

Discover Rutland

EXAMPLE TEXT

Discover Rutland – The County of Good Taste: Overview

Rutland is one of the best kept secrets of the English countryside and is absolutely brimming with things to see and do. In fact, the county motto is 'Multum In Parvo', which means 'Much in Little'.

The county is home to two picturesque market towns and some fantastic attractions; the largest attraction, Rutland Water is the ideal family leisure destination in the heart the county. It's one of the largest reservoirs in Europe and is as spectacular in beauty as it is in size. With 1,000 acres designated to the internationally famous nature reserve, which regularly holds in excess of 25,000 waterfowl, Rutland Water's appeal is wider ranging, as other areas of the water specialise in the of enjoyment of sailing, cycling, windsurfing, or simply admiring the views from the shore.

Away from Rutland Water there are plenty of other attractions to tempt the visitor. Barnsdale Gardens in Exton features 38 individually designed gardens in an 8 acre site, where you are bound to find some inspiration. Toleshorpe Hall celebrates being home to the Stamford Shakespeare Company for 50 years in 2018; each year it offers magical performances of Shakespearean classics and family favourites in an open air everglade stage, yet with a comfy covered auditorium. Oakham Castle is England's most complete Norman Great Hall with a unique interior showcasing historic decorative horseshoes.

Known at The County of Good Taste, Rutland is proud of its farming and agricultural background and it is thanks to this strong tradition of supporting local produce that there is an excellent selection of quality food and drink available now, not only when eating out, but also with local businesses producing delicious fare to enjoy in your own home. Choose from a selection of restaurants demonstrating the pinnacle of culinary expertise, country inns offering quality pub grub and many cafes with exceptional cakes and treats.

Market Towns

Rutland is home to two traditional market towns that are both full of independent retailer. A visit to Rutland would not be complete without enjoying some time in the pretty county town of **Oakham**. This small but perfectly formed market town has something for everyone – if you like to shop, you will love the boutiques, art galleries, jewellery designers and the popular local farmers market on the third Saturday of every month. If you like history, follow the Oakham Heritage Trail and discover the hidden gems around town, starting at the excellent Rutland County Museum, it takes you to many historical buildings including Oakham Castle. If a relaxing pint is what you're after, Oakham has its very own

brewery: The Grainstore Brewery offers real ale drinkers a real treat, pop in and sample the many brews on tap.

Uppingham is the smallest town in Rutland and is a quintessentially English market town that has kept its old traditions and traders. The majority of shops are still family run and provide a high level of personal service, you can find many of these on High Street and Market Place – but there are lots of unique retailers hidden away along ancient alleyways. Uppingham is renowned for its excellent range of antiques stores, fine art galleries and bookshops, you can meander around town all day and rest your legs in one of the homely tea rooms.

Rutland Water

Rutland Water is the largest man-made reservoir in Europe and an amazing spot for every type of watersport; Set in 4200 acres of open countryside, Rutland Water lies at the very heart of the county and is as spectacular in beauty as it is in size. Created in the 1970's to meet an ever increasing demand for water, nowadays it's widely regarded as a leading centre for water and land based leisure activities and has year round appeal for fishermen, cyclists, sailors and bird watchers. Whether you bring the family, come on your own, or in a group, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Cycling and walking

The whole county is excellent for cyclists and walkers with beautiful scenic routes going all around and crisscrossing the county. The Rutland Round is a complete tour around the perimeter of the county totalling 65 miles. Phew! If that sounds a bit daunting, there are plenty of shorter walking or cycling routes to discover too. The route around Rutland Water is a must with lots of country pubs or waterside cafes to stop off for a break or to take in the scenery.

And don't worry if you don't have your own bike, Rutland Cycling have hire stops by the water at Whitwell and Normanton where you can even hire tandem bicycles! They are also the UK's leading electric bike shop, so you can find out the advantages of going electric.

Gardens

Rutland is scattered with exquisite and historic gardens and even has one of the last remaining medieval turf mazes in England at Wing. Barnsdale Gardens is the most famous garden attraction in the county featuring a magnificent 38 gardens built by Britain's best loved gardener, the late Geoff Hamilton, star of Gardener's World. There's also a fabulous tea room full of tempting homemade and locally sourced delights.

If you're looking for a Garden Centre to spend an afternoon in, you'll be spoilt for choice. Each having their own speciality, from the small Herb Nursery in Thistleton, to the mecca of Gates Garden Centre. For those near Uppingham, head to Welland Vale Garden Inspirations, you cannot miss Rutland Water

Garden Nurseries if you're cycling around the water, plus you're in for a treat if you've not discovered Rutland Garden Village at Ashwell yet!

Food & Drink

Rutland is justly proud of its farming and agricultural background and it is thanks to this strong tradition of supporting local produce that there is an excellent selection of quality food and drink available in the county. The local pub is still an important feature of village life, which means you are never far away from a great place to eat. Rutland may be small but it is home to many restaurants demonstrating the pinnacle of culinary expertise. Hambleton Hall has the longest retained Michelin Star and is one of Britain's finest country house hotels, with a spectacular lakeside setting it is a haven for gourmets and wine lovers. The Good Pub Guide praises numerous pubs in the county, with The Olive Branch pub in Clipsham always a firm favourite. This traditional country pub has a warm and welcoming feel; in summer enjoy a seasonal drink or two outside and in winter take your place in the warmth of the pub by a roaring log fire and choose from the widely acclaimed menu. The Kings Arms Inn is fast becoming one of Rutland's top eateries; with its own smokehouse, the team are passionate about creating and serving good honest food using very local produce and this has been recognised by achieved 2 AA rosettes. Not forgetting the Grainstore in Oakham where you can not only enjoy a pub atmosphere in the converted railway grain warehouse, but also tour the brewery where they create the local ales.

Don't miss - Rutland Food & Drink Week

This wonderful foodie extravaganza will be held around the October half term. Highlighting a variety of events and special promotions around the county including food markets, beer festivals, themed menus and a chance to meet some of the local food & drink producers. See www.discover-rutland.co.uk/food-week for details.

Top 5 Tips

- 1. Bike around Rutland Water;** bring your own bikes, or pre book bike hire from Rutland Cycling.
- 2. Visit gardens or parkland;** from the collection of individually designed areas at Barnsdale Gardens, to the extensive grounds at Burghley House, there is plenty of outdoor space to explore.
- 3. Wander the market towns of Uppingham and Oakham** and enjoy a spot of shopping, be it for antiques or the latest fashion, with the requisite afternoon tea stop!
- 4. Eat alfresco;** a great opportunity to embrace the changes and discover pub gardens coming to life offering fantastic local food and drink
- 5. Stay somewhere special;** Rutland has lots of quality accommodation to make your holiday memorable, choose from luxury country house hotels, cosy cottages, boutique B&B's, restaurants with rooms and the most glamorous glamping options from In the Stix domes to A Little Bit of Rough canvas lodges.