

A Wonderland of Castles

NORTH EAST WALES

01

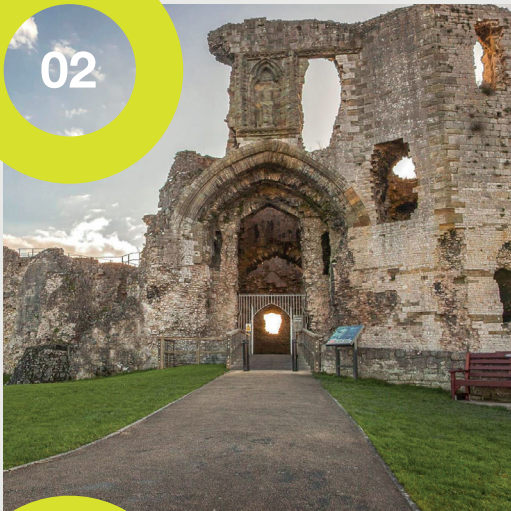


Chirk Castle A magnificent marcher fortress built by Roger Mortimer over 700 years ago – during the reign of King Edward I. It was bought by Sir Thomas Myddelton in 1595, and was then owned by the Myddelton family for over 400 years. Extensive work has been done over generations of Myddelton family ownership to turn the medieval fortress into a comfortable family home.

The beautiful gardens offer beautiful seasonal planting, and commanding views over the Cheshire/Shropshire plains. The 480 acre estate has several walking paths of different difficulties, and is crossed by the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Offa's Dyke.

Chirk (SAT NAV LL14 5AF)

02



Denbigh Castle is all about drama. Cross the drawbridge into the triple-towered gatehouse and you'll hear the portcullis thundering down, chains rattling and the din of horses and marching soldiers.

Don't be too alarmed. It's all down to sensors and the wonders of modern technology. But it's a powerful reminder that this great fortress crowning a rocky outcrop above the Vale of Clwyd played a vital role in the wars that shaped Wales.

It was once the royal residence of Dafydd ap Gruffudd, whose attack on nearby Hawarden Castle provoked the English King Edward I to mount a full-scale invasion. By 1282 Denbigh was in the hands of the king's commander Henry de Lacy.

By car from Chirk Castle 1 hour (SAT NAV LL16 3NB)

03



Rhuddlan Castle King Edward I liked his castles to be on the coast. It was safer that way. If his ruthless campaign to subdue the Welsh ran into trouble, supplies could still get through by sea.

At Rhuddlan, several miles inland, the plan was to use a river instead. Just one problem – the meandering Clwyd wasn't quite in the right place. So Edward conscripted hundreds of ditch-diggers to deepen and divert its course.

More than seven centuries later Rhuddlan still looks like a castle that was worth moving a river for. Begun in 1277 it was the first of the revolutionary concentric, or 'walls within walls', castles designed by master architect James of St George.

By car from Denbigh Castle 25 mins (SAT NAV LL18 5AD)



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