



Bodmin & East Cornwall

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Woods Cafe (p153)
- ➔ Rising Sun (p158)
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- ➔ Hilltop Farm Shop (p156)
- ➔ Cornish Cheese Company (p159)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ South Penquite Farm (p158)
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Why Go?

Hugging the edge of the Devon border, the stark, barren expanse of Bodmin Moor is the county's wildest and weirdest landscape. Pockmarked by bogs and treeless heaths, Cornwall's 'roof' is often overlooked by visitors, but it's well worth taking the time to explore; lofty peaks loom on the horizon, stone circles are scattered across the hills, and ancient churches nestle at the foot of granite tors.

It's also home to Cornwall's highest peaks – Rough Tor (pronounced row-tor; 400m) and Brown Willy (420m) – as well as the infamous Beast of Bodmin Moor, a black catlike creature that's been seen for many years but has still not been conclusively captured on camera.

You're probably unlikely to spy the legendary cat, but on the upside you most likely won't spot many other tourists: Bodmin Moor is an under-explored corner of Cornwall that's skipped by most visitors making a beeline for the better-known attractions of the coast.

When to Go

➔ **Apr–Jun** These are often the best months to visit the moor, as they're usually when you'll encounter the most sunshine, along with colourful displays of spring wildflowers.

➔ **Jul & Aug** The summer months can swing either way: it could be hot and sunny one day, or carpeted in thick fog the next. Don't rely on the moor having good weather simply because it's sunny on the coast.

➔ **Sep & Oct** Can also be pleasant months to visit, with a good chance of late sunshine and rich autumnal colours.

➔ **All year** The changeable weather on the moor means it's vital to take precautions before venturing out: always check the forecast, pack an Ordnance Survey (OS) map, and definitely don't forget your waterproofs.

BODMIN

POP 14,500

On the western side of the moor is the stout market town of Bodmin, which grew up around a large 7th-century monastery founded by St Petroc, and later became one of the county's most important stannary towns. Although much of Bodmin's administrative power shifted to Truro in the late 19th century, Bodmin remained the seat

of the county court until the mid-1990s. You can visit the old courtroom inside the town hall and the ruins of Bodmin Jail, Cornwall's most infamous lock-up, where lawbreakers were incarcerated or – in more serious cases – introduced to the hangman's noose.

The modern town has little to detain you, but it makes a useful launch-pad for venturing out onto nearby Bodmin Moor.



Bodmin & East Cornwall Highlights

- 1** Conquering the summit of Cornwall's highest hill, **Brown Willy** (p153)
- 2** Pondering the past around the eerie stone circle known as **The Hurlers** (p159)
- 3** Taking a tour around Cornwall's premier vineyard, **Camel Valley** (p152)
- 4** Picnicking by the cascading waters of **Golitha Falls** (p159)
- 5** Hiking or biking the trails of **Cardinham Woods** (p152)
- 6** Spotting spooks in the haunted setting of **Bodmin Jail** (p152)
- 7** Piloting a canoe across the choppy waters of **Siblyback Lake** (p159)