

# Welcome to Gatwick

Discover what's on our doorstep

Hever Castle, Kent



## CASTLES & STATELY HOMES

### 7 castles and stately homes to explore near Gatwick Airport

The countryside around the airport is filled with historic castles and stately homes. Their battle-marked walls and beautiful gardens tell the stories of centuries of England's rulers, from Tudor royalty to influential politicians.

Here are 7 of the best castles and stately homes to explore.



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#### 1. Hever Castle, Kent

It's easy to imagine King Henry VIII wooing Anne Boleyn at Hever Castle. The childhood home of Anne Boleyn is topped by battlements and a fluttering flag, and surrounded by a moat. The landscaped gardens contain a 100-year-old yew tree maze. Inside, the panelled rooms were restored in the early 20th century by American William Waldorf Astor, and the castle's Edwardian story is as fascinating as its Tudor and medieval heritage.

See Anne's signature in her two prayer books, and walk through Anne Boleyn's bedroom and the chamber where Henry VIII stayed. You could sleep here too, in the luxury bed and breakfast in the Astor Wing.

🔗 **Website:** [www.hevercastle.co.uk](https://www.hevercastle.co.uk)

📅 **Open:** February – December; closed for some dates February, November and December.

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Hever Castle is 15 miles (25km) east of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 30 mins by road, or 50 mins by rail to Hever station then a 20-min walk.

#### 2. Chartwell, Kent

The country home of Winston Churchill for 40 years looks as if the Churchill family has just gone out for a walk. A visit here is a peek into the private life of this charismatic British prime minister. As well as helping lead the Allies to victory in World War II, Churchill was an inspired writer, artist and speaker. At Chartwell you can see his desk arranged with framed photos, cigars and spectacles, and his garden studio filled with paintings.

Did you know that Churchill loved cats? His cat, Jock, was with him when he died and, at the request of Churchill's family, there will always be a marmalade-coloured cat called Jock at Chartwell.

🔗 **Website:** [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell)

📅 **Open:** March – November; some days in winter including Christmas; gardens and estate open all year.



ARUNDEL IS WHAT  
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SHOULD BE

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Chartwell is 20 miles (30km) northeast of Gatwick Airport. Travel times are approximately 35 mins by road, or 35 mins by rail to Oxted station followed by a 15-min taxi, or 1 hour 5 mins to Sevenoaks then a 20-min taxi.

#### 3. Arundel Castle, West Sussex

Arundel is what every child imagines a castle should be. It has battlements, towers and a spot high on a hill overlooking the rolling South Downs hills. At almost 1,000 years old, the castle has seen wars, royal visits, extensive restoration works and the invention of electricity – Arundel was one of the first English country houses with electric light. Today, the castle is filled with 16th-century furniture, tapestries and historic artworks.

Don't miss the exquisite suite of bedroom furniture that was specially made for a visit by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1846. The castle hosts a lively calendar of living history events, too.

🔗 **Websites:** [www.arundelcastle.org](https://www.arundelcastle.org)

📅 **When:** Tuesday – Sunday, April – early-November.

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Arundel Castle is 40 miles (60km) southwest of Gatwick Airport. Travel times are approximately 50 mins by road, or 50 mins by rail to Arundel station then a 20-min walk.

#### 4. Penshurst Place, West Kent

Movie fans might know Penshurst Place from *The Princess Bride*, *The Other Boleyn Girl* and *Wolf Hall*, but it was built in the 14th-century as a country retreat for the Lord Mayor of London. Since then, it has been a hunting lodge for Henry VIII, and the home of the Sidney family since 1552.

Start your tour beneath the 18-metre-high (60ft) beamed ceiling of the medieval Baron's Hall. As you explore, you will see tapestries, suits of armour and the velvet stool on which Queen Victoria was declared Empress of India. There's a delight around every corner in the charming gardens, including a Union Jack flag made of roses and lavender and a 16th-century Italian Garden around a lily pool.

🔗 **Website:** [www.penshurstplace.com](https://www.penshurstplace.com)

📅 **Open:** April – October; weekends only from mid-February.

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Penshurst Place is 20 miles (30km) east of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 40 mins by road, or 1 hour 30 mins by rail to Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells stations then a 20-min taxi.

#### 5. Polesden Lacey, Surrey Hills

Don't be fooled by Polesden Lacey's calm Regency exterior. Inside, the property is a model of Edwardian extravagance. In the early 20th century, the socialite Mrs Greville transformed the building into a weekend party house visited by celebrities, maharajahs, kings and queens. Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and the future George VI even had part of their honeymoon here.

The Gold Saloon glitters with gold leaf, Cartier and Fabergé objects, fine silverware and art by Dutch old masters, all displayed as they were during Mrs Greville's famous parties. Visit in summer to walk through gardens scented by climbing roses, lavender and thyme.



**Website:** [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/polesden-lacey](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/polesden-lacey)

**Open:** Year-round, excluding Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

**Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Polesden Lacey is 20 miles (30km) northwest of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 40 mins by road, or 25 mins by rail to Dorking station then a 15-min taxi.

### 6. Knole, Kent

Take a trip to Knole and follow a path trodden by tourists for centuries. Originally built as an archbishop's palace, the 600-year-old estate's showrooms have been open to visitors for 400 years. Knole is in Kent's last medieval deer park, which is populated by a wild deer herd and loved by walkers. Admire important collections of 17th-century tapestries and furniture and climb the spiral staircase to the roof for panoramic views.

In 2019, Knole's attics open to the public for the first time. These forgotten spaces tell the secrets of Knole's residents through items that were never meant to be seen, from 17th-century letters discovered under floorboards to graffiti and witchmarks carved into beams.

**Website:** [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/knole](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/knole)

**Open:** Showrooms, March – November; some days in winter including Christmas; park open all year.

**Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Knole House



**TAKE A TRIP TO  
KNOLE AND FOLLOW  
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is 25 miles (40km) northeast of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 40 mins by road, or 1 hour 5 mins by rail to Sevenoaks station then a 30-min walk or 10-min taxi.

### 7. Ightham Mote, Kent

This 14th-century moated manor house is deeply romantic. Its timber frame, towering chimneys and leaded windows are mirrored in the moat, which is surrounded by orchards and ancient bluebell woods. Unlike many historic houses, Ightham Mote isn't presented in one era and the changing tastes of 700 years are shown in its décor. You'll see many different styles that can be attributed to the building's past owners, including medieval knights, high-society Victorians and its last owner, an American called Charles Henry Robinson.

Admire Tudor painted ceilings, a Grade I-listed dog kennel, and Robinson's 1950s New England-style bedroom and library.

**Website:** [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ightham-mote](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ightham-mote)

**Open:** March – November; some days in winter including Christmas; gardens open all year, excluding Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

**Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Ightham Mote is 25 miles (40km) northeast of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 45 mins by road, or 1 hour 5 mins by rail to Sevenoaks station then a 15-min taxi.



**Arundel Castle,  
West Sussex**

### If you like these, you might like:

- Petworth House, West Sussex
- Standen House and Garden, West Sussex
- Scotney Castle, Kent
- Leith Hill Place, Surrey
- Bodiam Castle, East Sussex

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### Surrey

[www.visitsurrey.com](http://www.visitsurrey.com)

### South Downs National Park

[www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk)

### Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

[www.surreyhill.org](http://www.surreyhill.org)

### West Sussex

[www.experiencewestsussex.com](http://www.experiencewestsussex.com)

### West Kent

[www.visitsevenoaksdistrict.co.uk/see-and-do](http://www.visitsevenoaksdistrict.co.uk/see-and-do)

### East Sussex

[www.visitengland.com/things-to-do/east-sussex](http://www.visitengland.com/things-to-do/east-sussex)

The information in this guide is intended to assist visitors in choosing suitable places to visit. Information has been curated and produced by the Gateway Gatwick Group in good faith. Details were correct at time of going to press (July 2019). Whilst every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information shown in this publication, the Gateway Gatwick Group does not accept responsibility or liability for any of the claims made nor the information stated, especially opening times and dates.

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