

Destinations & Attractions



Our excellent location means that many attractions and places of interest are within easy reach



The Peak District

Get right to the heart of things among the internationally-important and specially protected landscapes in Britain's first National Park. Check out The Peak District's lesser known 'secret corners', stretching from Cheshire and Staffordshire in the north and west and our Historic Border Country to the east, right down to the National Forest in the south.

From rugged moorland to rolling hills and dales, and lush meadows to leafy forests, there are some of the country's finest scenery, just waiting to be explored. And wherever you roam, you're never far from the superb sports and entertainment facilities, wide-ranging culture and vibrant night-life of surrounding cities like Derby and Sheffield. Add Hollywood film locations (e.g. The Full Monty, Pride and Prejudice and Jane Eyre), historic houses, glorious gardens, awesome attractions, world-class theme parks, fabulous festivals and delicious food and drink.

Contact Tourist Information Visitor Centre in Derby on 01332 255802



The National Forest

Wonderful woodland walks, Forest experiences, historic houses, exciting visitor centres, sparkling lakes, sun-dappled glades, fantastic festivals - these are just waiting for you to visit from Mercia Marina. The

National Forest is one of Britain's boldest environmental projects, creating a Forest for the nation across 200 square miles, embracing parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire.

Mercia Marina is within walking easy distance of the villages of Findern and Willington and a short drive from Derby and Burton.

Findern is a tranquil village situated about one mile from the marina. It has a traditional village green which is overlooked by the Parish Church of All Saints, the post office, shops and numerous cottages that lie on its edge. Sir Geoffrey de Fynderne was once Lord of the Manor in Findern. It is believed that he brought back a flower from the Crusades, known as 'poets daffodil' which still occasionally blooms in the village gardens. The village industry of velvet weaving used to be done in the cottages and in 1846 there were as many as 22 velvet and silk looms in the village.

In the main street is the village pump which was used until the 1930s when water mains were installed. Now the pump is 'dressed' by the WI for the village fete in June.



Willington village is also about one mile from the marina, and a short distance from the historic town of Repton. The Trent and Mersey canal follows the line of the Midland Railway through the village and the river Trent is just to the south, so Willington was an ideal communications centre in past times. The canal was built in 1770 when barges were drawn by horses. St Michaels Church is pretty, with a modest west tower complete with quoins, and a Norman tympanium over its south door. It contains a richly decorative 18th century font. There are several pubs in Willington including the The Dragon, Green Man and The Rising Sun, products of the early canal era and popular with canal boaters during the summer months.

Repton, from its beginnings as an Anglo-Saxon settlement on the low gravel bluff overlooking the floodplain of the River Trent, has taken part in some major events in the history of England and the earlier kingdom of Mercia. Mercia was one of the kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy. This area has been investigated by archaeologists for the past century or more, and the area contains many sites of archaeological importance including Early Neolithic settlements as found at Mercia Marina.

Repton crypt, dating from the first half of the 8th century, is of exceptional interest. Constructed perhaps as a baptistery, later a royal mausoleum, then a place of pilgrimage to St Wystan, it is one of the oldest and most important examples of Anglo-Saxon architecture to survive intact. The tranquillity of the Abbey and its religious life was shattered in the winter of 873-4 when the marauding Viking armies, having sailed up the rivers Humber and Trent, chose Repton to make camp.

Derby is the UK's most central city benefiting from the best of both worlds - a great cultural base situated in the East Midlands on the edge of the Peak District National Park. Derby was the home of Core Design, who developed the computer game Tomb Raider with its heroine Lara Croft. Part of the newly opened inner ring road is named Lara Croft Way in recognition of this. Derby County FC, also known as The Rams, is at present in the championship league and managed by Nigel Clough. Derby has much to attract the visitor with its excellent shopping facilities, the new Intu Centre having been completed in 2007 and attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors from both within and outside the county. The Cathedral Quarter is also a popular area with an upmarket mix of quality independent niche retailers, cafes, restaurants and bars.

Burton upon Trent straddles the River Trent in the east of Staffordshire. It is just a short drive from the marina, down the A38. Burton is best known for its brewing heritage, home to over a dozen breweries in its heyday. It originally grew up around Burton-on-Trent Abbey, the monastery of St. Modwen, and had grown into a busy market town by the early modern period. For centuries, Burton has been associated with the brewing industry. This is due to the quality of the local water, which contains a high proportion of dissolved salts, predominantly caused by the gypsum in the surrounding hills. This allowed a greater proportion of hops, a natural preservative, to be included in the beer, thereby allowing the beer to be shipped further afield. Much of the open land within and around the town is protected from chemical treatment to help preserve this water quality. The town is currently home to five brewers: Coors, Marston's, Bridge Brewery, Tower Brewery and Cottage Brewery. A by-product of the brewing industry, figuratively and literally, is the presence of the famous British icon Marmite factory in the town. This in turn generated the production of Bovril.

Chatsworth House

Chatsworth House, garden, farmyard and adventure playground will be open every day from 11th March 2012. In the house, the North Sketch Gallery will showcase new and exciting artworks and there will be a brand new purpose built exhibition space in the house called the New Gallery from 19th March. The first exhibition here will celebrate the life and passions of the inspirational 6th Duke and his significant influence on Chatsworth. Whether you come on your own, with friends, or bring children, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Contact 01246 565300. postcode for sat nav DE45 1PP. Distance from marina 32 miles



Haddon Hall

Haddon Hall is a fortified medieval manor house dating from the 12th Century, and is the home of Lord and Lady Edward Manners whose family have owned it since 1567. Described by Simon Jenkins in 1000 Best houses as "the most perfect house to survive from the middle ages", this remarkable old house is surrounded by terraced Elizabethan gardens and is set amongst the rolling countryside of the Peak District National Park. Haddon has welcomed visitors for hundreds of years and its beauty and atmosphere never fails to enchant.

The house is open to visitors from April to October, with a number of special events being staged throughout the season.

Contact 01629 812855. Postcode for sat nav DE45 1LA. Distance from marina 30 miles.



Kedleston Hall

Take a trip back in time to the 1760s at this spectacular Neo-classical mansion, framed by historic parkland. Designed for lavish entertaining and displaying an extensive collection of paintings, sculpture and original furnishings, Kedleston is a stunning example of the work of architect Robert Adam. The Curzon family have lived at the Hall since the 12th century and continue to live here. Lord Curzon's Eastern Museum is a treasure trove of fascinating objects acquired on his travels in Asia and while Viceroy of India (1899 to 1905). Used as a key location for The Duchess, the recent Hollywood blockbuster. Note: medieval All Saints church, containing many family monuments, is run by the Churches Conservation Trust. Contact 01332 842191. postcode for sat nav DE22 5JH - distance from marina 11 miles.



Calke Abbey

With peeling paintwork and overgrown courtyards Calke Abbey tells the story of the dramatic decline of a grand country-house estate. The house and stables are little restored, with many abandoned areas vividly portraying a period in the 20th century when numerous country houses did not survive to tell their story. Discover the tales of an eccentric family who amassed a vast collection of hidden treasures. Visit the beautiful, yet faded, walled gardens and explore the orangery, auricula theatre and kitchen gardens. Escape into the ancient and fragile habitats of Calke Park and its National Nature Reserve.

Contact 01332 863822. Postcode for sat nav DE73 7LE. Distance from marina 9 miles



Matlock, the county town of Derbyshire, is a former spa town situated at a sharp bend in the River Derwent, where it turns south to carve its way through the ridge of limestone which bars its route towards Derby. Just downriver of the main town lies Matlock Bath, which is enclosed by the limestone cliffs of the gorge and contains the main tourist attractions of the locality.

Heights of Abraham: One of the Peak District's oldest and most popular purpose built tourist attractions, The Heights of Abraham, at Matlock Bath provides a range of activities suitable for all the family.

As well as the famous cable cars (pictured above) the park features underground tours of Masson and Rutland caverns; play areas, exhibitions and picnic spots. There are also spectacular views across the Derwent valley towards Matlock



Summary

Alton Towers Theme Park, ST10 4DB – distance from marina = 22 miles
Drayton Manor Theme Park, B78 3TW - distance from marina = 26 miles
Kedleston Hal, DE22 5JH I – distance from marina = 11 miles
Heights of Abraham/Matlock - distance from marina = 27 miles
Carsington Water, DE6 1ST – distance from marina = 24 miles
Dovedale, DE6 2AW – distance from marina = 21 miles
Calke Abbey, DE73 7LE – distance from marina = 9 miles
Chatsworth House, DE45 1PP - distance from marina = 32 miles
Peak District and Derbyshire Dales – distance from marina = 20 miles
National Forest – distance from marina = 6 miles



Nearest Supermarkets

Co operative Willington, DE65 6BX - distance from marina = 0.5 miles
Tesco Hilton, DE65 5JR - distance from marina = 3 miles
Asda Sinfin, DE24 3DS - distance from marina = 4 miles
Sainsburys Kingsway Derby, DE22 3NF - distance from marina = 6 miles
Morrisons Derby, DE21 4RX - distance from marina = 9 miles



If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to telephone on 01283 703332
or email bookings@merciamarina.co.uk