



Exmoor & North Devon

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Mason's Arms (p144)
- ➔ Woods (p130)
- ➔ Terra Madre (p145)
- ➔ Rising Sun (p138)
- ➔ Reeve's (p134)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Vintage Vardos (p144)
- ➔ Millers at the Tors (p137)
- ➔ Berridon Farm (p148)
- ➔ Broomhill Art Hotel (p144)
- ➔ Tarr Farm (p130)

Why Go?

Thousands of holidaymakers peel past this region on their way to the (undeniably lovely) holiday spots further west. So they miss Exmoor, an enchanting national park, where heather-clad hills are roamed by wild ponies and red deer. Villages huddle cosily beside precipitous cliffs; dramatic headlands plunge towards mossy gorges; sturdy towns deliver an authentic slice of rural life.

North Devon's charms are also worth the detour: classic surf breaks; a wild, jagged coast with vast expanses of sand; plus pretty villages, striking modern art, fine gardens and stately homes. Everywhere, restaurants serve just-caught seafood and produce fresh from furrow and farm, while sleep options range from comfy camping and vintage caravans, to art-packed boutique hotels. That's why your Exmoor and North Devon detour just might end up being your destination.

Much of Exmoor is in Somerset, but some is in Devon, so for complete coverage we've included the whole national park in this guide.

When to Go?

- ➔ **Apr & May** Vivid bluebells carpet woods; bright yellow gorse dots Exmoor. At Easter, attractions open.
- ➔ **Jun–Aug** By late-July, blooming heather turns Exmoor into a sea of purple. Expect (possibly) warmer days, but also more demands on accommodation.
- ➔ **Sep & Oct** Holiday crowds disperse, leaving (hopefully) reasonable weather and warmer seas, and definitely cheaper sleeping bills. Freshly gathered mushrooms enliven restaurant menus. Early October brings the spectacle of stags battling it out, as Exmoor's deer rut begins.
- ➔ **Dec** Short winter days reveal north Devon and Exmoor's exceptionally dark skies. Enjoy the magical, mischievous Dunster by Candlelight celebrations.



Exmoor & North Devon Highlights

- 1 Seeing stags lock antlers in **Exmoor National Park** (p129)
- 2 Exploring the heritage at the **castle** (p133) in **Dunster**
- 3 Strolling the steep, cobbled streets of the
- 4 Rattling up sheer cliffs in a water-powered **railway** (p137) at Lynton and Lynmouth
- 5 Seeing a shepherd and sheepdog herd their flock around **Morteheo** cliffs (p139)
- 6 Marvelling at star displays in Europe's first **International Dark Sky Reserve** (p133)
- 7 Finding 300 contemporary art works in the **Broomhill Sculpture Gardens** (p144)
- 8 Roaming the Cistercian site of **Cleve Abbey** (p133)
- 9 Discovering a horse-drawn carriage collection at **Arlington Court** (p144)
- 10 Riding the waves at Devon's surf-central **Croyde** (p141)