



AllWays Traveller

Rutland, UK

www.allwaystraveller.com

Discovering the delights of England's smallest county

Rutland, which is England's smallest county, is waiting to be discovered by visitors looking for all that is best in the English countryside.

Close to the M1 and A1 road networks makes it easy to get to Rutland while also ensuring that most of the country's road traffic passes on by.

What visitors to Rutland find, therefore, are two busy market towns, in Oakham and Uppingham, and any number of picturesque villages of stone-built cottages with thatched roofs, village greens and thriving country pubs.

Rutland Water, the UK's largest man made reservoir offers all manner of water sports and is an important nature reserve and breeding site for ospreys.

This is a destination for those wanting to combine a relaxing break in beautiful English countryside while enjoying fine locally produced food and real ales.

Ashley Gibbins

Managing Editor
AllWays traveller



www.discover-rutland.co.uk

A county town of real note

Rutland's county town of Oakham is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086,

Its castle, a fortified Norman manor house, has a collection of horse shoes gathered from visiting nobility including members of the Royal family.



An independent view of Rutland

A small pocket of peaceful England

by Ashley Gibbins

Rutland's latin motto is *Multum in Parvo*, which translates as *Much in Little* and this is oh so true.



The county's tourism campaign, in turn, encourages us to *Discover Rutland* and this is one invitation I would urge you to accept.

But the last phrase you will hear is *Everyone for themselves*.

For Rutland is a county whose residents, or *Raddlemen*, cherish the unspoilt, quality of life they enjoy and who realise that the best way to preserve this is work together and support each other.

The county also takes a real pride in being able to give visitors a glimpse, a feel and indeed a taste of the best that Rutland has to offer.

Take things down three or four notches

Take a short break to Rutland and you will find a pocket of England that demands you take things down three or four notches for a couple of days.



If so, you will unwind while walking, or maybe cycling, along footpaths that wend their way through gently rolling English countryside or beside Rutland Water.



You may up the pace just slightly to browse in the county's two bustling market towns of Oakham and Uppingham.

And when you take to the car it will be to meander through Rutland's many picturesque villages and hamlets.

In brief

Rutland's market towns

Oakham



Oakham, the county town of Rutland, is a traditional, bustling English country town market with an historic market place and a Britain in Bloom award.

Rutland County Museum in Oakham, which charts the history of the town, is a good place to start a visit.

Uppingham

The pleasant market town of Uppingham is particularly well known as an antiques centre, which alone is worth a visit.

www.uppinghamfirst.co.uk

Village life



Rutland has many small villages and hamlets to explore including :

Edith Weston

In 1030 Edward the Confessor bequeathed Rutland to his wife Edith and the village was at the extreme western area of Edith's lands.

Gunthorpe

William the Conqueror made reference to Gunthorpe in the Domesday book. The population grew to several hundred before being devastated by the plague in the 14th Century.

A destination waiting to be explored

The people responsible for Discover Rutland know they have a great destination waiting to be explored and their website has a whole host of guided walks and drives to help you on your way.

And to crown it all, you will most certainly enjoy some wonderful food, wine and real Rutland ales and English ciders.

Real English inns and ales

Fancy a refreshing pint in that 'olde' English country inn? These are to be found in most of Rutland's villages.



And while the frustration of some destinations is to find somewhere (anywhere) to get a good meal, in Rutland the frustration is that the choice can be just too great.

When it comes to casual fine dining, focus on the fresh and locally produced food served in any number of excellent pubs and restaurants throughout the county.

It is really quite something to enjoy a memorable breakfast, lunch and/or dinner of fare almost totally bred, grown or produced within a fifty mile radius.

Many of the producers and suppliers welcome visitors and this also provides the opportunity to take the produce home.

Festivals and events

Finally, if you time your trip right you can enjoy one of the many country festivals staged each year in the county.

The British Bird Watching Fair (19 to 21 August 2011) which is the world's largest international birdwatching event, takes place here every August and attracts over 20,000 visitors who come to listen to celebrity seminars, stock up on gadgets and spot the bird life on Rutland Water.

The Rutland Food Festival (17 September 2011) takes place every September and is a celebration of the wonderful food and drink on offer in and around Rutland.

The festival brings together small family run farm shops, traditional bakeries and award winning producers of ciders and beers, pork pies and cheeses.



Finally, **The Rutland Beer Festival** is held at The Grainstore Brewery, Oakham every August Bank Holiday weekend.

The festival brings together a wide range of real ales from around the UK.

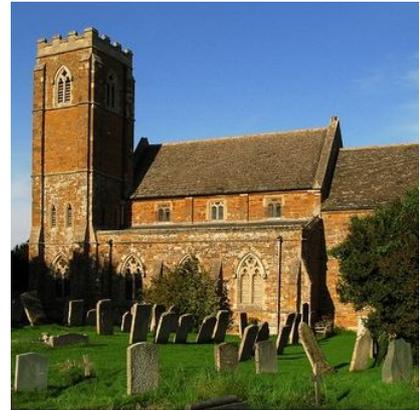
It features over seventy real ales, including the Brewery's Rutland ales and there's live entertainment and barbecues every day.

Stoke Dry

This village of around 14 houses, in the hillside overlooking the Eyebrook Reservoir.

It is here where, it is said, the Gunpowder Plot conspirators met in the small room above the church.

Bisbrooke



A small village straddling an ironstone ridge between two brooks and it is from one of these streams that Bisbrooke takes its name.

Hambleton



The village is situated on the Hambleton Peninsula with Rutland Water surrounding it on three sides.

Its name derives from 'the settlement' (tun) 'on the crooked hill' (Hamble).

Langham

Meaning long village or long water meadow, Langham owes its origins to the Anglo Saxons.

Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman remains have also been found within the parish.

The Domesday Book records Oakham as having five hamlets of which Langham was one.

The county's glistening jewel

Rutland Water nature reserve, owned and managed by Anglian Water, is the jewel glistening at the county's heart and an absolute must on a visit.



There is the chance to enjoy any number of activities on or around this majestic man made stretch of water, be it sailing or kayaking, trout fishing or bird watching.

A 25-mile pathway is ideal for those looking to cycle or walk part or all of its shoreline.

Alternatively head to Upper Hambleton and do the eight mile peninsular trail, which can be just as rewarding and allows for refreshment at the delightful Finch's Arms (www.finchsarms.co.uk).

There are two visitor centres which make a great starting point for those wanting to appreciate the bird and wildlife of the water.

The Rutland Belle offers cruises on the water and also runs dedicated Osprey cruises between April and August.

www.anglianwater.co.uk/leisure/what-to-see/water-parks/rutland

Taking Rutland's food and drink trail

Rutland residents do seem particularly keen on eating locally produced food and visitors soon come to realise that this is by far the best bet.



Discovering Rutland means discovering its locally produced meat, fish and cheeses; fruit and vegetables and bread. And, of course, its real ale.

Pubs and restaurants throughout the county will highlight those dishes on the menu that use the best of what is local and in season.

Eat and drink Rutland

Eat drink Rutland, which can be ordered free or downloaded from the Discover Rutland website highlights local eateries that do their utmost to source and serve the best local produce.

It also contains a comprehensive listing of all pubs, restaurants and cafes in Rutland, as well as information about local food producers and markets.

www.discover-rutland.co.uk

Market Overton



The settlement at Market Overton, which dates back to Roman times, was important in Saxon times too with an early pagan cemetery that has revealed many fine grave goods. The church tower dates to the 10th century.

There are references to a market here from early 12th century with the village green probably being the location of the medieval market place.

Normanton

All that remains of Normanton, after the creation of Rutland Water, is a few farms, a hotel and cottages.

The iconic Normanton Church sits at the edge of Rutland Water.

Whitwell

Named after the spring which flows beneath the church, which is called 'the white spring', or 'the white well'.

Whitwell claims to be twinned with Paris, France because, in the 1970's, regulars wrote to the Mayor of Paris proposing this twinning with a tight deadline for a response.

When no answer arrived, the village unilaterally declared itself to be twinned and erected road signs to that effect.

Village walks



You can download a village walks leaflet from the Discover Rutland website.

When to go to Rutland



Being England the best time to visit Rutland, and in order to enjoy all that the county has to offer, is spring, summer and early autumn.

That said, a winter or early spring break with brisk walks followed by a warming in front of a roaring fire in a country pub can be very rewarding.

How to get to there

By Road

Rutland enjoys a central location in the heart of England, which makes accessing the county very easy.

It lies just off the A1, roughly half way between London and York with the A47 from Leicester to Peterborough also passing through the county.

By Rail

Oakham, the county town of Rutland, has its own railway station providing visitors with rail connections to the rest of the country.

There is a daily direct rail link from London and connections from Oakham to Peterborough, Leicester, Nottingham and beyond.

www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk

By Air

The nearest commercial airport is the East Midlands Airport at Castle Donington in North Leicestershire, which is 38 miles from Oakham.

Where to stay

There is an abundance of holiday and short break accommodation in Rutland.

In addition to the hotels, many of Rutland's traditional country inns offer a place to stay and there are any number of guest houses and bed & breakfasts.

For those who want to remain in the outdoors, there's camping and caravanning sites, including family orientated and adult only sites.

www.discover-rutland.co.uk

Two options

Barnsdale Lodge Hotel

Barnsdale Lodge Hotel is a fine hotel on the North shore of Rutland Water and a short drive from Oakham.

It has a particularly fine conservatory restaurant which is also open to non residents for breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner

Barnsdale Lodge is also dog friendly and reserves some rooms for guests with well trained dogs.

www.barnsdalelodge.co.uk

Beech House

Beech House is a delightful bed and breakfast in the picturesque village of Clipsham.

It has six bedrooms and suites, all individually and exquisitely decorated to the highest standards.

Breakfast is served in the Olive Branch across the road.

(see The Olive Branch in *What and where to eat*).

Hambleton Hall

Hambleton Hall, a Relais and Chateaux property, is one of Britain's finest country house hotels. It has a spectacular lakeside setting and gourmet restaurant.

www.hambletonhall.com

What and where to eat

Rutland has a high number of excellent places to eat in a very small area with emphasis on local produce.

While restaurants tend to be clustered in Oakham and Uppingham there are some wonderful, award winning, country pubs in the county serving delicious bar snacks, lunches and dinners.

And don't forget to try the local ales.

Eat Drink Rutland, a handy guide to the best places to eat and drink in the county, can be downloaded from the Discover Rutland website.

www.discover-rutland.co.uk

One particular recommendation :

The Olive Branch



The Olive Branch which is situated in the picturesque village of Clipsham, and just two miles off the A1, is a shining example of the fine food and fare available in Rutland.

This pub, which was originally three farm labourers cottages knocked together to make a pub in 1890, is now one of the most popular inns in the county.

This Michelin Pub of the Year (2008) and Good Pub Guide Inn of the Year (2008) also has a Michelin star restaurant.

The Olive Branch also offers accommodation in Beech House opposite the pub.

www.theolivebranchpub.com

What to do in Rutland

The Rutland discovery trails

These seven circular driving trails start in either Oakham or Uppingham and enable visitors to drive through a different part of the county.

They also provide an insight into the history of Rutland villages while also highlighting eateries and attractions en-route.

The trails can be downloaded from the Discover Rutland website.

Walking and cycling

Rutland is well suited for walking and cycling, with water, village and countryside trails and routes.

The ospreys



Now in their seventeenth year, Rutland Water is home to the first Ospreys to breed in England for 150 years. These magnificent birds arrive from Africa in late March to breed and remain through to their Autumn migration.

www.ospreys.org.uk

The farmers' market



Farmers' markets in Uppingham (1st Saturday) and Oakham (3rd Saturday) sell local fruit, vegetables and other goods from local suppliers.

Northfield Farm

Northfield Farm, near Oakham, has gained a national reputation for its free range premium quality beef, lamb and pork which has lived well.

The farm itself is also a local attraction with a farm trail, craft and wine workshops, farm shop and café.

www.northfieldfarm.com

Hambleton Bakery



Hambleton Bakery in Exton specialises in traditional breadmaking.

www.hambletonbakery.co.uk

Just over the border

Those willing to leave Rutland for a short distance will find :

Rockingham Castle



Rockingham Castle was built by William the Conqueror and is the best example of a Norman Castle in Britain. It has been owned by the same family for 450 years.

www.rockinghamcastle.com

Burghley House

Burghley House, in Stamford is one of the largest and grandest houses of the first Elizabethan Age and home to the annual, three-day Burghley Horse Trials each September.

www.burghley.co.uk and
www.burghley-horse.co.uk

Belvoir Castle

Belvoir Castle dates back to Norman times. It has been the ancestral home of the Duke and Duchess of Rutland for one thousand years and is currently the family home of the 11th Duke and Duchess.

www.belvoircastle.com

Deene Park

Deene Park has grown from a mediaeval manor to a Tudor and Georgian mansion. It is still owned by the Brudenell family who first occupied it in 1514.

www.deenepark.com

Grimsthorpe Castle

Grimsthorpe Castle is an historic house, park and gardens in rolling Lincolnshire countryside.

www.grimsthorpe.co.uk

And did you know ...

Motto

Rutland residents are known as 'Raddlemen'

Horsehoes

Peers of the realm who pass through Oakham for the first time must give a horseshoe to the Lord of the Manor, this unique custom started over 500 years ago and still continues today.

Over 200 horseshoes are displayed in Oakham Castle (which is actually a Great Hall), the oldest surviving horseshoe is said to have been given by Edward IV in about 1470.

Nurdling

Rutland hosts a World Championship of Nurdling every late May Bank Holiday.

Nurdling dates back to the middle ages, competitors throw old pennies on to a drilled hole in a wooden seat.

This takes place at The Jackson Stops in Stretton and the winner is known as the 'Best Tosser'



More information :

www.discover-rutland.co.uk

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AllWays

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The International Travel Writers Alliance

www.itwalliance.com

The International Travel Writers Alliance is the worlds largest association of professional travel writers, editors, broadcasters and photographers.

Ashley Gibbins



Ashley Gibbins, a third generation journalist, is Chief Executive of the International Travel Writers Alliance.