

time
for us

48 hours in...

...Test Valley

Test Valley is a wonderful place to explore whatever the season. The River Test, Hampshire's longest river, meanders through ancient woodlands, tranquil water meadows, picturesque villages and historical towns.

The many cycle routes, bridle paths and footpaths allow you to explore the local countryside that epitomises our 'green and pleasant land', with traditional thatched cottages and quintessential English pubs.

It boasts a variety of attractions from horticultural gems to fascinating museums and hands-on wildlife experiences. Possibly most famous for its fly fishing, visitors come from around the world to fish in the clear chalk streams of the Test and its tributaries.

Getting to Test Valley by car

With excellent transport links, Test Valley is easy to reach whether you are travelling by road, train, ferry, coach or air. But to explore it properly you ideally need a car.

Located on the western side of the county of Hampshire, it is less than an hour's drive from London and easily accessed from the M3 and A34 or, coming from the West, the M27 or A303.

There are good A-roads across the borough, making it easy to explore. Further information on parking and travelling by car in Test Valley can be found at visit-hampshire.co.uk/plan-your-visit/travel-information

Top 5 must see places

Romsey Abbey

The magnificent Norman Abbey, built in the 12th and 13th centuries, dominates the medieval market town of Romsey.

visit-testvalley.org.uk

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

One of our horticultural gems, this garden for all seasons includes twelve National Plant Collections and one of the largest Winter Gardens in Europe.

hilliergardens.org.uk

Mottisfont

Set amidst glorious countryside along the river Test, Mottisfont began its life as a 12th century Augustinian priory that boasts sweeping lawns and beautiful gardens.

nationaltrust.org.uk/Mottisfont

The Hawk Conservancy Trust

This award-winning visitor centre has 150 birds of prey on view, some of which feature in the spectacular daily flying demonstrations.

hawk-conservancy.org

Stockbridge

Lying at the heart of Test Valley, the picturesque village of Stockbridge with its wide Georgian high street, has inspired poets over the years and is definitely worth a visit.

the Beautiful South

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Day one

Start your day with a visit to the historic market town of Romsey. Pop into the Tourist and Heritage Centre in Church Street where you can pick up details of a 1½ hour walking trail that includes the 19th century Corn Exchange, the Bartlett Almshouses, the spectacular Romsey Abbey and King John's House & Heritage Centre.

Romsey offers great shopping with a range of independent shops and boutiques together with eateries to suit every palate and budget for when you have worked up an appetite. Try Berties Restaurant for lunch, or the Three Tuns, a warm and welcoming local pub serving real ales and great food.

After lunch, discover the beauty and inspiration of delightful themed landscapes, woodlands and walkways at Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, famous the world over. It's the perfect place to relax after lunch or enjoy afternoon tea in the summer tea rooms.

Alternatively, head to the small village of Mottisfont. The Abbey was founded in the 13th century as an Augustinian priory. It was converted into a private house after the Dissolution and still retains the spring or 'font' from which its name is derived. Don't miss the vaulted cellarium, the art gallery or the historic gardens.

Finish the day by heading back into Romsey for dinner from a choice of worldwide cuisine -La Parisienne, the Suan Thai or, for something a bit special, try the two Rosette Brasserie at the White Horse Hotel, an historic coaching inn for over 600 years.



Day two

Start the morning exploring the picturesque town of Stockbridge. As in the 12th century, the town consists of one broad, handsome high street, and it is to this characteristic that it owed its early name of The Street. Stockbridge lies at the heart of Test Valley and features many circular walks for the casual walker. After a walk, rest your feet and enjoy award-winning home-cooked fare in the vibrant Thyme & Tides bistro.

From Stockbridge, drive out to Danebury Iron Age Hill Fort, just five minutes by car. The fort is 2,500 years old and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest - it's also a great place for kite flying! Then on to the Museum of Army Flying with its unique collection of aviation history. Celebrating 130 years of heroic flying achievement, this unstuffy museum also has flight simulators and a rifle range.

Just a short hop down the A303 is Amport where you can enjoy a leisurely lunch at The Hawk Inn or at the new Feathers restaurant at the Hawk Conservancy Trust. This award-winning visitor centre is home to 150 different birds of prey many of which feature in the spectacular daily flying demonstrations.

If you still have time (and energy!), then pop in to the Whitchurch Silk Mill (whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk), a 19th century working silkmill set in an idyllic riverside location where you enjoy afternoon tea before heading home.

Where to stay

The White Horse Hotel
Historic boutique hotel.
thewhitehorseromsey.co.uk
01794 512431

Best Western Chilworth Manor
Edwardian manor house hotel.
bw-chilworthmanor.co.uk
02380 767333

Grosvenor Hotel
Classic Georgian features.
oldenglishinns.co.uk/stockbridge
01264 810606

Packridge Farm
16th century farmhouse B&B.
packridgeestate.com
02380 733073

The Barn House
Luxury bed & breakfast.
thebarnhousebandb.co.uk
01264 720544

Ranvilles Farm House & Barn
Open plan barn conversion (self catering and B&B).
ranvilles.com
02380 814481

Hill Farm Caravan Park
Set in beautiful countryside.
hillfarmpark.com
0179 4 340402

Where to eat

The Three Tuns, Romsey
Award-winning local food.
the3tunsromsey.co.uk
01794 512639

Suan Thai, Romsey
A true taste of Thailand.
suanthai.co.uk
01794 511115

La Parisienne
Authentic French cuisine.
la-parisienne.co.uk
01794 512067

Berties Restaurant
Perfect for lunch or dinner.
berties.co.uk
01794 830708

The Peat Spade Inn
Fresh, seasonal menu.
peatspadeinn.co.uk
01264 810612

The Mill Arms, Dunbridge
Warm, friendly atmosphere.
millarms.co.uk
01794 340401

King's Arms, Lockerley
All an English pub should be.
kingsarmsatlockerley.co.uk
01794 340332