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UK'S BEST SEASIDE TOWNS & VILLAGES

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Plot your next great escape once the lockdown is over with more than 100 destinations rated by you

We'll be desperate for a break when this is all over. And a week away in the UK with a warm sun at your back and the splash of the sea at your feet will be a brilliant way to blow away the been-stuck-inside-for-too-long cobwebs. The good news is that our survey, conducted before coronavirus arrived, saw you telling us that your favourite seaside destinations were those with a bit of space and some hush away from the crowds. Visitors named St Mawes, in Cornwall, the best place in the UK for a seaside break this year, handing it five stars for peace and quiet. While smaller towns, such as Southwold, and less touristy villages, like Tynemouth, were rated better than classic favourites such as St Ives or Salcombe. >

Number 1

St Mawes, Cornwall 85%

There is no sand, but pebbly Summers Beach is good for rock pooling. There is no amusement arcade or pier, either (although the Miracle Theatre company does set up stage in the 16th-century castle). Yet, it's the lack of these things that make St Mawes special – it's a lived-in village rather than a tourist trap. Instead it's all about quiet pleasures; strolling along the seafront, pasty in hand, past whitewashed cottages to St Mawes Castle for sparkling views of the Fal estuary. Take your time choosing fish from a van on the harbour or enjoy a pint of Cornish brewed Doom Bar while sitting at wooden benches outside the Victory Inn. 1

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Highlights from the top 10

Head to Tynemouth for a five-star beach (and a bargain), and Southwold for the fish suppers

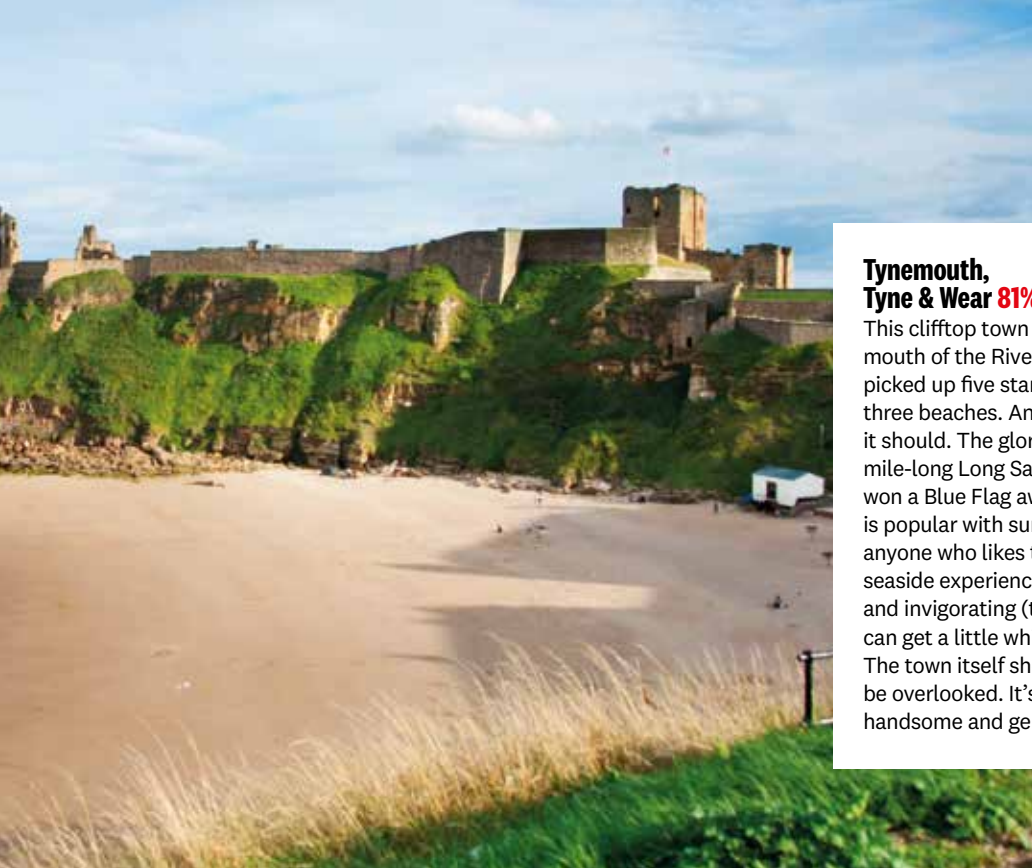


Dartmouth, Devon 84%

The half-timbered streets of this historic former port have maritime history running right through them. The Neapolitan-ice-cream-coloured houses banked up alongside the water could tell countless tales of salty sea dogs and naval bravado. Dartmouth is a town to saunter through soaking up its nautical past – which includes the Mayflower and the Armada – while window shopping at chandlers, and

browsing independent shops and galleries in the Butterwalk, a traditional tudor-era, timber framed building. High above the harbour sits the Britannia Royal Naval College, where tours take you around its parade ground. For the full maritime experience, visit during Regatta (27-29 August), when an illuminated river procession and a Kon-Tiki raft race are just two of many water-based activities taking place. 2





Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear **81%**

This cliff-top town at the mouth of the River Tyne picked up five stars for its three beaches. And so it should. The glorious, mile-long Long Sands has won a Blue Flag award and is popular with surfers and anyone who likes their seaside experience sandy and invigorating (the wind can get a little whippy). The town itself shouldn't be overlooked. It's handsome and generously

proportioned with wide streets, crescents of gracious Victorian villas and an abundance of reasonably priced cafés, and fish suppers. Longsands Fish Kitchen serves two courses based around the daily catch for just £12. Riley's Fish Shack, on the smaller beach at King Edward's Bay, dishes up local seasonal food in cardboard boxes from a converted shipping container: messy and delicious. **6**



Southwold, Suffolk **84%**

With a brewery at its heart and fresh fish for sale, it's unsurprising Southwold was rated so highly for food and drink. Adnams brewery has been here since 1876, and its presence is felt everywhere: from the hoppy smell on the sea breeze to its hotels (The Crown and The Swan). For fresh fish, you can buy the catch of the day from the Sole Bay Fish Company shack, or fish and chips at Mrs T's and tuck in overlooking the Blue Flag beach. Mooch past the fat lighthouse, Georgian houses and flint cottages to the pier, which houses artist Tim Hunkin's eccentric arcade, for a genteel day by the sea. **3**



Bamburgh, Northumberland **83%**

Last year's winner has dropped to fourth this time, but the beach retains its five stars. And why wouldn't it? The expansive, mind-clearing stretch of sand backed by a rolling dune system, runs for three glorious miles. There's plenty of room to let a dog really run, hunker behind a windbreak with a Thermos, or just gulp lungfuls of sea air carried on the North Sea wind. Looming over all this is Bamburgh Castle, a crenelated fortress started in AD547, which sits imposingly 46 metres above the beach and provides a spectacular backdrop. **4**



St Andrews, Fife **81%**

Scotland's highest-rated seaside destination is as ritzy as the seaside gets. Brush shoulders with royal alumni at the university and pink-jumpered golfers heading for a swing on the world-class course, while exploring a high street made up of smart, independent shops. Make your way to cheesemonger I. J. Mellis for local farmhouse truckles or legendary gelateria Jannettas (try the In Bru ice cream). Within strolling distance are two white sand beaches: East Sands is for surfers and kayakers, while two-mile-long West Sands is a blustery but bonny place for a windswept stroll. **5**



Beer, Devon **80%**

A chance to step back in time in this small village of cottages with moss- and lichen-covered roofs. Surrounded by limestone cliffs Beer's shingle beach still has a fishing fleet of small boats, so there are plenty of opportunities to buy crab for sandwiches or a pot of cockles for your tea. The beach scoops up the sun and is sheltered from westerly winds, while there are deckchairs to hire and beach huts to envy. Order a cream tea at Ducky's café, which is served on china crockery. You can enjoy it while sheltered beneath a cheery umbrella right on the beach. **7**



Least visited, highly rated

Looking for somewhere new? These three destinations had few visitors but good reviews



Mevagissey, Cornwall 79%

It's still all about the fish at Mevagissey, a welcome change from the picturesque but often clogged-with-tourist harbours of many other Cornish fishing villages. Around 100 boats still go out from here – it's a proper working town, and is as much about serving the community as catering for visitors. Among cafés, pubs and gift shops are more everyday but welcome shops, such as a greengrocer and bakery, and plenty of welcoming smiles. The nearest beach, a short walk from the harbour, is reached by scrambling down 200 steps. But the peaceful, sheltered cove is worth the descent. **8**

Frinton-on-Sea, Essex 77%

Thanks to by-laws dating from the 1890s, nothing much goes on here. Developed as an elegant resort by Sir Richard Powell Cooper to attract 'a better sort' of resident, 'vulgar' attractions such as arcades and piers were banned. This has been flouted more recently with the opening of a fish and chip shop (1996) and pub (2000), but the town keeps a restrained air. A verdant stretch of immaculately maintained turf, the Greensward, sweeps along above the beach. There are beach huts but none of the ribald seaside merriment evident at neighbours Clacton and Walton-on-the-Naze. **9**



Most visited

Three of your most-visited seaside towns, but not all of them got the thumbs up

Whitby, North Yorkshire 78%

You could come here just to sit on its sandy beaches and eat the best fish and chips known to man (at the Magpie Café). But that would be to miss a trick. The town has history and legend written through it like a stick of rock. Perched

on one of the hills that enclose the harbour are the ruins of Whitby Abbey. On the other is a statue of local boy Captain James Cook and the jawbones of a whale. Elegant hotels and terraces look out to sea, where Dracula pitched up in the guise of a dog in Bram Stoker's novel. **11**



Scarborough, North Yorkshire 68%

The town no longer attracts society's lords and ladies to the curative properties of its waters, but Scarborough's stucco terraces and Victorian Spa building still help it cut a dapper figure. The seafront is admittedly scruffy, but look past it and you'll find a clean, sandy sweep of South Bay Beach with donkey rides, beach huts and rock pools. If you're after a more tranquil experience, head along the coast to Saltburn-by-the-Sea (number 24 in the ratings), where it's always possible to escape crowds on its seemingly never-ending beach. **12**

Brighton, East Sussex 66%

Brighton has been a destination for pleasure-seeking hedonists since the Prince Regent built the Pavilion and filled it with oriental furnishings and louche house guests. The city's reputation for a good time, and plenitude of bars, restaurants and shops saw visitors give it full marks for entertainment and a high rating for food and drink. But one star for peace and quiet tells the story of lairy scenes on the seafront. Inebriated customers spilling out of over-filled bars on to the shingle are a familiar sight. Try Rye, further along the coast, for an altogether more grown-up and varied experience. **13**

Criccieth, Gwynedd 73%

Tucked into the crook of the Llyn Peninsula, Criccieth is often overlooked by those heading straight for celebrated Portmeirion. And never has being overlooked been better for a place; with this little market town retaining a sense of normality alongside its traditional attractions. On a rocky promontory above the town is 13th-century Criccieth Castle, which looks protectively over the two

beaches on either side. The Esplanade curls around Criccieth Beach, a mixture of sand and shingle, and is where you can find Dylan's, a café designed by local architect Clough William Ellis of Portmeirion fame. Marine Beach is lined by small Georgian hotels with bow windows in pastel colours. Both feel decades away from the clatter of amusement arcades in seaside towns further along the coast. **10**



UK SEASIDE TOWNS & VILLAGES, AS VOTED FOR BY YOU

	HOTEL PRICES	BEACH	SEAFRONT & PIER	FOOD & DRINK	ATTRACTIONS	TOURIST	SCENERY	SHOPPING	PEACE & QUIET	VALUE FOR MONEY	CUSTOMER SCORE
ST MAWES Cornwall	-	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	85%
DARTMOUTH Devon	£150	n/a	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	84%
SOUTHWOLD Suffolk	£160	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	84%
ALDEBURGH Suffolk	£129	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	83%
BAMBURGH Northumberland	£105	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	83%
BLAKENEY Norfolk	-	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	83%
SAINT ANDREWS Fife (S)	£128	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	81%
SAINT DAVIDS Pembrokeshire (W)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81%
TYNEMOUTH Tyne and Wear	-	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	81%
BEER Devon	-	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	80%
LLANDUDNO Conwy (W)	£91	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	80%
MEVAGISSEY Cornwall	-	-	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	79%
ROBIN HOOD'S BAY North Yorkshire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	79%
ST IVES Cornwall	£164	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	79%
TENBY Pembrokeshire (W)	£112	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	79%
CONWY Conwy (W)	£105	-	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	78%
DUNGESS Kent	£125	★★★★	-	★★★	-	★★★★	-	★★★★★	-	-	78%
SIDMOUTH Devon	£149	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	78%
WHITBY North Yorkshire	£84	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	78%
FRINTON-ON-SEA Essex	-	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	77%
LYME REGIS Dorset	£135	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	77%
PORTMEIRION Gwynedd (W)	£147	-	-	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	-	★★★★	★★★	★★★	77%
RYE East Sussex	£125	-	-	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	77%
SALTBURN-BY-THE-SEA North Yorkshire	£104	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	77%
BUDE Cornwall	£95	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	76%
ABERDOVEY Gwynedd (W)	£115	-	★★★★	-	-	★★★★★	-	★★★★★	-	-	75%
BRIXHAM Devon	£99	-	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	75%
LOOE Cornwall	£120	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	75%
LYTHAM ST ANNES Lancashire	£99	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	75%
NORTH BERWICK East Lothian (S)	£152	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	75%
SHERINGHAM Norfolk	£163	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	75%
WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA Norfolk	£148	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	75%
ABERAERON Ceredigion (W)	£68	-	★★★★	★★★★	-	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	74%
FOWEY Cornwall	£168	-	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	74%
TEIGNMOUTH Devon	£69	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	74%
OBAN Argyll and Bute (S)	£106	n/a	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	74%
CRICCIETH Gwynedd (W)	£99	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	-	★★★★★	-	73%
FALMOUTH Cornwall	£125	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	73%
FILEY North Yorkshire	£81	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	73%
LYMINGTON Hampshire	£135	n/a	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	73%
SWANAGE Dorset	£120	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	73%
WHITSTABLE Kent	£127	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	73%
DEAL Kent	£79	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	72%
PORTHMADOG Gwynedd (W)	£111	-	-	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	-	★★★★	★★★★	72%
BERWICK-UPON-TWEED Northumberland	£119	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	71%
SALCOMBE Devon	£209	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★	71%
EASTBOURNE East Sussex	£66	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	71%
PADSTOW Cornwall	£145	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★	★★	71%
SAUNDERSFOOT Pembrokeshire (W)	£155	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	71%
ABERYSTWYTH Ceredigion (W)	£100	★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	70%
BOURNEMOUTH Dorset	£99	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	70%
BROADSTAIRS Kent	£101	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	70%
CROMER Norfolk	£139	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	70%
FELIXSTOWE Suffolk	£57	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	70%
LYNMOUTH Devon	£110	-	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	70%
SOUTHSEA Hampshire	£97	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	70%
SWANSEA (W)	£81	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	70%
WEYMOUTH Dorset	£106	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	70%
WHITLEY BAY Tyne and Wear	£68	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	70%
PLYMOUTH Devon	£77	-	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	69%
POOLE Dorset	£112	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	69%
APPLEDORE Devon	-	-	★★★★	★★★	-	★★★★★	★★★★★	★	★★★★★	★★★	68%



Clockwise from above: Sidmouth, Barton on sea, Portmeirion, Oban, Conwy, Skegness.

IMAGES: 4 CORNERS IMAGES, GETTY, ROBERT HARDING

UK SEASIDE TOWNS & VILLAGES, AS VOTED FOR BY YOU

	HOTEL PRICES	BEACH	SEAFRONT & PIER	FOOD & DRINK	ATTRACTIONS	TOURIST	SCENERY	SHOPPING	PEACE & QUIET	VALUE FOR MONEY	CUSTOMER SCORE
BARMOUTH Gwynedd (W)	£95	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	68%
BEAUMARIS Anglesey (W)	£87	-	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	68%
EXMOUTH Devon	£81	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	68%
GRANGE OVER SANDS Cumbria	£111	n/a	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	68%
SCARBOROUGH North Yorkshire	£78	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★	68%
SEAHOUSES Northumberland	£108	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	68%
SHANKLIN Isle of Wight	£87	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	67%
BRIGHTON East Sussex	£122	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★	★★	66%
DAWLISH Devon	£93	★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	66%
TORQUAY Devon	£87	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	66%
SOUTHPORT Merseyside	£71	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	65%
VENTNOR Isle of Wight	£119	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	65%
AYR South Ayrshire (S)	£76	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	64%
MINEHEAD Somerset	£84	★★	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★	64%
ULLAPOOL Ross and Cromarty (S)	£119	-	★★	★★★	-	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★	63%
WORTHING West Sussex	£82	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	63%
BARTON ON SEA Hampshire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62%
BRIDLINGTON East Yorkshire	£75	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	62%
HERNE BAY Kent	-	★★	★★★	★★	-	★★★★	★★★★	-	★★★★	★★★	62%
HUNSTANTON Norfolk	£103	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	62%
LARGS North Ayrshire (S)	£99	★	★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	-	62%
FOLKESTONE Kent	£52	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	61%
HASTINGS East Sussex	£88	★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★	61%
LOWESTOFT Suffolk	£80	★★★★	★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	61%
PORHCRAWL Bridgend (W)	£80	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	60%
COLWYN BAY Conwy (W)	£86	★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	-	★★★	★★	59%
RAMSGATE Kent	£80	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★★	59%
NEWQUAY Cornwall	£116	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★	★★	58%
ILFRACOMBE Devon	£85	★★	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	57%
NEW BRIGHTON Merseyside	-	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	57%
PENZANCE Cornwall	£126	★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	57%
WESTON-SUPER-MARE Somerset	£80	★★★	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★	★★	57%
MARGATE Kent	£92	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	★	★★	55%
MORCAMBE Lancashire	£89	★★	★★★★	★★	★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	55%
BURNHAM-ON-SEA Somerset	£78	★★★	★★	★★	★	★★★★	★★★★	-	★★★	★★	54%
CLEETHORPES Lincolnshire	£61	★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	54%
LITTLEHAMPTON West Sussex	£150	★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★	★★★	★★	54%
BLACKPOOL Lancashire	£68	★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	★	★	53%
MABLETHORPE Lincolnshire	-	★★★★	★★	★★	★	★★	★★	-	★★★★	★★	52%
BOGNOR REGIS West Sussex	£105	★★	★	★	★	★★	★★	★	★★	★	49%
CLACTON-ON-SEA Essex	£129	★★★	★★★	★	★★	★★	★★	★	★	★	48%
GREAT YARMOUTH Norfolk	£68	★★★	★	★★	★★★	★★	★★	★	★	★★	48%
SKEGNESS Lincolnshire	£65	★★★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	44%

(S) = Scotland (W) = Wales. **Average hotel rate:** kayak.co.uk. **Star ratings:** one to five. **Score:** combination of overall satisfaction/likelihood to recommend. A dash (-) indicates the sample size was too small to calculate a rating. **n/a:** indicates there is no beach close enough to the city, town or village centre to rate.



In defence of Skegness

Dear old Skeggy might be a bit rundown these days, and it's famously 'bracing' when the wind hurtles in from Scandinavia. It can feel rammed in summer with fun-seeking holidaymakers from its many caravan parks walking the seafront with trays of chips and pints of beer. And out-of-season it does take on a forlorn, abandoned air when fairground rides are closed and fog rolls in

from the Fens. But does it deserve bottom place and its slew of one-star ratings?

No, it jolly well doesn't. How can you not love a town whose main purpose is to entertain? Billy Butlin recognised its power to pull in the punters when he opened his first holiday camp at Skegness in 1936 (which still exists). He knew that its miles of sandy beach would be irresistible to holidaymakers.

The town went on to become a classic seaside resort, offering all those tempting distractions that, collectively, cannot be found anywhere else on earth: crazy golf, a model village, a boating lake, rollercoasters and a giant ferris wheel on the Pleasure Beach, a 118-metre-long pier, go-kart racing. Donuts. All bathed in neon like a budget Las Vegas. Skegness rocks. Case closed.