

Weekend Wanderings in Shrewsbury, Shropshire

Shrewsbury is a quaint medieval town, that made it onto my hit list of potential places to live here in the UK. This was largely due to the accolades it received from Londoners who'd made the move, housing prices and location. It didn't seem like much of a hard sell.

Yet, it is always wise before seriously considering settling into a new country or city to visit and spend some time there, even if only for a few days. You need to see the place first hand, does it live up to your expectations, as you view it through the eyes of a potential future resident.

While there is much I enjoyed about my visit to Shrewsbury. The reality is that I couldn't see myself living there long-term. This is of course a brisk assessment – I know many people who have made the move and love it.

The decision on whether a place suits you or not is personal. It depends on your style, requirements and history. This is why it's important to know yourself, and what you are looking for.

Even though I won't be spending the rest of my life there, I did really enjoy my time there. It's a great city to escape to for a weekend, with its rich history, gorgeous Tudor buildings, tasty food and ample space for riverside wanderings.

It's a perfect spot to practice the [art of slow travel](#).

Here is a snapshot of spots that warrant a visit:



Best Places to Sleep in Shrewsbury

There are hotels in Shrewsbury. But if you are keen on a local experience a lot of pubs rent out rooms upstairs. This is ideal for an authentic old-English experience that leaves a lasting memory.

Thankfully, a few old alehouses have also evolved. Back in the day a typical pub had wall-to-wall carpet, partnered with the nose-curling stench of beer, to create a multi-sensory overload of the most nauseating kind.

Now, there is a subset of bars that have modernized themselves, sharing the older Tudor-style building, but in a cleaner, stylish setting.

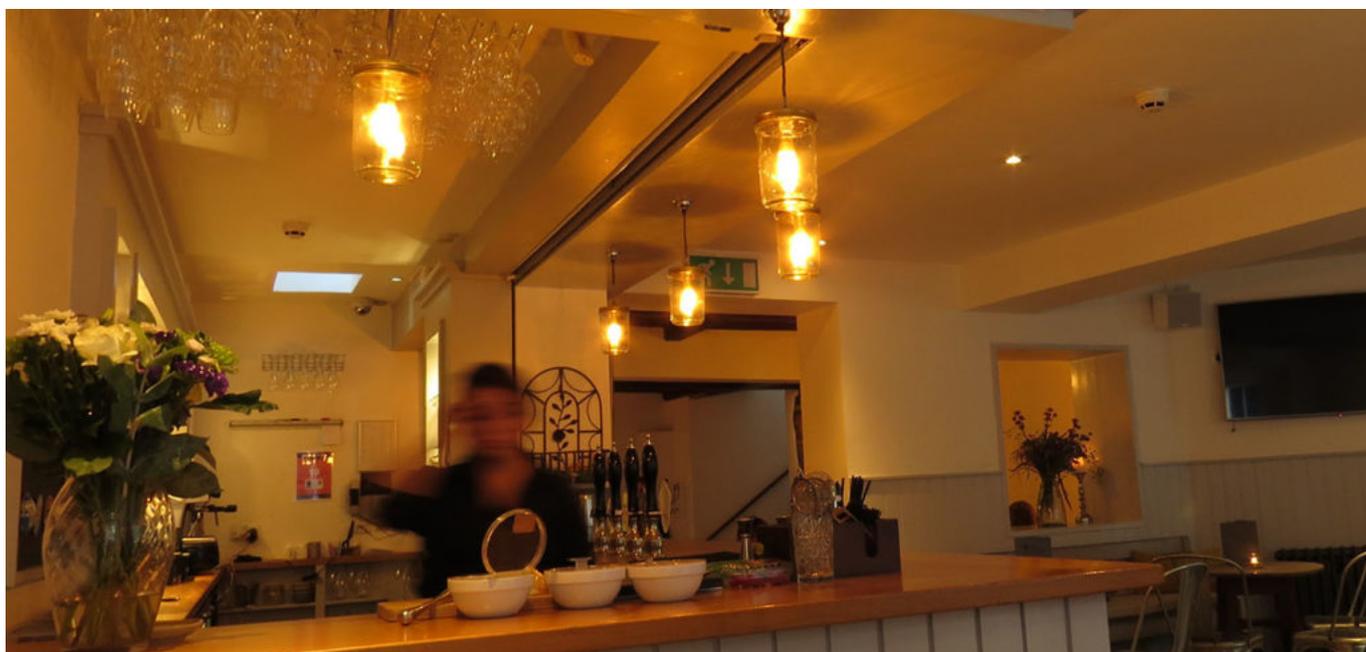
Boutique Pubs at their Finest

I stayed at [The Loopy Shrew](#): A fresh take, modern furniture and design in a country chic setting. Located in the centre of town, with everything within walking distance. The only downside is the photos on the website were taken with a fish-

eye lens, giving the mistaken impression that the rooms are more spacious.

On the upside, the service and staff were friendly. And the room included a real English breakfast. A real cooked breakfast of Eggs Florentine (my fav), Full English Breakfast among others. Hands down, one of the best hotel breakfasts I've had in a while.

[The Lion + Pheasant](#) is also a boutique up-market pub that meets B&B, ideal for anyone with a taste for comfort and design.



Eating out in Shrewsbury

Travelling while attempting to go gluten-free has its challenges. I thought Japanese was a safe bet but was wrong – and in a smaller city exotic food can be a bit of a mistake. So, my first night's dinner was a tad mediocre.

To counter that, there are I found a few better restaurants with a gluten-free menu. [Jacques Bistro](#) has typical French fare at decent prices, it's open all day and offers great pre-theatre specials and a decent set menu.

[Loch Fyne](#) is a welcome treat. The food is local or sustainably sourced from the Scottish Highlands. So fresh it melts in your mouth and the service was second to none. It is popular with the locals and regulars and is located in the centre of town.

[Lion + Pheasant](#) is also a popular and recommendable choice. It is upmarket, with small portions – but well worth it for the quality and flavour. The atmosphere was great, and the food was phenomenal.

The city does have some stellar restaurants, but I did feel after a few nights to be running out of options. Especially considering my desire to go gluten-free.

If I were eating gluten I would have liked to try the [Dough + Oil](#) as it looked like it had handcrafted sourdough pizza. In the end, when you've run out of places to eat, it might be time to move on.



Things to see and do in Shrewsbury

There is a good [calendar of events](#) happening in Shrewsbury. Everything from beer to folk festivals. I imagine the place turning into a mini-metropolis at those times. The city has an impressive new theatre complex. A small historic castle worth visiting. With plenty more to see and do on the tourist route, you can [find more details here](#).

As I only had one free day and two working days to see the place, I opted for a walking tour and a scenic stroll along the river. It is along the river at Quarry park that you'll

also find an incredible small garden called 'The Dingle'. Bursting at the seams with flowers, trees and benches it's the ideal spot to spend some time.

Not sure if there had recently been a flower festival in the city, as everywhere you look there are flowers. Flowers in the windowsills, flowers along the walkways, flowers hanging on shop fronts. Stunning.

Wandering back through Shrewsbury's past



Another point of interest outside top of the fact it has over 660 listed historic buildings. Is that Charles Darwin was born and grew up in Shrewsbury.

As a result, you'll find everything from rocks to restaurants named after him. You can see his statue at the library or visit his place of birth.

The old town encircled by the Severn River lends itself to aimless wandering. The city shows a range of architectural styles from classic Tudor, Victorian, and Edwardian to modern eyesores of the industrial era.

Being on the border of Wales made the town a hub for the wool industry. You can see this early wealth reflected back in the

quality of the early Tudor buildings.

It was also due to its location that it was at the forefront of regional disputes between Wales and England.

The Market Hall, a Hub of Creativity

When you get tired of strolling around town, [the Market Hall](#) is well worth a visit. It is one of my favourite places. You can sit down and grab a spot for lunch or do a spot of shopping. You will find fresh vegetables, vintage stalls, books, stalls selling wool or those that feature local artists. A vibrant creative hub of activity.

Getting out of town

If you have a car, you might even want to follow the trail of what they say [is the real king Arthur](#). Which legend has, does exist and happens to be from the local area. Ludlow and Wreham are close by and also have a rich history and colourful past and are worthy of a visit.

Being as it is Shrewsbury is also still today the gateway into Wales, you can catch trains up to Holyhead, or down to Cardiff and the start of the well-known Snowdonia park is but a short drive away.

Whatever your interest in Shrewsbury and the surrounding area, it is a great place to wander and spend a long weekend or dawdle away a few weeks.





