

February half term frolics in Shakespeare's England!

Celebrate the spring half term from 15 – 21 February in Shakespeare's England with a host of exciting activities. Sing songs inspired by Shakespeare at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, head to Kenilworth Castle for their Knights & Princesses Academy, design a piece of automata for the MAD Museum or visit the new British Motor Museum to build a British car. Shakespeare's England is the place to visit this half term to keep the kids entertained!

To coincide with the launch of the **Royal Shakespeare Company's** forthcoming production, *A Midsummer Night's Dream: A play for the Nation*, the Stratford-upon-Avon based theatre company is offering families a whole host of activities based on the magical play. Highlights include singing songs inspired by Shakespeare's mystical play, creating your own version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in a day with help from an RSC expert and exploring a range of props, costumes and accessories based on the fairies and Athenian court.

The RSC has commissioned a brand new self-guided tour to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's legacy. **Shakespeare Steps** invites people to follow in the footsteps of the world's most famous playwright. The free self-guided tour, which involves eight locations, will run alongside Stratford's historic spine. At each stop visitors can follow footsteps and speech bubbles painted on pavements that work as instructions for acting out mini dramas. The tour launches on 30 January and a free map will also be available to guide visitors, give them historical background and will also feature a treasure hunt challenge for children.

Visit **Shakespeare's Birthplace** to discover the toys young William would have played with. Put your hands into the feel boxes to work out what is hidden inside. At **Hall's Croft** figure out secret messages and write your own in invisible ink – just like spies did in World War 1. At **Harvard House** learn how Tudor houses were built, and help the team build their own miniature versions. Learn about mucky wattle and daub, and the dangers of a thatched roof. Visit **Anne Hathaway's Cottage** to learn about baking and dress up as a Victorian descendent of Shakespeare's wife plus have a go at cutting your own biscuits.

The **MAD Museum** invites you to join the museum's illustrious list of resident artists by designing your very own eccentric piece of automata. The winning design will be built and exhibited at The MAD Museum for everyone to see and play with. Automata is a sculpture (typically wooden) which moves in a clever or funny way. Get inspired then get designing. All entries need to be received by 5pm on Monday 22 February.

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To celebrate the re-opening of the **British Motor Museum** (formerly the Heritage Motor Centre) children of all ages can enjoy "Build a British Car Week". Every day they can test their knowledge with the 'Family Story' trail and join one of the workshops in the LEGO® Education Innovation Studio where they can get creative building a British car with bricks.

Take part in an Elizabethan spy week at **Tudor World** in Stratford-upon-Avon. In the past spies worked with codes and invisible ink, breaking seals and forging signatures. Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's famous spymaster, had a network of agents who operated in secret including William Shakespeare. Young visitors are tasked at cracking the code at the school desk and each will be given a Time Travelling passport to complete. Admission fee: £5 adults, £4 concession, £3 for children (5 and under free).

Enrol in **Kenilworth Castle's** Academy for budding knights and princesses, with hands on medieval fun. Transform yourself into a courtly Lord or Lady with tips on everything from curtsies to combat!

Take part in an innovative workshop exploring the heritage of Stratford's High Street by engineering models with the help of expert model maker. The workshop will take place at **The Old Slaughter House** on Monday 15 February from 10am - 3pm and Tuesday 16 February from 10am - 3pm. The workshop is for children aged 6+, booking required. Workshops costs £20 each, concessions available.

For more suggestions and family friendly accommodation in Shakespeare's England visit <http://shakespeares-england.co.uk>

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Notes to editors

Shakespeare's England is the official destination management organisation for Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick Districts. It is a public-private sector partnership representing the leading tourism businesses and organisations in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa, Kenilworth and surrounding market towns and villages. For more information visit please visit <http://shakespeares-england.co.uk/about-us>

More information on Shakespeare's England can be found at www.shakespeares-england.co.uk www.facebook.com/ShakespearesEngland and Twitter [@ShakespearesEng](https://twitter.com/ShakespearesEng)

*Offer's mentioned at subject to availability, terms and conditions apply.

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