

Experience family adventures during May in Shakespeare's England!

Visit Shakespeare's England during May with two Bank Holidays (2 & 30 May) and half-term (30 May – 3 June) to experience a family adventure! Visit the pop-up tavern at Shakespeare's Birthplace, be one of the first to visit Shakespeare's Schoolroom and take part in a live Tudor lesson and for the classic car enthusiast there's the new look motor show at Ragley Hall! With so much to see and do, there is something for everyone to enjoy and experience throughout May!

Visit the pop-up tavern in **Shakespeare's Birthplace garden** and meet the innkeepers. Play Tudor inn games and learn about the pub which used to be there at his family home. At **Halls Croft** make a Tussie Mussie used by the Tudors to ward off disease. Its Woolly Week at **Mary Arden's Farm** where you can see sheep shearing and craft demonstrations. Celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday with a royal garden party at **Anne Hathaway's Cottage and Gardens** on 14 May. See the guides dressed in costumes, enjoy a BBQ, picnic and a corgi treat bar for your four legged friends.

Discover where Shakespeare was educated and inspired to become the world's greatest playwright. Be one of the first through the doors of **Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall**. Experience a live lesson with a 'Master', try your hand at writing with a quill and stand in the space where William would have seen performances by some of the country's greatest actors. Open from 10am during the holidays with last entry at 4pm; a family ticket (2 adults and up to 4 children) is £23.80.

The new Horrible Histories Maze gives **Warwick Castle** visitors a thrilling, intriguing and possibly frustrating time as they 'Get Lost in Time' in the multi-sensory free-to-enter attraction. The first of its kind in the UK, the maze helps to mark the 300th anniversary of Capability Brown. Visitors will need to put history in the right order, catch the rebel rodent, and get him safely under lock and key. Equipped with a time-travelling passport, guests' challenge is to unravel the clues and ensure their passport is stamped with the correct time period in the right order. Also new is a tour of The State Rooms which is free to join and runs twice daily from 20 – 29 May only.

National Trust venues are ideal places to watch spring unfold. For a blaze of colour, the display of over 100 varieties of daffodils at **Coughton Court** is a must. The hellebore collection at **Charlecote Park** boasts an array of colours with pink and cream blooms. See new-born lambs that bound through the parkland surrounding **Packwood House**. Search for

frog spawn in the small 'dog pool' at **Baddesley**

Clinton. Enjoy the birdsong in the gardens at **Upton House** and find a quiet spot to watch them fly back and forth.

Take part in themed workshops with **Playbox Theatre** at The Dream Factory in Warwick. A *Midsummer Night's Dream* runs on 31 May & 1 June for years 5 - 11. Or take part in a musical course featuring singing, acting, choreography and songs from the musical *Annie* on 1 & 2 June for years 8 - 18 years. Musketeer School on 2 & 3 June enables those aged 7 – 12 to learn fencing and stage combat, rope swinging, brawling, bragging, storytelling and heroics. All courses cost £70 for members and £85 for non-members.

Children can get creative at **Compton Verney** by making a mini-theatre set for a Shakespearean play in a box plus play games such as Pinecone Skittles, Knuckle Bones, Checkers with a twist and Marvellous Marbles. On 4 June take part in a workshop to create a design then print it onto a tote bag to take home. The Big Picnic is on 5 June for children to bring along their favourite teddy bear and enjoy a picnic in the grounds.

Visit the **British Motor Museum** to make your own short animation film. Start with creating a storyboard and then build a model car to star in a short stop motion film. Explore the Museum with the family newspaper trail and discover more about the British Motoring industry. Shaun the Sheep ears are also available for a selfie and if you send your pictures in you could win some prizes.

Visit the newly refurbished Caterpillar Room at the **Stratford Butterfly Farm** and find out about these beautiful and delicate creatures. There will be daily demonstrations on a variety of subjects including seed planting and growing, where the butterflies come from and how the chrysalis are carefully nurtured and looked after until they are ready to emerge into butterflies. There will also be the popular *Meet The Mini-Beast* daily handling sessions.

The new look classic car motor show takes place at **Ragley Hall** on 29 & 30 May. The show will include all the popular features of the annual event plus a new live commentary arena with performance and classic motors from the last 70 years. The show is expected to attract thousands of visitors as well as over 600 vintage, classic, American, kit and custom cars as well as motorcycles and commercial vehicles.

Visit **The Fleece Inn** near Evesham for their famous asparagus auctions where the best crop is auctioned for the local Silver Band on 29 May & 5 June. The family fun day is on 30 May with music, *Gus the Asparagus Man* and an asparagus menu including asparagus ice cream! Join in with the Asparafest Music & Food Festival at Ashdown Farm from 3 - 5 June, with music stages, a food demo stage, duck herding, storytelling and dancing.

With lots of activities for kids and racing for the adults, what more do you need on a Bank Holiday Monday then a day at **Warwick Racecourse**. A huge crowd is expected to descend on England's best small jumps track for the carnival opener, with entertainment and activities including appearances from The Gruffalo! £10 early bird price for 18+ until 5 days prior to the fixture when the price goes up to £15. On the gate it will be £20. Kids go FREE!

Drop in to **The Old Slaughterhouse Arts & Heritage Studio** on 1 & 2 May for Art of Motoring activities. Using recycled materials, make a wind-up toy car and enter the weekend Race Poll. On 30 & 31 May take part in games, visit the SAUCE vintage funny postcard exhibition, have your picture taken with the hilarious photo boards, take part in splat the rat, and create artwork to take home! Entry is FREE; activities are a £4 donation.

Stoneleigh Abbey are introducing their bird hide to spot the birds and wildlife. Children can pick up fact and activity sheets to complete as they explore the grounds. Plus there will be picture trails to find the pictures and unscramble the letters to make a word; the completed forms can then be exchanged for a treat. Entry into the grounds for children is free.

Take part in a workshop on 2 June at **Hill Close Gardens** in Warwick to discover more about the creatures that live in the garden. Cost is £4 per child (pre-booking essential). Family 'Drop-Ins' take place the second Wednesday each month for those under 8 years. *Joe, the Scarecrow* presides over the garden where children can enjoy art and craft activities, digging, planting and water play.

'*Sing-A-long-A-Grease*' at the **Royal Spa Centre** on 3 June. Don a pink jacket, grease those quiffs and let your inhibitions go for an evening which begins with a vocal warm-up before you use your fun packs and learn how to hand jive. Cost: £15/Concessions £10.

Shipston-on Stour hosts its woolly weekend from 28 – 30 May with a photographic exhibition, Arts & Crafts Market with music from local buskers and children's entertainment plus a French style Jazz Concert at 7.30pm. On Sunday there is the Rotary Songs of Praise Concert and on Monday the Wool Fair with rare breed sheep, shearing, spinning and felting.

Children can join the *Young Curators Club* at **Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum** on 31 May and find out about insects that invade our buildings and how to protect objects from damage. Art Club takes place on 2 June to make your own Simon Lewty-inspired figures in air-drying clay and find out more about 3D printing. Both events are free.

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St Mary's Church in Warwick will play host to the "Good Queen Bess Fest", an Elizabethan weekend from 28 - 30 May in collaboration with Kenilworth Castle, Lord Leycester Hospital and Charlecote Park. There will be a shuttle service in operation between the venues.

See a performance of *God of Carnage*, a black comedy which seethes with social hypocrisy at the **Bear Pit Theatre** from 6 – 14 May. Admission price - £12 (£10 concessions)

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)

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