



Padstow, Cornwall

Cornwall

WHY GO?

First came the new wave of surfers (ones bearing Le Creuset pans and bottles of Chablis rather than camper vans and beer), then Tate St Ives and “Padstein” – Rick Stein’s foodie empire in Padstow. Now even Jamie Oliver has ventured way out west, with a branch of restaurant Fifteen in Watergate Bay outside Newquay. However, the county’s thriving cultural scene and untamed landscape has softened the edges of its commercial development.

WHAT TO DO AND SEE

Long before the Tate opened a Cornish outpost above Porthmeor Beach in St Ives (tate.org.uk; 01736 796226), Cornwall had drawn an artistic crowd. The region’s most famous artist’s colony was started in the 1930s by sculptor Barbara Hepworth and her husband Ben Nicholson. Visit the magical Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden on Barnoon Hill in St Ives (01736 796226); a joint ticket with Tate St Ives costs £8.75. Next, fill up on fresh crab sandwiches from a stall or café and head out for a windswept stroll between Lamorna and Mousehole. Then there’s the Minack Theatre (minack.com; 01736 810181), an amphitheatre hewn out of the cliff by its eccentric founder, Rowena Cade. This summer’s performances include *The True Story of Martin Guerre* and *Twelfth Night*. You can also test out the surf at the National Surfing Centre (nationalsurfingcentre.com; 01637 850737); day courses cost £50. Or stop off at the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth

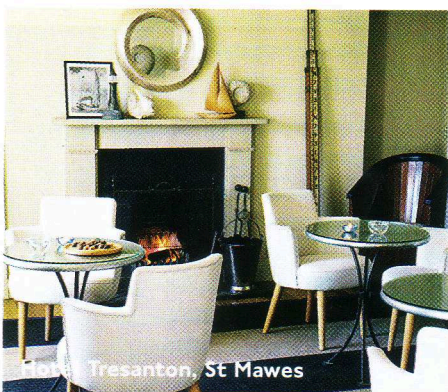
(nmmc.co.uk; 01326 313388) – a spectacularly designed building on the harbour. Finally, if you’re interested in plants and botany, make sure you leave time to visit the space-age Eden Project (edenproject.com; 01726 811911).

WHEN TO GO

With bracing coastal walks in winter and sunny days in summer, every time of year has something to offer but most people visit between June and September. Be warned though, it can get crowded.



Bedruthan Steps, Cornwall



Hotel Tresanton, St Mawes

WHERE TO STAY

- **Budget** Cornish Tipi Holidays (cornish-tipi-holidays.co.uk; 01208 880781) rents wigwams for two from £375 per week.
- **Mid-range** Primrose Valley Hotel (primroseonline.co.uk; 01736 794939) near Porthminster Beach in St Ives, combines style with eco-awareness (guests can donate £1 a night to the Marine Conservation Society). Doubles cost from £85 a night including breakfast.
- **Luxury** Try Hotel Tresanton (tresanton.com; 01326 270055) by the harbour at St Mawes. Each room contains one-off furniture and Cornish art. There is a terrace restaurant and facilities for children. Doubles start from £170 a night including breakfast.

HOW TO GET THERE

The most romantic way to get to Cornwall from London is by sleeper train; bed down in Paddington and wake up in Penzance (thetrainline.com; 0845 484950). Trains take well under six hours from London and there are good connections from the rest of the country. Or fly from Stansted, Bradford, Manchester, Gatwick, Dublin, Leeds, Edinburgh, Belfast and other airports (visitnewquay-airport.co.uk).

TO FIND OUT MORE

- **Contact the Cornwall Tourist Board** (cornwalltouristboard.co.uk; 01872 322800) □

For more holiday ideas go to SHE’s website, www.allaboutyou.com/escape