maidstone would not be complete without a trip to Leeds Castle. Your key to the castle ticket enables you to return within the year and you will want to, for as the seasons change so does the castle and the events which surround this unique and beautiful place. Inside the castle the grand lifestyles and history are embedded both in the atmosphere and in the fabric of the walls. Yet the feeling of safety and security remain, as it has for centuries, with the protection of the moat glistening in the sun.

A walk through the gardens and aviaries to the maze and shell grotto is delightful and fun, full of intriguing faces and textures and is well worth the exploration.

The Fairfax Hall restaurant offers homemade traditional lunches and afternoon tea, made up of small sandwiches, cakes and scones.



Where to stay

Merzie Meadows
Beautiful Countryside B&B.
www.merziemeadows.co.uk
01622 820500

Best Western Russell Hotel
Charming Victorian Building.
www.bw-russellhotel.co.uk
01622 692221

Chart Hill Cottage
Luxury B&B.
www.charthillcottage.co.uk
01622 844397

The Black Horse Inn
Homely & welcoming inn.
www.wellieboot.net
01622 737185

Chilston Park Hotel
Luxury Country House Hotel.
www.handpickedhotels.co.uk
0845 072 7426

Tudor Park,
A Marriott Hotel & Country
Club. Championship 18 hole
golf course.
www.marriott.com
01622 734334

Where to eat

Souffle Restaurant
Relaxed fine dining.
www.soufflerestaurant.net
01622 737065

Fortify Café
Fab and quirky vegetarian
eatery for lunch.
www.fortifycafe.co.uk
01622 670533

Fish on the Green
Perfect for fresh seafood.

www.fishonthegreen.com
01622 738300

The Barge
Floating restaurant for a
relaxed meal in a great setting.
www.the-barge.co.uk
08081 661024

Ringlestone Inn
Steeped in history serving
great Kentish produce.
www.theringlestoneinn.co.uk
01622 859900