

# Welcome to Gatwick

Discover what's on our doorstep

Tonbridge, Kent



## TOWNS & VILLAGES

### 8 deeply English towns and villages near Gatwick Airport

The quintessentially English towns and villages that characterise the countryside around the airport make a great base for your holiday. They're crammed with historic architecture, authentic English pubs, and independent shops crammed with clothes, art and antiques.

Live like a local and experience life in the countryside at these 8 deeply English towns and villages.

[www.gatwickairport.com/at-the-airport/flying-in/discover-local/](https://www.gatwickairport.com/at-the-airport/flying-in/discover-local/)

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*Gatwick*

#### 1. Shere, Surrey Hills AONB

The quaint village of Shere looks as if it has sprung from the pages of a fairy tale, but you might recognise it from the Bridget Jones films or The Holiday. Its location in the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the picture-perfect architecture, 12<sup>th</sup>-century church and tranquil stream make Shere popular with filmmakers, walkers – and ducks! Many of the red-brick and timber-framed buildings date from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In summer, the village overflows with flowers; in winter, cosy pubs and tea rooms take centre stage. Visit the village museum, browse independent shops and visit The Dabbling Duck Café and Deli or try Shere Delights on the banks of the Tillingbourne River for coffee, ice-cream and confectionary or use Shere as a starting point for walks into the Surrey Hills.

🔗 **Websites:** [www.sheremuseum.co.uk](http://www.sheremuseum.co.uk) | [www.thedabblingduck.uk.com](http://www.thedabblingduck.uk.com) | [www.trulyscrumptiousdelights.co.uk](http://www.trulyscrumptiousdelights.co.uk) | [www.surreyhills.org/discover/walks](http://www.surreyhills.org/discover/walks)

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Shere is 20 miles (30km) northwest of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 40 mins by road, or 1 hour 10 mins by rail from Gomshall station which is 1 mile (1.6km) from Shere.

#### 2. Guildford, Surrey

There are plenty of reasons to spend a day or three in Guildford, on the edge of the Surrey Hills. This historic market town has history, heritage, shopping and restaurants by the bucket load.

Before you explore the town's cobbled streets, climb up to the Medieval Castle Keep for views of Guildford and the surrounding countryside. On the High Street, don't miss the ornate black-and-gold bracket clock on the Tudor Guildhall, or The Undercroft, a stone-vaulted basement that was once a wealthy merchant's showroom. Alice in Wonderland fans can discover Guildford's Lewis Carroll connections in the Guildford Museum and visit the writer's grave. The Guildford Town Guides' walking tours are a great way to

find out more about Carroll and Guildford, from its oldest street to its ghosts.

🔗 **Website:** [www.visitsurrey.com/explore/guildford-p196111](http://www.visitsurrey.com/explore/guildford-p196111)

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Guildford is 25 miles (40km) west of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 50 mins by road, or 40 mins by rail to Guildford station.

#### 3. Chiddingstone, Kent

Owned almost entirely by the National Trust, pretty Chiddingstone is one of England's finest examples of a one-street Tudor village. Among the half-timbered buildings leaning over the cobbled pavement you'll see what is thought to be the country's oldest working shop; it was once owned by Anne Boleyn's father. Now, it's a gift shop, Post Office and cosy tea room.

The name 'Chiddingstone' derives from the mysterious Chiding Stone, a large sandstone outcrop behind the village school. No one knows why it's called that, but some say it was once a place to tell off nagging wives. At the edge of the village, the privately owned Chiddingstone Castle is a mock-medieval historic house with Tudor origins. It houses a fascinating collection of art and antiquities, and there's a tea room, gift shop and antiques and second-hand bookshop, too.

🔗 **Websites:** [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chiddingstone-village](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chiddingstone-village) | [www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk](http://www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk)

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Chiddingstone is 20 miles (30km) east of Gatwick. Travel time is approximately 40 mins by road.

#### 4. Pantiles, Kent

Thanks to the discovery of a natural spring in 1606, the Pantiles in Royal Tunbridge Wells became a popular destination for gentry and royalty, attracted by the health-giving qualities of the mineral-rich waters. A typical 17<sup>th</sup>-century holiday in Royal Tunbridge Wells involved drinking at least 2.5 pints of the water every day, attending chapel, meeting at a coffee house or a pipe house, and promenading along the 'Walks'.

Today, the Pantiles is still stylish, with independent shops, galleries and cafes spilling out of the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings, and if you time your visit right, you can still sample the waters from the Chalybeate Spring – although brunch in one of the Pantiles' elegant eateries is much tastier! Four miles up the road is the charming market town of Tonbridge, where you can also find Tonbridge Castle.

🔗 **Websites:** [www.thepantiles.com](http://www.thepantiles.com) | [www.visittunbridgewells.com](http://www.visittunbridgewells.com)

📍 **Getting there from Gatwick airport:** Pantiles in Royal Tunbridge Wells is 20 miles (30km) east of Gatwick. Travel time is approximately 40 mins by road.

#### 5. Rye, East Sussex

Quaint Rye is utterly enchanting. This small hilly town near the south coast is one of Britain's best-preserved medieval towns, steeped in intrigue and charm. It's easy to imagine the town's infamous smugglers sneaking along cobbled Mermaid Street to the 15<sup>th</sup>-century Mermaid Inn. Or American author Henry James pondering the plot for his next novel while walking past the crooked black and white half-timbered houses.

Nowadays, antiques shops, independent boutiques and art galleries line the adorable streets, and the courtyard garden of James's home, National



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VILLAGE



Trust-owned Lamb House, is an idyllic spot for tea and cake. Rye even has a castle, Ypres Tower, which houses Rye Castle Museum; climb the tower for far-reaching views to the Rother estuary. If you can tear yourself away, go to Rye Harbour Nature Reserve to spot seals and sheep, or picnic among the dunes of vast Camber Sands.

Website: [www.visit1066country.com/explore-1066-country/rye](http://www.visit1066country.com/explore-1066-country/rye)

Getting there from Gatwick airport: Rye is 55 miles (90km) southeast of Gatwick. Travel time is approximately 1 hour 35 mins by road.

#### 6. Lewes, East Sussex

Lewes Castle has been standing guard over the serene county town of Lewes for almost 1,000 years. A climb to the castle is rewarded with views of the medieval 'twittens' (a local word for alleyways) below and chalk cliffs all around.

The town today buzzes with independent shops selling books, antiques and clothes, contemporary art galleries and historic pubs. About half-way along elegant Cliffe High Street you'll find Harvey's Brewery, which has been wafting the scent of hops through the town since the 19th century. Don't miss Anne of Cleve's House, a 15th-century timber-framed building that was given to Anne as part of her divorce settlement from King Henry VIII; it's now a museum of Tudor and Elizabethan life.

Websites: [www.visitlewes.co.uk](http://www.visitlewes.co.uk)

QUAINT TEA  
ROOMS, COSY PUBS AND  
EXCELLENT RESTAURANTS  
ALONG THE COBBLED  
STREETS

Getting there from Gatwick airport: Lewes is 30 miles (50km) south of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 40 mins by road, or 35 mins by rail to Lewes station.

#### 7. Petworth, West Sussex

Petworth has enough independent bookshops, galleries and clothing boutiques to fill your suitcase with souvenirs, but the antiques are the real star of the market town's shopping scene. 'The Antiques Centre of the South' is the only place outside London with more than 30 arts and antiques dealers within a mile radius. Cute tea rooms, cosy pubs and excellent restaurants along the cobbled streets will help keep you going.

Between the South Downs National Park and the edge of the town is Petworth House and Park. The state rooms of this 17th-century stately home display the finest art collection in the National Trust's care. Get some fresh air after all those antiques and artworks with a walk through the Pleasure Ground and expansive Lancelot 'Capability' Brown landscaped Deer Park.

Website: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house-and-park](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house-and-park)

Getting there from Gatwick airport: Petworth is 30 miles (50km) southwest of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 50 mins by road, or 40 mins by rail to Pulborough station then a 10-min taxi.

#### 8. Chichester, West Sussex

The best way to get your bearings in stylish Chichester is with a walk along the

Roman City Walls, which date from the third century. Nearly 1.5 miles (2.5km) long, they're the most intact Roman walls in the south of England. Take a detour through the flower-filled Bishops Palace Gardens and into Chichester Cathedral, which has been watching over this small city for more than nine centuries. Explore the cathedral on a free guided tour (11.15am and 2.30pm, Monday – Saturday; no booking necessary); if you're visiting in spring or early summer, you might be lucky enough to see the peregrine falcons who raise their chicks each year in the 600-year-old spire.

Nearby Pallant House Gallery is a leap into the present, thanks to its internationally recognised collection of British art from 1900 to the present day. Stay in the 21st century with a walk among cutting-edge sculpture in beautiful woodland at the Cass Sculpture Garden, a 15-minute drive from the town centre.

Website: [www.visitchichester.org](http://www.visitchichester.org) | [www.chichestercathedral.org.uk](http://www.chichestercathedral.org.uk)  
[www.sculpture.org.uk](http://www.sculpture.org.uk)

Getting there from Gatwick airport: Chichester is 45 miles (70km) southwest of Gatwick. Travel times are approximately 1 hour by road or 1 hour by rail to Chichester station. mins by rail to Guildford station then a 10-min taxi.

### OUR PARTNERS:

#### Gatwick Airport

[www.gatwickairport.com/at-the-airport/flying-in/discover-local/](http://www.gatwickairport.com/at-the-airport/flying-in/discover-local/)

#### 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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