

Tatler Travel

Edited by MELINDA STEVENS

THE GREAT BRITISH ESCAPE SPECIAL

THE COAST

Nowhere is better than Britain in the summertime sun – we all know that. We'd damn near sell a kidney for its blistering rays. So let's just assume it's going to be a goodie and make a beeline for the coast, which happens to be twinkling with secret, gorgeous barnacles of brilliance. In the Cary Arms (caryarms.co.uk), there's lots of sloe gin and cooking up what you fished for that morning, and the view from the rolltop bath is of the bobbing bay all the way from here in Devon to undulating Dorset. After clifftop walks of wind and salty air, fall apart in big armchairs, eat pizza from outside ovens and get lost in whisky mist. In Cornwall, you might find the Camerons boogie-boarding in Rock and eating eggs Benedict from Blue Tomato (way more expensive than Daylesford), but where does the stylish holidaymaker stay? The answer is Boutique Retreats (boutique-retreats.co.uk), the go-to website for anyone who has swapped their week in Ibiza or San Tropez for Mousehole and Penzance. Here are high-end fisherman's cottages with whitewashed floorboards, granite kitchens and state-of-the-art bathrooms. As far as the east coast is concerned, Holkham and Burnham Overy are all very well, but where's the classic seaside of old, the penny arcades? Head to Camber, where the sand drifts like dry ice over the dunes, and the Gallivant (thegallivanthotel.com) is all driftwood and charm. Stay in one of the new studios and feast on potted shrimp and freshly landed sea bass. And then there's Monkey Beach Cottage (monkeybeachcottage.co.uk) off the weird, wonderful and thrillingly spooky Essex coastline (think *Great Expectations*); the oyster sheds in the boatyards are awesome. The butcher, baker and cappuccinos five minutes away in West Mersea village are all excellent. Catch the cottage across the causeway – a riot of creeks that flood twice a day – while you can. □