

Plymouth
Britain's Ocean City

four

Destination Plymouth National Coverage Overview

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The 24 most underrated travel destinations in the world

From a Bali dupe to a place where penguins outnumber people, these overlooked travel spots are worth the trek

21. Plymouth, England



Photograph: Shutterstock

If the **Devon** city of **Plymouth** were any smaller, it'd be considered a jewel of a day-trip destination. If it were any bigger, it simply couldn't be overlooked. Perhaps because of its middling size, it's slipped under the radar, and that's pretty unfair, if you ask us. Like art? **The Box** is a brilliant, recently opened gallery that celebrates local artists. Like architecture? You'll be dazzled by the newly done-up **Market Hall**, which also has its own 'immersive art dome'. Like swimming? Few pools are more spectacular than the **Inside Lido**. Like gin? England's **oldest distillery** is smack bang in the historic city centre. Book a room at the **Bistro Pierre B&B**, in the revamped Royal William Yard, and you've lined up pretty much the perfect weekend away.

The Telegraph

Revealed: Britain's best city to live and work in

London, Manchester and Birmingham named among the worst locations in the country



A port city in Devon topped PwC's index measuring cities by economic performance and quality of life | CREDIT: Thomas Faulstich/Photo

Plymouth has topped the list of Britain's best cities with London, Manchester and Birmingham named among the worst.

Bristol came second followed by Southampton and Swindon, in an index measuring economic performance and quality of life by consultancy firm PwC.

Reading and Exeter also saw large improvements on last year in areas such as income distribution, work-life balance and jobs, the annual index found.

OTV – 18,000,000

The research points to an "increasing imbalance" between neighbourhoods that is fuelled by disparities in access to quality education and housing in some areas of the country, the report warned.

Rachel Taylor, of PwC, said: "Raising prosperity across the UK is needed more than ever as we continue to see growing inequality in housing, jobs and education.

"There is an increasing imbalance within and between neighbourhoods, which is being driven by disparities in access to quality education, jobs and housing.

"This is felt not only across different regions, but also between people living within the same postcodes in cities."

Cities were assessed on 12 criteria that were health, income, jobs, safety, skills, work-life balance, housing, commuting to work times, income equality, high street shops environment and business start-ups.

Those in the east of England were named the most improved, with Lincoln York and Hull improving on income distribution and jobs.

This contrasts with some of the country's largest cities, like London, Birmingham and Manchester, where large waiting lists for social housing were blamed for making them the lowest performing cities assessed by PwC.

London had the longest waiting lists for council houses of any city in the country, with more than 300,000 people awaiting accommodation, followed by Manchester at 100,000, Newcastle at approximately 25,000 and Birmingham with a similar number on its waiting list.

Carl Sizer, of PwC, said: "The new Government is moving at pace setting out a legislative agenda that starts to pave the way for how we are going to turn the dial on key issues holding back the UK's economic growth, such as reform of the planning regime, improving work readiness of graduates and school leavers and investment in key national infrastructure and skills.

"However, this is against a backdrop of a challenging fiscal environment, so successful delivery will hinge on a level of close collaboration and innovation between national, local and regional governments, businesses, academia and the third sector that has historically rarely been seen."



The Great British Seaside

From planting seagrass to spotting seals: how to help look after the UK's coastline

Whether you want to volunteer or just get up close to marine life, here are some of the best places to visit for a fresh view of your shores

Where to visit ...

- With a recent £11.6m injection from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Plymouth will soon be home to the UK's first national marine park, focused on connecting people with nature, restoring local salt marsh and seagrass habitat, and rehabilitating coastal landmarks such as Plymouth's art deco seaside lido (plymouthseasideandnationalmarinpark.com). The project is still in the early phases, but for the time being you can visit the local National Aquarium, the UK's largest charitable aquarium, run by the Ocean Conservation Trust and focused on marine education (national-aquarium.co.uk).



Town among 'most affordable staycation spots for autumn' is 'UK's version of San Diego'

Whether you're planning a spontaneous weekend getaway or a quiet week exploring your hometown, staycations offer a perfect opportunity to unwind without the hassle of long travel.



Town among 'most affordable staycation spots for autumn' is 'UK's version of San Diego' (Image: Getty)

Autumn presents a great opportunity to embark on local adventures and enjoy the picturesque scenery while enjoying the mild weather.

The UK is brimming with towns and villages perfect for a relaxing weekend away exploring, but sometimes it's hard to decide which getaways offer the best value for money.

A recent credit card brand Aqua analysis highlights the most budget-friendly UK locations for autumn, considering factors like accommodation prices, search interest, average rainfall, and temperature.

The study discovered that among the top options for money-saving travellers was the port city of Plymouth, in Devon, with two-night stays going for as cheap as £90.

Ahead of Plymouth were Portsmouth in third place with £88 weekend stays, Blackpool for £79 and Torquay with £74 two-day stays.

This city between the rivers Plym and Tamar is a fantastic destination to visit in autumn, offering a blend of stunning natural scenery, rich history, and vibrant culture.

Its iconic waterfront area offers stunning views of Plymouth Sound and the English Channel, and the cobbled streets of the Barbican provide an ideal autumnal stroll setting for explorers.

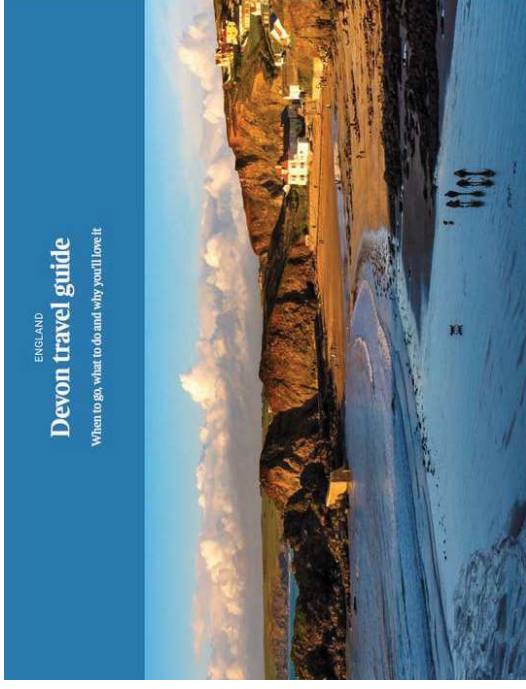
People who have visited this maritime hotspot have praised its coastal appeal, with one TripAdvisor even comparing it to the Californian city of San Diego.

Eunnya penned: "I have travelled to most cities in the UK and Plymouth is by far the best!

Mum39 added: "Lots of boat trips, good walking, and buses to get you around when hills become hard work!

"Numerous cafes to suit every taste, and excellent development going on at Royal William Yard bringing old buildings back to life."

"Such a gorgeous place to be, if you love nature and quiet seaside towns then I cannot recommend Plymouth more!" said CharlotteFoxy. "Wouldn't hesitate to go back!"



Devon is the epitome of England's green and pleasant land, with two beach-lined coasts, two national parks and two of the West Country's most intriguing cities (Exeter and Plymouth). Come for the bucket-and-spade beach towns and you'll stay for the bracing country walks, quaint villages, dramatic castles and country houses.

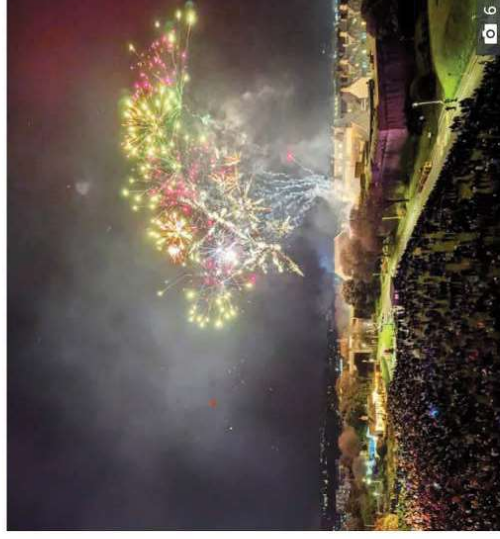
Inland from South Hams lies Dartmoor, the southwest's largest and wildest national park, home to spooky tors, empty moors and wild horses. It's prime hiking territory (but you're not allowed to wild camp). To the west is Plymouth, a much-maligned city that's on the up: attractions here include the National Marine Aquarium, the attractive harbour area around the Barbican and the city's striking new gallery and exhibition space, the Box. A walk along the Hoe presents Plymouth's most view: this is where Francis Drake supposedly watched the Spanish Armada arrive while playing bowls. Nearby, the 1930s Tinside Lido is irresistible for a dip.

OTV – 60,000,000



BANG ON Five of the UK's best bonfire nights and firework displays – with fairgrounds, beer festivals and new drone shows

The Hoe, Plymouth



Bonfire Night at The Hoe on Plymouth's waterfront will return for 2024 Credit: Supplied

ONE of the most popular events in [Devon](#), Bonfire Night at The Hoe on Plymouth's waterfront will return for 2024 with a vast bonfire,

fireworks, above, and plenty of family-friendly fun on November 5.

The scenic spot is supposedly where, in 1588, Sir Francis Drake first heard about the invading Spanish Armada and, as the story goes, continued his game of [bowls](#).

The fairground opens at 4pm and there's food from 5pm. The bonfire is lit at 7pm with fireworks from 7.30pm. See [visitplymouth.co.uk](#).

STAY: The imposing Victorian gem, the Duke of Cornwall Hotel, is close to The Hoe and has rooms from £67/50 the week of November 3. See [thedukeofcornwall.co.uk](#).

14 of the UK's best saltwater and tidal pools

Rugged rock pool or art deco lido? Cool off with a dip in one of these coastal pools for a safe, relaxing swim when the sun comes out

Wild swimming might seem particularly in vogue right now, but taking a sea dip has been a popular pastime since Victorian times. The UK is blessed with a surprising number of outdoor pools where you can enjoy a plunge without having to worry about getting smashed by waves, navigating inconvenient tide times or burning your eyes with chlorine. Some are little more than natural ponds that fill up with seawater as the tide rises; others were purpose-built, especially during the great lido-building boom of the 1920s and 1930s. Many were closed or abandoned when Britain's seaside resorts fell out of fashion, and are now being brought back into use by volunteer groups or a new generation of wild swimmers.

Since the water is refreshed regularly, either naturally by the tide or by man-made means, seawater pools are also a good bet for a clean swim. To be extra safe, you can always double-check by using Surfers Against Sewage's fantastic, free Safer Seas & Rivers Service (SSRS) app, which records recent pollution alerts around the UK coastline in real time.

1. Tinside Lido and Devil's Point, Devon



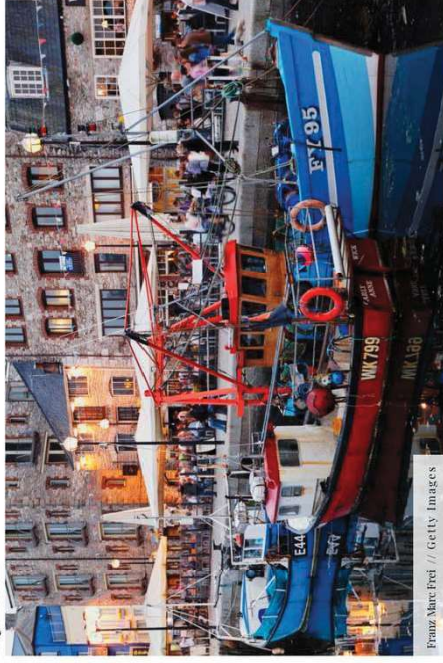
The Tinside Lido was built in 1935
ALAMY

In a prime patch of Plymouth real estate up on the Hoe, overlooking Plymouth Sound, this is a crown jewel in the UK's lido line-up. Built in 1935 in the fashionable art deco style, the Tinside Lido (open late May to mid-September, £8; plymouthactive.co.uk) is grade II listed, and a joy to swim in. For something wilder, there is a small tidal pool nearby known as Devil's Point (open year-round, free), just east of Royal William Yard on Firestone Bay. For somewhere to stay, Residence One is a good boutique bet, run by the owners of Bistrot Pierre. **Details** B&B doubles from £186 (bistrotpierre.co.uk)

The UK's best city breaks with kids

There's a host of vibrant cities that offer plenty of family-friendly activities, from medieval castles to inner urban adventure playgrounds

15 Plymouth



A maritime city on the up, Plymouth is a great choice for a city break with kids – especially if you want to combine it with a seaside stay in the surrounding Devon and Cornwall countryside. Your first stop should be the National Marine Aquarium, which is the UK's largest and full of fascinating fish and sea life that will keep kids entertained for hours on end.

If you and the brood fancy a dip yourselves, it's hard to beat Tinside Lido on a sunny day. This Grade II-listed outdoor salt water swimming pool is an Art Deco gem and a hit with little ones, looking out onto the sea itself at the tip of Plymouth Hoe. There are plenty of shops, cafes and restaurants nearby too, with a walk around the historic Barbican offering another treat for everyone.

Just outside the city, you'll find the lovely Saltram House and Gardens, a National Trust property and a great example of Regency style. Kids will love dressing up as a Georgian or simply getting lost in the spacious gardens, which are buggy (and picnic!) friendly.

Where to stay: Children of all ages are welcome at [Crownin Plaza Plymouth](#), which is conveniently located looking out to the sea and in the centre of all the key attractions.

[CHECK AVAILABILITY](#)

[BROWSE MORE HOTELS IN PLYMOUTH](#)



OTV - 158,600

Plymouth showcases city's credentials as a must-see MICE destination

Britain's Ocean City is set to showcase its impressive credentials as a key destination for conferences, meetings and events.



The latest Meet Plymouth event will target organisations seeking a unique experience in the city rated as the 'best place for quality of life' in this year's Demos-PwC Good Growth for Cities Index*

Plymouth, which scored particularly highly across income distribution, work-life balance, jobs and skills, is famed for its centuries-old maritime heritage, stunning coastline and 21st century commitment to the preservation of its unvalued history and environment. It also has a growing reputation as an unvalued location to work, study and play, thanks to its superb cultural, academic and leisure opportunities.

The Showcase Event, taking place on January 23, at Plymouth Argyle Football Club's Home Park Stadium, will highlight the varied range of versatile event venues and suppliers from hotels to visitor attractions, including a Monastery, zoo and a castle.



With a spectrum of opportunities to suit countless MICE requirements, Plymouth also offers a wealth of exceptional activities to enhance the meetings and events industry's needs, with providers offering everything from watersports, including kayaking on Plymouth Sound – the site of the UK's first National Marine Park – to Gin Tasting, teambuilding activities like rock climbing on Dartmoor or drink receptions on boat trips.

Destination Plymouth Chief Executive Amanda Lumley says: "Plymouth is not just Britain's Ocean city but also the highest-performing city in the latest annual Demos-PwC Good Growth for Cities Index, consistently scoring above the UK average for quality of life, health & safety, skills and more. This is reflected in the fantastic diversity of venues and activities we have here in the city for meetings, conferences, events, team-building, and 'away days'.

"You can have the best of all things here, whether you want calming waterfront locations and green spaces or a vibrant cultural experience from our world-class theatre to the only high-tech immersive dome in the country. Couple that with a warm welcome and hospitality second to none and you are sure to have a brilliant experience here in the city."

The event runs from 3:30pm until 5:30pm and exhibitors include: Dartmoor Zoo; Boringdon Hall 5-star luxury manor house hotel; Plymouth Boat Trips; Buckfast Abbey and spectacular Pentillie Castle & Estate available for private hire.

OTV - 233,000

insidermedia

Multimillion-pound architecture upgrade for Plymouth - city heavily bombed during World War Two

A £2.1m scheme designed to make people look again at Plymouth city centre's stunning post-war architecture has been completed.

Britain's Ocean City was one of the country's most heavily bombed cities during World War Two.

Its civic heart was virtually razed to the ground during the conflict when, between 6 July 1940 and 30 April 1944, Plymouth experienced 59 separate attacks and the air raid sirens sounded 602 times.

Instead of rebuilding, in 1943 the council appointed leading town planner, Patrick Abercrombie, to create 'The Plan for Plymouth'.

Some 80 years later and following a four-year High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme, buildings and spaces in the city centre, known as the Abercrombie Estate, have emerged revitalised and re-energised.

Funded by Historic England, the project was match-funded by the Transforming Cities Fund, Active Travel England and Plymouth City Council.

A key project was repairing and cleaning the Portland stone facades of buildings on Royal Parade such as Pearl Assurance House. A grant worth £208,884 was agreed with Historic England.

The completion of this work was hailed as a "significant milestone" in the overall re-development of the city centre which will continue in further phases.

One of the first projects was producing the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. This celebrated the UK's first post-war conservation area, highlighted its international significance in the field of planning and urban design and signalled how this could be upgraded and returned to its former glory.

Cllr Mark Lowry, City Centre Champion, said: "We wanted people to look again at the incredible architecture all around them. Rebuilding the city centre to an entirely new street pattern after the Plymouth Blitz was unprecedented in postwar Britain and so much of this architecture is still here."



Port Readies for Big Spike in Cruise Ship Arrivals

With bookings 40% up, the cruise port located on the UK's south coast is expecting over 10,000 passengers in 2024.



A small port on England's southwest coast has big ambitions for 2024 and beyond, as the number of cruise ships committed to exploring the region continues to grow. The Port of Plymouth, in the county of Devon, will benefit from a hefty 40% rise in cruise ship arrivals in 2024.

Fourteen Ships Already Booked to Call in 2024

Plymouth, also called Britain's Ocean City, is situated in England's only county that has two coastlines — the Bristol Channel to the north and the English Channel to the south.

The Port of Plymouth is poised for rapid expansion as a cruise destination, with more than 10,000 cruise guests anticipated to visit in 2024. The number represents a 40% jump in arrivals versus 2023.

OTV – 1,800,000

Plymouth is set to welcome 14 ships when its cruise season gets under way in April and continues to October, providing a financial boon to the regional economy. Revenue from cruise guests and ship crew members who spend money on local tours and in retail shops and restaurants help local businesses thrive and fill the port's coffers with fees from berthing, harbor pilot costs, and other expenses.

Ships confirmed to call at the port in 2024 include several luxury vessels, such as Seabourn's 450-guest *Seabourn Sojourn*, Exploris' 132-guest expedition ship *Exploris I*, Windstar Cruises' 312-guest *Star Legend*, Ponant's 184-guest *Le Dumont D'Urville*, Silversea Cruises' 691-guest *Silver Dawn* and 608-guest *Silver Spirit*, and Oceania's 684-guest *Sirena*, among others.

Ambassador Cruise Line's 1,248-guest *Ambition* and 1,400-guest *Ambience* both will make their inaugural calls at the port in 2024. The cruise line is **the UK's newest cruise brand**, having debuted in 2022.

The Port of Plymouth is well known for providing a warm welcome to guests, as Cruise Plymouth Ambassador volunteers greet passengers as they come ashore, along with the Town Crier, and the Plymouth Maritime Corps of Drums performs, all making for a rousing and festive arrival.





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