

# Destination Devon, Cornwall & Southwest England

The southwest's in flux. You can feel the crackle of change in the air. After decades of economic hardship and industrial decline, England's far-westerly peninsula has turned a corner and is chasing an upward curve. Regeneration is happening everywhere you look: futuristic greenhouses are springing up in abandoned clay pits, run-down docksides are being rejuvenated and designer bistros are setting up shop all along the coastline. For years it's been dismissed by snooty urbanites as a cultural backwater, but over the last decade or so there's been a profound shift in attitudes: the southwest has sloughed off its country-bumpkin image and reinvented itself as a hotbed of art, creativity and cutting-edge cuisine. There's a real interest in what's going on out west; people are yearning for a simpler, slower, more sustainable existence, and the region seems to offer a taste of the kind of life we all want to lead in the 21st century.

It's an ecohaven: home to the pioneering Eden Project and Britain's first plastic bag-free town, not to mention wind farms, wave hubs and farmers markets where you can be sure your fruit and veggies are 100% food-mile free. It's a creative trendsetter: Bristol's music scene is still basking in the post-trip-hop glow, while avant-folk artists are emerging from the region's murkiest corners, innovative chefs are taking the culinary world by storm, abstract painters are displaying their wares in converted telephone exchanges and world-class theatre companies are performing down disused mine shafts. And lastly, of course, it's an amazing outdoor playground, with natural charms to suit all-comers: heather-covered clifftops, surf-washed beaches, tree-clad lanes and wild moors. It's a place where people zip down the hillsides on mountainboards, strap themselves into inflatable zorbs and clamber across the cliffs in search of new coasteering spots.

And while much of the region is changing, it's also a place that remains reassuringly rooted in the past. History litters the landscape; tumbledown abbeys, ghostly mine stacks, crumbling keeps and spooky stone rings stand out against the horizon, and thatched villages and red-brick cottages nestle next to rushing brooks and village greens. You can still sip warm beer in a thatch-topped pub or down a pint of scrumpy made in the time-honoured fashion. Tractors trundle along the back lanes, birdsong fills the bridleways and sheep huddle together against knotted hedgerows. And, of course, the southwest remains by far the nation's favourite sea-side getaway, where Britain's finest beaches rub shoulders with holiday towns and Victorian promenades. Thousands of holidaymakers flock to its shores to paddle in the surf and feel the sand between their toes, but they're certainly not all wearing Gucci shades – the southwest's beaches and clifftops have a broad appeal, and depending on which stretch of the coastline you choose to explore, you could find yourself building sand castles with the nippers, mixing it with the surfing fraternity or living it up in party-town hell.

## FAST FACTS

- Population: 3.2 million
- Gross value added to the regional economy per person (2005): £16,685
- Value of economy (2005): £84.6 billion
- Unemployment: 3.8%
- Total length of coastline: 711 miles
- Proportion of energy from renewable sources: 3%
- Average annual CO<sub>2</sub> output per person: 8.2 tonnes
- Approximate number of second homes: 38,000
- Percentage of journeys made by bus: 3%
- Number of working fishermen (2005): 1020 (a 78% decline on the number of fishermen in 1938)

And it's that diversity that's one of the southwest's main draws. The four counties of the southwest covered in this book – Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset, plus the stand-alone city of Bristol – are a complex jumble of characters, where seaside resorts meet urban sprawl, country villages bump into buzzing cities and Georgian crescents commingle with concrete, plate glass and stainless steel. It's backward and forward in roughly equal doses; you can certainly buy a decent cappuccino on the St Ives harbourfront these days, but thankfully you can still buy a classic ice-cream cone and a paper-wrapped pasty too.

But life's not all rosy out west. There's no doubt that the region has seen a dramatic turnaround in its financial fortunes, buoyed up by the wider success of the British economy, the booming housing market, and major programmes of investment such as Objective One in Cornwall. Increased interest and booming investment in the region is obviously good news for an area that's historically been one of Britain's poorest, but it comes at a price. The southwest's always had a love-hate relationship with the summer influx of emmets and grockles (tourists); overflowing car parks, low-paid seasonal jobs and summer traffic jams have long been a fact of life out west. But new times have brought new tensions, and tourism isn't the silver bullet for all the region's ills as is sometimes claimed.

The spiralling property market and corresponding boom in second-home-ownership has priced many of the southwest's young people off the property ladder. Villages have had their hearts sucked out as the holiday lets and second-homers have moved in. The decline of traditional industries – fishing, farming, mining – has changed the character of much of the landscape, and certainly not always for the better. When a narrow sliver of land in south Dorset can command higher property prices than a penthouse apartment in downtown Manhattan, and villagers from a remote Cornish village are occupying Islington Green in an act of protest, you know strange things are afoot out in the west. And perhaps more worrying, many southwesterners still feel that decisions made in metropolitan-focused Westminster are made without any real understanding of the communities they'll affect – just look at the passionate feelings stirred up by fox hunting, the common agricultural policy or EU fishing quotas. The town and country divide is alive and well in the West Country, despite what the tourist brochures and development agencies will tell you.

Whatever you make of the arguments, there's no doubt that – at least for now – this is a region on the up. After years of economic neglect and downright metropolitan snobbery, the southwest feels like a place that's headed off down a new, exciting and unfamiliar road. Right now it is surfing the crest of a wave – how long it'll be before it breaks on the beach is anyone's guess, but for now most people seem happy just to enjoy the ride.

# Getting Started

This is one region of Britain which really does suit every type of traveller, whether you're the kind of person for whom floating beds, fruit teas and flat-screen TVs are all essential items, or you're after just a rugged night under the stars with nothing but your backpack for company. Families, solo travellers and honeymooning couples will all find plenty to pique their interest, but even if you are a footloose nomad, it always pays to do a little bit of planning (and the odd bit of booking) before you set out on the road.

## WHEN TO GO

With beaches and beauty spots galore, and countryside that's just crying out for galumphing, it's hardly surprising that the southwest is one of Britain's holiday hot spots. In fact, in the peak season during July and August, it can seem like half of the country is hightailing it to the southwest's shores, but despite the summer crowds and the region's reputation for having a peculiarly balmy climate, the weather is actually no more predictable than anywhere else in Britain. There's an old Cornish saying that sums it up pretty neatly: 'If you don't like the weather – wait a minute'. It's an adage that could happily be applied to the whole region; while it might be blazing sunshine over the coast, travel 10 minutes inland and you might well find yourself pulling on the Wellington boots and waterproofs.

Consequently, recommending the best time of year to visit is tough. Statistically speaking, July and August usually receive the most prolonged spells of sunshine – and by far the most visitors to boot – but both months can also be prone to sudden heavy downpours or more prolonged periods of rain. In general the most reliable periods are in late spring (April to May) or early autumn (September to October), when the crowds have eased and the weather is generally at its most settled. Other busy periods that might be worth avoiding – unless you're a fan of premium prices and mile-long traffic jams, of course – include the main bank holidays, especially Easter, May Day and New Year.

## COSTS & MONEY

These days the southwest is popular with everyone from families on a bare-bones budget to city slickers in search of a luxury seaside getaway, and there are accommodation options to suit all-comers. As with any

For climate charts of the region, see p283.

### DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...

- Swimming gear, snorkel, beach towel, windbreak and sunscreen – plus that all-essential bucket and spade
- Umbrella – equally handy for sunshine and showers
- Binoculars and camera
- Sturdy hiking shoes for tackling the tors, and comfy sandals or flip-flops for the beach
- Well-stocked picnic basket, some blankets and a Thermos flask
- A head for heights (cliffs)
- A nose for the country (cows)
- A taste for warm beer or strong cider – preferably both.

popular holiday destination, prices tend to take a hefty hike upwards in the high season, especially from June to August; consequently this is by far and away the most expensive time to visit, especially if you're travelling with the kids. To take advantage of the many out-of-season deals that tend to spring up in the shoulder months, it might be worth rescheduling your family trip.

No matter when you choose to visit, the region's big cities are always at the top of the price bracket, especially the must-see duo of Bristol and Bath. Here midrange travellers should budget between £80 and £100 per person per night, and between £30 and £50 for restaurant, transport and admission costs – so you're unlikely to see much change out of £150 per day.

Outside the cities, many upmarket country hotels can be just as pricey as their city cousins, but for most midrange travellers, chances are you'll be travelling by car and staying in small hotels and B&Bs. For a double room in a decent guesthouse, you're looking at between £40 and £60 per person per night (remember most B&Bs quote their tariffs per person, not per room, so what looks like a reasonable rate can actually be quite steep). Above £80 per person and you should be expecting something quite special; below £40 and you'll be exploring saggy-bed and shared-bathroom country. Single rates are often just a reduced rate on a double room (usually about 75%). Factor in meals, transport and admission charges, and you should be budgeting £100 to £120 per day for a pretty comfortable holiday.

If you're travelling with kids in tow, staying in B&Bs can be an expensive option, and some of the posher places won't accept younger children, so many people end up plumping for a self-catering holiday home instead – though this obviously means you'll be rooted in one spot. If you're aiming to travel more widely, ask for a family room or a large double, which often come with one or two extra single beds perfect for the kids.

Backpackers can get by for around £30 a day by staying in hostels, cooking your own grub and travelling by public transport (or better still by bike). If you need to cut costs, then bring your sleeping bag and a tent and head for one of the region's camp sites: prices average between £8 and £15 for a site for a tent and two people, depending on location and season.

### ESSENTIAL LISTENING

Looking for an intro to southwest's rich and varied music scene? Here are a few titles from all ends of the spectrum with a solid southwest connection.

- *Dummy* (Portishead)
- *Protection* (Massive Attack)
- *Flashlight Seasons* (Gravenhurst)
- *Up All Night* (Razorlight)
- *Contact* (Thirteen Senses)
- *Freedom Fields* (Seth Lakeman)
- *Kokopelli* (Kosheen)
- *Tales of Grime and Grit* (Ruarri Joseph)
- *Black Holes and Revelations* (Muse)

# TOP READS

## NOVELS, POEMS & STORIES

- *Jamaica Inn and Rebecca* (Daphne du Maurier)
- *Tarka The Otter* (Henry Williamson)
- *Northanger Abbey* (Jane Austen)
- *Kangaroo* (DH Lawrence)
- *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (Thomas Hardy)
- *Lorna Doone* (RD Blackmore)
- *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Arthur Conan Doyle)
- *The Once And Future King* (TH White)
- *The Water Babies* (Charles Kingsley)
- *Collected Poems: 1951–75* (Charles Causley)

## HISTORY & BIOGRAPHY

- *A Cornish Childhood* (AL Rowse)
- *Summoned by Bells* (John Betjeman)
- *The Imaginary Autocrat: Beau Nash and the Invention of Georgian Bath* (John Eglin)
- *Secret Underground Bristol* (Sally Watson)
- *Vanishing Cornwall* (Daphne du Maurier)
- *A Wild Life on Exmoor* (Johnny Kingdom)
- *Sir Francis Drake* (John Sugden)
- *Brunel: The Man Who Built The World* (Stephen Brindle)

## GUIDEBOOKS

- *The South West Coast Path* (Official National Trail Guide)
- *Footprint Surfing Britain* (Chris Nelson and Demi Taylor)
- *South West Mountain Biking: Quantocks, Exmoor, Dartmoor Trail Guide* (Nick Cotton)
- *Pathfinder Walking Guides* (available for Cornwall, South Devon, Dartmoor and Somerset)
- *Complete British Birds: Collins Complete Photoguide* (Paul Sterry)
- *Fossils: A Collins Gem Guide* (Douglas Palmer)

There are several ways to cut costs if you're doing a lot of sightseeing. Membership of English Heritage (EH) and the National Trust (NT) can be a good investment, as these two organizations between them own many of the region's castles, country houses, gardens and monuments (with the added bonus that you'll also be able to park for free at all NT beaches). And it's worth remembering that many of the best attractions are completely free: sandy beaches, coastal walks and exquisite country scenes all come without an admission charge (although sadly the same can't always be said for the nearby car parks).

## TRAVEL LITERATURE

There's plenty of reading material around if you want to get familiar with the southwest before you arrive. The region has inspired countless poets and writers down the years, and you'll come across a whole pantheon of colourful characters during your travels, from pioneering engineers and crackpot inventors to smugglers, explorers and sea captains. We've included some of our favourite titles in the boxed text, p19, but the list is by no means exhaustive – do a bit of digging and you're bound to turn up your own undiscovered gem.

## INTERNET RESOURCES

You can't beat the net as a fount of preplanning information, but finding what you want can sometimes be a challenge. Your first port of call should be the main **Visit Southwest** ([www.visitsouthwest.com](http://www.visitsouthwest.com)) website, an excellent general resource put together by the southwest tourist board, with separate themed subsites on everything from heritage and nature to outdoor activities and romantic getaways.

The **Lonely Planet** ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)) site is always a useful resource, and you can check out the Thorn Tree forum for tips from other travellers to the southwest.

**Adventure Southwest** ([www.itsadventuresouthwest.co.uk](http://www.itsadventuresouthwest.co.uk)) Comprehensive advice on adventure sports in the region.

**Countryside Access** ([www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk)) Find out which bits of the countryside you can (and can't) ramble over.

**English Heritage** (ET; [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)) If you can't find the castle or monument you're after on the NT site, chances are it'll be here.

**Good Beach Guide** ([www.goodbeachguide.co.uk](http://www.goodbeachguide.co.uk)) More sage and sandy advice on the region's best beaches.

**National Trust** (NT; [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)) Opening hours, prices and maps for all the NT's houses and gardens.

**Surfcore** ([www.surfcore.co.uk](http://www.surfcore.co.uk)) Surfers' site with links to lots of local blogs.

**Youth Hostel Association** ([www.yha.org.uk](http://www.yha.org.uk)) Plan your stay at one of the many fantastic YHAs dotted across the southwest.

# Itineraries

## CLASSIC ROUTES

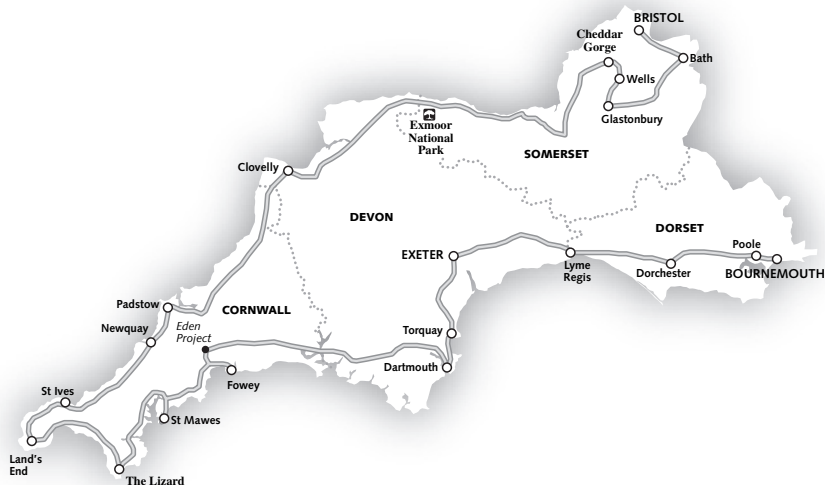
### THE GRAND TOUR

Four Weeks/Bristol to Bournemouth

This is the big one – end-to-end and top-to-bottom in one grand south-western adventure. Kick your trip off in the big city, **Bristol** (p76), then head to nearby **Bath** (p90) with its Georgian finery and 21st-century spa. Stock up on joss sticks in **Glastonbury** (p106); stroll around England's titchiest city, **Wells** (p100); delve into the caverns of **Cheddar Gorge** (p103); and explore **Exmoor** (p113), with its hilltop trails and red deer. Stop briefly in Devon at cliffside **Clovelly** (p216) before hitting the north coast of Cornwall – seafood central **Padstow** (p225), surf capital **Newquay** (p228) and art haven **St Ives** (p235).

Round the bend of **Land's End** (p243) and chase the curve of the **Lizard** (p248) to chichi **St Mawes** (p266) and the postcard-perfect harbour of **Fowey** (p269), allowing time for a side-trip via the **Eden Project** (p268). Then the home stretch: designer **Dartmouth** (p186), touristy **Torquay** (p178) and elegant **Exeter** (p166), rounded off with some fossil-hunting near **Lyme Regis** (p160), Hardy heritage in **Dorchester** (p138), and much-needed R&R in **Poole** (p129) and **Bournemouth** (p124).

The main event. A classic road trip around all the must-see sights the southwest has to offer: big cities, thatched villages, empty moors, boat-packed harbours and bone-white sands.

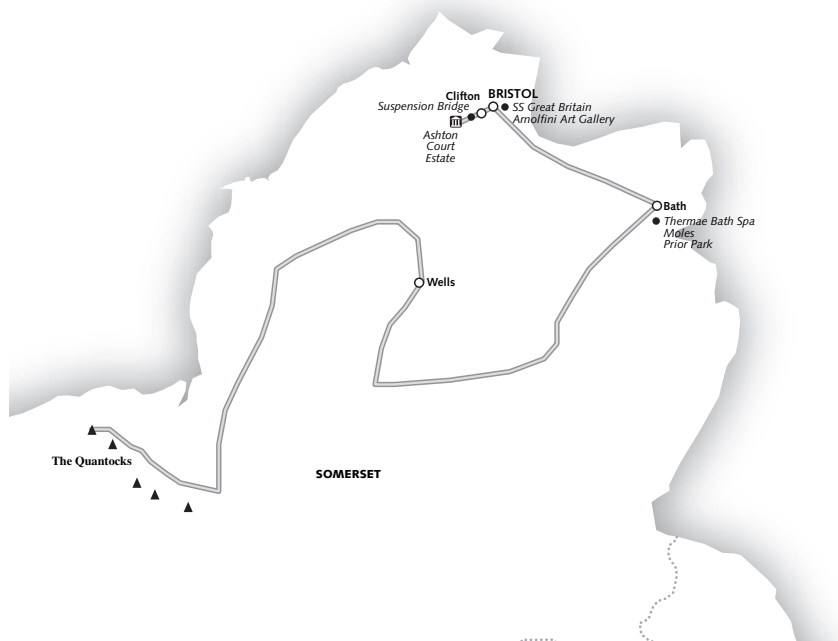


**This tour travels from big city to bucolic countryside in just under two weeks, taking in everything from Brunel's Bristol to tiny Wells and the wild Quantocks.**

## BIG CITY, LITTLE CITY

**Two Weeks/Bristol to the Quantocks**

This one's more focused, concentrating on the main attractions in the region's major cities. Open up in **Bristol** (p76) at Brunel's **SS Great Britain** (p79), see what's afoot in the **Arnolfini Art Gallery** (p79), chunter around the boutiques and bars of **Clifton** (p87) and drink in the views from the **Suspension Bridge** (p81). Spend the next couple of days exploring the city's **museums** (p80) and the 320-hectare grounds of **Ashton Court Estate** (p82). Then swap the big city vibe for gentler Georgian **Bath** (p90), famous for its Roman **hot tubs** (p92) and regal **crescents** (p93), as well as a clutch of **museums** (p94) where you can view everything from classical art to period Americana and Jane Austen artefacts. Take a plunge at the luxurious **Thermae Bath Spa** (p93), catch a gig at **Moles** (p99), and spend a day strolling around the imagination of Capability Brown at **Prior Park** (p100), before heading on to the smallest city of all, **Wells** (p100), with its stunning scissor-arched cathedral and Bishop's Palace. And to round the trip off, leave the cities behind on the **Quantocks** (p110), where you can shake the smog out of your lungs, get down to some countryside hiking and tuck into plenty of hearty pub grub and real ale.

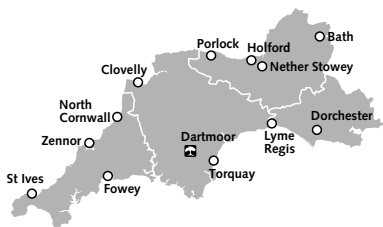




## TAILORED TRIPS

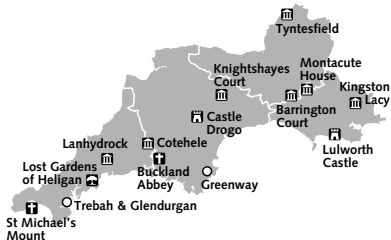
### LITERATURE LOVERS

England's far west has always attracted the nation's pen-pushers and poets. This route takes you on a whistlestop tour of the region's literary landmarks. Start in **Bath** (p90), the quintessential setting for Jane Austen's novels, before heading west across the Quantocks and Exmoor via **Nether Stowey** (p110), **Holford** (p110) and **Porlock** (p119), where Coleridge and Wordsworth wandered the hills in search of poetic inspiration. Further west is the hillside village of **Clovelly** (p216), where Charles Kingsley penned his classic children's tale *The Water Babies*, while the windswept cliffs of **north Cornwall** (p219) frequently informed the poems of John Betjeman. DH Lawrence briefly lived in **Zennor** (p240), while Virginia Woolf recalled her childhood holidays around **St Ives** (p235) in her groundbreaking novel *To The Lighthouse*. Follow in the footsteps of Daphne du Maurier in **Fowey** (p269), Agatha Christie in **Torquay** (p178), Arthur Conan Doyle on **Dartmoor** (p202) and John Fowles in **Lyme Regis** (p160), before finishing up in Thomas Hardy's Casterbridge – aka Dorset's county town, **Dorchester** (p138).



### GREAT ESTATES

The southwest is stuffed with historical houses and (not so secret) gardens, and no matter which county you're in, a grand country seat is never far away. In Somerset, the finest examples are at **Montacute House** (p113) and **Barrington Court** (p113), joined by new-boy **Tyntesfield** (p90), currently undergoing a huge restoration programme. In Devon, there's Drake's former seat at **Buckland Abbey** (p206), the architectural mish-mash of **Knightsayes Court** (p173) and the last castle built in England, **Castle Drogo** (p210), as well as Agatha Christie's hush-hush hideaway **Greenway** (p187). Dorset has its fair share of stately homes, notably **Kingston Lacy** (p134), designed by the architect of the Houses of Parliament, and **Lulworth Castle** (p137), a crenellated chateau that's endured everything from tasteless owners to tragic fires. But it's Cornwall that has the greatest concentration of aristocratic estates. **Cotehele** (p277) and **Lanhydrock** (p275) are the finest, combining architecturally extravagant mansions with glorious landscaped grounds. Elsewhere in Cornwall the gardens take centre stage: the Fox family duo of **Trebah** (p252) and **Glendurgan** (p252) sit side-by-side along subtropical valleys, while the **Lost Gardens of Heligan** (p267) contain their own jungle ravine filled with exotic ferns and towering trees. Out to the west sits **St Michael's Mount** (p248), a craggy island abbey silhouetted against the skyline of Mount's Bay that's been variously used as a monastery, fortress and family seat.



## WILD SOUTHWEST

If you want to get far from the madding crowd, then this backcountry tour's for you. First up is a spot of hiking around the high hills of the **Mendips** (p104) and the **Quantocks** (p110). There's wildlife, wetland and willow galore on the **Somerset Levels** (p111), while on **Exmoor** (p113), you can spend your days bombing down the bridleways on a mountain bike or hugging the hedgerows on a deer-spotting safari. South of Exmoor is the wild, windy, wet expanse of **Dartmoor** (p202), pocked by ancient bogs, granite tors and open heaths, and much loved by hikers, bikers and horse riders. Across the

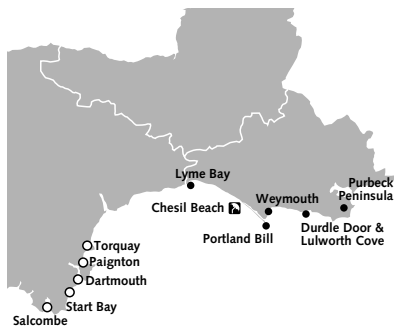
border is **Bodmin Moor** (p273), home to Cornwall's highest peaks, Brown Willy and Rough Tor, as well as prehistoric remains and a fabled feline beast. If you haven't fulfilled your wild fix, then head for the rocky cliffs of the **Lizard Peninsula** (p248) or the quoits and stone circles of **West Penwith** (p241). For the ultimate escape head for the **Isles of Scilly** (p253), where you can while away the days exploring turquoise bays that would put most South Pacific islands to shame.



## SEASIDE SPECIAL

For many people the southwest is all about the seaside, and there's somewhere to suit you whether you're after untouched beaches or stripy deckchairs on the sand. One of the most intriguing stretches is along the south Dorset coast; start off with a mosey around the **Purbeck Peninsula** (p134), before heading west via **Durdle Door** (p137) and **Lulworth Cove** (p136), where you'll find shiny white cliffs, circular coves and dramatic rock stacks. Take a wander around the promontory of **Portland Bill** (p158) and the huge bank of pebbles that makes up **Chesil Beach** (p159). Then make a beeline for rust-red **Lyme Bay** (p160), where the rapidly eroding cliffs are a paradise for amateur palaeontologists. For

a more classic vision of the English seaside, you can't beat **Weymouth** (p155), where King George III kicked off the fashion for seaside dipping in the 18th century and Punch & Judy booths still man the beaches. Further west you'll find more class around the swish harbour towns of **Salcombe** (p192), and **Dartmouth** (p186), and wild beauty at **Start Bay** (p190). If you're still keen for kitsch look no further than **Torquay** (p178) and **Paignton** (p178), where Victorian piers, jingling amusement arcades and candy-coloured bathing huts line the seafront. Grab a bag of chips, stroll the prom and find a handy bench as the fairy lights wink on for that quintessentially British finish.



## ELEGANT ENGLAND

This tour steers a course through some of the southwest's quintessentially English towns. Top of the architectural heap is **Bath** (p90), with its concoction of Georgian crescents, landscaped gardens and palatial town houses; the gorgeous garden of **Prior Park** (p100) lies just outside the city, while the country house of **Tyntesfield** (p90), is to the northwest. The vintage cottages and quiet pubs of the Mendip villages are worth discovering, especially **West Harptree** (p105) and **Priddy** (p105), before heading south for the pocket-sized city of **Wells** (p100), still the official seat of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Have a mosey around **Glastonbury** (p106) and take a trip up the tor for views over the Somerset countryside, then veer south to the hilltop town of **Shaftesbury** (p152), where you'll find the classic English cobbled street on Gold Hill. Nearby **Sherborne** (p151) is blessed with a brace of imposing castles and a fabulous abbey dating from the early Middle Ages. Dorset's dotted with lots of smart market towns, including **Blandford Forum** (p153), **Wareham** (p134) and **Wimborne** (p133), and for more showiness there's also the elegant country house at **Kingston Lacy** (p134) and the rarefied ruins of **Corfe Castle** (p136). **Lyme Regis** (p160) still cuts a dashing figure, but it's outstripped in the style stakes by the red-brick streets of **Dorchester** (p138) and the cathedral city of **Exeter** (p166).



## TASTEBUD TOUR

Time to think with your stomach. The southwest is becoming a destination of choice for people who appreciate fine wine and even finer food, so here's a quick rundown of the culinary cornerstones. Top on the specials board is the north Cornish coast, where you'll find Rick Stein's gastronomic empire in **Padstow** (p228), Jamie Oliver's spanking new restaurant on **Watergate Bay** (p232) and a bumper catch of seafood restaurants around **St Ives** (p238). Over at **Newlyn** (p244) you can buy lobsters and crabs straight from the pot, while there are loads of little farm shops dotted around the county worth seeking out. Across the Devon border you'll find another celebrity set-up run by TV chef John Burton Race in **Dartmouth** (p190), while **Torquay** (p182) is another good spot for a gourmet gander. Bristol's got some fantastic eateries, too – our favourites are **riverstation** (p86) and **Severnshed** (p86) for top-class waterside dining.

For tippers, the **Camel Valley Vineyard** (p275) in Cornwall and the **Sharpham Vineyard** (p184) in Devon are brewing vintages that have even got the French sitting up and taking notice. The **Blue Anchor** (p249), in Helston, and the **Beer Engine** (p173), near Lyme Regis, both brew their own beer. Still not feeling too tipsy? Then take a gin tour in **Plymouth** (p198) or a spin around a traditional scrumpy farm in Somerset p114. Here's mud in your eye!



# On the Road



## **OLIVER BERRY** *Coordinating Author*

### **Kynance Cove**

Kernow's where I grew up and where I still live, so it's a place that's sort of in my blood. Here I'm on the cliffs above a beautiful little corner of the Lizard called **Kynance Cove** (p250), basking in the sunshine and drinking in the views. Cornwall's got a wild, grand edge that's different to the rest of Britain, and I miss it when I'm away.



## **BELINDA DIXON**

### **Tidal Road**

Sometimes in Devon you just have to wait for dinner. The stretch of water in front of the car is covering a tidal road on the way to a bistro near **Bigbury-on-Sea** (p195) in the south of the county. When the tide is high you can go the longer way around, but this route is much more fun. And if you haven't quite judged it right take a tip from the locals: take it easy, watch the boats bobbing on the river, wait for the water to fall and get them to hold that starter.

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