



Britain

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Why Go?

Few places cram so much history, heritage and scenery into such a compact space as Britain. Twelve hours is all you'll need to travel from tip-to-tip, but you could spend a lifetime exploring – from the ancient relics of Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall, to the great medieval cathedrals of Westminster, Ely and Canterbury, and the magnificent country houses of Chatsworth and Castle Howard.

In fact, Britain isn't really one country at all, it's three. While they haven't always been easy bedfellows, the contrast between Britain's nations is one of the things that makes this such a rewarding place to visit. And with a wealth of glorious coastline, rolling countryside, stately cities, world-class museums and national parks to explore, Britain really is one of Europe's most unmissable destinations. And despite what you may have heard, it doesn't rain *all* the time – but even so, a brolly and a raincoat will certainly come in handy...

Best Places to Eat

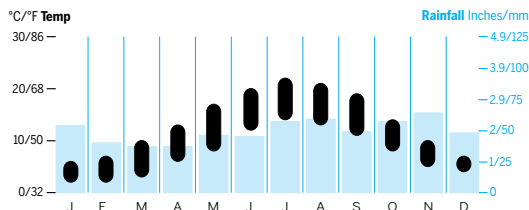
- » Modern Pantry (p192)
- » Muset by Ronnie (p215)
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Best Places to Stay

- » Hoxton Hotel (p189)
- » Halcyon (p212)
- » Hotel Indigo (p245)
- » Hotel Missoni (p268)
- » Clachaig Inn (p282)

When to Go

London



Easter–May
Fewer crowds, especially in popular spots like Bath, York and Edinburgh.

Jun–Aug The weather is at its best but the coast and national parks are busy.

Mid-Sep–Oct
Prices drop and the weather is often surprisingly good.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** pound sterling (£)
- » **Languages** English, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic
- » **Money** Change bureaux and ATMs widely available
- » **Visas** Schengen rules do not apply

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 88,500 sq miles
- » **Capital** London
- » **Country code** 44
- » **Emergency** 999 or 112

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	UK £0.68
Canada	C\$1	UK £0.64
Euro Zone	€1	UK £0.84
Japan	¥100	UK £0.70
New Zealand	NZ\$1	UK £0.55
USA	US\$1	UK £0.65

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** £60-80
- » **Two-course meal** £10-15
- » **Pint of beer** £3-4
- » **London Tube ticket** £4.50

Resources

- » **Visit Britain** (www.visitbritain.com) Comprehensive national tourism website.
- » **Traveline** (www.traveline.org.uk) Timetables and travel advice for public transport across Britain.
- » **Lonely Planet** (www.lonelyplanet.com/england/london) Planning advice, traveller reviews and insider tips.

Connections

The opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994 introduced direct Eurostar rail services to Britain from Paris and Brussels. Ferries sail from southern England to France in a couple of hours, from eastern England to the Netherlands, Germany or northern Spain, from northern England to Scandinavia, from southwest Scotland to Northern Ireland, and from Wales to the Republic of Ireland.

ITINERARIES

One Week

With just seven days, you're pretty much limited to sights in England. Start in London, then branch out to Canterbury and Brighton, or Salisbury and Stonehenge (or all four). Sample the delights of historic Bath, tootle up to Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon, then head east to Cambridge before returning to London.

Two Weeks

Start in London, then do a southeast-southwest loop via the grand cathedral cities of Canterbury, Winchester and Salisbury. Marvel at the iconic menhirs of Stonehenge and nearby Avebury, and enjoy more history in beautiful Bath. Head over to Cardiff for a taste of Wales, then cruise across the classic English countryside of the Cotswolds to reach Oxford. Not far away is Stratford-upon-Avon, for everything Shakespeare. Strike out north to Scotland's capital Edinburgh, before recrossing the border down to Durham and York, followed by Cambridge and back to London.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Roast beef with Yorkshire pudding** Iconic English dish: beef with baked-batter pudding.
- » **Bangers and mash** Another icon: sausages and mashed potato.
- » **Fish and chips** Once the nation's most popular takeaway food, though nowadays a curry is the favourite.
- » **Haggis** Scottish speciality of sheep-offal pudding served with 'tatties and neeps' (potatoes and turnips).
- » **Cawl and bara lafwr** Welsh treats: a broth made with lamb and leeks; savoury scones made with oatmeal and seaweed.