

## WARWICK

Situated on the banks of the River Avon Warwick has become famous for its historic buildings which have featured in many TV's drama series such as 'Dangerfield', 'Pride and Prejudice', 'Tom Jones' and 'Moll Flanders'.

The Grand Union Canal runs through the town and was built for industrial transport, especially coal. The Canal joins two of England's largest cities, Birmingham and London and is 135 miles long and has 160 locks. The Hatton Flight, just west of Warwick, is a flight containing 21 locks over just two miles. Opened in 1799 it was built to carry locally mined coal to the power stations and factories of the Black Country. It was also a vital link connecting London with the Midlands.

Warwick Castle was founded almost 1,100 years. In 914AD Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, ordered the building of a 'burh' or an earthen rampart to protect the small hill top settlement of Warwick from Danish invaders. In 1705 the world famous gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown was commissioned to landscape the gardens. If you visit today go back in time to 1898 and be a guest at a house party hosted by Daisy, Countess of Warwick meet Daisy and her friends preparing for their party. The Castle has experienced some of the bloodiest and frightening times in history are you brave enough to visit the dungeons ? Or be taken back to 1345 when the town was gripped by the plague? Enter the labyrinth of lost soles a scary mirror maze or view close up the implements of torture and execution.

There has been a Church on the site of St Mary's since Saxon times. The imposing tower of St Mary's Collegiate Church can be viewed from almost anywhere in Warwick. Rebuilt by Sir William Wilson in 1704 after the great fire of Warwick. Climb the 134 steps to the top of the tower and marvel at the glorious views of the town, the surrounding countryside and the Castle.

The Lord Leycester Hospital has never been an actual hospital but the word hospital is used in its ancient sense meaning "a charitable institution for the housing of the needy, infirm or aged". In the reign of Queen Elizabeth I it became a place of retirement for old warriors and their wives. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester converted the buildings of the dissolved Warwick Guilds into a retreat for the old soldiers. Today it still remains an independent charity providing a home for ex-Servicemen and their wives.

St. Johns House museum tells the history of the 6th Foot (Royal Warwickshire Regiment). Hear the story of the "Warwickshire Lads" revealed through a mix of real objects, uniforms, weapons, equipment, medals, pictures, documents. St. John's House Museum occupies the ground floor of this 17th century historic house. Explore the Victorian school room and the kitchen to explore and experience of how people lived in the past.

Set amidst historic building are a vast array of antique shops and second hand bookshops. Warwick has a great variety of cafés, restaurants and other eateries. For Centuries Warwick has been hosting the annual Mop Fair and Runaway Mop Fair and are the towns oldest traditions. It first started nearly seven hundred years ago when the event was for a hiring local labourers. During the industrial revolution came along rides which became a feature of the Mop. In the beginning pedalled rides then steam power and now the white knuckle rides of today.

Experience the thrill of the races visit Warwick Racecourse next to Warwick Castle, the racecourse is one of the oldest in the country with racing having taken place since the 1700s.

