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Singing Britain’s praises
KATHERINE JENKINS on the places she loves most

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Published by The River Group (020 7420 7000)
in association with the GREAT Britain campaign and
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Printed in England and produced on paper that is
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Product Code: 17GREAT/EN

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Britain gave me the chance to be great,
recalls the celebrity chef
A very proud Brit

Performing at The Queen’s 90th birthday celebrations while wearing a Union Jack dress, Katherine Jenkins was almost overcome. ‘Oh my gosh, it was so exciting,’ exclaims the 36-year-old classical singer. ‘Standing on that stage, I had to talk to myself and say, “stay calm, don’t get carried away”. It’s such an incredible honour.’

That was May 2016, and not the first time Jenkins has been asked to sing for royalty. Over the past ten years she has performed at Royal Variety Performances and events such as The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. ‘I have to tell you that, every single time, I’ve been quite overwhelmed by it,’ she says. That’s no small admission because not much would appear to faze the south Wales-born mezzo-soprano. Today she is being photographed for Imagination in the grounds of the former home of Henry VIII, Leeds Castle, in Kent, south-east England.

‘I don’t know why we’ve never been here with the family on a day trip,’ she says. ‘It’s gorgeous, I’m definitely going to come back with my mum, sister and the kids.’ Jenkins is so warm and chatty, it’s easy to forget this is the woman who landed the largest record deal in UK classical recording history when she was just 23 years old. In 2014, she received an OBE for services to music and her charitable work. She is a British icon and a global star. That same year, Jenkins married American artist and film producer Andrew Levitas and their daughter, Aaliyah, was born a year later. ‘Everybody thinks I’ve moved to America, but we live in London,’ she says, firmly. ‘I’m a very proud Brit, and I love living in the UK.’

Having sung all over the world and entertained The Queen, Welsh mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins has always been proud of her roots. Here she talks about British music, fashion — and the importance of cooking proper roast potatoes...
‘Singing is woven into the British spirit’
We spend a fair amount of time in America because I want my daughter to have time with that side of the family too. But home is home and we're very happy here.

In fact, when she gets back from a trip away, the first thing she does is cook a proper Sunday roast. 'I do good roast potatoes,' she says proudly. 'There's a skill to them. A little bit of pre-cooking before you put them in the oven. Andrew and I cook together so, even though he's not been brought up cooking a Sunday roast, he's pretty good at it now.'

Although many of her favourite British places are Welsh – she cites the Gower Peninsula, near her hometown of Neath – there is one London landmark that she knows very well. The London Eye had just opened when Jenkins was a student at the Royal Academy of Music in 2000, and she got a summer job there as a tour guide. 'I probably went around The London Eye at least ten times a day for one entire summer,' she laughs.

Jenkins has performed all over the world, from New York and Sydney to Berlin and Dubai, but she remains proud of her roots. 'The amount of creativity in Britain is so impressive for a small island,' she says, 'particularly when it comes to music and fashion.' Jenkins loves designers Julien Macdonald (a fellow Welshman), and Suzanne Neville, 'who makes all of my stage wear', including that Union Jack dress for The Queen's 90th birthday. 'I also love Alexander McQueen, Burberry and Stella McCartney.'

Singing, Jenkins suggests, is woven into the British spirit. 'We have a great tradition of singing here, whether that's from folk music or, in Wales, our many male-voice choirs.' She praises Welsh singers Tom Jones and Dame Shirley Bassey, but also loves London-born Adele.

Jenkins has achieved much herself, and has lots more still to come. But, for now, she is looking forward to introducing one-year-old Aaliyah to some of her favourite spots in Britain. 'What's amazing about the UK is the amount of heritage and culture we have here. I'm a bit of a history geek, so I love the palaces and castles. Bath is a gorgeous city. I went to summer school for singing there, and it's quintessentially British – it feels unchanged by time. Andrew and I got married at Hampton Court Palace and the grounds alone are gorgeous, then you step inside and history comes to life. I can't wait to take Aaliyah there.'

Her daughter's musical knowledge is going to be extremely advanced. In fact, she has already been on stage at the Royal Albert Hall. 'I performed there in June, and took my daughter in the afternoon to my soundcheck,' she recalls, 'she always welling up with pride. I held her in my arms, on the stage, with the orchestra. I really wanted to have her there with me because who gets to do that?'

That famous Katherine Jenkins smile is wider than ever. 'No matter how many times I step out onto that stage, it still takes my breath away.'
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HOW TO ENTER
Go to visitbritain.com/magazine and click on ‘Enter Competition’. Submit your answers to all three questions (find clues in this magazine). Then complete a tie-breaker slogan and give your details for your chance to win. Please refer to the competition terms and conditions at visitbritain.com/magazine/ecs

Competition opens 20 February 2017 and closes at midnight (GMT) on 20 November 2017.
It’s not just for children – all ages will be enchanted by the incredible Harry Potter filming locations across the UK, says Simon Heptinstall

It all started by chance. Our family was enjoying a train ride on the scenic West Highland Line from Fort William and, as the train emerged from the trees around Loch Shiel, suddenly there it was in front of us.

My daughter shouted first: ‘We’re on the Hogwarts Express!’ We crowded to the window. The Heptinstall family was about to cross the Glenfinnan Viaduct, a curving Victorian railway bridge that soars 30m above the River Finnan in west Scotland [visitscotland.com]. I recognised it instantly from the Harry Potter films, where it leads towards Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. My wife and I cheered loudly – but the children went very quiet, as if they expected a moment of magic to happen at any second.

It was a thrilling experience, and one that later inspired us to visit some of the many other Harry Potter locations across the UK. We knew that any journey on the Hogwarts Express had to start at Platform 9¾ at King’s Cross station in London [kingscross.co.uk]. We turned up and found that the Potter-loving railway authorities had recreated the trolley going through the wall – it was just like the films.

All across the capital there are dozens of Harry Potter locations to explore. It was in the Reptile House at London Zoo [zsl.org] that Harry first discovered he could talk to snakes in The Philosopher’s Stone. My 13-year-old son, also called Harry, tried and tried, but he couldn’t even make the frogs understand him.

An hour by train from London is the university city of Oxford, where our first stop was the 400-year-old Bodleian Library, which was used for Hogwarts’ library and hospital [bodleian.ox.ac.uk].

Next, my excited children practically dragged me into Christ Church, one of Oxford’s oldest colleges. Its wood-panelled hall was the model for Hogwarts’ dining hall. From the stone staircases of Christ Church to the distinctive cloisters of New College (where Malfoy was turned into a ferret in The Goblet Of Fire), fans will recognise scores of familiar sights. Visit ox.ac.uk for details of all Oxford colleges.

Heading east to Suffolk, we found Lavenham, one of the UK’s best-preserved medieval villages [discoverlavenham.com]. It’s known in Harry Potter world as Godric’s Hollow, and De Vere House in the village is the birthplace of the wizard.

For the climax of our tour, we went to Hogwarts itself, Alnwick Castle
STUDIO TOUR
At Warner Bros. Studios, Leavesden, you can step inside the sets and see the costumes, props and special effects from ten years of filming. To get there, it’s a 20-minute train ride from London, then a short distance by shuttle-bus. For more information, visit wbstudiotour.co.uk

FILM LOCATIONS
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them is JK Rowling’s screenwriting debut, based on her book about the mythical creatures from Harry Potter. Filming took place in Warner Bros. Studios and at landmark buildings across the city of Liverpool in north-west England; visitliverpool.com

AND MORE...
London’s Palace Theatre is currently staging Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, based on the eighth story; it runs until December 2017 [harrypottertheplay.com]. The British Library hosts a Harry Potter exhibition from 20 October 2017 to 28 February 2018; visit bl.uk

Northumberland [alnwickcastle.com]. The 700-year-old fortress’s towers and battlements featured in the first two films, The Philosopher’s Stone and The Chamber Of Secrets. My family was spellbound by the Outer Bailey, a large, grassy area where Harry had his first broomstick flying lesson with Madam Hooch. Perhaps that’s because visitors are allowed to have a go on a ‘flying’ broomstick, too. I tried myself but only succeeded in falling off!

For an ambitious writer like me, the natural place to imagine the locations created by JK Rowling is The Elephant House [elephanthouse.biz]. This humble coffee shop overlooking the castle in Edinburgh’s Old Town is where the author wrote many of her books. So, leaving the children behind, I sat with tea and cakes all day, striving for inspiration. But I’m afraid all that came out was this article.

Experience it!

'Fly' on broomsticks at Alnwick Castle
Britain’s historic attractions are not just about the past — today they play host to a huge range of activities and events that are as modern as they are unique.

*Drop by Richard Hudson at Sotheby’s Beyond Limits, a contemporary sculpture show held in the grounds of Chatsworth in Derbyshire.*
There is no shortage of places in Britain where tradition contrasts brilliantly with innovation and creativity. Sports, music, art and family activities have given new life to palaces, stately homes and glorious gardens - just as inspiring as when they were first unveiled.

**ART AND MUSIC**

Every September, the manicured lawns and verdant pathways of Chatsworth, a stately home in Derbyshire, come alive with large-scale contemporary sculpture at Sotheby’s Beyond Limits exhibition. Works from artists including Damien Hirst, Marc Quinn and Thomas Heatherwick (designer of the London 2012 Olympic cauldron) have featured in previous years and 2017’s line-up is set to be equally impressive. Chatsworth is a great place to visit any time of year as it lies in the Peak District National Park, which is a breathtaking area to discover on foot or by bike.

If that sounds like fun, then you’re sure to like the cool vibes on offer in the Yorkshire Wolds at Burton Agnes Jazz & Blues Festival. Taking place late June beside a splendid Elizabethan residence, it features 25 musical acts playing their own hits, plus covers of greats like Billie Holiday and Gershwin.

**SPORTING GREATS**

Thrills are to be found all year round in Snowdonia, Wales, where Bounce Below offers trampolining deep within a Victorian slate mine. Picture yourself suspended 100ft in the air in a cathedral-size cavern bouncing on one of several trampolines joined by industrial chutes. One for adrenaline junkies aged seven and over. Held every September in West Sussex, about an hour south of London, the Goodwood Revival honours the circuit’s heyday of the 40s, 50s and 60s. Nostalgic racing and beautifully restored vehicles make Goodwood an exciting event, and the vintage aircraft displays and period costumes really transport you back in time. Also in September, the Concours of Elegance brings together dozens of the rarest cars from around the...
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world, which arrive in a spectacular procession at a royal residence. For 2017, the show will be held at Hampton Court Palace, where legendary British marques include Aston Martin and Rolls-Royce.

STAGE AND SCREEN
Set into granite cliffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean in Cornwall, Minack Theatre is a tiny amphitheatre that was constructed in the 1930s [www.minack.com]. Today you can sit on the grass terraces and watch contemporary plays alongside classics like Frankenstein or The Tempest while listening to the waves below.

Best known for the plays of William Shakespeare and his contemporaries, Shakespeare’s Globe theatre on the south bank of the River Thames in London also stages brand new productions [shakespearesglobe.com].

Film fans can watch James Bond in the grounds of Blenheim Palace, or Robin Hood in the Tower of London at The Luna Cinema, which hosts pop-up film screenings every year from August to October [thelunacinema.com]. Venues have included several castles, an open air swimming pool, a botanic garden and a seaside pier. Bring a picnic or treat yourself to a premium package with director’s chairs, drinks and hot food.

FAMILY FUN
Kids will love a trip to see the naval ships at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, which is home to fascinating museums that offer fun activities [historicdockyard.co.uk]. In summer, children can look for a lobster wearing sunglasses, and more beach themed finds, on a treasure hunt around the Royal Navy Submarine Museum. In December and January, get lost in the enchanting Christmas maze next to Admiral Lord Nelson’s impressive flagship, HMS Victory.

For a different view of Edinburgh, head to Camera Obscura [camera-obscura.co.uk]. The 19th century observatory on the Royal Mile has colourful vortex tunnels, mirror mazes, optical illusions and interactive exhibits to amuse you for hours. Over 150 years old, the camera on the top floor projects a shifting image of the outside world onto a white table, and still has the power to impress today.

For more glimpses into the past, take an old fashioned train journey on the Belmond Northern Belle [belmond.com]. You’ll feel as if you’ve been transported back to the golden age of luxury travel as this elegantly restored 1930s style train whisks you through the British countryside. Family friendly journeys include trips to Edinburgh Castle, Chester Zoo and Jane Austen’s House Museum in Hampshire. Choose your departure point from a list that includes Bolton, Edinburgh, Liverpool and York.
A matter of TASTE

Travelling and tasting go hand in hand, and many flavours have found their way to Britain's shores. When you visit you'll find you can eat your way around the world – it's time to discover a menu like no other.

Turkish
In London
In London there are an estimated 200,000 people of Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot origin, based mainly in the north-east of the city. Here's where you'll find 'ocakbasi' restaurants specialising in charcoal-grilled meat and fish accompanied by pillow-soft flatbreads and salads doused in pomegranate dressing. It's great-value, no-frills cooking. Mangal in Dalston is among the best – famous fans include top chef Jamie Oliver.

Balti
In Birmingham
One of the UK's most popular curry dishes is the balti, said to have been invented by the Kashmiri community in this Midlands city in the early 1970s. The word balti means 'bucket' and refers to the thin, pressed-steel bowl that the curry is cooked and served in – watch out, because they can get very hot! Eat it in the area known as the 'Balti Triangle', with restaurants such as Al Frash and Shababs on Ladypool Road at the heart of the action.

Polish
In Scotland
There has been a strong Polish presence in Scotland since the 1940s, when tens of thousands of Poles were stationed in the country during the Second World War. Today, more than 60,000 Poles live in Scotland and a large number have made their home in the capital, Edinburgh. Sample Polish delicacies such as potato pancakes and 'pierogi' (dumplings) at Yellow Bench café on Leith Walk.

Chinese
In Manchester
Britain's largest Chinatown outside London is in Manchester, north-west England. Dominated by a huge red and gold arch on Faulkner Street, its old textile warehouses were repurposed by Chinese restaurateurs in the 1970s. A thriving hub of Chinese culture, it has a dizzying array of restaurants, as well as grocery and health stores. Hunan and Little Yang Sing, both on George Street, are two of the most popular places to eat here.

Italian
In Wales
A close-knit Italian community has thrived in south Wales for more than a century – thousands left their homeland in the 1800s to join an industrial boom taking place in the Welsh valleys. The most famous Italian restaurant is Giovanni's in Cardiff, whose fans include Welsh legends Sir Anthony Hopkins and Sir Tom Jones. For the best ice cream, try Verdi's in the fishing village of Mumbles, near Swansea.

Korean
In London
The south-west suburb of New Malden has the UK’s highest concentration of Korean residents, dating back to a time when it was home to the South Korean ambassador and electronics company Samsung. There are supermarkets and cafés, as well as a huge choice of restaurants serving home-style cooking. Many have barbecues built into the tables, where you can cook meat, fish and vegetables yourself to wrap in lettuce leaves and dip in spicy sauce. Sorabol on the High Street is considered one of the best.
Balti was created by Kashmiris in Birmingham.

Grilled meat is a Turkish speciality.

Manchester's Chinatown is the UK’s second-largest.

Pierogi are delicious Polish dumplings.

Balti is a Turkish speciality.

Go to south-west London for home-style Korean. Find more online: visitbritain.com/food.
Dining WITH A DIFFERENCE

A good meal out is about more than what’s on your plate - it’s the whole experience. Here are some of Britain’s more unusual restaurants to try.

Memories ON A PLATE
An hour west of London is three-Michelin-starred The Fat Duck, where every course tells a story. The menu is described as a journey through childhood memories: for example, ‘Sound of the Sea’ is seafood served on edible sand that transports you back to beach holidays.

Dine in a TREEHOUSE
Perched high up in a copse of lime trees within The Alnwick Garden, north-east England (beside the equally fantastic castle), is one of the world’s largest wooden treehouses. Inside is a magical restaurant, the Treehouse, that serves seasonal, local food, and has twinkling lights, handcrafted furniture and a roaring log fire.

24-hour COOKING
Take the glass elevator up to the 40th floor of one London office block and you’ll find the trendy restaurant Duck & Waffle, with panoramic views across the capital. It’s open 24/7, serving cocktails and comfort food – perfect for a sunrise breakfast or a late-night dinner.

Eat by THE HOUR
At Ziferblat cafés in London, Manchester and Liverpool, help yourself to drinks, snacks and cakes, and pay only for the time you spend there.

Food as THEATRE
Inspired by art and music, chef Michael O’Hare creates dishes with crazy combinations and colours that have earned his restaurant, The Man Behind the Curtain, in the northern city of Leeds, a Michelin star.

Feast in a LIBRARY
Head to Norwich in the east of England to dine in a Grade-II Listed former library that’s more than a century old, still with its bookcases and wooden panels intact. The Library restaurant is perfect for literary-minded guests, plus, there’s plenty to read if you’re left waiting for your date.

Dinner in THE DARK
At Dans le Noir? in London, the senses are intensified as you eat in complete darkness, guided and served by blind and visually impaired waiters.

Restaurant in A PRISON
The Clink Restaurant in Cardiff, Wales, is a restaurant with a social mission. All the food is prepared and served by prisoners who are studying for catering qualifications to help them start a new life when they leave.

SUNDAY ROAST
A large joint of roast meat with vegetables and roast potatoes covered in rich, brown gravy sauce is a British favourite. Top chef Tom Kerridge serves a magnificent roast at The Hand and Flowers in Marlow, about an hour west of London; it was Britain’s first pub to win two Michelin stars, which it has retained since 2011. You’ll find a traditional Sunday roast served at pubs all around the country.
**FISH AND CHIPS**
Nothing tastes finer than fish and chips eaten by the seaside, straight out of the paper they’re wrapped in. **VC Jones** in Whitstable, on the south-east coast of England, cooks delicious, fresh cod and chunky chips. [vcjones.co.uk](http://vcjones.co.uk)

**HAGGIS**
Scotland’s national dish is a savoury pudding of sheep’s heart, liver and lungs minced with oatmeal, suet and spices. Taste for yourself at **Whiski Bar** on Edinburgh’s Royal Mile, along with a traditional serving of neeps, tatties and a dram of whisky. [whiskibar.co.uk](http://whiskibar.co.uk)

**CORNISH PASTY**
This folded pastry started out as a portable, filling lunch for workers, containing potato, swede, onion and seasoning (Cornish beef was later included in the recipe). Enjoy across south-west England at butcher’s shops, cafés and restaurants.

**SMOKED FISH**
Sample some of the best at **Norfolk’s Cley Smokehouse** [cleysmokehouse.com](http://cleysmokehouse.com). Try the Anglo-Indian ‘breakfast of kings’, kedgeree, at the nearby restaurant and hotel **Byfords**, which adds Cley Smokehouse haddock and prawns to buttery rice and tops it with a poached egg [byfords.org.uk](http://byfords.org.uk).

**AFTERNOON TEA**
A pot of good tea with tiny sandwiches, cakes, scones and jam is a must – especially if you visit Devon and Cornwall in south-west England, where local dairies produce the thickest and richest clotted cream around.

**ENGLISH WINE**
The chalky soil of Sussex and Hampshire in southern England is near identical to that of the Champagne region in France. Try a sparkling white or rosé from the **Nyetimber estate** [nyetimber.com](http://nyetimber.com). **Chapel Down** in Tenterden, Kent, also produces excellent wines [chapeldown.com](http://chapeldown.com).

**SCOTTISH TEA**
On a plantation in Scotland, 750m above sea level, the frequent rain and low clouds give plants protection against the sunlight. The **Wee Tea Company’s** Dalreoch estate in the foothills of the Highlands produces mainly white and smoked teas, which have been a hit with connoisseurs [weeteacompany.com](http://weeteacompany.com).

**CRAFT BEER**
Brewing is booming in Britain, and there are many superb drinks to try. Take a brewery tour at **BrewDog** in Ellon, Scotland – the world’s first crowd-funded brewery [brewdog.com](http://brewdog.com). Or sample the delicious brews at **Meantime** in Greenwich, south-east London [meantimebrewing.com](http://meantimebrewing.com).

**WELSH GIN**
The clear spring waters of Wales are a key ingredient for its gin distilleries. Brecon Gin uses water from the Brecon Beacons National Park at its **Penderyn Distillery**, which also produces whisky [welsh-whisky.co.uk](http://welsh-whisky.co.uk). For a taste of the ocean in your cocktail, try Seaweed Gin from the **Dà Mhìle distillery** in west Wales [damhile.co.uk](http://damhile.co.uk).

**SOMETHING TO DRINK?**

---

*Image: “Counting Sheep” is a theatrical dessert at The Fat Duck*. 

*Image: The meringue rests on a pillow that floats above your table.*
Myths and ancient stories are as much a part of Wales as its lush green valleys, rugged mountains and stunning coastline. In 2017, the Year of Legends, discover these inspiring places for yourself.
It’s a land of roaring dragons and mighty kings, mythical wizards and warrior queens, where ancient castles, sacred burial sites and prehistoric hill forts scatter the landscape. In Wales, you will find dramatic rock stacks, deep glacial lakes, unspoilt moors and cathedral-like caves with lakes and waterfalls that shimmer in the lantern light. There’s no doubting that Wales is a country of outstanding natural beauty, but it’s also a place with magic in the air. As 2017 is the Year of Legends, it’s the perfect time to discover the epic stories that have shaped the culture of this country.

**TALES OF LOVE**

Wales has its own patron saint of love – St Dwynwen’s feast day is celebrated on 25 January. Like all the most powerful love stories, it is a tragic one. Dwynwen was a 5th-century Welsh princess who, unable to marry the man she loved, retreated heartbroken to Llanddwyn Island in north Wales and lived the rest of her life as a hermit. See the ruins of a chapel dedicated to her and follow in the footsteps of pilgrims who once visited; many still go in search of the spring, said to contain fish whose movements can predict a couple’s future. Be sure to explore the stunning coves and beaches where you may spot seals bobbing in the water or resting on nearby rocks, and even the occasional dolphin.

**HISTORIC CASTLES**

There are many castles situated across Wales, some of the most impressive built in the 13th century by King Edward I. Mighty Caernarfon occupies a strategic position on the northern coast; its heavily fortified walls protected a small town and it served as a residence for the king and his companions.
Llyn Llydaw is one of the most visited lakes in the UK

It is a spectacular sight from both sea and land – and, despite being attacked many times through the centuries, it is extremely well preserved.

**Discover Camelot**

One of Britain’s best-known legends is that of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, whose origins can be traced back to the Celtic people who inhabited the land before the Romans. Tales of magic, bravery in battle, eternal love and betrayal, set in the enchanted kingdom of Camelot, it’s no wonder the stories of Arthur, Merlin, Lancelot and Guinevere continue to resonate through the ages. In fact, 2017 sees the release of the film King Arthur: Legend of the Sword, which brings them to a new generation. The identity of the real Arthur remains a mystery, though many believe he was a Celtic leader from the 5th century who defeated the Saxons. There are strong links to the legend all over Wales. The mound covering the Roman amphitheatre at Caerleon, near Newport, in south Wales, was known for years as Arthur’s Round Table. Llyn Llydaw, a long lake beside Mount Snowdon, is said to be where Arthur, following his final battle, sailed across to the magical island of Avalon to be healed of his wounds. Today, it is one of the most visited lakes in the UK and its wonderful views of the Gwynant Valley are as legendary as Arthur himself.

**The Welsh Robin Hood**

The county of Carmarthenshire, in south-west Wales, was the home of Twm Siôn Cati, a 16th-century ‘highwayman’, who is often compared to Robin Hood. He apparently stole from the rich – though, unlike Robin, doesn’t appear to have given much to the poor. Twm used to hide from his arch-enemy the Sheriff of Carmarthen in a cave on Dinas Hill, near the picturesque market town of Llandeilo. He inspired many myths and works of fiction. Eventually, he was forgiven his crimes with a ‘royal pardon’ from Queen Elizabeth I and went on to become a poet and historian. You can follow a footpath to his cave, which is now part of Gwenffrwd-Dinas, a RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) nature reserve, home to species such as red kites and common sandpipers.

**A Nation of Storytellers**

Roald Dahl, the children’s author, was born in Cardiff and drew on memories of his Welsh childhood to create his magical tales, while the poet RS Thomas was a clergyman whose work was inspired by the Welsh landscape and its people. Swansea-born Dylan Thomas may be the best known of all Welsh writers and is famed as much for his wild lifestyle as his sublime verse. It’s perhaps no coincidence then that Wales is also home to one of the most famous literary festivals in the world, the Hay Festival, described by former US President Bill Clinton as ‘the Woodstock of the mind’. It’s held annually in the historic market town of Hay-on-Wye, in beautiful Welsh border country. In 2017, the gathering takes place from 25 May to 4 June, but this picturesque spot – also known for the quality and abundance of secondhand and antiquarian bookshops – is perfect for book lovers at any time of the year.

**Wordsmiths of Wales**

Dylan Thomas turned childhood memories into the magical verse of Under Milk Wood

Roald Dahl is known all over the world for books such as Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Year of Legends 2017
Ancient scenery.
Action-packed activities.
A cast of characters you’ll never forget.

Immerse yourself in Wales’ epic story

Harlech Castle.
CHARLIE
What do I miss?
HUNNAM
Born in Newcastle and now working in Hollywood, Charlie Hunnam plays the lead role in *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*, directed by Guy Ritchie. Here he talks about hanging out, his favourite places, and what he misses about home.

**Working with David Beckham was...** a great reminder of what it takes to be successful. Beckham is obviously a superstar and although his role in Arthur is a small cameo he came to set really well prepared and determined to do a great job, which he did. It made me realise that all of the success he has achieved came from hard work and a hunger to do everything he does at the highest level. It was very inspiring. He’s also a really sweet and humble person.

**Guy Ritchie and I hang out...** anywhere there is a jujitsu mat or a good bottle of wine.

**My favourite clothes shops are...** Ralph Lauren for its RRL line, or any sneaker store.

**When I’m in the USA I miss...** the weather in Britain. I live in Los Angeles where it is sunny all year long. I miss the seasons, especially autumn.

**My hometown taught me...** fortitude. It was tough economic times in Newcastle while I was growing up, the main industries were coal mining and shipbuilding, both of which were struggling. Plus, the weather can be brutal. Yet there is a pervasive attitude of ‘let’s just get on with it’. Strong people, the Geordies.

**My favourite place in Britain is...** rural Northumberland. There’s a ruggedness and loneliness about that place I find very stirring.

**The most romantic place in Britain is...** the Highlands of Scotland.

**The best place to ride my motorbike is...** the Highlands of Scotland! I have not been there on a bike yet, but it’s on the wish list.

**My favourite British meal is...** prawn cocktail followed by a steak in a good, traditional country pub.

**The first thing I do when I get back from a trip is...** have dinner with my mum and brothers.

**The one thing every visitor to Britain should do is...** see the north. Most visitors just see London or small pieces of the south but there is so much beauty in the north, from the people to the landscape. I would highly recommend the Lake District. I spent my teenage years there and it is extraordinarily beautiful.

King Arthur: Legend of the Sword is in cinemas May 2017. warnerbros.co.uk/kingarthur

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**The British weather!**

Charlie Hunnam as Arthur in *KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD*
Do you dream of entering a brave new world of possibilities to explore your passion for science, engineering or technology? Then Britain is the place to study.

London is the best city in the world for businesses and individuals in search of opportunities – that's according to the Cities of Opportunity study published by PricewaterhouseCoopers in 2016.

Britain has a long history of science, industry and entrepreneurship; it is the home of prestigious organisations such as The Royal Society and forges scientific partnerships across the world. British universities have played their part by attracting high-calibre students from around the globe and guiding exceptional talent into key industries.

Loughborough University, in Leicestershire, central England, is one such institution that has a global reputation for excellence in science and technology research, with over 100 research centres, groups and institutes.

Loughborough's reputation is founded on research driven by society's need to address real-life issues. ‘We have well-established partnerships with business and industry, and commercial potential is at the centre of much of what we do,' says Professor Robert Allison, the Vice-Chancellor and President. ‘We want to ensure that our students gain the skills and experience they need to either start up their own companies or to help them as they move into the world of business or industry.

‘Our international students come from all over the world, attracted by the quality of the education that we offer and our strong community feel.'
I was always excited by the prospect of studying at a UK university because of their reputation for acclaimed scientific contributions, industrial connections and multicultural diversity. However, the idea of leaving my home, family and friends back in Malta, where university is free of charge for all undergraduate students, made it a difficult decision for me.

The turning point came on a trip to the UK one summer as part of the London International Youth Science Forum (see overleaf for more). It was during a visit to the Department of Chemical Engineering at Imperial College London that I got my first insight into the subject.

The research was so different from anything I had seen before – I learnt about pilot plants to store CO2 underground, and the production of artificial blood for regenerative medical purposes. This ignited my passion for wanting to help the environment and the human race, and it was then that I made up my mind to apply to the UK to study chemical engineering.

I’m now in my third year of the MEng (Hons) Chemical Engineering course at the University of Bath in south-west England. Studying in the UK has opened up a world of opportunities for me. My university has amazing connections to industrial companies – we have been lectured by safety engineers from ExxonMobil and have frequent access to careers fairs. Another attraction of the UK is the support for female Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) students. Chemical engineering is still a largely male-dominated profession but I have had the chance to attend workshops on women in leadership and to speak to women scientists.

Our department also offers the chance to conduct a research project abroad through connections with universities across the world, including Australia, New Zealand, France and Germany. After graduation, I hope to study for an MBA. I’m aiming for a managerial position where I can influence global change. Chemical engineers will be key in developing the technologies of the future such as sustainable energy, biomedical and biotechnological products. Building my own start-up some day is a dream I keep close to my heart.

My advice to students hoping to study science in the UK is to just go for it, however competitive it may seem. The global interactions, industrial connections and diverse outlook have taught me more than I could ever have imagined.
I chose Heriot-Watt University because it has a good reputation for engineering and focuses on developing students for industry. After my master’s degree in Structural Engineering with Architectural Design, I did a PhD in carbon assessment of wind power. I was looking into the associated carbon emissions of construction materials and was asked to be involved in a project funded by Zero Waste Scotland’s Innovation Fund, which supports new renewable technologies. It was to develop a sustainable, unfired brick using only construction waste materials – which could have a major impact on the construction sector. If a typical two-bedroom house were made from these bricks, it would effectively ‘store’ 35 tonnes of building waste. It will also support affordable house-building, since it is a low-tech, inexpensive solution.

The next step was to set up a company, Kenoteq, to develop the brick, which is what I am doing now. I have received so much support along the way from the university’s Research and Enterprise Services. The Royal Academy of Engineering also awarded me an Enterprise Fellowship in 2016. This gives financial support to academics wanting to set up a company, so it meant I could work solely on developing Kenoteq as a business for a whole year. I also gained unparalleled access to people with a wealth of experience.

Now funding has been secured from Scottish Enterprise’s High-Growth Spinout Programme, which means Kenoteq can be based at Heriot-Watt for a few more years while the business is developed fully and commercialised, without needing to take the full plunge.

I have always wanted to be my own boss and this is my chance. My goal is to help boost manufacturing in the UK and provide bricks at a time of shortage.

‘MY WORK WOULDN’T BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF HERIOT-WATT’
LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

Launched in 1983, the Chevening Scholarships programme is an international scholarship scheme that enables students with leadership qualities from 144 countries and territories to undertake postgraduate study or courses in UK universities. It is funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and aims to build a network of future leaders, influencers and decision-makers across the world. Recipients are personally selected by British Embassies and High Commissions around the globe. chevening.org

SCIENCE FOR THE YOUNG

Founded in 1959, the annual London International Youth Science Forum is a two-week residential event held in the heart of London. Its aim is to unite outstanding talent from all nations and provide a deeper insight into science and its applications for the benefit of all mankind.

The forum attracts 500 of the globe’s leading young scientists, aged 17-21, from over 65 countries. Along with an active social calendar and a focus on cultural education and forming lasting friendships, the programme includes lectures, demonstrations from leading scientists and visits to industrial sites, research centres, scientific institutions, world-class laboratories and universities.

In 2017, it takes place 26 July to 9 August, and applications are open until the end of May. liysf.org.uk

YOUR OWN BUSINESS!

If you come to a UK university to study and develop a highly innovative idea and/or strong entrepreneurial skills, the Tier I (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa allows you to stay in the UK to develop your business. It is the first initiative of its kind in the world, and there are currently around 100 UK universities taking part.

You can apply for this visa if you:

• are a graduate who has been officially endorsed by the UK’s Department for International Trade (DIT) or an authorised UK higher education institute as having a genuine and credible business idea
• are from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland
• meet other eligibility criteria

The Tier I (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa is initially valid for one year, but can be extended for a second year. Following these two years you can apply to switch to a Tier I (Entrepreneur) visa, which allows you to stay for up to three more years in order to develop a business within the UK.

FIND MORE ONLINE

Visit gov.uk and search for "Graduate Entrepreneur"
EXPERIENCE
LIFE-CHANGING LEARNING

Find out more about the life-changing opportunities a UK education can offer you.

STUDY UK
DISCOVER YOU

Unlock your potential, visit study-uk.britishcouncil.org

#Studyuk
FASHIONING THE FUTURE

Britain’s new wave of wearable technology startups is leading the way for fashion with function.

CHARGE YOUR PHONE
Numerous practical benefits are being explored by British universities and companies. Intelligent Textiles, based in Surrey, just outside London, has made an ‘e-fabric’ for army uniforms that distributes power to multiple devices so only one battery is needed [intelligente textiles.com]. At the University of Bath, solar cells fitted into clothes mean your socks could one day charge your mobile phone [bath.ac.uk]. The University of Brighton is also developing smart textiles, including a swimsuit that changes colour according to how long you’ve been exposed to the sun [brighton.ac.uk].

VIRTUAL HUGS
‘In five to ten years, all the little gadgets we carry around – mobiles, cameras, fitness trackers – will disappear and everything will be integrated into a garment,’ says Francesca Rosella, creative director at London wearable technology company CuteCircuit. The company’s innovative products include a clutch bag that displays Twitter messages, the Eiza dress, which has 10,000 colourful micro-LED lights controlled via an app and Twitter hashtags, and the Hug Shirt, which lets you send a virtual cuddle to a loved one anywhere in the world. ‘The shirt has sensors that feel the strength, duration and location of the touch, the skin warmth and the heartbeat rate of the sender,’ says Rosella. ‘Actuators in another shirt recreate that sensation.’ cutecircuit.com

HEATED COATS
London-based Emel + Aris launched its heated coats brand in 2016. Powered by a battery that can also charge your phone, its infrared panels distribute heat through a polymer lining. Founder Rana Nahal Solset got the idea from her seven-year-old son. ‘We were planning a holiday to the North Pole and he asked if I could buy heated jackets,’ she recalls. ‘I had a lightbulb moment. Why aren’t we all walking around in jackets that keep you warm?’ emelandaris.com
As well as events like Glastonbury, there are hundreds more festivals and unique venues where you can feel the power of music in Britain.
FESTIVAL No.6
Named after the protagonist of cult 1960s TV show The Prisoner, which was filmed in Portmeirion, Wales, this is a festival like no other. The summer event takes place against a backdrop of Portmeirion’s Italianate buildings and its spectacular bay; any music should sound magical here, and the line-up usually lives up to the setting. festivalnumber6.com

PROMS SPECTACULAR
As well as experiencing the annual BBC Proms in London’s Royal Albert Hall, you can also join in the fun in the spectacular grounds of a Yorkshire stately home. Enjoy traditional orchestral anthems under the stars at Castle Howard; the 300-year-old manor was the star of TV show and film Brideshead Revisited. Take a picnic, bottle of English sparkling wine and a rug, then soak up the sounds of the English National Orchestra. castlehoward.co.uk

THE CAVERN CLUB
The Cavern is where The Beatles played almost 300 gigs between 1961 and 1963. When the original club was demolished in the 1970s, many of the bricks were used to build the new venue, which hosts live music seven days a week. Regular tribute acts to The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, The Kinks and more are part of the folklore, as well as big-name stars such as Adele. cavernclub.org

INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD
Every summer, about 4,000 performers from all over the world converge on the north Wales town of Llangollen to compete in a music and folk dance competition. Entrants from the Philippines, India, Morocco, Canada, Estonia, Finland and Zimbabwe have helped to establish long-rooted cultural connections that date back to the first staging in the 1940s. Today the festival draws crowds of up to 50,000. international-eisteddfod.co.uk

AN LANNTAIR
This arts centre overlooks Stornoway harbour on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland, and has a 220-seat auditorium. It may be remote, but it not only features up-and-coming local talent but also big names such as Mumford & Sons. Head there for the annual HebCelt Festival, 19-22 July 2017. lanntair.com

FREEDOM FESTIVAL
Hull in Yorkshire has been awarded City of Culture for 2017, so this year’s annual international arts festival will be more of a celebration than ever. The event takes place in early September, bringing an eclectic mix of music ranging from modern brass bands to African beats, as well as theatre, comedy, arts, poetry, dance, circus acts and more. The festival first came to life in 2007 to mark the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade, led by Hull-born Member of Parliament William Wilberforce. freedomfestival.co.uk

THEKLA
Fancy seeing a live band on a boat? Thekla is a 1958 German cargo ship, moored in the Mud Dock area of Floating Harbour in Bristol, south-west England. It has been converted into a music venue with rooms for bands and club nights, and there is something going on there most nights of the week. Everyone from Calvin Harris to Jamie T and Metronomy have performed onboard, and the unusual space makes for a great atmosphere. If you like to see the hottest new pop and dance music talent, this is the place to head to. theklabristol.co.uk

SING YOUR HEART OUT
Join the acclaimed London Community Gospel Choir for an uplifting singing session
It doesn’t matter if you’re a professional, or someone who usually sings in the shower, the LCGC welcomes everyone, even if you’re only here for the day; start with a singing lesson, then join a rehearsal and meet the choir members. Gift vouchers for Experience Days with LCGC are valid for one year. lcgc.org.uk
Britain’s fledgling businesses, entrepreneurs and freelancers demand more from their offices than just a tidy desk. Discover the next generation of flexible workspaces where creativity is king.

Britain is a great place to live and work. If you are looking for somewhere to set up your business, there is an inviting array of creative, innovative environments on offer. Many new companies want to work in surroundings that reflect their aspirations and put them in touch with other like-minded people.

Futuristic spaces are springing up all over the UK that promise to inspire whether you’re a fashion designer or an app developer. Imagine a day that starts with sunrise Pilates sessions and ends with live gigs at sunset, with locally sourced food and engaging workshops in between. It’s time to find your place...
There is a strong focus on work-life balance.

TEC MARINA, CARDIFF

South Wales’ newest hub for innovative businesses, Tec Marina is a breath of fresh air, set on Penarth Marina only six minutes by train from Cardiff Central. The community of forward-thinking organisations, freelancers and startups who work here have use of private offices and co-working spaces, as well as meeting and events rooms kitted out with 80-inch touchscreens and brainstorming software. Socialising and eating areas promote the sharing of ideas, and there is a strong focus on work-life balance, namely a swish, free gym, a games room with ping pong, table football and video games, and kitchens with bean-to-cup coffee machines. Of course, it’s open 24 hours a day, because ambition never sleeps.

tecmarina.com
CUSTARD FACTORY, BIRMINGHAM

A beacon of entrepreneurial spirit in the Midlands, the Custard Factory is fast earning a reputation as one of the most exciting hubs outside London. Along with sister project, Fazeley Studios, it forms the heart of a growing creative district, home to over 500 businesses from startups to established brands such as global architecture, design and planning practice Gensler, online fashion retailer Asos and The Prince's Trust.
custardfactory.co.uk

FORGE & CO., LONDON

Located in the Tech City area of trendy Shoreditch, east London, Forge & Co features The Modern Grill, an all-day dining restaurant, and a bar serving craft cocktails and Greenwich-brewed beers. Catering for 100 residents, the light and airy co-working spaces are spread across three floors, with both individual desks and enclosed studios for teams. There’s a programme of curated talks and events, though the best ideas come about over quality food and drink.
forgeandco.co.uk

STUDIO SOUK, BELFAST

Part marketplace, part workshop, this is where independent artists, designers and craftspeople can share ideas, interact with customers and build confidence. There’s a strong sense of community, and sustainable production methods such as upcycling (giving a second life to discarded materials) are encouraged. Shoppers can bag everything from Nearynogs artisan chocolate [nearynogs.com] to colourful leather bags from the Vintage Satchel Company [vsbc Belfast]. studiosouk.com

THE ASSEMBLY, MANCHESTER

Many small businesses can do without expensive frills, so it’s easy to see the appeal of this collaborative concept, which was established as a cost-effective option. The buzzing Northern Quarter is the backdrop to the stylish shared space, which has exposed iron beams and views over the city rooftops. The Assembly houses a variety of companies, who benefit from fibre-optic broadband and 24/7 access – yet without a hefty price tag.
assemblymcr.com

THE WHISKY BOND, GLASGOW

Built as a bonded warehouse for Highland Distilleries in the 1950s, this seven-storey red-brick building took on a new life in 2012 welcoming artists and entrepreneurs to Glasgow’s canalside. The wider regenerated Speirs Locks district regularly hosts festivals and parties that bring together workers from neighbouring studios, making this one of the most social and vibrant creative hubs in Scotland.
thewhiskybond.co.uk

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The UK is an ideal location for events and conferences: with venues to suit all tastes, from ExCeL London to Blenheim Palace, everyone will feel inspired.
While technology has made our lives immeasurably easier, having devices such as mobile phones permanently to hand these days means it’s hard to truly relax. This has led to a growing trend for ‘digital detox’ holidays.

Martin Talks set up a company, Digital Detoxing, offering exactly that. ‘We try to help people get a better balance by taking them on a digital-free adventure for a three-day minimum,’ he says.

‘There’s the initial horror at handing over their phone and some even suffer from a phantom vibration in their pocket… Then people engage with each other and the world around them – a good kick-start to better behaviour.’ Cutting back on your digital life, even briefly, can benefit you straight away through improved memory, better posture and healthier sleep patterns. So give these escapist adventures a go, and relax…
A TASTE OF TRADITIONAL ISLAND LIFE
Step back in time on the tiny Channel Island of Sark, in the south-western English Channel, where there are no cars, only tractors, bicycles and horses [visitguernsey.com]. The Isles of Scilly, near Cornwall, is a subtropical archipelago of 145 islands [visitislesofscilly.com]. Most are uninhabited – perfect for going off-radar. Thousands of plant species, including giant palms, ferns, agapanthus, flame trees and cacti, grow in Abbey Garden on the second-biggest island of Tresco [tresco.co.uk]. And you can relax even further by joining a yoga retreat nearby.

SAILING OFF THE SOUTH COAST
Charter a yacht or join a river cruise along the Beaulieu River on the south coast of England. Visit Buckler’s Hard harbour, where ships used in the Battle of Trafalgar were built, and see the pretty houses and wildlife along its banks [www.bucklershard.co.uk]. Across the Solent, the Isle of Wight is a 40-minute ferry trip away [visitisleofwight.co.uk]. From here you can take a cruise into Alum Bay and around The Needles, three impressive chalk stacks, voted one of the most beautiful places in the UK [needlespleasurecruises.co.uk].

STUNNING WALKS IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
Travel back to AD122, when the northernmost frontier of ancient Rome was built in what is now some of England’s prettiest countryside. Hadrian’s Wall Path follows all 84 miles of history from coast to coast, offering magnificent views to admire and Roman settlements to explore. You can dip in at any point, though Housesteads Roman Fort and Sycamore Gap, on the eastern side, are particularly scenic [nationaltrail.co.uk/hadrians-wall-path]. Travel a little further south and you’re in the must-see Lake District National Park, which has inspired many British writers and artists [lakedistrict.gov.uk].

OFF GRID IN REMOTE SCOTLAND
Take in deep gulps of salty air as the boat braves the waves and glimpse stunning coastline and seascapes. The Outer Hebrides, Inner Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland are some of Scotland’s wildest places to explore. Spot seabirds, including puffins, and seals lazing on the rocks. Mornings on the Moray Speyside coast mean a bracing wake-up, surfing the waves, and you could be snowboarding in the nearby mountains after lunch [morayspeyside.com]. Find glorious people-free stretches of beach and feel the freedom of the open road on the North Coast 500, a route that offers mile after mile of stunning views [northcoast500.com]. For total alone time, the archipelago of St Kilda in Scotland’s Outer Hebrides is the most remote part of the British Isles and is a World Heritage Site [kilda.org.uk].

WALES’ NATURAL PLAYGROUNDS
Take in the sight of 480-million-year-old rocks crumpled into layers at Fforest Fawr in the Brecon Beacons, south Wales, where you can go horse-riding, canoeing, hiking and caving [fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk]. Prefer to unwind on the fairway? Head to Nefyn, one of Wales’ most spectacularly sited golf courses, with a view of the sea from every tee [nefyn-golf-club.co.uk].

FOSSIL HUNTING ON THE JURASSIC COAST
Admire fossils and rock formations in colours ranging from white to yellow, orange, green, purple and black at this World Heritage Site that runs for 96 miles along the southern coast of England. Starting at Old Harry Rocks on Studland Bay in Dorset, where chalk cliffs plunge into sapphire seas, it continues to the red...
Renate Ruge PHOTOGRAPHY Scilly Isles, VisitWales, VisitEngland/Rich J Jones, VisitBath/Philip Edwards

RELAX

THERMAE BATH SPA
Ritual bathing was a way of life for the Romans. And today’s baths also tap into natural geothermal springs running beneath the city. At Thermae Bath Spa, you can take to the warm, mineral-rich waters. Feel your worries melt away as you gaze up at the sky from the fabulous rooftop pool.
thermaebathspa.com

RAW HORIZONS
Gourmet raw food, cleansing juice, one-on-one life-coaching sessions and yoga classes will put you in good health again at the women-only Raw Horizons retreat in north Yorkshire. Take a soak in the hot tub, before settling down to read a good book in the library at Split Farthing Hall.
rawhorizons.co.uk

YEOTOWN
Stretch a little deeper at this vinyasa yoga retreat in rural north Devon. Less about hard training and more about nourishing your soul, stay in the Love + Be Loved Cottage to fine-tune your balance by swaying in a meditation pod, all while looking out onto an orchard filled with apple, pear and cherry trees.
yeotown.com

DESTINATION DETOX

Rocks of Orcombe Point near Exmouth in east Devon, charting 185 million years of the Earth’s history. Don’t miss the impressive limestone arch known as Durdle Door [jurassiccoast.org].

ADVENTURE IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES
Walk over moorland, stepping over tufts of pink heather in the beautiful county of Yorkshire – also great for cycling and caving [yorkshire.com]. Find a magical subterranean world among the stalagmites and stalactites of White Scar Cave and meander through oak woodland to discover gushing waterfalls [ingletonwaterfalltrail.co.uk]. Brown trout and salmon are found in the rivers, if you fancy a spot of fishing.

WELLBEING IN THE NEW FOREST
There’s pin-drop peace in the woodlands grazed by the wild ponies of the New Forest, and the area is dotted with villages whose pubs serve hearty local food. Exploring here, in the south, is a gentle way to soak up Britain’s natural beauty. Set off on walks or cycle over a landscape that emerged at the end of the Ice Age 12,000 years ago. Retreat to an indulgent spa such as Lime Wood for an ‘ancient stone massage’ [limewoodhotel.co.uk].
London’s mainline railway stations are an attraction in themselves and the starting points for a great British day trip or weekend away. Follow our handy map and enjoy the ride!

**Paddington to Cardiff**

Children’s book character Paddington Bear was found at Paddington Station along with a note saying ‘please look after this bear, thank you’. His statue sits under the clock on Platform One.

**DISCOVER:** Cardiff (9 hours 7 minutes). Capital of Wales and once the world’s busiest port, Cardiff is now home to all kinds of culture and great shopping and dining. Journey through space and time at the BBC’s Doctor Who Experience.

**STAY:** The St. David’s Hotel has breathtaking views across Cardiff Bay and a fantastic restaurant [thestdavidshotel.com].

**Marylebone to Stratford-upon-Avon**

In the Beatles film *A Hard Day’s Night*, the Fab Four were chased through this station by fans.

**DISCOVER:** Stratford-upon-Avon (2 hours). The birthplace of Shakespeare is packed with half-timbered Tudor façades, old-world pubs and grassy riverbanks. Enjoy a cruise along the River Avon in an Edwardian boat [avon-boating.co.uk].

**STAY:** The Arden Hotel sits handily opposite the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and close to Shakespeare’s New Place – recently restored gardens on the site of his family home [theardenhotelstratford.com].

**Victoria to Brighton**

In Oscar Wilde’s play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Jack tells a horrified Lady Bracknell how he was found as a baby in a handbag at Victoria Station.

**DISCOVER:** Brighton (56 minutes). The Prince of Wales (the future King George IV) spent summers here in the 18th century and it’s been popular with Londoners ever since. The town is now a centre for the creative industries so you’ll find great galleries, shops and restaurants.

**STAY:** By the beach at Grade II Listed property A Room with a View in Kemptown [aroomwithaviewbrighton.com].

**Waterloo to Winchester**

Young lovers meet here (as sung about by The Kinks in Waterloo Sunset), usually beneath the clock, while ABBA posed for photos at the station after winning the Eurovision Song Contest in 1974. Tunnels below form arts and theatre venue The Vaults [thevaults.london].

**DISCOVER:** Winchester (1 hour). Quirky boutiques and galleries line the city’s cobbled lanes, and the cathedral holds 1,500 years of history [winchester-cathedral.org.uk]. Don’t miss the Great Hall, whose Round Table dates to around 1290 and is inscribed with the names of King Arthur and his knights [hants.gov.uk/greathall].

**STAY:** Set in an 18th-century Georgian house, Hotel du Vin has a superb French restaurant [hotelduvin.com].
Liverpool Street to Norwich

This station in the heart of London’s financial district is surrounded by skyscrapers such as The Gherkin.

**DISCOVER:** Norwich (1 hour 53 minutes). This medieval market town blends Tudor, Jacobean and Georgian architecture. The cathedral was built in the 12th century of Caen stone. Surlingham Church Marsh, part of the Norfolk Broads, is a must for birdwatchers. There are also miles of golden beaches nearby.

**STAY:** Bed down at The Maids Head Hotel – dating back 800 years, it’s one of the UK’s oldest hotels [maidsheadhotel.co.uk].

Charing Cross to Tunbridge Wells

Outside is a replica of the Eleanor Cross that once marked the centre of London. The original was built on nearby Trafalgar Square in around 1294.

**DISCOVER:** Tunbridge Wells (54 minutes). Established 400 years ago on the site of an iron-rich natural spring, Tunbridge Wells became a fashionable spa town in the 18th century. Taste the waters of Chalybeate Spring, and visit The Pantiles, where small independent shops, art galleries and cafés are housed in historic buildings.

**STAY:** Step back in time at The Tunbridge Wells Hotel with its wonderful 18th-century feel [thetunbridgewellshotel.com].

Euston to Manchester

A statue of railway engineer Robert Stephenson still stands and the sleeper service to Scotland is one of the few remaining overnight journeys.

**DISCOVER:** Manchester (2 hours 7 minutes). Often referred to as the capital of the north, it meets new amid red brick buildings and iron bridges in this thriving city. The canal waterfront is lined with bars, and its shopping hub is found around The Royal Exchange.

**STAY:** King Street Townhouse is a smart boutique hotel, originally built in 1872 for the Manchester and Salford Trustee Savings Bank [eclectichotels.co.uk].

King’s Cross to Edinburgh

This redesigned station, together with neighbouring St Pancras, is the centre of a massive regeneration project for the area.

**DISCOVER:** Edinburgh (4 hours 30 minutes). Scotland’s capital is so full of history that the New Town is 250 years old! Its beautifully preserved Georgian streets lie next to the medieval Old Town in this compact city that’s made for exploring on foot. For the best views climb up Calton Hill.

**STAY:** Tigerlily is one of the coolest hotels in town – ultra modern and fun, but also behind the graceful facade of a Georgian building [tigerlilyedinburgh.co.uk].

St Pancras to Canterbury

Recently restored to its former Victorian glory, the addition of a glass roof means light floods into the home of Eurostar. The destination station has fancy boutiques, the longest champagne bar in Europe and a beautiful hotel next door.

**DISCOVER:** Canterbury (51 minutes). England’s first seat of learning has four universities and a stunning cathedral protected by medieval city walls [canterbury-cathedral.org]. Its cobbled streets are home to beautiful individual shops and traditional tearooms.

**STAY:** ABode Canterbury is a chic boutique hotel with a mock Tudor façade, a short stroll from the cathedral [abodecanterbury.co.uk].

For further information, visit [nationalrail.co.uk]
JO LOVES
This new venture by perfumer Jo Malone in central London has a ‘Fragrance Tapas experience’, a free sensory journey through the brand’s iconic colognes, cleansers and lotions. You can also create your own scented candles. Jo’s signature scent? ‘My first for Jo Loves – Pomelo – inspired by fresh linen sheets and sparkling iced water.’
Lisa’s pick: Pomelo Fragrance, £65 for 50ml
joloves.com

JAMES SMITH & SONS
You’ll be wishing for rain when you see the 300-plus umbrellas in this iconic store dating back to 1857. Discover modern metallics through to rare collectables worth up to nearly £5,000. The collection of animal-head brollies is pretty fun, too. ‘An umbrella is a British symbol,’ says Phil Naisbit of James Smith & Sons. ‘The classic gents’ Redwood is our most popular.’
Lisa’s pick: Ladies’ walking-length umbrella in silver, £125
james-smith.co.uk

DONNA IDA
Denim never goes out of fashion, and now denim queen Donna Ida has two London stores to help you find your perfect blues, plus other clothes and accessories. ‘IDA denim and Donna Ida separates are all designed in London, for what women in Britain want,’ says Donna. Check out her IDA Ivy and IDA Rizzo skinny jeans.
Lisa’s pick: Lips charm keyring, £20
donnaida.com

THE THE BRITISH BROLLY

THE THE SHARED SCENT

THE DESIGNER DENIM

THE THE GREAT BRITISH SHOPPING LIST

Discover unique British stores for stylish products you will love. Fashion editor and blogger Lisa Haynes takes us on a shopping trip around the capital
THE ICONIC BOWLER

LOCK & CO
Be sure to allow plenty of time for browsing at this shop, which dates back to the 1700s and stocks 250 traditional styles of British hat. So which are the classics to look out for? ‘The Town Coke [bowler] and the silk top hat because it’s synonymous with Royal Ascot,’ says Lock & Co’s Hannah Rigby. ‘We also sell plenty of Panama hats in December for winter sun.’

Lisa’s pick: Town Coke, £325
lockhatters.co.uk

THE TAILORED JACKET

KATHRYN SARGENT BESPOKE TAILORING
As Savile Row’s first female tailor, Kathryn Sargent is your go-to for suiting that’s completely custom-made. Her precision cuts and British fabrics make for a timeless piece. ‘I don’t have a house cut, I make something unique for the individual,’ says Kathryn. ‘We work with British cloths, like west of England flannels and Scottish tweeds.’

Lisa’s pick: Bespoke jacket from £2,970 (bespoke suit from £4,220)
kathrynsargent.com

THE BESPOKE BAG

MILLI MILLU
Make a handbag your own by personalising it with your initials. At Milli Millu, you can DIY your own bag, choosing from four leathers and 60 colours – all topped off with bespoke monogramming. ‘It’s like having a handbag made just for you,’ says Mireia Llusia-Lindh, founder and creative director. ‘Milli Millu was inspired by the London woman: smart and cosmopolitan.’

Lisa’s pick: The Mini Venice in Indigo, £275 (bespoke price on application)
millimillu.com

SHOPPING FROM HOME

ANYA HINDMARCH
Check out Anya’s ‘man bags’. The men’s collection includes graphic leather bags, wallets and business card holders. From £195.
anyahindmarch.com

JAN CONSTANTINE
Union Flags, marching guards, Jan Constantine’s cushions are very British indeed. They can be personalised with your name on too. From £45.
janconstantine.com

WOLF & BADGER
Shop for dream outfits and find gifts for the whole family from a host of independent labels, such as childrenswear brand Jessie & James. From £25.
wolfandbadger.com

LIBERTY
Ladies can shield themselves from the elements with a Barbour jacket lined with the department store’s classic printed fabrics. From £249.
liberty.co.uk

Buy these iconic British products from anywhere in the world

PHOTOGRAPHY Muffadal Abbas
A UNIQUELY BRITISH EXPERIENCE

Bicester Village is the most fashionable shopping street in England outside Mayfair, nestled in the rolling hills and heritage-filled countryside of Oxfordshire.

Bicester Village sits at the very heart of English historic and cultural life; you don’t so much visit Bicester Village as experience it.

Arriving in style by rail direct from London Marylebone in as little as 46 minutes, guests can stroll straight into the Village, with more than 130 boutiques of leading brands offering year-round reductions of up to 60%. Make the most of those savings and indulge with services including Valet Parking or Hands-free Shopping, with the world’s most charming hosts on hand to make your visit truly effortless.

British style is beautifully represented at Bicester Village, from the glamour of Temperley London and the handbag genius that is Anya Hindmarch to possibly the smartest stationer in the world, Smythson. For classic British style with quirk, a visit to Paul Smith is a must, while Theo Fennell at L’Atelier is home to fine jewellery and unmistakable quality.

Drawing on a wealth of international talent, the Village is home to boutiques of world-renowned brands, including the distinctive luxury of Marni and the inimitable style of Missoni.

Bicester Village is renowned for its picturesque architecture and immaculate detailing, and a makeover from floral titan – Wild At Heart’s Nikki Tibbles – has seen the Village transformed into a botanical wonderland with exceptional planting inspired by world-famous British gardens. Speaking of which, Blenheim Palace, birthplace of Winston Churchill and Britain’s only non-royal palace, is a stone’s throw away with its 2,000 acres of Capability Brown designed gardens. And Oxford University – the oldest and most famous seat of learning in the world – is minutes away. But why leave when you could plant yourself at a table in farmshop restaurant & cafe, a scion of Britain’s most exciting modern hospitality group, Soho House.

Bicester Village is a uniquely British experience.

BICESTER VILLAGE
Why book a standard hotel stay when you can sleep in a castle, spend a night in a zoo, or snuggle up in a lighthouse?

COSY LIGHTHOUSES
Ideal for self-catering holidays with friends or family, Rural Retreats offers 26 former lighthouse cottages around the UK [ruralretreats.co.uk]. To really get away from it all, stay at Sally Port Cottage in the far south west, near Truro in Cornwall. This cozy retreat has spectacular views over the sea and easy access to a quiet beach. Or live life on the edge at Lizard Lighthouse, which has six adjacent cottages located on the southernmost tip of Britain.

CAPTURE THE CASTLE
If you’ve always dreamed of waking up in a castle, there are plenty of enticing options around Britain. Augill Castle, in north-west England, is a spectacular turreted fortress set amid landscaped grounds [stayinacastle.com]. Many of its
luxurious rooms offer views over the Yorkshire Dales. The setting is grand, but the atmosphere is friendly and welcoming. In the city of Durham, north-east England, you can sleep in a Unesco World Heritage Site; part of the university campus. Durham Castle offers both standard and state rooms, mainly available outside of term time, with breakfast taken in the medieval Great Hall [dur.ac.uk].

GLORIOUS GLAMPING
Sleeping under canvas can now be an indulgent experience, thanks to ‘glamping’ (glamorous camping). Fforest has three beautiful campsites across west Wales with luxury bell tents, kata cabins and domes underneath the stars [coldatnight.co.uk]. Over at Loveland Farm in Devon, the whole family can glamp together in futuristic pods filled with natural light, large enough to fit armchairs, fireplaces and table football [lovelandfarmcamping.co.uk].

EXTRAORDINARY STAYS
Ever wanted to stay in an antique gypsy caravan, Iron Age roundhouse or converted fire truck? Canopy & Stars is a collection of quirky places to stay around the UK, with some truly one-of-a-kind options on offer, ranging from a state-of-the-art treehouse with a retractable roof in Northumberland’s Dark Sky Park to a floating cabin on a lake in Essex, east England [canopyandstars.co.uk/glamping]. For a city stay with a difference, book into Brooks Guesthouse in Bristol, south-west England [brooksguesthousebristol.com].
While they do offer ‘normal’ rooms, who could resist one of the three ‘Retro Rockets’ vintage Airstream caravans they’ve got hidden away on the roof?

ON THE WATER
Travelling along Britain’s waterways on a narrowboat takes you through stunning scenery and into the heart of historic towns and cities. Floating along canals and rivers, stopping off at pubs on the banks for refreshment, makes for the ultimate relaxing escape. There’s a variety of waterways to choose from, including the Avon Ring, which takes you across the border between England and Wales [waterways.holidays.com].

BED AND BREAKFAST
The great British bed and breakfast offers what you would expect – a bed for the night and breakfast in the morning – but the experience often extends to much more. B&B owners are the best source of insider tips on how to enjoy the place you’re in, leading you to attractions and eateries loved by locals. And today’s B&Bs aren’t just a place to sleep, but to admire stunning architecture and design, dine on fabulous local produce and make new friends too.

The Bloomsbury in York, northern England, has scooped awards for its warm hospitality – there is tea and cake on arrival, sumptuous breakfasts and luxurious bedrooms. Hosts Matthew and Paul are passionate about their city and are happy to share their tips with guests [thebloomsburyguesthouse.com].

Llwyn Helyg in south-west Wales has won awards for its super-comfortable beds and delicious breakfasts, and is a haven for music-lovers too thanks to its ‘Listening Room’, where themed musical events are held [llwynhelyg.countryhouse.co.uk]. Wake up to a spectacular countryside vista at Three Glens in Dumfriesshire, southern Scotland; this eco-friendly B&B also has panoramic views from its living room and terrace. The full Scottish breakfast they serve here is excellent [3glens.com].

LAKESIDE HAVENS
Like the sound of an idyllic lakehouse retreat in the Cotswolds, only a couple of hours from London? Book a stay at The Lakes by Yoo, whose luxury cabins and on-site spa make a great base for exploring the surrounding countryside and villages [thelakesbyyoo.com]. Or head to the Lake District for some serious lakeside relaxation. Find everything from cosy cottages that will accommodate the whole family to romantic lodges with hot tubs overlooking the water [golakes.co.uk/accommodation].

INTO THE WILD
If you want to get up close to wild animals, bed down at Port Lympne Reserve, a safari park in Kent, south-east England; and pick its Treehouse Hotel for a truly luxe experience [aspinallfoundation.org]. The Lodge at Bristol Zoo Gardens in southwest England is a beautifully refurbished former keeper’s house with a private terrace and views over award-winning gardens [thelodgebristolzoo.co.uk]. Or stay right in the middle of a wild Scottish landscape and spend your days fishing and birdwatching at Eagle Brae [eaglebrae.co.uk]. Set amid some of the highest mountains and largest lochs of the northern Highlands, there are seven pretty log cabins to choose from.

Enjoy a luxurious fairy-tale getaway at Augill Castle

Eco-friendly log cabins at Eagle Brae
A journey with Jane Austen

2017 marks 200 years since the death of the author who gave us Pride and Prejudice. Now’s the time to see the places connected with her fascinating life and work.
Her witty observations, engaging love stories and relatable characters have delighted generations of fans. English novelist Jane Austen’s books are as fresh today as when they were written some two centuries ago, and just as captivating are the places that inspired her writing and the film and TV adaptations that followed.

Of all Austen’s six novels, perhaps the most famous is *Pride and Prejudice*, her story of how the stubborn, outspoken Elizabeth Bennet and the proud and prickly Mr. Darcy eventually find love, despite many misunderstandings.

Film and TV have brought Austen’s creations to life: in the BBC’s 1995 version (with Colin Firth playing Mr. Darcy), scenes of the fictional village of Meryton were filmed in Lacock. This village in south-west England is so perfectly preserved it has also featured in the TV drama *Downton Abbey* and the film adaptations of Harry Potter.

Several National Trust properties have been used as filming locations for *Pride and Prejudice* [nationaltrust.org.uk]. Travel to the Peak District in the north west for a visit to the country estate of Lyme Park, used as the location of Mr Darcy’s home in the TV series, and where Colin Firth’s famous ‘wet shirt’ scene was shot. He emerged from a swim in the lake, captured the heart of ‘Lizzy’ and won the affections of female fans around the world. The house is a glimpse into a bygone age and the gardens are impressive too.

**Lyme Park** starred on screen as the home of Mr Darcy

**Stourhead** in the south-west county of Wiltshire has many stunning architectural features, including the Temple of Apollo, built on a hill overlooking a lake. It’s where Lizzy (played by Keira Knightley in the 2005 movie) rejects a rain-drenched Mr Darcy’s first proposal. Today it’s highly popular as a wedding venue for modern-day lovers.

**Basildon Park**, an 18th-century Palladian mansion in south-east England, played the role of Netherfield in the 2005 film. It’s a suitably grand residence for a ‘single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year’, as Austen describes its owner, Mr Bingley, and the property and its grounds are open to visitors to explore.

**Bath** was Austen’s home for several years. True fans flock to the annual *Jane Austen Festival* (8 to 17 September 2017), which includes a costumed promenade and masked ball [janeaustenfestivalbath.co.uk].

To really look inside the mind of Austen, a trip to her home in Chawton, an hour from London, is a must. The writer lived in this Hampshire village with her family for the last eight years of her life and wrote her finest novels here. At Jane Austen’s House Museum, see the simple table where she sat each day and fired up her imagination to create the characters and stories that continue to entertain readers around the world today [jane-austens-house-museum.org.uk].

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**SPORTING TRIUMPHS**

Britain is a nation of sport lovers – whether you’re at a major event or cheering on smaller teams in a local battle, you’ll be swept up in the excitement.

**FOOTBALL AT ITS MOST PASSIONATE**

The Premier League is the most watched league in the world. From August to May, the twists and turns of all 20 clubs are followed avidly. Last season – when Leicester City surprisingly captured the title – more than two billion people around the world watched on TV. The stadiums are always packed with fans which makes for a thrilling occasion [premierleague.com].

Wherever you are in the country, matches are being played almost every week, from Scotland’s Aberdeen to Wales’ Cardiff City and England’s Portsmouth. Whatever the level, be it a local club or globally famous one, the fervour from the crowd is all part of the ‘beautiful game’. Pubs are great places to watch, as well as outdoor screens during major tournaments such as the World Cup.

If you want to get even closer to the sport, check in to Hotel Football, opposite Manchester United’s Old Trafford stadium [hotelfootball.com]; or see the unique exhibits and memorabilia on display at the National Football Museum in the city centre [nationalfootballmuseum.com]. To explore the nation’s top football grounds, including legendary Wembley Stadium, book a tour by going online to [visitbritainshop.com]. For a range of official match packages around the country, book online at [thomascooksport.com].

With nearly 60 racecourses in Britain, from Newton Abbot in south-west England to Perth in Scotland, there is plenty of choice wherever you may be. Race meetings are held every day of the year, apart from Christmas, so you can always relish the thrill of watching pedigree horses and their jockeys up close.

Some of the world’s most famous race meetings take place in spring. Cheltenham Gold Cup is held in March, a 2.5-hour drive west from London [thefestival.co.uk], and the Grand National in April, at Aintree, Liverpool [grandnational2017.com]. Both are amazing feats of endurance as the horses battle it out over many miles and dozens of fences. In June, electrifying pace is on display at The Queen’s favourite, Royal Ascot [ascot.co.uk], just outside London, and at the Derby, Epsom [epsomderby.co.uk], also near the capital. For more details, visit [britishhorseracing.com].

It is not just about the horses either – at Royal Ascot, you’ll see some of the most fashionable displays of the British summer and an array of flamboyant hats on Ladies’ Day.

**THE SPORT OF KINGS (AND QUEENS)**

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It is not just about the horses either – at Royal Ascot, you’ll see some of the most fashionable displays of the British summer and an array of flamboyant hats on Ladies’ Day.
Every summer, a suburb of south-west London becomes the focus of the sporting world. For two weeks, Wimbledon is home to top-class grass court tennis action and a series of delicious summer traditions. Join the half a million spectators who consume about 180,000 glasses of the fruity cocktail Pimm’s, 140,000 portions of strawberries and 7,000 litres of fresh cream during The Championships each year.

You need to register to enter a lottery to be in with a chance of getting tickets to this sought-after event. However, several thousand ground admission tickets are set aside daily for those who queue outside the venue. There are also many other leading tournaments where tickets are easier to obtain, including Queen’s [queensclub.co.uk] in west London and Eastbourne [eastbournetennis.com] in Sussex. Both have tournaments just before Wimbledon and feature most of the leading players. They also host matches throughout the season and are a great way to enjoy top-quality tennis.

A sporting arena steeped in history, Lord’s Cricket Ground, next to Regent’s Park in north London, is considered the home of cricket, and seeing a five-day Test Match here will be a memory to treasure. Prefer your entertainment at a faster pace? Lord’s also hosts England One Day Internationals and T20 matches, and there are fascinating daily guided tours around the ground too [lords.org]. The Midlands hosts some of the nation’s most exciting cricket – drop in to Trent Bridge in Nottingham, and Edgbaston in Birmingham, and witness every run, catch and wicket, in an enthralling season that stretches from April to September. For a pitch with a difference, head to Arundel Castle in Sussex, near the south coast, which hosts several matches a year [cricketatarundelcastle.co.uk], as well as countless village greens with a country pub close by.
THE BROGUE COLLECTION

A LIFETIME OF REFINEMENT. The discreet brogue motif epitomises a peerless marriage of modern design and timeless panache. The exquisite detail made possible by new craft, piercing the deep, rich tones of our Bridle Hide leather to reveal the brilliant London Tan calf beneath. To us, excellence is an endeavour without end.

ETTINGER. TO EACH THEIR OWN.

ETTINGER.CO.UK
On one small island, you can experience a fantastic variety of culture, landscapes and events. A camera is essential. We asked leading landscape photographer, Charlie Waite, for tips to capture your own unforgettable experiences in Britain.

Spreading over 4,500 acres in south-west England, it’s not surprising that Savernake Forest is home to all kinds of wildlife. As well as deer you may see owls, birds of prey, woodpeckers and nightingales.

SHHHH!

Charlie says: ‘Leave your camera on basic settings in between photographs so that, when the unexpected happens, you have the best chance of a good result. And turn off all sounds in your camera settings as these can startle wildlife when a great image is in frame.’

THE MOMENT

you catch a glimpse of the natural world

visitbritain.com/countryside
THE MOMENT

you discover something amazing

Not just an aquarium, but helping to preserve the oceans. That’s the mission of The Deep, in Hull, north-east England, even more worth a visit this year as it is the 2017 UK City of Culture.

thedep.co.uk
hull2017.co.uk

PATHWAYS

Charlie says: ‘A leading line, in this case the path that takes the viewer’s eye into the picture, is always useful. Do check round the edge of the frame a few times to make sure that you are happy with the composition and that everything in the image is intended.’
**THE MOMENT**

**you try something new**

Zorbing, or WoW balling, in a giant ball on Loch Ness is an experience like no other. Scotland is the ultimate natural playground – from watersports and walking to cycling and golfing.

[visitscotland.com/see-do/active](http://visitscotland.com/see-do/active)  
[boots-n-paddles.co.uk](http://boots-n-paddles.co.uk)

**THE MOMENT**

**you feel that life is beautiful**

Breathe in the fragrant air of the heather moors of north Yorkshire, in one of Britain’s largest National Parks. Listen to the birdsong, watch for wildlife and be happy.

[nationalparks.gov.uk](http://nationalparks.gov.uk)
THE MOMENT

you share
the excitement

One of the most striking palaces in Britain, Brighton’s Royal Pavilion was built as a seaside home by King George IV. It looked even more exotic during a light show at the annual Brighton Festival held in May.

visitbrighton.com
THE MOMENT

you experience something wonderful

Get in touch with the wonders of the universe. At Dark Sky Discovery sites such as Snowdonia in Wales you can see millions of stars; there are 150 sites to choose from in Britain.

www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk

BE PART OF IT

Capturing amazing moments is a key part of any visit to Britain, creating lasting memories to share with family and friends. Did you know that your photographs could also be part of a national exhibition? Charlie Waite set up the Landscape Photographer of the Year competition ten years ago to celebrate the beauty of the British countryside. Everyone can enter (entry fees apply) and each year winning entries can be seen at a London exhibition, as well as in the annual awards book. There will also be a special book, looking back at the first ten years of the competition, published in April 2017.

LIGHT

Charlie says: ‘When taking photographs, you must be acutely aware of the nature and quality of light and how it is falling on the subject. Light is everything!’
A splash of Tartan

Not many nations have their own fabric design known all over the world – no wonder Scotland is so fiercely proud of its Highland dress. Time to bring a piece home for yourself.

There’s nothing quite like catching a performance by traditional Scottish dancers and musicians, when the stirring sound of bagpipes blends with the swirl of kilts. And the iconic tartan-patterned garment is an essential part of the spectacle. Throughout 2017, Scotland will be celebrating the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology, so it’s a fitting time to explore the origins of this instantly recognisable design.

Start in the capital, Edinburgh, with a trip to the Clan Tartan Centre in the dockside district of Leith, where you can find out if your name has an ancestral link to a Scottish clan or tartan by searching a database of 50,000 names [leithmills.co.uk]. Nearby, pay a visit to Kinloch Anderson, supplier of tartan to The Queen [kinlochanderson.com]. The British royal family spends every summer at Balmoral Castle on Royal Deeside in north-east Scotland, and it was Queen Victoria’s love for the country that helped to spread the popularity of tartan in the 19th century.

The amazing thing about tartan is how it is reinvented by successive generations. In the 1920s, it was the basis of the Burberry check, which is listed by the Scottish Register of Tartans. In the 1970s, tartan was rediscovered by the punk rock generation; and now trendsetter Howie Nicholsby has been inspired by tartan and kilts to redefine men’s clothing.

‘I want to take the kilt away from being a formal garment and make it an everyday piece of clothing… I think the kilt can be a true alternative for modern men,’ he says. At his store, 21st Century Kilts in Edinburgh, you’ll find versions in tartan, but also denim and even leather [21stcenturykilts.com].

Not many nations have their own fabric design known all over the world – no wonder Scotland is so fiercely proud of its Highland dress. Time to bring a piece home for yourself.
Trendsetters buy from 21st Century Kilts in Edinburgh, which creates bespoke kilts in tartan, denim and even leather.
DISCOVER REFLECTIONS FILLED WITH OUR HISTORIC PAST.

SCOTLAND’S YEAR OF HISTORY, HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY
From World Heritage Sites to historic battlefields, in 2017 we celebrate Scotland’s rich and vibrant past. Join us from 1 January to 31 December, when the spotlight will be shining upon some of Scotland’s greatest attractions, icons and traditions. Delve into the past and uncover how Scotland has become the country it is today through a range of exciting events, attractions and activities during 2017. For more information, go to visitscotland.com/hha2017

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS FOR YOUR DIARY

THE ROYAL EDINBURGH MILITARY TATTOO
2 – 26 August 2017
Celebrating Scotland’s history and heritage through the 2017 theme “Splash of Tartan” enjoy an unforgettable evening of various music and dance performances with an incredible backdrop - Edinburgh Castle.

BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE AND THE JACOBITES
26 June – 12 November 2017
National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
A new exhibition tells the tale of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Featuring treasures from both the UK and France, the exhibition will showcase the rise and fall of the Jacobites.

DIG IT! 2017
Throughout the year, across Scotland
Unleash your inner archaeologist at Dig It! 2017. Co-ordinated by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and Archaeology Scotland, the packed programme of events includes digs, festivals, and people exploring their own local area. Find yourself getting hands on with Scottish history!
Travel north from Edinburgh across the Firth of Forth to the village of Comrie in Perthshire. Here you’ll find House of Tartan, which sells its products all around the world and has a shop packed with kilts, scarves, hats, bags and jewellery, all in tartan [houseoftartan.co.uk]. You can also design your own tartan and they’ll make up the cloth with your chosen colours – perfect if you’re after a unique gift. Comrie is surrounded by sweeping glens, lush forests, rushing rivers and waterfalls. It lies close to Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. Take a walk around the area and seek inspiration for your palette and patterns.

Only 20 minutes by car from this wild and wonderful landscape is Glasgow – a hugely popular destination for shoppers, thanks to its Style Mile with 200 stores to choose from. It’s in this retail quarter that you’ll find MacGregor and MacDuff with its selection of traditional Scottish attire [macgregorandmacduff.co.uk]. People come from miles around to buy or rent its kilts, jackets and accessories – now worn mostly at special occasions such as weddings, ceilidh dances and Highland Games. They are usually worn with a sporran (Gaelic for purse) and a sgian dubh, a small dagger tucked into the sock. It’s often said that nothing should be worn under a kilt, and some are brave enough to follow this draughty dress code.

An interesting item at MacGregor and MacDuff is the handfasting ribbon, also available to order in a wide range of tartans. Handfasting is an ancient tradition where a couple’s hands are bound together, and is practised at symbolic ceremonies and weddings.

Lying off Scotland’s west coast are the islands of the Outer Hebrides, where one of the world’s finest tweeds is still made to this day by islanders in their own homes. Harris Tweed is made on the Isle of Harris and across the archipelago, and is the only fabric in the UK with a Parliamentary act to protect its provenance [harristweed.org]. Wool that is dyed and then spun here is woven into a hard-wearing cloth marked with the famous orb symbol, ready to be cut and sewn into everything from suits to upholstery. It’s exported to more than 50 countries worldwide.

Harris Tweed is rooted in the culture and landscape of the Outer Hebrides, and after getting an insight into how the tradition has evolved, you’re sure to want to take some away with you.

So wherever you go in Scotland, you won’t be far from the tartan and tweed trail – and, what’s more, you could end up bringing back a unique, wearable souvenir of your travels. Who knows, maybe you’ll be swapping trousers for tartan kilts in future!

**TARTAN ON SHOW**

A vast array of kilts and clan tartans are guaranteed at the Highland Games, which take place across Scotland from May to September. Celebrity fans include Ewan McGregor, Judi Dench and Sean Connery, Royalty are present too, and The Queen always attends the Braemar Gathering in the Cairngorms National Park [braemar gathering.org].

‘Most of the modern Highland Games were founded in the 19th century and kilts have always been worn,’ says James Brown, Chairman of the Grampian Highland Games. Rules are strict. ‘Heavy athletes such as shot-putters must wear kilts, as well as pipers, dancers and pipe bands,’ he adds.

The largest event is the Cowal Gathering, held in Dunoon, which is reached via a scenic drive an hour west of Glasgow, followed by a 20-minute ferry crossing [cowal gathering.com].

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is an unforgettable evening of military pageantry, music, dance and fireworks held every August. Set against the stunning backdrop of Edinburgh Castle, the Tattoo celebrates Scotland’s glboe family both near and far [edintattoo.co.uk]. In 2017, the theme will be Splash of Tartan – what better place to wear your kilt with pride?
Britain is an entrepreneur’s wonderland. Discover four companies that have evolved from bright ideas and humble beginnings into profitable start-ups and big success stories.
ONLINE FURNITURE
It was London’s vibrant entrepreneurial spirit that first brought Ning Li to the city in 2009

‘I was attracted to London’s well-developed and fast-moving start-up scene,’ says Ning Li, the 34-year-old co-founder of Made.com, an online furniture retailer that has become an international name.

Li, who was born in China, came up with the idea for Made.com and set up shop with Brent Hoberman (co-founder of Lastminute.com), Julien Callide and Chloe Macintosh six years ago.

‘Brent originally convinced me to come to London and was a key mentor in helping to launch Made.com and gather the initial funding,’ says Li.

The company now has 160 employees and operates in seven European countries. ‘The greatest challenge was convincing people to buy furniture online, but we really focused on our initial customers,’ he explains. ‘They spread the word and the company started to become a recognised brand.

‘Made.com is a young brand and we still have plenty to do, but our customers love it.’

made.com

‘I was ATTRACTED to London’s WELL-DEVELOPED and fast-moving START-UP scene’

INNOVATIVE JEWELLERY
In 2012, Efrat Rassin left Tel Aviv for Britain to undertake an MA in Fashion Retail at the London College of Fashion, part of University of the Arts London

‘I wanted to be inspired by one of the most well-known cities in the world for innovation, fashion, retail, design and the arts,’ explains Efrat, 34, who was looking to move on from working at her family’s chain of opticians. She was frustrated by the lack of well-designed eyewear accessories.

While studying, she met student Tara Shen from Shanghai, and the pair joined forces.

‘We researched a business while we were studying. Thanks to winning the UK Government’s Sirius Programme Award we were able to start,’ says Efrat. Funded by the UK’s Department for International Trade, the award helps international graduates to set up in the UK.

Rassin & Shen was launched in 2015 with a handcrafted ‘eyewear jewellery’ range. The debut collection was recently taken on by the London department store, Liberty.

‘I wanted to be INSPIRED by one of the most well-known CITIES in the world for innovation and fashion’

What advice can Efrat offer? ‘Do your research into your competition and grants available, go to networking events and learn all about start-ups.’

rassinshen.com
McLaren Applied Technologies provides innovative high-performance solutions, found in everything from healthcare & financial services to advanced racing bikes. For world-leading technology, choose the UK.
It was his passion for art-house film that gave Efe Çakarel his big idea. Relocation to London helped the business grow.

'I was sitting in a café in Tokyo trying unsuccessfully to watch a film,' recalls the 40-year-old Turkish-born entrepreneur. 'Japan has the fastest broadband speed in the world, but I couldn’t find anywhere to watch a movie online.' Efe wrote a business plan for MUBI – a streaming service for art-house, cult and critically acclaimed films – on the plane back to California.

I set up the company in Palo Alto, which seemed a natural place for a tech company,' he says. 'But it’s a long way from Europe, which has such a rich cinema culture.'

Relocating to London in 2010 offered his fledgling business multiple benefits. 'Britain is very well-positioned geographically. The UK has an amazing pool of creative film talent and a vibrant film industry.'

Efe believes that just working hard is not enough. 'It’s equally important to know where to get good advice. I sought out people in the film industry who could help us navigate the business.' Being an outsider also had its advantages. 'You are not weighed down by traditions. When we started, online streaming was still a rather radical idea, so my main challenge was convincing the industry and rights owners this really was the future.' And that future is looking bright. Watch this space!

mubi.com

‘The UK has an AMAZING pool of creative film talent and a VIBRANT film industry’
Britain’s fashion industry is one of its most famous exports, contributing an estimated £28 billion to the economy. Shoppers around the world buy British brands for their association with heritage, luxury and innovation.

Centuries of traditional crafts have produced the finest tweeds and knits. These heritage fabrics have an enduring appeal, and have been a key trend on the global catwalks. High-end labels such as Burberry, Mulberry, Paul Smith and Pringle of Scotland are international names.

The individualistic British approach is encouraged by London’s art and design schools, which attract students from all over the world. Central Saint Martins in particular has fostered generations of designers who have changed the way we dress, including British stars such as Stella McCartney and Alexander McQueen, plus US designer Zac Posen and Italian Riccardo Tisci. Now a new generation of emerging British-based designers is shaking up the industry and taking inspiration from the place they call home…
SHOPPING

EUDON CHOI

Korean-born Eudon Choi swapped designing menswear in Seoul for an MA in womenswear at the Royal College of Art in London. ‘There’s a great sense of possibility and freedom in Britain, which means there’s no better place to be a young designer,’ he says. Before he even graduated, Eudon caught the eye of high-street chain All Saints, which hired him as its senior designer. He set up his eponymous label in 2009 and debuted at London Fashion Week in 2012. He can also count Gwyneth Paltrow as a fan. ‘Every season is a highlight and I hope the best is yet to come,’ he says. eudonchoi.com

GEORGIA HARDINGE

Georgia Hardinge’s designs fuse sculpture with fashion. ‘I try to create 3D pleated architectural garments that are flattering and wearable,’ she says. As a designer, Hardinge is excited about the point where technology meets fashion and is currently working on a t-shirt collection with thermochromic ink that changes colour under heat. But despite having celebrity customers from Beyoncé to Lady Gaga, the biggest thrill is seeing someone on the street wearing her work. ‘It’s the best feeling in the world,’ she says. Her clothes are available to buy online at byondonline.com and georgiahardinge.co.uk.

‘I took a picture once of a girl walking past me wearing my clothes’

JOE RICHARDS

After working in Paris and London for fashion houses Céline, Lanvin and Dior, Richards has based his own label in Bath. ‘I find the atmosphere of the city so uplifting, it feels like being in a film,’ he says. His signature pieces include silk-georgette draped blouses and luxe denim, and his latest project is a collaboration with John Smedley knitwear. ‘My customer is very discerning – she enjoys fashion but isn’t necessarily guided by it. I’m striving to make clothes that women love and want to wear on an ordinary Tuesday.’ byjoerichards.com

‘I love it when someone tries on something you’ve made and they feel great in it’

EDELINE LEE

Central Saint Martins graduate Edeline Lee is Canadian but considers herself a British designer. ‘It’s easier in London to find your voice as a young designer,’ she says. After setting up her own label in 2012, Lee became a favourite with celebrities such as Keira Knightley and Solange Knowles. Her new collection features bright colours, bold stripes and unusual fabrics. ‘I was striving to transmit some of the lightness of London,’ she says. ‘I wanted to express the joy I find in the diversity of this great city.’ Her clothes are available from Browns, Harvey Nichols and online at edelinelee.com.

‘I make clothes for busy women who know their own minds’

Clean, modernist lines define Lee’s designs

Details are key for a designer who trained in tailoring

Georgina Harding applies paper sculpture techniques to fabric

Hardinge applies paper sculpture techniques to fabric

The British fashion industry is a force of creativity and individuality’

FIND MORE ONLINE
youngbritish designers.com
If your kind of holiday involves plummeting thousands of feet out of the sky, scaling the heights of mountainous cliffs, white-water rafting or zooming around a racetrack, there are plenty of options to push your limits in Britain.

**CAPITAL ADVENTURES**

Some say London is best seen from the River Thames, and to add a dash of excitement why not try a trip on a RIB (rigid inflatable boat)? Hold on tight as you race along, passing famous landmarks at speeds of up to 40mph. Or get a bird’s-eye view on a helicopter ride over the city’s key landmarks, a fantastic trip especially for keen photographers.

[thamesrockets.com](http://thamesrockets.com)  
[thelondonhelicopter.com](http://thelondonhelicopter.com)

**COASTEERING**

A blend of rock hopping, shore scrambling, cliff jumping, cave exploring and wave swimming, this is one exciting way to experience Britain’s coastline. South-west England has several coasteering centres. Bude in Cornwall is a lively resort with some of the best surfing in the UK, so why not try another extreme adventure while you’re there? And in north Devon, you can get your heart pumping in Croyde and Woolacombe, which was voted the UK’s best beach by the TripAdvisor website. Or head to Pembrokeshire in Wales where coasteering first began.

[gocoasteering.com](http://gocoasteering.com)  
[coasteeringwales.org.uk](http://coasteeringwales.org.uk)

**SKYDIVING**

Freefalling over the countryside after jumping out of an aeroplane generates an incredible buzz. Climb to 15,000ft to drop out of the sky and hurtle towards the ground at 125mph. First-timers can train in a simulated environment before jumping in tandem with an instructor at GoSkydive located on the outskirts of Salisbury, about an hour and a half by train from London.

[goskydive.com](http://goskydive.com)
Such is the G-force that pulls you, your stomach lurches with a mixed feeling of fear and pleasure. Saw – The Ride, is the exciting roller coaster at Thorpe Park, south west of London. With a 100-degree descent from a 100ft peak, it races at speeds of up to 55mph, turning passengers through multiple inversions.

Saw – The Ride

Go even higher by becoming a ‘space tourist’ on the flying rollercoaster Galactica at Alton Towers in Staffordshire, central England. Wearing a virtual reality visor, your immersive, interstellar journey through space will take you on a soaring flight across heavenly clouds to see the birth of a star.

Galactica

Pedalling downhill over rocky terrain, slate rock and mud is not for the faint-hearted. But if mountain biking is your thing, take on the Antur Stiniog downhill trail near the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog in north-west Wales. You are taken up to the top of one of the six graded trails before descending over the slippery rocks and hopping over bumps in the forest floor to cross the finish line, all with glorious views of rolling hills.

Antur Stiniog

As engines rev and cars zoom past, you know you’re in for a rip-roaring adventure at Scotland’s national motorsport centre at Knockhill, north of Edinburgh. Formula One fans can get behind the wheel of racing cars like the Yamaha single-seater, while would-be rally drivers may prefer a Ford Fiesta Zetec. Experience a real supercar by driving a Ferrari F430 Coupe or have a James Bond moment in an Aston Martin.
Messum’s Wiltshire

Tisbury

Opened last year by art dealer Johnny Messum, this gallery and arts centre in south-west England is set to be a destination for lovers of modern art and design. Even without the exhibits, the enormous 14th-century barn – located in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty frequented by walkers – is stunning in its own right.

What to see: Sculptor Bridget McCrum’s majestic bronze Crescent Birds, which stands at over two metres tall.

messumswiltshire.com
Riverside Museum

GLASGOW
Set on the banks of the River Clyde in Scotland, this Zaha Hadid-designed museum opened in 2011. Its particular emphasis is on transport, with everything from ships that used to steam up the river outside and horse-drawn carriages to motorbikes and skateboards.

What to do: Take a seat in an original Glasgow tram, stand on the platform of an early 20th-century subway station, and walk down cobbled Main Street, dodging vintage cars.
glasgowlife.org.uk

St Fagans

CARDIFF
Standing in the grounds of a 16th-century manor house, St Fagans National History Museum has more than 40 original buildings from various historical periods that have been re-erected to illustrate the social and cultural history of Wales.

What to see: An open-air museum and working village, St Fagans has an emphasis on traditional crafts. Visitors can see shawls and blankets being produced in the Woollen Mill and have wooden shoes made to measure in the clogmaker’s workshop.
museum.wales/stfagans

Tate Liverpool

LIVERPOOL
Built on the city’s Albert Dock, this is a beacon of contemporary and modern art in north-west England. You should also visit the gallery café; hung with maritime flags and emblazoned with pop-art motifs, it was designed by Sir Peter Blake, the co-creator of The Beatles’ *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover.

What to see: Until September 2017, Tracey Emin’s famous *My Bed* is part of a free exhibition alongside the works of poet and artist William Blake.
tate.org.uk/visit/tate-liverpool

Turner Contemporary

MARGATE
Erected on the site of a guesthouse where Britain’s greatest landscape painter, JMW Turner, often stayed during his visits to this Kent seaside town, the Turner Contemporary opened in 2011 and quickly became one of the most important cultural landmarks in the south of England. Past exhibitions have celebrated contemporary artists, including Grayson Perry and Margate-raised Tracey Emin, as well as the likes of Constable, Van Dyck and, of course, Turner.

What to see: Full-height windows make the most of the sweeping views of the Margate bay once enjoyed by Turner.
turnercontemporary.org

The Whitworth

MANCHESTER
This gallery in north-west England has a focus on modern art and houses works by great 20th-century artists including Francis Bacon, Henry Moore and Pablo Picasso. A £15 million development was completed in 2014, and a glass, stainless-steel and brick extension is now joined to the original building by a glass promenade.

What to see: For sheer impact, Jacob Epstein’s 1930s white-marble sculpture of an expectant mother, *Genesis*.
www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk
Titanic Belfast

BELFAST
Housed in a futuristic building on the site of the Harland & Wolff shipyard from where the RMS Titanic was launched in 1912, Titanic Belfast brings a depth to the story of this doomed vessel that so many will know from James Cameron’s film. With nine interactive galleries, a sister ship to explore and a collection of personal artefacts, it is a stunning and often moving experience.

What to see: The ship’s first-class lunch menu from the day it struck the iceberg is particularly poignant.

titanicbelfast.com

At-Bristol

BRISTOL
This innovative science centre in south-west England is a dream for children – and adults – who love pressing buttons and pulling levers. It combines hundreds of exhibits in dedicated zones, and has shows, workshops and special theme days.

What to see: Explore the cosmos from the comfort of your seat at the UK’s first 3D Digital Planetarium. at-bristol.org.uk

The Lowry

MANCHESTER
Named after the local artist who painted northern English working-class life, this state-of-the-art gallery and arts venue contains theatres and studios alongside galleries that not only showcase a permanent display of work by Lowry, but also a changing roster of high-quality visiting exhibitions.

What to see: The gallery is located within walking distance of Manchester United’s home ground, Old Trafford, so why not admire LS Lowry’s football-themed painting Going To The Match?

thelowry.com

Tate St Ives

ST IVES
Located on a beautiful Cornish beach, this south-western outpost of the Tate empire concentrates on modern art. Tate St Ives also incorporates the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden, which is housed in the nearby former home of the great sculptor.

What to see: The gallery will reopen in spring 2017 following refurbishment, with an exhibition of Sea Paintings by Jessica Warboys, who uses natural elements from the Cornish coast.
tate.org.uk

Messum’s

Wiltshire

PHOTOGRAPHY James Beck, Titanic Belfast

MUSEUM SERVICES

With so much success in creating exciting and vibrant museums and galleries, British experts are now working around the world advising international colleagues about how they can create unmissable artistic experiences. experienceuk.org

FIND MORE ONLINE
visitbritain.com/culture
Experiences, friendships and opportunities: a UK education enables you to discover your potential. Here, international students, past and present, share their thoughts.

"I owe a debt of gratitude to the UK for providing me with a platform to pursue my PhD, long before anyone would take my subject seriously. The UK had the foresight to take a risk on an Egyptian-American doctoral candidate who asked: what if we used mobile phones to support health?

Dr Patricia Michael from the USA did her PhD at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in the field of 'mHealth', exploring how mobile technology can be used to improve health.

"Coming to the UK to study gave me a global perspective. I was taught to think analytically and to experiment. I learnt to hold my own in tough situations and to negotiate, which was useful when I was raising funds for my start-up.

Ankit Mehrotra from India studied Computers and Telecommunications Engineering at the University of Essex. He now runs his own company, Dineout, India's first online and app-based restaurant table reservation platform, dineout.co.in.

"Culture shock doesn't quite explain what you go through: it is more 'perpetual wonder'. I have met more nationalities in the past months than in my entire life.

Gabrielle Goncalves from France is studying BA English Literature and Film and Television Studies at the University of Glasgow.

"My British educational experience was instrumental in what I have achieved since returning to China. It helped strengthen my leadership skills and develop my business judgment. It also exposed me to views and perspectives from diverse angles.

Dun Xiao from China studied Electrical and Information Engineering at the University of Cambridge. He set up the online learning platform 17zuoye.com, which now helps more than 15 million school students with their homework.

"Studying in the UK has introduced me to so many new people from different places. When I leave, I will not only have a great advantage in the jobs market with my degree but also lots of friends from the UK and around the world.

Anita Nkonge from Kenya is studying for a BA in Journalism at the University of Kent.

"I love studying here. Through exploring markets, eateries and museums, you will come across people from various ethnic backgrounds and learn so much about their culture.

Hansika Jethnani from Indonesia is studying BA Photography at the University of the Arts London.

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GARDEN PARTY

Britain’s botanical and landscaped gardens are among the best in the world. Find picturesque picnic spots, inhale fresh blooms and be dazzled by floral displays.

Evidence of Britain’s passion for horticulture blossoms all around the country, from neighbourhood window-boxes full of fresh herbs to the decorative gardens of grand stately homes. Hundreds of gardens are open year-round across the country, so whether you want to count colours at an arboretum, tour the world in a tropical greenhouse or picnic in the grounds of a magnificent castle, there’s a glorious garden for every mood.
HERITAGE GARDENS

Floral splendour through the centuries

TRENTHAM GARDENS
These award-winning Italianate gardens in Staffordshire, central England, offer the perfect family day out. The estate was first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, but Trentham is creating a new history on its site with contemporary activities such as the Barefoot Walk; tapping into the ‘mindfulness’ trend, this trail enhances the senses and creates a feeling of wellbeing. trentham.co.uk

THE LOST GARDENS OF HELIGAN
Cornwall, in south-west England, is not short of beautiful gardens (Trebah Garden also deserves a mention) but few are as enigmatic and romantic as Heligan. It has been the seat of the Tremayne family for more than 400 years and underwent a phase of neglect for decades, before being restored to its original glory. heligan.com

TATTON PARK
Tatton Park in Cheshire, northern England, will delight flower fans with its array of gardens, glasshouses and a leafy arboretum. It also offers a packed calendar of more than 100 annual events, from car shows to food festivals, not forgetting the annual RHS Flower Show Tatton Park (19-23 July 2017). tattonpark.org.uk

NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN OF WALES
This 560-acre estate about an hour west of Cardiff is home to the largest single-span glasshouse in the world, designed by Lord Foster of Foster + Partners. As well as housing some of the most endangered plants from across the globe, you can book a sleepover in the glasshouse or indulge in astronomy at a ‘Star Party’ – the garden is a Dark Sky Discovery Site. botanicgarden.wales

DRUMMOND CASTLE GARDENS
One of Scotland’s most legendary formal garden estates, Drummond dates back to the 1600s, and even has a beech tree planted by Queen Victoria, commemorating her visit in 1842. The gardens have often been used as a location for the TV series Outlander. Open Easter weekend then daily, 1 May to 31 October. drummondcastlegardens.co.uk

POLLOK COUNTRY PARK
Few city parks truly create the illusion that you’re out in the country, but this award-winning expanse just 20 minutes from central Glasgow does just that. With woodland and meadows, it’s ideal picnic territory, and the historic Pollok House, one of Scotland’s grandest, makes it a cultural outing too. There’s even a mountain bike trail for those keen to combine flowers with fitness. glasgowlife.org.uk

Enjoy events, art, stargazing and even mountain-biking!

TATTON PARK hosts more than 100 events a year, including the annual Flower Show
TERRIFIC TREES

Step into a fairy tale at these wonderful woodlands

RHS GARDEN WISLEY
An easy day trip about an hour’s drive from London, the Royal Horticultural Society’s base offers outstanding strolls beneath a huge array of trees, including bright birches, fragrant eucalyptus and elegant maples. There are several Champion Trees – the largest recorded example of a given species in the UK – and you can spot them in the Pinetum, Wild Garden and Battleston Hill.

 rhs.org.uk

CHELSEA PHYSIC GARDEN
Founded in 1673 for the study of the medicinal qualities of plants, this botanic garden in London’s Chelsea is home to over 100 different types of tree, including Britain’s largest outdoor fruiting olive tree and the world’s most northerly grapefruit tree. chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

SHEFFIELD PARK AND GARDEN
Sumptuous at any time of year, but particularly resplendent in autumn, south-east England’s Sheffield Park is a photographer’s dream location, with a lake that reflects the leaves of both exotic and native trees. Kids will love the woodland trail where they can build dens and climb trees. nationaltrust.org.uk

RAINY DAY GARDENS

Incredible gardens, whatever the weather

THE EDEN PROJECT
This south-west England attraction is the ultimate wet-weather garden, with breathtaking bubble-like biomes nestled in a former clay pit. You’ll find the world’s largest indoor rainforest – with tropical plants, a waterfall and a steamy paddy field – and for adrenaline-junkies there’s England’s longest, fastest zip wire too. edenproject.com

KEW GARDENS
With 4.5 acres of this London garden under glass, there’s plenty to occupy a rainy day. The Princess of Wales Conservatory recreates ten different climatic zones, with orchids from Central America and carnivorous pitcher plants from south-east Asia. Look out for special late-night events, and come at Christmas to see the garden all lit up. kew.org

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDEN
With some of the most impeccably curated systematic gardens and glasshouse collections in the world, this 40-acre space was created for the university in 1831 by Professor John Stevens Henslow, Charles Darwin’s mentor. Today it remains highly rated by visiting academics as well as curious visitors; it’s just a ten-minute walk from the station.

www.botanic.cam.ac.uk
A NOTE ABOUT VISAS
Can’t wait to start planning your UK adventure? Check if you need a visa and apply now, following these three steps:

1 **CHECK:** First of all, use the tool on [gov.uk/checkukvisa](https://www.gov.uk/checkukvisa) to check whether you need a visa.

2 **APPLY:** You can complete your application online using UK Visa and Immigration’s new, quicker digital service with an easy-to-follow guide. You can book your visa appointment and pay for your visa online.

   Want your visa more quickly? Priority and Premium services are available.

3 **ATTEND:** Make sure you have all the necessary supporting documentation before you go for your visa appointment, including your passport. You can check which documents you need by visiting [gov.uk/checkukvisa](https://www.gov.uk/checkukvisa).

If you make frequent trips to the UK, check out the Registered Traveller service at [gov.uk/registeredtraveller](https://www.gov.uk/registeredtraveller). It’s a fast and convenient way to enter the country. Available to eligible passport holders from over 20 countries.

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Britain gave me the opportunity to be global

People don’t think in a small box here, they think big. They’ve come from all corners of the globe, bringing new cooking ideas, and Brits are now producing their own food with exotic and spicy flavours. That’s just one way immigration has had such a positive impact on the British food culture. Just go to any quality food retailer, such as Selfridges, Marks & Spencer and Waitrose, and you’ll see a wonderful selection of international products.

British people are intrepid travellers

They try new dishes around the world and when they come home, they want the real thing. You can get great Japanese food in the UK and I don’t just mean sushi and sashimi. Bone Daddies is one of my favourites. The options for Vietnamese are fantastic too, while Chinese food here is better than ever.

The best British dishes are the simplest ones

I love retro dishes like ‘toad in the hole’ (sausages cooked in batter) and steak and kidney pie, made with love and care and using organic produce from farmers who are really proud of what they do.

The new wave of British gastropubs is fantastic

One place that I loved recently is called The Three Fishes in Lancashire. I went with friends from France and they were amazed at how good the food was. We ordered fish and chips, which tasted so wonderful, it makes me yearn to go back. In fact, I’d love to try their Lancashire hotpot.

I’m impressed by how many British food brands export

Take Crispin Busk whose company Kabuto, in Sussex, south-east England, is selling noodles to China. He makes his noodles with all organic ingredients. People in China are concerned about food safety and keen to ‘buy British’, as you can trust the production and hygiene standards. Another example is Maldon Sea Salt, which is used by chefs all over the world.

When I came to Britain in 1971, people didn’t really know about Chinese food. Through my books and TV shows I showed them how to use a wok to cook simply. Everything from a wok tastes good – even scrambled eggs!

Chefs need a global mindset

British chefs such as Gordon Ramsay and Jason Atherton are opening in Dubai, Australia and Hong Kong. Even Heston Blumenthal has opened in Melbourne!
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