

Mid Sussex

a place to discover



- world-class gardens • picturesque villages
- national heritage • stunning countryside

Welcome to Mid Sussex



Autumn at Borde Hill Garden

Mid Sussex is set in quintessentially English countryside, encompassing the South Downs National Park and the High Weald in West Sussex. A short distance from Gatwick, less than an hour from London and twenty minutes from Brighton, Mid Sussex is a gem worth visiting.

Renowned for its world-class gardens, historic houses and picturesque villages, a visit to Mid Sussex offers so much to see and do. International award-winning vineyards, fine cuisine and an authentic steam railway are just a few of the treats in store. Whatever the weather, Mid Sussex makes a first class destination.



Bluebell Railway

Nearly half of our district is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Our charming villages are steeped in tradition and nestled within magnificent scenery. Our towns are bustling hubs of activity, boasting a fine selection of shops, restaurants and evening entertainment.

Whether you stay for a day, weekend or a short break, Mid Sussex makes time slip away happily, leaving you wishing you could stay for longer.

For a truly memorable experience, make it Mid Sussex.



Jack and Jill Windmills

Mid Sussex *Gardens*



Mid Sussex has some of the most spectacular gardens in the world - only minutes from each other, and so easy to get to. Enjoy magnificent floral displays at the unique, botanically rich gardens - steeped in gardening history and set in hundreds of acres of unspoilt countryside.

Wakehurst Place houses the famous Millennium Seed Bank - see scientists at work and discover how Kew is helping to safeguard the world's most endangered plants. High Beeches Gardens boast 27 acres of magnificent woodland and water gardens, full of rare, exotic and unusual plants - a botanical treasure trove.



Borde Hill Garden is described as 'One of the country's truly great gardens' by Country Life magazine. More than just a beautiful and historic garden, it features distinctive 'living rooms' each with a unique style.

Nymans is a horticulturalist's dream and a peaceful country garden. The house, transformed into a Gothic mansion in the 1920s, burnt down shortly after, leaving romantic ruins.

All year round the Great Gardens of Sussex offer a haven of peace and tranquility .



Mid Sussex *Villages*



Mid Sussex villages are set in idyllic locations. From delightful hamlets to enchanting hubs of activity, they offer breathtaking views and are full of charming independent shops and tearooms.

Stay in a cosy Bed and Breakfast and discover exciting walking and cycling trails through the quintessential English countryside. Stop off at a village pub for a delicious lunch and a welcoming atmosphere. Many of our villages are mentioned in the Domesday Book and their traditions live on. The summer months are host to a wealth of traditional farmers and craft markets and the winter months sparkle with festive concerts, Christmas fayres and the peal of church bells.



Villages with attractions nearby:

Ardingly: Wakehurst Place, The Millennium Seed Bank, the South of England Showground

Balcombe: Balcombe Viaduct, Cherry Fair

Bolney: Bookers Vineyard

Clayton: Jack and Jill Windmills

Cuckfield: Borde Hill Garden, Cuckfield Museum

Handcross: Nymans and High Beeches Gardens

Hassocks: Ridgeview Wine Estate

Hickstead: All England Show Jumping Ground

Hurstpierpoint: Washbrooks Family Farm

Poynings: Devil's Dyke

Turners Hill: Tulleys Farm

West Hoathly: Priest House



Mid Sussex *Indulgence*



Alexander House Hotel

Wake up to a sumptuous 'Sussex breakfast' before teeing off on one of our many golf courses. With unrivalled views of the South Downs, Mid Sussex courses are as beautiful as they are challenging.

Shopping for pleasure? Mid Sussex is the perfect place - our historic towns and beautiful villages have an eclectic mix of high street names, speciality shops and antique markets.

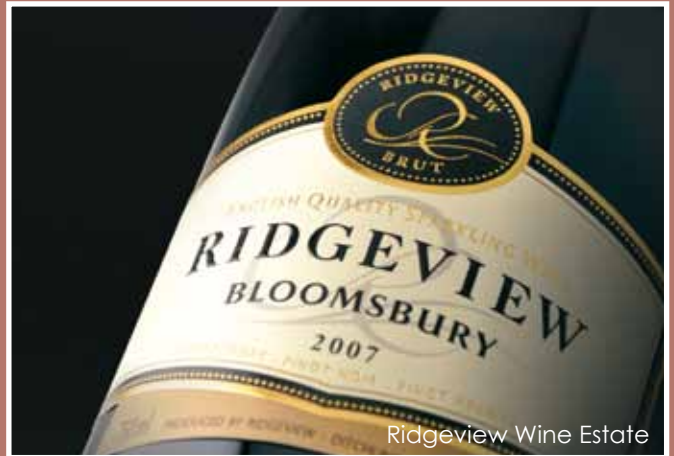
Plan a tasting tour at one of our internationally renowned vineyards, Bookers Vineyard or Ridgeview wine estate – winners of the Decanter World Wine Awards for 'best sparkling wine in the world'.



Gravetye Manor

Feeling peckish? Experience fine dining at our acclaimed restaurants, or feast on produce from the famous High Weald dairy – winners of six awards at the 2010 International Cheese Awards.

Leave your stresses behind and pamper yourself at one of our magnificent award winning spa hotels – with fine cuisine and luxurious treatments, there's no better way to relax. Whether you're celebrating your anniversary with a short stay, organising a girls' pampering day or simply need a bit of rest and relaxation, Mid Sussex has all you need to make your stay really special.



Ridgeview Wine Estate

Tim Locke's *Mid Sussex*



South Downs National Park

Sussex-based travel writer Tim Locke is the author of 'Slow Sussex & the South Downs National Park', published by Bradt Guides

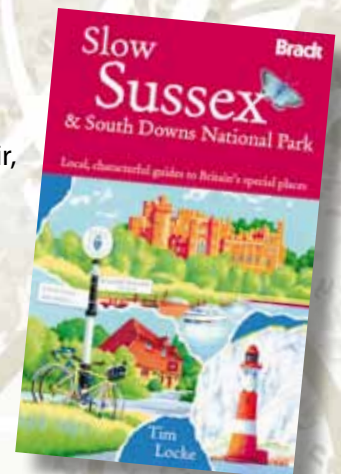
"Mid Sussex encapsulates the extraordinary variety of Sussex, slicing as it does through Sussex from the South Downs to the High Weald. You can really get the feeling of being a hundred miles from anywhere, yet much of the area is effectively on London's back doorstep, being remarkably accessible by public transport as well as by car. Staying locally is the best way to give enough time to savour the area's special qualities.

"At Jack and Jill Windmills, you're in five-star walking and mountain-biking country, easily accessed from car parks at Ditchling Beacon (buses from Brighton at summer weekends) or Jack and Jill, between which you can sample a magnificent stretch of the South Downs Way. This gives you the feeling of being on top of the world, with skylarks for company, the coast and Brighton in sight to the south, and the patchwork

fields of the Weald to the north. Or you can approach the escarpment from the dramatic north side, from Clayton, for example, where the church has extremely rare wall paintings predating the Norman Conquest.

"Into the Weald, timeless tile-hung villages cluster in lush surroundings. The Bluebell Railway chugs its way through this deep countryside, giving a ride on vintage rolling stock with time warp country stations, to end near the famous Sheffield Park Garden; a perfect day out would be to combine this with a visit to Standen, my favourite National Trust house in the southeast – an Arts and Crafts masterpiece by Philip Webb, an associate of the great William Morris.

"The gardens in Mid Sussex rival anything I've come across on my travels. Each has very much its own character: Borde Hill has exquisite views out to the Weald and numerous rare trees and shrubs, High Beeches has enchantingly secretive qualities within its steeply sloping site, Wakehurst Place is on a huge scale and merges into the Loder Valley nature reserve, while Nymans has theatrical moments of surprise as you wander from one intimate space to the next. These each deserve day visits, which you could easily combine with lunch at a country pub or visiting another local attraction. Wakehurst Place, for instance, ties in nicely with the Priest House museum at West Hoathly, or country shows and antique fairs at the South of England Showground; or you could take a walk along beautifully naturalistic-looking Ardingly Reservoir, and to the railway-age wonder that is the Balcombe Viaduct, beneath which you can look through a series of gigantic ovals in the brick piers that gives one of Sussex's most eye-opening views".





Gatwick Airport



MID SUSSEX DISTRICT



Mid Sussex District - Location

Mid Sussex *Heritage*



Mid Sussex boasts a treasure trove of historical attractions. Visit the late Victorian Standen house and garden - a gem of the Arts and Crafts Movement hosting all the big names of the period. Minutes away, immerse yourself in English social history at the perfect Jacobean almshouse of Sackville College.

Ride through the glorious Sussex countryside on the Bluebell Railway steam train. Visit Saint Hill Manor - the 18th-century historic estate of a succession of distinguished owners, and open to the public all year round. Visit Jill Windmill, which along with its neighbour Jack stands atop the scenic South Downs, with spectacular views of the Sussex Weald.



Wander the furnished rooms of the 15th century Priest House - part of the divorce settlement of Anne of Cleves when Cromwell was beheaded! There is a varied collection of domestic by-gones including the doorway - a rough iron slab, which is supposed to stop witches entering the house. Relax in the formal herb garden, containing over 170 culinary, medicinal and household herbs.

Be impressed by the beautiful engineering of the 500-metre Balcombe Viaduct containing around 11 million bricks. Step into the past at museums in East Grinstead and Cuckfield or the South Downs Heritage Centre.



Mid Sussex *Culture*



Nymans Outdoor Theatre

Mid Sussex is bursting with culture – from classical concerts in our historical gardens to family theatre and exhibitions, there's something to suit all tastes.

The Great Gardens of Sussex are not only beautiful, but host to a wealth of events and concerts which are simply too good to miss! From jazz picnics to summer soirees and theatre, the gardens provide the perfect setting.

Make merry in May at the Lindfield Arts Festival, or follow time old tradition at the summer St Lawrence Fair in Hurstpierpoint - granted a royal charter in 1313.



It's Magic event 'That'll be the Day'

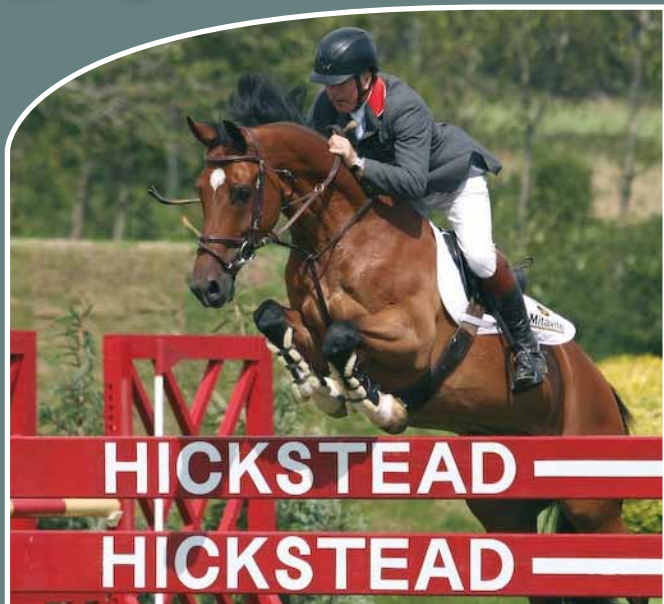
You're never far from a fantastic evening's entertainment in Mid Sussex - Chequer Mead Arts Centre in East Grinstead, Martlets Hall in Burgess Hill and Clair Hall in Haywards Heath all host a variety of exciting shows and events. With such a full year round repertoire you're sure to find something that will make your visit extra special.

If you enjoy being entertained, Mid Sussex has something for you – with such a tantalising array of events, there's something to suit everyone!



Kathrine Jenkins - regularly performs in Mid Sussex

Mid Sussex *Leisure*



Whether you prefer to spectate or be active, Mid Sussex has a wealth of opportunities. Visit Hickstead - one of the world's premier equestrian venues - home to the Longines Royal International Horse Show and Pony Club Championships. Experience everything that the countryside has to offer at the nationally renowned South of England Show. From farming and food to arena entertainment, the Show is also a showcase for hundreds of trade and craft exhibitors.

Hire a mountain bike in Deers Leap Park - with 240 acres of dedicated mountain bike tracks, from family-friendly trails to single track there's something for everyone.



Take a gentle walk, horse ride or cycle along the many footpaths and bridleways of the South Downs National Park or, for the more adventurous, enjoy the thrill and challenge of sailing, windsurfing and canoeing at Ardingly Activity Centre.

Take the family to Blackland Farm - whether you're a beginner or an expert, there's an activity for you. You'll be busy from dawn to dusk enjoying activities such as zip wire, water sports on Weir Wood Reservoir, climbing, abseiling, archery and rifle-shooting.



Mid Sussex *Towns*



Mid Sussex towns are brimming with history and offer traditional farmers markets and attractive, speciality shops. They provide an ideal base from which to explore the stunning countryside, beautiful gardens and award-winning vineyards in the district.

East Grinstead is an ancient market town with a wealth of architectural heritage. Surrounded by some of the finest countryside in the whole of England, this is where the River Medway rises and the vast swathes of Ashdown Forest begin. Browse the interesting, independent shops that make the picturesque high street so special or relax in a charming tea shop, restaurant or pub.



Burgess Hill is located in the Sussex Weald and is surrounded by charming villages and within easy reach of the South Downs National Park. The Tourist Information Centre is located in the centre of town and the traffic free shopping area make the town an ideal base.

Haywards Heath has a great choice of places to eat and shop - a honeypot of restaurants, bistros and winebars. Take a ride on a steam-powered, miniature locomotive in Beech Hurst Gardens or stop for a bite in the family restaurant. Rainy day? Visit the eclectic Orchards Shopping Centre.



Mid Sussex *Countryside*



Mid Sussex Countryside

If you've ever dreamt about quintessential countryside, look no further than Mid Sussex - the district heralds breathtaking landscapes and Britain's newest National Park - the South Downs, which stretches 100 miles from the edge of Winchester to Beachy Head.

Devil's Dyke valley is an historic beauty spot within the park and the perfect place from which to admire the impressive landscape, where the gentle rolling hills descend dramatically on to the plain below. Legend has it that the Devil dug the valley in an attempt to flood the Sussex Weald!



High Weald wheatfield

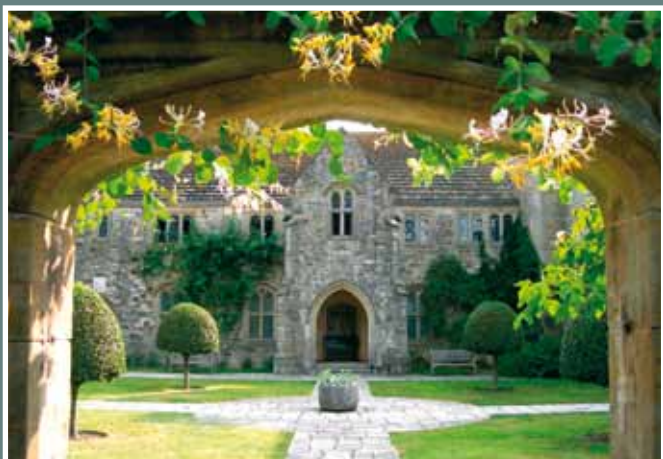
For pleasant country walks, The High Weald offers incredible views and an abundance of flora and fauna. You'll encounter tree covered ridges, dramatic sandstone outcrops and wooded valleys. Walkers will truly be spoilt for choice as to which trail to choose.

Among the many trails is Worth Way - running seven miles along a disused railway line from Three Bridges through open countryside to East Grinstead, where chalk-loving plants, such as common spotted orchid and wild strawberry flourish.



South Downs National Park

Mid Sussex District Council:
supporting tourism and
the local economy



Photographs by:

- Nymans: Edward Shorthouse
- Borde Hill Garden: Eleni Clarke
- Ridgeview Wine Estate: Roberts family
- Alexander House Hotel
- Autumn at Borde Hill Garden: Britain on view/Tourism South East
- Bluebell Railway: BDI Images Ltd
- Wakehurst Place: David Ford
- Jack and Jill windmills: BDI Images Ltd
- Standen: David Ford
- High Beeches Gardens: Sarah Bray
- Cuckfield golf centre
- Cottages in Lindfield: Don Carr/PPL
- Hurstpierpoint: Andrew Hair
- Priest House: BDI Images Ltd
- Mid Sussex Countryside: Eleni Clarke
- Shepherd & Dog: John Christie
- Burgess Hill: BDI Images Ltd
- South Downs National Park 2: BDI Images Ltd
- Hickstead
- Balcombe Viaduct: Henry Law (National award-winning image)
- 'That'll be the Day': Its Magic events
- Wheatfield: BDI Images Ltd
- Katherine Jenkins: Make It Happen events
- Gravetye Manor
- Weir Wood Reservoir: BDI Images Ltd
- East Grinstead: Simon Kerr
- Haywards Heath: Emma Bennett
- South Downs National Park 1: Britain on View

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