



# West Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tolcarne Inn (p240)
- ➔ Porthminster Beach Café (p225)
- ➔ Gurnard's Head (p229)
- ➔ Ben's Cornish Kitchen (p244)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Old Coastguard Hotel (p241)
- ➔ Artist Residence Penzance (p238)
- ➔ Venton Vean (p238)
- ➔ Boskerris (p224)

## Why Go?

While most visitors head for the tourist honey pots of the north coast, the wild west of Cornwall receives fewer visitors outside the major draws of St Ives and Land's End. But the real beauty of this corner lies off the beaten track: it's a land where stone monuments rise up from the hilltops, ancient moorland butts up against gorse-topped cliffs, and forgotten mine stacks stand out in relief against the skyline.

With its sparkling seaside setting and artistic connections, the attractions of St Ives are very well-known, and the town can feel uncomfortably crowded between July and September, but time your visit for early spring or autumn and you'll find things quieter. Similarly, the main beaches around Gwithian, Sennen and the Lizard can be very busy, but many more remote coves can be reached via the coast path. And for a real escape, the lesser-visited islands of Scilly feel like a whole different world.

## When to Go

- ➔ **May** St Mary's on the Isles of Scilly hosts the World Pilot Gig Championships over a weekend in early May. Accommodation is almost impossible to find, so you'll need to book at least six months' ahead.
- ➔ **Jun** Penzance stages its big summer street celebration during the Golowan Festival: try and visit on Mazey Day if you can, when the whole town turns out to party.
- ➔ **Dec** Christmas lights cover the harbour around Mousehole, and Penzance's pagan Montol Festival provides a slightly more alternative view of the festive season.

## WEST CORNWALL

### St Ives

POP 9870

Huddled at the end of a peninsula fringed by golden sands and glittering sea, St Ives is unquestionably one of Cornwall's prettiest

coastal towns. Historically the town was an important pilchard harbour, but it reinvented itself as a haven for the arts after a stream of influential painters and sculptors set up studios here during the 1920s and '30s.

These days it's a blend of boutique chic and old-fashioned seaside. From the old harbour, a maze of cobbled alleys and



### West Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly Highlights

- 1 Seeing the work of key St Ives artists at the **Tate St Ives** (p221)
- 2 Hiking to the picturesque ruins of **Botallack and Ding Dong Mine** (p229)
- 3 Bringing out your inner artist at the **Newlyn School of Art** (p240)
- 4 Seeking out the hillforts and stone circles scattered across the **Penwith Moors** (p227)
- 5 Watching a cliff-top play at the amazing **Minack Theatre** (p234)
- 6 Losing your inhibitions (and your swimsuit) on the nudist beach of **Pedn Vounder** (p234)
- 7 Sounding the fog-horn inside the historic **lighthouse** (p247) at Lizard Point
- 8 Trying some of Cornwall's best home-made ice-cream at **Roskilly's Farm** (p249)
- 9 Watching an evening gig race on the idyllic **Isles of Scilly** (p250)