

Your Holiday



Anna Smith, 29, and her fiancé Phil, 32, from Sheffield, explored the cobbled streets of this historic city...

It's one of the prettiest cities I've ever visited in the UK and two nights was not nearly enough to explore the hidden corners of Canterbury.

Famed for its towering cathedral, there's enough to see and do to keep you entertained for hours.

As an added bonus, it's also great for shopping with lots of stores packed into easy walking distance.

Where did you stay?

We booked a room at a family-run guest house on the edge of the city.

The Coach House had a lovely homely feel and the owners Stuart and Claire were very welcoming and helpful, telling us where was good to eat and how to get around.

The room was big and spacious, with a comfy double bed and antique furniture that wouldn't look out of place in a stately home!

The breakfasts were hearty, but healthy, with freshly prepared ingredients that are all sourced from local suppliers.



Canterbury

What was there to do?

You can't go to Canterbury without a trip to the Cathedral, which lies in the heart of the city centre and can be seen from almost every cobbled street, path and alleyway.

It's the oldest working church in England and dates back nearly 1,500 years. It's worth a visit even if you're not religious just to admire the impressive stained glass windows, statues, tombs and monuments.

While there, pay your respects to the shrine of Archbishop Thomas Becket.

He was murdered after four knights attacked him with a sword and sliced off the top of his head!

Thomas was made a saint two years later and thousands of visitors have come to Canterbury to worship him ever since.

What about the kids?

Experience the sights, sounds and smells of medieval England at The Canterbury Tales visitor attraction on St Margaret's Street, where they'll also find out about the city's famous literary connections.

Or for older children, take them on a ghost tour of Canterbury – if you dare!

The 75-minute night time walk includes a mix of the history, humour and haunted tales of the Old Town.

The best bit?

We jumped on a guided boat tour along the River Stour to experience Canterbury's rich history by water.

As well as excellent views of the cathedral and the 12th century King's Bridge, the tour takes you past the infamous ducking stool, which was used as a form of punishment in the old days and also to test if someone was a witch.

The person would be strapped to the chair and then submerged under water.

If the person was a witch, she'd survive, and then, unfortunately for her, be killed.

If she wasn't a witch, she'd drown clearing her name in the process.

Either way, it was a lose, lose situation!

Useful stuff...

● Rooms at The Coach House start from £55 per night for a standard double, including breakfast. For more information visit www.coachhouse-canterbury.co.uk

● Tickets for Canterbury Ghost Tours cost £9 for adults and £7 for children. Visit www.canterburyghosttour.com

● Canterbury Historic River Tours run from April to September. Tickets cost £7.50 for adults, £5 for children under 16. Visit www.canterburyrivertours.co.uk

● To find out more about Canterbury, go to www.canterbury.co.uk or www.visitkent.co.uk



Top tip

The seaside town of Whitstable is just a few miles away from Canterbury, so if you want some sea air, it's worth the 20-minute drive.

Bit on the side!

Fun facts

The heat is on!

A major fire destroyed Canterbury Cathedral in 1067 and the entire place had to be rebuilt from scratch.

Who nose?

Ever wondered where the phrase nosey parker comes from? It's all down to a former archbishop of Canterbury called Matthew Parker. He had a very long nose and was always poking it into other peoples' business!

It's old skool

Canterbury is home to what's said to be the oldest school England. The King's School is now a boarding school for boys and girls aged between 13-18.

Bear necessities

Mary Tourtel, creator of children's character Rupert Bear, was born and buried in Canterbury.

Photos: Tim Stubbings

Take a trip along the River Stour

The cathedral is a must-see