

ESCAPE

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THE BEST OF BRITISH

How to have the perfect
English summer holiday

14

CHILLING,
THRILLING
WINTER
GETAWAYS

Art'otel, Battersea, London.

KENDALL HILL
The airport lounge
that wowed me



KEEP COOL AND CARRY ON

Kerry Parnell's guide to the perfect English summer holiday

Brighton

Brighton Pier in Brighton, East Sussex.

“

Life is all a green old English garden and time an endless summer afternoon,” wrote author Henry James, and, sitting in the pretty walled garden of his former home, Lamb House in Rye, East Sussex, I can see why the novelist loved it so much.

In its kitchen garden by the lush green lawn, I feel the waft of the warm sea breeze, bringing with it the scent of rambling roses and wild wisteria, and conclude there really isn't anything more pleasant than an

English country garden in summer. So inspiring was the garden – now a National Trust property open to visitors, including, just after me, Queen Camilla – it also set the scene for E.F. Benson's Mapp and Lucia novels and TV series.

As the flowers bloom with the first, longed-for rays of sunshine, England comes alive. Pubs are festooned with floral displays, punters spill on to pavements, parks are full of picnickers, festivals get into full swing, and so, the season begins.

Here are 12 of my favourite ways to join the party.

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“You know it’s summer in London when the parks are full of sunbathers and picnickers. London’s Royal Parks are sprinkled through the city...”

TAKE A TRIP TO THE SEASIDE

WHAT: There’s still something magical about a visit to the British seaside, with its faded grandeur, promenades, piers and fish and chips.

WHERE: Brighton remains one of the most popular daytrip destinations, an hour by train from London and full of cool eateries and shops. Visit the Royal Pavilion with its OTT interiors, take a trip up the Brighton i360 observation tower, or explore nearby historic Lewes. Other seaside towns within easy reach of London include up-and-coming Hastings and arty Margate, with its Turner Contemporary gallery and vintage amusement park.

WHERE TO STAY: Brighton’s Drakes Hotel is said to be a favourite of Kylie Minogue and Cate Blanchett.

drakeshotel.com

FOR MORE INFO: visitbrighton.com;

visit1066country.com; visitthanet.co.uk

WALK THE COAST

WHAT: This year, the King Charles III England Coast Path is expected to fully open, becoming the longest managed coastal path in the world, at 2700 miles (4345 km). There are spectacular sections to walk, all around the country.

WHERE: The most famous section is the South West Coast Path, from Somerset to Dorset and one of the loveliest parts of it is the Jurassic Coast. See the dramatic Durdle Door limestone arch and beautiful bays like Lulworth Cove. Other rewarding routes include the South Downs Way, Norfolk Coast Path and North Yorkshire Coast.

WHERE TO STAY: The Pig On the Beach combines good food and great walks, along the Jurassic Coast. thepighotel.com

FOR MORE INFO: nationaltrail.co.uk

HAVE A DRINK AT A ROOFTOP BAR

WHAT: As soon as the sun comes out in London, so do the people, making use of the rooftop bars and restaurants, which open up in the summer, all over the city.

WHERE: Rooftop bars are found all over London, from the hip Queen of Hoxton in Shoreditch, to the newest and most exclusive, Brooklands Bar, on top of The Peninsula hotel in Belgravia. Check out Aqua London, Radio Rooftop at ME London (although currently closed for renovations), Alto on top of Selfridges, and the sensational secret spot, the Piazza rooftop terrace at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

WHERE TO STAY: Art’otel, Battersea, has a fabulous rooftop pool and bar, with views across Battersea Power Station’s heritage chimneys. artotellondonbattersea.com

FOR MORE INFO: queenofhoxton.com; peninsula.com;

aquarestaurantgroup.co.uk; radiorooftop.com;

sancarloalto.co.uk; roh.org.uk



Thermae Bath Spa rooftop pool. Clockwise from left: Newquay’s Great Western Beach; London’s St James’s Park; Chelsea Flower Show festivities in Sloane Square.

JOIN A GARDEN PARTY

WHAT: Instagrammers can’t get enough of London’s wisteria-clad houses, and there are flower shows all over the country, plus gorgeous gardens to visit.

WHERE: RHS Chelsea Flower Show is the big-ticket event, followed by Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival and Tatton Park Flower Show. However, the Royal Horticultural Society is launching an exciting new calendar of events including shows at Sandringham, Norfolk and Wentworth Woodhouse in Yorkshire. You can also visit gorgeous gardens, such as Sissinghurst Castle Garden in Kent and Kew Gardens in London, all year round.

FOR MORE INFO: rhs.org.uk; nationaltrust.org.uk;

kew.org

VISIT A VINEYARD

WHAT: The French might not approve, but English wine is having a moment. There are vineyards all over the country, from the Isle of Wight to York, and usually in beautiful spots.

WHERE: You’ll find a cluster in Kent, including award-winning Chapel Down, Gusbourne and Balfour Winery. Neighbouring Sussex has multiple, including Ridgeview and Tinwood Estate. For something special, Belmond British Pullman offers luxury train trips and private tours of vineyards such as Winston Winery, from £615 (about \$1185).

FOR MORE INFO: chapeldown.com; gusbourne.com;

balfourwinery.com; ridgeview.co.uk;

tinwoodestate.com; belmond.com





London



SOAK IN A ROMAN BATH

WHAT: When you visit the Roman Baths in Bath's World Heritage Site you can experience the thermal water, in luxury, for an unforgettable experience.

WHERE: You can drink the water in the Pump Room, or plunge in the mineral-rich water in the Thermae Bath Spa rooftop pool. The Royal Crescent Hotel, in the middle of the famous Royal Crescent, also has a bath house.

WHERE TO STAY: The Gainsborough Bath Spa is a five-star hotel with an impressive, historic spa.

thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk

FOR MORE INFO: romanbaths.co.uk;

thermaebathspa.com; royalcrescent.co.uk

PICNIC IN THE PARK

WHAT: You know it's summer in London when the parks are full of sunbathers and picnickers. London's Royal Parks are sprinkled through the city, from famous Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens to Richmond Park.

WHERE: Take your pick from the eight Royal Parks and multiple gardens and green spaces. Row a boat on Hyde Park's Serpentine, swim in a pond on Hampstead Heath, see the deer in Richmond Park or have a picnic on Primrose Hill. It's also worth heading out of London for some of the UK's 15 fabulous national parks. The closest to London are the New Forest, South Downs and Broads.

FOR MORE INFO: royalparks.org.uk; nationalparks.uk

GO SURFING IN CORNWALL

WHAT: Cornwall has a thriving surf scene, including its popular Boardmasters Festival in Newquay, in August. The UK's most popular summer destination is full of picturesque villages, beautiful beaches, gourmet restaurants and fabulous hotels.

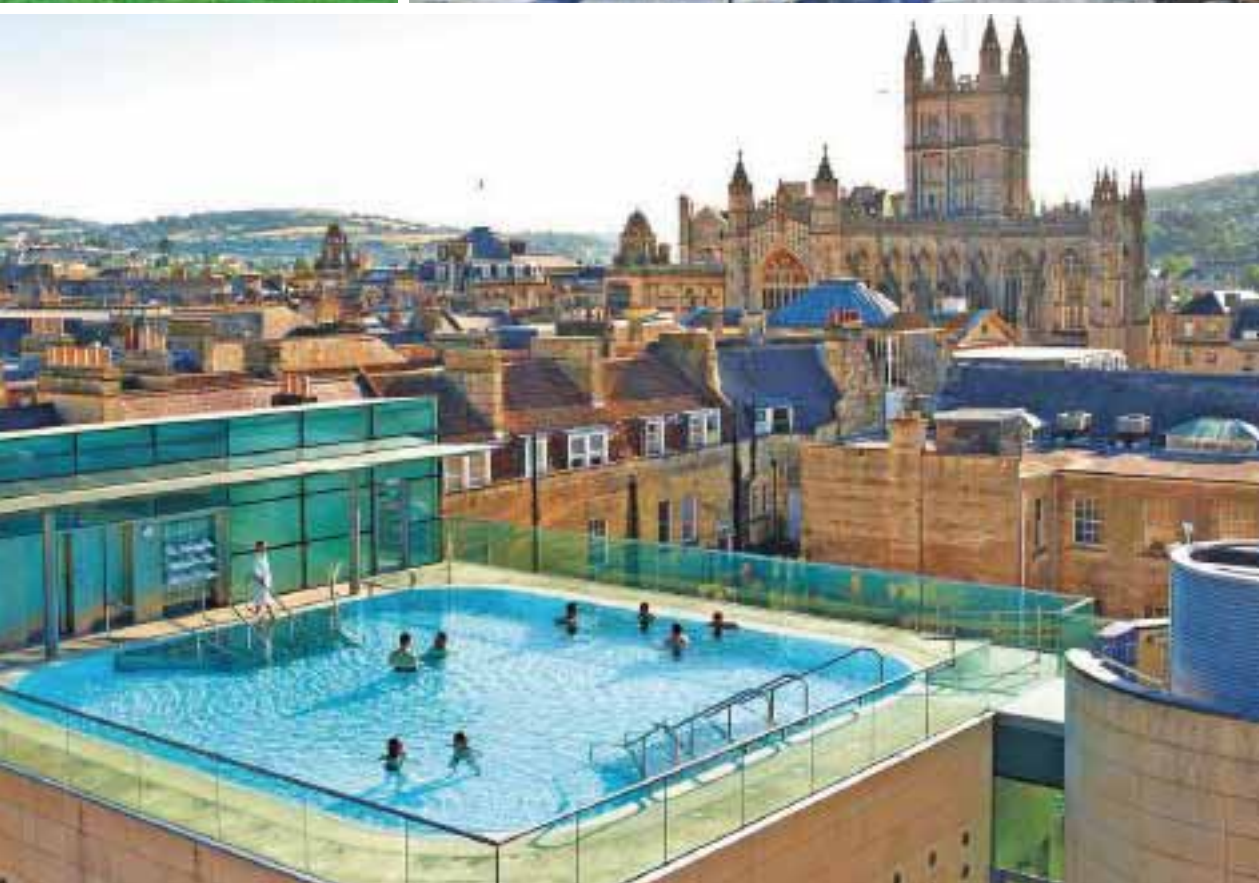
WHERE: Popular surfing spots include Fistral Beach (Newquay), Polzeath Beach (near Padstow), Porthtowan Beach and Praa Sands Beach.

WHERE TO STAY: Rick Stein's The Seafood Restaurant has 16 rooms, in the centre of Padstow. rickstein.com

TOP TIP: Getting to Cornwall by car can be a slow process. Alternatively, take the train or the Night Riviera Sleeper from London. You can also fly to Newquay. gwr.com

FOR MORE INFO: visitcornwall.com

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Dorset



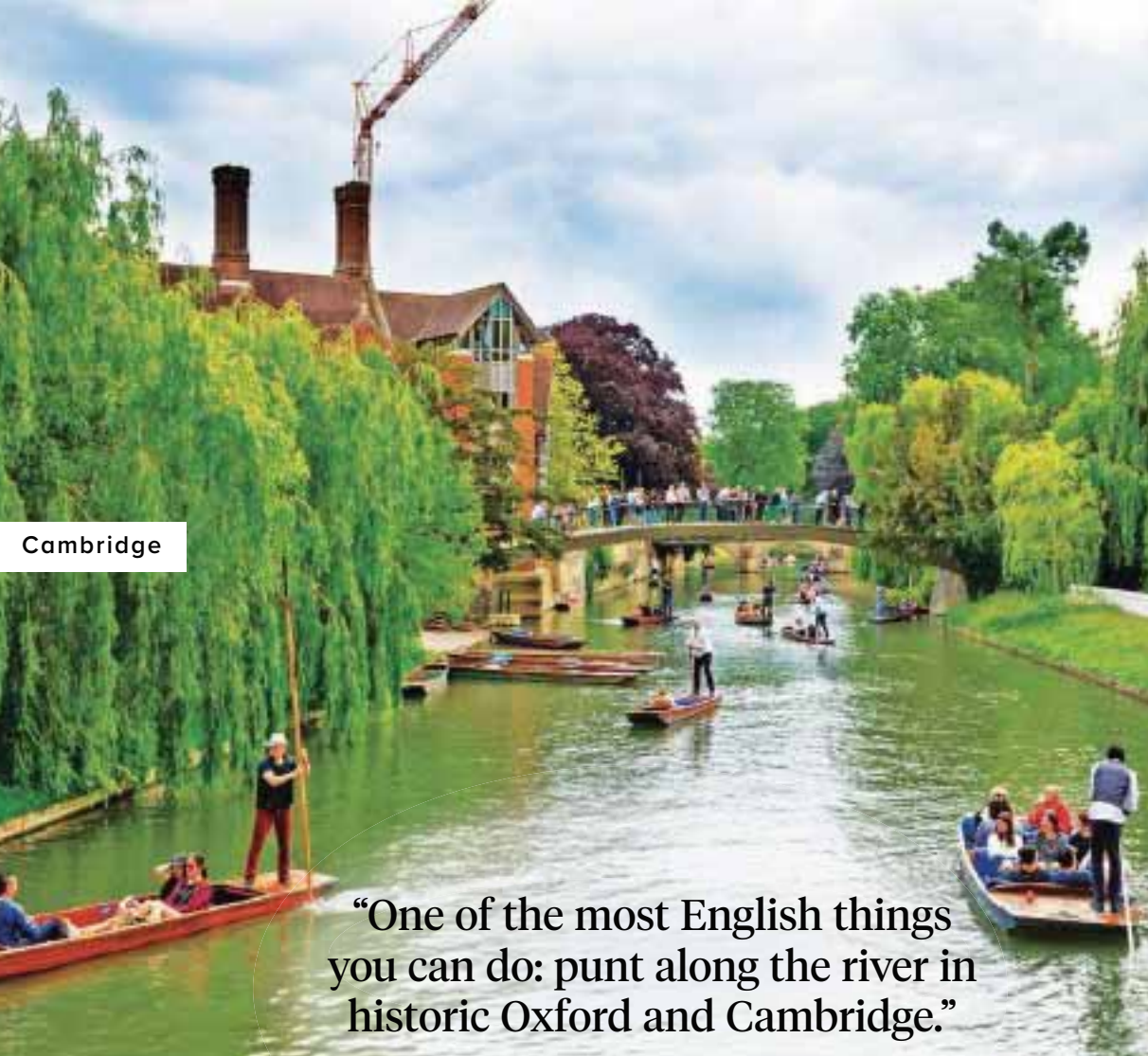
ARE YOU BINGEING PART 2 OF SEASON 3 OF BRIDGERTON? SCAN TO SEE UK LOCATIONS WHERE THE HIT SERIES WAS FILMED.



Durdle Door on the Jurassic Coast in Dorset. Left, from top: Piazza at the Royal Opera House; Chancery Lane London Underground station.

“See the dramatic Durdle Door limestone arch and beautiful bays like Lulworth Cove.”





Cambridge

“One of the most English things you can do: punt along the river in historic Oxford and Cambridge.”



ENGLISH SUMMER TIPS

TICKETS: Book as far ahead as possible. There's The London Pass for multiple discounts (londonpass.com); The National Trust Touring Pass for visitors (nationaltrust.org.uk) and English Heritage Overseas Visitor Pass (english-heritage.org.uk). Also go to visitbritainshop.com.

HOW TO GET AROUND

LONDON: Plan your travel at tfl.gov.uk and pre-order a Visitor Oyster Card through Visit Britain shop. You can use contactless and ApplePay on public transport.

HOW TO GET AROUND ENGLAND: The easiest way is by train. Pre-book journeys at nationalrail.co.uk for significantly-reduced fares. There's also a BritRail pass for visitors, britrail.com.

HOW TO GET THERE: Airlines including Qantas, British Airways, Singapore Airlines, Emirates and Etihad fly to the UK from Australia, to multiple cities, including London, Manchester and Birmingham.

FOR MORE INFO: visitengland.com; visitbritain.com



Guards on duty outside Buckingham Palace, and the palace's Centre Room (above). Right: Glastonbury Festival. Top: Punting on the River Cam in Cambridge.



LIVE IT UP AT A MUSIC FESTIVAL

WHAT: Britain's music festival scene is going strong and there is one for every musical taste.

WHERE: Top of the bill is Glastonbury, Somerset, in late June. There are also Reading and Leeds festivals in August and family-friendly Camp Bestival in July. You can get the festival experience without camping at the BST Hyde Park concert series, where everyone from Stevie Nicks to Kylie is headlining this year, plus catch a concert at London's Somerset House or Southbank's Meltdown Festival. Classical music fans will love the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, or opera with a picnic at Glyndebourne, East Sussex.

FOR MORE INFO: glastonburyfestivals.co.uk; readingfestival.com; leedsfestival.com; campbestival.net; bst-hydepark.com; somersethouse.org.uk; southbankcentre.co.uk; royalalberthall.com; glyndebourne.com

TAKE A PUNT

WHAT: One of the most English things you can do: punt along the river in historic Oxford and Cambridge, with the backdrop of their famous colleges.

WHERE: Hire a punt in Oxford, through companies such as the Magdalen Bridge Boathouse and in Cambridge from Scudamore's Punting Company. You can also experience punting in Stratford-upon-Avon through Avon Boating, and Canterbury with Canterbury Punting Company.

WHERE TO STAY: University Arms Hotel is the oldest hotel in Cambridge. universityarms.com

FOR MORE INFO: oxfordpunting.co.uk; scudamores.com; avon-boating.co.uk; canterburypunting.co.uk

VISIT NOBLE HOMES

WHAT: One of the best ways to experience England's history is to visit its palaces, castles and stately homes. Many have special exhibitions in the warmer months.

WHERE: Buckingham Palace opens to the public in the summer, this year including the East Wing, plus balcony, for the first time. It also has the *Royal Portraits* exhibition in The King's Gallery. Kensington Palace has a summer exhibition, *Untold Lives*, and The Tower of London's moat blooms with wildflowers. In Oxfordshire, Blenheim Palace has festivals and exhibitions.

FOR MORE INFO: rct.uk; hrp.org.uk; blenheimpalace.com

BOOK A LITERARY FESTIVAL

WHAT: Summer means brilliantly British book festivals, from the biggest, Hay Festival, to the newest, the Queen's Reading Room Festival.

WHERE: Hay Festival takes place in Hay-on-Wye – on the England/Wales border – in late May/early June. It's followed by a library of literary events, including the Queen's Reading Room Festival at Hampton Court in June, Cliveden Literary Festival in September, and the Cheltenham Literature Festival and London Literature Festival in October.

FOR MORE INFO: hayfestival.com; clivedenliteraryfestival.org; cheltenhamfestivals.com; southbankcentre.co.uk; thequeensreadingroom.co.uk

