

A romantic sunset over a body of water. The sun is a large, bright yellow-orange orb in the upper right, casting a shimmering reflection on the water. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of reeds on the left and three ducks swimming on the right. The overall atmosphere is warm and peaceful.

A Romantic Weekend in the Lower Stour Valley

Escape and pamper, then saunter from garden to village pub and into Nature's hideaways.



Day One -

1) Goodnestone Park Gardens

Toddle over to Goodnestone Park Gardens, a genuine haven of tranquillity created by generations of the Fitzwalter family. Jane Austen, who knew a thing or two about romance, was once a regular visitor here. Explore the Woodland Garden, the Walled Garden, The Parterre and Terraces which overlook the village cricket green, The Arboretum and Gravel Garden. The Rose Garden gives lovely views across to the neighbouring Church of the Holy Cross, which is also well worth visiting whilst you are here.

It is possible to walk from Wingham to Goodnestone along the Miners Way (section 3 in reverse. The footpaths are also clearly marked on OS map 150). Your section of the trail starts in the centre of Wingham, where you can lunch at one of the pubs, restaurants or the Whistle Stop Café at the Little Stour Farm Shop. Also have a look around historic St. Mary's Church.

The route then takes you through the hamlet of Wingham Well, the site of a freshwater spring that has allowed the growing of watercress beds. Cross the Adisham Road (B2046 – take care) to continue through Crockshard Farm and on to the village of Goodnestone.





Wickhambreaux Village Green

Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve

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Day Two

1) Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve

Then stretch your legs through fields of orchards and soft fruits to Stodmarsh and the National Nature Reserve. Experience the peace and tranquillity of the open water, the reed beds and marshes and view the abundance of wildlife from the hides. Pure bliss!

It is easy to walk from Wingham to Stodmarsh following public footpaths, through the charming villages of Ickham, Seaton and Wickhambreaux. See their water mills and ancient churches, and perhaps stop for a drink at the Duke William in Ickham or the Rose Inn on the Green in Wickhambreaux. If you make it as far as the other end of the reserve, you will come to the Grove Ferry – it's best to arrive early or book in advance on a Sunday.



View from the Grove Ferry

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The Rose Inn

Attraction	Telephone	Web address	Opening Times	Address
Goodnestone Park Gardens	+44 (0) 1304 840107	http://www.goodnestoneparkgardens.co.uk/index.php	Check website alternatively phone	Goodnestone Park, The Street, Goodnestone, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1PL
The Little Stour Farm Shop	+44 (0) 1227 721199	http://www.thelittlestourfarmshop.com	Check website alternatively phone	The Little Stour Farm Shop, Canterbury Rd, Wingham, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1NH
Duke William	+44 (0) 1227 721308	http://www.dukewilliam.biz/	Sunday-Wednesday 9:30-23:30, Thursday-Saturday 9:30-00:30	Duke William, The Street, Ickham, Canterbury, CT3 1QP
The Rose Inn	+44 (0) 1227 721763	http://theroseinnwickhambreaux.co.uk/	Monday to Saturday 12:00-23:00, Sunday 12:00 - 22.30	The Rose Inn, The Green, Wickhambreaux, Kent, CT3 1RQ
The Grove Ferry	+44 (0) 1227 860302	http://www.thegroveferry.co.uk/home.html	Monday-Thursday 10:00 - 23:00, Friday & Saturday 9:00-00:00, Sunday 9:00- 22:30	The Grove Ferry, Upstreet, Nr. Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4BP

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