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BRITAIN 2021



WELCOME



Welcome to *BRITAIN 2021*, our annual look at the very best that the country has to offer. After a year of restricted travel,

get ready to revisit old haunts and explore more of our beautiful shores. Whatever you love about Britain – craggy castles or winding country lanes, rambling gardens or scenic beaches – you'll find it in these pages.

We've given each part of the country its own mini chapter, with highlights and hidden gems to help you plan a visit. And we've visited some of the country's loveliest corners to inspire you, from historic 1066 Country to Yorkshire's atmospheric moors; from north Norfolk's stately homes by the sea to the timeless villages of Cornwall. Happy planning!

Natasha
Natasha Foges, Editor



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BRITAIN 2021

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Clockwise, from this image: The Nare, Cornwall; the Great Hall at Cliveden, Berkshire; Rothay Manor, Cumbria



Country house hideaways

Rothay Manor, Cumbria

There's no better place than the Lakes for a few days' walking, and this handsome Regency manor, a ten-minute stroll from Ambleside, makes the ideal base. All the details are just right: an acclaimed restaurant – one of the best in the Lakes – stylish but comfy rooms whose vast beds come with cloud-like mattresses, and private hot tubs to ease aching muscles after yomping the fells. The full Cumbrian breakfast will set you up for more of the same the next day.

www.rothaymanor.co.uk

Grove of Narberth, Pembrokeshire

A romantic Welsh hideaway, Grove of Narberth overlooks the Preseli Hills and is just a 15-minute drive from pretty Tenby. Rooms are dotted with art, antiques and period fireplaces, imbuing them with warmth and character. Six 15th-century cottage suites in the grounds have been renovated

this year. Our pick is 'Sage'; decorated in soft earthy hues, it comes with its own sun-trap terrace. The hotel also has one of Wales' finest restaurants, with fresh produce picked daily from the kitchen garden for its 5-, 7- and 10-course tasting menus. www.thegrove-narberth.co.uk

The Nare, Cornwall

A country house hotel by the sea on Cornwall's Roseland Peninsula, The Nare is family-run, traditional and utterly charming. It has elegantly appointed rooms, a comfortable lounge in which to relax with afternoon tea or read the papers, and a



WHERE TO STAY IN 2021

Whether it's a country house escape, a rustic bolthole or a sophisticated city stay, you'll find your perfect getaway on these pages

WORDS NATASHA FOGES AND ROSE SHEPHERD



top-notch restaurant with panoramic views of the sea from its floor-to-ceiling windows. The brand-new Whittington Suites, boasting heart-stopping sea views and a contemporary chintzy decor, offer the hotel's trademark mix of elegance and comfort in spades.

www.narehotel.co.uk

The Fife Arms, Scottish Highlands

Braemar is the town famous for hosting the Highland Games, and there's no better place for a Highland fling than the Fife Arms, opened to much fanfare in 2018 by the art collectors and gallerists Iwan and Manuela Wirth. The interior is as impeccably curated as you'd expect, with each of the rooms dedicated to a local place or person and 'dressed' to tell their stories. There's also a strong Scottish narrative, with lashings of tartan and notable Scottish paintings alongside choice items from the Wirths' collection. The restaurant proudly flies the flag in dishes such as birch-roasted Hebridean lamb loin and Perthshire raspberry cranachan.

www.thefifearms.com



Cliveden House, Berkshire

For a country-house hotel with history, Cliveden in leafy Berkshire reigns supreme. There's been a house on this site since the 17th century, playing host to every monarch from George I onwards. The hotel prides itself on its historic pedigree, and the interiors are wonderfully in keeping – everywhere you look are suits of armour,

tapestries, portraits and statuary. Whether you're having a cocktail in the wood-panelled bar, relaxing in your antiques-filled suite, or feasting in the ornate French Dining Room, you can't fail to be transported to a bygone era.

www.clivedenhouse.co.uk

Ockenden Manor, West Sussex

Ockenden Manor is a hotel of two halves. The main building is an Elizabethan manor house, all dark wood panelling, creaky floors and cosiness, while in the grounds the clean lines of a cutting-edge spa are a striking counterpoint. The spa is fed by the hotel's own underground spring and is an impressive offering, with indoor and outdoor pools, steam room, flotation room and a hot tub overlooking rolling Cuckfield Park, a prime swathe of Sussex countryside. With an award-winning fine-dining restaurant, fire-lit drawing room and luxurious bedrooms that come stocked with home-made biscuits, this is a hotel designed for a weekend of indulgence.

www.hshotels.co.uk

Rural retreats

Howard Arms, Warwickshire

This 400-year-old stone inn on the village green was in the doldrums when two families came to its rescue. It is adorned with hanging baskets and feels truly cherished. Within, it is a tasteful blend of old and new – flagged floors, bare stone, wooden settles, rich fabrics and wall coverings. Food is locally sourced: home-baked bread, roasts and real ales the very stuff of a British Sunday. Characterful bedrooms are supplied with gingerbread and you can hunker down by the fire in a leather armchair after a visit to Shakespeare's Stratford.

www.howardarms.com

Inn at Whitewell, Lancashire

Third-generation owner Charles Bowman combines absolute professionalism with a sense of fun at this friendly country-sports inn on the River Hodder. After a day's fishing, or a walk in the Forest of Bowland, you can warm yourself by a blazing log fire in one of the flagstone-floored public spaces adorned with prints, paintings and memorabilia. There are even open fires in many of



the antiques-filled bedrooms. The Queen came here for her 80th birthday lunch on a visit to the Duchy of Lancaster estate – although whether she had the celebrated fish pie or roast cannon of local lamb is not recorded.

www.innatwhitewell.com

Felin Fach Griffin, Powys

One of the Inkin brothers' three dining-pubs-with-rooms, The Griffin in the Brecon Beacons makes a virtue of simplicity, with shabby-chic interiors and an unstuffy, free-and-easy feel. Breakfast is a treat of smoked salmon with scrambled eggs, fruit from the kitchen garden and homemade soda bread. Bedrooms feature Roberts radios, fresh flowers, local artworks,

home-baked biscuits and warm Welsh blankets.

www.eatdrinksleep.ltd.uk

Bossington Hall, Somerset

Set amid the dramatic landscapes of the Exmoor National Park, this inviting late Edwardian house enjoys some of Somerset's most panoramic views. It is now a luxury B&B, where you can relax in the cosy lounge or take advantage of the impressive facilities, including 8 acres of gardens, a 10-seater private cinema for guests, a tennis court and England's oldest private squash court. Beyond the grounds, you can head off to explore the picturesque wilds of Exmoor or the pubs of Porlock, a short walk away.

www.bossingtonhall.co.uk

White Swan, Yorkshire

Fires crackle in the candlelit restaurant and in the dog-friendly lounge and bar at this 18th-century inn, in long-time family ownership, on the site of a much older hostelry. Wing armchairs, sofas and secluded nooks entice you to snuggle in after a moorland hike. The bedrooms are smartly contemporary, and some come with luxurious touches such as roll-top baths or four-poster beds.

www.white-swan.co.uk

English Cottage Vacation, Dorset

For a more luxurious take on the country-cottage holiday, book a stay at Well Cottage, a thatched cottage deep in the idyllic Dorset countryside. The cottage's USP is that everything, from meals to excursions, is included, and taken care of by live-in hosts Nathan and Laura. Laura is the housemaid and private chef, whipping up gourmet feasts, plus snacks on demand, while Nathan is on hand as barman, chauffeur and tour guide on trips to local attractions such as Stonehenge and the Jurassic Coast.

www.englishcottagevacation.com



Clockwise, from this image: Felin Fach Griffin, Powys; Inn at Whitewell, Lancashire; Howard Arms, Warwickshire; White Swan, Yorkshire

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Clockwise, from this image: Shaun Rankin at Grantley Hall, Yorkshire; Morston Hall, Norfolk; Lympstone Manor, Devon; afternoon tea at The Balmoral, Edinburgh; locally sourced charcuterie at The Forest Side, Cumbria



Gourmet getaways

Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Oxfordshire

Britain's gourmet stay par excellence, Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons was awarded two Michelin stars upon opening 35 years ago, and it retains them to this day. A honey-coloured 15th-century manor approached by a lavender-scented pathway, the

hotel is permeated with the gallic flair of its famous maître de maison, Raymond Blanc. The exceptional 7-course dinner might include Cornish turbot, cucumber, wasabi and Exmoor caviar; Rhug Estate lamb, courgette flower and fresh pea; and much more besides. Aside from the food, a stay here is a treat: individually designed suites are the height of luxury, and the beautiful gardens are dotted with contemporary sculpture.

www.belmond.com

The Forest Side, Lake District

What could be better after a bracing hike through Grasmere's craggy fells than a slap-up meal at The Forest Side? Set in a gabled Victorian mansion, this restaurant-with-rooms has been classily refurbished to become one of the Lake District's top choices. Depending on the length of your walk, reward yourself with chef Paul Leonard's 4-course or 8-course menu. Dishes showcase the best of Cumbria's natural larder, with tasty local ingredients such as salt-aged Cumbrian duck and raw Lakeland Dexter beef. After dinner, enjoy a





nightcap by the fire in the cosy lounge or retreat to your room, a masterclass in contemporary country style.

www.theforestside.com

The Balmoral, Edinburgh

Edinburgh's The Balmoral hotel is the city's top choice for a luxury stay, and its restaurant, Number One, is a suitably glamorous affair, with dove grey wool banquettes and splashy contemporary art on the lacquered red walls. Despite the attention-grabbing decor, the food can't fail to steal the show: head chef Mark Donald's creations fuse modern Scottish cuisine with international flourishes. The 7-course menu might include such delights as BBQ Orkney scallop, followed by North Sea cod and Shetland mussel, with Highland Wagyu beef as a succulent main. If you're not in the market for a full meal, the afternoon tea here is pretty special too.

www.roccofortehotels.com

Grantley Hall, Yorkshire

Grantley Hall near Ripon has an astonishing range of restaurants and bars under one roof, giving ditherers a wealth of options. The fine-dining choice is Shaun Rankin, offering a 10-course menu that runs the gamut from scallop with sea buckthorn and lovage to venison loin with celeriac and blackcurrant. Then there's the playful Pan Asian EightyEight, a seductive space with teal green banquettes and low lighting. Fletcher's is the traditional option – all oak panelling, fireplaces and classic dishes such as salt-aged Yorkshire lamb rump. Plenty to occupy epicures, then, and spa-lovers too: Three Graces is a state-of-the-art complex of pools, hot tubs, steam rooms and even a snow room.

www.grantleyhall.co.uk

Morston Hall, Norfolk

Chef and owner Galton Blackiston is at the helm of this highly regarded country house hotel. Small but perfectly considered, it has just 13 rooms, and a cosily intimate feel prevails throughout. The dining experience begins with canapés in the garden or lounge before you take your seat in the dining room and await a gastronomic feast. The 7-course tasting menu (no choice, but you're in impeccable hands) is a paean to local produce. Norfolk's bounty is put to good use in dishes like Wild Stiffkey sea bass with whey butter sauce, and Bungay raw milk cream with blackcurrant. The menu changes daily – a good excuse to book a return visit.

www.morstonhall.com

Ynyshtir, Wales

This white-painted building was once owned by Queen Victoria as a country retreat, and its location, near the Snowdonia National Park, has



lost none of its charm. If you find the usual Michelin star restaurant experience stuffy, this place is for you. The style is stripped-back Scandinavian cool rather than formal, and refreshingly, there's no dress code. There are plenty of surprises in chef Gareth Ward's bold and experimental tasting menu, full of Japanese-meets-Welsh flavours and featuring meat and fish in every guise (vegetarians should look elsewhere). A culinary journey in 19 courses and four hours, it's not for the faint-hearted; luckily, you can work it off afterwards with a roam round the grounds.

www.ynyshtir.co.uk

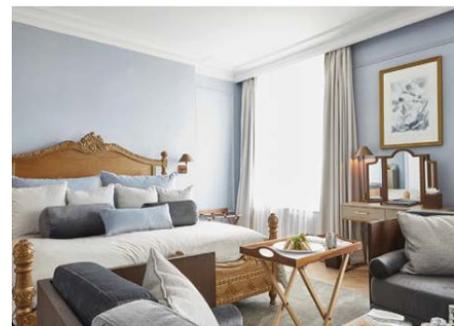
Lympstone Manor, Devon

Overlooking the tranquil Exe estuary and the rugged Jurassic Coast, Lympstone Manor may have miles of unspoilt beaches, luxurious rooms (plus, new this year, fancy shepherd's huts) and Georgian elegance galore, but what really sets it apart is its kitchen. With chef/patron Michael Caines at the helm, the restaurant secured a Michelin star just six months after opening. Three elegant fine-dining rooms benefit from airy views of the coast and make an elegant setting for Caines' refined cuisine. After a lunch to remember, take a tour of the vineyard, planted by Caines in 2018 and maturing nicely.

www.lympstonemanor.co.uk



PHOTO: © HOTEL PHOTOGRAPHY/INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHER MARK ASHBE





City escapes

Mayfair Townhouse, London

As a new sister property to the likes of Cliveden and Chewton Glen, expectations were high for the Iconic Luxury Hotels Group's first London hotel, and the Mayfair Townhouse doesn't disappoint. Though it occupies a run of 15 Georgian townhouses, the feel is surprisingly intimate and boutique. The hotel takes its cue from the dandies that once frequented this part of London: a whimsical, bohemian decor prevails, from the crystal-embellished peacock that preens in the foyer and the low-lit bar (where the Green Carnation cocktail is named after Oscar Wilde's most famous accessory) to the glamorous guestrooms. www.themayfairtownhouse.com

Number 38 Clifton, Bristol

Bristol is a rewarding city-break destination, and the stately Clifton neighbourhood makes an ideal base, on the edge of the rolling Downs but within easy reach of town. There are prime views from this stylish Georgian townhouse, which prides itself on its 'home away from home' feel. Relax in your airy wood-panelled room, stocked with a Roberts radio, waffle dressing gowns and tea and coffee facilities, browse the papers by the fire or enjoy a cocktail on the terrace overlooking the rooftops. www.number38clifton.com

Artist Residence, Brighton

There's a bohemian, decadent feel to the interiors of this Brighton B&B that seems to suit the city's fun-loving, cheeky spirit. The bedrooms are individually decorated, with wood floors, vintage



Clockwise, from this image: Rock House, Edinburgh; Mayfair Townhouse, London; Grays Court Hotel, York; Artist Residence, Brighton



New for 2021

The Harper, Norfolk

The hotly anticipated opening of The Harper in North Norfolk gives us a new reason (as if one were needed) to visit this picturesque stretch of coast. Housed in a former brick and flint-built glassblowing factory in the sleepy village of Langham, The Harper's aesthetic is refreshingly chintz-free. Unfussy yet seriously luxurious rooms – modern four-posters, warm wood floors, generous bathrooms – are designed for guests to decompress. www.theharper.co.uk

Gleneagles Townhouse, Edinburgh

Scotland's finest hotel, Gleneagles, is launching a city outpost in Edinburgh this autumn. Behind a grand sandstone facade on St Andrew's Square, this historic townhouse (a former bank) will have 33 bedrooms decked out in tastefully luxurious style. An all-day restaurant is also planned, plus two bars, including a rooftop space that promises stunning city views, until now only enjoyed by the statues that line the rooftop balustrade. www.gleneagles.com

The Pig in the South Downs, West Sussex

The latest Pig in the much-loved boutique chain is opening this summer in 18th-century Madehurst Lodge near Arundel. Expect the rustic-chic interiors, kitchen gardens and relaxed vibe that have become Pig hallmarks. Taking the chain's farm-to-table ethos to the next level, the hotel will have its own vineyard, which will produce its first harvest in 2022. www.thepighotel.com

The Beaverbrook Town House, London

Two Georgian townhouses have been lavishly restored to create the Beaverbrook Town House, due to open in Chelsea this summer: a city sister to the Beaverbrook Hotel, a storied and stylish country-house hotel in Surrey. The 14 suites, named after London theatres, promise to be flamboyant in style. A gourmet Japanese restaurant completes the picture. www.beaverbrook.co.uk

The Double Red Duke, Oxfordshire

Closely resembling many people's idea of the perfect Cotswolds inn, the Double Red Duke is a wisteria-clad stone manor set in the sweet Oxfordshire village of Clanfield, surrounded by rolling countryside. The interiors are vibrant and contemporary, with funky wallpaper, statement lighting and vases of country flowers conjuring the sense that you're staying at the home of a (very stylish) friend. www.countrycreatures.com



the Wig Room, where in the 18th century the men and women of the house had their wigs fitted. www.vanbrughhousehotel.co.uk

Grays Court Hotel, York

Tucked between York Minster and the ancient city walls, this hotel has an unbeatable location – and a pretty impressive history. York's oldest inhabited building, it was built for the Archbishop of York's first Treasurer, and has hosted many prestigious guests over the centuries, including James I and William Wilberforce. Signs of its grand age and stature are everywhere, from the leaded windows to the antique beds, but it's all softened with contemporary art, zingy textiles and fresh flowers. The excellent restaurant and manicured garden are further draws. www.grayscourtyork.com

Rock House, Edinburgh

Edinburgh boasts an array of tempting hotels but those in the know book the Rock House, a decidedly untouristy bolthole in the heart of town. Built in the 1750s, Rock House was once home to David Octavius Hill, a distinguished photographer. Beautifully restored and set over two floors, the house is wonderfully inviting, crammed with original features and warmed by log fires. Couples wanting a cosy retreat can book the Photographer's Studio, with a sweeping staircase and domed roof. Best of all, the house is sited at the foot of Calton Hill, with a panoramic terrace overlooking Edinburgh's landmarks. www.rockhouse-edinburgh.com

and reclaimed furniture and limited-edition prints. South-facing rooms enjoy heart-stirring views of the famous Brighton seafront and the atmospheric remains of the West Pier. Set in one of Brighton's handsome Regency squares, it's a mere pebble's throw to the seafront and to the buzzy Lanes district, full of independent boutiques, pubs and cafés. www.artistresidence.co.uk

Vanbrugh House Hotel, Oxford

The location of this friendly B&B is hard to beat, right in the heart of Oxford, an easy stroll from the colleges and museums. Behind the honeyed Cotswold stone of the facade – designed by Sir John Vanbrugh, the architect of Blenheim Palace, no less – is a comfortable modern interior, with many original features intact. Guestrooms are elegantly appointed and full of character, their beams, wood panelling and fireplaces tangible links to the past. Some even have stories to tell, such as

PHOTO © GRAHAM MELLANBY FRSA

London

Whether you're a first-time visitor or a lifelong Londoner, Britain's vibrant capital is entrancing. 'Tired of London, tired of life' goes the old adage, and it's true: beyond the top tier of world-class sights, from the Tower of London to the British Museum, there are numerous smaller museums, galleries and buildings to absorb you, each with stories to tell. And even if you don't set foot in a single one, you'll find endless (and free) entertainment exploring the capital's markets, tucked-away Georgian squares and City backstreets, or people-watching on the South Bank, home to Tate Modern, the London Eye and Shakespeare's Globe.

Then there's the food. London has evolved into one of the world's great culinary capitals, with an impressive 66 Michelin-star restaurants; take afternoon tea, join a food tour or fine-dine with a skyline view. However you round off your evening – with a stroll along the fairy-lit Thames, maybe, or a pint in a local pub – we think you'll agree that there are few cities on earth that can match the sheer buzz of London.



The London Eye
offers panoramic
city views



London essentials



The Changing of the Guard at Horse Guards Parade

PHOTOS: © VISITLONDON.COM/JOHN REID

ANNUAL EVENTS

Trooping the Colour

This parade of over 1,400 soldiers and 200 horses has marked the official birthday of the British sovereign for over 260 years. *12 June*

Wimbledon Tennis Championships

The world's oldest tennis tournament is set to go ahead this year – without the queues. *28 June-11 July*

BBC Proms

A world-renowned eight-week classical music festival held each summer in the Royal Albert Hall. *30 July-11 September*

RHS Chelsea Flower Show

A must for all keen gardeners, the Chelsea Flower Show has cutting-edge show gardens and fabulous floral displays. *21-26 September*

HIGHLIGHTS

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUMS

A superb trio of museums – the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum and the V&A – make this cultural pocket of southwest London a must-visit.

NATIONAL GALLERY

This beautiful gallery houses one of the greatest collections of paintings in the world, and also offers stunning views over Trafalgar Square. Discover over 2,300 paintings, including masterpieces such as Constable's *The Hay Wain*.

TATE MODERN

The home of contemporary art in London, this iconic museum puts on thought-provoking exhibitions.

GREENWICH

Visit *Cutty Sark*, the world's only surviving tea clipper, stand astride the historic Prime Meridian, divider of East and West; visit Greenwich Observatory, home

of Greenwich Mean Time; and marvel at the Old Royal Naval College's Baroque Painted Hall.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Sir Christopher Wren's masterpiece is full of wonder. Walk across the floor where Prince Charles and Diana were married in 1981, take a pew for Choral Evensong or climb 528 steps to the Dome for breathtaking views.

BRITISH MUSEUM

One of the oldest museums in the world, the British Museum has over eight million objects covering over two million years of history. It holds countless precious exhibits, including the Rosetta Stone, the Parthenon Sculptures and Egyptian mummies.

THE SOUTH BANK

This buzzing area, across the river from the Houses of Parliament, has some of the city's biggest attractions including Tate Modern, Shakespeare's Globe and the

London Eye. And with its theatres, galleries and restaurants, you could easily spend a day here.

TOWER OF LONDON

From the Crown Jewels to the legendary beefeaters, explore 1,000 years of history at this fortress, royal palace and infamous prison.

AFTERNOON TEA

This very civilised tradition is a must on any visit to the capital. Hotels offering tea with all the trimmings are numerous, but for a truly indulgent treat with live piano accompaniment, head to Claridge's or The Savoy.

HIDDEN GEM

The Churchill War Rooms are an atmospheric warren of rooms from which the Prime Minister directed operations during the Second World War. Left as they were when they were finally abandoned in 1945, they are a fascinating glimpse back in time.

DON'T MISS

Whether you're on the hunt for antiques at Portobello, street food at Borough or flowers at Columbia Road, you'll find London's markets the perfect browsing ground

Every Item Has a Story...



399
Strand



If it seems unusual that the PUC £1 - a stamp used to promote a conference about international co-operation - features a very elaborate, yet violent, design showing St George attacking a dragon, it is because this design was not originally intended for this stamp.

This Elizabeth I pound is a superb example of English Renaissance metallic art. Elizabeth was extremely fussy about her appearance; she personally inspected examples of her portrait and chose designs as it's known that she destroyed any which she judged to be inferior.



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Culture CAPITAL

After a year of stop-start openings, London's museums are welcoming visitors back in 2021 with an array of blockbuster exhibitions

WORDS NATASHA FOGES & JENNY ROWE

The British Museum,
located in London's
Bloomsbury



For months London's museums stood empty, but all that changed in May with the long-awaited reopening of museums, galleries and other venues. There are some exciting shows planned to welcome you back, which we've outlined on these pages (plans can change so please check dates and other details with the museums directly).

The Royal Academy of Arts is one of the oldest permanent collections of art in the UK, housed in magnificent Burlington House. The Royal Academy reopens with a hopeful reflection on the wonders of the natural world and the beauty of spring. David Hockney spent 2020 at home in Normandy, chronicling the unfolding of spring in a flurry of works 'painted' on his iPad. The 116 large-scale works that make up this showstopping exhibition are both a breath of fresh air after a difficult year and a reminder of Hockney's virtuoso talent (*until 26 Sept; www.royalacademy.org.uk*).

Rewind a few centuries with a visit to Tate Britain's big exhibition, *Turner's Modern World*. The artist may be best known for his portrayal of nature's unpredictable, otherworldly power, but he also had his feet planted firmly on earth, in a world that was changing at a frightening rate. The exhibition will explore Turner's fascination with politics, conflicts and new technology, as he put local elections, battlefields, steamboats and railways under the spotlight (*until 12 Sept; tate.org.uk*).

Tate Modern puts the work of another great artist in the frame with *The Making of Rodin*. Though best known for his bronze and marble sculptures, Rodin's mastery of plaster is the subject of this blockbuster exhibition. Tate recreates the atmosphere of the artist's studio with over 200 works in all shapes and sizes, including casts of his most famous works such as *The Thinker*. A large number of works have been loaned from the Musée Rodin, many of which have never left France before (*until 31 Oct; www.tate.org.uk*).

At the National Gallery, meanwhile, there's an exhibition of the works of Bellotto, Canaletto's lesser-known nephew. ▶

The artist painted the Saxon fortress of Königstein five times at different points in his career, and the National Gallery reunites the quintet for the first time in over 250 years (*until 31 Oct*). Autumn's big exhibition is *Poussin and the Dance*, bringing together a colourful Classical world full of revelry, dance and drama (*9 Oct-2 Jan 2022*; www.nationalgallery.org.uk).

Art aficionados will also want to try out *Van Gogh Alive*, claimed to be the 'most visited immersive experience in the world'. On an epic tour of 65 cities worldwide, this arty extravaganza lands in London this summer in Kensington Gardens, one of the capital's loveliest royal parks. Visitors will transcend space and time on a journey through places dear to the artist, from the Netherlands to Provence, with his famous works daubed on every surface. An intriguing way to immerse yourself in some of the world's most famous paintings (*until 26 Sept*; vangoghaliveuk.com).

Another offbeat cultural experience can be found at the V&A, the world's leading museum of art and design. Its collection covers 5,000 years of history, but this year it transforms into a theatrical Wonderland with *Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser*. Go down the rabbit hole and immerse yourself in the mind-bending imagination of CS Lewis, exploring the world of Alice through literature, art, film and fashion (*until 31 Dec*; www.vam.ac.uk).

Just down the road is the Natural History Museum, a must-see for devotees of the natural world. The menagerie of gargoyles that embellish the facade of this landmark

building are just a taster of the 80 million specimens to explore inside. This year's big exhibition is *Fantastic Beasts™: The Wonder of Nature*, a quirky look at how the natural world has inspired myths, legends and magical creatures. It features 120 exhibits, from a real-life dinosaur named after Hogwarts – the Dracorex Hogwartsia – to favourites of the wizarding world such as Nifflers and Bowtruckles. This hotly anticipated exhibition, delayed due to the pandemic, is bound to be a hit with Harry Potter fans and explorers of the future (*until 3 Jan 2022*; www.nhm.ac.uk).

The British Museum can always be counted on to provide some of the year's cultural highlights, and in 2021 it doesn't disappoint. A delayed exhibition marking the 850th anniversary of Thomas Becket's assassination, *Thomas Becket: Murder and the Making of a Saint*, delves into the grisly murder that shook the medieval world (*until 22 Aug*); the turbulent reign of the mad, bad and dangerous Emperor Nero is explored through 200 spectacular objects (*until 24 Oct*); while the history, beliefs and cultural achievements of the peoples of the central Andes in Peru are the focus later in the year (*11 Nov-20 Feb 2022*; www.britishmuseum.org).

Finally, having been confined to our own homes for more days than we care to count, it will be a treat to explore Shoreditch's Museum of the Home (previously the Geffrey Museum), set to reopen in June following a major £18.1 million development. New galleries explore personal experiences of home life over four centuries and the much-loved 'Rooms Through Time' displays have been revived, bookended with new offerings such as 'Domestic Game Changers', which showcase how everyday objects have had a radical effect on the quality of life at home through history. And in a supernatural twist, a new Victorian room will present the clashing textures and patterns of a middle-class London parlour set up to welcome guests to a séance (www.museumofthehome.org.uk). **B**

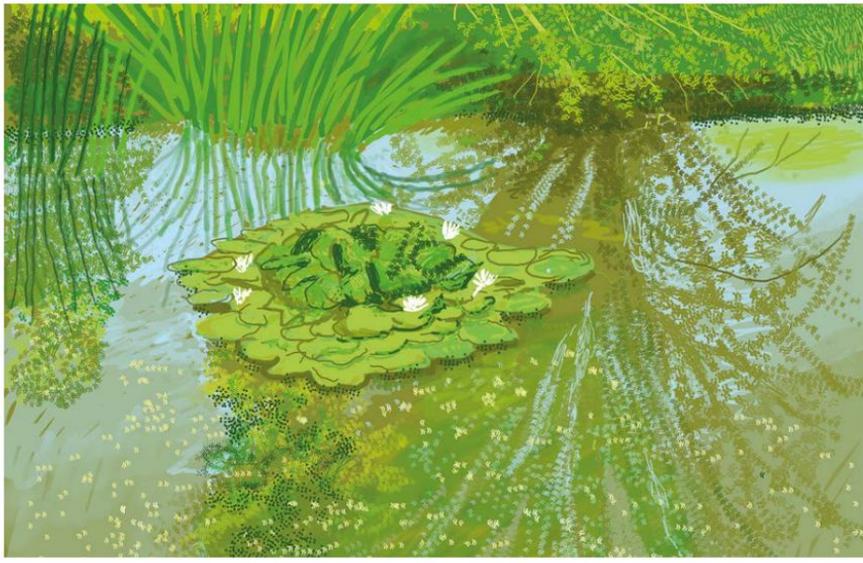
For more on London's attractions, www.britain-magazine.com

Clockwise, from left: 'Main droite de Pierre et Jacques de Wissant' by Auguste Rodin, 1885-6; Kensington Gardens; the Natural History Museum; 'No. 340' by David Hockney, 21 May

2020; an 1830s drawing room in the new Museum of the Home; 'A Bacchanalian Revel before a Term' by Nicolas Poussin, 1632-3; the V&A museum near Hyde Park



PHOTOS: © VISITLONDON.COM/JON REDD; HOCKNEY/THE NATIONAL GALLERY; LONDON/CHRIS RIDLEY/PETER SCHOLLEY/ALAMY/TATE MODERN/WALSERE RODIN



Southwest England

The West Country is full of wonder: the mystical land of King Arthur and Stonehenge; the awe-inspiring Jurassic Coast, embedded with the fossils of dinosaurs; moorland dotted with ancient monuments and traversed by wild ponies; and a spectacular coastline tapering out at Lizard Point, Cornwall's southernmost point.

Covering Gloucestershire, Bristol, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, the area holds an impressive four UNESCO World Heritage Sites and two national parks.

If the coast, with its quaint fishing towns and cheerful seaside resorts, leaves the most lasting impression, the interior is pretty spectacular too. With cities like Bath, a harmonious cityscape in creamy limestone, and Salisbury with its elegant cathedral, there's much to explore.

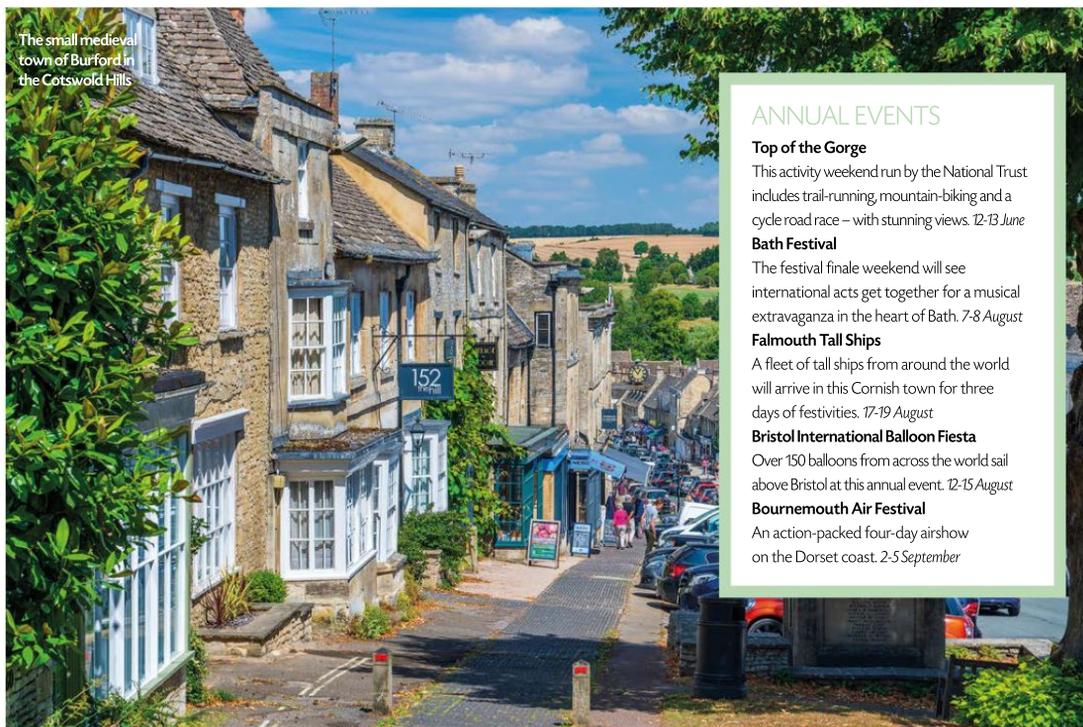
The region is also prized for its food and drink: Gloucester Old Spot pork, Somerset cider and cheese, Cornish crab and pasties. And of course, you can't leave the West Country without tucking into to a cream tea of scones, clotted cream and jam. We'll leave the age-old question – jam or cream first? – to you.



The Roman Baths
in the city of Bath



Southwest England essentials



The small medieval town of Burford in the Cotswold Hills

ANNUAL EVENTS

Top of the Gorge

This activity weekend run by the National Trust includes trail-running, mountain-biking and a cycle road race – with stunning views. 12-13 June

Bath Festival

The festival finale weekend will see international acts get together for a musical extravaganza in the heart of Bath. 7-8 August

Falmouth Tall Ships

A fleet of tall ships from around the world will arrive in this Cornish town for three days of festivities. 17-19 August

Bristol International Balloon Fiesta

Over 150 balloons from across the world sail above Bristol at this annual event. 12-15 August

Bournemouth Air Festival

An action-packed four-day airshow on the Dorset coast. 2-5 September

PHOTOS © SEBASTIAN WASEK/ACORNIES IMAGES

HIGHLIGHTS

BATH

This beautiful Georgian town is famed for its spa waters, honey-stone houses and Jane Austen connections: Bath was home to the author from 1801 to 1806, when it was a fashionable spa resort.

DARTMOOR

Windswept and beautiful, this brooding granite expanse is dotted with tors and tumbling springs. Wild ponies trot freely across the moorland here, as they have done for centuries.

THE COTSWOLDS

Arguably Britain's prettiest villages are clustered in this corner of England, including Bourton-on-the-Water, with its sweet bridges over the River Windrush; Burford, lined with antiques shops; and Bibury, described by William Morris as "the most beautiful village in England". Photo opportunities abound.

ST IVES

Blessed with beautiful light and sparkling sea, this town has long had links with artists, and holds an outpost of the Tate Gallery.

STONEHENGE

The origins of this mysterious monolithic ring still confound archaeologists. What we can say for sure is that it's one of Neolithic man's most incredible achievements. However accustomed you are to seeing it in pictures, visiting in person never fails to thrill.

CREAM TEAS

Whether you spread the jam first, as in Cornwall, or the cream, as in Devon, a cream tea is a must in this part of the country.

TINTAGEL

In a picturesque setting on Cornwall's northern coast

are these spectacular ruins of a vast Norman stronghold. A dramatic new footbridge set 187ft above sea level links Tintagel island to the castle where, as legend has it, King Arthur was conceived.

JURASSIC COAST

England's only natural World Heritage Site covers over 95 miles of coastline, including horseshoe-shaped Lulworth Cove and the limestone arch of Durdle Door.

WELLS CATHEDRAL

This medieval Gothic masterpiece stands at the heart of England's smallest city.

HIDDEN GEM

The iconic SS Great Britain sits in Bristol harbour, where it was built in 1843. It is now a museum ship where you can experience the sights, sounds and smells of the world's first great luxury liner.

DON'T MISS

Cheddar Gorge in Somerset is one of England's most dazzling landscapes: a breathtaking limestone gorge with a network of floodlit caves at its base

Specialist London Auctioneers of Rare and Historically Significant Items



Located in the heart of Mayfair, Dix Noonan Webb Ltd are the UK's leading specialist auctioneers and valuers of banknotes, coins, tokens, medals and militaria, jewellery and antiques, with a team of in-house specialist staff with over 250 years combined experience.

A selection of Recent Highlights



A Roman gold Aureus of the usurper Allectus, c.296 AD
Found by a metal detectorist in a field in Kent
Sold at DNW for £552,000



A magnificent Napoleon Eagle of the First Empire
Sold at DNW for £49,600



A 22ct gold model commemorating the Apollo moon landing, 1969, by Louis Osman and Malcom Appleby
Sold at DNW for £26,400



A handsome and impressive King Ghazi 100 Dinars of 1936
Sold at DNW for £16,120



The emotive P.D.S.A. Dickin Medal for Gallantry, "The Animals' V.C.", awarded to the cock-pigeon 'Duke of Normandy', for his gallantry on D-Day, 6 June 1944
Sold at DNW for £27,280



The important and well-documented George Medal awarded to Ronald Russell, for his spontaneous gallantry in defending H.R.H. The Princess Anne during the kidnap attempt on 20 March 1974
Sold at DNW for £62,000



Bank of England, Kenneth O. Peppiatt, £1000, London, 20 November 1936, extremely fine and very rare
Sold at DNW for £29,7600



A pair of late 19th century large diamond drop earrings
Sold at DNW for £62,000

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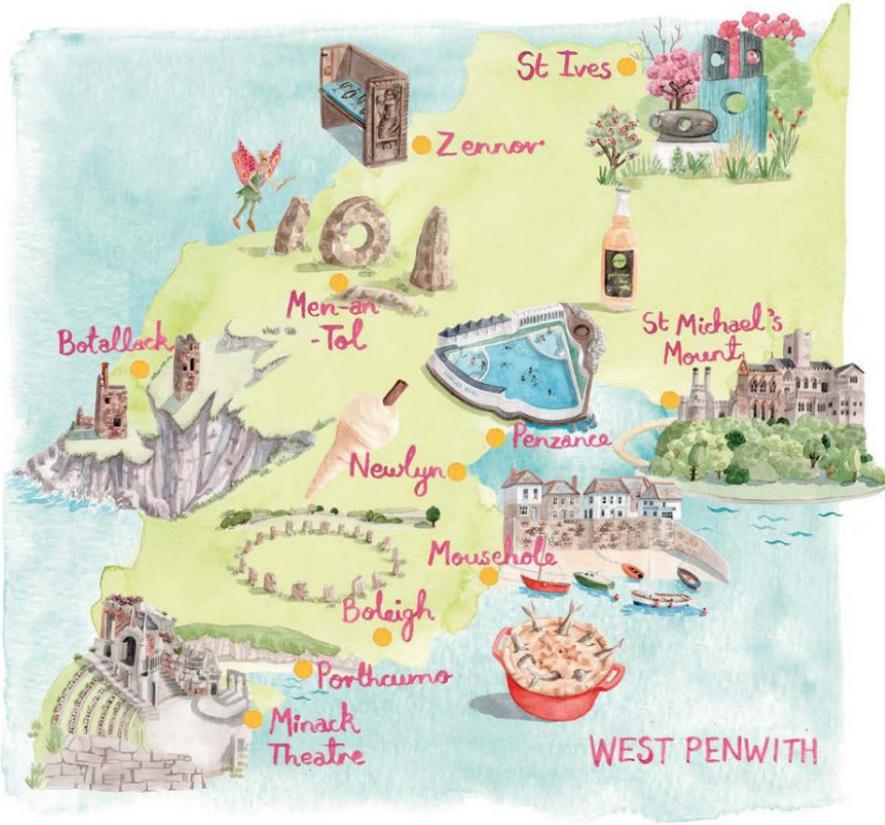


Hidden Cornwall

Discover the beautiful, beguiling and rugged land
of West Penwith in the far reaches of Cornwall

WORDS FELIX ROWE





PHOTOS: © PIETRO CANNALI/CORNIERS IMAGES/IN CAMERA STOCK/PALM WILLIAMS/ALAMY ILLUSTRATION: © LAURA HALLETT





Previous page:
St Michael's Mount
This image: The Minack
Theatre is magical
Bottom left: Men-an-Tol is said
to be guarded over by a fairy

It's called Land's End for good reason. Tucked away in the extreme southwest of mainland Britain, the Penwith peninsula feels like the very edge of the world. Flanked by the Atlantic on all sides – and often bearing the full brunt of its rages – the landscape here is as wild and rugged as it comes. And it's all the more beautiful for it. If you're looking to escape the throngs of the city and enter the wilderness then West Penwith is not a bad place to start. A land where the myths and legends are as impenetrable as the fog that rolls in from the sea. Welcome to the Wild West.

But in fact, with a direct train line to London Paddington and recently improved road links, Penwith today isn't as inaccessible as you might first think. And upon arrival you'll soon find yourself swept away by its myriad charms.

When a relatively small area boasts not one, but two of the country's most magnificent wonders – in the form of St Michael's Mount and the Minack Theatre – it's perhaps understandable that surrounding treasures can get overlooked. St Michael's Mount is a dramatic tidal island, connected to the mainland only via a granite

causeway at low tide, on which is perched a medieval castle, itself built on the site of an 8th-century monastery. It bears striking resemblance to its Normandy namesake, Mont-Saint-Michel.

The Minack, meanwhile, is a construction as breathtaking as its clifftop setting: a magical place for outdoor theatre in the warmer months. Both landmarks enjoy wide coverage for good reason and they must be experienced. Yet deeper exploration of West Cornwall reveals so much more.

Another highlight of Mount's Bay is the harbour village of Mousehole – that's 'Mowzul' to locals. Poet Dylan Thomas famously found it to be "the loveliest village in England", and that sums it up quite neatly. A day watching the boats come and go is always an absolute delight. Spend the afternoon with a well-thumbed copy of iconic children's tale, *The Mousehole Cat*, and a slice of the local speciality, stargazy pie.

Nor is the Minack the only reason to explore Porthcurno. This sleepy headland was once the communications centre of the world, the terminal for the 19th-century submarine telegraph cables connecting Britain to her empire, with ▶



huge cables landed on the beach from as far away as India. The Telegraph Museum and underground Second World War tunnels make a fascinating detour.

Long before Cornwall's influx of tourism, the county relied on its lucrative mining industry: it was once the mining capital of the world. Look out for the ruins of engine houses lining the coastline, including Botallack, managed by the National Trust. Some local mining tunnels extend out miles into the sea. Fans of the TV series *Poldark* may recognise scenes from their screens, and the crew are often seen filming locally over the summer months.

Despite its remoteness, Penwith has been inhabited for thousands of years. At first, it's hard to fathom what would bring people to settle somewhere so extreme, until you encounter the almost magnetic draw first-hand. The area is positively littered with prehistoric monuments and henges, less publicised than their more famous cousins, yet no less beguiling. Cornwall is said to host a particularly high concentration, from standing stones to burial chambers, some variants entirely unique to the area, and invariably accompanied by their own mysterious local legends.

Men-an-Tol, for instance, is said to be guarded over by a fairy, or *psikie* as they are known locally, with miraculous healing powers. According to local mythology, passing a naked child through the hole of the central circular stone nine times will cure them of rickets. Women are advised not to pass through the hole seven times backwards during a full moon if they wish to avoid becoming pregnant. Nearby Madron Holy Well has been revered for millennia for its legendary remedial qualities. Look out for offerings, or 'clouties', such as ribbons tied to the surrounding trees.

The Neolithic stone circle, the Merry Maidens of Boleigh, complete with two further stones known as the Pipers, is equally intriguing. Supposedly the 19 maidens danced as the pipers played, only to be turned to stone for daring to enjoy frivolities on the Sabbath. Kiss your lover while standing in the centre of the stones to ensure enduring happiness.

The Iron Age and Neolithic coastal villages of Chysauster and Carn Euny are uncannily reminiscent of the equally remote Skara Brae in the Orkney Islands at the other extreme of the British Isles.

Penwith is home to scores of beautiful, ancient Christian churches, often built on earlier pagan sites. St Senara's Church gave rise to another legend of Cornish folklore – the Mermaid of Zennor, who fell in love and subsequently eloped with the local churchwarden's son. A 15th-century carved chair, which may have inspired the tale, can still be seen in the church today.

Owing to its abundant scenery and famed quality of natural light, West Cornwall has long been a haven for artists. The Newlyn, St Ives and Lamorna schools are particularly well known, as is St Ives' Leach Pottery. Painters drawn to the area have included the British abstract artist Sir Terry Frost and SJ 'Lamorna' Birch.

The scene's prominence was significant enough to tempt the Tate to take residence above St Ives' Porthmeor Beach in 1993, and the gallery has recently been extended. The Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden is a tranquil haven hidden away within the town, and there are many smaller



The myths and legends are as impenetrable as the fog that rolls in from the sea

Left: The abandoned engine houses of Botallack near St Ives
Above: A lively pub in St Ives

independent galleries across the region that equally delight. Tremenheere Sculpture Gardens occupy a wonderful position overlooking St Michael's Mount, while nearby Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange and Penlee House Gallery are must-visits too.

Many revere Cornwall as a top foodie destination. The beloved pasty, Cornwall's signature snack, now has 'protected designation of origin' status. St Ives has its own popular food festival in May, one of many similar events across the county. Pick up an ice cream from Jelberts in Newlyn – don't be fooled by the low-key shopfront or the fact that they only do one flavour. Made with fresh Cornish clotted cream, many say it's the best you'll ever experience. But, in the name of balance, Moomaid of Zennor is pretty good too.

If your thirst needs quenching, pay a visit to the family-run Polgoon on the outskirts of Penzance, for a tasting and tour of the vineyard and orchard. Meanwhile, being ►



a small-batch operation hasn't stopped St Ives Cider from winning international awards. There are several enterprising microbreweries in the area, helping to propel the country's artisan ale revolution.

THE PLANNER

GETTING THERE

Penzance is around 5hr 30min by train from London Paddington. By car take either the M5 or A303 west until you meet the A30, which continues down to St Ives and Penzance. www.thetrainline.com

WHERE TO STAY

The St Ives Harbour Hotel offers chic rooms with fantastic sea views. In Penzance, stay at Camilla House, a guesthouse with boutique rooms and an award-winning breakfast. www.harbourhotels.co.uk; www.camillahouse.co.uk

WHERE TO EAT

There are many wonderful places to sample delicious food. The Gurnard's Head near Zennor is renowned, while La Casita near St Ives offers wonderful tapas in a relaxed atmosphere. www.gurnardshead.co.uk; www.lacasitarestaurant.co.uk

With provenance on everyone's minds, you don't need to travel far to experience fantastic, locally-sourced produce. Enjoy fish as fresh as it gets, straight off the boats from Newlyn, St Ives and other local harbours.

Cornwall's fishing and seafaring heritage goes way back. Many will know Penzance for Gilbert and Sullivan's eponymous pirates. Today, walking down its narrow alleys and opeways you can stumble upon historic taverns, once frequented by seafarers of a decidedly nefarious nature.

But it's also home to a grand promenade and the recently restored Art Deco lido. A regular port of call for cruising yachtspeople, Penzance is also the gateway to the Isles of Scilly, reached aboard the *Scillonian*.

West Cornwall boasts a rich pilchard-fishing history. Sadly, overfishing swiftly saw an end to the trade, but not before significantly contributing to the vernacular architecture, with pretty whitewashed stone fisherman's cottages and pilchard cellars lining the coast.

So, there's much more to West Cornwall than first meets the eye. Replete with independent boutiques, bistros and galleries, and with glorious scenery at every turn, Penwith harbours many hidden gems just waiting to be discovered. **B**

For more on Cornwall, visit www.britain-magazine.com

Above: The harbour at Mousehole



Launch your own COASTAL RETREAT

Berkeleyparks are best known for their residential sites, with parks in 21 counties throughout the UK. Now they have embarked on an exciting new venture: the launch of their Holiday Parks, giving you the opportunity to own a luxury holiday lodge in an idyllic location

The first of the Holiday Parks are Llewelyn Park in Wales and the idyllic Kingfisher Park in Essex, which we would like to introduce to you here.

Peace and serenity

Kingfisher Park is located on the serene banks of the River Crouch, in the village of Hullbridge, Essex. This is an ideal location for those wishing to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life, a home from home in a relaxing, peaceful rural location. There are 40 plots in total, in an idyllic setting just over an hour from the river, but conveniently just over an hour from central London and 10 miles from London Southend Airport.

Design your own lodge

Kingfisher Park offers the option of designing your own bespoke lodge from leading UK manufacturers. If you wish, you can be involved in every detail, from the layout down to the tiles. Dedicated staff are on hand to help with the process every step of the way, from design to siting to handing over the keys to your new holiday home.

All lodges come fully furnished with integrated appliances, but there is so much more you can add



and personalise to make your holiday home individual to you, whether you decide on integrated Bluetooth speakers throughout the lodge, a hot tub on your decking area, or a feature fireplace.

A year-round escape

The park offers a 12-month licence, so you can escape to your lodge at the weekends all year round. For added security and peace of mind, Kingfisher Park has CCTV and a private gated entrance, as well as an electric car charging port.

Local attractions

If you manage to tear yourself away from your luxury

lodge, you'll find plenty to do within a short distance. Southend's bustling seafront is just 12 miles away, boasting the world's longest pier, an amusement park and Sea Life centre, not to mention the beach, casino, theatre and an array of shops and restaurants. RHS Garden Hyde Hall is less than a 20-minute drive away, while the antiques village of Battlesbridge is close by.

The local area is perfect for those with a love of the outdoors, having three yacht clubs, a first-class golf course and Hadleigh Bike Park, purpose built for the London 2012 Olympics, all within a short distance. The rolling Essex countryside offers miles of scenic walks, as well as local pubs and restaurants within strolling distance. For those that prefer some livelier nightlife, the neighbouring town of Rayleigh has plenty of bars and restaurants.

So, whether you are seeking regular weekends away to escape the city, or a summer getaway for lazy walks along the river, consider the Kingfisher Park as your new staycation home from home.

For more information, call 01702 232017 or email kingfisheroffice@berkeleyparks.co.uk. berkeleyparks.co.uk/holiday-parks

Southeast England

The Southeast, with its scenic coastline and bucolic scenes of apple orchards and country lanes, exerts a nostalgic pull on many Londoners, as it's traditionally a region where city-dwellers took their summer holiday. Easily accessible by train from the capital, the area covers Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, and East and West Sussex.

Many of the Southeast's prettiest spots have an appealingly old-fashioned feel. Charming seaside towns such as Whitstable, renowned for its oysters, and cheerful Brighton line the coast, with many a castle bearing witness to the days when this coastline saw off waves of invaders. The breathtaking White Cliffs of Dover are a high point – literally – while the rolling South Downs and the High Weald hold stunning scenery, sleepy villages and quaint market towns.

Two of the country's finest cathedrals – Winchester and Canterbury – Henry VIII's handsome Hampton Court Palace, and Windsor Castle, the Queen's favourite home, are further draws.



The Pond Garden and
Banqueting House at
Hampton Court Palace



Southeast England essentials



The White Cliffs of Dover

PHOTOS: © NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/SCIENT NEWS AND PHOTOGRAPHY AGENCY

ANNUAL EVENTS

Glyndebourne

A wonderful summer opera festival held in the grounds of this country house in East Sussex. 20 May-29 August

Royal Ascot

World-class horse racing, high fashion, fine dining and pageantry sum up this popular event on the British social calendar. 15-19 June

Alice's Day

Mad hatters can join the annual festivities celebrating *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in Oxford, a city-wide celebration. 4 July

Henley Royal Regatta

Thousands of spectators gather for this annual five-day rowing event in Oxfordshire.

August

Whitstable Oyster Festival

A popular celebration of the town's connection with the oyster industry. Late July

HIGHLIGHTS

WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER

An iconic landmark, the spectacular, 100m-high White Cliffs overlook the English Channel; the perfect place for breathtaking coastal path walks.

CANTERBURY

This charming city impresses with stunning architecture and a rich history. Admire the oldest cathedral in England, walk in the footsteps of Chaucer's medieval pilgrims or wander the narrow medieval alleys.

OXFORD

This distinguished university city, surrounded by the rolling Cotswold Hills, has honey-coloured buildings, historic colleges and cobbled streets. Best enjoyed from a punt on the River Cherwell.

BRIGHTON

A cool seaside town known for its iconic pier and shopping in the famous Lanes. The Brighton Pavilion – George IV's extravagant palace – is a must-visit.

WINDSOR CASTLE

Windsor Castle is awe-inspiring. Used as the venue for Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding, the castle has seen over 900 years of history and has served as a home to 39 monarchs.

HAMPTON COURT PALACE

Explore the extravagant interiors of the Baroque palace that was once Henry VIII's favourite residence, from the Great Hall to the Tudor Kitchen, before getting lost in the UK's oldest surviving hedge maze.

RYE

With its cobbled streets and timber-framed buildings, the medieval town of Rye is pretty as a picture. There's lots to see, from the 13th-century Rye Castle to Lamb House, the home of author Henry James.

GARDENS OF KENT

Kent's High Weald has a generous sprinkling of some of England's greatest gardens, including Vita Sackville-West's Sissinghurst and the exuberant Great Dixter.

HIDDEN GEM

Winchester is a handsome market town with an abundance of history. Visit what is reputed to be King Arthur's Round Table and go on the Jane Austen trail: the novelist was born in nearby Chawton.

DON'T MISS

The vineyards of the Southeast are developing a global reputation for their sparkling wines. Indulge in a tasting tour at the Bolney or Denbies estates

“MY FAVOURITE FAMILY FRIENDLY
ATTRACTION IN KENT”



TangAdvisor - TRIPADVISOR JAN 2020

“IT SIMPLY IS A SUPERB PLACE”

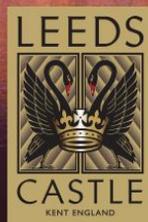


DonnaWashington - TRIPADVISOR JAN 2020

“GRAND DAY OUT”



7icurllybear - TRIPADVISOR AUG 2019



PAY ONCE
VISIT FOR
15 MONTHS

“The Loveliest Castle in the World”

KENT | ENGLAND leeds-castle.com



Bodiam Castle was designed to impress, with soaring crenellations and huge drum towers

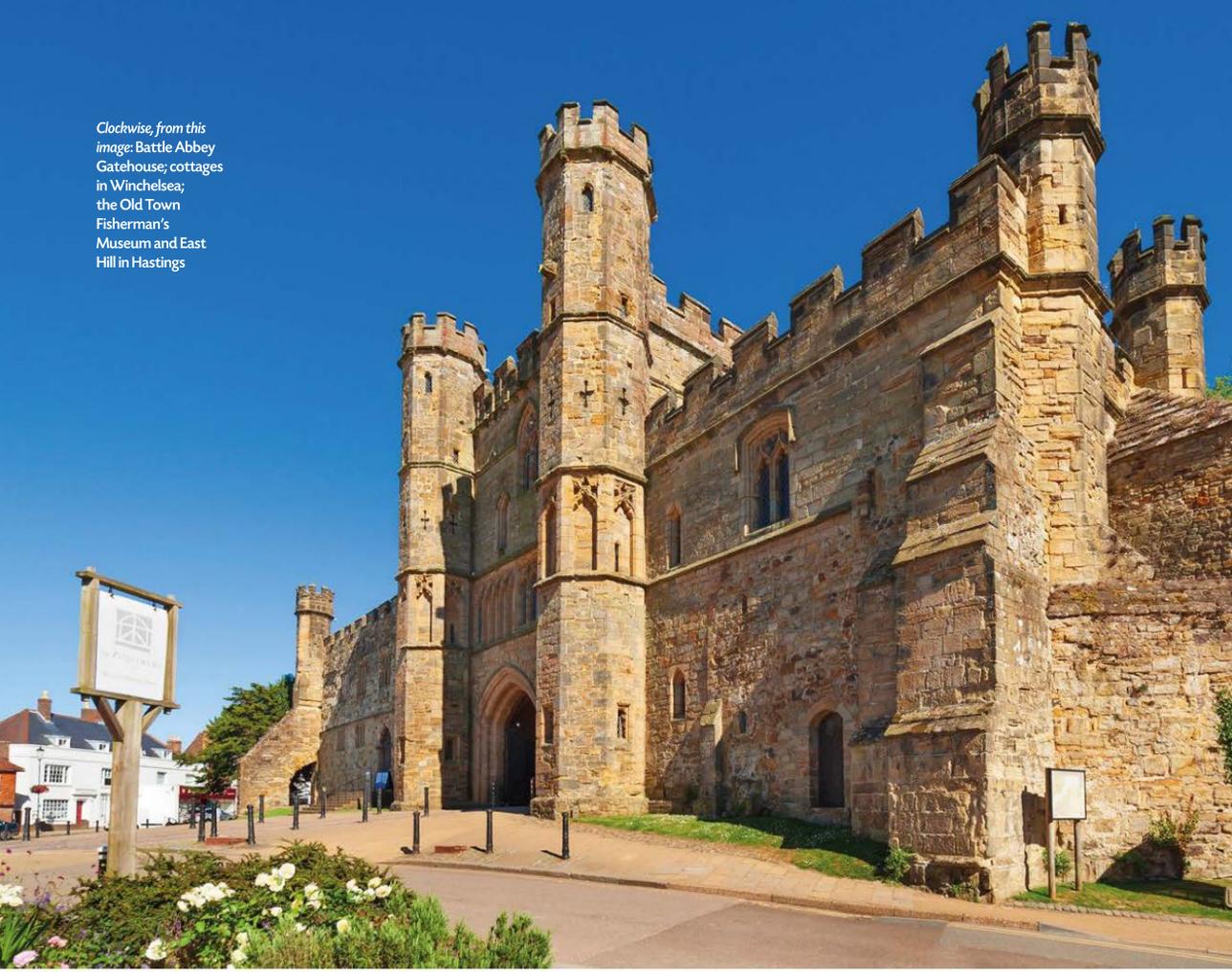


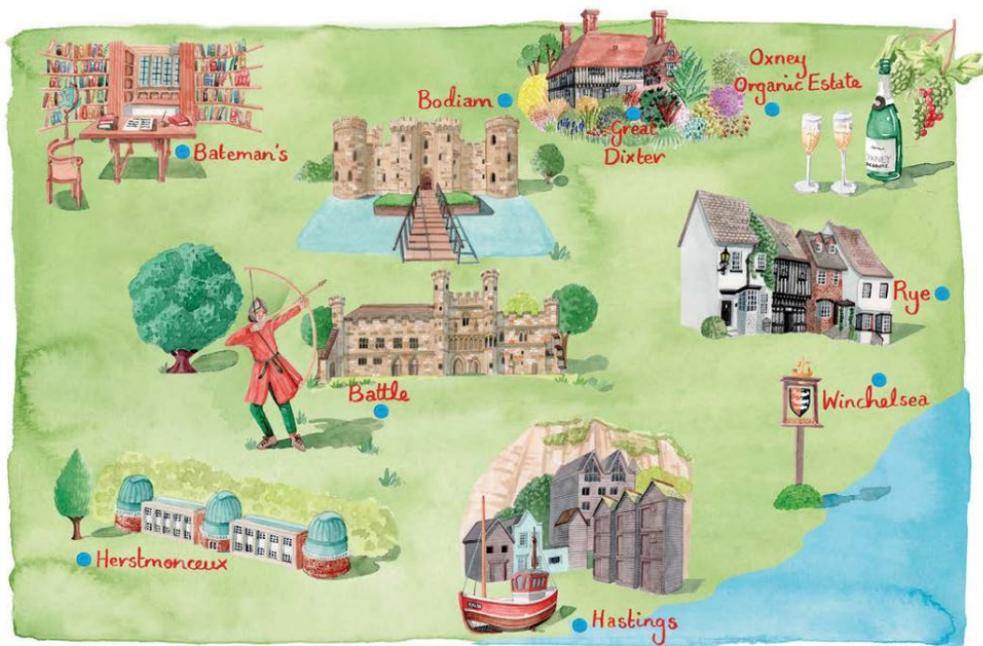
1066 COUNTRY

England's sunny south coast has a rich heritage, harbouring ancient castles and evocative landscapes that tell the story of the Battle of Hastings and beyond

WORDS EDWARD AVES

Clockwise, from this image: Battle Abbey Gatehouse; cottages in Winchelsea; the Old Town Fisherman's Museum and East Hill in Hastings





There's a potent sense of the past in 1066 Country, an idyllic swathe of the Sussex countryside in England's far southeastern corner. It was here on Senlac Ridge one autumn day in 1066 that William of Normandy's invading army put King Harold's footsore soldiers to the sword, bringing Saxon England to a brutal end and setting his new domain on a path towards nationhood.

Birdsong rather than battle cries may greet you as you tread the soil of the most famous battlefield in English history, but the landscape – which unfurls beneath the town of Battle – remains so remarkably intact that it is still a powerfully evocative place.

To stamp his authority, William ordered the construction of an abbey over the site of his victory, setting the high altar of the abbey church on the spot where Harold was slain. The abbey's extensive cloisters and chambers now lie in an atmospheric state of ruin, but you can vividly picture the scene from the battlements of its fourteenth-century gatehouse, which looms imposingly over Battle's postcard-pretty High Street.

It's a scene replayed – thankfully without the bloodshed – every year around October 14, when thousands of costumed warriors gather from all over the world to reprise the conflict with high-octane enthusiasm.

Yet in 1066 Country, the Battle of Hastings is only the beginning of the story. Scattered across this landscape of wooded hills and ancient heaths, there are mighty castles, fine country mansions and glorious gardens to be explored. Down by the coast, where towering cliffs give way to shingle shores, you'll find medieval port towns rich in salty tales of shipwrecks and smuggling.

Biggest of these is Hastings itself, one of the southeast's most lovable seaside towns. Six miles from the eponymous battlefield, it makes an ideal base. Begin your explorations strolling the streets of the beguiling old town, a jumble of moss-roofed medieval and Regency buildings squeezed between two cliffs.

From here it's a short hop to The Stade, the photogenic fishing quarter, whose most distinctive feature is the curious cluster of 'net shops' – tall, black, weatherboarded fishermen's huts, originally derived from upended boats, that stand sentinel over the beach.

Here, too, you'll find Hastings Contemporary, the town's cultural hub. This superb modern gallery links up to the burgeoning number of artistic powerhouses along this stretch of coast, from the De La Warr Pavilion, a modernist masterpiece in next-door Bexhill-on-Sea, to the spectacular Turner Contemporary in Margate.

From the Stade, it's a steep climb up through the ▶

twittens (alleys) to the ruins of Hastings Castle – the first constructed by William on English soil – perched on a high cliff. Soak up the splendid views before searching out one of the town's hidden gems.

Off the beaten track, the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery is a treasure trove of curiosities. One exhibit engagingly retells the town's story in 66 objects, while oddities include the collection of Victorian traveller Anna Brassey, including an exquisitely carved Durbar Hall, seemingly transplanted from an Indian palace.

Head east along the coast through the panoramic Hastings Country Park and you'll soon reach the tiny hilltop town of Winchelsea. Now a sleepy backwater marooned a mile inland, Winchelsea was once one of the most important shipbuilding centres in England – like Hastings and nearby Rye, it was one of the Cinque Ports allowed trading privileges in return for providing the Crown with ships in wartime. Laid waste by a storm in 1287, the town was relocated to its current hilltop site, but gradually drifted into obscurity as the sea retreated and its harbour silted up.

Further east, Rye is one of the most perfectly preserved medieval towns in England: a maze of cobbled streets, lined by tile-hung shops and houses. It's ideal for leisurely browsing, with an array of independent shops, cosy cafés and restaurants, though its prosperous air today belies a chequered past.

In the Middle Ages, Rye benefited from Winchelsea's decline, though soon its port too was abandoned by the sea. By the 17th century it had become a centre for smuggling – often in the hands of criminal gangs who would think nothing of despatching a nosy customs officer to a sticky end. The town museum, Rye's imposing fortress, the thick-walled Ypres Tower, provides a suitably forbidding setting for a lesson in this grizzly history, with turrets that served for 400 years as the town prison.

From Rye, we strike inland along peaceful, hedgerow-lined lanes and enter the High Weald, a quintessentially English landscape of rolling farmland and tranquil villages. We're now in the heart of wine country. Basking in the warmest and driest weather in Britain, Sussex is England's champagne region – and boasts the quality to match. To sample a drop of the finest fizz, stop for a tasting at Oxney Organic Estate, the UK's largest organic vineyard. Set up only in 2012, they've already proved a sparkling success, bagging gold at the 2020 International Wine Challenge for their fresh-tasting, delicate 2016 Oxney Classic.



Those sunny skies and rich soils are a gift to the green-fingered as well, and this little corner of Sussex has long played host to some of the nation's most gorgeous gardens. Among the most dazzling is Great Dixter, the creation of the late Christopher Lloyd, which spreads out around a half-timbered, medieval manor restored and remodelled by his father with the help of the architect Edwin Lutyens.

Lloyd planted out Great Dixter in a spirit of joyful experiment, creating a fluid series of intimate outdoor "rooms". There are delightful surprises at every turn: luxuriant meadow bloom bursts from beneath clipped topiary; an old cowshed gives onto an exotic garden zinging with dahlias and verbenas. The Long Border, exuberantly crammed and exploding with colour, is perhaps the best loved in England, and puts on a show well into October – just as lesser gardens are sliding into hibernation.

Clockwise, from top left: The Hall at Bateman's; the Long Border and Manor at Great Dixter; cobbled streets in Rye



It's a short hop to the formidable battlements of Bodiam Castle, which rises from its still-flowing moat like the perfect fairytale fortress. Built by Sir Edward Dallingridge, a swashbuckling knight of Richard II, in the late 14th century, its massive drum towers and soaring crenellations were designed to impress, though it never saw any real action – at least until Cromwell's Roundheads gutted the interior during the Civil War.

Though largely ruined inside, it's hard to resist the urge to explore every weathered nook. Past the portcullis – the oldest dated example in Britain – spiral steps lead up to windswept parapets and spectacular views. Look out for the murder holes in the Postern Tower, from which quicklime and hot sand blocks could be dropped onto unwary intruders, though these days the only possible assailant is a colony of bats – Bodiam is one of the most important roosting sites in the southeast.

Driving deeper into the Weald, we duck down a secluded country lane at the neat little village of Burwash and come to a halt at Bateman's, a modest sandstone Jacobean mansion that provided sanctuary for over thirty years to Rudyard Kipling. Author of *The Jungle Book* and "If", the nation's favourite poem, Kipling adored Sussex and fell in love with the house at first sight, decamping here with his family in 1902 to escape prying eyes at the height of his fame.

Kipling enjoyed playing the country squire, kitting the house out

in period furniture, dabbling on the estate – he converted a disused water mill beside the River Duddeswell to convert electricity – and being chauffeured around in a succession of motor cars: his prized 1928 Rolls-Royce Phantom Mark 1 still occupies pride of place in the grounds.

Inside, the house is richly evocative, scattered with artefacts and left much as it was when Kipling was alive. The book-lined study offers a fascinating glimpse into the author's *modus operandi* – his ink-spattered walnut writing desk strewn with papers. Kipling would pace the floor perfecting the meter of his poetry to the tick of the grandfather clock on the landing, and at any minute it feels as though he might just step back in.

There is little that is modest at our final stop: magnificent moated Herstmonceux Castle. Though it appears an impregnable fortress, Herstmonceux was built as a palatial residence to reflect the fabulous wealth of Sir ▶



PHOTOS: © NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/ANDREAS VON EISEDEL/GRAHAM PRENTICE (B&A TRAVEL/ALAMY)

**Below: The moated
Herstmonceux
Castle**

Roger Fiennes, treasurer to Henry VI. With cash to burn, Sir Roger eschewed the local stone in favour of brick, a fashionable new material in the 15th century, bringing in specialist Flemish craftsmen at an eye-watering cost of (in today's terms) over £1 billion.

Today, the castle is a rather grand campus setting for students of the Queen's University of Canada – open only for guided tours – but its formal and themed gardens and surrounding parkland are a delight. They're at their most animated during the Medieval Festival over the August bank holiday, when knights, jesters and minstrels descend on the grounds for three days of battle sieges, men-at-arms displays and medieval ribaldry.

The rest of the year Herstmonceux is serene – part of the reason why in 1946 the site was chosen as the new headquarters for the Royal Observatory, forced out of Greenwich by the capital's light pollution and smoky air. Official stargazing ceased in 1979, but the observatory buildings, capped by distinctive, weathered green copper domes, still evoke a mid-century spirit of discovery, when this was one of the most advanced astronomical operations in the world. They're now home to a hands-on science centre, with the remaining historical telescopes – now restored to working order – open to budding astronomers on regular stargazing evenings. **ii**

ii For more on beautiful Sussex, visit www.britain-magazine.com

THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

Trains run from London Charing Cross to Hastings, via Battle (1hr 30min). For Rye and Winchelsea (1hr 10min), take the train from London St Pancras, changing at Ashford. www.thetrainline.com



WHERE TO STAY

A cosy, low-beamed B&B in the heart of Hastings' Old Town, ancient Swan House blends period charm and designer chic, with vast sofas for curling up in front of the fire and a secluded garden terrace for summer breakfasts. There's a whimsical feel to The Bell, a rustic former coaching inn in a pretty Wealden village. Luxurious touches, such as freestanding copper baths, abound. www.swanhousehastings.co.uk; www.thebellinticehurst.com



WHERE TO EAT

Imaginatively combined flavours pack a punch at The Bell's restaurant, a real community hub. On Hastings' fishing beach, Maggie's is the place for fish and chips fresh off the boats, while the cosy First In Last Out is pick of the old town pubs. www.thebellinticehurst.com; www.maggiesfishandchips.co.uk; www.thefilo.co.uk



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.visit1066country.com



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Heart of England

Birthplace of William Shakespeare and of the Industrial Revolution, this earthy region encompasses Birmingham, Warwickshire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Coventry and Worcestershire.

Stratford-upon-Avon is the obvious honeypot: Shakespeare's home town with its quaint streets, historic houses and world-class theatre never loses its appeal. Scattered around the region are plenty of Tudor traces: chocolate-box cottages, stately homes such as Hardwick Hall, and dramatic Ludlow Castle.

The Iron Bridge spanning the River Severn is one of the world's most famous industrial landmarks, and rightly so – it paved the way for the use of cast iron in structures all over the world. This part of England, once known as the 'workshop of the world', prospered on iron and coal, and later became known for its potteries – some of which still exist.

Don't miss the region's cities, most notably Birmingham, England's second largest. Once an industrial powerhouse, it now buzzes with life and brims with culture.



PHOTO © JOHN WARBURTON/LEE PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY ILLUSTRATION © JIZ KAY



One of Ludlow's
striking Tudor facades



Heart of England essentials



Shakespeare's wife, Anne Hathaway's cottage in Stratford-upon-Avon

PHOTOS © ABRIAN CHANDLER/ALAMY

ANNUAL EVENTS

Coventry City of Culture

Coventry is UK City of Culture 2021, and there's a lively programme of cultural events planned, from the prestigious Turner Prize exhibition to a city-wide street art festival. *All year*

Buxton International Festival

One of the UK's leading art festivals, BIF in Derbyshire celebrates the best in opera, music and literature. *8-25 July*

Ludlow Food Festival

Held at Ludlow Castle, this is the oldest food festival in the UK and attracts foodies from around the world. *10-12 September*

Christmas at Chatsworth

The festive season is a big deal at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. Warm and inviting scenes enliven this magnificent house, beautifully dressed for Christmas. *November to early January*

HIGHLIGHTS

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

Once described by a smitten John Ruskin as "out and out the most precious piece of architecture in the British Isles", the 11th-century Lincoln Cathedral is a sight to behold.

CHATSWORTH HOUSE

Home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, this elegant Elizabethan stately pile sits in a 35,000-acre estate in Derbyshire. As well as 30 beautifully decorated rooms to explore, it also houses the Devonshire Collection, one of Europe's most significant art collections.

PEAK DISTRICT

The first national park in England, the Peak District covers 550 miles of rolling hills, ancient stone villages, farmland and moorland: perfect terrain for hiking, cycling and wildlife-watching.

LUDLOW

This medieval market town on a cliff overlooking the River Teme is known for its beautiful architecture, including the stunning 11th-century Ludlow Castle and an array of attractive timbered buildings in the centre. The town is also famous for its food: gourmands from all over the country descend for the annual food festival in September.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

The birthplace of William Shakespeare, this medieval market town located on the River Avon is a vibrant cultural hub for theatregoers.

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

Rising above the River Severn, this handsome cathedral is a glorious sight, with highlights including the tomb of King John, medieval cloisters and stunning Victorian stained glass.

IRONBRIDGE GORGE

Named after the world's first iron bridge spanning the River Severn, dramatic Ironbridge Gorge in Shropshire was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its ten absorbing museums tell the story of the Industrial Revolution.

STAMFORD

Doubling as Meryton in the 2005 TV adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, this charming Georgian town with its cobbled lanes and limestone buildings is regarded as the finest stone town in England.

HIDDEN GEM

The Mappa Mundi, a fascinating antique map dating to around 1000 AD, resides in Hereford Cathedral. A permanent exhibition interprets this extraordinary relic and provides an insight into the medieval mind.

DON'T MISS

Buxton is a beautiful Georgian spa town in the Peak District. Book a spa stay at the historic Buxton Crescent hotel, just opened after a 17-year restoration



WORCESTERSHIRE'S VALE & SPA

Home to Broadway, Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore

Set within beautiful Worcestershire countryside - straddling the M5 and nestled snugly alongside the Cotswolds - makes the area a very appealing, easily accessible visitor destination. Alongside unique shopping experiences, the district boasts...

Attractions

An assortment of places - providing fun for all, whatever your age or interest



Family Fun

Play areas galore within Green Flag parks - perfect for family picnics and a great day out



History & Heritage

Marvel at majestic buildings and monuments with heritage spanning thousands of years



Countryside & Scenery

Hills, Cotswold stone, orchards and unspoilt countryside to take your breath away



Food & Drink

Get a flavour of the wonderful unique local produce as ingredients or within delicious meals



Waterways

Why not take in the canal and river via a relaxing boat ride or try water sport activities



For tourism information, attractions, full event details and inspiration:

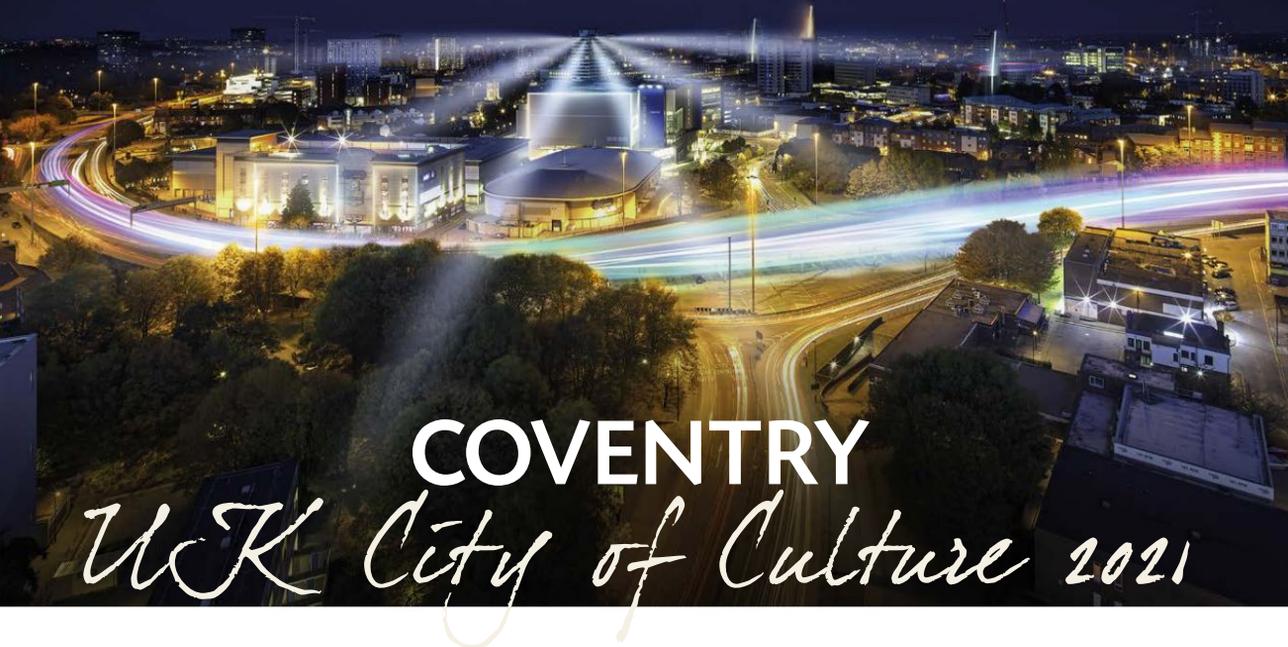
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Fusing the past with the present, culture is Britain's beating heart, and Coventry is the place to soak it up in 2021

Running from May 2021 to May 2022, the Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 programme promises a packed schedule of exciting experiences, incorporating everything from visual art and theatre to music and dance. If ever there was a time to immerse yourself in this wonderfully diverse city, it is now, as Coventry celebrates its long history and shares stories about contemporary city life.

Plus, just in time for Coventry's year as UK City of Culture 2021, a range of heritage sites have undergone significant development, including Charterhouse, the city's 70-acre heritage park, that will see a Carthusian monastery restored and extended this year.

Meanwhile in the city, discover where medieval history meets modern architecture at Coventry Cathedral; immerse yourself in world-class art at Herbert Art Gallery and Museum; be captivated

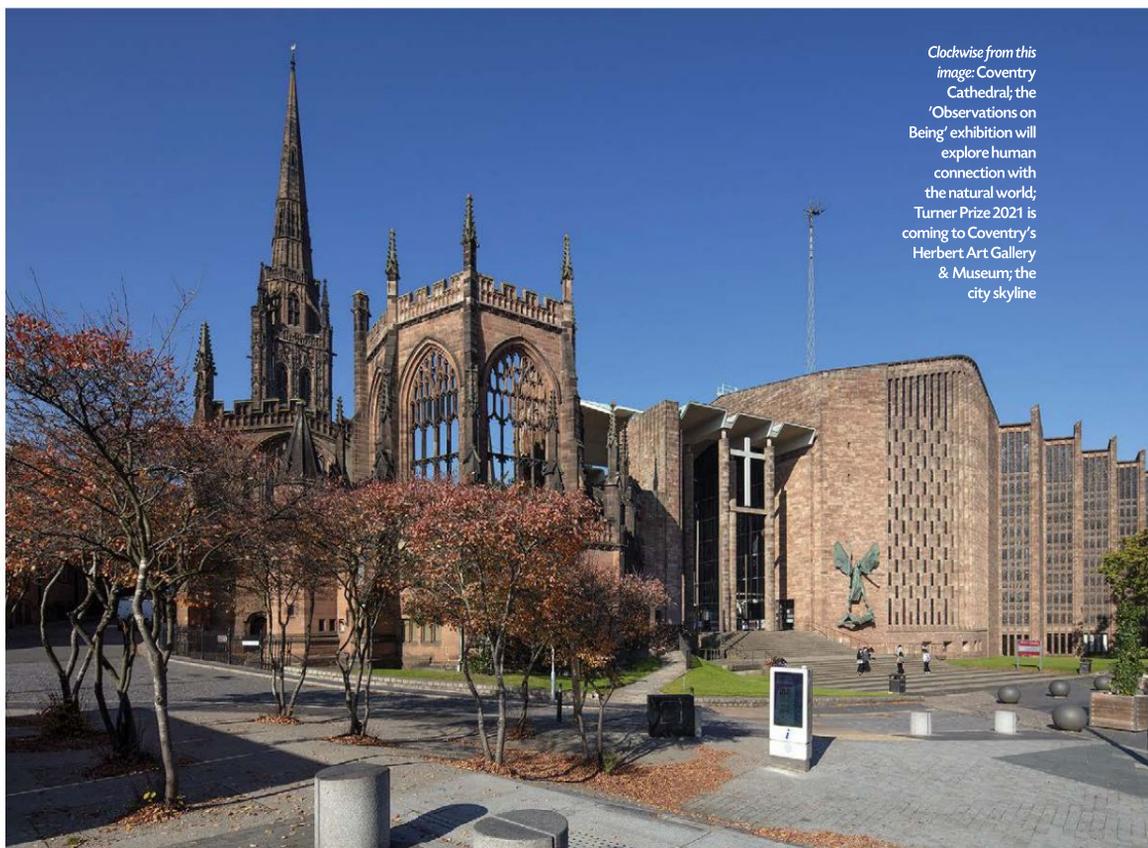


by displays at the Transport Museum; enjoy afternoon tea at historic Coombe Abbey; and shop 'til you drop at FarGo Village, the artistically repurposed industrial space for creative, independent businesses.

Then there is the food and drink. One thing is certain – you won't go hungry when in Coventry. From thriving independents offering local delicacies, to street vendors cooking up international favourites, Coventry's eclectic food scene gives you the chance to taste your way across the globe.

Throw in the city's central England location – nearby the manufacturing powerhouse of Birmingham as well as the historic market towns of Warwickshire – and you have an ideal Great British escape.

To stay up to date with the city's plans, download the Coventry UK City of Culture app, follow them @Coventry2021, or visit www.coventry2021.co.uk for all the latest information, and to book tickets.



Clockwise from this image: Coventry Cathedral; the 'Observations on Being' exhibition will explore human connection with the natural world; Turner Prize 2021 is coming to Coventry's Herbert Art Gallery & Museum; the city skyline

Event highlights

Get inspired by the Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 programme. There's plenty more to come.

Observations on Being

(22 June-15 August 2021)

Observations on Being is an inspiring journey within the Charterhouse Heritage Park, revealing the city's connection with nature.

Music, poetic storytelling and compelling visuals will invite you to explore your own relationship with the natural world through this exhibition of



TOP RIGHT PHOTO © GRAHAM FRAZICK

newly commissioned immersive experiences by Marshmallow Laser Feast.

The Show Windows

(From June 2021 onwards)

Following a year where much time has been spent gazing out of windows, The Show Windows invites you to instead look in. Inspired by The Wonderful Wizard of Oz author, L Frank Baum's book about shop window design, city centre shops and businesses will play host to a range of extraordinary window installations designed by local, national and international architects and artists.

Terry Hall Presents Home Sessions

(29 July-1 August 2021)

Born and raised in Coventry and lead singer

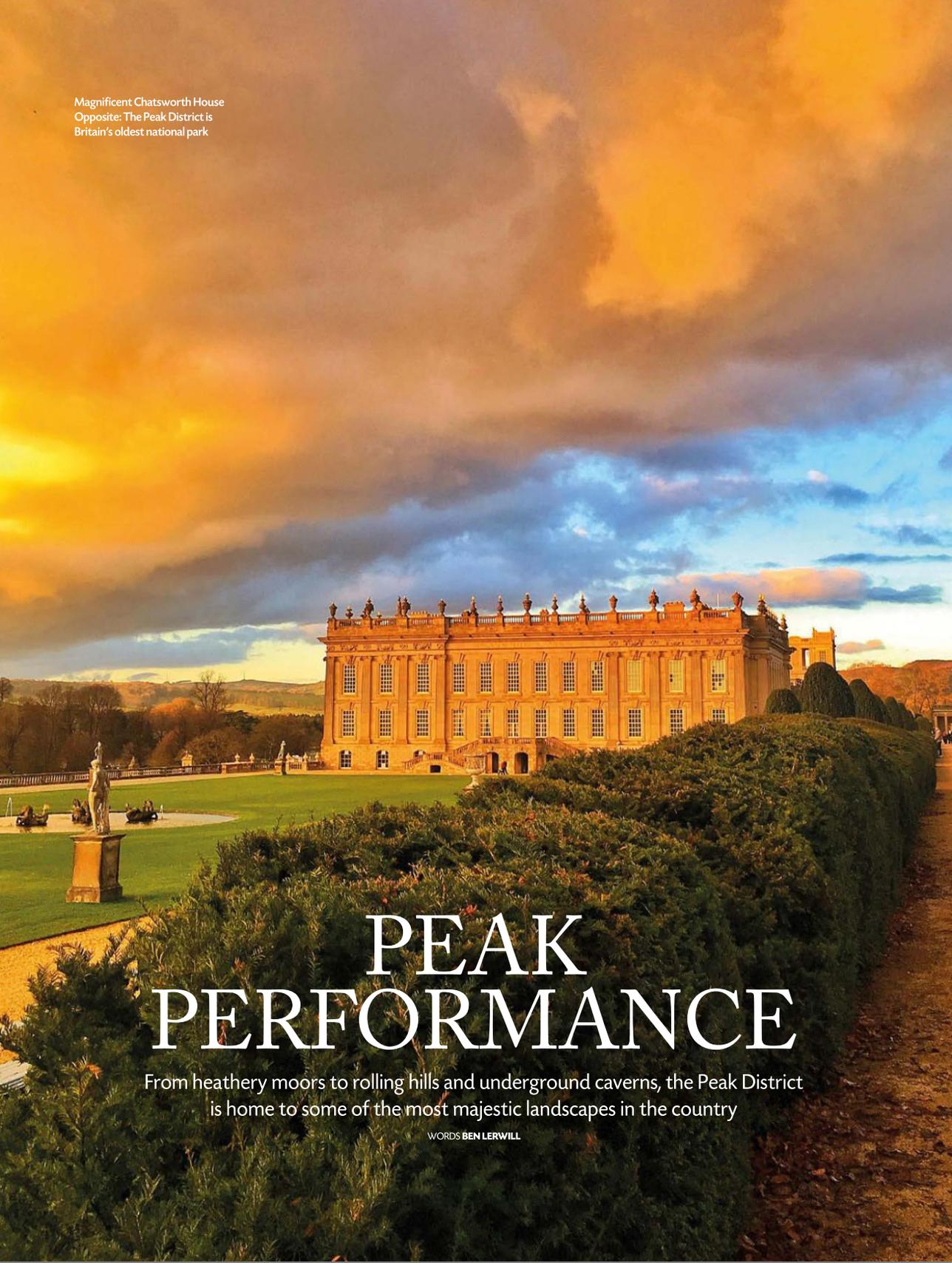
of the iconic Coventry band The Specials, Terry Hall will return to his hometown to curate a brand-new four-day music event, which will take place in the city centre. The festival promises to blend international legends with contemporary pioneers, while also shining a light on the rich history of the Coventry music scene in what will be one of the most unique experiences of 2021.

The Turner Prize

(29 September-12 January 2022)

One of the world's best-known prizes for visual arts, Turner Prize 2021 is coming to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry, making this the first time the prize has ever been presented in the Midlands. Don't miss this opportunity to admire the recent work of Britain's boldest contemporary visual artists.

Magnificent Chatsworth House
Opposite: The Peak District is
Britain's oldest national park



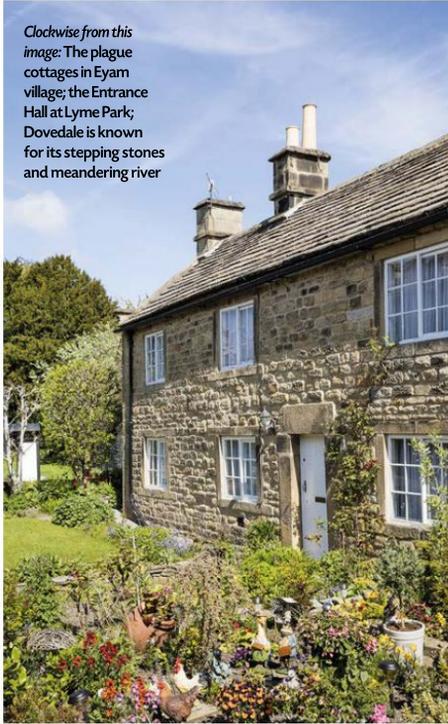
PEAK PERFORMANCE

From heathery moors to rolling hills and underground caverns, the Peak District
is home to some of the most majestic landscapes in the country

WORDS **BEN LERWILL**



Clockwise from this image: The plague cottages in Eyam village; the Entrance Hall at Lyme Park; Dovedale is known for its stepping stones and meandering river



laws regarding access rights, something the country as a whole still benefits from today. Of the two, however, it's the White Peak which holds more appeal for the first-time visitor, not least because of the variety of its attractions.

Many of these places of interest are manmade. The wider region contains history-rich market towns like Bakewell, home to the famed pudding of the same name, and Buxton, once a fashionable spa resort and still renowned for its spring water. You'll also find fascinating little villages such as Eyam, famously cut off from the outside world by a 17th-century plague outbreak, and Youlgreave, one of many settlements that still practices well dressing, a local tradition of decorating wells with flowers and other natural materials a few weeks after Easter.

Tucked among the Peak District's rolling hills, meanwhile, are some of the finest stately homes in central England. Top of the list is surely spectacular Chatsworth House, where more than 100 acres of gardens surround a truly grand residence which has passed down through 16 generations of the Cavendish family. Its art collection alone – spanning four millennia – means it should be part of any Peak District itinerary, and Capability Brown himself had a hand in the layout of the gardens.

But Chatsworth is just the start. The region also holds the Elizabethan masterwork that is Hardwick Hall – where the windows are so numerous it's often described as “more glass than wall” – and the crenellated medieval majesty of Haddon Hall, which has starred on screen in both *Jane Eyre* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Lyme Park, once a hunting



PHOTOS: © JAMES DOBSON/ANDREAS VON HINSEDEL/NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/ALAN NOVELLI/ALAMY



The crenellated medieval majesty of Haddon Hall has starred on screen in both *Jane Eyre* and *Pride and Prejudice*

lodge and still an imposing stately home, is another gem with extensive grounds.

By way of contrast to these mighty mansions rising from the land, the White Peak also has large-scale attractions underground. Poole's Cavern near Buxton is home to vast subterranean chambers, and the show caves around the town of Castleton – so named for the ruined 11th-century castle that still stands here – provide more of the same.

Some of these, such as Treak Hill Cavern and Blue John Cavern, grant access to natural netherworlds of rare rock types and age-old stalactites and stalagmites. Others, including Speedwell Cavern and Peak Cavern – the latter, incidentally, also known as The Devil's Arse – give insight into the underground industry and mining practices that have been a part of Peak District life for so long.

The creator of *Sherlock Holmes*, Arthur Conan Doyle, was so impressed by the scale and extent of the mines and caves beneath the region that he pronounced “all this country is hollow – could you strike it with some gigantic hammer it would boom like a drum.” It's known that the author once stayed at Castleton, and the fact that he later set a story in the area shows that the formations above ground made no less of an impression.

Not far from Castleton is the great shapely hill of Mam Tor, arguably the best-known summit in the National Park. Once the site of a hillfort, its 517-metre-high top can be reached with relative ease via a paved footpath. Being roughly at the centre of the entire region, it grants deep views in every direction. If you're in the mood for continuing the walk, the Great Ridge carries on from Mam Tor, eventually rising to meet Lose Hill, a popular hike of around 2.5 miles each way.

The Peak District is full of more challenging outdoor options, from the climbing hotspot of the Stanage Edge escarpment to long-distance treks such as the Pennine Way, which begins here in the mellow little village of Edale. If you'd rather sample the scenery in a more sedate manner, however, the options are just as numerous. ▶

Above: Haddon Hall has been famous for its roses since Elizabethan times

MAZZLE

A map jigsaw puzzle



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This image:
Buxton is renowned
for its spring water
Below: The rock formations
at Poole's Cavern

The three adjoining reservoirs of Ladybower, Derwent and Howden offer miles of flat walking and cycling terrain, as well as the chance to encounter more history – the area was used for dummy trials of Professor Barnes Wallis' famous 'bouncing bomb' in the Second World War, thanks to its physical resemblance to Germany's Ruhr dams. It later starred in the film *The Dam Busters*.

Further south is picturesque Dovedale, a valley known for its stepping stones and meandering river. Do make the effort to walk past the stepping stones, after which the crowds start to thin. And if you'd rather avoid the main flow of tourism altogether, the region has a whole host of quieter scenic valleys, among them Cressbrook Dale, Monk's Dale and Peter Dale. Because that's the thing with a place as broad and varied as the Peak District – it's packed with attractions, but there's also plenty of space to go round. Which, somewhere as handsome as this, can only be a good thing. ■

📍 For more on the Peak District, visit www.britain-magazine.com

THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

The Peak District is easily reached by car, being around 3hr 15min from London, 1hr 30min from Birmingham and only an hour or so from Manchester. The National Park is also well served by bus and rail, with train stations at places such as Edale, Hope and Hathersage. www.nationalexpress.com; www.thetrainline.com



WHERE TO STAY

The Cavendish Hotel on the Chatsworth House estate offers finely furnished rooms and an excellent restaurant. The Peacock at Rowsley is a luxurious option near Bakewell with four-poster bedrooms and a fine-dining restaurant. Alstonefield Manor is a B&B with bags of charm, set in a country house on the hills above Dovedale. Expect fresh flowers, high-class decor and scones and tea on arrival. cavendishbaslow.co.uk; thepeacockatrowsley.com; alstonefieldholidaycottages.com



WHERE TO EAT

An atmospheric 18th-century pub on the village green at Alstonefield, The George offers Michelin-recommended dining, thanks in part to having its own vegetable garden. Other local produce, such as Derbyshire beef, features heavily on the menu. thegeorgeatalstonefield.com



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.visitpeakdistrict.com



PHOTOS: © IAN HUBBALL/ALAMY; LINDA BUSSEY/VISIT PEAK DISTRICT; VISIT ENGLAND



WIN

A LUXURY STAY ON THE HISTORIC CHATSWORTH ESTATE

Chatsworth House is the jewel in the crown of the Peak District, and there's nowhere better to stay than at the Cavendish Hotel, a historic 18th-century coaching inn owned by the Duke of Devonshire, in an enviable location on the Chatsworth Estate. The great house itself, a treasure trove of art surrounded by world-renowned gardens, is a mere 20-minute cross-country stroll away. This fine hotel also provides an ideal base for discovering the Peak District.

One lucky winner and their guest will win a luxury two-night stay at this very special hotel, staying in one of the Superior rooms and enjoying a three-course evening meal with a bottle of wine in three AA Rosette restaurant The Gallery on one night. Local, fresh, seasonal produce takes centre stage here, and Head Chef Adam Harper (runner up for the covetable Roux Scholarship, 2019) is a master of the culinary arts.

Our winner will enjoy an ambience that's peaceful yet polished, with an experienced team overseeing their every need. All of the bedrooms offer generous proportions and sumptuous country-house decor, overseen by the Duchess herself along with her interior designer, and enhanced by modern amenities, from Bluetooth speakers to cosy underfloor heating.

After a full traditional breakfast, why not explore your scenic surroundings? Chatsworth itself, perhaps England's best-known stately home, is renowned for the quality of its art, landscape and hospitality. Its 105-acre garden is a product of nearly 500 years of careful cultivation and expertise, and is famous for its forward-thinking design, captivating features and important sculptures.

www.devonshirehotels.co.uk

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Closing date for entries is 12pm GMT 22 November 2021. The prize is for two guests sharing a double or twin room, and is non-transferable. Dates are subject to availability, excluding Saturdays, Bank Holidays, Christmas and New Year. The prize must be redeemed by 31 March 2022. For full terms and conditions, go to www.britain-magazine.com/competitions/cavendish

HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win this fantastic prize go to www.britain-magazine.com/competitions/cavendish to apply online or fill in the coupon below with the answer to the following question:

- Q: How many acres of gardens surround Chatsworth House?
- a) 50
 - b) 105
 - c) 115

ENTRY FORM

SEND YOUR COUPON TO:

US readers – Cavendish Competition, PO Box 207, Des Moines, IA 50301, US
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East of England

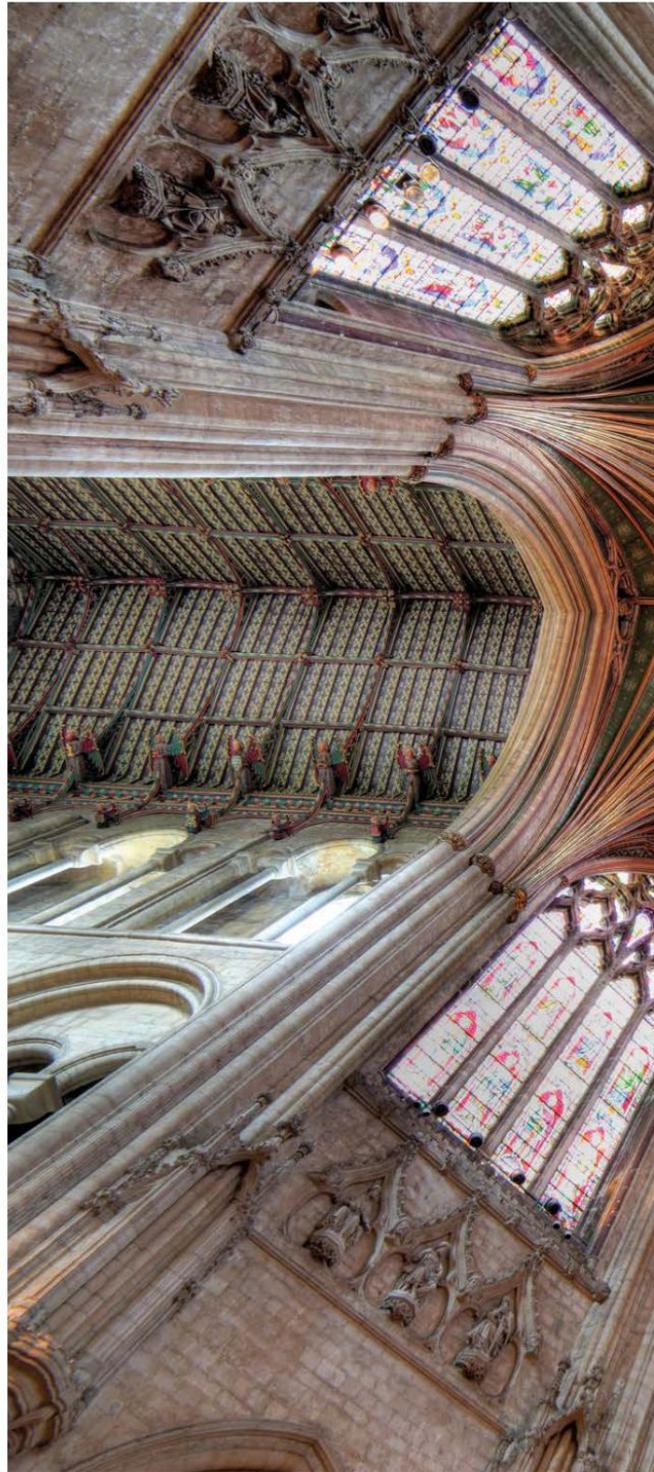
Famous for its wide, open skies and tranquil landscapes, the East of England encompasses Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. The linear landscape of the Fens, a huge coastal plain stretching across much of the area, makes this an area rich in wildlife.

The region has inspired many an artist and composer – most notably Romantic painter John Constable, who set his evocative pastoral scenes here, and Benjamin Britten, one-time resident of Suffolk, whose legacy is Snape Maltings, an internationally important concert hall and cultural hub.

The area also boasts some stunning architecture. One of the country's finest cathedrals – Ely – is worth the visit alone, while you could easily while away a day admiring the colleges and churches of Cambridge.

Cultural corners apart, this is classic bucket-and-spade territory: beautiful beaches and resorts with the nostalgic seaside tang of holidays past.

Flop on the glorious golden sand of Holkham Beach, stroll down Southwold's pier or treat yourself to world-class fish and chips in Aldeburgh.





The ornate ceiling of Ely Cathedral

East of England essentials

ANNUAL EVENTS

Aldeburgh Festival This internationally famous classical music festival puts on both new and old works in the impressive concert hall of Snape Maltings. *May-September*

King's Lynn Festival

The Norfolk town comes alive during this music and arts festival with free jazz and classical performances. *18-31 July*

Latitude Festival

The line-up at this popular Suffolk music festival includes Snow Patrol and Bastille. *22-25 July*

Wells-Next-the-Sea Carnival

For over a century this North Norfolk town has put on a colourful week-long carnival. *30 July-August*



Southwold's colourful beach huts

PHOTOS © SARAH GROVES/ANIMAS

HIGHLIGHTS

ELY CATHEDRAL

Considered one of the marvels of the medieval world, Ely Cathedral is magnificent to behold. Admire the Octagon – a gravity-defying 14th-century oak, lead and stone tower – and take in the 13th-century Quire and 14th-century Lady Chapel.

NORFOLK BROADS

Britain's largest area of wetland, the man-made Norfolk Broads are a network of 125 miles of navigable waterways amidst peaceful countryside.

FISH AND CHIPS IN ALDEBURGH

Where better to enjoy this traditional staple than in a quintessential British seaside town? Aldeburgh Fish & Chips is considered by many to be Britain's best chippy.

LAVENHAM

The picturesque medieval wool village of Lavenham in Suffolk, famed for its colourful and crooked timber-framed houses, hasn't changed much since the 14th century. The town boasts 320 listed buildings – and almost as many photo opportunities.

HOLKHAM BEACH

North Norfolk has no shortage of stunning beaches, but vast Holkham is undisputedly its finest, backed with fragrant pines and blanketed with sea lavender in summer.

SOUTHWOLD

Jewel of the Suffolk coast, this seaside town is worth a visit for its traditional pier, lighthouse and colourful beach huts.

CAMBRIDGE

The city may be famous for its prestigious university, but it's a gem in its own right. Admire the exquisite architecture of the colleges and churches, punt on the River Cam or picnic in one of the city's leafy parks.

SUTTON HOO

The royal burial ground at Sutton Hoo – the final resting place of an ancient royal dynasty laid to rest in a 90ft ship – is hauntingly atmospheric.

HIDDEN GEM

The Fens – an otherworldly broad and flat landscape – cover a vast area. Once a wild marshland, the Fens were drained in the 17th century. Head to Wicken Fen Nature Reserve for a flavour of what the area used to be.

DON'T MISS

Norwich is possibly the country's best-preserved medieval city, with a beautiful cathedral, imposing castle and cobbled lanes galore

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www.elycathedral.org
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Travelling along the flat Fens under broad, open skies to Britain's easternmost county, you feel as though you're approaching the ends of the Earth. On the way to nowhere, North Norfolk is a place of windmills and watery vistas, of cosy pubs and flint-stone villages.

This sleepy region is less populated now than it was in the Middle Ages, when the capital Norwich was England's second largest city, a hub for the lucrative wool trade. The peaceful landscape is dotted with medieval church spires (Norfolk has the highest concentration anywhere in the world), remnants of the county's distant heyday.

These days, North Norfolk is famous for its beaches. The coastline, to which holidaymakers flock in summer, is head-turningly picturesque – which might explain why a wealth of historic attractions, tucked away inland, can get overlooked. Wait till the first brisk autumn breeze sends the beach crowds packing, and embark on a tour of the area's historic houses, each seemingly grander than the last.

This far-flung rural landscape holds not just an abundance of stately homes but four so-called 'power houses': in the 18th century, Norfolk was home to some of the country's most politically powerful men, who carved out vast estates as a reflection of their wealth and influence.

Holkham Hall, seat of the Earls of Leicester, is the best known of the quartet. This serene Palladian-style house a mere pebble's throw from the coast was built in the mid 18th century by Thomas Coke, the first Earl, who was Postmaster General of England. He chose William Kent, the leading architect and designer of the day, to create the house's grand interiors.

Star of the show is the triple-height Marble Hall, with a soaring plaster dome and alabaster walls (not marble after all – but the effect is just as sumptuous). A sweeping staircase leads to a remarkable art collection, with works by Rubens, Van Dyck and Gainsborough.

The hall is at the heart of a 25,000-acre estate, ▶



This image:
Holkham Hall,
seat of the
Earls of Leicester
Below: Burnham
Market, a typical
brick and flint-stone
village near Holkham



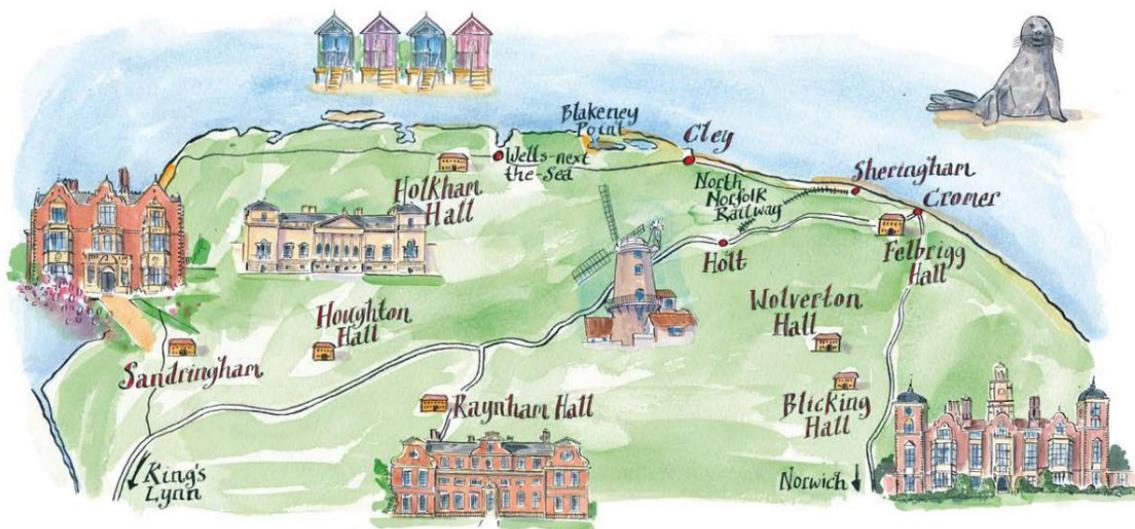
PHOTOS © SIMON WHALEY; LANDSCAPE ILLUSTRATION © MICHAEL A HILL



HISTORIC NORFOLK

Spend time exploring this peaceful county, whose stately homes are a grand counterpoint to its unadorned rural landscapes

WORDS NATASHA FOGES





Clockwise from this image: Raynham Hall; the North Norfolk Railway; Cley Windmill; the Dining Room at Felbrigg Hall

incorporating a deer park, lake and walled garden; you can hire a bike to explore its hidden corners. Pine-backed Holkham beach is the most beautiful along this coast of famed beaches, and you don't need sunshine to appreciate its charms. Indeed, on a wintry day with the fog atmospherically rolling in and the eerie calls of seagulls passing overhead, it's spine-tingling.

Some 15 miles inland is another Palladian stunner, Houghton Hall, built in the 1720s for Sir Robert Walpole, Britain's first Prime Minister. With a honeyed ochre facade and lavish interiors by William Kent, it was a fittingly grand abode (even though Walpole only visited twice a year). Alongside the tricky business of running the country, Walpole was an avid collector, amassing one of Britain's finest collections of European art, to which the ornate state rooms were a striking backdrop.

So extravagant were his tastes that when he died in 1745 Walpole was £40,000 in debt. His son, Robert, died a few short years later, and his grandson George inherited the house and its debts. George was forced to sell most of the house's prized paintings – 250 of them went to Catherine the Great of Russia for display in her Hermitage, more or less clearing the debt.

The Hall is now inhabited by Walpole's descendant, the Marquess of Cholmondeley and his family, who have restored the house and furthered its artistic legacy with installations by contemporary artists in the grounds.

While Sir Robert's builders were hard at work on Houghton, his brother Horatio was building another splendid Palladian-style house down the road, the little-known Wolterton Hall, using Houghton's architect, Thomas Ripley. A well-connected member of parliament, Horatio needed an impressive home in which to entertain; his godson Admiral Lord Nelson was a frequent visitor. The house is open for occasional tours and, its Georgian interiors restored, can now be rented as a holiday home.

"In all England there are few more beautiful houses than Raynham," opined the historian John Julius Norwich of ▶





*This image: The staircase in the magnificent Great Hall at Blickling
Below: Beach huts at Wells-next-the-Sea*

Reliefs of Anne and her daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, can be seen on the staircase of the Great Hall



the house that completes the quartet of ‘power houses’. Building started on Raynham Hall in 1619, to a design that was incredibly modern for the time: it was the first house in England to be heavily influenced by Italian architecture.

A century later the second Viscount Townshend, a key political figure at the court of Queen Anne and King George I – and brother-in-law to Sir Robert Walpole, yet another connection that binds these houses – engaged William Kent to work his magic on the interiors. Still inhabited by the Townshend family (and, allegedly, by the ‘Brown Lady’, the ghost of the second Viscount’s wife Dorothy Walpole), the house is open for occasional tours and music recitals.

The power and prestige of these houses still echoes through the centuries, and after so much richness, you might be in need of a palate-cleanser; a trip to the seaside should do the trick. The coast east of Holkham is a delight, from the colourful beach huts of Wells-next-the-Sea, backed by fragrant Scots pines, and onwards via sweeping expanses of salt marsh – the winter home of millions of migrant birds – to quaint Blakeney, with its grey seal colony; and then to Cley with its windmill and shops selling local pottery and smoked fish.

Further along the coast road, stop to lunch on the local speciality, dressed crab, at Cookie’s Crab Shop – in operation for over a half a century – before taking a nostalgic ride on the North Norfolk Railway. Also known as the Poppy Line, its enchanting steam trains puff and hiss their way through five miles of scenic countryside between the smart Georgian town of Holt and the Victorian seaside resort of Sheringham.

You can resume your tour with two red-brick Jacobean mansions nearby, which stand in contrast to the cool classicism of the ‘power houses’ further west.

Magnificent Blickling Hall, built in 1616, stands on the site of the home of the Boleyn family, where it is believed that Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII’s unfortunate second wife, was born. There’s no documentation to back up the claim, but legend has it that her ghost (headless, of course) makes an appearance every year on 19 May, the date of her execution.

Reliefs of Anne and her daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, can be seen on the staircase of the Great Hall. Don’t miss the Long Gallery, which has a staggering 123 feet of books on each side – the most prestigious collection held by the National Trust, including the first complete Bible to be printed in English and first editions of Jane Austen’s works. The romantic grounds are another highlight, dotted with yew topiary, a Doric temple and a walled garden.

Blickling so impressed a local family that they snapped up its designer Robert Lyminge to work on their own stately pile, Felbrigg Hall, just down the road; it was completed just four years later. Now looked after by the National Trust, it was home to the Windham family for 300 years.

The interiors are a wonderful mishmash of Jacobean, Georgian and Victorian styles, conjuring a curious blend of opulence and cosiness. The medieval Great Hall, for example, was turned into a Victorian sitting-room, whose windows still bear their 15th-century stained glass. The Chinese Bedroom, lined with hand-painted wallpaper, and the walled garden are also not to be missed.

PHOTOS: © ANDREW BUTLER/NADIA MACKENZIE/NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/NADIA SARCOVA/LAMY



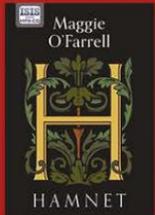
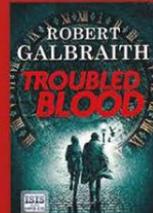
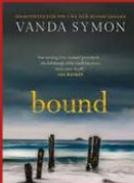
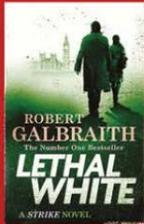
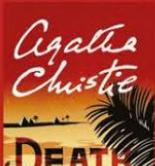
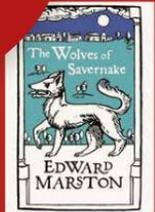
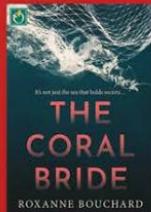
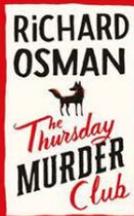
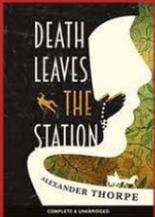
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*This image: The north front at Sandringham
Below right: The dovecote in the walled garden at Felbrigg Hall*

Anyone who does venture to Norfolk in the winter months will be in good company: from Christmas to February every year Her Majesty The Queen retires to her Norfolk home, Sandringham. The house was bought by Queen Victoria in 1862 for her son (later Edward VII), and has been home to four generations of sovereigns.

While grand, the eight rooms open to visitors are far from austere and have a cosy, unpretentious feel: squishy armchairs abound in the Saloon, where there's a jigsaw table (the Queen is reportedly fond of puzzles), and the house is dotted with family portraits. George V called it "dear old Sandringham", and it still feels like a much-loved family home.

Sandringham represents for the Queen a place of quiet refuge – a restorative pause before the year gathers pace. Spend time among Norfolk's tranquil landscapes of heath, wood, fen and coast, and you too will leave lighter and happier than when you arrived. **📍**

📍 For more on Britain's beautiful stately homes, see www.britain-magazine.com

THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

Trains leave London Liverpool Street and King's Cross every hour, arriving in Norwich or King's Lynn in just under 2hr. From both towns there are local bus services. www.thetrainline.com



WHAT TO SEE AND DO

Holkham Hall is the grand seat of the Earls of Leicester, with lavish interiors and extensive grounds. www.holkham.co.uk
Houghton Hall, once residence of Sir Robert Walpole, has beautiful gardens dotted with contemporary sculpture. www.houghtonhall.com
The North Norfolk Railway travels a scenic route between Sheringham and Holt from April to October. www.nnrailway.co.uk
Blickling Hall is a magnificent Jacobean house surrounded by splendid gardens. www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Felbrigg Hall, home to the Windham family for 300 years, has a homely, intimate feel. www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Sandringham, the Queen's winter retreat, is partly open to the public from April to October. sandringhamestate.co.uk



WHERE TO STAY

New this year, **The Harper** is a stylish offering in the village of Langham near the pretty Georgian town of Holt. With a brick-and-flint exterior; 32 elegant rooms, an array of places to eat and a bijou spa, it's bound to be popular, so book ahead. Alternatively, stay in the 18th-century **Cley Windmill**, whose gorgeous interiors are matched by the views; or at **The Hoste** in Burnham Market, a pretty brick and flint-stone village. www.theharper.co.uk; www.cleywindmill.co.uk; www.thehostearms.com



WHERE TO EAT

North Norfolk is renowned for its food, especially Cromer crabs, Brancaster oysters and Morston mussels. For a fine-dining treat, head to Michelin-starred **Morston Hall** near Blakeney. For a casual lunch, the charming **Wiveton Farm Café**, between Blakeney and Cley, serves simple food grown on the surrounding farmland. www.morstonhall.com; www.wivetonhall.co.uk



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.visitnorfolk.co.uk

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Northern England

Covering a huge swathe of the country, the North holds an enormous variety of attractions, with historic castles and cathedrals, magnificently craggy landscapes, sandy beaches and dynamic cities. Encompassing Cheshire, Cumbria, Northumberland, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Durham, Tyne & Wear, Manchester and Liverpool, this region, once known for its industrial cities, now boasts lively hubs of culture and design, though traces of its past remain in its former mines, docks and factories.

Visitors flock to Northumberland, drawn by the medieval castles that scatter the county. Nearby Durham is home to a historic university and a magnificent cathedral. Further south is York, a wonderful heritage city established by the Vikings and encircled by medieval walls. The northeast coast harbours beguiling towns including Whitby, whose ruined abbey provided inspiration for Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and Staithes, once home to Captain Cook.





Northern England essentials

ANNUAL EVENTS

Scarborough Seafest

Feast on seafood as you celebrate the Yorkshire coast's seafaring history at this foodie festival, with plenty of stalls and cookery demos. 23-25 July

Castle Howard Proms

This spectacular classical concert in the grounds of Castle Howard, North Yorkshire, is a memorable musical experience. 21 August

Kynren

Auckland Castle hosts this epic open-air night spectacular that brings to life 2,000 years of Britain's history, with fireworks and water effects. 7 Aug-11 Sept

Ulverston Dickensian Festival

Thousands dress up to celebrate the Dickensian era at this popular annual festival in Cumbria. 27-28 November

Walkers hike along Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland



PHOTOS © NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/JOHN MILLER

HIGHLIGHTS

MANCHESTER

This vibrant city is not just home to the most famous football club in the world. It's got stunning art and architecture, including the John Ryland Library, Manchester Cathedral and the award-winning Whitworth Art Gallery; great shops and nightlife; and beautiful countryside right on its doorstep.

LAKE DISTRICT

England's largest national park is also the home of the tallest mountain in England, Scafell Pike, and the deepest lake, Wastwater. This Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has inspired writers and poets alike. Visit Beatrix Potter's home at Hill Top or Wordsworth's family home, Dove Cottage.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL

This 11th-century cathedral set high on a rocky promontory is the finest example of Norman architecture in England.

FOUNTAINS ABBEY

One of England's best preserved monastic ruins, Fountains Abbey is a truly atmospheric sight. After visiting the ruins, make sure to walk round the stunning landscaped Studley Royal Water Garden.

HADRIAN'S WALL

This UNESCO World Heritage Site, which stretches for 73 miles, was once the Northwest frontier of the Roman Empire. Walks across it offer magnificent views of the surrounding landscape.

LIVERPOOL

The birthplace of the Beatles, Liverpool is a cultural capital with more museums and galleries than anywhere in the UK outside of London.

YORK

Whether you're taking in the views from the top of York Minster, seeing Queen Victoria's royal carriage at

the National Railway Museum, wandering the medieval Shambles or placing bets at York Racecourse, there's something for everyone in York. Yorkshire's stunning Moors and Dales are within easy reach too.

WHITBY

Famous as the inspiration for Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and as the town where Captain Cook trained as a seaman, this seaside town is also celebrated for its stunning beaches and mouthwatering fish and chips.

CHESTER

A fantastically well-preserved two-mile ring of Roman and medieval walls enclose Chester's picture-perfect core.

HIDDEN GEM

In a double celebration for 2021, Derby will mark the 300th anniversary of the world's first factory and the long-awaited opening of the Museum of Making on the site of that historic building.

DON'T MISS

The atmospheric home of the Brontë sisters in Haworth, Yorkshire, is furnished as it was in their day and dotted with their treasures. A must-visit for bookworms



DURHAM CATHEDRAL



A place of worship, welcome and hospitality at the heart of Durham's UNESCO World Heritage Site, we're proud of the steps we're taking to keep our visitors, staff and volunteers safe from COVID-19.

Famous as the Shrine of St Cuthbert and the resting place of the Venerable Bede, Durham Cathedral is renowned for its stunning Norman architecture.

We're welcoming visitors and worshippers into the cathedral, but please be aware of the safety measures in place. Not all of the cathedral's facilities may be open. We're working to fully reopen, dependent on guidance about controlling the spread of COVID-19, as soon as we can.

Get inspired for your future visit with online resources on our website and social media pages, including in-depth blogs and videos revealing the cathedral's history and remarkable collections.

Find our latest updates at www.durhamcathedral.co.uk

This is
durham
place of light



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

#Pilgrimage2020

Image: Graeme Peacock





Yorkshire's MOORS & SHORES

Equal parts mystical moor and secluded seashore, the Yorkshire coast beats some of Britain's more traditional summer destinations hands down

WORDS JENNY ROWE



Previous page:
Sunrise at Staithes
Opposite: The view
of Robin Hood's Bay
from Ravenscar



The best-known Victorian pleasure piers in England may be at Brighton and Blackpool, but Saltburn-by-the-sea in North Yorkshire has one too, and an original Cliff Lift to boot. Likewise, Dorset's Jurassic Coast isn't the only fossil-hunter's paradise on the block: try Yorkshire's Dinosaur Coast at Staithes. And although visitors flock to Devon on the trail of Sir Walter Raleigh and his *Golden Hind*, just over a century later in 1728, Captain James Cook was born to more humble stock in the unassuming Yorkshire village of Marton. He would go on to achieve national hero status too, as the first European to chart New Zealand and the Great Barrier Reef of Australia.

Yorkshire is formidable – England's largest county, with a population bigger than Scotland – but it is a gentle giant. Perched respectfully on the shoulder of York and its acclaimed Minster is the North York Moors National Park – one of three National Parks in Yorkshire – adjoined to the Howardian Hills, one of three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Though many don't give North Yorkshire's softly spoken claims to fame the time of day, it is here that

you can get a feel for what the county does best.

Rugged moorland sweeps right up to the North Sea shoreline at the red-roofed fishing villages of Robin Hood's Bay, Staithes and Ravenscar. Moor and shore are not just neighbours here: they cohabit the ancient landscape in resolute harmony.

The perfect place, then, to build Rievaulx Abbey, the first outpost of the Cistercian order in the north of England, founded in 1132. The monks chose a plot of land deep in the Rye valley on the North York Moors, surrounded by camouflaging woodland. Nowadays, it is one of Britain's most complete abbey ruins, yet its secluded location makes it lesser known than nearby Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire's first World Heritage Site. Its reticence only amplifies its magnificence, as you glimpse its elegant arches rise out of the treetops.

Another famed monastic house at this postcode is Whitby Abbey. These dramatic ruins inspired Bram Stoker to pen *Dracula*, his 1897 Gothic horror novel. Stories of this genre, popular at the time, were often set in foreign



Moor and shore are not just
neighbours here: they cohabit the ancient
landscape in resolute harmony



lands full of creepy castles, convents and caves. Yet the atmosphere on this exposed cliffside was obviously spooky enough for Stoker. Scraps of Whitby are scattered throughout the book: the famous 199 steps up to the abbey; the name of Dracula's first victim, 'Swales', lifted from a grave at St Mary's Church next door; and the name of Dracula himself, which Stoker stumbled upon while researching in Whitby library.

The charming harbour town is well worth a visit in its own right. You might even be lucky enough to spot a whale offshore – boat trips run through the summer and autumn months. Before you leave, visit the Captain Cook Memorial Museum within the building that once belonged to Quaker shipowner Captain John Walker, to whom James Cook was apprenticed at 18. From here, Cook set off on his first voyage – not quite as intrepid as his later expeditions: a trip carrying Tyne coal down to London.

It was at Staithes, though, a small village just north of Whitby, that Cook's seafaring dreams were sparked. At the time it would have been one of the largest fishing ports on the North East coast, but now all is quiet. The Staithes Beck estuary is a wellspring of calm within its maze of narrow streets and tiny, hotchpotch cottages, making it one of the most picture-perfect of Yorkshire's cove communities.

Heading further south, but before you reach the headland heavyweight of Scarborough, stop off at Robin Hood's Bay. Its secret alleyways and tunnels were once the veins through which a lifeblood of booze and tobacco flowed into the basements of public houses and the secret closets of entrepreneurial seamen, who would sell the clandestine goods on the black market in order to avoid

paying hiked-up wartime taxes. French lace and tea were among the illicit goods that flooded here in 1799, when 'Smugglers' Town' was at its most prolific. It is thought that so many of the residents were involved in the subterfuge that it was possible to pass a bale of silk from shore to moor without it ever seeing the light of day.

If you're looking for less delinquency and more deck chair, aim for Scarborough. There were plans to transform Ravenscar, a village you'll pass en route, into a popular seaside resort like Scarborough; roads and a handful of fine houses were built, but it never really caught on. Instead Ravenscar is known for its thriving seal colony, which provide quite the spectacle when they venture ashore to pup during the summer and autumn months.

From the mid-18th century onwards, Scarborough, meanwhile, did burgeon into an established holiday destination. Highlights include the medieval Scarborough Castle; the Grand Hotel, which has proudly adorned the South Bay since 1867; and the nearby Spa Bridge, which was built in 1826 to connect St Nicholas Cliff to the Spa – a promenade in the sky.

Then meander inland to explore some of the moorland market towns in the area. Helmsley (market day is Friday) and Pickering (Monday) should make the list, while Malton puts on Yorkshire's most renowned food market every second Saturday, its stalls heaving with local produce from 35 specialist food suppliers.

With your shopping bag (or stomach) full, retire to Scampston Hall and Walled Garden close by. Tours of the Hall are led by Sir Charles Legard – part of the family who live there – and his team. Without any of the usual ropes and red tape, it's a real treat, allowing an intimate



PHOTOS: © DANIEL RAO/NEL ART; TISTOCK/NICK GREAVES/ALAMY



Clockwise from this image: The ruins of Whitby Abbey; Common and Grey seals thrive on the cliffs and beaches at Ravenscar village; a steam train chugs along the scenic North Yorkshire Moors Railway



PHOTOS: © IAN DAGNALL/COMMERCIAL COLLECTION/ALAMY

THE PLANNER

GETTING THERE AND AROUND

LNER operate trains from London King's Cross to York (2hr). From there you can explore the area on Northern Rail. For a heritage steam train experience, catch the North Yorkshire Moors Railway from its southern terminus at Pickering. The 24-mile route through the National Park will get you to Whitby in just less than two hours. www.lner.co.uk; www.northernrailway.co.uk; www.nymr.co.uk

WHERE TO STAY

Pickering is an ideal base right on the edge of the Moors. The award-winning Georgian B&B 17 Burgate House will provide every luxury for you here. Alternatively, stunning sunset sea views of Robin Hood's Bay can be enjoyed at the charming Victoria Hotel, which was built in 1897. www.17burgate.co.uk; www.victoriarhb.com

WHERE TO EAT

Trenchers in Whitby is a must-visit; get your fish and chips to take away so you can enjoy hot salty chips harbour-side. The Bay Tree just south of the Howardian Hills is the perfect place if you're after friendly fine-dining. www.trenchersrestaurant.co.uk; www.thebaytreeyork.co.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.yorkshire.com

rendezvous with the house's French-style Regency interiors. The kitchen garden, set within the original walls, opens onto a rolling, landscaped 18th-century park characteristic of 'Capability' Brown's design.

Another must-see garden nearby is Helmsley Walled Garden, where filming for the 2020 adaptation of *The Secret Garden* took place. A five-acre haven of peace and tranquility, it's also a charity promoting mental wellbeing through gardening.

Now (though you wouldn't know it) you're practically in Rievaulx Abbey's backyard again. The Kilburn White Horse, the largest and most northerly hill figure in England, is also nearby. A walk along the escarpment edge will do its impressive size proper justice.

A stone's throw from here is the distinctive half-cone-shaped hill, Roseberry Topping, which, if you prefer your walks with a helping of history, might better suit. Captain Cook is known to have roamed its rocky summit while working for his father on Aireyholme Farm near Great Ayton.

Having marched the untrodden hills of the North York Moors from a young age, it's perhaps not surprising that Cook found its shores, similarly raw and clam-like, an irresistible advertisement for a lifetime of exploration at sea. Even today, unfolding North Yorkshire's treasure map of landscapes and landmarks at all corners can require time and patience, but the rewards are boundless. **📍**

📍 For more on Yorkshire, see www.britain-magazine.com

Above:
Scarborough Castle overlooks the Old Town



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Real Yorkshire Tours is run by **Blue Badge tourist guide** Tim Barber, who will bring the Yorkshire landscape, history, heritage & culture to life, showing you some wonderful scenery, sights and locations as well as many special hidden gems.

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Wales

Wales has more castles per square mile than anywhere else in the world, thanks in part to Edward I, whose 'Iron Ring' of magnificent fortresses represent Europe's most ambitious military building project. There's plenty of scope for a castle-hopping tour of Wales – there are 600 to choose from – but it would be a shame to miss Wales's humbler charms. Dip in anywhere along the 870-mile Wales Coast Path, the first in the world to follow a country's coastline in its entirety, for scenery to swoon over. The picturesque villages of Pembrokeshire and the vast beaches of the Gower peninsula are highlights.

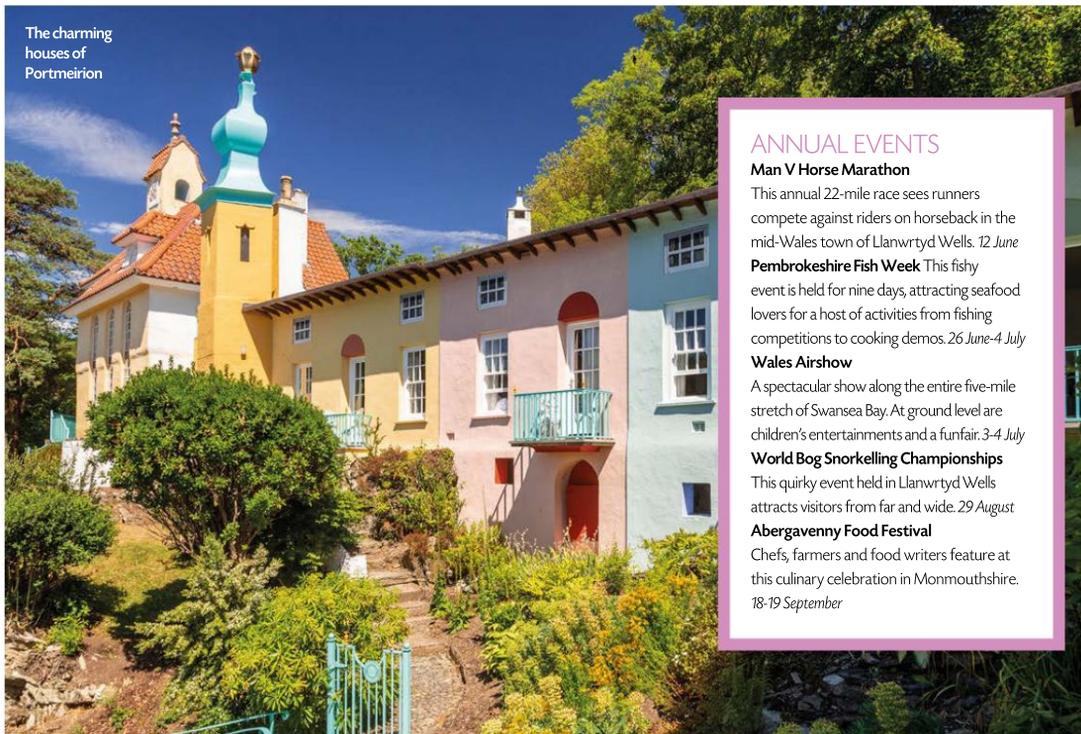
For romance, head to Snowdonia National Park. The panoramic train ride to the top of Snowdon is one of Wales's great experiences. For more majestic mountain scenery, the Brecon Beacons further south never disappoint. Finally, a trip to Cardiff, Wales's charismatic capital, will reward you with fascinating history, excellent shopping and an exciting cultural calendar.





Wales essentials

The charming houses of Portmeirion



ANNUAL EVENTS

Man V Horse Marathon

This annual 22-mile race sees runners compete against riders on horseback in the mid-Wales town of Llanwrtyd Wells. *12 June*

Pembrokeshire Fish Week This fishy event is held for nine days, attracting seafood lovers for a host of activities from fishing competitions to cooking demos. *26 June-4 July*

Wales Airshow

A spectacular show along the entire five-mile stretch of Swansea Bay. At ground level are children's entertainments and a funfair. *3-4 July*

World Bog Snorkelling Championships

This quirky event held in Llanwrtyd Wells attracts visitors from far and wide. *29 August*

Abergavenny Food Festival

Chefs, farmers and food writers feature at this culinary celebration in Monmouthshire. *18-19 September*

PHOTOS: © HOWARD LITHEBERLAND/ALAMY

HIGHLIGHTS

PORTMEIRION

With stunning views, colourful gardens and amazing architecture, this Italian-inspired village built by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis in the 20th century is a sight to behold. The village's quirky buildings in ice-cream colours are now heritage-listed.

CARDIFF

Wales' capital is fast becoming one of the UK's top cities for shopping, food and entertainment. With fifteen castles within an hour's drive, it's the perfect base for a tour of Wales's famous fortresses, starting with the medieval Cardiff Castle.

CAERNARFON CASTLE

Built by Edward I as part of his 'Iron Ring', mighty Caernarfon, with its sturdy walls and polygonal towers, is one of Wales's most impressive castles.

TENBY

This picture-perfect seaside town in Pembrokeshire has glorious beaches and a charming medieval core.

CONWY

From a colossal 13th-century castle to the smallest house in Britain, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is bursting with things to see. The scenic medieval town boasts a stunning harbour and suspension bridge. It is close to some of Wales's prettiest beaches and surrounded by gorgeous countryside.

SNOWDONIA

Wales's largest national park, Snowdonia covers 823 square miles of spectacular landscapes. As well as Wales's highest mountain, Mount Snowdon, there are some lovely, scenic villages to visit, including Betws-y-Coed and Beddgelert.

BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK

Whether it's climbing the highest peak at Pen-y-Fan, wandering through the cave system at Dan-yr-Ogof or stargazing at this Dark Sky Reserve, there are few better places for exploring the great outdoors than South Wales's Brecon Beacons National Park.

THE GOWER

The Gower Peninsula holds some of Britain's most spectacular coastal scenery, culminating in the quaint town of Mumbles and dazzling Rhossili Bay, beloved of the poet Dylan Thomas.

HIDDEN GEM

For a blast of nostalgia, head to Llandudno, a genteel Victorian seaside resort which retains its old-fashioned feel with a period pier, pastel-coloured houses and a vintage tramway.

DON'T MISS

The Pembrokeshire Coast Path follows cliff-top pathways through stunning coastal scenery, with magnificent views at every turn

SMALL
GROUPS

MAXIMUM
25 PEOPLE

Conwy Castle, Day 5



G R E A T R A I L J O U R N E Y S

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From charming Llandudno, experience the very best of North Wales, soaking up scenery aboard historic steam railways and visiting impressive castles.



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Enjoy panoramic views from on board the Snowdon Mountain Railway as you travel up the highest mountain in Wales.

Take scenic journeys aboard the Welsh Highland Railway through the beauty of Snowdonia National park, and the Ffestiniog Railway.

Explore some of Wales' most impressive and historic castles, including Caernarfon Castle and UNESCO-listed Conwy Castle.

Visit the Italianate-style seaside town of Portmeirion and take a guided tour of this unique destination.

Discover Plas Mawr, the best preserved Elizabethan town house in Britain, and see what life was like in the 1500s.

Sit down to a 'Taste of Wales' dinner, featuring local produce prepared by a two AA Rosette-rated restaurant, and sit back and relax to the sound of a local harpist.

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5 nights in a 3-Star hotel
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Aug	1	£795	Oct	1	£845
	6, 11	£775		6	£745
	20	£775		18	£695

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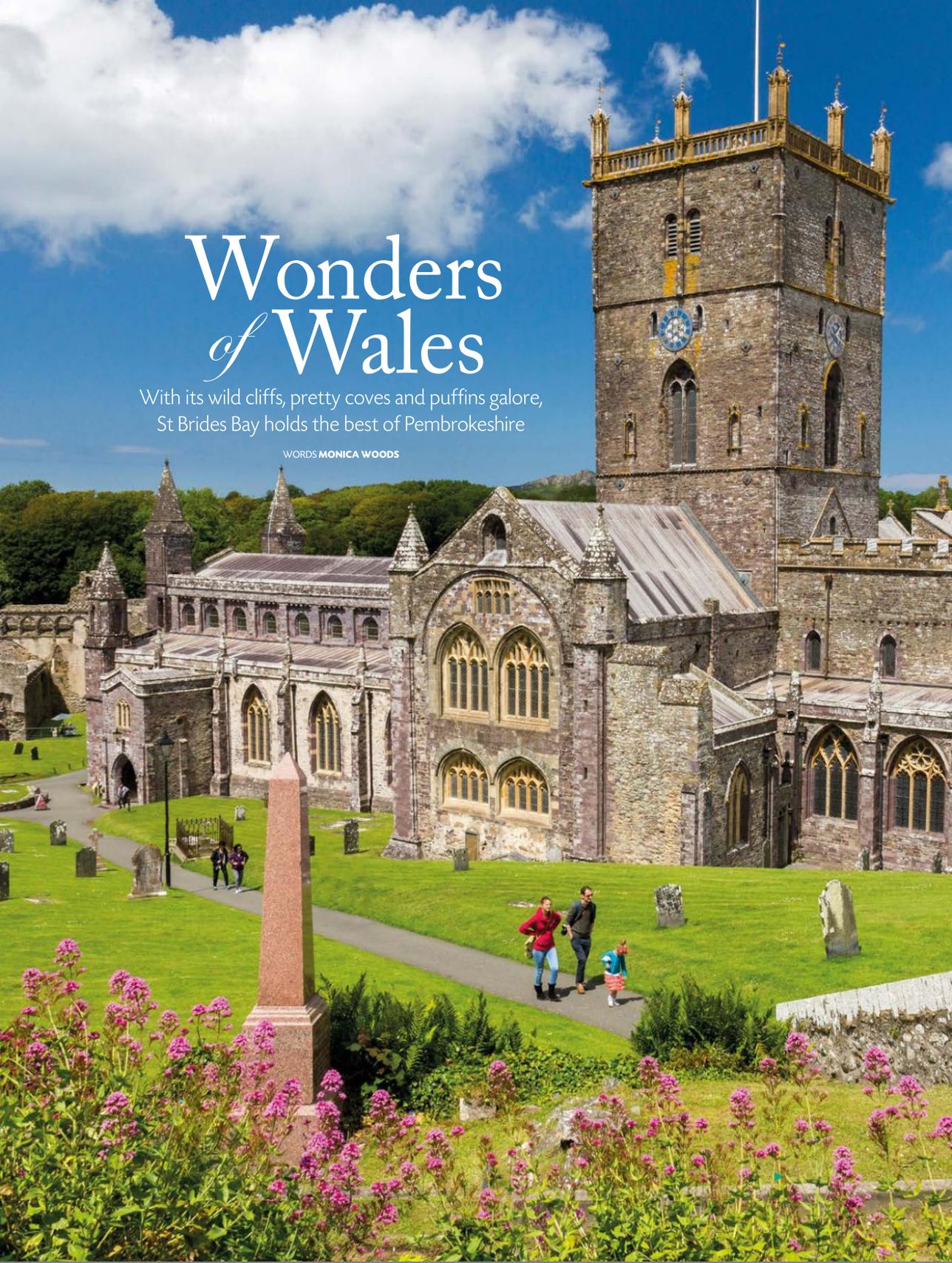
With five decades of experience at our fingertips we'll ensure your holiday goes without a hitch.

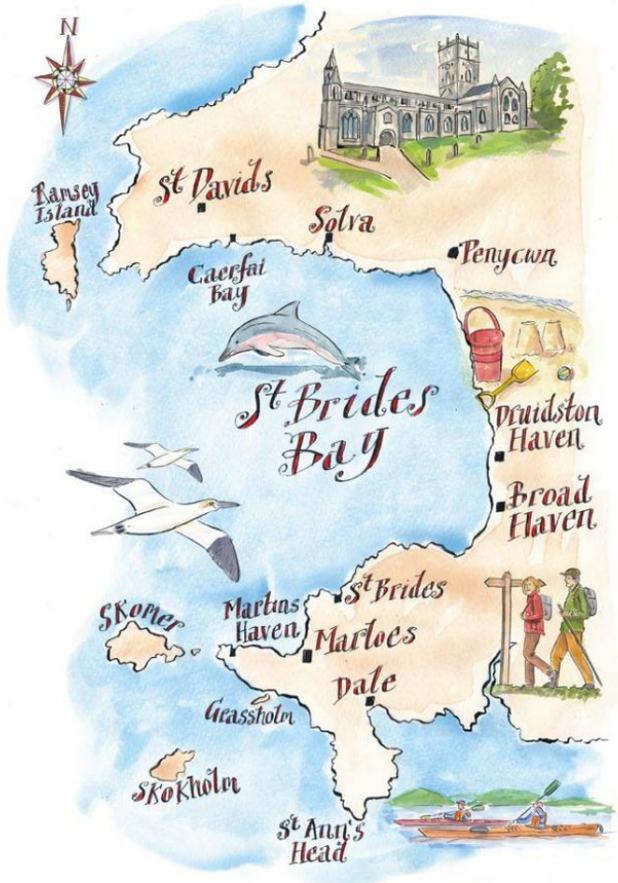


Wonders *of* Wales

With its wild cliffs, pretty coves and puffins galore,
St Brides Bay holds the best of Pembrokeshire

WORDS **MONICA WOODS**





Calling all curious travellers: if you're on the lookout for an alternative sun, sea and sand destination in the British Isles, the wild west coast of Wales may be just the thing. Turn away from the popular southwest and south coast, make for Pembrokeshire's western reaches and be prepared to fall head over heels for St Brides Bay.

The Gower peninsula may get most of the attention, but this notch in the Welsh coastline has similarly spectacular beaches, charming towns and villages, fantastic wildlife and, crucially, enough space for everyone. Topping it all, literally, is St David's, Britain's smallest city, perched at the tip of the bay and wooing visitors with its medieval cathedral, winding lanes and foodie hotspots.

Of course, it's thanks to the cathedral that St David's – with a population of less than 2,000 and the diminutive size of a village – can claim city status. Dedicated to the patron saint of Wales, the splendid cathedral was built in 1180, but it was back in the 6th century that St David founded a monastery on the site.

And the site was well chosen – tucked into a dell next to the River Alun, the cathedral was less vulnerable to

Left: Thanks to its cathedral the small settlement of St David's in Pembrokeshire claims city status

PHOTOS © CHRISTOPHER NICHOLSON/ALAMY ILLUSTRATION © MICHAEL AITHEL



PHOTOS © CW IMAGES/MAGDALENA BUJAK/ALAMY

attack. Today, as you pass beneath Tower Gate and make your way down to Cathedral Close, the overall impression is one of sheltered calm. Unusually, there is no admission charge (although donations are welcome), so you are free to admire the purple-tinged stone exterior and elaborate latticed oak ceiling, just as flocks of pilgrims have done over the centuries. Indeed, there was a time when two trips to St Davids were deemed by the Pope the equivalent of one to Rome.

With everything within walking distance, and a high street crammed with independent shops and galleries, delis and cafés where local produce reigns supreme, plus a weekly market on Thursdays, St Davids is perfect browsing territory.

Following the curve of St Brides Bay eastwards brings you to another colourful enclave, Solva. This bustling little village has an artistic bent, with galleries, crafts and ceramics shops and, one mile upriver, a woollen mill where you can see weavers at work and buy distinctive runners and rugs.

The village is split between Lower Solva, clustered at the end of the L-shaped harbour, and the more residential Upper Solva. At low tide, the harbour water drains almost completely away, leaving boats lodged in the sand and revealing rock pools and caves. Children will enjoy crabbing from the harbour wall – naturally those critters

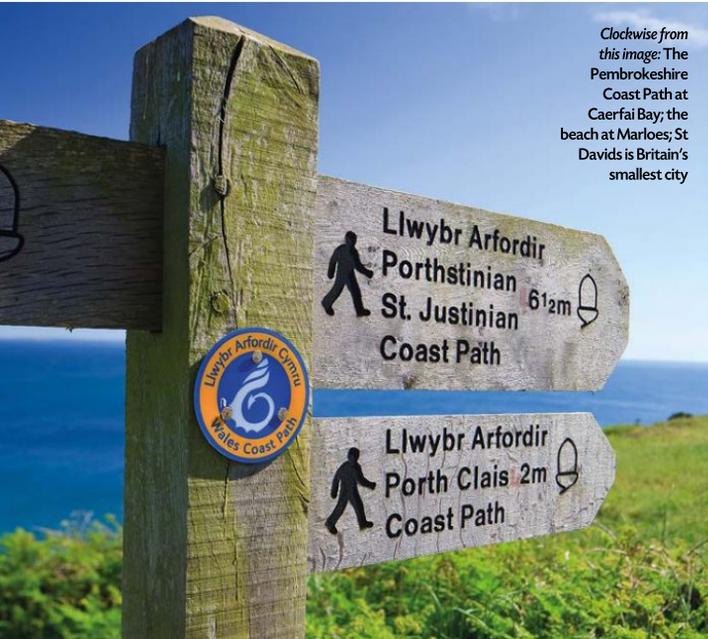
must be returned to the water once they've been counted up, but don't miss freshly dressed local crab and lobster, specialities on offer in many of Solva's plentiful cafés, restaurants and pubs.

Take one of several paths leading up to the Gribin, the rocky headland guarding the entrance to the harbour, to be granted superb views of the village and the surrounding rugged coastline, plus the chance to see the remains of an Iron Age fort and settlement. Depending on the tide, you may also be able to peek inside 200-year-old lime kilns, evidence of the area's industrial heritage. Down on the other side of the Gribin, there's a glimpse of a more distant past – the pebble beach of the Gwadn was formed by meltwater at the end of the last Ice Age.

With such historical significance, not to mention stunning scenery, it's no wonder that this stretch of southwestern Wales was designated a national park back in 1952. The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park comprises a series of coastal and some inland areas, not always contiguous but adding up to a sublime patchwork of land- and seascape.

The 186-mile-long Pembrokeshire Coast Path plots a course over windswept and wildflower-flecked cliffs, quiet sandy coves and lush green glades. When the sun shines, it may be hard to resist the golden beaches of St Brides Bay, but the coastal path gives a different,





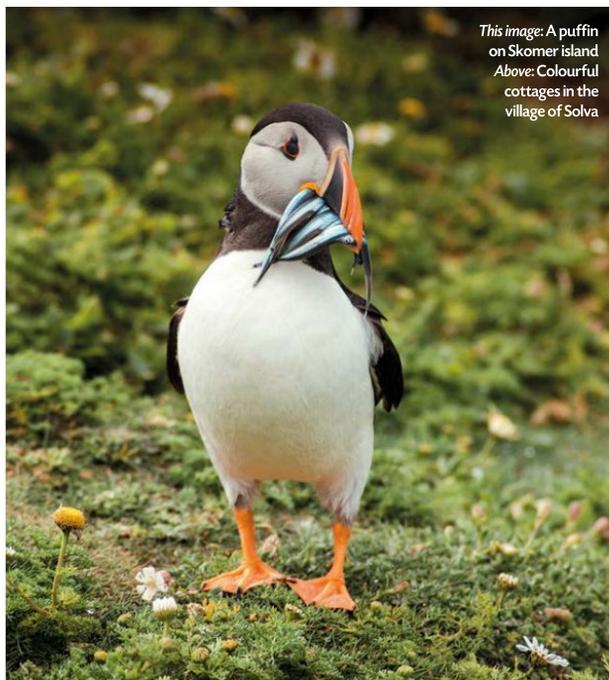
Clockwise from this image: The Pembrokeshire Coast Path at Caerfai Bay; the beach at Marloes; St Davids is Britain's smallest city

sometimes dizzying perspective, with views of outlying islands, bobbing seals and flocks of seabirds.

Down at the water's edge, you'll find the beaches are so much more than just a place to flop on a beach towel. The steep cliffs at secluded Druidston Haven are a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (one of 17 along the coast path), thanks to their rich fossil content, and are a favourite haunt of gannets and peregrine falcons. A natural waterfall gushing down the cliffside at one end of the cove provides an ideal post-swim shower point.

There are treats and surprises like this all along the bay. While some beaches, like the wide sweep of Broad Haven, offer more conventional, family-friendly seaside fun, others reveal their often unique charms more discreetly. At Caerfai Bay, for example, the purple sandstone underfoot may look familiar – it was used to build St Davids Cathedral. At Marloes, there's a winding walk from the car park, or along the cliffs, to get to the beach but reward comes in the form of dramatic, jagged rock islands and cliffs seamed with purple, grey and gold. And even at Broad Haven, at low tide a separate, smaller bay, The Setlands, becomes enticingly accessible.

If paddling or swimming don't appeal (although be reassured that most beaches boast Blue Flag and/or Green Coast awards), there are other ways to take to the water. Holiday sailing courses are popular at Dale, officially ▶



This image: A puffin on Skomer island
Above: Colourful cottages in the village of Solva

THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

There is no station at St Davids but trains run to Haverfordwest from Swansea, which is 2hr 45min from London Paddington. Parking can sometimes be tricky in smaller places so make use of the Pembrokeshire Coastal Bus network, which operates a handy seven-day service in summer. www.thetrainline.com; www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk



WHERE TO STAY

Close to St Davids, the former Victorian convent of Penrhif Hotel makes a comfortable rural base, right in the heart of the national park but only ten minutes from the cathedral. Further down the bay and slightly inland, Mill Haven Place is a good self-catering option with three well-equipped cottages. www.penrhifhotel.com; www.millhavenplace.co.uk



WHERE TO EAT

The Refectory offers homemade, good-value meals in a calming, light-flooded space within St Davids Cathedral. For a drink, you can't beat sipping a pint on the Swan Inn's terrace, carved into the cliffside at Little Haven. Runwayskiln café, in a perfect clifftop location above Marloes Sands, is a real foodie find right on the coast path, serving up local seafood, delicious pakoras and tempting cakes. www.stdavidsrefectory.co.uk; www.theswanlittlehaven.co.uk; www.runwayskiln.co.uk



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.visitpembrokeshire.com

PHOTOS: © PAUL WESTON/ALAMY/PHOTOSHUTTER; FRANCESCA JONES/SHUTTER WALES

the sunniest place in Wales. You could also try your hand at kayaking or windsurfing – and it certainly can get windy. The gusts at St Ann's Head, the promontory immediately south of Dale where Henry Tudor landed in 1485, on his way to fight for the English crown, often exceed 100mph in winter. Wind-lashed walkers or sodden swimmers will be grateful of the warm welcome at the Griffin Inn in Dale, a 300-year-old pub overlooking the bay.

The best way to experience the Celtic Sea, though, is to join a boat trip out to Pembrokeshire's offshore islands, Skomer, Skokholm, Grassholm and Ramsey. Departing from the peninsula's harbour at Martins Haven (April to September, weather permitting), the crossing to Skomer only takes around ten minutes, bringing you up close to southern Britain's largest puffin colony. Ten thousand pairs of puffins nest here, and the turquoise waters and green-blanketed cliffs of the island and its neighbours also attract Manx shearwaters, razorbills, gannets and guillemots, not to mention grey seals and dolphins.

Prime time for puffin and puffling viewing is June and July. Boat tickets are sold on a first come, first served basis, so arrive at the harbour early to secure your place on this most memorable Pembrokeshire voyage. **B**

For more on wonderful Wales, see www.britain-magazine.com



PHOTO: ©ITALIKA/ISTOCK

Interested in writing your memoir but don't know how to get started? Let experienced ghostwriter and memoir editor **Marnie Summerfield Smith** guide the way

"As well as helping us write about our adventures as wartime entertainers, Marnie arranged for us to be on BBC Radio 4 and organised a book launch with an accompanying exhibition of our costumes and memorabilia. It was marvellous and we sold all our books." Mollie and Peggie Bensaïd, nonagenarian authors of *All The World's A Stage*

If you've thought about writing your memoirs, chances are that something about the process has you stumped.

Maybe your head is full of memories and you don't know where to start.

Maybe you know what you want to achieve but don't have time.

Or perhaps you want to write about a difficult time but feel daunted going it alone.

And there's always the chance that you've made a start, or have finished and are wondering, what now?

You might want feedback on what you've written.

Or assistance with printing, self-publishing or trying to find an agent or traditional publisher.

I have been a ghostwriter, memoir editor and mentor since 2008. My first project,



Home From War, was published by Mainstream, an imprint of Random House, in 2009. It was the first time that HRH The Duke of Cambridge agreed to write a foreword for a book.

I love helping people tell their stories, so I created Your Memoir so I could guide you from the very beginning, where you think, "I'd love to write my life story," to the place where you want to be, that life-changing moment when you hold your book in your hands.

I offer a full ghostwriting service. I'll sit with you and help you remember everything. I'll edit your book with your input. When we are finished you will feel as if you have written every single word.

Or, if you want to write your book yourself, I can encourage you. Why not send me a chapter a month? We all need deadlines, don't we! I can edit at your pace and help you decide what to write next. I offer warm and friendly support on email, on the telephone and in person.

I have worked on more than 100 memoirs with

"You were a breath of fresh air, who helped me dig deep and bring the suppressed memories to the surface in a couple of the most difficult chapters I had to write." Hana Ali, author of *At Home With Muhammad Ali*

"This book changed my whole outlook on life. I never felt comfortable talking to anyone about my private life for 65 years, until I met Marnie." Brian Denny, author of *From Boy to Son to Father*

authors of all ages on every subject imaginable. Some have been dramatic, but many have been with authors who have lived so-called "ordinary lives". To me, however, every life is extraordinary and precious. Do you wish your grandparents had left something behind for you to read? If so, why not give this gift to your descendants.

Whatever your reason and story, you'll need an experienced ghostwriter like me who has been described by her authors as "genuine, insightful, instinctive, heartfelt, sensitive, professional and compassionate".

If you've never thought of writing your memoirs, that's okay. But if you have thought about it, don't leave it too late. Don't leave your story unwritten. I'm here to help you make it happen.

Contact me for a no-obligation chat in complete confidence. Email: marnie@yourmemoir.co.uk Call, text or WhatsApp:

+44 (0)7851 548 522

Visit www.yourmemoir.co.uk for more about how I can help and to download a copy of my free quick-read memoir writing guide.



Scotland

A land of craggy peaks, majestic lochs and glens ablaze with purple heather, Scotland's wild and wonderful landscapes take some beating. For unparalleled scenery, head for the Highlands. Covering two-thirds of the country, the region's untarnished beauty is jaw-dropping. If this gives you a taste for wild Scotland, the islands – there are over 700 of them – offer more of the same, plus history (Orkney's Neolithic remains, for example), fantastic cuisine (foodies love Skye) and whisky (Islay's distilleries produce some of the world's best single malts).

The untamed beauty of the north may feel like the edge of the world, but you're just a couple of hours from Scotland's lively cities. Historic, beautiful Edinburgh, its fairytale castle perched on an ancient volcano, is a

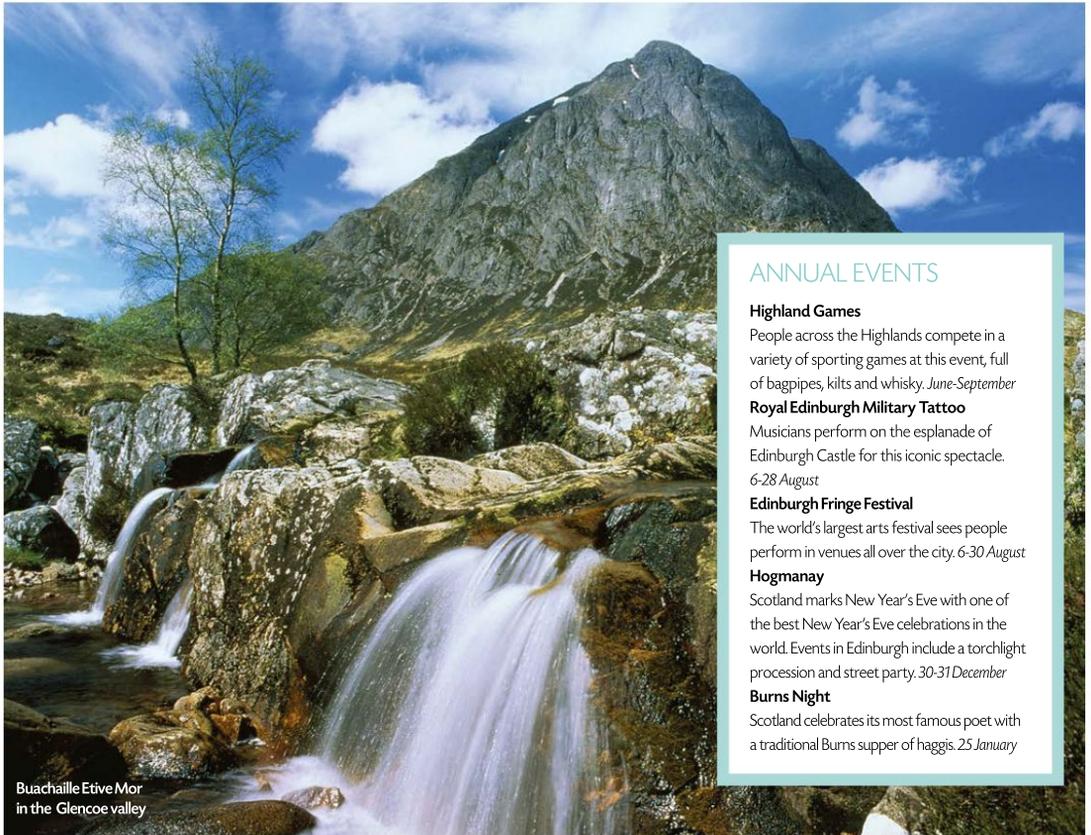
stunner – “My own Romantic town”, as novelist Sir Walter Scott described it; while Glasgow has transformed itself in recent years into an absorbing cultural city with some of Britain's best museums.



Pipe bands perform at the
Ballater Highland Games in
Royal Deeside



Scotland essentials



Buachaille Etive Mor
in the Glencoe valley

PHOTOS © HARVEY WOOD/NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

ANNUAL EVENTS

Highland Games

People across the Highlands compete in a variety of sporting games at this event, full of bagpipes, kilts and whisky. *June-September*

Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

Musicians perform on the esplanade of Edinburgh Castle for this iconic spectacle.

6-28 August

Edinburgh Fringe Festival

The world's largest arts festival sees people perform in venues all over the city. *6-30 August*

Hogmanay

Scotland marks New Year's Eve with one of the best New Year's Eve celebrations in the world. Events in Edinburgh include a torchlight procession and street party. *30-31 December*

Burns Night

Scotland celebrates its most famous poet with a traditional Burns supper of haggis. *25 January*

HIGHLIGHTS

THE HIGHLANDS

From majestic mountains – including Britain's highest Peak, Ben Nevis – to verdant valleys such as Glencoe and sparkling lochs, most famously Loch Ness, the Highlands' landscapes are unbeatable.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND

The National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh has a fascinating and hugely varied collection of over 20,000 artefacts covering the history of Scotland.

EDINBURGH CASTLE

Edinburgh's number one attraction, the castle is home to the Honours of Scotland, Britain's oldest Crown Jewels, dating from the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

SPEYSIDE WHISKY DISTILLERIES

Speyside in the Highlands is a land of mountains, pristine pine forests and sparkling lochs, but it's perhaps best known for its whisky distilleries.

KELVINGROVE ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM

You can't visit Glasgow without stopping at this stunning museum, which has 22 galleries and 80,000 exhibits, ranging from fine art to natural history.

THE TROSSACHS

Looking for the Highlands in miniature? Try the Trossachs, a magnificent expanse of craggy peaks and densely forested slopes. The novelist Sir Walter Scott, born 250 years ago this year, set several of his works here.

STIRLING CASTLE

This grand castle, which sits high on a volcanic rock, was the childhood home of Mary Queen of Scots.

FORT WILLIAM

Described as Britain's outdoor capital, this town on Scotland's west coast offers an array of adventures from canoeing to mountaineering.

HIDDEN GEM

Culloden was the site of one of Scotland's most harrowing battles, when the final Jacobite Rising came to a head with much bloodshed. 2021 marks the 275th anniversary of the Battle of Culloden – a good time to visit this atmospheric site.

DON'T
MISS

V&A Dundee, Scotland's first design museum, resides in a futuristic building on the city's waterfront and includes a room by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, restored to its former glory

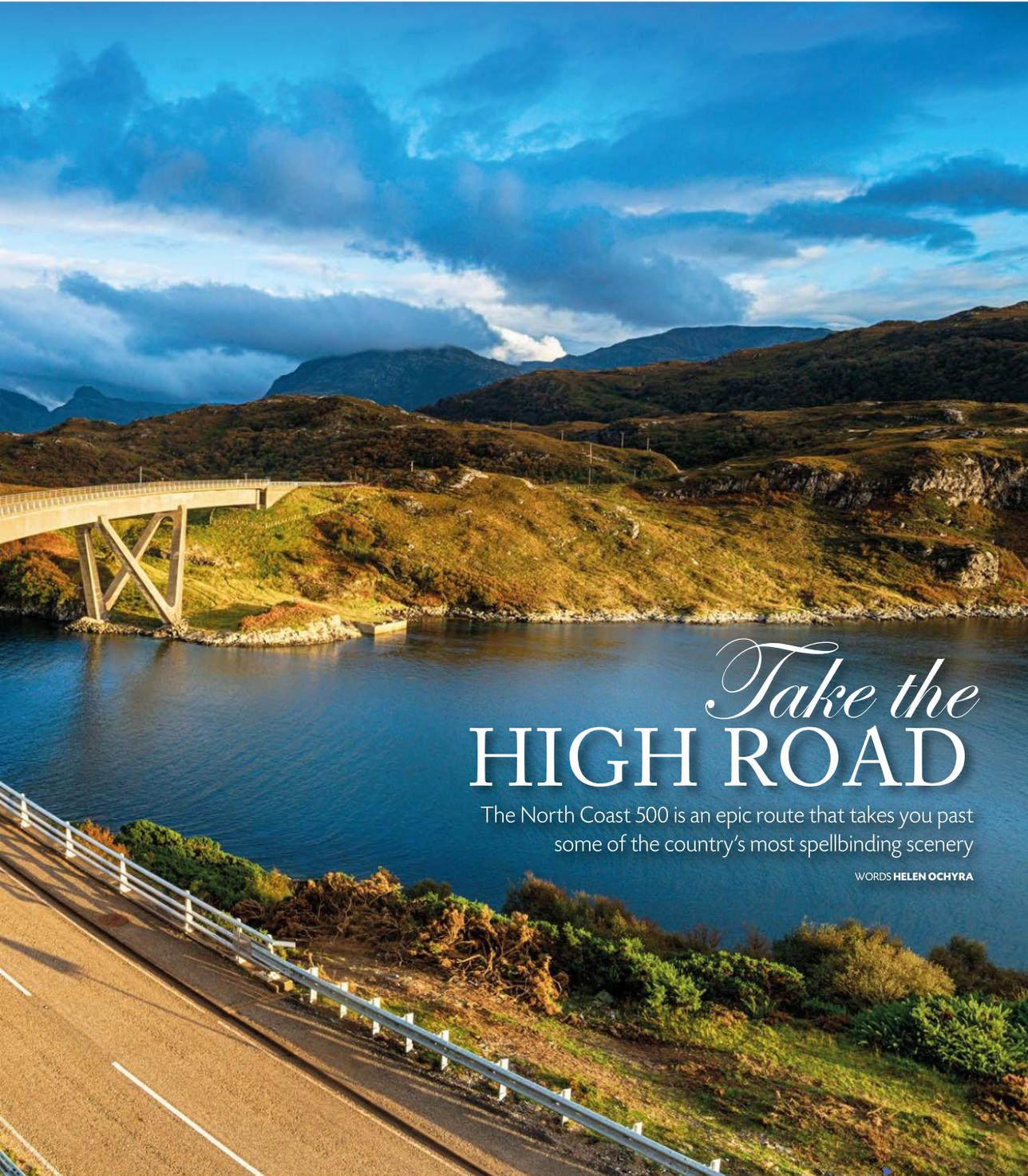


EVERY JOURNEY STARTS A STORY

*Discover Scotland's wonderful
west coast by ferry*

Kylesku Bridge on the
North Coast 500 route





Take the
HIGH ROAD

The North Coast 500 is an epic route that takes you past some of the country's most spellbinding scenery

WORDS HELEN OCHYRA



Few places can rival northern Scotland for dramatic coastal scenery. Here powdery white sands run for miles between crashing ocean and windswept dune, and towering cliffs of ancient, darkest stone surround inlets so sheltered their waters appear as unruffled as a sheet of glass. In wee stone harbours up and down the coast, seals gather and otters hide, while offshore amid the waves you'll find playful pods of bottlenose dolphins and large colonies of puffins and gannets.

With such abundance, though, comes the greatest indecision. Unfurl a map of Scotland on your kitchen table and the challenge begins – how can you sort the unmissable from the leave-until-next-time? How much is realistic in a one-week break? And how will you navigate your way from loch to loch, up mountain and down glen?

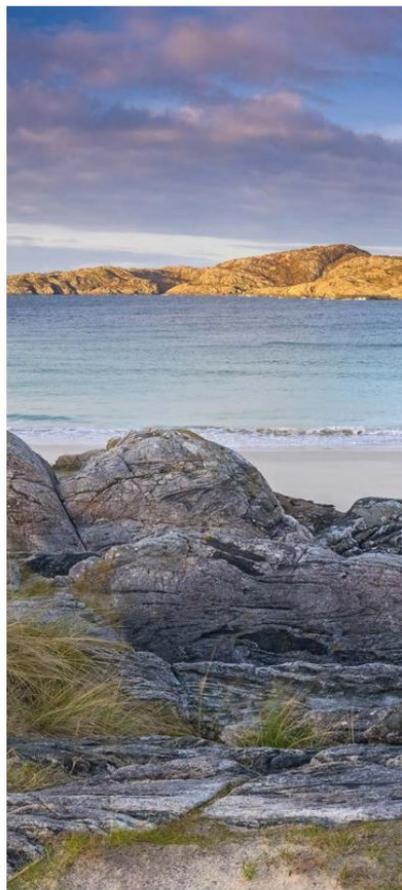
In 2015, the North Highland Initiative stepped forward with the answer – the North Coast 500. This is Scotland's Route 66, an epic yet easily digestible road trip of some 500 miles around the far north coast of Britain. It runs in a loop from Inverness – the city that has long been the gateway to the Highlands – and can be completed in a week or so.

The route is best done anti-clockwise, whizzing up the less dramatic east coast before slowing down to linger amid the sea lochs and mountains of Scotland's far northwest.

It's worth stopping in Inverness first, though, to take the short trip out of the city to visit the atmospheric battlefield of Culloden. This was the site of the last pitched battle

Clockwise, from top right: Achmelvich Beach in Sutherland; the Castle of Mey; a memorial cairn on Culloden Moor

PHOTOS: © ALAN COPSON (AVIL IMAGES); JIAN HOLMHELEN; HOTSUN/ALAMY; ILLUSTRATION © MICHAEL HILL





ever fought on British soil, which marked the end of the failed Jacobite rising of 1745. The desolate moorland is scattered with memorial cairns to each of the clans who fought and died here. The museum lays out the story of how the Highlands' darkest day became inevitable, and why the ramifications rattle the very fabric of the country to this day.

Balance this sombre start with a joyride out to sea with EcoVentures (www.ecoventures.co.uk), departing the charming village of Cromarty on a RIB to see the world's largest bottlenose dolphins. Captain Sarah speeds out into the Moray Firth, the boat bouncing from wave to wave in a thrilling two-hour trip that also offers the chance to see oil rigs up close and learn about the area's copious seabirds.

From Cromarty you'll follow the A9 north towards John o'Groats. Break the journey at the Whaligoe Steps, a plunging staircase that leads from the top of the cliffs down to a tiny harbour that was once an integral part of this coastline's booming herring-fishing industry. Today all is quiet – plants poke their heads through the cracks in the Caithness stone and you'll likely have the place to yourself.

In contrast, almost everybody stops at John o'Groats – a photo of the world-famous signpost on the shoreline here is obligatory – but this is not in fact Britain's northernmost point. For that you'll need to drive a few miles further west, to Dunnet Head. Here an RSPB-owned headland juts out into the North Sea. The jade-and-russet landscape is sodden with puddled lakes and ends abruptly at some of the highest, sheerest sea cliffs in Britain, with views out over the scattered lumps of the Orkney Islands. You've hit the north coast now, and from here on in the scenery only gets better.

No wonder, then, that the Queen Mother chose to make her home here, buying the nearby Castle of Mey in 1952. Take the guided tour to peer into royal life – the Queen Mother's videos, books and even wellies remain where

Clockwise, from top right: Smoo Cave in Durness; a bottlenose dolphin plays in the Moray Firth; the popular Applecross Inn; the NC500 passes Stac Pollaidh

she left them – and stroll the glorious gardens.

It is around Bettyhill that the landscape begins to buckle upwards. Peaks appear on the horizon here and gradually rear up around you, blocking out more and more of the sky until you find yourself surrounded by sheer mountain slopes. At Durness make time to stop for a look around Smoo Cave, a sizeable bite out of the limestone coastline that has been carved over millennia and hides a gushing waterfall that froths up the peaty water into a white foam reminiscent of the head on a pint of ale.

Close by is the dreamy Cocoa Mountain, one of Scotland's best chocolatiers. Call in for a hot chocolate, which comes with a choice of two chocolates on the side – a champagne truffle perhaps, or a peppermint fondant – and linger in the surrounding craft village for a spot of souvenir shopping.

From Durness the route turns south, hugging the richly indented west coast all the way down to the Applecross peninsula. This is the section where slower exploration is most richly rewarded. A short detour just past Durness brings you to Kinlochbervie, and the trailhead for the four-mile walk to Sandwood Bay. This vast, gleaming white sweep can lay claim to being Scotland's most glorious beach, and since it takes a couple of hours to walk out here, you won't encounter much competition for a spot on the sands.

A little further on is Kylesku, where the hotel offers rooms overlooking the loch and a restaurant serves mussels from the waters just outside. Boat trips run out from the jetty here, cruising up Loch Glendhu to Eas a' Chual Aluinn, the highest waterfall in Britain.

En route you'll learn how the loch's mussels and langoustines end up on your dinner plate and, if you're lucky, you might spot golden eagles overhead and deer in the forest-cloaked hinterland.





For more of Scotland's most beguiling beaches, slow down for the drive around Achmelvich and Clachtoll, stopping wherever the mood takes you for a romp on the sands or to dip a toe in the Atlantic. If you fancy a hike, continue south to Stac Pollaidh, one of the country's easiest mountains to conquer. There's – unusually – a well-formed path up this chunky peak and only a moderate level of fitness is required to get up high above the mountainous landscape of Sutherland for views out across the peaks and lochs towards the Summer Isles clustered offshore.

Before turning inland and back to Inverness, get ready for the drive of your life, up and over the Bealach Na Bà, or Pass of the Cattle. This steeply winding road loops up through a glacial valley before rearing over the top of the pass and careering down towards the village of Applecross. The brooding peaks on the island of Skye practically smack you in the eye as you descend and are your constant companions as you settle in for dinner at the Applecross Inn on the shore. A warmer, more welcoming pub would be hard to find and there's excellent local seafood here to boot. There's nowhere better to raise a glass to this unforgettable road trip, and to some of the best coastal scenery anywhere in the world. 📖

Helen Ochyra's book, Scotland: Beyond the Bagpipes, is published by Book Guild Publishing Ltd.

📍 For more stunning places to discover in the Scottish Highlands, visit www.britain-magazine.com

THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

Inverness airport has flights from UK airports including London, Bristol and Manchester. The Caledonian Sleeper train arrives at Inverness daily at 8.42am, having travelled overnight from London Euston. www.invernessairport.co.uk; www.sleeperscot.com



WHERE TO EAT

Try local langoustines and mussels from the loch outside the window at the Kylesku Hotel, and don't miss dinner at the Applecross Inn, where seafood is chalked up on the blackboard and the garden has views of Skye. www.kyleskuhotel.co.uk; www.applecrossinn.co.uk



WHERE TO STAY

The Torridon stands on the shores of the eponymous loch on Scotland's west coast, offering luxury in the main hotel and simpler rooms at the inn. In nearby Applecross, Eagle Rock is a stylish self-catering eco-lodge, ideal for boutique destination gatherings, with panoramic views from its infinity hot tub. Further north, overlooking the village of Lochinver, Inver Lodge has comfy rooms with sea views, while on the east coast, the village of Cromarty is home to the welcoming Sydney House B&B. www.thetorridon.com; www.eaglerockscotland.com; www.inverlodge.com; www.sydneyhouse.co.uk



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.northcoast500.com

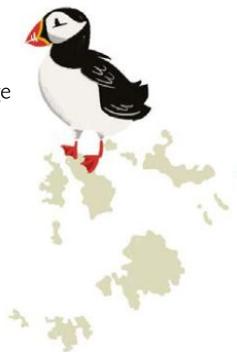
Britain's islands

Britain has more than 1,000 islands – although only about 200 are inhabited. Each has its own appeal, charm and character. Scotland's islands are not only the most numerous but are also especially scenic and serene. Arran, often described as 'Scotland in miniature' has beautiful beaches, mountains and woodlands, Skye has dramatic, otherworldly scenery, while Islay in the Inner Hebrides is the place for whisky lovers: it has nine distilleries.

Of England's islands, the Isle of Wight, off Hampshire, is the largest. It has been a popular retreat for over a century (you can tour Osborne House, Queen Victoria's palatial holiday home there). The Isle of Man, off the coast of Lancashire, has its own language (Manx), as well as some fabulous medieval castles, while the Scilly Isles off Cornwall bask in some of Britain's balmiest temperatures.

In Wales, highlights include Skomer, off the Pembrokeshire coast, which is particularly rich in wildlife. About half of all Manx shearwaters in the world live on the island, while the Atlantic puffin colony is the biggest in southern Britain.

The largest Welsh island is Anglesey, which boasts wide beaches, Victorian seaside towns and the village with the longest name in Britain (it's shortened to Llanfairpwllgwyngyll).



A seal off Lundy
Island, Devon



Britain's islands essentials

ANNUAL EVENTS

Cowes Week

The world's oldest and largest sailing regatta takes place on the Isle of Wight every summer, with plenty of shore-side entertainment too. *31 July-6 August*

Alderney Week

The Channel Isles' biggest festival: a week of live music, carnivals and family-friendly events in picture-postcard Alderney. *2-7 August*

Dark Skies Week

The Scillies enjoy pristine night skies, and a new community observatory on St Martin's will be the focus of this brand-new stargazing festival. *2-9 October*

Up Helly Aa

Mesmerising Viking-themed fire festivals in Shetland rural communities. The largest and best known is Up Helly Aa in Lerwick, but there are 12 in total. *January-March*



Osborne House, Isle of Wight

PHOTOS © JIM HODDEN/ENGLISH HERITAGE TRUST

HIGHLIGHTS

ISLAY WHISKY DISTILLERIES

The scenic Hebridean isle of Islay has no fewer than nine working distilleries, which produce some of the most distinctive single malt whiskies in the world.

ANGLESEY

Off Wales's north coast, Anglesey is known for its unspoilt coastline and outstanding natural beauty. On the must-see list are the Menai Suspension Bridge and mighty 13th-century Beaumaris Castle, Edward I's last great fortress.

ISLE OF WIGHT

The island has some big historic sites. Tour Osborne House, Queen Victoria's seaside retreat that's still dotted with her belongings, and Carisbrooke Castle where Charles I was imprisoned before his trial.

LUNDY

A chunk of granite in the Bristol Channel, Lundy feels properly remote. You can visit for the day, hike and spot seals and puffins, or book an overnight stay (arriving by helicopter or boat) and be one of the lucky few to experience this magical place after dark.

SKARA BRAE, ORKNEY

This ancient site, built before Stonehenge, is one of the best preserved prehistoric monuments in Europe. Eight dwellings connected by low passages were once part of a Neolithic village, and are incredibly well preserved.

ALDERNEY

One of the beautiful Channel Islands, Alderney offers stunning scenery and absorbing history, not to mention a unique wildlife-spotting opportunity: the chance to

see the rare blond hedgehogs that have made their home there.

SCILLY ISLES

Each of the enchanting Scilly Isles, scattered off the Cornish coast, has its own distinct identity. Don't miss Tresco's breathtaking Abbey Garden, the idyllic beaches of St Martins or the Bronze Age sites of St Agnes.

SKYE

This spectacular isle off Scotland's west coast is home to some of the country's most iconic landscapes.

HIDDEN GEM

With a population of just 600, the Channel Island of Sark is a remote and ruggedly beautiful place where cars are banned and you can truly get back to nature.

DON'T MISS

The Isle of Man Railway is the longest narrow-gauge steam line in Britain. Take a seat in one of the original carriages as the train trundles through charming countryside



IS THE COAST CLEAR?



SAFER SEAS & RIVERS SERVICE

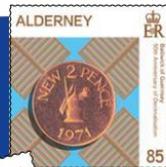


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GUERNSEY STAMPS AND COLLECTABLES
Issued: 2021

GUERNSEY POST

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At the end of the First World War millions of men returned from the war but faced terrible hardship without work and little money or support. The British Legion which was created in 1921 by Field Marshal Earl Haig and Lance Bombardier Tom Lister who were moved to provide care for all those who had suffered as a result of service during the war.

Although it has had royal patronage since its formation in 1921, The British Legion received its Royal appellation on 29 May 1971 – the date of its golden anniversary. We are proud to commemorate the centenary of The Royal British Legion, with these four stunning stamps. Each stamp will be released individually during 2021, with a lovely souvenir sheet bringing the set together available on the 11th November, Armistice Day.

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Guernsey Stamps

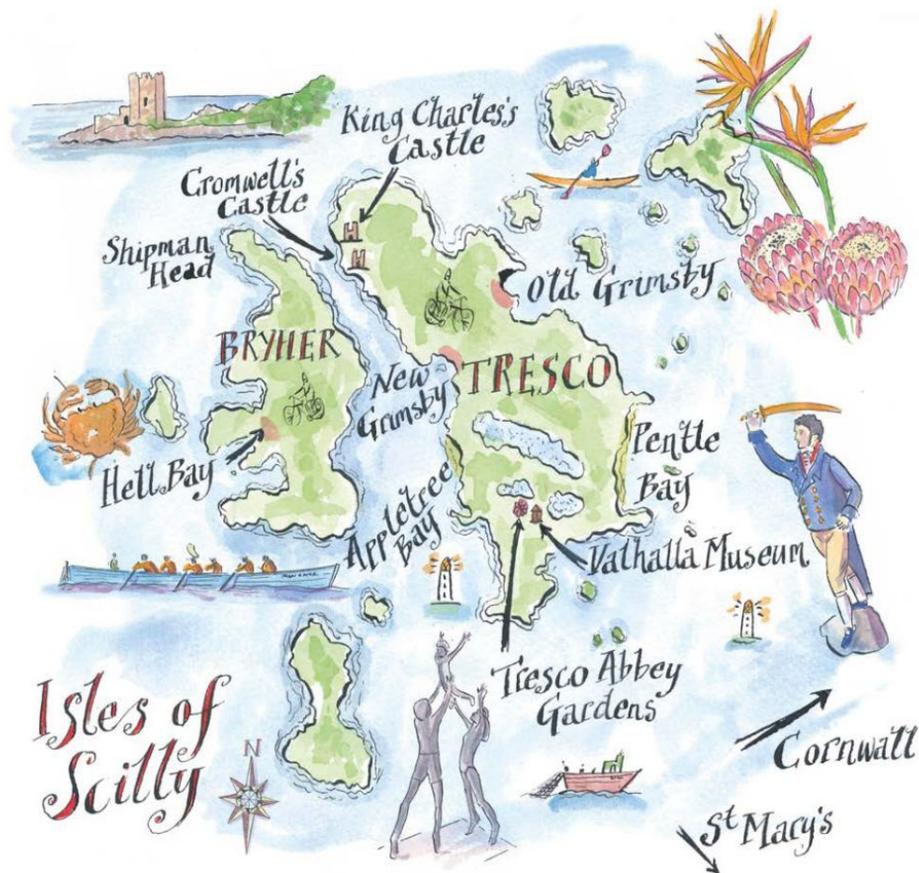


@guernseystamps

The beautiful Bailiwick of Guernsey is a constant source of inspiration for creating memorable and collectable stamp issues and we are fortunate to be able to showcase its beauty on our stamps. The remarkable island of Guernsey is just 24 square miles, yet its mild, temperate climate means that the island's flora, fauna and wildlife are rarely found elsewhere within the British Isles.

Over the decades we have built a global reputation for the quality of our stamps and the diversity of the subjects we cover. For 2021, the Philatelic Bureau has produced an interesting programme with themes ranging from the 50th Anniversary of Decimalisation, UN International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, The Queen's 95th Birthday, Guernsey Definitive Birds and Sark - The Dark Sky Island, there is something for everyone.

www.guernseystamps.com



The EMPEROR'S ISLE

Tresco was once a treeless and windswept island, the haunt of smugglers. Dramatically transformed by one man's vision, it is now one of Britain's most beautiful spots

WORDS **NATASHA FOGES**

Land's End might sound definitive, but the last piece of England before America is really 28 miles beyond Cornwall's western tip. The Isles of Scilly, an enchanting archipelago of rocky islands (of which five are inhabited) are a tempting vision from the mainland: "an eternal stone armada of over a hundred ships, aloofly anchored off England", as author John Fowles put it. "Mute, enticing, forever just out of reach."

Reaching the Scillies is not so hard these days. Apart from regular ferries, 16-seater twin-engine planes make the journey an adventure in itself. As the mainland recedes, the Scillies shimmer into view like an exotic atoll: a constellation of islets set in deep azure sea, whose turquoise shallows are lined by white arcs of sand. For even greater thrills, a new scheduled helicopter service has recently launched, flying from Penzance direct to Tresco in just 15 minutes. ▶

PHOTOS: © ROB POTTER/WILL PERRETT/PHILIP BISHOP/ALAMY/JAMES DARLING PHOTOGRAPHY/ILLUSTRATION: © MICHAEL A HILL



Clockwise, from this image:
Cromwell's Castle;
Tresco Abbey Garden
benefits from the
island's clement climate;
figureheads in the
Valhalla Museum;
Tresco seafood dinners





Left, top to bottom: Looking towards Old Grimsby harbour with St Nicholas church in the foreground; Middle Terrace, the most sheltered part of Tresco Abbey Garden

The Scilly Isles are owned by the Duchy of Cornwall (Prince Charles' estate), and the Duchy has complete control over all of the islands except one. Tresco has been leased by a single family, the Dorrien-Smiths, since 1834 when their ancestor, wealthy banker Augustus Smith, first dropped anchor here and set himself up as Lord Proprietor of the islands.

Before Smith's arrival, islanders had scraped out a meagre living burning seaweed into kelp for glassmaking, fishing and smuggling – and plundering the many ships wrecked on the jagged coastline. Smith reinvigorated the farming industry, improved infrastructure and built schools on all the main islands, making education compulsory 30 years before the rest of Britain. Such was his influence that he became known as 'the Emperor of Scilly'. But his greatest legacy is undoubtedly the Tresco Abbey Garden.

To make the most of the island's warm and sunny climate – its proximity to the temperate Gulf Stream means that summer lingers long and winter hardly exists – Smith decided to create a garden where exotic species would bloom in abundance, carving it out from moorland around the atmospheric remains of a Benedictine priory. Today, his creation is one of the most beautiful gardens in the country, if not the world.

Reached along a woodland road lined with towering Monterey pines and cypresses, planted as a salt-tolerant buffer from Atlantic gales, this subtropical idyll is quite unlike anything you will have seen before. Some 20,000 exotic species from as far afield as Brazil, South Africa and New Zealand thrive here, many of them collected by the islanders Smith had educated to become ship's officers. Winding terraced paths dwarfed by mighty palms, giant eucalyptus and cypresses swathed in Spanish moss transport you from the Mediterranean to the tropics. Everywhere is an exuberance of colour: crimson Queensland lilies on stems five metres tall, the orange-and-purple-plumed Bird of Paradise plant, coral-pink protea and abundant blue agapanthus.

The extravagant floral display – "Kew with the roof off", as it's sometimes described – is dotted with sculptures. The weathered granite Neptune Steps, for example, lead up to a sculpture of the Roman sea god – a salvaged figurehead from a steam ship wrecked nearby; climb to the top of the steps and you're rewarded with a view of David Wynne's joyful *Tresco Children*, perfectly framed between living walls of green. As you gaze at this view, the fact that the land was completely barren when Smith first arrived is hard to fathom.

Don't miss the open-air Valhalla Museum, tucked into a corner of the gardens. It holds some 30 figureheads from shipwrecks that washed up on the isles – there are thought to have been more wrecks here than in any other island group in the world, so treacherous are the Scillies' rocky shores. An old prayer of Scilly goes: "We pray Thee, Oh Lord, that if wrecks will happen, Thou wilt guide them into the Scilly Isles."

Smith built himself a house within the walls of the ruined priory, and his descendants Robert and Lucy Dorrien-Smith still live there, continuing to nurture the gardens as previous generations have done. The family's

control over the island has ensured that it has remained timeless, unspoilt; Tresco's old-fashioned appeal is what draws people back year after year. No cars are allowed on the island, and golden pheasant, quail and partridge wander the island's roads undisturbed. Its size – just two-and-a-half miles by one – means you can explore every corner by bike and on foot.

The main settlements are New Grimsby and Old Grimsby. The former, the unofficial village 'capital', has a shop for provisions and a pub. A friendly, community feel prevails, and, slowing to Tresco's calmer pace of life, you soon find yourself greeting neighbours and enjoying the small pleasures of a stay on Tresco: a bike ride around the island, a pint at the cosy New Inn, or a picnic – the island has some outstanding beaches, their sugar-white sands scattered with cowrie shells. Pentle Bay and Appletree Bay are regularly voted among the best beaches in Britain.

You might even be lucky enough to catch a gig race, a pursuit dear to any Scillonian's heart. These brightly painted elm-wood rowing boats were historically used to lead ships through the treacherously rocky obstacle course that separated them from the safety of shore; and when ships didn't make it, the gigs raced to pull survivors from the churning waters. These days, the racing is purely for sport. Every week, crews from across the islands compete – spectator boats allow you to watch the action up close ▶

THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

Great Western Railway runs direct trains from London Paddington to the South West, including a sleeper service. Isles of Scilly Travel run flights from Newquay, Land's End and Exeter (the latter March to Oct only) to St Mary's, the main island. The same company runs the Scillonian passenger ferry from Penzance to St Mary's (March to Oct; 2hr 45min). Tresco Boat Services run from St Mary's to Tresco and Bryher at least once a day. Penzance Helicopters fly from Penzance to Tresco (15min). www.gwr.com; www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk; www.penzancehelicopters.co.uk



WHERE TO STAY

A range of options, from rooms in the pub to luxuriously furnished traditional cottages, are available to rent throughout Tresco. On Bryher, the Hell Bay Hotel is a stylish beachside getaway with colourful art by some of Cornwall's leading artists on the walls. On St Mary's, four properties let out by the Duchy of Cornwall include the cosily appointed Tamarisk House, Prince Charles's own Scillies base. On St Martin's, Karma St Martin's is a luxurious beachside retreat. www.tresco.co.uk; www.hellbay.co.uk; www.duchyofcornwallholidaycottages.co.uk; karmagroup.com



WHERE TO EAT

The Hell Bay Hotel's restaurant is the top choice, with seasonal ingredients including prime Tresco beef and Bryher crab and lobster. On Tresco, the New Inn has a menu of pub classics, and the Ruin Beach Café offers pizzas cooked in a wood-fired oven. www.tresco.co.uk



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.visitislesofscilly.com

– before the traditional post-race pint in the pub.

For such a small area, Tresco's landscape is dramatically varied. The subtropical succulents of the Abbey Garden give way to wildflower-lined lanes and rolling English countryside further north. Beyond, the island's rugged, heathery northern end is reminiscent of a Scottish isle. Here the ruin of King Charles's Castle, a fort built in around 1550 to guard against a French invasion, commands from a high perch; its replacement further down the hillside, a 50ft tower named Cromwell's Castle, was built 200 years later. Climb the tower's spiral stairs for stirring views of the island of Bryher, across a narrow strait to the west.

Tiny Bryher (population: 80) is well worth a visit in its own right. Boats deposit you on its fine-sand beach, from which you can stroll to the Hell Bay Hotel, owned by the Tresco Estate, and lunch on fresh crab or lobster. Though Hell Bay might seem a strange moniker for such an idyllic place, a bracing walk along the wild west coast

Boats deposit you on Bryher's fine-sand beach, from which you can stroll to the Hell Bay Hotel and lunch on fresh crab or lobster

PHOTOS: © PARKER/PHOTOGALLERY/ALAMY

offers a clue to its origins: lashed by Atlantic rollers, it was once the site of many shipwrecks. The island's gentler eastern side with its dune-backed beaches makes a soothing contrast.

In between, sleepy lanes lead up and down – Bryher means 'land of the hills' – past honesty stalls selling local produce, from daffodils (an industry that long sustained the Scillies) to homemade fudge. Even the place names here – Droppy Nose Point, Shipman Head, Popplestones – are charmingly rural.

It's easy enough to explore the other inhabited Scilly Isles too: St Agnes, a wild, secluded little isle with stunning coves; St Mary's, the island hub, with a quaint town and winding country lanes reminiscent of Cornwall; and laid-back St Martin's, with its flower fields and gorse-covered moorland.

Sooner or later though, it'll be time to board your flight back to the mainland. As the plane soars, crane your neck for a final peek at the islands scattered like emeralds in the Atlantic. As Scillonian legend has it, these craggy rocks are all that remain of the sunken kingdom of Lyonesse, the final resting-place of King Arthur. Fishermen's tales maybe, but there's no denying it: there's something magical about the Scillies. **B**

Below: Great Par Beach on tiny Bryher island

For more on Britain's islands, see www.britain-magazine.com





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Safe and welcoming, our capital, St Peter Port, has a distinct Mediterranean feel with unique, independent shops. It's also really sociable, with cafés, restaurants and bars throwing open their doors from Spring to Autumn, allowing people to spill out onto the pavements and seafront into September, when the air is warm, and so is the sea.

Thanks to our milder climate, summer feels like it lasts longer here in the Islands. We are still enjoying our beaches well into September, when the air is warm, and so is the sea.

As we drift into Autumn, the Island's coastlines become a little wilder and cliff paths are carpeted with Autumn leaves. Stroll at your own pace, stopping at cliff-top shops and cafés or join the Guides leading the Autumn Walking Festival.

Here in the Islands of Guernsey we are spoilt for choice when it comes to our beautiful beaches.

Abandon your shoes and feel the soft golden sands between your toes, build epic sandcastles and explore our low tide rock pools, snorkel in our sheltered coves and find your spot on our uncrowded beaches.

If you've missed the buzz of busy, but not crowded, restaurants we are ready to serve. With more than 200 eateries to choose from, it's time to toast great food, with great company, in great restaurants. Where the gin is distilled in the hotel you're

staying in and the crab in the sandwich at the beach kiosk was caught in the very bay it overlooks.

History here is entwined in the every day. From Neolithic burial ruins to Roman Forts to World War II bunkers, you can step into the past and relive thousands of years of the Islands' history.

The Channel Islands were the only part of the British Isles to be occupied during World War II, and the Islands of Guernsey lived under German control from June 1940 to May 1945. During the Occupation, German troops fortified the Islands, building bunkers and tunnels and adapting existing defences, which can all still be visited today.

A holiday in Guernsey simply wouldn't be complete without a trip to one of our sister Islands.

Herm is small but perfectly formed with some of the most spectacular beaches in the Channel Islands, while Sark is famed for its slow pace of life, where people get around on bikes or horse and cart. A trip to La Coupée, the narrow isthmus that connects Sark with Little Sark is an absolute must.

📍 SHELL BEACH, HERM ISLAND



📍 ST PETER PORT HIGH STREET

If you have missed quality time with people you love, it's time to reconnect, and there's no better place to do it than the Islands of Guernsey.

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The ISLANDS of
GUERNSEY

VisitGuernsey   



Punting on the River Cam in Cambridge

BRITISH DAYS OUT

With our 2021 directory, you'll find the best of Britain to ensure you make the most of your next holiday or day trip

Welcome to the *BRITAIN 2021* directory. Now is the time to start picking out your favourite destinations and planning your perfect trip!

To make your preparations even easier, we have divided this advertisement directory into separate geographical areas,

for an at-a-glance look at the best of what each region has to offer, from cultural days out to beautiful places to stay.

Whether you want to explore a new area, take a walking tour, wander the gardens of a beautiful stately home or catch the latest gallery or museum exhibitions, we've got just the thing for you.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

-  Information
-  Shop
-  Plant sales
-  Corporate hospitality/functions
-  Disabled access
-  Refreshments/café/tearoom
-  Restaurant
-  Guided tours
-  Audio tours
-  Parking available
-  Education/school visits
-  Accommodation
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- 129** SCOTLAND
- 130** BRITAIN'S ISLANDS



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The Roman Baths

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www.romanbaths.co.uk

The Roman Baths is one of the finest ancient spas in Europe. This incredible Roman site has witnessed nearly two thousand years of history, and its tales of healing, worship and relaxation are even more relevant today than ever.

Natural thermal waters once heated a sophisticated bathing complex where Romans came to relax and socialise. To the Romans the hot springs were a sacred place where worshippers prayed to the goddess Sulis Minerva. To visitors today it is still a site of special significance.

Projections and costumed actors bring the complex to life, and free, optional audioguides provide a unique insight into Roman life dating from the first to the fourth century AD.

The adjacent Pump Room Restaurant serves refreshments, accompanied by live music, though guests are advised to pre-book for this and all elements of the site, including entrance tickets.

OPEN/ADMISSION: Please check the website for up to date opening times and prices.





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Hestercombe Gardens

Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8LQ

T: +44 (0)1823 413923 www.hestercombe.com

Often referred to as the 'jewel in Somerset's crown', Hestercombe Gardens is famous for its unique collection of gardens spanning three centuries of garden history and design. The Edwardian Formal Garden is hailed as one of the finest examples of the world-renowned partnership between garden designer Gertrude Jekyll and architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. In 2021 a restored 17th century water garden will add a fourth period garden.

The gardens have all undergone acclaimed restoration work and they continue to develop and grow, giving visitors a stunning setting to explore, learn and relax. Award-winning visitor facilities include the welcoming Stables Restaurant, serving home-made lunches, cakes and hot drinks, with a bright, airy courtyard and plant centre.

Inside the historic Hestercombe House you'll find Hestercombe Contemporary Art Gallery, presenting the best in contemporary arts practice with regularly changing exhibitions; and the second-hand bookshop, which offers a wide selection of genres.

Hestercombe is also a gorgeous wedding venue: ceremonies are held in the beautiful Edwardian Orangery, and wedding receptions take place in the Bampfylde Hall, dating back to 1680.

OPEN Daily from 10am-6pm (April-October), 10am-5pm (November-March) (except Christmas Day)

ADMISSION: Adults: £13.75. Children: £6.90. Great discounts for family saver tickets, membership, tramper hire and wheelchair users. Please check the website for further information on booking your visit.



Photo: Pawel Borowski





Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein

37 Gay Street, Bath, Somerset BA1 2NT
www.houseoffrankenstein.com

Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein is a world-first attraction dedicated to author Mary Shelley and her iconic creation, *Frankenstein*.

Blurring the lines between museum and immersive experience, the Bath attraction commemorates the legacy of Shelley's work and celebrates *Frankenstein* in popular culture, boasting an 8ft recreation of the monster exactly as Mary imagined, alongside a basement experience and escape room.

OPEN: From 30 June 2021. 10am – 6pm, last admission 5pm.

ADMISSION: Adults: £15.50. Children: £12.50. Groups save over 20 per cent.



Bossington Hall

Porlock, Somerset TA24 8HJ
 T: +44 (0)16438623800 www.bossingtonhall.co.uk

Bossington Hall is a luxury bed and breakfast, which also boasts a self-catering apartment, set in Porlock Vale in the beautiful Exmoor National Park. Breathtaking views of the moors and the coastline can be enjoyed from the terrace. The apartment is easily accessible on the ground floor, while the bed and breakfast is on the first floor. The house also has its own cinema, tennis and squash courts, and a children's play area within its eight-acre grounds.

OPEN: 1 January to 31 December. 5pm check-in and 10am check-out.
 Bed and breakfast rooms from £150 per night.



The Holburne Museum

Great Pulteney Street, Bath BA2 4DB
 T: +44 (0) 1225 388569
www.holburne.org

One of Bath's great Georgian buildings, The Holburne Museum is only a ten minute walk from the centre of town. Set within five acres of beautiful grounds – once enjoyed by Jane Austen – the museum now features a stunning modern extension as well as the Grade I-listed building.

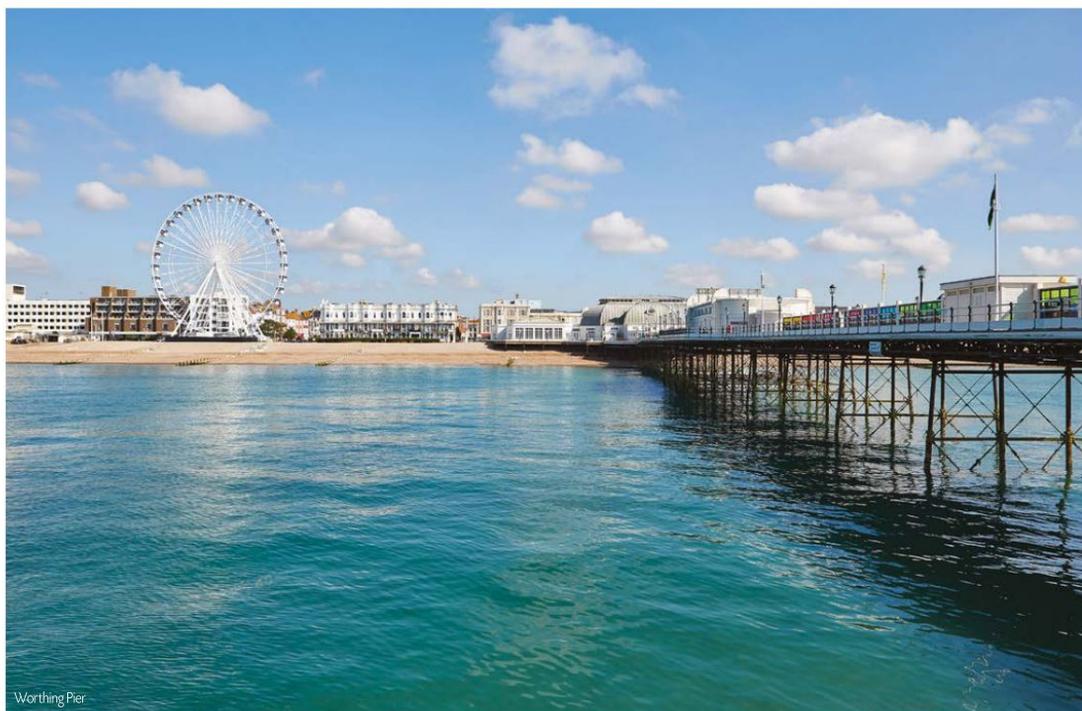
Experience critically acclaimed exhibitions of historical and contemporary art, as well as lectures, concerts, workshops and events against a backdrop of renowned 18th century portraits, portrait miniatures, Renaissance bronzes, ceramics, silver and embroidery.

The Garden Café also serves fresh seasonal lunches and delicious cakes for visitors to enjoy.

OPEN: Monday to Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday and bank holidays 11am-5pm. Closed 24-26 December and 1 January.

ADMISSION: Please check the website for details.





Worthing Pier

Wild ponies at the Iron Age Fort site of Cissbury Ring



National Plant Collection at Highdown Gardens



Time for Worthing

Worthing, West Sussex

T: +44 (0)1903 221066

www.timeforworthing.uk

The elegant seaside town of Worthing in West Sussex is located on England's south coast just 45 minutes from London Gatwick Airport or 80 minutes by train from London Victoria. It provides a great base for visiting the region's other top attractions such as Chichester, Arundel Castle and Brighton.

A classic British seaside destination, in Worthing visitors can enjoy seafront walks and explore the grand pier (awarded UK Pier of the year 2019) and the tallest observation wheel on the south coast.

Other must-see destinations include the private plant collection at the wonderful Highdown Gardens, and outdoor lovers should not miss the nearby South Downs National Park, where you can take in the wild ponies, breathtaking coastal views and the Iron Age fort of Cissbury Ring.

History fans will enjoy exploring the town's heritage; follow one of several dedicated trails to learn more about its famous residents, which include Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde.

Meanwhile, creatives flock to Worthing for its extensive arts scene including Worthing Museum & Art Gallery, Colonnade House and quirky beach hut studios, from which you can purchase any souvenirs.

By night choose from one of many restaurants serving everything from fine-dining to traditional fish and chips, and then take in a show at either the Connaught or Pavilion theatres, or catch a movie at the Dome, one of the UK's oldest working cinemas.





An Indulgent Tour of the Festive Castles of Kent

T: +44 (0)3332 342 096
www.justgoholidays.com/brhh



The Garden of England is Britain's oldest county, steeped in thousands of years of history and full of treasures, from medieval manors to romantic castles adorned with enchanting Christmas decorations. We discover some of these historic gems including Hever Castle, the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, as well as Canterbury Cathedral. This festive break is a magical way to enjoy the countdown to Christmas. 5 days, departing Sun 5 Dec to Thurs 9 Dec 2021. Self-drive from £660pp; add return coach travel from selected pick up points for £25pp. Club Class home collection service also available - see website for details.

For a full tour itinerary prices, other available tours plus terms and conditions, please visit the website shown above. Discounts apply for members of Historic Houses.



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Canterbury Guided Tours

T: +44 (0)1227 459779 www.canterburytouristguides.co.uk

Canterbury Guided Tours provide entertaining 90-minute walking tours led by expert Green Badge Guides. Explore the charming cobbled streets, dotted with historic buildings and brimming with stories of pilgrimage, famous characters and literary figures. This thriving and celebrated city is a wonderful location for visiting families and groups. The daily public tour and pre-booking for groups are available to reserve online. Other European languages are also available.

OPEN: All year, except Christmas Day.

ADMISSION: Daily tour rates – Adults: £10. Senior/Students: £9. Children: £6
 Group Tour Rates* – Adults: £8. Senior/Students: £7.50. Children: £6.50

*Minimum charge for group tours £80.



Canterbury Cathedral

The Precincts, Canterbury, CT1 2EH
 T: +44 (0)1227 762862
www.canterbury-cathedral.org



There's never been a better time to discover the wonderful Canterbury Cathedral, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Mother Church of the Anglican Communion and seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Founded by St Augustine in 597AD, the Cathedral spans over 1400 years of history, telling thrilling stories that have shaped England. King Henry IV and the Black Prince are entombed here, and 2020 marked the 850th anniversary of St Thomas Becket's murder in the cathedral.

A site of pilgrimage for centuries, the cathedral continues to welcome visitors from across the world, introducing them to an array of treasures from stunning medieval stained glass and beautiful stonework, to exquisite large open gardens.

Kids go free* until 31 October 2021. Book today at www.canterbury-cathedral.org

*Terms and conditions apply.

OPEN: 10am-4pm, Monday-Saturday. 12.30pm-4pm, Sundays. Open all year round.

ADMISSION: Adults: £14. Children: Free when accompanied by a paying adult (valid until 31/10/21, terms and conditions apply).





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Army Flying Museum

Middle Wallop, Stockbridge, Hampshire SO20 8FB
T: +44 (0)1264 781086 www.army-flying.com

The Army Flying Museum tells the story of British Army Flying from the early days of military ballooning to the modern Army Air Corps. It comprises two large aircraft hangars, a 1940s house display and indoor/outdoor play areas. The collection covers the five main branches of Army Aviation: Royal Engineers, The Royal Flying Corps, Air Observation Post Squadrons, the Glider Pilot Regiment and the current Army Air Corps. Featuring over 40 aircraft, the Museum has an example of every Allied glider used operationally during the Second World War. **OPEN:** All year (except 24-26 Dec), 10am to 4.30pm (5.30pm in July/August). **ADMISSION:** Adults: £14. Children (5-15yo): £8. Under 5s: Free. Seniors: £10. Valid for 12 months, unlimited return.



Credit: Elizabeth Zischin



Photo: W. Williams/Art & Architecture Ltd

Parham House & Gardens

Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 4HR
E: enquiries@parhaminsussex.co.uk
www.parhaminsussex.co.uk



Parham House is one of the country's finest Elizabethan houses, with splendour and award-winning gardens. Set in an ancient deer park at the foot of the South Downs, it has been a well-loved family home since its foundation stone was laid in 1577. Parham's beauty and tranquillity have changed little over the centuries. Visitors can discover a superb collection of paintings, furniture, clocks and needlework, before exploring the gardens. The four-acre, 18th-century walled garden includes rose, herb and vegetable gardens as well as an orchard, historic glasshouse, and a 1920s Wendy House. Its borders grow flowers to decorate every room in the house, an old Parham tradition. The adjoining Pleasure Grounds include a lake, many specimen trees and a brick and turf maze. Simon Jenkins placed Parham in the top 20 of *England's Thousand Best Houses*. He called it "a house of magic".

OPEN: From 25 April and will close (subject to COVID restrictions) on 10 October 2021. Parham is open from midday to 5pm (last admission is 4.30pm) on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Parham House is closed but is expected to re-open at the end of June. Advance booking is required and Parham is cashless. Please see their website for the latest information before travelling. **ADMISSION:** Adults: from £12.50. Concessions: from £11.50. Children: from £6.



The Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, Basingstoke

Welcome to the Test Valley

www.visit-testvalley.org.uk



Come and explore the quintessential corner of England that is the Test Valley, which nestles between the beautiful New Forest and historic Winchester. It is a landscape of unspoilt villages and market towns full of character and history. Andover, Romsey and Stockbridge each have a unique identity and all offer a warm welcome. Plus, its world famous river is the home of fly fishing.

The valley boasts four outstanding gardens: as well as the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, near Romsey, there is National Trust property, Mottisfont House, with its 500 varieties of stunning roses. Close by is Longstock Water Garden, part of the Leckford Estate where John Spedham Lewis spent much of his later life, and lastly, there is Houghton Lodge Gardens near Stockbridge.

OPEN: Please see www.hants.gov.uk/things/todo/hilliergardens for details.



Waterperry Gardens

Waterperry, Nr Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1LA
T: +44 (0) 1844 339254 www.waterperrygardens.co.uk

Waterperry Gardens comprises eight acres of beautifully landscaped ornamental gardens, including a formal knot, rose and alpine garden and one of the country's finest purely herbaceous borders. Visit the plant centre, gift barn, gallery, rural life museum and teashop for lunch and cakes. Seven miles from Oxford in the heart of the countryside.

OPEN: Every day, 10am-5.30pm (October to March, 5pm), except between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

ADMISSION: February to October, £8.50; November to January, £6.



A Grand Tour of Oxford & the Home Counties

T: +44 (0)3332 342 096
www.justgoholidays.com/brhh



The pastoral landscapes of the Home Counties provide a beautiful backdrop to some of Britain's most impressive houses and manors. Uncover the fascinating stories of these magnificent places, including Stonor Park, one of the oldest family homes still lived in today. The tour is complemented by a visit to Oxford, with its skyline of dreaming spires and famous university.

5 days, departing Monday 23 August or Monday 20 September. Self-drive from £760pp; add return coach travel from selected pick up points for £25pp. Club Class home collection service also available - see website for details.

For a full tour itinerary, prices, other available tours plus terms and conditions, please visit the website shown above. Discounts apply for members of Historic Houses.



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Petwood Hotel

Stixwold Road, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 6QG
T: +44 (0)1526 352411 www.petwood.co.uk

A former Edwardian country house and wartime officers' mess of 617 'Dam Busters' Squadron, the independently owned, Grade II-listed Petwood Hotel is set in 30 acres of beautiful grounds. Offering delicious, AA-rosette awarded, locally sourced food and warm, friendly service, it is the ideal base for exploring Lincolnshire, its aviation heritage sites and the historic city of Lincoln.

OPEN: All year round





Cambridge University Botanic Garden

1 Brookside, Cambridge CB2 1JE
T: +44 (0)1223 336265 www.botanic.cam.ac.uk

Cambridge University Botanic Garden is one of the largest university-owned botanic gardens in the world. With over 8,000 species from all over the world, spread over 40 acres of beautiful gardens and glasshouses in the centre of Cambridge, it offers all year-round interest and inspiration.

Highlights include: seasonal colour in the Winter and Autumn Gardens, the Scented Garden, Bee Borders, the Dry Garden, the Lake, Glasshouse Range and the Rising Path.

OPEN: 7 days a week. Closed 24 Dec 2021 – 1 Jan 2022 inclusive.

ADMISSION: Adults £6; Children 16 and under free.



Discover Newmarket

The National Stud, Newmarket CB8 0XE
T: +44 (0)1638 501122 www.discovernewmarket.co.uk

Go behind the scenes on a Discover Newmarket tour and explore the home of horseracing. Experience the splendour of a morning on the famed gallops, meet some of the stars of the turf and go inside hallowed institutions like the Jockey Club Rooms and the Tattersalls sales complex. Explore the history and heritage of the area with one of our theme guided walks. Take a tour of The National Stud and meet the foals or go back in time with a visit to the National Horseracing Museum. Not just aimed at avid horseracing fans, these tours are suitable for everyone who enjoys new experiences.

OPEN: All year round.

ADMISSION: Please see website for details.



Saffron Walden

Tourist Information Centre, 1 Market Place, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1HR
T: +44 (0)1799 524002 www.visitsaffronwalden.gov.uk

Saffron Walden is a delightful medieval market town located in north-west Essex. It has a rich heritage of old buildings, including St Mary's Church, the largest and one of the most beautiful parish churches in Essex. On the north side of town is Bridge End Garden, a restored Victorian garden of great charm, which contains a wonderful sunken Dutch Garden.

A market has been held here since 1141, and market days are now Tuesdays and Saturdays. Beyond the market place, there are many independent shops and eating places to choose from.

We look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful town.



Natural Beauty & Architectural Splendours of Suffolk

T: +44 (0)3332 342 096
www.justgoholiday.com/brh



Beautiful Suffolk has plenty to discover, from a glorious coastline to rolling countryside and picturesque towns. On this fascinating tour we visit some of the most interesting and diverse houses of the county such as Kentwell Hall, Glemham Hall and the lavish Somerleyton Hall. We also discover glorious gardens set in the region's extensive estates.

5 days, Sunday 1 August to Thursday 5 August. Self-drive from £760pp; add return coach travel from selected pick up points for £25pp. Club Class home collection service also available - see website for details.

For a full tour itinerary, prices, other available tours plus terms and conditions, please visit the website shown above. Discounts apply for members of Historic Houses.





York Minster

York Minster, Deangate, York YO1 7HH

T: +44 (0)1904 557200

www.yorkminster.org

York Minster is one of the world's most magnificent cathedrals. Since the 7th century, the Minster has been at the centre of Christianity in the north of England and today remains a thriving church rooted in the daily offering of worship and prayer.

Experience its vast spaces and breathtaking medieval architecture and discover its Roman roots and learn about the Minster's role in Viking York. Then explore the cathedral's spectacular collection of medieval stained glass, from the newly refurbished Great East Window to the spectacular Heart of Yorkshire.

OPEN: 11am-4.30pm (Mon to Thurs), 10am-4.30pm (Fri to Sat) and 12.30pm-2.30pm (Sundays).

The cathedral's opening times are changing throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, so please make sure to check the website before your visit.

ADMISSION: Adults: £11.50. Students (not studying in York): £9. Children (16 and under): free with a paying adult*. York resident/student: free with proof of address. *Up to four children with one paying adult



Helmsley Walled Garden

Cleveland Way, Helmsley YO62 5AH

T: +44 (0)1439 772314 www.helmsleywalledgarden.org.uk

Spend a day enjoying the peace, tranquility and beautiful colours of historic Helmsley Walled Garden. The garden nestles beneath Helmsley Castle in the market town of Helmsley in the North York Moors, perfectly placed for wider exploring.

Wander through the orchard and the Kitchen Garden and see the range of heritage varieties of fruit and vegetables there. Discover the healing herbs used by medieval monks in the historic Physic Garden or stroll down the Iris Border. Vibrant colour is everywhere in the Hot Border, where part of the latest film adaptation of *The Secret Garden* was filmed. Sit surrounded by plants in The Garden of Contemplation and explore the Clematis Garden, which holds over 150 different clematis cultivars.

Then relax under Victorian vines at The Vine House Café with a drink, lunch or a delicious snack and take in the view.

Dogs and cyclists are welcome.

OPEN: 10am to 5pm (last entry 4.30pm), Wednesday to Sunday from April 1 to October 31.

ADMISSION: Adults: £8. Children (under 16): free.

Pre-booking available at www.helmsleywalledgarden.org.uk





Skipton Castle

Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1AW
T: +44 (0) 1756 792442 www.skiptoncastle.co.uk

For more than 900 years, Skipton Castle has stood firm through wars and sieges at the gateway to the Yorkshire Dales. Once home to the famous Clifford Lords, it is one of the best preserved and most complete medieval castles in England.

OPEN: Open year-round. Monday-Saturday, 10am-5pm, Sunday, 11am-5pm. October-March, 4pm. Closed 23, 24, 25 December.

ADMISSION: Adults £8.90; children (5-17) £5.70; under -5s free; over 65s £7.90.



A Taste of the Stately High Life in Yorkshire

T: +44 (0)3332 342 096
www.justgoholidays.com/brhh



Yorkshire is home to some of the most beautiful landscapes in the country as well as a wonderfully rich and fascinating heritage. Delve into the past with a look around some of the county's most impressive historic houses, some lived in by the same families for hundreds of years, filled with family memorabilia, treasured collections, and boasting stunning interiors and magnificent gardens. 5 days, Mon 21 June or Mon 23 August 2021. Self-drive from £760pp; add return coach travel from selected pick up points for £25pp. Club Class home collection service also available - see website for details.

For a full tour itinerary, prices, other available tours plus terms and conditions, please visit the website shown above. Discounts apply for members of Historic Houses.



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YORTOURS

Yorkshire
T: +44 (0)7505 485532 www.yortours.co.uk

Yortours provide bespoke driver-guided tours of Yorkshire to individuals or groups of up to five people. It's an informative and unforgettable experience enjoyed by everyone from all over the world. Fully guided day tours offer the opportunity to learn about the diversity of local landscapes, food and customs, with a captivating and fun commentary. All delivered by your qualified Blue Badge Tourist Guide, silver award-winner of the Experience of the Year for Yorkshire, and enjoyed in the luxurious comfort of a Mercedes-Benz.

OPEN: Private, bespoke tours take place daily.

ADMISSION: See website for more details; prices shown apply to pre-bookings.



Whitby Kiln

5B Skinner Street, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO21 3AH
T: +44 (0)1947 878587 www.whitbykiln.co.uk

A visit to Whitby Kiln (Paint Your Own Pottery and Art Studio), located in Whitby's popular and quaint shopping streets, is a must, providing a fabulous, relaxing space to get creative and have fun, for all ages and abilities, whether it's on your own or with others. Whatever the weather, come dry day or rain - the door's always open. Whitby Kiln carries an extensive selection of over 250 types of pottery for you to choose from, and they cater for various calendar year occasions (and price ranges). Over 30 different colours of underglaze paints and plenty of tools are on tap, enabling you to create a unique, colourful masterpiece. Feeling stuck for ideas? No problem! Their Inspiration Station offers various, easy-to-perfect techniques, and their friendly staff are always on hand to offer advice.



Aberglasney Gardens

Llangathen, Carmarthenshire SA32 8QH
T: +44 (0)1558 668998 www.aberglasney.org

Aberglasney is one of Wales' finest gardens, and at its heart lies a fully restored Elizabethan Cloister Garden that is the only surviving example of its kind in the UK today. Beyond this, visitors can explore 10 acres of over 20 different garden styles from formal to woodland, right through to exotic and modern.

OPEN: 10am-6pm, with last entry at 5pm (April to October), 10.30am-4pm, with last entry 3pm (November to March). Monday to Sunday.

ADMISSION: Adults: £9.75. Children under 16 go free.



Footpath Holidays

16 Norton Bavant, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 7BB
T: + 44 (0) 1985 840049 www.footpath-holidays.com

Footpath Holidays has been an expert provider of walking holidays throughout England, Wales and the Scottish Borders since 1983. A family-run business, it offers top-quality walking breaks with a reputation for professionalism, customer care and enthusiasm.

Based in the heart of rural England, Footpath Holidays is the perfect choice to make sure you get the very best experiences from your visit to the British countryside, whether on a guided, self-guided or bespoke holiday.

OPEN: March to November



Adra

Parc Glynllifon, Clynnog Road, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 5DY
T: +44 (0)1286 831353 www.adrahome.com

Adra specialises in stylish and contemporary Welsh gifts and homeware. The shop is based in a listed building full of character - a former saw-mill situated in the grounds of beautiful Parc Glynllifon country park near Caernarfon, north Wales.

Just show our friendly team this advert for 10 per cent off your purchase when you visit us in store, or use the code DBR10 when shopping online at www.adrahome.com.

OPEN: 10am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday. 11am to 4pm, Sundays. Please check website prior to visit.



Dragon Trails

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T: +44 (0) 1873 810970 www.dragontrails.com



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OPEN: See website for dates of tours from April - October 2021.





Portmeirion Village and Hotel

Portmeirion, Minffordd, Gwynedd LL48 6ER

T: +44 (0)1766 770000
www.portmeirion.wales

Nestled between the Dwyryd estuary and the mountains of the Snowdonia National Park in Wales, Portmeirion is a wonder to behold. With vistas in every direction and endless pathways to explore, you will be transported into a world full of surprises.

Soak up the atmosphere in the village centre with a homemade gelato ice cream or enjoy a cup of fine tea or a cheeky cocktail with riviera views on the terrace at The Hotel Portmeirion.

Wander through 70 acres of woodland and stumble upon hidden gems such as the Chinese lake, or find your own special place amongst the exotic plants and secret coves.

Whatever you choose to do whilst visiting Portmeirion, you are guaranteed an unforgettablely unique experience.

OPEN: 9am-7:15pm from 22 March 2021 to 31 October 2021.

ADMISSION: Adults: £13.00. Seniors: £11.00. Children (5-15 years): £9.00. Under 5s: free.





Dinosaur Isle

Culver Parade, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 8QA
T: +44 (0)1983 404344 www.dinosaurisle.com

From authentic fossils to life-sized dinosaur displays, there's something for everyone to enjoy at this landmark Palaeontological institution. With fascinating displays to spark young imaginations, Dinosaur Isle Museum is home to one of the most important collections of dinosaurs in Europe. Combining authentic fossils, life-sized dinosaur models are set in a reconstructed prehistoric landscape, recreating the island 125 million years ago. Located on the picturesque seaford, just north of Sandown, when the tide permits during school holidays, museum staff lead field trips to the nearby Yaverland beach, where dinosaur bone fragments are commonly found.

OPEN: Until June 2021: 10am-4pm, Tues to Sat. July & August 2021: 9am-5pm, daily. September 2021 to March 2022: 10am-4pm, Tues to Sat.



Sausmarez Manor Guernsey

Sausmarez Manor, St. Martin, Guernsey GY4 6SG
www.sausmarezmanor.co.uk

Visit Guernsey in the Channel Islands and go on a tour of Sausmarez Manor, the house built at the bequest of the first governor of New York. Enjoy the Historic House Tour, the Ghost tour and the Authentic Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society Tour.

Practise your golf swing on the pitch and putt course, or visit the art gallery and the last coppersmith in the Channel Islands.

There's also a wild subtropical garden, stunning sculptures for sale from around the world, and a 4-star tearoom to enjoy a drink in, or stay in one of the two holiday apartments in the house with all the above FREE (except the tearoom!)



Alderney: An island adventure close to home

Bailiwick of Guernsey, Channel Islands
T: +44 (0)1481822300 www.visitalderney.com

Just a stone's throw from the south coast of England lies the beautiful island of Alderney. With no crowds, no queues and no traffic jams Alderney is often described as the 'hidden gem of the Channel Islands' and offers the safe, warm and relaxing escape you have been dreaming of.

On this small island, you are never far from the scenic coastline. You can walk the stunning cliff paths, enjoy the quiet, uncrowded sandy beaches or tuck into the local produce. Go birdwatching or discover Alderney's fascinating heritage. Be entertained by a wide variety of events or simply enjoy a night of stargazing under the truly dark skies.

There is no other place in the world quite like Alderney. It's a friendly island with an easy pace of life, where children can still roam free.

From 1 July, Alderney is looking forward to welcoming you back to their island with no test and no quarantine and with open arms.

An Alderney adventure awaits you. Go to visitalderney.com to find out more.



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