# CANTERBURY AND THE SOUTHEAST

Updated by Joseph Reaney













# WELCOME TO CANTERBURY AND THE SOUTHEAST

#### TOP REASONS TO GO

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- ★ Castles galore: From Dover to Herstmonceux, these fortresses will dazzle with their architecture and fascinate with their histories.
- ★ Brighton: With its great bars and restaurants, top-notch nightlife, and sunbathing-friendly shoreline, this is the quintessential modern English seaside city.
- ★ Canterbury Cathedral: This enormous House of God, a masterpiece of medieval architecture, inspires awe with its soaring towers and

### ★ Manors and Mansions:

flagstone corridors.

West Kent is home to one of England's richest concentrations of historic homes, including the medieval moated lghtham Mote and the sprawling Jacobean-style Knole.

★ Gardens: Gardens of all kinds are an English specialty, and at Sissinghurst and Wisley, as well as in the gardens of Hever Castle and Chartwell, you can easily spend an entire afternoon wandering through acres of exotic flora.

The eastern part of the region takes in the cathedral town of Canterbury and the Kent coast, right down to the port city of Dover with its famous white cliffs. The next section heads inland to the pretty spa town of Royal Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding area of West Kent, where stately homes and castles dot the farmland. A third part encompasses the county of East Sussex, which includes the medieval hill town of Rve. the 1066 battlefield near Hastings, and the cool coastal city of Brighton. And the fourth section covers the western part of the region: coast-hugging West Sussex-including its county town of Chichester—and Surrev.

- Canterbury. A
  UNESCO-listed medieval
  town dominated by a
  massive cathedral
  founded more than 1,000
  years ago.
- 2 Deal. A quiet seaside town home to two famous coastal castles built during the reign of Henry VIII.
- **Dover.** A busy port town, famed for its striking white cliffs.



- 4 Royal Tunbridge
  Wells. An ideal base for
  exploring nearby regal
  homes and gardens.
- Hever. Home to Hever Castle—seat of Anne Boleyn's family—and close to Winston Churchill's residence Chartwell.
- Tonbridge. A little market town within easy reach of renowned country houses like Knole and Ightham Mote.



- Rochester. A historic cathedral city best known for its Norman castle and Georgian dockyard.
- 8 Rye. A pretty hill town popular with London day-trippers.
- Hastings. A oncepopular Victorian spa town, famed for the nearby 1066 battefield.
- Lewes. A gem of a town with a crumbling medieval castle, a famous opera festival, and a penchant for bonfires.
- Brighton. A funky and lively city that blends Victorian architecture with the best shopping and dining on the coast.
- Arundel. A little hilltop town with an impressive castle, a neo-Gothic

- cathedral, and a medieval priory church.
- © Chichester. The charming capital of West Sussex, which once played an important role in ancient Rome.
- ☑ Guildford. The largest town in Surrey, known for its historic merchants' houses and ruined
  Norman castle.

### TEA TIME IN ENGLAND

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Tea is often called the national drink, and for good reason. Most people start their day with "a cuppa," have tea breaks in the afternoon, and a cup after dinner.

Yet despite its ubiquity, a patiently brewed cup of tea can also take on a rare sophistication when combined with a scone in a cream tea or, even better, as part of a fancier formal afternoon tea.

It's hard to imagine a time when tea wasn't part of English culture. But there was no tea in Europe until the 1600s, when it was first brought by Portuguese and Dutch traders. Charles II and his wife, Catherine of Braganza, were tea drinkers. When coffeehouses in London began serving the drink in the mid-17th century, it was seen as an expensive curiosity. By the early 18th century, tea was sold in coffeehouses all over the country, and consumed by all classes. The Duchess of Bedford is credited with popularizing formal afternoon tea in the early 1800s. Dinner in those days was often not served until after 8 pm, so a light meal in late afternoon was welcome. The tradition faded when more people began working in offices in the 20th century—though the love of tea remains.

#### WHICH TEA?

England's most popular tea is English Breakfast tea. a full-bodied blend of black teas. Second in line is Earl Grey: oil of bergamot orange creates an elegant perfume, but it's an acquired taste. Assam is one of the major teas blended into English Breakfast, and it tastes similar. if a bit more brisk. By contrast, Darjeeling is light and delicate; it's perfect for afternoons.

#### **CREAM TEA**

In popular tourist areas in Britain, signs everywhere advertise "cream tea." This is the national shorthand for "tea and scones." The "cream" part is delectable clotted cream—a cream so thick it has a texture like whipped butter. Some scones are fruity and have raisins or dried fruit; others are more like a cross between American biscuits and shortbread. Along with the cream, you'll usually be offered jam. It's customary to put both jam and cream on the scone, though there's no consensus on which should go first. In fact, it's a matter of some dispute, particularly between residents of southwestern counties Cornwall and Devon.

Cream teas are widely offered in areas favored by travelers, such as Stratford-upon-Avon, the Cotswolds, Devon, and Canterbury. In those regions, you'll see it advertised in pubs, restaurants, and dedicated tea shops. Cream tea is a casual afternoon affair: think of it as a coffee break, with tea. Your tea will likely be in a teabag rather than loose leaf. The cost is usually from £3 to £7.

#### **AFTERNOON TEA**

A pricey treat reserved for vacations and special occasions, afternoon tea (called "high tea" in America, but not in England, where that term referred to

**Amberley Castle** 





Cucumber sandwiches at afternoon tea

a meal between 5 and 7 pm) is served in upscale hotels in London, as well as in Oxford, Cambridge, and Brighton, or anywhere popular with travelers. Along with tea—and you can choose from a variety of teas—you'll be served finger sandwiches (usually cucumber, egg, ham, and smoked salmon) and scones, as well as tiny cakes and pastries. These will usually be brought on tiered plate stands, with sweet options higher up and savory on the lower level. Tea will be brewed in a china pot and served with china cups and saucers; milk and lemon are accompaniments.

Afternoon tea is generally offered between 3 and 5:30 pm and can last for hours. It's generally quite formal, and most people dress up for the occasion. Expect to spend anything from £20 to £60.

#### TEA IN THE SOUTHEAST

Amberley Castle. If you're indulging in an English tradition, why not do it at a castle? Amberley Castle, now a very expensive hotel, does an excellent afternoon tea, with all the requisite cakes and finger sandwiches. Make reservations. 

☐ Church St., Off B2139, Amberley ☐ 01978/831992 ⊕ www. amberleycastle.co.uk.

Surrey, Kent, and Sussex form the breadbasket of England, where bucolic farmland stretches as far as the eye can see. Once a favorite destination of English nobility, this region is rich with history, visible in the great castles and stately homes that dot the countryside.

Its cities are similarly historic, especially ancient Canterbury, with its spectacular cathedral and medieval streets. Along the coast, funky seaside towns have a more relaxed attitude, especially artsy Brighton, where artists and musicians use the sea as inspiration for their work.

Although it's close to London (both Surrey and Kent reach all the way to London's suburbs) and is one of the most densely populated areas of Britain, the Southeast feels far away from the big city. In Kent, acres of orchards burst into a mass of pink-and-white blossoms in spring, while Dover's white cliffs and brooding castle have become symbols of coastal Britain. Historic mansions, such as Petworth House and Knole, are major draws for travelers, and lush gardenssuch as Vita Sackville-West's Sissinghurst and the Royal Horticultural Society's Wisley-attract thousands to their vivid floral displays.

Because the English Channel is at its narrowest here, a great deal of British history has been forged in the Southeast. The Romans landed in this area and stayed to rule Britain for four centuries. So did the Saxons—Sussex means "the land of the South Saxons." The biggest invasion of them all took place here when William ("the Conqueror") of Normandy defeated the Saxons at a battle near Hastings in 1066, changing the island forever.

#### **MAJOR REGIONS**

Canterbury and the Kent Coast. The cathedral city of Canterbury is an ancient place that has attracted travelers since the 12th century. Its magnificent cathedral, the Mother Church of England, remains a powerful draw. Even in prehistoric times, this part of England was relatively well settled. Saxon settlers, Norman conquerors, and the folk who lived here in late-medieval times all left their mark. From Canterbury there's rewarding wandering to be done in the gentle Kentish countryside between the city and the busy port of Dover. Here the landscape ravishes the eye in spring with apple blossoms and in autumn with lush fields ready for harvest. In addition to orchards and market gardens, the county contains round oast houses. These buildings with tilted, pointed roofs were once used for drying hops; now many are expensive homes.

Tunbridge Wells and West Kent. England is world-renowned for its magnificent stately homes and castles, but many of them are scattered across the country, presenting a challenge for travelers. Within a 15-mile radius of Tunbridge Wells, however, in the area of hills and hidden dells known as the Weald, lies a wealth

of architectural wonder in the historic homes, castles, and gardens found here: Penshurst Place, Hever Castle, Chartwell, Knole, Ightham Mote, Leeds Castle, and lovely Sissinghurst Castle Garden.

East Sussex. The area to the west of Canterbury, both along the coast and inland, is home to a host of history-rich sites, including the delightful medieval town of Rye, the famous 1066 battlefield at Battle (near Hastings), and the location of the long-standing Glyndebourne Opera House Festival near Lewes. One of the three steam railroads in the Southeast services part of the area: the Romney. Hythe, and Dymchurch Railway.

Brighton, West Sussex, and Surrey. The self-proclaimed belle of the coast, Brighton is upbeat, funky, and endlessly entertaining. To the west is Chichester, with its fascinating Roman foundations and its 900-year-old poem-in-stone cathedral. Outside town, the soft green downs of West Sussex and Surrey hold stately homes you can visit, including Arundel Castle and Petworth House, as well as the bustling and historic town of Guildford.

# **Planning**

# When to Go

It's best to visit in spring, summer, or early fall. Many privately owned castles and mansions are open only between April and September or October, though the parks surrounding the stately houses may be open all year. If crowds tend to spoil your fun, avoid August, Sunday, and national holidays, particularly in Canterbury and the seaside towns.

#### **FESTIVALS**

#### **Arundel Festival**

FESTIVALS | The popular Arundel Festival presents dramatic productions, classical and pop concerts, and a few more locally

centered fun and games, such as a rubber duck race. Most events take place in and around the grounds of Arundel Castle for 10 days in late August. The full schedule is published on the website. arundelfestival.co.uk.

#### **Brighton Festival**

FESTIVALS | The three-week-long Brighton Festival, one of England's biggest and liveliest arts festivals, takes place every May in venues around Brighton. The more than 600 events include drama, music, dance, and visual arts. ⊠ Brighton 🖀 01273/709709 🏶 www.brightonfestival.org.

#### ★ Brighton Fringe

FESTIVALS | One of the largest fringe festivals in the world—and second only to the Edinburgh Fringe in Scotland—this fourweek-long arts extravaganza sees hundreds of stand-up, sketch comedy, music, dance, and circus acts descend on the city every May. ⋈ *Brighton* 🕾 01273/917272 www.briahtonfringe.org.

#### **Broadstairs Dickens Festival**

FESTIVALS | In 1937, Gladys Waterer, the then-resident of Dickens House in Broadstairs, put on a commemorative production of Charles Dickens's David Copperfield and had people about the town dress in Victorian clothing to publicize it. Since then, the town has hosted a Dickens Festival every June, incorporating everything from film screenings and walking tours to country fairs and dress-up mini-golf. ⋈ Broadstairs ≈ 01843/863701 www.broadstairsdickensfestival.co.uk.

#### **Canterbury Festival**

**FESTIVALS** | Kent's biggest international arts festival fills the town with music. dance, theater, and other cultural events for two weeks every October. \subseteq Canterburv a 01227/457568 www.canterburyfestival.co.uk.

#### **Rye Arts Festival**

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FESTIVALS | The town of Rye has long been a chosen residence for arty types, from Henry James and Anthony van Dyck to Paul McCartney and Spike Milligan. So it makes perfect sense that, for two weeks every September, the town hosts this art festival, filled with literary talks, film screenings, concerts, and theater performances. ⊠ *Rye* 🕾 01797/224442 www.rveartsfestival.org.uk.

# **Planning Your Time**

With the exception of Brighton, you can easily see the highlights of each of the towns in less than a day. Brighton has more to offer, and you should allot at least two days to take it all in. Consider basing yourself in one town while exploring a region. For example, you could stay in Brighton and take in Lewes on a day trip. Base yourself in Rye for a couple of days while exploring Winchelsea. Battle. Hastings, and Herstmonceux Castle. Royal Tunbridge Wells is a great place to overnight if you plan on exploring the many stately homes and castles nearby.

# **Getting Here and Around**

Although Heathrow isn't too far away, Gatwick Airport is the most convenient gateway for the Southeast. The rail station inside Gatwick has trains to Brighton and other major towns, and you can also take a taxi from Heathrow to Guildford for around £50.

#### BUS

National Express buses serve the region from London's Victoria Coach Station. Most of the larger towns can be reached this way; journey times vary from less than two hours (Canterbury) to more than three (Chichester). Megabus runs buses

at budget prices from Victoria Coach Station to many of the same destinations as National Express and can be cheaper, although luggage limits are strict.

Bus service between towns can be useful but is often intermittent. Out in the country, don't expect buses more often than once every half hour or hour. Traveline is the best central place to call for bus information, and local tourist information centers can be a big help.

**CONTACTS Megabus. @** 0900/160-0900 @ uk.megabus.com. National Express. **☎** 0871/781-8181 **⊕** www.nationalexpress.com. Traveline. \$\infty\$ 0871/200-2233 www.traveline.info.

#### CAR

While larger towns in the area can be easily reached by public transport (and having a car can be a bit of a nuisance), you will need your own wheels to visit most castles, grand country homes, and quiet villages. Major routes radiating outward from London to the Southeast are, from east to west, the A2/M2 via Canterbury (60 miles) to Dover (76 miles); the A21, passing by Royal Tunbridge Wells (42 miles) to Hastings (66 miles); the M23/A23 to Brighton (53 miles); and the A3 via Guildford (32 miles) to Chichester (72 miles).

#### **TRAIN**

Trains are the fastest and most efficient way to travel to major cities in the region, but they don't stop in many small towns. From London, Southeastern trains serve Sussex and Kent from Victoria and Charing Cross stations, and South Western Railway travels to Surrey from Waterloo Station. Getting to Brighton can take as little as one hour, Canterbury about 11/2 hours, and Dover around two hours. A Network Railcard costing £30, valid throughout the Southeast for a year, entitles you and three companions to one-third off many off-peak rail fares.

#### **CONTACTS National Rail Enquiries.**

co.uk. Network Railcard, @ 0345/300-0250 @ www.network-railcard.co.uk.

### Restaurants

If you're in a seaside town, look for that great British staple, fish-and-chips. Perhaps "look" isn't the word—just follow your nose. On the coast, locally caught seafood is the specialty. Try local smoked fish (haddock and mackerel) or the succulent local oysters. If you're inland, sample fresh local lamb and beef. In cities such as Canterbury, Brighton, and Tunbridge Wells, there are numerous restaurants and cafés, but out in the countryside the best options are often pubs.

### Hotels

All around the coast, resort towns stretch along beaches, their hotels standing cheek by jowl. Not all of the smaller hotels and questhouses remain open year-round; many do business only from mid-April to September or October. Some hotels have all-inclusive rates for a week's stay. Prices rise in July and August, when the seaside resorts can get solidly booked, especially Brighton. On the flip side, hotels may drop rates by up to 40% off-season. Places in Brighton may not take a booking for a single night in summer or on weekends.

Restaurant and hotel reviews have been shortened. For full information, visit Fodors.com. Restaurant prices are per person for a main course at dinner, or if dinner is not served, at lunch, Hotel prices are the lowest cost of a standard double room in high season, including 20% V.A.T.

WHAT IT COSTS in Pounds						
\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$			
RESTAURANTS						
under £16	£16-£23	£24-£30	over £30			
HOTELS						
under £125	£125- £225	£226- £350	over £350			

### Visitor Information

Tourist boards in the main towns can help with information, and many will also book local accommodations.

**CONTACTS Southeast England Tourist** Board. @ www.visitsoutheastengland. com.

# **Canterbury**

60 miles southeast of London, 18 miles northwest of Deal.

Just mention Canterbury, and most people are taken back to memories of high-school English classes and Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, about medieval pilgrims making their way to Canterbury Cathedral. Judging from the tales, however, in those days Canterbury was as much a party town as it was a spiritual center.

The city has been the seat of the Primate of All England, the archbishop of Canterbury, since Pope Gregory the Great dispatched St. Augustine to convert the pagan hordes of Britain in 597. The height of Canterbury's popularity came in the 12th century, when thousands of pilgrims flocked here to see the shrine of the murdered archbishop Thomas Becket. This southeastern town became one of the most visited in England, if not Europe. Buildings that served as pilgrims' inns (and that survived World War II bombing of the city) still dominate the

streets of Canterbury's center, though it's tourists, not pilgrims, who flock to this city of about 40,000 people today.

Prices at city museums are higher than average, so if you plan to see more than one, ask at the tourist office if a combination ticket might be cheaper.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

The fastest way to reach Canterbury from London is by train. Southeastern trains to Canterbury run every half hour in peak times from London's Charing Cross Station. The journey takes around 1½ hours. Canterbury has two centrally located train stations, Canterbury East and Canterbury West; both are about a 10-minute walk from the cathedral.

National Express and Megabus buses bound for Canterbury depart several times a day from London's Victoria Coach Station. Trips to Canterbury take around two hours and drop passengers at the bus station right in the center. If you're driving, take the A2/M2 to Canterbury from London (60 miles). Park in one of the signposted lots at the edge of the town center.

Canterbury has a small, walkable town center (there's also a good local bus service, but you're unlikely to need it). Most major tourist sites are on one street, though it changes name three times—from St. George's Street, to High Street, to St. Peter's Street.

#### TIMING

The town tends to get crowded around religious holidays—particularly Easter weekend—and on other national holiday weekends. If you'd rather avoid the tour buses, try visiting midweek.

#### **ESSENTIALS**

#### VISITOR INFORMATION Canterbury

Visitor Information Centre. 

☐ The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge, 18 High St.
☐ 01227/862162 
☐ www.canterbury. co.uk.

#### **TOURS**

#### **Canterbury Guided Tours**

Expert guides lead 90-minute walking tours at 11 am daily, with an additional tour at 2 pm on weekends from November to March and daily April through October. Tours start outside Christchurch Gate (the main cathedral gate) opposite the Buttermarket, and they cost £10. You can buy a ticket in advance online or during the tour.  $\bowtie$  Christchurch Gate, The Precincts  $\cong$  01227/459779  $\cong$  www. canterburyguidedtours.com  $\cong$  From £8.



#### The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge

MUSEUM | The medieval Poor Priests' Hospital is the site of this guirky local museum, where exhibits provide an overview of the city's history and architecture from Roman times to World War II. It covers everything and everyone associated with the town, including the mysterious death of the 16th-century writer Christopher Marlowe and the British children's book and TV characters Rupert the Bear and Bagpuss. One recent acquisition is a beautiful gold dragon pendant, made in Kent during the Anglo-Saxon era (410-1066). ⋈ 18 High St. 🕾 01227/862162 www.canterburymuseums.co.uk/ beaney E Free.

#### ★ Canterbury Cathedral

RELIGIOUS SITE | The focal point of the city was the first of England's great Norman cathedrals. Nucleus of worldwide Anglicanism, the Cathedral Church of Christ Canterbury (its formal name) is a living textbook of medieval architecture. The building was begun in 1070, demolished, begun anew in 1096, and then systematically expanded over the next three centuries. When the original choir section burned to the ground in 1174, another replaced it, designed in the new Gothic style, with tall, pointed arches.

The cathedral was only a century old, and still relatively small, when Thomas



Impressive both inside and out, ancient Canterbury Cathedral dominates the town.

Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered here in 1170. Becket, as head of the church, had been engaged in a political struggle with his old friend Henry II. Four knights supposedly overheard Henry scream, "Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?" (although there is no evidence that those were his actual words—the only contemporary record has him saying, "What miserable drones and traitors have I nourished and brought up in my household, who let their lord be treated with such shameful contempt by a low-born cleric?").

Thinking they were carrying out the king's wishes, the knights went immediately to Canterbury and hacked Becket to pieces in one of the side chapels. Henry, racked with guilt, went into deep mourning. Becket was canonized, and Canterbury's position as the center of English Christianity was assured.

For almost 400 years, Becket's tomb was one of the most extravagant shrines in Christendom, until it was destroyed by Henry VIII's troops during

the Reformation. In **Trinity Chapel**, which held the shrine, you can still see a series of 13th-century stained-glass windows illustrating Becket's miracles. (The actual site of Becket's murder is down a flight of steps just to the left of the nave.)

Nearby is the tomb of Edward, the Black Prince (1330–76), warrior son of Edward III and a national hero. In the corner of Trinity Chapel, a second flight of steps leads down to the enormous Norman **undercroft**, or vaulted cellar, built in the early 12th century. A row of squat pillars engraved with dancing beasts (mythical and otherwise) supports the roof.

To the north of the cathedral are the **cloisters** and a small compound of monastic buildings. The 12th-century octagonal water tower is still part of the cathedral's water supply. The Norman staircase in the northwest corner of the Green Court dates from 1167 and is a unique example of the architecture of the times. Another highlight is the almost Disney-like stained glass window "'Salvation" by Hungarian artist Ervin Bossányi.

Look out for a little padlock with a swastika, a reference to the atrocities that occured during World War II.

At the entrance to the cathedral, by Christchurch Gate, is a free-to-enter vistor center, which has more information on the history (and myth) of Canterbury Cathedral. ■TIP→ The cathedral is popular, so arrive early or late in the day to avoid the crowds. 

The Precincts thedral.org £12.50; free for services; £5 tour; £4 audio quide.

#### **Canterbury Roman Museum**

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MUSEUM | Below ground, at the level of the remnants of Roman Canterbury. this small but informative museum tells the story of the area's distant Roman past. Highlights of the collection include a hypocaust (the Roman version of central heating) and two colorful floor mosaics dating from around the year 270 that were unearthed in the aftermaths of the bombs that fell on Canterbury during World War II. Displays of excavated objects—some of which you can hold in the Touch the Past area—and computer-generated reconstructions of Roman buildings and the marketplace help recreate the past. \simes Butchery La. seums.co.uk/romanmuseum 🖼 £9.

#### **Christchurch Gate**

RELIGIOUS SITE | This huge gate, built in 1517, leads into the cathedral close. As you pass through, look up at the sculpted heads of two young figures: Prince Arthur, elder brother of Henry VIII, and the young Catherine of Aragon, to whom Arthur was married in 1501 (when he was just 15). He died shortly afterwards. and Catherine married Henry. Jump forward 25 years, and Henry was king. But they had produced no male children, a fact Henry attributed to God's wrath for marrying his sister-in-law. The Pope refused to grant him a divorce, but Henry went ahead and did it anyway, creating an irrevocable breach with the Roman

Catholic Church and altering the course of English history forever.

Outside the gate is the tiny Buttermarket, an old dairy market square with a sweet name and a dark past. Before the 16th century, it was called "the Bullstake," because animals were tied here and tortured (a popular activity of the time known as "baiting") before they were slaughtered. Today, it's surrounded by bars and restaurants and leads onto pretty Mercery Lane, with its medieval-style cottages and massive, overhang-Sun St. @ www.canterbury-cathedral.org.

#### Eastbridge Hospital of St. Thomas

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | The 12th-century building (which would now be called a hostel) lodged pilgrims who came to pray at the tomb of Thomas Becket. It's a tiny place, fascinating in its simplicity. The refectory, the chapel, and the crypt are open to the public. ⋈ 25 High St. 🕾 01227/471668 ⊕ www.eastbridgehospital.org.uk £3 © Closed Sun. and Nov.-late Mar.

#### **Medieval City Walls**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE | For an essential Canterbury experience, follow the circuit of the 13th- and 14th-century walls, built on the line of the Roman walls. Roughly half survive; those to the east are intact, towering some 20 feet high and offering a sweeping view of the town. You can access these from a number of places, including Castle Street and Broad Street. but perhaps the most photo-worthy section is by Canterbury East Station Bridge. ☑ Canterbury E. Station Bridge.

#### **Westgate Towers**

LOCAL INTEREST | In medieval times, Canterbury had seven gatehouses guarding entry to the city, but today only this one survives. Still, with its twin castellated towers, it's one of England's finest. Currently under renovation but still open to the public, Westgate Towers contains a small museum with exhibits on the gate's history, including medieval

armaments once used by the city quard and artifacts related to the city iail that was here from the 14th century. There are also some surprising links to the United States: one of the prisoners held here. Robert Cushman, was an organizer of the Mayflower voyage in 1620. Climb to the roof for a panoramic view of the city. The entrance is via a bar called The Pound Bar & Kitchen. Be aware that a trip to the top requires climbing five sets of narrow Pound Ln. ≈ 01227/458629 @ www.onepoundlane.co.uk/westgate-towers 2 £4 (£2 during renovation).

### Restaurants

#### City Fish Bar

\$ | BRITISH | Long lines and lots of satisfied finger licking attest to the deserved popularity of this excellent fish-and-chip shop in the center of town, where all orders are takeout. Everything is freshly fried, the batter crisp, and the fish tasty; the fried mushrooms are also surprisingly good. Known for: fresh fish in crispy batter; chunky chips; good-quality fast food. \$ Average main: £7 ⋈ 30 St. Margaret's com/cityfishbar.

#### ★ The Corner House

\$\$ | BRITISH | Set just outside the medieval city walls, this historic pub turned restaurant serves locally sourced British produce with creative culinary twists. Mains include confit pork belly with creamed kale and bacon and herb-crumbed cod loin with mash and cockles, but it's the "nibbles" (snacks) that are really inventive—try the sausage roll, served as three thick slices with homemade mushroom ketchup. Known for: building that dates back to 1574; to-die-for treacle bread; four guest rooms available on-site. \$ Average main: £19 ⋈ 1 Dover St. a 01227/780793 www.cornerhouserestaurants.co.uk.

#### The Goods Shed

\$\$ | BRITISH | Next to Canterbury West Station, this farmers' market restaurant with wooden tables is well known for offering fresh, seasonal Kentish food think monkfish with parsley dumplings and broccoli or guinea fowl with lentils and black pudding. Whatever is freshest that day appears on the menu, whether it's quail eggs, John Dory, or duck breast. **Known for:** fresh local produce: great seafood, including a catch of the day; cool historic design. \$ Average main: £18 \subseteq Station Rd. W \subseteq 01227/459153 ⊕ www.thegoodsshed.co.uk 
♥ Closed Mon. No dinner Sun.

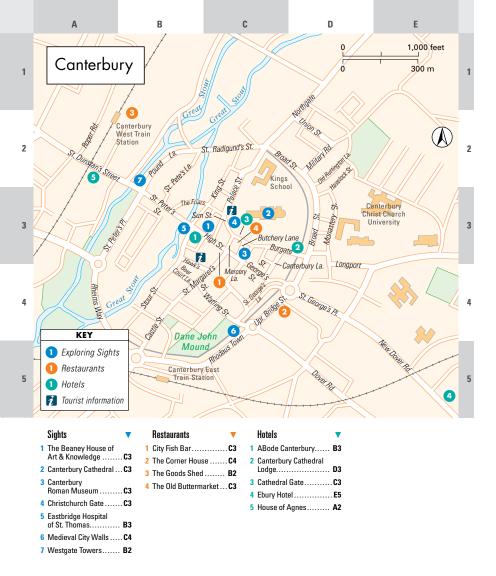
#### The Old Buttermarket

\$ | BRITISH | A colorful, friendly old pub near the cathedral, the Old Buttermarket is a great place to grab a hearty lunch and sample some traditional English fare with a modern inflection. You can sip a pint of fresh English ale from the ever-changing selection while sampling a wild boar and chorizo pie or perhaps a warming bowl of Applewood-smoked mac and cheese. Known for: great selection of ales; excellent savory pies; interesting history (there's been a pub in this spot for 500 years). \$ Average main: £13 ⊠ 39 Burgate 🖹 01227/462170 ⊕ www. nicholsonspubs.co.uk/theoldbuttermarketcanterbury 
No credit cards.



#### **ABode Canterbury**

\$ | HOTEL | This glossy boutique hotel inside the old city walls offers up-todate style in traditional Canterbury, with good-size rooms-modern but not minimal—classed as Comfortable. Desirable. Enviable, and Most Enviable. Pros: central location; luxurious handmade beds; tasty afternoon tea. Cons: one of the pricier hotels in town; bar gets guite crowded; breakfast is extra. \$ Rooms from: £110 \sim 30-33 High St. \sim 01227/766266 ⊕ www.abodecanterbury.co.uk ≈ 72 rooms ON No meals.



#### ★ Canterbury Cathedral Lodge

\$ | HOTEL | There is no more peaceful place to stay in Canterbury then at this small and modern hotel tucked away within the grounds of the famous cathedral. Pros: outstanding location; incredible cathedral views; free entry to the cathedral (worth £12.50). Cons: no lunch or dinner served in restaurant; double beds are small; gets booked up during conferences. \$ Rooms from: £120 ⋈ The Precincts 101227/865350 www.canterburycathedrallodge.org 35 rooms ¶⊙I Free breakfast.

#### **Cathedral Gate**

\$ | HOTEL | If you're looking for a hotel with history, you're in the right place: Cathedral Gate's ancient beamed ceilings, low doorways, and sloping floors reveal origins dating back to 1438 (that's 75 years earlier than Christchurch Gate next door). Pros: a real sense of history; convenient location right by cathedral; free tea and coffee served all day. Cons: cooked breakfast costs extra; patchy TV and Wi-Fi signal; some rooms share bathrooms. \$ Rooms from: £82 ⋈ 36 Burgate ≈ 25 rooms | Free breakfast.

#### **Ebury Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | Family run, this hotel earns rave reviews for its laid-back attitude and comfortable accommodations inside two big Victorian buildings. Pros: cozy lounge: lovely indoor pool; three- and four-bedrooms good value for families. Cons: a bit of a walk to the town center: no elevator; pet-friendly ethos is great for dog lovers, not allergy sufferers. \$ Rooms from: £130 \simes 65–67 New Dover Rd. co.uk 7 15 rooms Free breakfast.

#### ★ House of Agnes

\$ | B&B/INN | This historic B&B, which dates back 600 years and was written about by Dickens, offers unique and stylish accommodations not far from Canterbury West Station. Pros: historic building; just enough modern touches; honesty bar. Cons: rooms vary quite a bit in size; no elevator; quirky design not for everyone. \$ Rooms from: £95 \subseteq 71 St. Dunstans St. 8 01227/472185 www. houseofagnes.co.uk ≈ 17 rooms ¶ Free breakfast.



Canterbury is home to a popular university, and the town's many pubs and bars are busy and often crowded with college-age folks.

#### Alberry's Wine Bar

BARS/PUBS | With late-night jazz and hip-hop and a trendy crowd, Alberry's Wine Bar is one of Canterbury's coolest nightspots. At lunchtime they serve a fine burger, too. ≥ 38 St. Margaret's St. **1** 01227/452378 ⊕ www.alberrys.co.uk.

BARS/PUBS | Built in 1370 on Roman foundations, the Parrot is an atmospheric old pub known for its ever-changing selection of real ales. They also do good food; Sunday lunch here is particularly popular. ☑ 1–9 Church La. 🖹 01227/454170 www.parrotcanterbury.co.uk.

#### **Thomas Becket**

BARS/PUBS | A traditional English pub, with bunches of hops hanging from the ceiling and a fire crackling in the hearth on a cold winter's day, the Thomas Becket is a convivial kind of place. There is food available, but most people just come for the ale and the atmosphere. ≥ 21 Best La. 3 01227/464384 www.facebook. com/thethomasbecketpubrestaurant.

# Performing Arts

#### **Gulbenkian Theatre**

THEATER | Outside the town center, the Gulbenkian Theatre mounts all kinds of plays, particularly experimental works, as well as dance performances, concerts, and comedy shows. It also screens 

© 01227/769075 ⊕ www.thegulbenkian. co.uk.

#### The Marlowe Theatre

THEATER | This impressive modern performance space showcases Shakespeare productions, contemporary theater, music, dance, and comedy. It is also a venue for popular touring shows, including West End musicals. 

☐ 01227/787787 
☐ www.marlowetheatre.com.



Canterbury's medieval streets are lined with shops, perfect for an afternoon of rummaging. The best are in the district just around the cathedral. The King's Mile, which stretches past the cathedral and down Palace Street and Northgate, is a good place to start.

#### ★ Catching Lives Charity Bookshop

BOOKS/STATIONERY | One of Canterbury's most photographed buildings (and that's saying something), this wonderfully crooked half-timbered house dates back to the 17th century. Inside, volunteers sell a wide range of second-hand and collectable books, with all profits going to the local homeless charity Catching Lives. ⋈ 28 Palace St. © 07899/458961 ⊕ www.catchinglives. org/catching-lives-bookshop.

#### **Crowthers of Canterbury**

MUSIC STORES | Behind the delightfully old-style red shop front, Crowthers of Canterbury carries an extensive selection of musical instruments, gifts, and other souvenirs for music lovers. ⋈ 1 Borough © 01227/763965 ⊕ www.crowthersof-canterbury.co.uk.

#### 925 Silver

JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES | This little shop has a great selection of handmade silver jewelry. ⋈ 57 Palace St. ☎ 01227/785699 www.925-silver.co.uk.

#### \* Revivals

# Deal

18 miles southeast of Canterbury, 9 miles north of Dover.

The large seaside town of Deal, known for its castle, is famous in history books as the place where Caesar's legions landed in 55 BC, and it was from here that William Penn set sail in 1682 on his first journey to the American colony he founded, Pennsylvania.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

Southeastern trains travel to Deal twice an hour from London's St. Pancras Station and once an hour from London's Charing Cross. The journey takes between 1½ and two hours. You can also get a National Express bus from London's Victoria Coach Station, but there's only one bus per day (late evening), and the trip takes around three hours. From Canterbury, drive east on the A258 to Sandwich, then south on the A258 into Deal. Direct bus number 12 (45 minutes) is the best public transport option from Canterbury; trains take longer, cost more, and require a change in Ashford.

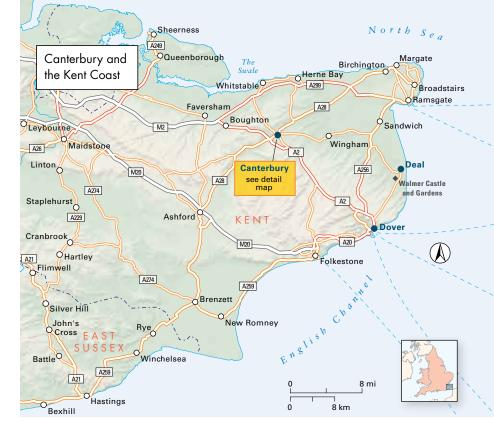
#### **ESSENTIALS**

#### **VISITOR INFORMATION Deal Visitor**



#### **Deal Castle**

CASTLE/PALACE | Erected in 1540 and intricately built to the shape of a Tudor rose, Deal Castle is the largest of the coastal



defenses constructed by Henry VIII. A moat surrounds its gloomy passages and austere walls. The castle museum has exhibits about prehistoric, Roman, and Saxon Britain. 

■ Victoria Rd. 
■ 0370/333–1181 
■ www.english-heritage.org.uk/deal 
■ £7.60 
○ Closed Mon. and Tues. in Mar. and weekdays Nov.—mid-Feb.

#### **Dickens House Museum**

MUSEUM | This house was originally the home of Mary Pearson Strong, on whom Dickens based the character of Betsey Trotwood, David Copperfield's aunt. Dickens lived here from 1837 to 1839 while writing *The Pickwick Papers* and *Oliver Twist*. Some rooms have been decorated to look as they would have in Dickens's day, and there's a reconstruction of Miss Trotwood's room as described by Dickens. The house is in Broadstairs, 18 miles up the coast from Deal. ⋈ 2 Victoria

Parade, Broadstairs ☎ 01843/861232 ⊕ www.dickensmuseumbroadstairs. co.uk ☎ £3.75 ♥ Closed Dec.–Mar. and weekdays in Nov.

#### **Walmer Castle and Gardens**

CASTLE/PALACE | Another of Henry VIII's coastal fortifications, this castle was converted in 1708 into a residence for the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, a ceremonial honor dating back to the early Middle Ages. Made up of four round towers around a circular keep, the castle has counted many famous figures among its lord wardens, including William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806), the Duke of Wellington (1769–1852), and Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965). The small museum here homes in on Wellington (who lived here from 1829 until his death), telling the story of his victory at Waterloo through a rather random selection of

memorabilia, including an original pair of Wellington boots, which the duke is credited with inventing.

Visitors can enter the drawing and dining rooms of the castle (except when the lord warden is in residence) and explore the eight acres of award-winning gardens that surround the fortification. These include the Glen, a planted former chalk quarry that's now open for the first time in a century, and the sprawling lavender gardens, which come with gorgeous ocean views. The castle is about two miles south of Deal town center. ⋈ Off Kingsdown Rd. ⋈ 0370/333−1181 www.english-heritage.org.uk/walmer t12.20 Closed Mon. and Tues. in Mar. and weekdays Nov.-mid-Feb.

# **Dover**

9 miles south of Deal, 78 miles east of London

The busy passenger port of Dover has for centuries been Britain's gateway to Europe, famed for its pretty white cliffs. The town itself is, sadly, not a pretty place; the savage bombardments of World War II and the shortsightedness of postwar developers left the city center in something of a mess. Mostly Dover town is a place you go through to get to the ferry. However, there are a couple of notable exceptions, including the Romanera legacy of a lighthouse adjoining a stout Anglo-Saxon church.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

National Express buses depart from London's Victoria Coach Station for Dover about every 90 minutes. The journey takes between 2½ and 3 hours. Drivers from London take the M20, which makes a straight line southeast to Dover. The journey should take around two hours. Southeastern trains leave London's Charing Cross, Victoria, and St. Pancras stations about every 30 minutes for Dover Priory Station in Dover. Direct trains take

around two hours; a slightly quicker (but usually more expensive) service changes in Ashford.

To get to Dover from Deal, drive south on the A258. There are also regular direct trains (16 minutes) and buses (40 minutes).

For the best views of the cliffs, you need a car or taxi; it's a long way to walk from town.

#### **ESSENTIALS**

VISITOR INFORMATION Dover Visitor Information Centre. ⋈ Dover Museum, Market Sq. 🖹 01304/201066 ⊕ www. whitecliffscountry.org.uk.



#### **★** Dover Castle

CASTLE/PALACE | FAMILY | Spectacular and with plenty to explore, Dover Castle, towering high above the ramparts of the white cliffs, is a mighty medieval castle that has served as an important strategic center over the centuries.

Most of the castle, including the keep, dates to Norman times. It was begun by Henry II in 1181 but incorporates additions from almost every succeeding century. The **Great Tower** re-creates how the opulent castle would have looked in Henry's time, complete with sound effects, interactive displays, and courtly characters in medieval costume.

History jumps forward the better part of a millennium (and becomes rather more sober in the telling) as you venture down into the labyrinthine **Secret Wartime Tunnels**. The castle played a surprisingly dramatic role in World War II, the full extent to which remained unknown for years afterward. These well-thought-out interactive galleries tell the complete story. The tunnels themselves, originally built during the Napoleonic Wars, were used as a top-secret intelligence-gathering base in the fight against Hitler.  $\boxtimes$  Castle Hill Rd.  $\cong$  0370/333-1181  $\cong$  www.



The majestic White Cliffs of Dover are a national icon.

english-heritage.org.uk/dover № £20.90 ⊗ Closed weekdays Nov.—mid-Feb. and Mon. and Tues. mid-Feb.—Mar.

#### **Roman Painted House**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE | Believed to have been a hotel, the remains of this nearly 2,000-year-old structure were excavated in the 1970s. It includes some Roman wall paintings (mostly dedicated to Bacchus, the god of revelry), along with the remnants of an ingenious heating system. ⋈ 25 New St. ⋈ 01304/203279 ⋈ karu.org.uk/roman\_painted\_house.html ∠ £4 ⊘ Closed Sun., Mon., Oct.-Mar., and Wed.-Fri. in May.

#### ★ White Cliffs

NATURE SITE | Plunging hundreds of feet into the sea, Dover's startingly white cliffs are a spectacular sight, and one of the most iconic symbols of England. The cliffs, which are composed mainly of chalk with slivers of flint, are eroding at a rather alarming rate: more than a foot (30 cm) a year on average. Because of this, you must be cautious when walking along the cliffs—experts recommend

staving at least 20 feet from the edge. The cliffs stretch for around eight miles altogether, but the most popular section to visit is the one managed by the National Trust, about two miles east of town. The visitor center has five miles of walking trails heading farther east to the 19th-century South Foreland Lighthouse and St. Margaret's Bay, with spectacular views along the way. There are also some lovely coastal walks to the west of Dover with good views of the cliffs, inclduing Samphire Hoe, Folkestone East Cliff, and Warren Country Park. Signs will direct you from the roads to scenic spots. ☑ Visitor Centre, Upper Rd., Guston www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-whitecliffs-of-dover Free; parking £5.



#### The Allotment

\$ | BRITISH | This charming, slightly quirky restaurant in the center of Dover doesn't look like much from the outside, but don't be fooled—delicious, creative Modern British meals are served within.

The menu is jam-packed with local and regional ingredients; try the pan-seared scallops to start, followed by Kentish venison steak or, even better, the bouillabaisse (a French seafood stew made with seasonal fish, shrimp, calamari, and clams in a garlic, white wine, and tomato sauce). **Known for:** house special fisherman's pie; lots of local produce; charming and quirky character. (§) Average main: £15 \to 9 High St. (§) 01304/214467

#### La Scala

\$ | SICILIAN | This cheerful Italian restaurant in the center of Dover is much favored by locals looking for an authentic, inexpensive Italian meal without feeling the need to sit up too straight. The menu is mostly Sicilian influenced; you might start with a simple caprese salad of fresh tomatoes with mozzarella and basil, before moving on to some homemade pasta with swordfish in a tomato and white wine sauce or a whole rump of lamb cooked with garlic and rosemary. **Known for:** delicious homemade pasta; authentic and informal Italian cooking; busy on weekends (so book early). \$ Average main: £13 ⋈ 19 High St. site & Closed Sun.



#### White Cliffs Hotelwhite

\$\$ | B&B/INN | Situated near St. Margaret's Bay, four miles east of town along the famous White Cliffs of Dover, this colorful little hotel is attached to a friendly pub that serves good food. Pros: tons of character; beautiful cliff-top location; good food. Cons: a little way from central Dover; Wi-Fi comes and goes; quite pricey for what you get. ⑤ Rooms from: £180 ⋈ High St., St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe ੴ 01304/852229 ∰ www.thewhitecliffs. com № 17 rooms 10 Free breakfast.

# **Royal Tunbridge Wells**

54 miles west of Dover.

Nobody much bothers with the "Royal" anymore, but Tunbridge Wells is no less regal because of it. Because of its wealth and political conservatism, this historic bedroom community has been the subject of (somewhat envious) British humor for years. Its restaurants and lodgings make it a convenient base for exploring the many homes and gardens nearby.

The city owes its prosperity to the 17th-and 18th-century passion for spas and mineral baths. In 1606, a mineral-water spring was discovered here, drawing legions of royal visitors looking for eternal health. Tunbridge Wells reached its zenith in the mid-18th century, when Richard "Beau" Nash presided over its social life. The buildings at the lower end of High Street are mostly 18th century, but as the street climbs the hill north, changing its name to Mount Pleasant Road, structures become more modern.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

Southeastern trains leave from London's Charing Cross Station every 15 to 20 minutes. The journey to Tunbridge Wells takes just under an hour. If you're traveling by car from London, head here on the A20/M25/A21; travel time is about an hour.

To get to Tunbridge Wells from Dover, drive west on the A20/M20, switching to the A228 heading south; the journey typically takes 1½ to two hours. You can also take an hourly train from Dover (1½ hours, with a change in Tonbridge).

Tunbridge Wells sprawls in all directions, but the historic center is compact. None of the sights is more than a 10-minute walk from the main train station. You can pick up a town map at the station.



#### **ESSENTIALS**

VISITOR INFORMATION Tunbridge Wells
Tourist Information Centre. ⋈ The Corn
Exchange, The Pantiles ☎ 01892/515675

⊕ www.visittunbridgewells.com.



#### ★ Church of King Charles the Martyr

RELIGIOUS SITE | This important parish church dates from 1678, when the area was little more than a mineral spring surrounded by fields; the modern town of Tunbridge Wells grew up around it. Dedicated to Charles I, who had been executed by Parliament in 1649—and whose son, Charles II, was restored 11 years later—the church's plain exterior belies its splendid interior, with a particularly beautiful plastered baroque ceiling. The entrance is on the corner of the A26 and the A267, across the road from the

Pantiles. 

Chapel Pl. 

01892/511745

www.kcmtw.org 
Free; donations welcome 
Closed Sun. except for services.

#### **Pantiles**

PROMENADE | A good place to begin a visit to Tunbridge Wells is at the Pantiles, a famous promenade with colonnaded shops near the spring on one side of town. Its odd name derives from the Dutch "pan tiles" that originally paved the area. Now sandwiched between two busy main roads, the Pantiles remains an elegant, tranquil oasis, and the site of the actual well. ■TIP→You can still drink the waters when a "dipper" (the traditional water dispenser) is in attendance, from Easter through September. ⋈ Royal Tunbridge Wells.

# Restaurants

#### \* Kitsu

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\$ | JAPANESE | This tiny, unassuming restaurant might seem like an unlikely venue for exceptional sushi, but it's the best for miles. Everything is fresh and delicious, from the fragrant miso soup to the light tempura to the sushi platters that are big enough to share. Known for: excellent sushi: good casual dining: BYOB and cash-only policies. \$ Average main: £13 \square 82a Victoria Rd. \square 07425/900016 ⊕ www kitsu co uk 

─ No credit cards

#### ★ Sankey's The Old Fishmarket

\$\$ | SEAFOOD | Serving the best of British seafood, as well as an extensive choice of champagne and sparkling wines. this intimate little restaurant has bar seating set around an open kitchen, so you can watch (and chat with) the chef preparing your food. But don't let the relaxed, friendly, and unstuffy atmosphere fool you; this is exceptional quality, fresh seafood cooked to perfection (or not cooked at all, in the case of the delicious oysters). Known for: intimate 20-seat setting; extensive oyster menu (including £1-an-oyster happy hour); historic old pavilion building. \$ Average main: £22 ⋈ The Pantiles, 19 The Upper the-old-fishmarket © Closed Mon.

#### ★ Thackerav's

\$\$\$\$ | FRENCH | Once the home of Victorian novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, this mid-17th-century tile-hung house is now an elegant restaurant known for creative French cuisine, with à la carte dishes like monkfish "on the bone" with barbecued celeriac or saddle of venison with roast sweet potatoes. A starter, main (plus side), and dessert will set you back £60, so if you're feeling hungry, opt for one of the prix fixe menus instead: there's the five-course seasonal tasting menu (£59 per person, plus £30 for wine pairing) or the seven-course "Chef's Tasting Menu" (£78 per person, plus £95

for premium wine pairing). Known for: fine dining experience; extravagant wine list; very expensive prices. \$ Average main: £34 \sqrt{85} London Rd. \sqrt{100} 01892/511921 mww.thackeravs-restaurant.co.uk Oclosed Mon. No dinner Sun.



#### Hotel du Vin

\$\$ | HOTEL | An elegant sandstone house dating from 1762 has been transformed into a chic boutique hotel with polished wood floors and luxurious furnishings. **Pros:** historic building; cute old-school elevator with mesh door; reliably good service. Cons: some rooms are small: bar can get crowded; big price hike in summer. \$ Rooms from: £170 ⋈ Crescent Rd. 🖀 01892/320749 🏶 www.hotelduvin. com/locations/tunbridge-wells 34 rooms Of Free breakfast.

#### ★ The Mount Edgcumbe

\$\$ | HOTEL | Perched on a hill overlooking the town below, this charming family-run boutique hotel has spacious, individually designed rooms that combine home comforts like Hypnos beds, walk-in showers, and roll-top baths, with quirky touches like bold print cushions, pineapple-shaped lamps, and antique chairs. Pros: excellent cellar restaurant; private parking available; delicious eggs royale at breakfast. Cons: an uphill walk from town; quirky touches not for everyone; no staffed reception. \$ Rooms from: £170 themountedgcumbe.com ≈ 6 rooms Tol Free breakfast.

#### **One Warwick Park**

\$ | HOTEL | This stylish boutique hotel in the center of Tunbridge Wells used to be a brewery and then a schoolhouse; today it's a luxurious and intimate place to stay, with spacious, contemporary quest rooms and modern bathrooms. Pros: chic design including underground art gallery; great food; central setting near Pantiles. Cons: cheapest rooms are small; no on-site parking; prices rise sharply for best rooms. \$ Rooms from: £115 ⋈ 1 Warwick Park ≈ 01892/520587 @ www. onewarwickpark.co.uk 39 rooms ¶⊙I Free breakfast.

#### **Spa Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | The country-house flavor of this 1766 Georgian mansion has been beautifully maintained by luxurious furnishings and preserved period details. Pros: lap-of-luxury feel; gorgeous countryside views; pony-riding lessons for kids. Cons: breakfast is extra; quite formal atmosphere; uphill walk from the town center. \$ Rooms from: £190 ⋈ Off Langton Rd. a 01892/520331 www. spahotel.co.uk ≈ 70 rooms No meals.

# Hever

10 miles northwest of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

The pretty village of Hever is best known for its romantic, history-layered castle—a fairy-tale medieval fortification on the outside and a Tudor mansion within. However, it's also within easy reach of two other famous heritage properties: Chartwell, the beloved home of Winston Churchill and magnificent views across rolling Kentish hills; and Penshurst Place, an Elizabethan manor house with one of the oldest and grandest medieval halls in England.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

Southern trains leave from London Bridge Station every hour. The journey to Hever takes around 40 minutes. If you're traveling by car from London, take the A2/M25/B2042: travel time is one to 11/2 hours. If driving from Tunbridge Wells, take the A264 east then follow signs directing you north on the B2026 toward Hever. Bus 234 runs between Tunbridge Wells and Hever three times a day (there's no convenient train connection).



#### Chartwell

**HOUSE** | A grand Victorian mansion with a pond-dotted estate offering views over the surrounding countryside, Chartwell was the beloved private home of Sir Winston Churchill from 1924 until his death in 1965. Virtually everything has been kept as it was when he lived here, with his pictures, books, photos, and maps. There's even a half-smoked cigar that the World War II prime minister never finished. Churchill was an amateur artist. and his paintings show a softer side of the stiff-upper-lipped statesman; outdoor art trails show his work displayed at the points where he likely sat to paint them. Admission to the house is by timed ticket available only the day of your visit. To get here from Hever, head north on the B2027 and follow signs. ■TIP→ Be sure to explore the rose gardens and take a walk in the surrounding countryside.  $\bowtie$  Mapleton Rd., Westerham @ 01732/868381 mww.nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell £19; garden and studio only £11; parking £4 \in House closed Nov.-Feb.

#### ★ Hever Castle

CASTLE/PALACE | It's hard to imagine a more romantic castle than this: nestled within rolling hills, all turrets and battlements, the whole encircled by a water lily-bound moat filled with fabulous beasts (enormous Japanese koi carp). Here, at her childhood home, Anne Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII and mother of Elizabeth I, was courted by Henry. He loved her dearly for a time, but had her beheaded in 1536 after she failed to give birth to a son. He then gifted Bolevn's home to his fourth wife. Anne of Cleves.

Famous though it was, the castle fell into disrepair in the 19th century. When American millionaire William Waldorf Astor acquired it in 1903, he needed additional space to house his staff. His novel solution was to build a replica Tudor village,



using only methods, materials, and even tools appropriate to the era. The result is more or less completely indistinguishable from the genuine Tudor parts.

Astor also created the stunning gardens, which today include an excellent yew maze, ponds, playgrounds, tea shops, gift shops, plant shops—you get the picture. There's a notable collection of Tudor portraits, and, in summer, activities are nonstop here, with jousting, falconry exhibitions, and country fairs, making this one of southern England's most rewarding castles to visit. In one of the Victorian wings, B&B rooms go for upwards of £145 per night for a basic room; there's also a four-bedroom holiday cottage available for £3,250 a week. ⋈ Off B2026, Hever @ 01732/865224 @ www.hevercastle.co.uk 2 £18/80; grounds only £15.55 © Closed Jan.-mid-Feb. and Mon. and Tues, in late Nov.-late Dec.

#### **Penshurst Place**

**HOUSE** | At the center of the adorable hamlet of Penshurst stands this fine medieval manor house, hidden behind tall trees and walls. Although it has a 14th-century hall. Penshurst is mainly Elizabethan and has been the family home of the Sidneys since 1552. The most famous Sidney is the Elizabethan poet Sir Philip, author of Arcadia. The Baron's Hall, topped with a chestnut roof, is the oldest and one of the grandest halls to survive from the early Middle Ages. Family portraits, furniture, tapestries, and armor help tell the story of the house, which was first inhabited in 1341 by Sir John de Pulteney, the very wealthy four-time London mayor. On the grounds are a toy museum, a gift shop, and the enchanting 11-acre walled Italian Garden, which displays tulips and daffodils in spring and roses in summer. Take time to study the village's late-15th-century half-timber structures adorned with soaring brick chimneys. To get here from Hever, take the B2027 east then follow signs to Penshurst. ⋈ Rogues

Hill, Penshurst and 01892/870307 www. penshurstplace.com 🖼 £12.50; grounds only £10.50 @ Closed Nov.-mid-Feb. and weekdays mid-Feb.-Mar.

### Restaurants

#### The Spotted Dog

\$ | BRITISH | One mile south of Penshurt, this historic pub first opened its doors in 1520 and in many ways hardly appears to have changed today. Its big inglenook fireplace and heavy beams give it character, the views from the hilltop are lovely, and the good food (a mixture of traditional pub grub and slightly more sophisticated fare) make it a pleasure to relax inside. **Known** for: mixture of casual and formal dining; atmospheric old pub; lovely beer garden in summer. \$ Average main: £13 ⋈ 6 Saint's Hill, Penshurst and 01892/870253 www. spotteddogpub.com.

# Tonbridge

9 miles east of Hever.

This Kentish market town is a great base for exploring two magnificent Tudor properties. The first is Knole, perhaps the quintessential Tudor mansion, as famous for its literary connections and impressive collection of furniture and tapestries as it is for its elegant 15th- and 16th-century architecture. The second is Ightham Mote, a captivating, unreal-looking place that's almost unique among medieval manor houses in that it still has a moat (although that has nothing to do with the name).

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

Southeastern trains leave several times an hour from London Charing Cross to Tonbridge (40 minutes). Driving, via the A2/ M25/A21, takes a little longer (one to 11/2 hours). If driving from Hever, head east on the B2027 to reach Tonbridge. The town is five miles north of Tunbridge Wells; drive on the A26 or take one of the regular trains (10 minutes) or buses (25 minutes).



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#### **All Saints Church**

RELIGIOUS SITE | Situated two miles east of Tonbridge in the little village of Tudeley, this modest 13th-century church holds one of the glories of 20th-century church art. The building is awash with the luminous yellows and blues of 12 windows by Marc Chagall (1887-1985), commissioned as a tribute by the family of a young girl who drowned in a sailing accident in 1963. To get here, take the A26 from Tonbridge, then continue a mile or so east along B2017. ⋈ Off B2017, org/allsaintstudelev.htm @ Free: £3 donation requested.

#### ★ Ightham Mote

HOUSE | This wonderful, higgledy-piggledy, timber-framed medieval manor house looks like something out of a fairy tale. Even its name is a bit of an enigma—"Ightham" is pronounced "Item" (we can't quite figure that out either) and "Mote" doesn't refer to the kind of moat you get in a castle, but an old English word for meeting place. Perhaps it's also fitting, then, that finding the place takes careful navigation down tiny, winding country lanes, and then even to reach the front door you must first cross a narrow stone bridge over the moat (yes, it has one of those, too). But it's all worth the effort to see a fanciful vision right out of the Middle Ages.

Built nearly 700 years ago, Ightham's magical exterior has hardly changed since the 14th century, but within you'll find that it encompasses styles of several periods, from Tudor to Victorian. The Great Hall, the Tudor chapel, and the drawing room are all highlights of the main property. Nearby is the smaller but equally pretty Laundry Hall, home to a second-hand bookshop and exhibition, as well as shaded woodland walks (awash with bluebells in spring), a pretty pond, and a natural play area for little ones.

Ightham Mote is six miles north of Ton-Sevenoaks @ 01732/810378 @ www. nationaltrust.org.uk/ightham-mote £15.50 Mar.-Oct.: £5.40 Nov.-Feb. House closed Nov., Jan., and Feb.

#### **★** Knole

**HOUSE** | The pleasant but workaday town of Sevenoaks, seven miles northwest of Tonbridge, lies in London's commuter belt, a world away from the baronial air of its premier attraction: Knole, the grand, beloved estate of the Sackville family since the 16th century.

Begun in the 1400s and enlarged in 1603 by Thomas Sackville, Knole's sprawling complex of courtyards and outbuildings resembles a small town. In fact, with more that 300 rooms, 51 chimneys (count them!), and a total footprint covering five acres—the equivalent to almost four football fields—it's England's largest house. Factor in the supremely stroll-worthy (and free-roaming deerfilled) 1,000-acre park surrounding the property, and you'll need at least an afternoon to explore Knole thoroughly.

The house is noted for its wonderful tapestries, embroidered furnishings, and an extraordinary set of 17th-century silver furniture. Most of the salons are in the pre-baroque model, rather dark and armorial. The magnificently florid staircase was a novelty in its Elizabethan heyday. Vita Sackville-West grew up here and used it as the setting for her novel The Edwardians, a witty account of life among the gilded set.

Also on the property is the Conservation Studio, which showcases the work that the National Trust does at Knole and other local properties (you can also see the conservators in action), as well as the beautiful private garden, though this is only open on rare occasions.

In contrast to the property itself, the entrance is surprisingly low-key; look for the signposted track opposite St.

Sevenoaks @ 01732/462100 @ www. nationaltrust.org.uk/knole 2 £15.50; gatehouse tower £5; parking £5 \infty House closed Nov.-early Mar.

# Restaurants

#### The Greyhound

\$ | BRITISH | This cozy country pub, situated in the village of Charcott six miles west of Tonbridge, serves superior pub grub using fresh, local ingredients. The owners rear their own livestock, so you can be certain the lamb, beef, and pork on the menu is farm fresh. Known for: beautifully cooked Sunday roasts: wide choice of real ales; meat-heavy menu. \$ Average main: £13 ⋈ Off Camp Hill, thegreyhoundcharcott.co.uk 
Closed Mon.

# Rochester

20 miles northeast of Tonbridge.

Positioned near the confluence of the Thames and the River Medway, this posh town has a history of Roman, Saxon, and Norman occupation, all of which have left architectural remains, including the vast castle at the town center. Novelist Charles Dickens called Rochester home for more than a decade, until his death in 1870, and would sometimes walk here all the way from London.

South of Rochester, in the corridor between Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells, lies a number of interesting historic sights, including Leeds Castle and Sissinghurst Castle Gardens.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

From London, Rochester is a 45-minute drive via the M2/A2. Regular Southeastern trains from several London stationsincluding St. Pancras, Victoria, and Charing Cross—take a similar amount of time. To reach Rochester from Tonbridge, take

the A26 and A228 northeast. The journey takes about 45 minutes. Southeastern trains run regular services from Tonbridge to Strood (one hour), which is a 15-minute walk from Rochester town center.

#### **ESSENTIALS**

**VISITOR INFORMATION Medway Visitor Information Centre.** ⋈ 95 High St., The Precinct @ 01634/338141 @ www.visitmedway.org.



#### **Historic Dockyard**

MARINA | FAMILY | The buildings and 47 retired ships at the 80-acre dockyard across the River Medway from Rochester constitute the country's most complete Georgian-to-early-Victorian dockyard. Fans of maritime history could easily spend a day at the exhibits and structures. The dockyard's origins go back to the time of Henry VIII; some 400 ships were built here over the centuries. Highlights include Maritime Treasures, a museum of naval artifacts including some fascinating 18th-century scale models; the Victorian Ropery, where costumed guides take you on a tour of an old rope factory, including its impressive quarter-mile-long "rope walk," where ropes are still made using old methods; and the Courtyard, part of the old Smithery (blacksmith), where special events are sometimes held, including pirate-themed fun davs for kids in summer. There's also a guided tour of the submarine HMS Ocelot, the last warship to be built for the Royal Navy at Chatham. ■TIP→ Book online in advance for good discounts on admission. 

Main Gate Rd., Chatham £22 ♥ Closed late Nov.-mid-Feb.

#### ★ Leeds Castle

CASTLE/PALACE | Every inch the grand medieval castle. Leeds is more like a storybook illustration of what an English castle should look like, from the fortresslike exterior to the breathtaking rooms

within. Ramparts and battlements? Check. Moat? Check. Ancient stone walkways on which you just know a knight in shining armor might pass by at any second? Pretty much.

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Leeds—not to be confused with the city in the north of England; the name comes from its mention as "Esledes" (meaning "hill" or "slope") in the Domesday Book of 1086—has all this and more. One of England's finest castles, it commands two small islands on a peaceful lake. Dating to the 9th century and rebuilt by the Normans in 1119, the castle became a favorite home of many medieval English queens. Henry VIII liked it so much he had it converted from a fortress into a grand palace.

The interior doesn't match the glories of the much-photographed exterior, although there are fine paintings and furniture, including many pieces from the 20th-century refurbishment by the castle's last private owner, Lady Baillie. The outside attractions are more impressive and include a surprisingly tricky maze (made from 2,400 yew trees), which leads to an atmospheric rock-carved grotto, as well as two adventure playgrounds, an aviary of native and exotic birds, and woodland gardens. There are also several dining options, including the informal but excellent Castle View Restaurant (try the haddock-and-chips).

Leeds Castle is 12 miles southeast of Rochester, off the M20 highway.

■TIP→ All tickets are valid for a year, in case you don't manage to see everything in one day. ⋈ Off A20, Maidstone

© 01622/765400 ⊕ www.leeds-castle. com ≤ £27.

#### **Rochester Castle**

CASTLE/PALACE | The impressive ruins of Rochester Castle comprise a superb example of Norman military architecture. The keep, built in the 1100s using the old Roman city wall as a foundation, is the tallest in England. In 1215, during King John's struggle against the barons who wanted him to sign the Magna Carta,

#### **Rochester Cathedral**

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | Augustine of Canterbury ordained the first English bishop in a small cathedral that stood on this site in the vear 604. The current cathedral, England's second oldest, is a jumble of architectural styles. Much of the original Norman building from 1077 remains, including the striking west front, the highly carved portal, and the tympanum above the doorway. Some medieval art survives, including a 13th-century Wheel of Fortune on the choir walls; it's a reminder of how difficult medieval life was. Informative, full-length guided tours take place daily at 11:30 am (£4 per person), with 20-minute "spotlight" tours daily at 10:30 am and 1:15 pm (free). Check the website for special evening viewings (a small charge applies) and various events, including music and supper. ⋈ Boley Hill @ 01634/843366 ⊕ www.rochestercathedral.org ☑ Free (donations welcome).

#### ★ Sissinghurst Castle Garden

GARDEN | One of the most famous gardens in the world, unpretentiously beautiful and quintessentially English, Sissinghurst rests deep in the Kentish countryside. The gardens, with their many different themed "rooms," were laid out in the 1930s around the remains of part of a moated Tudor castle by writer Vita Sackville-West (one of the Sackvilles of Knole, her childhood home) and her husband, diplomat Harold Nicolson. The relationship was clearly loving but also complicated, as both had a

string of extramarital same-sex affairs; Vita, famously, had a decade-long romance with Virginia Woolf.

Climb the tower for a wonderful overview of the gardens—as well as a peek inside Vita's study en route—then descend to see them up close. There's the stunning White Garden, filled with snow-color flowers and silver-gray foliage: the herb and cottage gardens, which showcase Sackville-West's encyclopedic knowledge of plants: and the Delos Garden, which brings a slice of the Mediterranean to the heart of Kent (as well as finally realizing a dream of Vita and Harold's following their visit to Greece in 1935). As well as the gardens, there are woodland and lake walks all around, making it easy to spend a half day or more here.

If you love it all so much you want to stay, you can—the National Trust rents the Priest's House on the property for a minimum stay of three nights; prices start at around £700 and rise to upwards of £1,600 in midsummer. See the National Trust website for details (but be warned, you'll need to book well ahead).

Sissinghurst Castle Garden is 22 miles south of Rochester on the A229, and 16 miles east of Tunbridge Wells on the A262. 

☐ Off A262, Cranbrook ☐ 01580/710700 ☐ www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst-castle ☐ £14.50; parking £4 ☐ Closed weekdays Nov.—mid-Mar.

### Restaurants

#### Don Vincenzo

\$ | ITALIAN | This lively Italian trattoria in the center of Rochester specializes in delicious pizza and pasta, the best of which is the simple Napoletana, which is topped with mozarella, anchovies, capers, and tomato sauce. If that's just not enough to satisfy your appetite, try a hearty calzone stuffed with two types of Italian cheeses, spicy salami, and tomatoes. Known for: delicious pizza and pasta; filling calzones; cheap eats. § Average main: £11 \sum 108

High St. 

© 01634/408373 

www.donvincenzo.co.uk.



#### The Dog and Bear

\$ | B&B/INN | This cozy, quaint country pub with guest rooms is located a few miles east of Leeds Castle, in the small village of Lenham. Pros: traditional village pub; convenient for Leeds Castle; family rooms available. Cons: basic amenities; rooms near bar can be noisy; food a mixed bag.

§ Rooms from: £110 \sum The Square, Lenham, Maidstone \$\mathbb{G}\$ 01622/858219 \$\mathbb{G}\$ www. dogandbearlenham.co.uk \$\mathbb{Z}\$ 24 rooms

#### ★ Sissinghurst Castle Farmhouse

\$\$ | B&B/INN | This lovely, larger-than-you-expect farmhouse on the grounds of Sissinghurst Castle was originally built in 1885 and lovingly restored by the National Trust in 2009. Pros: beautiful location on the grounds of a historic home; delicious breakfast; barbecues on the lawn in summer. Cons: patchy TV signal in the rooms; need a car to get here; no restaurant for dinner. ⑤ Rooms from: £160 ⋈ Off A262, Sissinghurst வ1580/720992 www. sissinghurstcastlefarmhouse.com ♀ 9 rooms ☐ Free breakfast.

# Rye

39 miles south of Rochester.

With cobbled streets and ancient timbered dwellings, Rye is an artist's dream. It was an important port town until the harbor silted up and the waters retreated more than 150 years ago; now the nearest harbor is two miles away. Virtually every building in the little town center is intriguingly historic. Rye is known for its many antiques stores and also for its sheer pleasantness. This place can be easily walked without a map, but if you need some direction, Campion Frames (71 The Mint) sells a fact-packed walking tour map for £2.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

If you're driving to Rve from London, take the A2, followed by M2, M20, and A2070/ A259. Trains from London's St. Pancras leave once an hour and take just over one hour, including a change in Ashford. Driving from Rochester is the same route as from London (though starting with the M2), while getting to Rye from Rochester by train means going via London.



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#### ★ Bodiam Castle

CASTLE/PALACE | FAMILY | Immortalized in paintings, photographs, and films, Bodiam Castle (pronounced *Boe*-dee-um) rises out of the distance like a piece of medieval legend. From the outside it's one of Britain's most impressive castles, with turrets, battlements, a glassy moat (one of the very few still in use), and two-footthick walls. However, once you cross the drawbridge to the interior there's little to see but ruins, albeit on an impressive scale. Built in 1385 to withstand a threatened French invasion, it was partly demolished during the English Civil War of 1642-46 and has been uninhabited ever since. Still, you can climb the intact towers to take in sweeping countryside views, and kids love running around the keep. The castle, 12 miles northwest of Rye, schedules organized activities for kids during school holidays. ■TIP→ For a unique way to approach Bodiam Castle, take a 45-minute river cruise through the pretty Sussex countryside. Boats leave from the riverbank in Newenden; find more information and sailing times at www.bodiamboatingstation.co.uk. ⋈ Off Main Rd., Bodiam org.uk/bodiamcastle 2 £11.40.

#### **Chapel Down Winery**

WINERY/DISTILLERY | After decades—centuries, even—as the butt of jokes, the English wine industry is at last being taken more seriously; in recent years, English wines have even been winning some prestigious international awards. Drop in

at Chapel Down Winery, one of Britain's leading wine producers, to decide for yourself. You can visit the wine shop and explore the herb gardens for free, or pay for a (nearly) two-hour-long guided tour of the rest of the grounds-advanced booking is advisable in summer. The winery is eight miles north of Rve. \approx Off B2082. chapeldown.com 

Tours £20 

No auided tours Dec.-mid-Feb.

#### Church of St. Marv

**RELIGIOUS SITE** | At the top of the hill at the center of Rye, this classic English village church is more than 900 years old and encompasses a number of architectural styles. The turret clock dates to 1561 and still keeps excellent time. Its huge pendulum swings inside the church nave. ■TIP→ Climb the tower for amazing views of the surrounding area. ⊠ Church Sq. \$\infty\$ 01797/222318 \$\omega\$ www.ryeparishchurch.org.uk 🖼 Free.

#### **Great Dixter House and Gardens**

**GARDEN** | Combining a large timber-frame hall with a cottage garden on a grand scale, this place will get your green thumbs twitching. The house dates to 1464 (you can tour a few rooms) and was restored in 1910 by architect Edwin Lutvens, who also designed the garden. From these beginnings, the horticulturist and writer Christopher Lloyd (1921-2006), whose home this was, developed a series of creative, colorful "garden rooms" and a dazzling herbaceous Long Border. The house is nine miles northwest of Rye. ⋈ Off A28, Northiam co.uk @ £13: gardens only £11 \ Closed Mon. and Nov.-Mar.

#### **Lamb House**

**HOUSE** | Something about Lamb House, an early-18th-century dwelling, attracts writers. The novelist Henry James lived here from 1898 to 1916, while E. F. Benson, one-time mayor of Rve and author of the witty Lucia novels (written in the 1920s and 1930s), was a later

resident. The ground-floor rooms contain some of James's furniture and personal belongings. ⋈ West St. 🖹 01797/222909 @ www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lamb-house £7.90 © Closed Nov.-Feb. and Wed. and Thurs, in Mar.-Oct.

#### **Mermaid Street**

**NEIGHBORHOOD** | One of the town's original cobbled streets, and perhaps its most quintessential view, heads steeply from the top of the hill to the former harbor. Its name supposedly came from the night a drunken sailor swore he heard a mermaid call him down to the sea (back when Rye was still a seaside town). The houses here date from between the medieval and Georgian periods; a much-photographed pair have the delightfully fanciful names "The House with Two Front Doors" and "The House Opposite." A Be careful on your feet—the cobbles are very uneven.  $\bowtie Rve$ .

#### \* Winchelsea

TOWN | This small town, a few miles south of Rye, perches prettily atop its own small hill amid rolling farmland, and has a number of interesting attractions. There's the splendid (though damaged) church at its heart. built in the 14th century with stone from Normandy. The stained-glass windows are particularly captivating, with renowned Scottish artist Douglas Strachan (1875-1950) creating an almost three-dimensional effect with his bold illustrations.

Outside the church lies a grave with one of most quoted epitaphs in the English language. When English-Irish comedian Spike Milligan (of The Goon Show fame) was buried here in 2002. he requested to have the words "I told you I was ill" added to his gravestone. The diocese refused, but agreed to a compromise in which it was written in Irish instead. Take a walk around the graveyard and see if you can spot the headstone with the words: "Dúirt mé leat go raibh mé breoite".

Under the town's narrow streets are at least 56 medieval cellars, with some accessible by an interesting—if rather long—guided tour (£5) on various dates from April to October. A short walk from the town center is Winchelsea Beach. a pretty stretch of shingle coastline. ⊠ Winchelsea @ www.winchelsea.com.

#### Ynres Tower

**BUILDING** | Down the hill past Church Square, Ypres Tower (pronounced "Wipers" by locals) was originally built as part of the town's fortifications (now all but disappeared) in 1249; it later served as a prison. A row of defensive cannons is fixed to the rampart overlooking the (disappointingly industrial) edge of Rye and several miles of flatland beyond. When they were installed, however, the canons pointed directly out to sea. Inside the tower is the Rye Castle Museum, which has displays on the city's history, from medieval floor tiles to 15th-century suits of armor, as well an interesting exhibition on 1830s life as a female prisoner in the "women's tower."

A second (free to enter) outpost of the RCM on nearby East Street has even more exhibits, including examples of Rye pottery for which the town was famous and a fire engine that was built in 1745 and served the town for 120 years. ☑ Gungarden 🕾 01797/226728 @ www. rvemuseum.co.uk 2 £4.

### Restaurants

#### ★ Hayden's Coffee Shop

\$ | BRITISH | This incredibly popular High Street café serves high quality and great value meals and snacks from mid-morning to late afternoon every day of the week. Come early for an excellent Full English breakfast or opt for a light lunch like homemade soup or Welsh rarebit (a fondue-like dish where a sauce of melted cheddar, ale, and mustard is poured over slices of toasted bread). Known for: lovely views of salt flats out the back: tastv



cream teas; long lines during weekend lunch. \$ Average main: 9 ≥ 108 High St. co.uk/dining/ No dinner.

#### ★ Knoops Chocolate Bar

\$ | SOUTH AMERICAN | Despite the fact it has no hot meals, no waiters, and no tables, Knoops has been one of Rye's most consistently popular "restaurants" for years. Step inside and it's easy to see why: this unassuming little shop serves perhaps the best hot chocolate in England. Known for: local Rye phenomenon; choosing your chocolate by cocoa percentage; tasty milkshakes and mochas. \$ Average main: £4 knoops.co.uk 

No dinner.

#### Simply Italian

\$ | ITALIAN | In a quiet, edge-of-the-center location, this popular Italian eatery packs in the crowds on weekend nights with its inexpensive but classic pasta and pizza dishes. Try the rigatoni con salsiccia (with spicy sausage in a tomato and garlic sauce) or chicken breast topped with mozzarella and parma ham cooked in a tomato cream sauce. Known for: excellent pizza and pasta; cozy interiors; relaxed atmosphere. \$ Average main: £9 ⋈ 12 Strand @ 01797/226024 @ www.simplyitalian.co.uk.

#### ★ Webbes at the Fish Café

\$\$ | SEAFOOD | One of Rye's most popular restaurants, where most of the seafood is freshly caught nearby, occupies a brick building that dates to 1907, but the interior has been redone in a sleek, modern style.

Sample the salt and Sichuan pepper squid with soy and sherry dressing or the pan-fried Rye Bay scallops with pancetta and chive vermouth sauce. Known for: top-quality and locally caught seafood; fast and friendly service; dinner reservations recommended. \$ Average main: £17 webbesrestaurants.co.uk.

#### Whitehouse

\$ | CAFÉ | FAMILY | This chic, contemporary café serves delectable baked goods. all-day breakfasts, and tapas-style light bites. Come for the Turkish eggs, poached with yogurt and dill, or, if you're in the mood for something heartier, try the coconut red lentil dal with chili salsa. **Known for:** perfectly brewed coffee: healthful light bites; delicious cakes. \$ Average main: £9 \subseteq 24 High St. *☎ 01797/224748 ⊕ www.whitehouserye.* co.uk ⊗ No dinner.



#### Jeake's House

\$\$ | B&B/INN | Antiques fill the cozy bedrooms of this rambling 1689 house, where the snug, painted-and-paneled parlor has a wood-burning stove for cold days. Pros: pleasant atmosphere; delicious breakfasts; lovely rooftop views from top-floor rooms. Cons: Mermaid Street is steep and cobbled; cheapest room has bathroom across the hall; some bedrooms are small. \$ Rooms from: £125 Mermaid St. @ 01797/222828 ⊕ www.jeakeshouse.com 

11 rooms ¶⊙l Free breakfast

#### The Mermaid Inn

\$\$ | HOTEL | Steeped in a history of smuqgling—look for Rudyard Kipling's atmospheric poem A Smuggler's Song on the wall outside—the 600-year-old Mermaid is Rye's most historic inn; its sloping floors, oak beams, low ceilings, and huge open hearth look like a film set, but it's all totally authentic. Pros: dripping in atmosphere; good restaurant; one of England's oldest

inns. Cons: price is high for what's on offer: small bedrooms: allegedly haunted. \$ Rooms from: £160 ⋈ Mermaid St. ≈ 01797/223065 www.mermaidinn. com ≈ 31 rooms ¶ Free breakfast.

#### ★ Rve Windmill

\$ | HOTEL | One of the Southeast's most unique B&Bs, this 450-year-old whitewashed windmill overlooking the River Tillingham is home to 10 lovely bedrooms with large en suite bathrooms, including walk-in showers. Pros: unique and luxurious Windmill Suite; central location but feels rural; welcoming hosts. Cons: tap water not drinkable (refillable bottled water provided); no restaurant; twonight minimum in summer. \$ Rooms from: £95 \simes Ferry Rd., Off B2089 **☎** 01797/224027 **⊕** www.ryewindmill. co.uk ≈ 10 rooms | Free breakfast.



#### Globe Inn Marsh Rve

BARS/PUBS | On the outskirts of the city, this pretty clapboard gastro-pub has an intriguing setup: instead of a bar, the drinks are piled up on a table in the middle of the room and served from there. Along with a good selection of local ales and craft beers, there's also a choice of ciders straight from the barrel and an extensive menu of artisanal gins. The food—from stacked burgers to bonfire pizzas—is great, too. There's live music every Thursday evening starting at 7:30 pm. ⋈ 10 Military Rd. 🕾 01797/225220 www.ramblinns.com/the-globe-inn-rye.

#### ★ Rye Waterworks

BARS/PUBS | This cozy little micropub, set within a 17th-century pump house, offers eight (mostly local) beers on tap. The bar staff is friendly and chatty, and there's a real communal vibe to the place, with most drinkers sharing tables. If you get peckish, there's are tasty pub snacks available; try the pork pie with mustard and chutney. ■TIP→ If you like the pub furnishings, you can pick some up for yourself

at the Waterworks Curios antiques shop **next door.** ⋈ *Tower St.* 🕾 01797/224110 www.ryewaterworks.co.uk.



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Rye has great antiques shops, perfect for an afternoon of rummaging, with the biggest cluster at the foot of the hill near the tourist information center.

#### **Britcher & Rivers**

FOOD/CANDY | This traditional sweet shop is like something out of a bygone age. Choose from row upon row of tall jars packed with every imaginable type of candy, measured out into little paper bags. ⋈ 109 High St. @ 01797/227152.

★ Clive Sawyer Gallery (Just Ten Gallery / Just One Gallery)

ART GALLERIES | This little gallery shop showcases the eye-catching fine art photography of Clive Sawver. The larger framed images are printed using the ChromaLuxe process, making them richly colorful and vibrant. ⋈ 103A High St. *≅* 07738/715354 *⊕* www.just-one.gallery.

#### Glass Etc

CERAMICS/GLASSWARE | A glorious collection of quality antique glass can be found in this colorful, friendly shop near the train station. ⊠ 18–20 Rope Walk @ 01797/226600 www.decanterman.com.

# Hastings

13 miles southwest of Rye.

In the 19th century, Hastings became one of England's most popular sparesorts. Tall Victorian row houses painted in lemony hues still cover the cliffs around the deep blue sea, and the views from the hilltops are extraordinary. The pretty Old Town, on the east side of the city, offers a glimpse into the city's 16th-century past. Hastings has been through difficult times in recent decades, and the town developed a reputation as

a rough place. It's currently trying hard to reinvent itself—a clutch of trendy new boutique bed-and-breakfasts have opened, as well as an important new art gallery—but the town center can still be guite rowdy after dark. Expect a handsome but tattered town, with a mix of traditional English seaside amusements: miniature golf, shops selling junk, fishand-chips stands, and a rocky beach that stretches for miles.

Of course. Hastings is also known for the famous battle that took place on October 14, 1066, when William of Normandy and his troops trounced King Harold's Anglo-Saxon army (although the battle itself actually took place six miles northwest of Hastings). Today, you can visit the battlefield and the abbey built in its honor, as well as the sweet little town around it (called, fittingly, Battle).

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

If you're driving to Hastings from London, take the A21. Trains travel to Hastings three or four times an hour from London's Victoria and St. Pancras stations. The journey takes between 11/2 and two hours: some trains involve a change in Brighton or Ashford. The main station is within easy walking distance of most sights, though a second station—the more grandly titled St Leonards Warrior Square—may be more convenient if vou're staving farther west. National Express buses travel from London Victoria Coach Station to Hastings once or twice a day in around 21/2 hours.

From Rye, there are direct trains every hour to Hastings (20 minutes). It's a 30-minute drive along the A259.

#### **ESSENTIALS**

**VISITOR INFORMATION Hastings Tourist Information Centre.**  $\bowtie$  *Muriel Matters* House, 2 Breeds Pl. 8 01424/451111 www.visit1066country.com.

### Sussex Beach Huts



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Rows of tiny, cheerfully painted, one-room wooden beach huts brighten the shoreline throughout Sussex (look for them in Hastings and Brighton) and elsewhere. The huts originated in the Victorian wheeled bathing machines that were rolled into the water so that women could swim modestly behind them. Eventually the wheels came off, and they and

similar structures became favored for storage and as a windbreak. Most huts lack electricity or plumbing but are beloved for their sheer adorableness. Some are rented: others are owned. and prices can be surprisingly steep. In 2017, a beach hut in Dorset sold for £275.000, which is more than £40.000 above the average price of a house in Britain.

# Sights

#### ★ Battle Abbev

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE | Situated six miles northwest of Hastings, this great Benedictine abbey was erected by William the Conqueror on the site of the Battle of Hastings—one of the most decisive turning points in English history and the last time the country was successfully invaded. All of this meant little to Henry VIII, of course, who didn't spare the building from his violent dissolution of the monasteries. Today the abbey is just a ruin, but a very pretty one.

Start at the visitor center to get the full story through a series of films and interactive exhibits before taking a walk around the abbey site, including up to the first floor. A memorial stone marks the high altar, which in turn was supposedly laid on the spot where Harold II, the last Saxon king, was killed.

You can also follow a trail around the 1066 battlefield, lined with a series of intricately carved wooden sculptures of Norman and Saxon soldiers, or climb the gatehouse for an exhibiton on the site's post-invasion history as well as spectacular rooftop views of the town. For a potted history of Battle, head to nearby St. Mary's Church, where the three-meter-long Battle Tapestry artfully illustrates how the town developed around the

abbey. ⋈ High St., Battle @ 01424/775705 @ www.english-heritage.org.uk/battleabbev 

£12.30: parking £4 

Closed weekdays early Nov.-mid-Feb. and Mon. and Tues. mid-Feb.-Apr.

#### **Hastings Castle**

CASTLE/PALACE | FAMILY | Take a thrilling ride up the West Hill Cliff Railway from George Street precinct to the atmospheric ruins of the thousand-vear-old fortress now known as Hastings Castle. It was built by William the Conqueror in 1066, before he had even won the Battle of Hastings and conquered England—that's confidence for you. Today all that remains of the country's first Norman castle are mere fragments of the fortifications, some ancient walls, and a number of aloomy dunaeons. Nevertheless, you get an excellent view of the chalky cliffs, the rocky coast, and the town below. You can buy a joint ticket that covers admission to Smuggler's Adventure and the nearby Blue Reef aguarium for £19; you then have seven days to see the other attractions. 

West Hill, Off Castle Hill Nov.-Mar.

#### **Hastings Contemporary**

MUSEUM | A symbol of Hastings's slow but growing regeneration after decades of neglect, this spruced-up exhibition space in the Old Town has become one of the most talked-about contemporary

art galleries outside London. Formerly known as the Jerwood Gallery. Hastings Contemporary's collection includes works by Walter Sickert, Stephen Lowry, and Augustus John, while temporary exhibitions change every couple of months. The glazed-tile building on the seafront was designed to reflect the row of distinctive old, blackened fishing sheds it sits alongside. ⊠ Rock-a-Nore Rd. @ 01424/728377 @ www.hastingscontemporary.org 2 £9 O Closed Mon. except bank holidays.

#### ★ Herstmonceux Castle

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CASTLE/PALACE | FAMILY | With a banner waving from one tower and a glassy moat crossed by what was once a drawbridge, this fairy-tale castle has everything except knights in shining armor. Situated 13 miles northwest of Hastings, the redbrick structure was originally built by Sir Roger Fiennes (ancestor of actor Ralph Fiennes) in 1444, although it was altered in the Elizabethan age and again early in the 20th century after it had largely fallen to ruin. Canadian Queen's University owns the castle, so only part of it is open for guided tours, usually once or twice a day except on Saturday; call in advance to schedule a tour in high season.

Highlights include the magnificent ballroom, a medieval room, and the stunning Elizabethan-era staircase. Explore the formal walled garden, lily-covered lakes, and miles of woodland—the perfect place for a picnic on a sunny afternoon. There's also a hands-on science center for kids.

When school isn't in session, the castle rents out its small, plain quest rooms from £40 per night. On the last weekend of August, the castle hosts a large Medieval Festival, complete with jousting, falconry shows, and around 100 craft **☎** 01323/833816 **⊕** www.herstmonceux-castle.com @ Castle, grounds, and science center £14.50; arounds only £7; castle tours £3 \infty Closed Nov.-mid-Feb.

#### Smuggler's Adventure

MUSEUM | FAMILY | The history of smuggling on the south coast is told through waxworks and other exhibits inside this labyrinth of caves underneath the West Hill, a 15-minute walk from Hastings Castle. You can buy a joint ticket with Hastings Castle and Blue Reef aguarium for £19. ⋈ St. Clement Caves @ 01424/422964 @ www.smugalersadventure.co.uk 2 £9 8 Closed mid-Nov.-mid-Feb.

### Restaurants

#### \* Blue Dolphin Fish Bar

\$ | SEAFOOD | The crowds line up all day to make their way into this small fish-andchip shop just off the seafront, down near the fish shacks. Although the decor is humble, reviewers consistently rank the battered fish and huge plates of double-cooked chips (chunky fries) as among the best in the country. Known for: popularity across Britain; beachside location; tasty traditional fish-and-chips. \$ Average main: £7 ⋈ 61A High St. ₱ 01424/547150.

#### \* Sundial

\$\$\$ | MODERN FRENCH | A 17th-century brick farmhouse with wood-beamed ceilings and lovely views of the South Downs is home to an excellent modern French restaurant. Situated near the castle in Herstmonceux, it features an imaginative three-course "Gourmet Menu" (£48 per person) that changes regularly but may include pan-fried wild turbot with truffle butter or beef fillet steak with a sauce of port and shallot. **Known for:** sophisticated Modern French cooking: lovely views: delicious pineapple tarte tatin dessert. \$ Average main: £25 \subseteq Gardner St., Herstmonceux **☎** 01323/832217 **⊕** www.sundialrestaurant.co.uk @ Closed Mon. No dinner Sun.

#### White's Seafood & Steak Bar

\$\$ | SEAFOOD | FAMILY | Great seafood in simple, unpretentious surroundings is the order of the day at this popular place in Hastings Old Town, Fresh-as-canbe seafood, huge platters of shellfish, creamy fish pies, and delicious plates of fish-and-chips are the epitome of unfussy local flavor. Known for: huge seafood platters; fresh catch of the day; hot-rock cooking at your table. \$ Average main: £16 \subseteq 44-45 George St. \subseteq 01424/719846 @ www.whitesbar.co.uk.



#### The Cloudeslev

\$ | B&B/INN | No TVs and a general Zen vibe at this boutique B&B in the guieter St. Leonard's district of Hastings make it a thoroughly relaxing place to stay. **Pros:** oasis of calm; great spa treatments; impeccable eco credentials. Cons: chill vibe won't be for everyone; two-night minimum at certain times; 20-minute walk into Hastings. \$ Rooms from: £85 ☑ 7 Cloudesley Rd., St. Leonards-on-Sea co.uk ≈ 5 rooms | Free breakfast.

#### **Hastings House**

\$\$ | HOTEL | In Warrior Square at the edge of Hastings, this boutique questhouse brings a funky, modern style to a grand Victorian building. Pros: spacious rooms; stylish and modern decor; near the sea. **Cons:** no restaurant: few services: area can be noisy at night. \$ Rooms from: £125 \Bigsi 9 Warrior Sq., St. Leonards-on-Sea *☎ 01424/422709 ⊕ www.hastingshouse.* co.uk 3 9 rooms 10 Free breakfast.

#### ★ Swan House

\$ | B&B/INN | Originally a bakery, this extraordinary 15th-century building has been beautifully converted into an elegant and welcoming B&B, where the light and airy guest rooms are decorated in neutral modern tones and retain original features such as exposed wood beams. Pros: beautiful and historic building; welcoming

hosts; seriously delicious breakfasts. Cons: some bathrooms have shower only: twonight minimum on summer weekends; gets booked up. \$ Rooms from: £120 ⋈ 1 Hill St. @ 01424/430014 @ www.swanhousehastings.co.uk ≈ 4 rooms | Free breakfast.

#### **Zanzibar International Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | This spacious, light-filled hotel overlooking the sea has guest rooms designed as a playful yet restrained homage to exotic destinations. Pros: great facilities for a small hotel; lovely sea views; champagne is served with breakfast. Cons: a bit over-the-top for some tastes; pricey for Hastings; nonrefundable 50% deposit. \$ Rooms from: £195 ☑ 9 Eversfield Pl., St. Leonards-on-Sea co.uk 🔊 8 rooms 🍽 Free breakfast.

### Lewes

30 miles west of Hastings, 8 miles northeast of Brighton.

The town nearest to the celebrated Glyndebourne Opera House, Lewes is so rich in history that the Council for British Archaeology named it one of the 50 most important English towns. A walk is the best way to appreciate its steep streets and appealing jumble of building styles and materials-flint, stone. brick, tile—and the secret lanes (called "twittens") behind the castle, with their huge beeches. Here and there are smart antiques shops, good eateries, and secondhand-book dealers. Most of the buildings in the center date to the 18th and 19th centuries.

Something about this town has always attracted rebels. It was once the home of Thomas Paine (1737-1809), whose pamphlet Common Sense advocated that the American colonies break with Britain. It was also favored by Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group, early-20th-century countercultural artistic innovators.

Today Lewes's beauty and proximity to London mean that the counterculture crew can't really afford to live here anymore, but its rebel soul still peeks through, particularly on Guy Fawkes Night (November 5), the anniversary of Fawkes's foiled attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605. Flaming tar barrels are rolled down High Street and into the River Ouse, while costumed processions fill the streets.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

If you're driving to Lewes from London, take the M23 south. The journey takes around an hour and 45 minutes. Southern trains run direct to Lewes from Victoria Station about three times an hour (the iourney takes an hour), but there's no good bus connection. To get to Lewes from Hastings, it's an hour drive west along the A259 and A27 or an hour by train (there are four Southern services an hour).

#### **FSSENTIALS**

250

#### VISITOR INFORMATION Lewes Information

Centre. ≥ 187 High St. = 01273/483448 www.visitlewes.co.uk.



#### **Anne of Cleves House**

**HOUSE | FAMILY | This 16th-century** structure, a fragile-looking, timber-frame building, holds a small collection of Sussex ironwork and other items of local interest, such as Sussex pottery. The house was part of Anne of Cleves's divorce settlement from Henry VIII, although she never lived in it. There are medieval dress-up clothes for kids. To get to the house, walk down steep, cobbled Keere Street, past lovely Grange Gardens, to Southover High Street. ⋈ 52 Southover High St. 8 01273/474610 www.sussexpast.co.uk/anneofcleves £6.50: combined ticket with Lewes Castle £13.40 ♥ Closed Nov.-mid-Feb.

#### **Beachy Head**

NATURE SITE | Move over Dover: these are perhaps Britain's most spectacular white cliffs. Located 18 miles southeast of Lewes, off the A259 just before Eastbourne, this up-to-162-meter-high curtain of chalk has watched over the English Channel for nigh on 100 million years. Today, you can walk the windy path along the top of Beachy Head for lovely views of the cliffs, the sea, and the pretty red-and-white-striped lighthouse. For a longer clifftop walk, continue west along the Seven Sisters Cliffs; it's around 5½ miles (two hours) each way from the Beachy Head parking lot to the stony beach at Cuckmere Haven. Main Car Park, Beachy Head Rd. 8 1323/410000 www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk.

#### ★ Charleston

**HOUSE** | Art and life mixed at Charleston. the farmhouse that Vanessa Bell-sister of Virginia Woolf—bought in 1916 and fancifully decorated, along with Duncan Grant (who lived here until 1978). The house, which is seven miles east of Lewes, soon became a refuge for the writers and artists of the Bloomsbury Group. On display are colorful ceramics and textiles of the Omega Workshop—in which Bell and Grant participated—and paintings by Picasso and Renoir, as well as by Bell and Grant themselves. Entry to the house is by guided tour; you can buy tickets when you arrive (first come, first served) or book in advance online. It's also possible to book private, themed tours that focus on different aspects of Charleston's heritage, such as its groundbreaking LGBTQ+ history or the influence French culture had on the Bloomsbury Group. ■TIP→ The house isn't suitable for those with mobility issues, although reduced-price ground-floor-only tickets are available. ⋈ Off A27, Firle **☎** 01323/811626 **⊕** www.charleston.org. uk 

£14.50 

Closed Mon. and Tues.

# **Bonfire Night in Lewes**



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In 1605, a group of Catholic rebels attempted to blow up Parliament in the most famous failed coup in English history. Known as the Gunpowder Plot. it's still commemorated with fireworks every year on the Saturday closest to the anniversary on November 5 ("Remember, remember, the fifth of November; gunpowder, treason, and plot"). As befitting a 400-year-old custom, it's a night rich with tradition—nowhere more spectacularly than in Lewes. Thousands march through the town with flaming torches: many wear elaborate costumes and play instruments. By far the most arresting part of the night is the parade of giant, towering effigies, built with great craftsmanship. Many depict public figures and other bogeymen of the day in viciously satirical ways. Recent examples include Vladimir Putin standing amid the wreckage of an airplane, Donald Trump as a clown shooting himself in the foot,

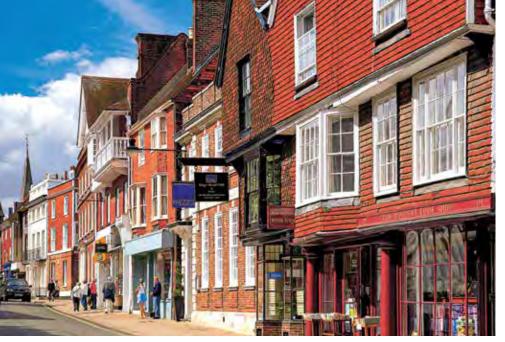
and British prime minister Boris Johnson urinating on newspapers. Huge pyres are lit ("bonfires"), on which the effigies are burned. Think of it as the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade directed by David Lynch. The fireworks and merriment carry on well into the night. Admittedly, it may be too much for some people to stomach—there's nothing like the sight of burning crosses, anti-Catholic chants, and the torching of a papal effigy to make foreign visitors wonder iust what they've stepped into. But. it's important to stress, it's all totally in the spirit of ancient tradition and bone-dry humor rather than actual anti-Catholic sentiment. It's a unique event with a carnival atmosphere and deep historic roots. Similar, though smaller, parades happen in Rye and Hastings, usually on different weeks. For more details see @ www.lewesbonfirecelebrations.com or check the town websites.

#### **Lewes Castle**

**CASTLE/PALACE** | High above the valley of the River Ouse stand the majestic ruins of Lewes Castle, begun in 1100 by one of the country's Norman conquerors and completed 300 years later. The castle's barbican holds a small museum with archaeology collections, a changing temporary exhibition gallery, and a bookshop. There are panoramic views of the town and countryside. ≥ 92 High St. = 01273/486290 www.sussexpast.co.uk/properties-to-discover/lewes-castle 2 £8.50; combined ticket with Anne of Cleves House £13.40 ♥ Closed Mon. in Jan.-Mar.

#### Long Man of Wilmington

PUBLIC ART | Ten miles southeast of Lewes on the A27, Wilmington has a famous landmark that people drive for miles to see. High on the downs to the south of the village (signposted off the A27), a 226-foot-tall white figure with a staff in each hand, known as the Long Man of Wilmington, is carved into the chalk. His age is a subject of great debate: some researchers think he might have been created as far back as Roman or even Neolithic times, but recent soil analysis places the figure closer to the 16th century. It's one of England's two most significant human hill figures, along with the Cerne



A mixture of architectural styles and good shops makes Lewes a wonderful town for a stroll.

Abbas Giant near Dorchester in Dorset. ⊠ S. Downs Way, Wilmington ⊕ sussexpast.co.uk/properties-to-discover/ the-long-man.

#### Monk's House

**HOUSE** | Of particular interest to Bloomsbury Group fans, this property three miles south of Lewes was the home of novelist Virginia Woolf and her husband, Leonard Woolf, who bought it in 1919. Leonard lived here until his death in 1969. Rooms in the small cottage include Virginia's study and her bedroom. Artists Vanessa Bell (Virginia's sister) and Duncan Grant helped decorate the house. ⋈ The St., Rodmell ☎ 01273/474760 @ www.nationaltrust. org.uk/monks-house ≥ £6.60 ♥ Closed Nov.-Mar., Mon., and Tues.

### Restaurants

#### Bill's

\$ | MODERN EUROPEAN | FAMILY | What started in the early 2000s as a distinctly Lewes café-restaurant has since grown to become a full-blown chain, with more than 80 restaurants across the United Kingdom. This is where it all began, and the casual, mostly Modern European food remains as reliably good here as it is everywhere. Known for: lots of vegetarian and vegan options; great breakfasts; family atmosphere. \$ Average main: £13 \subseteq 56 Cliffe High St. \subseteq 01273/476918 @ www.bills-website.co.uk.

#### The Limetree Kitchen

\$ | BRITISH | Elegant, imaginative menus and a commitment to locally sourced produce is at the heart of this popular restaurant in the center of Lewes. Menus are heavily influenced by what's in season, with just a few, well-chosen options

available each day—examples might include tempura of Devonishire hake with tartare sauce or local rib-eye steak with parsley and shallot. Known for: excellent value main courses: seasonal menus: locally sourced produce. \$ Average main: £11 \( \times 14 \) Station St. \( \exists 01273 \) /478636 ⊕ www.limetreekitchen.co.uk ⊕ Closed Mon. and Tues.

#### The Real Eating Company

\$ | CAFÉ | This light-filled restaurant has big windows overlooking the bustling shopping street outside. The heavy wood tables are perfect for lingering over the home-style cooking. Known for: good breakfasts; great cakes; bustling street view. \$ Average main: £9 ⋈ 18 real-eating.co.uk ® No dinner Sun.

#### Robson's of Lewes

\$ | CAFÉ | Good coffee, fresh produce, and delicious pastries make this coffee shop one of the best places in Lewes to drop by for an afternoon pick-me-up. A lightfilled space with wood floors and simple tables creates a pleasant, casual spot to enjoy a cup of coffee with breakfast, a scone, or a light sandwich or salad lunch. Known for: great coffee; tasty light bites; good to-go options. \$ Average main: £6 ⊠ 22A High St. @ 01273/480654 @ www. robsonsoflewes.co.uk 

No dinner.

### Hotels

#### **Horsted Place**

\$\$ | B&B/INN | On 1,100 acres, this luxurious Victorian manor house was built as a private home in 1850; it was owned by a friend of the current Queen until the 1980s, and she was a regular visitor. Pros: historic country manor; delicious food; lovely gardens. Cons: too formal for some; creaky floors bother light sleepers; the English manor lifestyle doesn't come cheap. \$ Rooms from: £200 \subseteq Off A26, Little Horsted @ 01825/750581 @ www. horstedplace.co.uk ≈ 20 rooms Free breakfast.

#### The Ram Inn

\$\$ | B&B/INN | Roaring fires, cozy rooms, and friendly locals give this 500-year-old inn its wonderful feeling of old-world authenticity. Pros: proper village pub atmosphere; excellent breakfast (try the croissants); well-designed rooms. Cons: you need a car to get here; rooms over the bar can be noisy; Wi-Fi is patchy. \$ Rooms from: £150 ⋈ The St., West co.uk ≈ 5 rooms of Free breakfast.

#### The Shelleys

\$\$ | B&B/INN | The lounge and dining room in this 17th-century High Street building are on the grand scale, furnished with antiques that set the tone for the rest of the lovely building. Pros: historic atmosphere; fine French-influenced cuisine; location in the heart of Lewes. Cons: service a bit spotty; securing a restaurant table can be tough; could do with a facelift. \$ Rooms from: £220 ⋈ 136 High St. **☎** 01273/472361 **⊕** www.the-shellevs. co.uk ≈ 19 rooms | Breakfast.

# **™** Nightlife

Lewes has a relatively young population and a nightlife scene to match. There are also many lovely old pubs.

#### The Brewers Arms

BARS/PUBS | On High Street, this is a good pub with a friendly crowd. While the half-timbered building only dates from 1906, a pub has stood on this spot since the 16th century. ≥ 91 High St. ≈ 01273/475524 @ www.thebrewersarmslewes.com.

#### King's Head

BARS/PUBS | A contemporary pub dating back to 1891, the King's Head has a good menu with locally sourced fish and meat dishes. There are also three quirky boutique rooms available. ⋈ 9 Southover High St. @ 01273/474628 @ www.kingsheadlewes.co.uk.



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Sights •	<ul><li>Restaurants</li></ul>	•	Hotels	
1 Brighton Beach D	1 Gelato Gusto	. D3	1 Brightonwave	E4
2 Brighton Museum and	2 lydea	. D2	2 Drakes	E4
Art Gallery D	3 The Mock Turtle		3 The Grand Brighton	R
3 Brighton Pier D		. D4	4 Granville Hotel	
4 i360 A	4 A Riddle & Finns			
	The Lenne	C3	5 Hotel du Vin	C4
5 The Lanes	.4		6 Nineteen Brighton	E4
6 Royal Pavilion D	5 Terre à Terre	. D4	•	
7 SEA LIFE Brighton D	6 The Witchez	E4	7 Oriental Brighton	A.
8 Standen <b>D</b>	1			

9 Volk's Electric

Railway ..... **E5** 

# Performing Arts

#### 🛨 Glyndebourne Opera House

OPERA | Nestled beneath the Downs, three miles east of Lewes, this world-famous opera house combines first-class productions, a state-of-the-art auditorium, and a beautiful setting. Tickets are very expensive (the cheapest start at around £85, though for many productions it's twice that, rising to around £250), and you have to book months in advance. But it's worth every penny to aficionados, who traditionally wear evening dress and bring a hamper to picnic on the grounds. The main season runs from mid-May to the end of August. ■TIP→ Save money by booking standing-room tickets (from £10), or look out for special nights when adults under 30 pay just £30.  $\bowtie New$ Rd., Ringmer @ 01273/813321 @ www.

# Shopping

alvndebourne.com.

Antiques shops offer temptation along the busy High Street. Lewes also has plenty of tiny boutiques and independent clothing stores vying for your pounds.

#### **Cliffe Antiques Centre**

ANTIQUES/COLLECTIBLES | This packed-tothe-rafters shop carries a fine mix of vintage English prints, estate jewelry, and art at reasonable prices. ⋈ 47 Cliffe High St. a 01273/473266 www.cliffeantiques.co.uk.

#### The Fifteenth Century Bookshop

**BOOKS/STATIONERY** | A wide collection of rare and vintage books can be found at this ancient, timber-framed building in the center of Lewes. Antique children's books are a specialty. ⋈ 99-100 High St. **1 01273/474160 ⊕ www.oldenyoung** books.co.uk.

#### Louis Potts & Co.

**CERAMICS/GLASSWARE** | From frivolous knickkacks to full-on formal dining sets, Louis Potts specializes in stylish bone **☎** 01273/472240 ⊕ www.louispotts.com.

# Brighton

9 miles southwest of Lewes, 54 miles south of London.

For more than 200 years, Brighton has been England's most interesting seaside city, and today it's more vibrant, eccentric, and cosmopolitan than ever. A rich cultural mix-Regency architecture, specialty shops, sidewalk cafés, lively arts, and a flourishing gay scene—makes it unique and unpredictable.

In 1750, physician Richard Russell published a book recommending seawater treatment for glandular diseases. The fashionable world flocked to Brighton to take Dr. Russell's "cure," and sea bathing became a popular pastime. Few places in the south of England were better for it, since Brighton's broad beach of smooth pebbles stretches as far as the eye can see. It's been popular with sunbathers ever since.

The next windfall for the town was the arrival of the Prince of Wales (later George IV). "Prinny," as he was called, created the Royal Pavilion, a mock-Asian pleasure palace that attracted London society. This triggered a wave of villa building, and today the elegant terraces of Regency houses are among the town's greatest attractions. The coming of the railway set the seal on Brighton's popularity: the Brighton Belle brought Londoners to the coast in an hour.

Londoners still flock to Brighton. Add them to the many local university students, and you have a trendy, young, and laid-back city that does, occasionally, burst at its own seams. Property values have skyrocketed, but all visitors may notice is the good shopping and restaurants, attractive (if pebbly) beach, and wild nightlife. Brighton is also the place to go if you're looking for hotels with offbeat design and party nights.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

Southeastern trains leave from London's Victoria and London Bridge stations several times per hour. The journey takes about an hour, and the trains stop at Gatwick Airport. Brighton-bound National Express buses depart from London's Victoria Coach Station every day on the hour and half hour. The direct buses take around 2½ hours. By car from London, head to Brighton on the M23/A23. The journey should take between 1½ and 2 hours, depending on traffic.

From Lewes, Southern train services leave every 10 minutes for Brighton (15 minutes). Otherwise, it's a simple drive down the A27 and A270 (20 to 30 minutes).

Brighton (and the adjacent Hove) sprawls in all directions, but the part of interest to travelers is fairly compact. All the major sights are within a 10-minute walk of the train station, where you can pick up a town map. City Sightseeing has a hopon, hop-off tour bus that leaves Brighton Pier every 20 to 30 minutes. It operates April through October and costs £14.

#### TIMING

On summer weekends the town is packed with Londoners looking for a day by the sea. Oceanfront bars can be rowdy, especially on national holidays (like the last weekend of August) when concerts and events bring in crowds. But summer is also when Brighton looks its best, and revelers pack the shops, restaurants, and bars. At other times, it's much quieter. The Brighton Festival in May fills the town with music and other performances.

#### **FSSENTIALS**

#### VISITOR AND TOUR INFORMA-

TION Brighton Visitor Information Point.

☑ The Brighton Centre, King's Rd.

☑ 01273/290337 ⊕ www.visitbrighton.
com. City Sightseeing. ☑ 01789/299123

⊕ www.city-sightseeing.com.



#### **Brighton Beach**

BEACH—SIGHT | Brighton's most iconic landmark is its famous beach, which sweeps smoothly from one end of town to the other. In summer, sunbathers, swimmers, and ice cream-sellers pack the shore; in winter, people stroll at the water's stormy edge, walking their dogs and searching for seashells. The water is bracingly cold, and the beach is covered in a thick blanket of large, smooth pebbles (615 billion of them, according to the tourism office). ■TIP→ Bring a pair of rubber swimming shoes if you're taking a dip—the stones are hard on bare feet. Amenities: food and drink; lifeguards; toilets; parking (fee); water sports. **Best for:** 

partiers; sunset; swimming. 

Brighton.

#### **Brighton Museum and Art Gallery**

MUSEUM | The grounds of the Royal Pavilion contain this museum, in a former stable block designed for the Prince Regent (1762-1830), son of George III. The museum has particularly interesting art nouveau and art deco collections. Look out for a tiny replica of Salvador Dalí's famous sofa in the shape of Mae West's lips. The Fashion & Style Gallery has clothes from the Regency period to the present day, and the Performance gallery has a collection of masks, puppets, and other theatrical curiosities. ☑ Royal Pavilion Gardens, Off Church St. **☎** 0300/029-0900 ⊕ brightonmuseums. org.uk/brighton 2 £6 O Closed Mon. except holidays.

#### **Brighton Pier**

MARINA | FAMILY | Opened in 1899, the pier is an amusement park set above the sea. In the early 20th century it had a music hall and entertainment; today it has roller coasters and other carnival rides, as well as game arcades, clair-voyants, candy stores, and greasy-food stalls. In summer it's packed with children by day and (on weekends) teenagers by night. There's no fee to enter the



The Brighton Pier makes for a lovely sunset backdrop.

pier, although the individual kiosks have their own charges. Alternatively, a wristband (£20 adults, £12 children) allows blanket entry, which can amount to a big savings if you're making the rounds of what's on offer. The skeletal shadow of a pier you can see off in the water is all that's left of the old West Pier.  $\boxtimes$  Off Madeira Dr.  $\cong$  01273/609361  $\oplus$  www. brightonpier.co.uk.

#### **★** i360

VIEWPOINT | FAMILY | Designed by the same people who made the London Eye, this seaside viewing platform ascends 531 feet into the air, allowing an incredible view of the coastline and the South Downs. On clear days you can see the Isle of Wight. The ride (or "flight" as sponsor British Airways insists on calling it) lasts about 25 minutes. Booking is advisable, especially in summer; it's also 10% cheaper if you reserve online. Check out the website for special packages that include dinner. i360 stays open in all

weather, other than exceptionally strong winds. It's so peaceful inside the doughnut-shaped pods, you'd never guess the storm that raged over the £43 million structure, ahead of its eventual opening in 2016. Locals worried it would ruin the character of the promenade. After you take in the sweeping view, you've got the leisurely descent back to street level to decide if you agree with them. 

Lower King's Rd. 

337/720360 

www.britishairwaysi360.com 

£13.50.

#### The Lanes

NEIGHBORHOOD | This maze of tiny alleys and passageways was once the home of fishermen and their families. Closed to vehicular traffic, the area's narrow cobbled streets are filled with interesting restaurants, boutiques, and antiques shops. Fish and seafood restaurants line the heart of the Lanes, at Market Street and Market Square. ⋈ Bordered by (clockwise) North St., Market St., Prince Albert St., and Ship St.



George IV loved the sea at Brighton and built the flamboyant Royal Pavilion as a seaside escape.

#### ★ Royal Pavilion

MUSEUM | The city's most remarkable building is this delightfully over-the-top domed and pinnacled fantasy. Built as a simple seaside villa in the fashionable classical style of 1787 by architect Henry Holland, the Pavilion was rebuilt between 1815 and 1822 by John Nash for the Prince Regent (later George IV). The result was an exotic, foppish Eastern design with opulent Chinese interiors. The two great set pieces are the Music Room, styled in the form of a Chinese pavilion, and the **Banqueting Room**, with its enormous flying-dragon "gasolier," or gaslight chandelier, a revolutionary invention in the early 19th century. The gardens, too, have been restored to Regency splendor, following John Nash's naturalistic design of 1826. For an elegant time-out, a tearoom serves snacks and light meals. 

☐ Off Church St. **☎** 0300/029-0900 **⊕** brightonmuseums. org.uk/royalpavilion 2 £15.

#### **SEA LIFE Brighton**

**200** | FAMILY | Near Brighton Pier, this aguarium has thousands of sea-dwelling creatures—from sharks to seahorses to starfish-in more than 30 marine habitats. There's a glass-bottom-boat experience, a humid rain-forest adventure (featuring an eight-foot-long anaconda), and a extraordinary coral reef exhibition that shows how the ecosystem changes between day and night. Check online for the daily feeding schedules, all of which are accompanied by free talks (including sharks at 2 and turtles at 4). Book online at least a day in advance for big Parade 30371/226-6770 www.visitsealife.com/brighton 2 £15.

#### Standen

**HOUSE** | A well-preserved family country house dating from the 1890s and set in a beautiful hillside garden, Standen typifies the Arts and Crafts movement. Designed by the influential architect

Philip Webb (1831–1913), it contains a wealth of William Morris carpets, wallpapers, fabrics, and even original electric-light fittings. The house is 2 miles south of East Grinstead and 28 miles north of Brighton. ⋈ West www.nationaltrust.org.uk/standen £12 

Closed Nov.-Jan. No tours on.

Control of the control weekdavs.

#### Volk's Electric Railway

TRANSPORTATION SITE (AIRPORT/BUS/FERRY/ TRAIN) | FAMILY | Built by Brighton inventor Magnus Volk in 1883, this was the first electric railway anywhere in the world and it's recently been spruced-up in an extensive, £2 million restoration project. Between April and October, you can take the 11/4-mile, three-station trip along the beachfront Marine Parade. 

Marine way.org.uk 2 £3.80 single, £4.90 return 

# Restaurants

#### ★ Gelato Gusto

\$ | CAFÉ | FAMILY | No seaside town would be complete without an ice-cream store, and the delicious, homemade, artisanal gelato on sale here is a real treat. Everything is made fresh daily; try the cherry cheesecake flavor or maybe a scoop of the delicious chocolate and sea salt. Known for: delicious Italian ice cream; indulgent desserts; essential part of the Brighton seafront experience. \$ Average main: £9 ⋈ 2 Gardner St. gelatogustobtn.

#### lydea

\$ | VEGETARIAN | This popular restaurant and café is a must for visiting vegetarians, though even the most ardent carnivores are likely to leave satisfied. The food is laid out cafeteria style (or "canteen" style in British English), so you choose your meal based on choices of

main dishes, sides, and toppings. Known for: top vegetarian restaurant: delicious. international cooking; popular veggie breakfast. \$ Average main: £7 ⋈ 17 Kensington Gardens 

☐ 01273/667992 www.iydea.co.uk.

#### **The Mock Turtle Tea Room**

\$ | CAFÉ | Less than five minutes' walk from the Royal Pavilion, the Mock Turtle is a great old-fashioned, homey café. Alongside a decent selection of teas and coffees are four types of rarebit. soups, and scones as well as cakes and enormous doughnuts. Known for: popular stop for tea and coffee; excellent cakes; location close to Royal Pavilion. \$ Average main: £7 ⋈ 4 Pool Valley **☎** 01273/327380.

#### ★ Riddle & Finns The Lanes

\$\$ | SEAFOOD | White tiles, bare metal tables, and sparkling chandeliers set the tone as soon as you walk through the door of this casually elegant restaurant. The house specialty is oysters, fresh and sustainably sourced, served with or without a foaming tankard of black velvet (champagne and Guinness) on the side. Known for: romantic atmosphere: supremely fresh seafood; no reservations policy so be prepared to wait. \$ Average main: £22 × 12B Meeting House La. ₱ 01273/721667 ⊕ www.riddleandfinns. co.uk.

#### Terre à Terre

\$\$ | VEGETARIAN | This inspiring vegetarian restaurant is incredibly popular, so come early for a light lunch or later for a more sophisticated evening meal. Dishes have a pan-Asian influence, so you may have steamed rice buns stuffed with ginger pak choi or battered halloumi with the pleasingly tongue-twistery side of lemony Yemeni relish. Known for: Asian-influenced cooking; excellent vegetarian dishes; great wine list. \$ Average main: £17 × 71 East St. @ 01273/729051 www.terreaterre.co.uk.

# Brighton and the Regent



The term "Regency" comes from the last 10 years of the reign of George III (1811-20), who was ultimately deemed unfit to rule because of his mental illness. Real power was officially given to the Prince of Wales, also known as the Prince Regent, who became King George IV and ruled until his death in 1830.

Throughout his regency, George IV spent grand sums indulging his flamboyant tastes in architecture and interior decorating—while failing in affairs of state.

The distinctive architecture of the Royal Pavilion is a prime, if extreme. example of the Regency style, popularized by architect John Nash (1752-1835) in the early part of the 19th century. The style is characterized by a diversity of influences—French, Greek, Italian, Persian, Japanese, Chinese, Roman, Indian... you name it. Nash was George IV's favorite architect, beloved for his interest in Indian and Asian art and for his neoclassical designs, as evidenced in his other most famous work: Regent's Park and its terraces in London.

#### The Witchez

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\$ | EASTERN EUROPEAN | Owned by talented graphic designers and photo artists, the Witchez Photo Design Restaurant is certainly a unique concept: delicious German- and Polish-influenced comfort food served in the middle of a design studio (which means you can have your passport photo taken while you wait). Never mind the weirdness of the concept; this place is a whole lot of fun, and the food is good to boot—schnitzel, pierogi, German sausage, potato dumplings, and pizzas. Known for: truly unique concept; tasty German and Polish dishes; great atmosphere. \$ Average main: £14 ⋈ 16 Marine Parade co.uk @ Closed Sun. No lunch.



#### \* Brightonwave

\$\$ | B&B/INN | Chic and sleek, this hotel a little off the seafront (three minutes' walk from Brighton Pier) is all about relaxation. Pros: big and comfortable beds; beautiful design; lovely hosts. Cons: rooms on the small side; few extras; limited parking. \$ Rooms from: £130 ⋈ 10 Madeira Pl. com ≈ 8 rooms | Free breakfast.

#### **★** Drakes

\$\$ | HOTEL | It's easy to miss the low-key sign for this elegant, modern hotel tucked away amid the frilly houses on Marine Parade, but it's worth the trouble of finding, because everything is cool, calm, and sleekly designed. Pros: attention to detail; well-designed bathrooms: excellent restaurant. Cons: two-night minimum on weekends; breakfast is extra: limited parking. \$ Rooms from: £160 ⋈ 43-44 Marine Parade @ 01273/696934 @ www.drakesofbrighton.com ≈ 20 rooms 1 No meals.

#### The Grand Brighton

\$\$ | HOTEL | The city's most famous hotel and a seafront landmark, the Grand Brighton is a huge, Victorian wedding cake of a building dating from 1864. **Pros:** as grand as its name: lovely sea views; luxurious spa. Cons: a bit impersonal; prices can rise sharply on weekends; cheaper rooms are small. **\$** Rooms from: £220 ⋈ 97–99 Kings brighton.co.uk ≈ 201 rooms ¶ Free breakfast.

#### **Granville Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | Three grand Victorian buildings facing the sea have been combined to create one great boutique hotel. Pros: creative design: friendly staff: rambunctious atmosphere. Cons: decor too quirky for some; sea-facing rooms can be noisy; not wheelchair accessible. \$ Rooms from: £125 ⋈ 124 King's Rd. ₱ 01273/326302 ⊕ www.granvillehotel. co.uk ≈ 24 rooms of Free breakfast.

#### Hotel du Vin

\$\$ | HOTEL | In the Lanes area, this outpost of a snazzy boutique chain has chic, modern rooms. Pros: gorgeous rooms; comfortable beds; excellent restaurant. Cons: bar can get crowded; big price fluctuations in summer: often gets booked up. \$ Rooms from: £185 ⋈ 2 Ship St. **☎** 01273/855221 **⊕** www.hotelduvin.com ♣3 49 rooms ¶○I Free breakfast.

#### Nineteen Brighton

\$ | B&B/INN | A calm oasis in the heart of Brighton, this questhouse is filled with contemporary art and designer accessories. **Pros:** innovative design; close to the beach; three nights for the price of two. **Cons:** not on the nicest street: two-night minimum on weekends; breakfast not included. \$ Rooms from: £95 \( 19\) Broad St. \( \exists 07426/043930 \) rooms 'N No meals.

#### **Oriental Brighton**

\$\$ | HOTEL | With a casual elegance that typifies Brighton, this Regency-era boutique hotel sits close to the seafront. **Pros:** close to the beach: chic and colorful rooms; tasty cooked breakfasts. Cons: lacking a restaurant; bar can get rowdy; no free parking. \$ Rooms from: £150 orientalbrighton.co.uk ≈ 9 rooms Free breakfast

# **™** Nightlife

Brighton is a techno hub, largely because so many DJs have moved here from London. Clubs and bars present live music most nights, and on weekends the entire place can be a bit too raucous for some tastes. There's a large and enthusiastic gay scene.

#### **Bohemia Brighton**

MUSIC CLUBS | Though open throughout the day as an upscale café-bar. Bohemia Brighton really comes to life after dark. Its Champagne Late Lounge has great cocktails and live DJs every Saturday night, while regular jazz nights (usually Thursday starting at 9 pm) see the best local jazz acts take over the venue, which is laid out like a traditional jazz club with table service and a romantic, candlelit ambience. ⋈ 54-55 Meeting House La. **☎** 01273/777770 **⊕** www.bohemiabrighton.co.uk.

#### **Patterns**

MUSIC CLUBS | One of Brighton's foremost venues, in an art deco building east of Brighton Pier, Patterns is the latest incarnation of a string of popular nightclubs that have occupied this spot. Expect to hear live acts during the week, including a regular local slot (this being Brighton, the quality is generally quite high) and techno and house on the weekend.  $\bowtie 10$ *Marine Parade* ≈ 01273/894777 ⊕ www. patternsbrighton.com.

#### The Plotting Parlour

BARS/PUBS | This ultrahip nightclub on Stein Street feels like a glamorous speakeasy. Cocktails are a specialty, and the bar staff certainly know what they're doing (try the fierce ginger and chili margarita). It's extremely popular with the cooler brand of local partygoer, and it's fabulously good fun to boot. ⋈ 6 Steine St. \( \frac{1273}{621238} \) www.theplottingparlour-brighton.co.uk.

#### **Proud Cabaret**

CABARET | A mixture of vintage and avant-garde cabaret and burlesque is on offer at this stylish nightclub, which has a distinctly 1920s flavor. It's only open Friday and Saturday and can get very busy, so booking ahead is advisable. ⋈ 83 St. Georges Rd. 🕾 01273/605789 ⊕ proudcabaret.com.



#### **Brighton Dome**

ARTS CENTERS | West of the Royal Pavilion, the Brighton Dome was converted from the Prince Regent's stables in the 1930s. It includes a theater and a concert hall that stages classical and pop concerts, plays, stand-up comedy, and festive pantomimes (a traditional British children's play with songs and dance, usually featuring a mix of talented stage pros and low-rent TV stars).  $\bowtie$  Church St.  $\cong$  01273/709709  $\oplus$  www. brightondome.org.

#### **Duke of York's Picture House**

FILM | One of the oldest cinemas in the world, the elegant Duke of York's Picture House dates back to 1910 and shows an eclectic range of art-house movies and also hosts film-related discussions and events. It's a 10-minute walk north of the main train station.

✓ Preston Rd. 🖹 0871/902–5747

⊕ www.picturehouses.com.

#### Theatre Royal

THEATER | Close to the Royal Pavilion, the Theatre Royal has a gem of an auditorium that has been a favorite venue for shows on their way to, or fresh from, London's West End for more than 200 years. ⋈ New Rd. ☎ 0844/871–7650 www.atgtickets.com/venues/ theatre-royal-brighton.



Brighton's best shopping can be found in two areas: the Lanes, a labyrinth of poky alleyways and passages full of boutique clothing, antiques, and jewelry and North Laine, a network of narrow streets full of fun, funky, and exotic little stores.

#### **Dave's Comics**

BOOKS/STATIONERY | This supercool independent comic book store is stocked with an enormous range of comic books. There's a sister store two doors down, specializing in graphic novels, toys, and other collectibles. ⋈ 5 Sydney St. ⋈ 01273/691012 www.davescomics.co.uk.

# The Great Frog Paterson and Curiouser & Curiouser

JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES | A two-for-one of funky jewelry stores sharing the same premises, the Great Frog Paterson specializes in jewelry with a rock 'n' roll theme (the owners claim to be the creators of the original skull ring) while Curiouser & Curiouser is filled with unique handmade pieces (the shop made several pieces of jewelry for the Harry Potter movies). ⋈ 2 Sydney St. வ01273/673120 www.thegreatfrogpaterson.com.

#### **Lavender Room**

JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES | This relaxing boutique tempts with scented calendars, glittery handmade jewelry, and little things you just can't live without. 

☑ 16 Bond St. ② 01273/220380 ⊕ www. lavender-room.co.uk.

#### **Pecksniff's Bespoke Perfumery**

PERFUME/COSMETICS | This delightfully old-fashioned "British Fragrance and Cosmetic House" mixes and matches ingredients to suit your perfume wishes. ⋈ 45–46 Meeting House La. © 01273/723292 ⊕ www.pecksniffs.com.



#### **Royal Pavilion Shop**

**GIFTS/SOUVENIRS** | Next door to the Royal Pavilion, this little shop sells well-designed toys, trinkets, books, and cards, all with a loose Regency theme. There are also high-quality fabrics, wallpapers, and ceramics based on material in the pavilion itself. ⋈ 4–5 Pavilion Parade 🕾 .

# Arundel

21 miles west of Brighton.

The little hilltop town of Arundel is dominated by three oversized landmarks. First, a great—and greatly restored—castle, which has been home of the dukes of Norfolk for more than 700 years. Second, an imposing neo-Gothic Roman Catholic cathedral (the duke is Britain's leading Catholic peer). And third, a spectacular

medieval priory church. The town center, which spreads down the hill towards the river, is also full of interesting old buildings, the vast majority of which are either pubs, tea shops, or antiques dealers.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

Arundel is located at the point where the A27 meets the A824, about a two-hour drive south of central London. Trains from London's Victoria Station leave every half hour and take 1½ hours. No direct buses run from London, and while it's possible to take a National Express bus to Worthing or Chichester and change to a local bus to Arundel, the journey is likely to take five hours or more.

From Brighton, there are regular Southern trains to Arundel (one to 1½ hours, changing in Barnham), or it's a 45-minute drive west along the A27.

#### **ESSENTIALS**

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VISITOR INFORMATION Arundel Visitor **Information Centre.** ⋈ *Arundel Museum*. River Rd. ₹ 01903/885866 ₩ www. sussexbythesea.com.



#### \* Arundel Castle

CASTLE/PALACE | FAMILY | You've probably already seen Arundel Castle without knowing it, at least on screen. Its striking resemblence to Windsor means that it's frequently used as a stand-in for its more famous cousin in movies and television.

Begun in the 11th century, this vast castle remains rich with the history of the Fitzalan and Howard families and holds paintings by Van Dyck, Gainsborough, and Reynolds. During the 18th century and in the Victorian era it was reconstructed in the fashionable Gothic style—although the keep, rising from its conical mound, is as old as the original castle (climb its 130 steps for great views of the River Arun), and the barbican and the Barons' Hall date from the 13th century. Among the treasures here are the rosary beads and prayer book used by Mary, Queen of Scots, in preparing for her execution.

The formal garden, a triumph of order and beauty, is also worth a visit. Special events happen year-round, including a week of jousting, usually in late July. (Ticket prices rise slightly during event weeks.) Although the castle's ceremonial entrance is at the top of High Street, you enter at the bottom, close to the parking lot. ☑ Off High St. 🖹 01903/882173 www.arundelcastle.org £23; gardens only £13 © Closed Mon. and Nov.-Mar.

#### **Arundel Cathedral**

RELIGIOUS SITE | This far-too-big-for-asmall-town Catholic cathedral in the French-Gothic style was commissioned by Henry, Duke of Norfolk, to celebrate his coming of age. Designed by Joseph Hansom (of Hansom Cab horse-drawn carriage fame), it opened in 1873. Stroll around the gorgeous interior, renowned for its signature stained-glass rose window and beautiful 19th-century organ. Also look out for the roundels of Saxon saints high up on the walls of the aisles. arundelcathedral.uk.

#### \* St. Nicholas Church

RELIGIOUS SITE | Just across the road from Arundel Cathedral is another equally impressive—and equally oversized—religious building. This 14th-century parish church, built on the site of a far older priory, was almost certainly the work of Henry Yeveley and William Wynford, who also contributed to Canterbury and Winchester cathedrals. Interestingly, the church is today divided into two separate parts according to denomination: the main part, the nave, is Protestant, while the chancel is Catholic. The latter, seized during the Reformation, is where the dukes of Norfolk are buried. Wander around to see some of the decorative highlights, including the remarkable stone pulpit, the unusually large Royal Coat of Arms, and some surviving fragments of medieval wall paintings. ⋈ Off stnicholas-arundel.co.uk.

# Restaurants

#### ★ The Town House

\$\$\$ | BRITISH | This small but elegant restaurant in a beautifully converted Regency town house (look above you-the dining room ceiling is quite something) serves top-notch British and European cuisine. The fixed-price lunch and dinner menus change regularly but could include roast breast of local partridge with red-currant jelly or trout with a chive butter sauce. Known for: local meats and fish; seasonal menus; beautiful dining room. \$ Average main: £30 ≥ 65 High St. @ 01903/883847 @ www.thetownhouse.co.uk.



#### ★ Amberley Castle

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Enter under the portcullis of this genuine medieval castle, where across the moat, present-day luxury dominates. Pros: sleep in a real castle: lovely gardens and grounds; good afternoon tea. Cons: you have to dress up for dinner; five miles outside Arundel; incredibly expensive. \$ Rooms from: £295 \subseteq Church St., Off B2139, Amberley ☎ 01798/831992 @ www.amberleycastle. co.uk ≈ 19 rooms of Free breakfast.

#### **Bailiffscourt Hotel & Spa**

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Situated a few miles south of Arundel, this charmingly out-of-theway country escape offers lovely period features, expansive private gardens, and one of the region's finest spas. Pros: elegant tapestry-filled restaurant; lovely spa and tennis courts; a short walk to the beach. Cons: "medieval" decor in some rooms a little much: underwhelming afternoon tea; spa visit requires walking outside. \$ Rooms from: £275 ☑ Climping St. 🖹 01903/723511 @ www. hshotels.co.uk/bailiffscourt 39 rooms In Free breakfast.

#### **Norfolk Arms Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | The best accommodation option in the town center, this 18th-century coaching inn on the main street was, like Arundel's cathedral and castle, built by one of the dukes of Norfolk (during the Napoleonic Wars, it was used to house soldiers). Pros: charming old building; good pub food and craft beer; friendly and welcoming staff. **Cons:** older rooms on the small side: underpowered and slowto-heat showers; no elevator. \$ Rooms from: £130 ⋈ 22 High St. 🗃 01903/882101 ⊕ www.norfolkarmsarundel.com 
⇒ 37 rooms Of Free breakfast.

# Chichester

11 miles west of Arundel. 66 miles southwest of London.

The Romans founded Chichester, the capital city of West Sussex, on the low-lying plains between the wooded South Downs and the sea. The city walls and major streets follow the original Roman plan to this day. This cathedral town, a good base for exploring the area, is a well-respected theatrical hub, with a reputation for attracting good acting talent during its summer repertory season. North of town is Petworth House, one of the region's finest stately homes.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

From London, take the A3 south and follow exit signs for Chichester. The journey takes around two hours, as much of it is on smaller highways. Southern trains run to Chichester at least twice-hourly from London Victoria Station, with a travel time of around 11/2 hours. Buses leave from London's Victoria Coach Station a handful of times per day and take between 31/2 and 4 hours with a change at Gatwick Airport.

From Arundel, it's a 25-minute drive west along the A27 to Chichester. There's also a regular 85A bus service (35 minutes), as well as trains via Barnham (25 minutes).

#### **ESSENTIALS**

**VISITOR INFORMATION Chichester Tourist Information Centre.** ⋈ The Novium. Tower St. ≈ 01243/775888 @ www.visitchichester.org.



The outdoor cloisters of Chichester Cathedral are just as pretty as its interiors.



#### ★ Chichester Cathedral

RELIGIOUS SITE | Standing on Roman foundations, 900-year-old Chichester Cathedral has a glass panel that reveals Roman mosaics uncovered during restorations. Other treasures include the wonderful Saxon limestone reliefs of the raising of Lazarus and Christ arriving in Bethany, both in the choir area. Among the outstanding contemporary artworks are a stained-glass window by Marc Chagall and a colorful tapestry by John Piper. Keep an eye out, too, for the memorial to Gustav Holst: the composer's ashes were interred here as he wished to be close to his favorite Tudor musician, Thomas Weelkes.

Entrance to the cathedral is free—as are the guided tours that begin every day except Sunday at 11:15 and 2:30—though donations are very welcome, particularly as the roof is in the midst of an €8 million restoration. You can also prebook tours that concentrate on subjects including

the English Civil War and the cathedral's art collection; call or go online for details. After visiting the cathedral's interior, be sure to walk around its pretty cloisters, where you'll also find a lovely café and shop. ⋈ Off West St. 🕾 01243/782595 www.chichestercathedral.org.uk Free; £5 suggested donation.

#### **Fishbourne Roman Palace**

MUSEUM | In 1960, workers digging a water-main ditch uncovered a Roman wall; so began nine years of archaeological excavation of this site, the remains of the largest, grandest Roman villa in Britain. Intricate mosaics (including Cupid riding a dolphin) and painted walls lavishly decorate what is left of many of the 100 rooms of the palace, built in AD 1st century, possibly for local chieftain Tiberius Claudius Togidubnus. You can explore the sophisticated bathing and heating systems, along with the only example of a Roman garden in northern Europe. An extension has added many modern attributes, including a video reconstruction of how the palace might have looked. The

site is 11/2 miles west of Chichester, a bourne @ 01243/785859 @ www.sussexpast.co.uk/fishbourne 

£10 

Closed weekdays Dec.-mid-Feb.

#### **Novium Museum**

MUSEUM | Set over three floors, this fascinating museum tells the story of Chichester and the surrounding area over the last 500,000 years. It's built around the remains of a Roman Bathhouse, so an entire floor is given over to life in Roman Chichester (or Noviomagus Reginorum, as it was known then). Explore further, and you'll delve both back and forward in time, with exhibits ranging from Bronze Age remains to 17th-century memorials. There are also excellent, regularly changing exhibitions on local history. ⋈ *Tower* org @ Closed Sun.

#### ★ Pallant House Gallery

MUSEUM | This small but important collection of mostly modern British art includes work by Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland. It's in a modern extension to Pallant House, a mansion built for a wealthy wine merchant in 1712 and considered one of the finest surviving examples of Chichcester's Georgian past. At that time, its state-of-the-art design showed the latest in complicated brickwork and superb wood carving. Appropriate antiques and porcelains furnish the faithfully restored rooms. Temporary and special exhibitions (usually around three at once) invariably find new and interesting angles to cover. ≥ 9 N. Pallant **☎** 01243/774557 **⊕** www.pallant.org. uk @ Ground-floor galleries free; rest of museum £12.50 (£6.50 Tues. and Thurs. evening) Tlosed Mon.

#### **Petworth House and Park**

HOUSE | One of the National Trust's greatest treasures, Petworth is the imposing 17th-century home of Lord and Lady Egremont and holds an outstanding collection of English paintings by Gainsborough, Reynolds, and Van Dyck. There are also 19 oil paintings by J. M. W. Turner, the great proponent of romanticism who often visited Petworth and immortalized it in luminous drawings.

A 13th-century chapel is all that remains of the original manor house. The celebrated landscape architect Capability Brown (1716–83) added a 700-acre deer park; today, it has the largest herd of fallow deer in England. Other highlights include Greek and Roman sculpture and Grinling Gibbons wood carvings, such as those in the spectacular Carved Room. Six rooms in the servants' quarters, among them the old kitchen, are also open to the public.

You can reach Petworth off the A285/ A283: the house is 14 miles northeast of Chichester. ⋈ A283, Petworth **☎** 01798/343929 **⊕** www.nationaltrust. org.uk/petworth 2 £10.90; parking £4.

#### Weald and Downland Open Air Museum

MUSEUM | FAMILY | On the outskirts of Singleton, a secluded village five miles north of Chichester, is this sanctuary for historical buildings dating from the 13th through 19th century. Among the 45 structures moved to 50 acres of pretty wooded meadows are a cluster of medieval houses, a working water mill, a Tudor market hall, and a Victorian schoolhouse. Look carefully, and you might recognize some of the structures from the hit Amazon/BBCTV show Good Omens. The buildings are brought to life with regular tours, talks, and demonstrations. 

Town La., Off A286, Singleton 

01243/811363 www.wealddown.co.uk £14.

# Restaurants

#### **Purchases**

\$\$ | BRITISH | This excellent bistro is popular with locals for a special-occasion dinner and with the pre-theater crowd, who enjoy the fixed-price early-bird menus. The food strikes a nice balance between hearty, traditional fare and contemporary stylings. Known for: bargain pre-theater menus; traditional cooking

with a contemporary edge; tasty beef Wellington with spinach and tarragon sauce. \$ Average main: £23 ⋈ 31 North St. @ 01243/771444 @ www.purchasesrestaurant.co.uk.



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#### **Chichester Harbour Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | This handsome 18th-century house, known for its flying (partially freestanding) staircase and colonnade, was once the residence of Admiral George Murray, one of Admiral Nelson's right-hand men. Pros: beautifully restored building; stylish design; great city center location. Cons: street-facing rooms can be noisy; prices are a little high; gets booked up during Glorious Goodwood horse racing season. \$ Rooms from: £160 ☑ North St. 🖹 01243/778000 @ www.harbourhotels.co.uk/chichester ≈ 37 rooms ¶⊙l Free breakfast

#### ★ Nightingale Cottage

\$\$ | B&B/INN | Located in Boxgrove, a village just northeast of Chichester, this charming B&B offers space, comfort, and personalized service within a gorgeous, 17th-century thatched cottage. Pros: attractive 400-year-old property; spacious suites with armchairs and desks; location opposite a lovely ruined priory. **Cons:** limited space means it's often full; low ceilings can be a hazard; a little way out of town. \$ Rooms from: £125 \subseteq The St. \equiv 01243/926389 www.nightingalecottagebedandbreakfast.com ≈ 2 suites Free breakfast.



#### **Chichester Festival Theatre**

THEATER | The modernist, hexagonal Chichester Festival Theatre presents classics and modern plays from May through September and is a venue for touring companies the rest of the year. Built in 1962, it has an international reputation for innovative performances and attracts theatergoers from across the country. Mac Oaklands Park, Off A286 € 01243/781312 ⊕ www.cft.org.uk.

# Guildford

37 miles northeast of Chichester, 32 miles southwest of London.

Guildford, the largest town in Surrey and the county's capital, has a lovely historic center with charming original storefronts. Gabled merchants' houses line the steep, pleasantly provincial High Street, where the remains of a Norman castle are tucked away in a peaceful garden, and the iconic clock on the old guildhall dates from 1683. The area around the train station is rather seedy and crowded, but once you make your way to the center it's a much nicer town. Guildford is a good place to base yourself if you're planning to visit nearby attractions such as the Royal Horticultural Society gardens in Wisley or the ruins of Waverley Abbey.

#### **GETTING HERE AND AROUND**

From London, take the A3 south and then exit onto the A31, following signs for Guildford. The 28-mile journey takes about an hour in traffic. Southwest trains run to Guildford several times an hour from London's Waterloo Station: the trip takes between 30 minutes and 11/4 hours. If you're coming from Chichester, drive up the A3 to Guildford (one hour), or hop on one of the regular trains (11/4 hours, changing in Havant).

Guildford Station is extremely busy and surrounded by traffic, but fortunately the center is a five-minute walk; just follow the signs for High Street. National Express buses travel from London to Guildford every couple of hours: the trip takes an hour.

#### **ESSENTIALS**

#### VISITOR INFORMATION Guildford

**Tourist Information Centre.** ⋈ 155 High St. € 01483/444333 ⊕ www.visitguildford. com.



#### **Guildford Castle**

**CASTLE/PALACE** | Constructed shortly after the Norman invasion of England in 1066, the sturdy keep of Guildford Castle still stands watch over the city center, surrounded by beautiful and colorful gardens (look out for the statue of Alice Through the Looking Glass, in honor of local resident Lewis Carroll). Step inside the keep to learn more about its fascinating history, to see a model of the castle as it appeared circa 1300, and to enjoy stunning views of the gardens and the city from the rooftop terrace. Nearby, the castle's old gatehouse houses part of Guildford Museum, with exhibits on local history and archaeology, as well as memorabilia of Lewis Carroll. 

Castle St. *☎* 01483/444751 *⊕* www.quildford.gov. Nov.-Feb. and weekdays Mar.-Oct.

#### **Guildford Cathedral**

RELIGIOUS SITE | On a hilltop across the River Wey, this is only the second Anglican cathedral to be built on a new site since the Reformation in the 1500s. It was consecrated in 1961, and the industrial-looking redbrick exterior is rather dauntingly severe, even brutal (so much so that it was even chosen as a key location for the 1976 horror movie The Omen). In contrast, the interior, with its stone and plaster, looks bright and cool.

Once inside, see if you can spot the brass stag on the floor, which marks the highest point of the hill. You'll also see some of the 1.468 "kneelers" which were individually designed for the cathedral with patterns appropriate to the time; look out for cushions dedicated to everything from Sputnik to the 1960 Olympics.

The cathedral has a lively program of events, including music recitals and art exhibitions, and is also used as a performance venue by the local Shakespeare society on certain dates in the summer.

Call or check the website for details. ☑ Stag Hill 🕾 01483/547860 ⊕ www. quildford-cathedral.org 22 Free.

#### **Polesden Lacey**

HOUSE | This gorgeous, creamy-yellow Regency mansion, built in 1824, contains impressive collections of furniture, paintings, porcelain, and silver gathered in the early part of the 20th century. Edwardian society hostess Mrs. Ronald Greville was responsible for the lavish interiors, and the future King George VI stayed here for part of his honeymoon in 1923. On summer days you can wander its vast landscaped gardens or rent croquet equipment from the house and take advantage of its smooth lawns. The house is in Great Bookham. 10 miles east of Guildford, ⋈ Off A246, Polesden Rd., Great Bookham @ 01372/452048 @www.nationaltrust.org.uk/polesden-lacev 🖭 £13.60.

#### ★ RHS Garden Wisley

GARDEN | Wisley is the Royal Horticultural Society's innovative and inspirational 240acre showpiece, beloved by horticulturalists across this garden-loving country. Both an ornamental and scientific center. it claims to have greater horticultural diversity than any other garden in the world. Highlights include the flower borders and displays in the central area, the rock garden and alpine meadow in spring, and the large and modern conservatories. There's also an impressive bookstore and a garden center that sells more than 10,000 types of plants. The garden is eight miles northeast of Guildford. ⋈ Off A3, Woking 🖹 01483/224234 www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wislev ™£13.45.

#### The Sculpture Park

PUBLIC ART | FAMILY | Set in a forested park 12 miles southwest of Guildford, this is a wild, fanciful place where giant steel spiders climb trees, bronze horses charge up hillsides, and metal girls and boys dance on lakes. You follow signposted paths across the parkland, spotting

tiny sculptures up trees, in bushes, and walking through the legs of other more gigantic creations. You can also follow the footpath beside the little car park outside up to the **Devil's Jumps**, a ruggedly beautiful spot with views over the South Downs. The name derives from a piece of local folklore: one night the devil stole a cauldron from a witch who lived near Waverley Abbey. She gave chase on her broomstick, so with each leap the devil kicked up huge clods of earth, which in turn became hills—hence "jumps." ☑ Jumps Rd., Churt @ 01428/605453 ⊕ www.thesculpturepark.com £10.

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#### ★ Watts Gallery and Memorial Chapel

MUSEUM | An extraordinary small museum, the Watts Gallery was built in tiny Compton in 1904 by the late-19th-century artist George Frederic Watts (1817–1904) to display his work. His romantic, mystical paintings have been somewhat rediscovered in recent years, not least by Barack Obama, who counts Watts's 1886 painting *Hope* as one of his favorite works of art.

A marvellously higgeldy-piggeldy studio displays his sculptures, which are astonishing both for their size and the near-obsessive attention to detail. However, for all his skill and popularity, he has critics who contend that his artistic talent was eclipsed by that of his wife. Follow the signposted walk to the Watts Memorial Chapel, less than half a mile from the museum, and you may become one of them.

Mary Watts (1849–1938), virtually unknown as an artist both then and now. designed this tiny chapel, a masterpiece of art nouveau style, from the intricately carved redbrick exterior to the jaw-dropping painted interior. You could easily spend half an hour trying to decode all the symbolism and allegory woven meticulously into the gilded walls. The museum and chapel are three miles south of Guildford. 

Down La., Compton uk Museum £11.50; chapel free.

#### Waverley Abbey

RELIGIOUS SITE | One of the oldest Cistercian abbeys in England, this was an important center of monastic power from 1128 until Henry VIII's dissolution of the monastries. What remains is a strikingly picturesque ruin surrounded by open countryside. Roofed sections of the undercroft and monks' dormitory survive, as does the refectory tunnel and a magnificent vew tree in the former churchyard, thought to be around 700 years old. A more unexpected historical footnote sits on the banks of the abbey stream: moss-covered tank traps, overlooked from across a field by a pillbox (sniper station). They were placed here during World War Il after British generals role-played a Nazi invasion and decided this was the route they'd choose to attack London. Unused plans later found in Berlin showed they were precisely right. The abbey is off the B3001, 11 miles south-Farnham @ 0370/333-1181 @ www. english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/ waverley-abbey 🖼 Free.

### Restaurants

#### The Mill

\$ | BRITISH | A short hop down the road from Waverley Abbey and nine miles south of Guildford, this unusually handsome pub is in an old watermill, which is still working—you can see it in the lobby. The menu nicely balances British pub classics and more contemporary tastes; expect to find some excellent fish-and-chips alongside chicken breast with truffle mashed potatoes or a delicious plate of linguine with chili and basil. Known for: fresh and tasty pies; good gastro-pub fare; lovely beer garden. \$ Average main: £14 ⋈ Farn-millelstead.co.uk.

# Hiking in the Southeast



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For those who prefer to travel on their own two feet, the Southeast offers long sweeps of open terrain that make walking a pleasure. Ardent walkers can explore all or part of the popular North Downs Way (153 miles) and the South Downs Way (106 miles), following ancient paths along the tops of the downs—the undulating treeless uplands typical of the area. Both trails are now part of the **South** Downs National Park (@ www.southdowns.gov.uk), but each maintains its separate identity. Both are very popular with hikers (particularly on weekends).

#### Trails on the Downs

The North Downs Way starts outside Guildford, in the town of Farnham, alongside the A31. You can park at the train station, about ½ mile away. The path starts with absolutely no fanfare. on a traffic-choked bypass, but soon improves. It passes several scenic spots, including the White Cliffs of Dover, along the way and follows part

of the old Pilgrim's Way to Canterbury that so fascinated Chaucer.

The South Downs Way starts in Winchester, at Water Lane, and ends on the promenade in the seaside town of Eastbourne. Along the way it crosses the chalk landscape of Sussex Downs, with parts of the route going through deep woodland. Charming little villages serve the walkers cool ale in inns that have been doing precisely that for centuries.

The 30-mile **Downs Link** joins the two routes. Along the Kent coast. the Saxon Shore Way, stretching 143 miles from Gravesend to Rve. passes four Roman forts.

#### Resources

Guides to these walks are available from the excellent website for National Trails ( www.nationaltrail. co.uk). Tourist information offices throughout the region also have good information.

#### Rumwong

\$ | THAI | Considered by locals to be one of the best Thai restaurants in the region, Rumwong has an incredibly long menu, with dozens of choices from all over Thailand. Tasty dishes include the poh-taek, a "seafarer's soup" made with lemongrass, lime leaves, and shellfish, and kai pud krapraw, a spicy stir-fry made with ground chicken, fresh chilies, and basil. Known for: one of region's best Thai restaurants; spicy stir-fries; delicious Thai curries. \$ Average main: £10 ⋈ 18–20 London Rd. ≈ 01483/536092 ⊕ www. rumwona.co.uk ≡ No credit cards © Closed Mon.

#### 🛨 Theion

\$\$ | GREEK | This excellent Greek restaurant is set within a gorgeous space in the city center, with brick walls and high ceilings. The à la carte menu features delicious Mediterranean dishes including fried zucchini balls with fresh Greek yogurt, black pork casserole with roasted potatoes, and oven-baked sea bream stuffed with seasonal greens, while the lunchtime set menu offers excellent value (two courses for £12.95). Known for: delicious modern Greek cuisine; atmospheric dining room; extensive wine list. \$ Average main: £16 \subseteq Chapel St. € 01483/579786 ⊕ www.theion.co.uk.



The Angel Hotel (Angel Posting House)
\$ | HOTEL | Guildford was once famous for its coaching inns, and this handsome, 500-year-old hotel is the last to survive.

Pros: historic building; central location; unique and quirky character. Cons: some rooms get very hot in summer; in need of some renovation; location can be noisy. ⑤ Rooms from: £115 ⋈ 91 High St. 
☐ 01483/564555 ⊕ www.angelposting-house.com ⋈ 22 rooms № No meals.

#### **Guildford Harbour Hotel**

\$\$ | HOTEL | Part of a small boutique chain, the Harbour Hotel is one of the more contemporary offerings in this part of Surrey, with its modern and well-designed rooms attracting mostly business travelers although the spa also brings in plenty of travelers who want a pampering getaway. Pros: efficient and modern design; centrally located; good spa and fitness center. Cons: lacks character; mostly business oriented; unromantic urban surroundings. ⑤ Rooms from: £130 ⋈ 3 Alexandra Terr. ☎ 01483/792300 ⋈ www.guildford-harbour-hotel.co.uk ⋈ 183 rooms ⋈ Breakfast.



#### **Yvonne Arnaud Theatre**

THEATER | This horseshoe-shape theater on an island in the River Wey frequently previews West End productions. The smaller Mill Studio showcases more intimate productions. ⋈ Off Millbrook № 01483/440000 ⊕ www.yvonne-arnaud. co.uk.