

W
ENGLAND'S
WATERWAYS



DISCOVER THE ENGLISH WATERWAYS BY NARROWBOAT

*Explore the heart of England and Shakespeare's
County in the slow lane*

Journey to the heart of England

DISCOVER SHAKESPEARE'S STRATFORD BY NARROWBOAT

Your journey along the Stratford-upon-Avon will immerse you in miles of stunning canals, taking in beautiful surroundings, from historic villages and quiet country pubs to market towns bustling with Englishness, all whilst relaxing on your very own narrowboat.

Your waterways adventure will reveal wonderful English countryside, taking you to places that you won't have experienced before. You'll feel the freedom and peacefulness of cruising along the water, slowing down the pace and taking time to relax and enjoy your very own English waterways experience.



What to expect:



Travel and accommodation

Trains to and from airport, then travel and stay on your own traditional narrow boat.



Unique Experiences

- Mary Arden's Farm
- Self-drive narrow boating short break
- Shakespeare's Stratford
- Gin Experience



Dining options

A range of traditional English pubs and contemporary dining option along the way.

Arrival information:

Arrive into Birmingham International Airport and take a train or taxi to Wooten Wawen.

All of our hire bases are within a reasonable taxi ride or train journey from Birmingham Airport and the Great British Boating team can provide all of the necessary details and contacts for you to arrange your transfers.

Meet and greet with your boat hire operator and familiarise with your narrowboat. Once you've learnt the ropes, begin cruising along the canal.



WATERWAY ITINERARY: STRATFORD CANAL

DURATION: 3-4 DAY SHORT-BREAK

Overview

Distance: 10.5 km

Locks: 18

Cruising time: 6 hours



The Stratford-upon-Avon Canal runs from Birmingham's suburbia to Shakespeare's Stratford in a total of 25 picturesque miles, memorable for its split bridges - built with a gap to allow the tow ropes of the boat horses to pass through - and its unique barrel roofed lock cottages.

Your journey to Stratford-upon-Avon will take one day each way, allowing you to spend two or three nights in Stratford.

Your journey begins in the village of Wootton Wawen, a charming area with many ancient timber-framed houses and only a short train ride from Birmingham. After some training on how to handle your narrowboat and navigate the locks, your voyage awaits in the nearby marina.

Once on the water, the canal takes a sharp bend as you arrive at the first lock and the Edstone Aqueduct, the longest in aqueduct in England located in a secluded stretch of waterway. You then pass through the historic village of Wilmcote, home to some quintessentially English pubs and Mary Arden's Farm, a historic half-timbered Tudor farmhouse where Shakespeare's mother lived before she was married.

After a series of 18 locks, the canal joins the River Avon at the Bancroft Basin in Stratford-upon-Avon. Along the waterfront paths, you will uncover the picturesque setting of Bancroft Gardens and the world-famous Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Moor your Narrowboat here and enjoy a prime position in the centre of town for the next two nights.

Stratford-upon-Avon is one of England's most famous medieval market towns with more than 800 years of history. The streets contain many of the 15th and 16th century buildings that would have been familiar to Shakespeare. This thriving town also offers a wide variety of leisure, accommodation and shopping experiences.

Start by following in the footsteps of the famous bard and embark on a journey through his extraordinary life. Discover Shakespeare's Birthplace, the house in which he was born and grew up in. Explore the different rooms, learn about 16th century life and hear tales of the family's colourful history from costumed guides.

WATERWAY ITINERARY: STRATFORD CANAL

DURATION: 3-4 DAY SHORT-BREAK

Overlooking the 13th century Guild Chapel is Shakespeare's New Place, the Bard's residence for the last 19 years of his life. Since it's demolition in 1759, a commemorative garden has been designed in its place. Enter through a spectacular new entrance built on the site of the original gatehouse. Wander through the restored Elizabethan gardens and specially-commissioned artworks inspired by Shakespeare's work.

And finally, visit the final resting place and grave of William Shakespeare at Holy Trinity Church, one of England's most beautiful parish churches. This is where William Shakespeare was baptised and where he would have worshipped.

In the evening relax over a glass of locally made Shakespeare Distillery Gin and tonic in the award-winning selection of bars and restaurants before you return to your narrowboat for the night.

