

E V A N S

5 Beach Destinations to Visit This Year

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After two years of restrictions, cancellations, and a *lot* of uncertainty, travelling is finally back on the menu. It has been a very difficult time for everyone but as we adjust to the new normal, we think that a beach holiday is the perfect way to unwind and decompress.

Below we have compiled a guide of our top 5 picks for must-visit beach destinations that are accessible from the UK, complete with recommendations on where to visit and eat. Now, pass us a cocktail...

1) Dubrovnik, Croatia

Nestled on the Adriatic Sea, the city of Dubrovnik features several beaches. From family favourites to hidden coves, you will never be stuck for choice. The closest beach to the city is Banje – a mostly pebbly stretch with crystal-clear, shallow water perfect for paddling. Banje is considered one of Dubrovnik's best beaches for swimming and sunbathing – so don't forget to pack your swimwear!

If you like your beach trips to be a tad more adventurous, check out the tiny islet of Lokrum. This nature reserve, known for its Napoleonic fort ruins, features a coastline that is best explored by kayak. A trip to Lokrum is a truly unique experience – not least because it is home to botanical gardens guarded by peacocks!

What to see

For the adrenaline seekers among you, what better way to see the Pearl of the Adriatic than from a 900-metre zip line? Here is your chance to experience being a superhero for a whole minute as you soar through the sky.

If you prefer to take in the sights at ground level, a trip to Dubrovnik isn't complete without a wander around the charming old town. The 9th century town is home to unique boutiques and restaurants with breath-taking views. Talking of restaurants...

Where to eat

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Konoba Bonaca is a gorgeous restaurant serving local seafood and Mediterranean fayre. With rustic stone walls and waterfront views, you can dine in true Croatian style.

2) Sardinia, Italy

Sardinia is an island with truly mesmerising beaches. It offers a slice of paradise mere hours away from the UK, with its white powdery sand and bright blue waters.

This is a destination that upturns everything you think you know about Italy. Sardinia is remarkably unique, with its own language and architecture style.

The island is home to a host of festivals – celebrating everything from fish to jazz music! For a destination so close to home, Sardinia feels like a luxurious escape to far-flung lands.

What to see

Sardinia is bursting with history dating back to the Bronze Age. One of the island's must-sees is the copious number of nuraghes – rock structures from the Nuragic civilisation which lasted from the 18th century BC until the Roman colonisation in 238 BC. The Su Nuraxi Nuraghe in Barumini is the most visited in Sardinia and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

From fascinating rock structures to Instagrammable villages, Sardinia offers excursions to suit every interest. One of the most aesthetically-pleasing locations in Sardinia is the town of Bosa – featuring pastel houses and a quaint castle.

Where to eat

It will come as no surprise to hear that Sardinia is one of the best places in the world to sample seafood. For an authentic taste of the ocean, head to **Frontemare** which overlooks the island's golden sands.

3) Crete, Greece

The largest of the Greek islands, Crete is a gem of the Aegean Sea. There is no shortage of beautiful beaches of all kinds: deep crystalline waters, bucket-and-spade-friendly sandy stretches, and secluded coves perfect for snorkelling.

On the north coast of Crete is Rethymnon – a popular tourist destination with lots to offer. Located just outside of the old town, Rethymnon beach is perfect for families with its shallow waters and golden sands. Its proximity to the centre of Rethymnon makes it one of the easiest beaches to get to.

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On the other side of the island lies one of the most breath-taking beaches in Greece. Elafonisi, situated in southwestern Crete, is itself an island-lagoon with calm blue waves and sand in beautiful shades of white and pink. Wherever you stay on the island, be sure to pay this slice of paradise a visit.

What to see

Believed to have been the palace of King Minos, the Palace of Knossos is the most significant archaeological site on the island of Crete. Dating back to the Bronze Age, the palace was abandoned around 1450 BC. Today, it makes for a fascinating day trip back in time.

If outdoor adventure is more your thing, why not take a hike through Samaria Gorge? This UNESCO Biosphere Reserve features a 16 kilometre trail with stunning views of the island's cliffs.

Where to eat

Bakaliko Crete in Heraklion is a deli-style restaurant serving delicious fresh produce from across Crete. Once you have sampled the quality food, you can buy the ingredients from the in-house store to recreate your new favourite Greek meal at home!

4) **Malaga, Spain**

A port city on the coastline of the Costa Del Sol, Malaga is a bustling hub of activity. It offers the perfect combination of beaches and culture to suit all the family. Within easy reach of the city's amenities are neighbouring beaches La Malagueta and Playa de La Caleta.

What to see

Keen shoppers will love El Zoco de Muelle Uno – a monthly Sunday market selling gourmet food, vintage clothing, and handmade trinkets. The market is situated near Malaga's port, adjacent to the stunning 18th century Baroque church, Chapel of Muelle Uno. Here you can marvel at the sandstone structure, immersing yourself in Malaga's rich history.

Where to eat

In the centre of Malaga is **Kraken**, a sophisticated venue serving the finest local dishes on its open terrace.

5) **Cornwall, UK**

If the last few years have taught us anything, it is that staycations make for a fabulous holiday! We are lucky to have some beautiful beaches on our own island. A county with no shortage of clear waters and pale sands is Cornwall.

Why not try being a tourist in your own country? Cornwall is home to sprawling beaches such as Porthcurno, and tiny shingle coves such as Kingsand.

What to see

For stunning views of the Cornish coast, take a walk from Polzeath to Port Quin and feel the sea breeze blow those cobwebs away!

Cornwall is also home to Tintagel Castle – the ancient ruins associated with King Arthur and Merlin. Located on the clifftops of North Cornwall, the castle is shrouded in fascinating history.

Where to eat

Cornwall is home to many fantastic restaurants thanks to its proximity to the coast. One of the most coveted spots to eat is The Hidden Hut, at the end of the Roseland Peninsula in Truro. With freshly-caught fish and crisp salads, The Hidden Hut is the perfect pitstop to recharge before exploring more of Cornwall's beautiful beaches.