

## STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

Set on the banks of the river Avon in the beautiful Warwickshire countryside Stratford-upon-Avon is steeped in history and culture and is the birthplace of William Shakespeare. The River Avon flows through the middle of town and there was once a trade route linking the British Waterways Canal network to the Midlands.

William Shakespeare was born in Henley Street, Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564 and at 18 he married Anne Hathaway. He spent between 1585 and 1593 in London where his success began as an actor and writer. He soon became actor-manager and part-owner of a playing company called the Chamberlain's Men and afterwards The Globe Theatres. The 37 plays he wrote vary from historical romances, comedies and tragedies. He returned to Stratford in 1613 and died there in 1616 at the age of 52 and is buried at the Holy Trinity Church.

The Royal Shakespeare Theatre (RST) is a large national theatre owned by the Royal Shakespeare Company, the RSC is probably the most famous classical theatre company in the world. A registered charity, the Royal Shakespeare Company relies on public support. Attend a performance of one of the Bard's plays or take a guided tour of the theatre.

In Henley Street stroll around the house where William Shakespeare was born find out how his father earned his living as a glove maker. Explore where William and Anne Hathaway started their married life.

See the beautiful childhood home of Anne Hathaway – Anne Hathaway's cottage is set in stunning gardens planted out with traditional flowers, shrubs and vegetables. The cottage belonged to the Hathaway family until 1892, when it was bought, along with furnishings, by The Birthplace Trust. Set in the hamlet of Shottery many of Shakespeare's works, appear to be inspired by the surrounding countryside in and around the Arden Forest.

Transport yourself back to 1570's at Mary Arden's House the childhood home of Shakespeare's mother. See Tudor life on the farm and learn how the daily bread was baked and how the kitchen garden was maintained. Meet our rare breeds and even help look after the pigs, cattle and sheep.

The Avon is a popular river with cruisers and narrowboats view the peaceful villages and the surrounding countryside. Experience Stratford from the River hire your own rowing boat or enjoy a lunch of fine cuisine on board one of the many pleasure crafts.

The Bancroft Gardens are in front of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and alongside the River Avon and it has a wonderful atmosphere with its open-air entertainers. In the gardens stands a statue of William Shakespeare with four characters from his plays representing Philosophy, Tragedy, Comedy and History.

Whatever the weather outside at the Butterfly farm you will experience conditions of an exotic rainforest. Watch hundreds of colourful butterflies flying all around can see them feeding and flying in a wonderful tropical environment hundreds of the world's most spectacular and colourful butterflies flying all around. You can see them feeding and flying in a wonderful tropical environment . If you are brave get close to the deadly and dangerous spiders in Arachnoland.