Bron Y Graig Shakespeare Holidays

Unique Shakespeare Holidays
In the Stunning Dee Valley

2027-28 Brochure

A Shakespeare holiday at *A Place to Write* is like no other. Aside from enjoying all the privacy and luxury of your own ensuite bedroom — with all the little extras you would expect in a hotel — you are also one of a select group of Shakespeare enthusiasts who will be welcomed into the very homely, yet professional space which Nic and Wendy run.

Meals are all home cooked by Wendy to a bespoke menu which is individual to every retreat: taking account of all your dietary requirements, with separate dishes produced when necessary, every meal is designed just for you. And this individual attention doesn't stop there!

With Nic guiding the schedule, and groups of no more than ten at a time, each guest has the opportunity to engage in readings, discussion, analysis, and exploration of a selection of Shakespeare's plays in the way that suits them best. Attend every session if you wish, or simply dip in when the mood takes you! The choice is always yours.

'Beautiful Wales, good food, great company and a week of fascinating Shakespeare study'
- Phil

Do it *your* way:

At our welcome meeting on the first day we emphasise that this is *your* retreat: you choose what you do, when you do it, how you do it and whether you do it at all! We are just here to help: whether you find play-readings thrilling, or want to avoid them like the plague; whether you enjoy discussing ideas or feel more comfortable listening to others; whether you enjoy watching streamed performances or would prefer to explore the local area of outstanding natural beauty; whether you are new to Shakespeare and unsure where to start, or an experienced teacher or performer with years of study to your name. On our Unique Shakespeare retreats we respect everyone's experience and point of view, and that's what helps make the atmosphere on our retreats so special.

- Nervous about reading aloud? You can opt out at any time.
- Fancy heading out for the day? Join a guided walk or explore on your own.
- Looking to learn? Participate in the workshops and join in the debates.
- Keen to socialise? Enjoy cosy post-dinner discussions in our comfy lounge.
- Loving all things Shakespeare? Immerse yourself in the bard for a whole week!

What we offer:

A unique home from home with your own spacious ensuite room PLUS

- Workshops and debates*
- Daily readings of different plays*
- Streamed performances*
- Interviews and Q&A with working professionals*
- A unique introduction to Shakespeare and Candlelight*

* *Participation in these elements is entirely optional*

Three levels of engagement:

- The full-on Shakespeare Experience (a full programme every day!)
- The Keen Enthusiast (daily readings and occasional other activities)
- The Holidaymaker (as much or as little Shakespeare as you like, with plenty of time to relax and explore the local area at your leisure)

Workshops and Seminars

Every Shakespeare retreat offers workshops on Shakespeare's Verse and Shakespeare's Storytelling Craft. In addition, seminars involving current professional practitioners provide the opportunity to hear about their work and question them on their approaches.

Daily Readings

Complimentary copies of the plays are supplied to all participants, and each reading is preceded by an introduction which provides context and structure for the subsequent reading. In the reading itself, parts are distributed randomly and re-distributed as desired to ensure everyone has the chance to read as much or as little as they want. Each reading is accompanied by informal discussion of the characters and themes.

Shakespeare and Candlelight

In 1610 Shakespeare's company began performing at the indoor, candlelit Blackfriars Playhouse. In a unique candlelit session on each retreat Nic will illustrate the unexpected ways in which candlelight affects human vision and, as a result, leads to inevitable shifts in acting style, design features and even the dramatic structure of a playwright's text.

Itinerary

On arrival you will check into your room and have time to settle in, learn about the history of Bron Y Graig and relax. At an agreed time we will all convene in one of our lounges for a housekeeping meeting and tour of the grounds, before sitting down together at our group dining table to enjoy a hearty welcome meal and learn a little about each other. After dinner there will be an informal exploration of the group's relationship with Shakespeare and aims for the week.

The following morning, after a full breakfast, those who want to can convene for a full reading of one of the week's features plays. With an introduction beforehand and points of discussion along the way, each day's reading is punctuated with a refreshment break and fills the morning with a gentle but typically entertaining event.

After a buffet lunch, guests have the chance each day to venture out for an exploration of the local town and area of outstanding natural beauty, retire to their room for a nap or relax in comfort in our lounge, or participate in a workshop or seminar focusing on an aspect of Shakespeare's craft in greater depth. Seminars are conducted via zoom with working professionals such as Lizzie Conrad-Hughes (Director of Shakes-scene Shakespeare, who rehearse and perform using only cues), John Mitton (founding member of Shit-faced Shakespeare), and Dan Poole (producer and director of *Muse of Fire*). Workshops take place in our large Stables lounge, with practical participation alongside theoretical analysis.

Evenings, after a delicious dinner, offer a chance to participate in a very non-Shakespeare activity (led by Nic), the opportunity to enjoy a streamed performance of a relevant Shakespeare play or engage in an informal discussion of any topic under the sun! The final night offering includes a unique candlelit presentation from Nic.

Oh yes, and every retreat offers the chance to join a guided walk to the iron-age hill fort on the top of Caer Drewyn—just across the Valley from Bron Y Graig.

‘Nic and Wendy have created a wonderful place to relax and be creative. A very special experience and I am already thinking about when I can go back.’
- Elspeth H.

Superior Rooms

These are spacious ensuite rooms with a view across the Dee Valley. They all come with a large writing desk and a full range of toiletries, bathrobes, towels, tea and coffee making facilities, widescreen TV, hairdryer and other little extras.

Standard Rooms (pictured)

These are slightly smaller than the Superior Rooms, but still fairly spacious and fully ensuite. They all come with a writing desk and a full range of toiletries, bathrobes, towels, tea and coffee making facilities, widescreen TV, hairdryer and other little extras. They have windows but not quite such a stunning view.

Attic Rooms

These are genuinely attic rooms with sloped ceilings, low beams and less space than our standard rooms but, again, they are fully ensuite. They have a small writing desk and a full range of toiletries, bathrobes, towels, tea and coffee making facilities, widescreen TV, hairdryer and other little extras.

Prices

Prices vary by retreat length, time of year and subject matter. Check the website for prices for the retreat of your choice.

Returning guests benefit from a £50 discount on all retreat prices.

CONCESSION RATES FOR STUDENTS, OAPs AND ANYONE IN RECEIPT OF A STATE BENEFIT:

DISCOUNT OF £100 (incl VAT) on the above prices*, subject to proof of entitlement

[* *There is only one room available at concession prices on each retreat. These may be withdrawn from sale for any retreat at our sole discretion, at any time. Contact info@aplacetowrite.co.uk for details and to book (subject to availability)*]

'Fantastic discussions and practitioner interviews, plus great fun reading the plays. A tremendous week. '
- Shakespeare's Tragedies

'It was a brilliant, stimulating holiday and I will definitely return'
- Jeni G

Nic and Wendy bought the venue for *our retreats,* Bron Y Graig, in June 2022, with a view to developing a world-class retreat centre. Nic is currently working towards publication of his monograph on Shakespeare and Candlelight with a major academic publisher.

Nic has taught Shakespeare and Literature in schools and colleges across the UK, including the Leys School, Cambridge, Wellington College, Berkshire, and Verulam School in St Albans. Prior to that he ran a theatre company that performed all over the UK, directed a production of *Macbeth* in Manchester Cathedral, and ran specialist masterclasses on Stanislavski and Brecht for secondary schools across England. His journey began in the dark ages when he met Wendy while training to be an actor at Mountview Theatre School in London.

Wendy's career, post-drama school, was much more sensible: having already trained as an intensive care nurse, Wendy moved effortlessly into stage managing West End shows before marrying Nic and starting a family. In more recent years she was a senior manager in the NHS and ran several large care homes across Hertfordshire.

Nic and Wendy look forward to welcoming you on your *Unique Shakespeare Holiday*!

'A wonderful week of Shakespeare: inspiring, informative, thought-provoking and most enjoyable from start to finish'
- June, *Shakespeare's Comedies*

2027-28

A Place to Write

Bron Y Graig
London Road
Corwen LL21 0DR

Tel. 07359 319055
www.aplacetowrite.co.uk