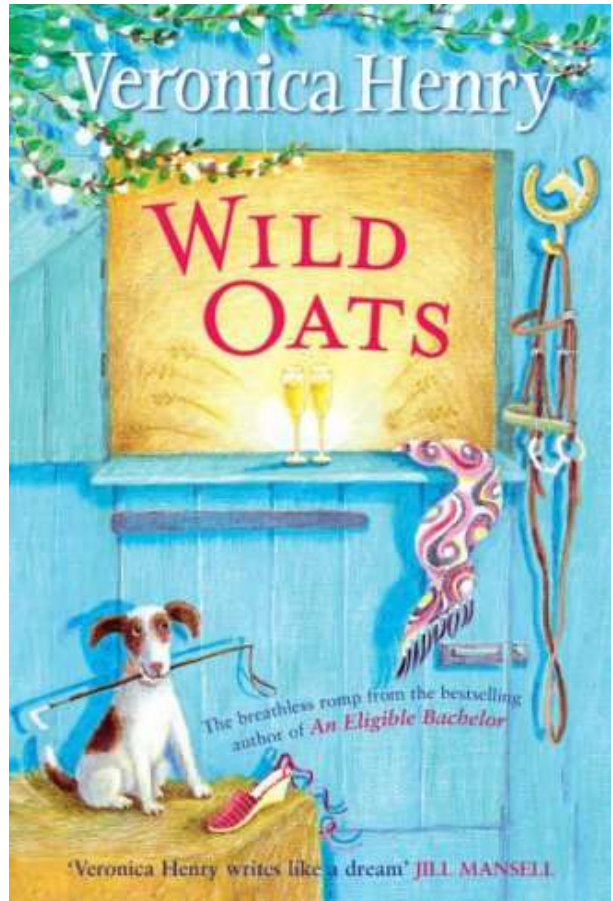


## Writing Wild Oats – The setting

Having set my first two novels in the glorious Cotswolds, I felt it was time for a change of location. It was also the perfect excuse to spend some time researching in one of my favourite places: Ludlow, in Shropshire. Over the past few years, if my husband and I had the opportunity of a childfree weekend we would hotfoot here for a couple of days' gastronomic delight and retail therapy.

I defy anyone to come to Ludlow and not come home with sheaves of estate agent details, dreaming of a secret hideaway or weekend retreat, for it really is the perfect place for some seriously grown up indulgence. Infamously stuffed with Michelin starred restaurants, it also has wonderful [and affordable!] antique shops and emporiums selling items of little use but great aesthetic value. The architecture is the best of British, a satisfying mix of black and white and mellow Georgian red with only a very few modern interventions, overlooked by a magnificent castle and with the river Teme burbling through it.

Thus with a view to setting my next novel here, I cunningly rented a tiny cottage just off the market place in order to finish *Making Hay*, so I could absorb the atmosphere during the [very regular!] breaks I needed to take whilst writing. For a few days, I pretended I was a native, shopping in the farmer's market for warm fresh bread and local cheeses, olives and ice cream. Luckily for my waistline, the day to leave came all too soon, but not before I had thoroughly absorbed the atmosphere which provided the inspiration for *Wild Oats* ...



If you fancy experiencing some of that atmosphere for yourself, then visit <http://www.ludlow.org.uk>

*Veronica Henry 2006*