



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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.kentlife.org.uk)

Mote Park, Maidstone's largest park with more than 450 acres of mature parkland with a 30 acre lake.

<http://www.visitmaidstone.com/things-to-do/mote-park-p12581>

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

[www.kentishlady.co.uk](http://www.kentishlady.co.uk) or  
[www.allingtonbelle.co.uk](http://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.

Discover Mote Park with its elegant tree lined avenues, beautiful lake, rowing boats, pitch and putt, gazebos and the recently restored Mote Park house, with its restaurant, terrace and lovely views over this romantic park. Alternatively, take a drive into the countryside with its delights of orchards and oast houses, hop gardens and farms.

Here you will find places such as Lashenden Air Warfare Museum at Headcorn Aerodrome with its wonderful collection of modern history and its role in protecting this corner of England and ruins such as Sutton Valence Castle and Thurham Castle add to the atmospheric uniqueness and enjoyment of Kent.

## 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

**Bramley Knowle Farm**  
\*\*\*\*Farmhouse, Silver Award  
Beautiful Countryside B&B.  
[www.bramleyknowlefarm.co.uk](http://www.bramleyknowlefarm.co.uk)  
01622 858878

**Marriott Tudor Park Hotel**  
\*\*\*\* Hotel  
Championship 18 hole course.  
[www.marriott.co.uk](http://www.marriott.co.uk)  
01622 692221

**Best Western Russell Hotel**  
\*\*\* Hotel  
Refurbished Victorian hotel.  
[www.bw-russellhotel.co.uk/](http://www.bw-russellhotel.co.uk/)  
01622 692221

**The Black Horse Inn**  
\*\*\*\*Inn, Highly Commended  
17th century welcoming inn.  
[www.wellieboot.net](http://www.wellieboot.net)  
01622 737185

**Aylesbury House**  
\*\*\*\* Guest Accommodation  
Smart Victorian B&B.  
[www.aylesburyhouse.co.uk](http://www.aylesburyhouse.co.uk)  
01622 762100

**Mercure Great Danes Hotel**  
\*\*\*\* Hotel  
Set in 26 acres.  
[www.mercure.com](http://www.mercure.com)  
0871 663 0627

### Where to eat

**Souffle Restaurant**  
Relaxed fine dining.  
[www.soufflerestaurant.net](http://www.soufflerestaurant.net)  
01622 737065

**Fortify Café**  
Fab and quirky vegetarian eatery for lunch.  
[www.fortifycafe.co.uk](http://www.fortifycafe.co.uk)  
01622 670533

**Fish on the Green**  
Perfect for fresh seafood.  
[www.fishonthegreen.com](http://www.fishonthegreen.com)  
01622 738300

### The Barge

Floating restaurant for a relaxed meal in a great setting.  
[www.the-barge.co.uk](http://www.the-barge.co.uk)  
08081 661024

### Ringlestone Inn

Steeped in history serving great Kentish produce.  
[www.theringlestoneinn.co.uk](http://www.theringlestoneinn.co.uk)  
01622 859900