

YOUR 10 PAGE GUIDE TO SHORT BREAKS AROUND BRITAIN

# BEYOND LONDON



Take a short break in St Ives

Spend a few days at the seaside



Take in the rich culture of Brighton



Enjoy the bright lights of Portsmouth



Relax on the Isle of Wight's beaches

ST IVES © ALLOU/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK; BRIGHTON © GETTY IMAGES/THINKSTOCK; ISLE OF WIGHT © VISITISLEOFWIGHT.CO.UK

## Brighton

It's hard to imagine that Brighton, which for a long time has been the south coast's most exciting city, was once a sleepy fishing village.

It took off as a seaside resort in the 18th century, first with people visiting the area for its reputed health benefits, then as a holiday destination favoured by royalty. King George IV spent a lot of time in the city before he came to the throne, ordering the building of his Brighton residence, the extravagant *Royal Pavilion*, in 1787. You can visit this oriental fantasy today ([brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk](http://brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk)).

Opposite this unique palace lies the *Brighton Museum & Art Gallery*, where you can learn about the city and explore rich collections of decorative art and fashion ([brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk](http://brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk)).

The best way to experience life in Brighton, known for its thriving gay community, is to mingle with its friendly residents and enormous student population at the shops, cafés and bars of the city's two traditional shopping areas. Browse for antiques, jewellery and upmarket fashion in The Lanes, a warren of alleyways that was at the heart of the medieval village that predates the city. North Laine, meanwhile, is full of independent shops, many with a bohemian flavour.

To get a sense of Brighton's past as a popular holiday resort, there's no place like the *Pier* ([brightonpier.co.uk](http://brightonpier.co.uk)). Projecting over half a kilometre out into the sea from Brighton's bustling seafront, it's home to two amusement arcades and a fun fair, as well as numerous kiosks where you can buy traditional seaside snacks such as fresh fish and chips, and sugary doughnuts. For unparalleled views of the Pier and the pebbly beach from above, make sure you take a ride on the *Brighton Wheel* ([brightonwheel.com](http://brightonwheel.com)).

• [visitbrighton.com](http://visitbrighton.com)



The Royal Pavilion



Brighton's pebble beach and pier

### How to get there

- 1 Brighton**
-  London Victoria to  
 Brighton in approximately 50 minutes.

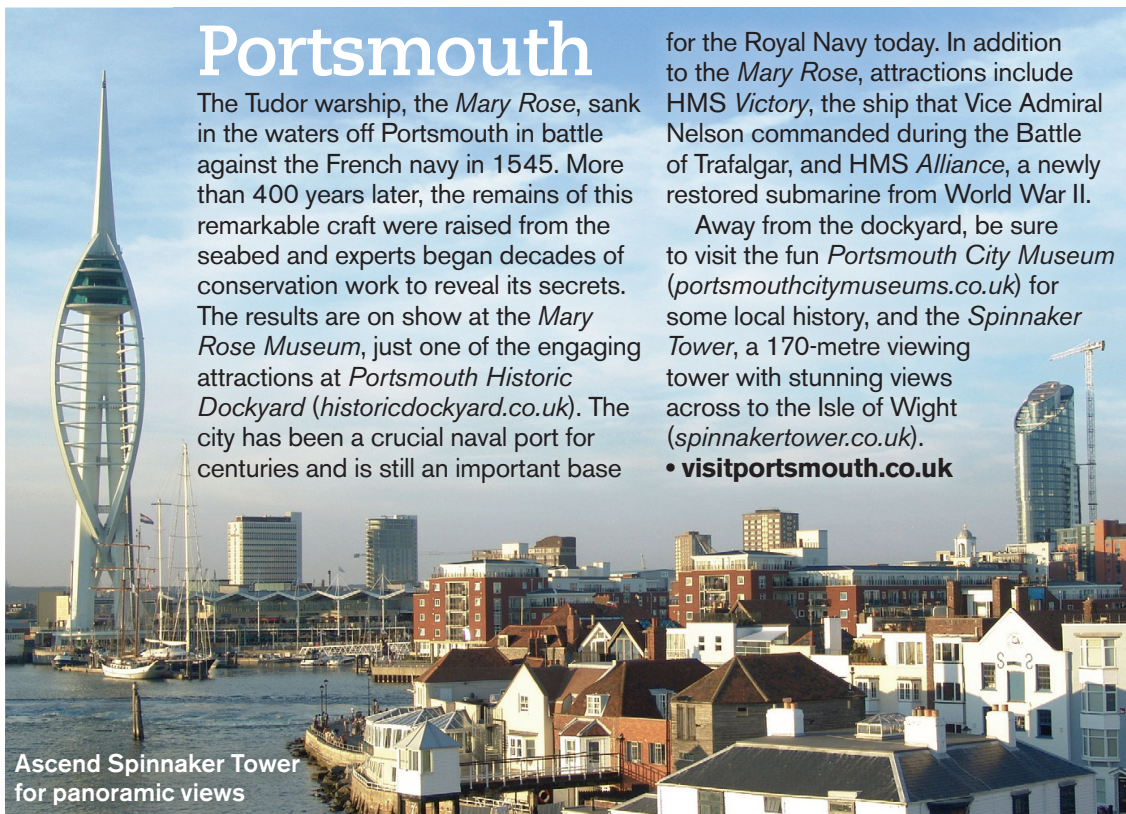


### Event highlights

**2 Aug:** Brighton Pride, City Centre/Preston Park ([brighton-pride.org](http://brighton-pride.org))

**22-25 Aug:** Fun fair, Hove Promenade

**22-24 Aug:** Brighton Mod Weekender ([modfest.co.uk](http://modfest.co.uk))



## Portsmouth

The Tudor warship, the *Mary Rose*, sank in the waters off Portsmouth in battle against the French navy in 1545. More than 400 years later, the remains of this remarkable craft were raised from the seabed and experts began decades of conservation work to reveal its secrets. The results are on show at the *Mary Rose Museum*, just one of the engaging attractions at *Portsmouth Historic Dockyard* ([historicdockyard.co.uk](http://historicdockyard.co.uk)). The city has been a crucial naval port for centuries and is still an important base

for the Royal Navy today. In addition to the *Mary Rose*, attractions include *HMS Victory*, the ship that Vice Admiral Nelson commanded during the Battle of Trafalgar, and *HMS Alliance*, a newly restored submarine from World War II.

Away from the dockyard, be sure to visit the fun *Portsmouth City Museum* ([portsmouthcitymuseums.co.uk](http://portsmouthcitymuseums.co.uk)) for some local history, and the *Spinnaker Tower*, a 170-metre viewing tower with stunning views across to the Isle of Wight ([spinnakertower.co.uk](http://spinnakertower.co.uk)).

• [visitportsmouth.co.uk](http://visitportsmouth.co.uk)

Ascend Spinnaker Tower for panoramic views



Bennetts Water Gardens

## Weymouth and Portland

Weymouth, a host venue during the London 2012 Olympics sailing events, boasts some of the south coast's most beautiful beaches. But they're not the only impressive things made of sand in these parts: 2,000 tonnes of it can be found shaped into more than a dozen enormous sculptures at Sandworld park, created by sand sculptors from all over the world ([sandworld.co.uk](http://sandworld.co.uk)).

The town is also home to some wonderful wildlife, from water birds and rare orchids at the *Radipole Lake Nature Reserve* ([rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk)), to eight acres of water lilies at *Bennetts Water Gardens* ([bennettswatergardens.com](http://bennettswatergardens.com)).

Hop over to the Isle of Portland for *Portland Castle* ([english-heritage.org.uk](http://english-heritage.org.uk)), a fort built by Henry VIII to protect the country from French and Spanish invaders, and *Portland Bill*, one of the UK's tallest lighthouses ([trinityhouse.co.uk](http://trinityhouse.co.uk)). Climb it for amazing views.

• [visit-dorset.com](http://visit-dorset.com)



Boats at Weymouth

PORTSMOUTH IMAGE © GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; BENNETTS WATER GARDENS IMAGE COURTESY OF BENNETTS WATER GARDENS; WEYMOUTH IMAGE © DORSET FOR YOU. OPPOSITE PAGE: ISLE OF WIGHT PHOTO © VISIT ISLE OF WIGHT; ST IVES PHOTO © ST IVES VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE



# Isle of Wight

England's largest island boasts such a rich collection of resorts, beaches and attractions that you could easily spend a week exploring it. From Ryde, with its long Victorian pier and kilometres of glorious beaches, to Ventnor, whose microclimate makes *Ventnor Botanic Garden* one of the best in the UK ([botanic.co.uk](http://botanic.co.uk)), there's something for everyone. Don't miss The Needles, chalk stacks rising out of the sea in Alum Bay. Take a ride on the chairlift ([theneedles.co.uk](http://theneedles.co.uk)), visit *Bembridge Fort* ([nationaltrust.org.uk](http://nationaltrust.org.uk)) or walk the coastal path.

As the home of British yachting, the Isle of Wight is a favourite with sailing enthusiasts all year round, but never more so than during *Cowes Week*, an historic regatta staging up to 40 races a day and attracting thousands of competitors from all over the world (2-9 Aug; [aamcowesweek.co.uk](http://aamcowesweek.co.uk)).

• [visitisleofwight.co.uk](http://visitisleofwight.co.uk)



Ventnor beach

## St Ives

St Ives has been synonymous with art since the 1920s, when artists began settling in what was then a small fishing village to take advantage of the stunning coastal landscape and good light. Two major museums, *Tate St Ives* and the

*Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden* ([tate.org.uk](http://tate.org.uk)), celebrate the town's artistic past, and its time as an influential 1950s avant-garde art colony in particular. There are a number of commercial galleries dotted around the adorable town centre too.

More active fun is to be had

on St Ives's various beaches, where it's possible to try out all manner of water sports, from surfing to coasteering ([stivessurfschool.co.uk](http://stivessurfschool.co.uk)). From the harbour, you can take a boat trip to nearby *Seal Island* and *Godrevy Lighthouse* ([stivesboats.co.uk](http://stivesboats.co.uk)).

• [stivestic.co.uk](http://stivestic.co.uk)



The harbour at St Ives

### How to get there

**1 Portsmouth**  
⇒ London Waterloo to ⇒ Portsmouth Harbour in approximately 90 minutes.

**2 Weymouth and Portland**  
⇒ London Waterloo to ⇒ Weymouth in approximately two hours, 30 minutes.

**3 Isle of Wight**  
⇒ London Waterloo to ⇒ Portsmouth Harbour in

approximately 90 minutes, then a 22-minute foot passenger catamaran to Ryde.

**4 St Ives**  
⇒ London Paddington to ⇒ St Ives in approximately five hours, 30 minutes.



OPPOSITE PAGE: ISLE OF WIGHT PHOTO © VISIT ISLE OF WIGHT; ST IVES PHOTO © ST IVES VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE



# Whitby

Visit the North Yorkshire town where the famous explorer Captain James Cook trained as a seaman and novelist Bram Stoker set part of his 1897 Gothic horror story, *Dracula*.

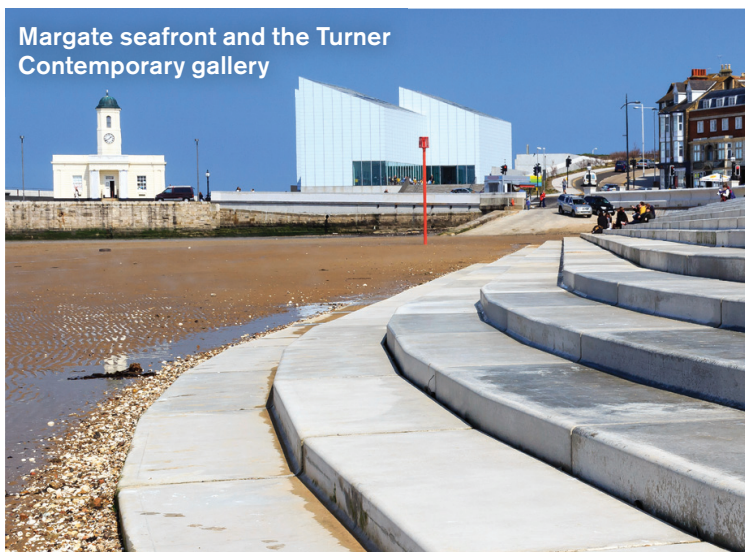
The dramatic ruins of *Whitby Abbey*, high up on the cliffs above the town, are a great place to start. This Benedictine monastery dates back to the seventh century and boasts beautiful views out over the North Sea. You can learn about the abbey and the town at the *Whitby Museum* ([whitbymuseum.org.uk](http://whitbymuseum.org.uk)), before exploring the historic harbour with its swing bridge and piers.

And be sure to visit the *Captain Cook Memorial Museum* ([cookmuseumwhitby.co.uk](http://cookmuseumwhitby.co.uk)), which is located in the house where the British explorer trained as an apprentice in the 17th century before discovering Australia and Hawaii.

• [visitwhitby.com](http://visitwhitby.com)



Whitby beach



Margate seafront and the Turner Contemporary gallery

# Margate

With its heyday as a seaside resort stretching throughout the 1800s and for most of the 20th century, Margate has been staging a comeback thanks to the *Turner Contemporary*, a striking new art gallery on the seafront. Its big summer exhibition is *Mondrian and Colour*, which explores the abstractionist's pioneering use of colour (**to 21 Sep**; [turnercontemporary.org](http://turnercontemporary.org)).

More traditional treats can be found at the *Walpole Bay Hotel and Museum* ([walpolebayhotel.co.uk](http://walpolebayhotel.co.uk)), where each floor is full of historical oddities. Some relate to the hotel's past, such as the maintenance cupboard filled with antique vacuum cleaners. And make sure you visit the *Shell Grotto*, a mysterious cave lined with millions of seashells ([shellgrotto.co.uk](http://shellgrotto.co.uk)).

• [visithanet.co.uk](http://visithanet.co.uk)

**How to get there**

**1 Whitby**  
 ➤ London King's Cross to  
 ➤ Whitby in approximately four hours, 30 minutes.

**2 Margate**  
 ➤ London St Pancras International to ➤ Margate in approximately 90 minutes.

WHITBY BEACH IMAGE COURTESY OF WHITBY TOURIST BOARD; MARGATE PHOTO © THINKSTOCK/GETTY IMAGES



# ACROSS THE UK

## 1 Edinburgh

Against the backdrop of Edinburgh Castle, military bands and display teams from the Armed Forces, the Commonwealth and other countries around the world come together for *The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (1-23 Aug)*. Taking part will be participants from the Commonwealth Games, which are taking place in Glasgow until **3 Aug** ([edintattoo.co.uk](http://edintattoo.co.uk)). ➔ London King's Cross to ➔ Edinburgh Waverley in four hours, 30 mins.



## 2 Nottinghamshire

A legend is brought to life at *The Robin Hood Festival (4-10 Aug; [nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://nottinghamshire.gov.uk))* at Edwinstowe's Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre, where you can enjoy crafts, music, jousting, falconry and archery. ➔ London St Pancras International to ➔ Nottingham in 100 mins, then a 50-minute bus ride.



## 3 Bristol

*Bristol International Balloon Fiesta* is Europe's largest ballooning extravaganza, with more than 130 balloons lifting off from the Ashton Court Estate (**7-10 Aug**; ([bristolballoonfiesta.co.uk](http://bristolballoonfiesta.co.uk))). Expect races, displays and mass ascents (at 6am and 6pm daily), as well as a fun fair and food. ➔ London Paddington to ➔ Bristol Temple Meads in 100 mins, then a 20-minute bus ride.



### UK ATTRACTIONS

#### BLenheim PALACE

Famed as the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill, this masterpiece of English Baroque architecture is set in 2,100 acres of Capability Brown parkland. Opening hours vary, please check website. Palace, park and gardens: Adult £21.50, child £11.80. *Woodstock, Oxfordshire, OX20 1PP. 0199 381 0530. [blenheimpalace.com](http://blenheimpalace.com)*. ➔ ➔ London Paddington to ➔ Oxford (50 mins) and then take a bus.

#### LEEDS CASTLE

This medieval fortress turned Tudor palace sits on the River Len. The castle has 500 acres of gardens. Daily 10.30am-6pm (last admission to castle 4.30pm). Admission £21, child £13.50. *Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1PL. 0162 276 5400. [leeds-castle.com](http://leeds-castle.com)*. ➔ ➔ London Victoria to ➔ Bearsted (one hour).

#### PALACE OF HOLYROOD HOUSE

The Queen's official residence in Scotland is situated at the end of Edinburgh's Royal Mile. Mary, Queen of Scots, lived here too. Daily 9.30am-6pm. Admission to Palace, The Queen's Gallery and Garden History Tour: Adult £19.75, child £11.25. *Canongate, The Royal Mile, EH8 8DX. 020 7766 7321. [royalcollection.org.uk](http://royalcollection.org.uk)*. ➔ ➔ London King's Cross to ➔ Edinburgh Waverley (approximately eight hours).

#### WINDSOR CASTLE

Windsor Castle has the distinction of being the world's oldest, largest inhabited castle, and it is one of the Queen's official residences. Visit the State Apartments, which are furnished with a selection of paintings that have been chosen for display from the Royal Collection. **To 25 Jan 2015: *Treasures from the Royal Archives***. Rarely-seen letters, diaries and objects. Daily 9.45am-5.15pm (last entry 4pm). Admission £18.50, child £11. *Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 1NJ. 020 7766 7300. [royalcollection.org.uk](http://royalcollection.org.uk)*. ➔ ➔ London Waterloo to ➔ Windsor & Eton Riverside (approx one hour).



EDINBURGH PHOTO © THINKSTOCK/GETTY IMAGES/ALAN CRAWFORD; ROBIN HOOD FESTIVAL © GOLSHUH-OLGA; BALLOON FESTIVAL PHOTO © DESTINATION BRISTOL