



SCALLOP BY MAGGI HAMBLING

ART *and* CULTURE **A**

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Amazing MAZES

45 WATER MAZE

AT: HEVER CASTLE
AND GARDENS

Hever,
Kent

TN8 7NG

South East

+44 (0)17 3286 5224

hevercastle.co.uk

You might want to bring a change of clothes, or at least a towel, to take on the Water Maze. Few make it to the stone grotto at the centre without getting wet. The unusual puzzle is made up of stepping stones sitting over water. One wrong step and your stepping stone could tilt, soaking you thanks to the water jets hidden below. Once you've dried off, stick around to explore Hever Castle – it was once the childhood home of Henry VIII's second wife Anne Boleyn.







161 THE WAVE

AT: WASHINGPOOL FARM

Main Road
Easter Compton,
Bristol

BS35 5RE

South West

+44 (0)33 3016 4133

thewave.com

Want to catch some waves? England probably isn't the first place that springs to mind, but The Wave might just change that. In a rural spot near Bristol, The Wave is England's first inland surf destination. It boasts safe and consistently perfect waves – one every 10 seconds – all year round. You can book surfing lessons to learn how to ride gentle 0.5-metre waves or non-guided surf sessions, with waves that vary in difficulty up to 2-metre barrel waves. You can even camp out onsite beside the surfing lake in safari-style tents until you properly master the art.



162 HONISTER SLATE MINE

Honister Pass
Borrowdale,
Cumbria

CA12 5XN

North West

+44 (0)17 6877 7230

honister.com

A working slate mine in the Lake District, Honister is also home to some seriously thrilling adventures. Head here if the Lakes' hikes and high points aren't cutting it for climbing, canyoning and cliff camping (yep, that's a thing). You'll find the longest high wire bridge in Europe and Via Ferrata Xtreme, a tough guided climb where you're secured to the mountain using cables. Top it off with a 30-metre free fall at the end if your nerves can take it.



Secluded BEACHES

185 THE STRANGLES

Crackington Haven,
Cornwall
EX23 0LQ
South West

This beach takes quite some effort to get to (and back out of) but the exertion is well worth it. The Strangles is signposted from the coastal road and the South West Coast Path, a little south of Crackington Haven. To begin with, the path takes you past hedgerows and fields before it opens out to expansive views of the Atlantic. Here the route becomes steep and sometimes slippery underfoot, as you start to meander down the cliff, past heather and gorse flowers, to the beach below. When you've made it you'll most likely be rewarded with a stretch of magical coastline, complete with a rock arch, all to yourself. At worst you'll share it with a couple of other intrepid beach-goers. Unsurprisingly there are no facilities at The Strangles, so you'd be wise to pack a picnic to fuel your ascent back up the path.

186 FORMBY BEACH

Formby,
Merseyside
L37 1LJ
North West
+44 (0)17 0487 8591
nationaltrust.org.uk

Okay, so on a sunny day, when visitors flock here in their droves, Formby can hardly be called a hidden gem. But visit out of season and you'll be surprised to find this great swathe of pristine sand dune and sea, so close to a major city like Liverpool. Visit to discover silent forests, red squirrels, incredible dunes, miles of soft sand and the outlines of shipwrecks just off the coast.



185 THE STRANGLES





Unique BOUTIQUES

249 SHE'S LOST CONTROL

74 Broadway Market
London
E8 4QJ
South East
+44 (0)20 3196 7690
sheslostcontrol.co.uk

Need somewhere to stock up on ethical crystals, or just curious about the whole alternative wellness scene? She's Lost Control is the place to go for unusual beauty products, oracle and tarot cards, spells and candles. They are also big supporters of the crystal mining community, and promote responsibly sourced and mined gems with transparent supply chains. The shop runs a series of events too, so stop by if you fancy getting your aura photographed and your cards read, or if your frazzled soul could do with a spot of sound healing, candlelit yoga or the connection of a sharing circle.

250 HAECKELS

18 Cliff Terrace
Margate,
Kent
CT9 1RU
South East
+44 (0)12 2720 3675
haeckels.co.uk

Handpicked Margate seaweed is the starting point for Haeckels' dreamy skin care, which is all sold in recyclable or compostable packaging. Where better to buy it than at their flagship store, metres from where that seaweed is harvested? Elevate your visit with a treatment, like a seaweed bath with a sea view, or a steamy spell inside Haeckels' nearby sea bathing machine: a community-run, donation-based sauna sat right next to the sea.



262 RIVER EXE CAFÉ

Exe Estuary
(by boat from
Exmouth Marina),
Devon
EX8 1FE
South West
+44 (0)77 6111 6103
riverexecafe.com

Constructed in 2011 using two flatbed barges and a shed, River Exe Café is one unusual restaurant. It's floating right in the middle of the River Exe Estuary. Access is by boat only – either you rock up on your own vessel or catch a 25-minute water taxi from Exmouth Marina (it's booked automatically when you reserve a table on board). The covered cafe is tethered, so you won't get seasick or drift off anywhere unexpected during your meal but you will get a unique watery perspective of the Devon coastline from all angles. It may be a little hard to reach, but everyone is catered for irrespective of their mobility needs. Babies, children and dogs are welcome too. Food is local and the focus is on seafood – oysters from Teignmouth and mussels from the River Teign, swimming in Devon Bays beer, all from just along the coast.

263 RYE BAKERY

Whittox Lane
Frome,
Somerset
BA11 3BY
South West
+44 (0)79 2583 0852
rye-bakery.com

Come to Rye Bakery in Frome for their great coffee, flaky pastries, cinnamon buns and epic cheese toasties. Stay for the stunning surroundings. The space they occupy on Whittox Lane is inside a former church which dates back to the early 1800s. Tables are on the ground floor, with a double height ceiling revealing a beautiful organ and stepped seating above. There's also a huge 'nest' woven out of wood at the back of the space, designed to provide customers with a little quiet for breastfeeding.

TINY pubs

264 THE NUTSHELL

The Traverse
Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk
IP33 1BJ
East of England
+44 (0)12 8476 4867
thenutshellpub.co.uk

The smallest pub in England, the diminutive Nutshell has a bar that measures just 15 by 7 feet (4,6 × 2,1 metres). The dinky pub, which has been serving punters since 1867, still manages to pack in an impressive amount of character. Visitors will find a mummified cat, a plane propeller and various taxidermied animals on the walls, while the pub's ceiling is plastered in banknotes from around the world.



264 THE NUTSHELL

CASTLES *you can kip in*

333 **KINGSWEAR CASTLE**

Kingswear,
Devon
TQ6 0DX
South West
+44 (0)16 2882 5925
landmarktrust.org.uk

An entire 16th-century castle, perched on the rocks opposite Dartmouth, can be yours for a weekend. It's not huge – it sleeps four in two bedrooms – but it feels mighty. Kingswear is all chunky walls, ancient stone floors and proper battlements, sat right on the edge of the surf with unrivalled views out to sea. Completed in 1502, Kingswear Castle was once designed to defend the harbour, but now it's a special setting for a whiling away peaceful hours. The best spot is the roof terrace, where you can watch boats and wildlife bob past, and raise and lower your very own flag.

334 **BAMBURGH CASTLE**

Bamburgh,
Northumberland
NE69 7DF
North East
+44 (0)16 6821 4208
bamburghcastle.com

Beautiful Bamburgh Castle has stood overlooking the Northumberland coastline for more than 1400 years. Huge and impressive, it's seen conflict and prosperity. It's been a hospital, a coastguard station, a home to royalty and left to ruin – and it's now the private home of the Armstrong family. Thousands visit the castle each year but only a lucky few get to wake up here. The 13th-century Clock Tower, which is built into the castle walls, is available as unique accommodation, with epic views of the castle itself and of Bamburgh beach, plus after-hours access to the castle grounds.



333 **KINGSWEAR CASTLE**