

Discover *England's*
South West
Coast Path



The Seafood Coast

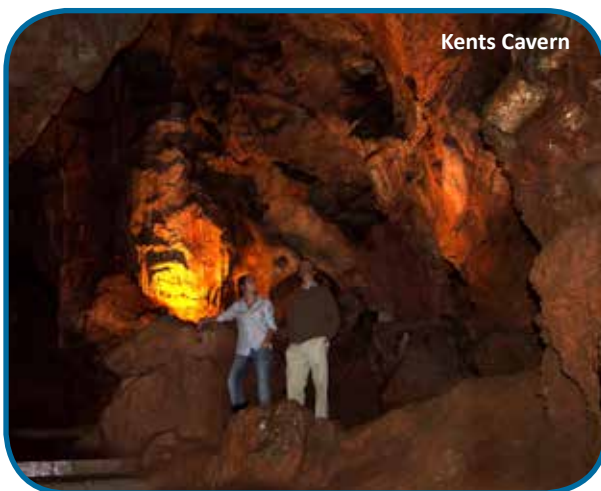
Fresh fish, a funicular railway and Stone Age caves at Babbacombe

MORNING



Start your day in Torquay. From here you can either drive or hop on the No.22 bus for the two-mile journey (3.2km) to one of Britain's highest clifftop promenades at Babbacombe. Soak up staggering sea views on the fairly strenuous 2.2 mile (3.5km) Babbacombe and Oddicombe Walk. Swap the steep descent from Lady Mount Temple for a ride on the historic funicular railway, and, from Oddicombe beach, gaze up to the mighty compressed layers of sandstone and limestone. Scour Babbacombe Beach for curled shell fossils, then climb the coast path through woodland, pausing for local ales and line-caught seafood at the Cary Arms.

AFTERNOON



If you want to wallow in the epitome of coastal chic, linger at the Cary Arms for a soothing spa treatment and a sundowner by the sea. Otherwise, dig deeper into the wonders of this UNESCO Global Geopark at the enthralling Kents Cavern, just a 20 minute stroll (one mile / 1.6km) or a few minutes on the No.22 bus, from the starting point of your walk. In this labyrinth of Stone Age caves, you can discover evidence of ancient humans and clap eyes on 400-million-year-old stalagmites and stalactites. Backtrack to Babbacombe and finish the day with a hearty portion of award-winning fish and chips from Hanbury's.



Photographs: English Riviera Image Gallery

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Wildlife, woodland and waterside dining in Torquay and Daddyhole Plain

MORNING

Starting from Torquay harbour, join the 1.9 mile (3.1km) Daddyhole Plain loop and take a twirl around one of Torbay's three limestone plateaux. Head past the ornate Mallock Clock Tower to emerge on the coast at the 75-metre-high Daddyhole Plain – named after a legendary devil thought to have lived in a cave at the foot of the cliffs. As the path takes a rollercoaster route through woodland and wildlife conservation area, look out for the limestone arch of London Bridge and the wartime lookout post that's home to a colony of horseshoe bats.



AFTERNOON



Before crossing the Millennium Bridge back to the start point of the walk, dip into the Living Coasts zoo and aquarium, where you can come face-to-face with penguins, puffins, seals and seabirds. Once you've had your fill of maritime facts, take a five-minute walk around the harbour to Rockfish restaurant and feast on succulent seafood delivered daily by Brixham's fishermen.



Photographs: English Riviera Image Gallery

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Brixham-Torquay: fish market at sunrise to seaside pier at sunset

MORNING



Brixham Fish Market



Brixham

It's an early start in Brixham with a morning tour around the world-famous fish market (from about 6am), where you can witness the live auction of huge sea bass, stacks of scallops and trays of plaice that get shipped off to the UK's finest seafood restaurants. It's worth dragging yourself out of bed in time to witness the sunrise over the harbour. After a hearty breakfast at Rockfish, it's time to strike out along the challenging 8.5-mile (13.6km) hike from Brixham to Torquay. Don't be deterred by the length of the walk – you can opt to shorten the route by hopping on the No.12 bus onto Torquay harbour at various points along the way.

AFTERNOON

With so much to see – including fascinating rock formations spanning three geological time periods – the walk will take you most of the day. Step foot on the secluded Fishcombe Cove, where William III of Orange landed his Dutch army of 20,000 men during the Glorious Revolution in 1688. Spot the mussel farms off Elberry Cove, hunt for crabs and critters in the rock pools along Broadsands and tuck into a seafood-biased menu at the casual Cantina Kitchen and Bar on Goodrington beachfront. Pause to enjoy Paignton's traditional seaside pier, before arriving at Torquay harbour and hopping back to Brixham on one of the regular passenger ferries.



Brixham Harbour



Brixham Sunset



Photographers from top: English Riviera Image Gallery and Jon Speed

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The River Dart by steam train, boat and bus (Paignton, Dartmouth, Totnes)

MORNING

Take in the sights of Paignton, Dartmouth and Totnes on a Round Robin tour via steam train, riverboat and bus (available April-October). Start in Torquay and hop on the No.100 (March 27–September 30) or No.12 bus for the 50 minute journey to Totnes (nine miles / 14.5km), taking time to dip into the cafés and shops of this bohemian market town before boarding the passenger ferry along the River Dart. Look out for seals, herons and egrets as you float to maritime Dartmouth (about 90 minutes by boat) – from where you can take a 20 minute (one-mile/1.6km) walk to Dartmouth Castle, or pause for a spot of crabbing and lunch in a waterside bistro.



AFTERNOON



Hop across the river mouth to Kingswear on the passenger ferry, then board a heritage steam train for a 30 minute journey along the River Dart, past Greenaway Halt (the stop for Dame Agatha Christie's Greenway Estate) and onto the traditional seaside resort of Paignton. Try out some water sports, hit the water slides or simply relax on the sandy beaches, before hopping on the bus (No.12, until 7pm) for a 30 minute (three-mile/5.1km) journey back to Torquay. Kick off your walking boots for Michelin-starred dining on seasonal, sustainable fish and farm produce at The Elephant.



Photographers from top: English Riviera
Image Gallery

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Country parkland and 800 years of history at Cockington and Torre Abbey

MORNING



Begin your day at Torquay railway station, a mile's walk (1.6km) from the harbour at the centre of town, or a 10-minute bus ride on several services, including the No.12. From here, set off on a 3.9-mile (6.3km) loop to Cockington, exploring the hidden valleys, rolling farmland, woodland and wildflower meadows around the Cockington Court country park and gardens. Take a picnic or feast on homemade fare (including honey made from the bees in the Walled Garden) at Cockington Court Tea Rooms.

AFTERNOON

Take a pit stop in Cockington for a local ale in The Drum Inn – built in 1936 by the world-famous architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. Once you're back at Torquay railway station it's just a 0.3 mile (0.5km) stroll to the magnificent 12th Century Torre Abbey – a heritage landmark flaunting 800 years of history, from its roots as a medieval monastery to a Georgian manor. It's now home to award-winning gardens and artwork dating back to the pre-Raphaelite era. End your day in the heart of Torquay (one mile/1.6km) on foot, or on the No.10 bus, for the catch of the day at the award-winning Pier Point restaurant.



Photographers from top: English Riviera
Image Gallery and Allan Ginman

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Brixham's panoramic sea views and the Berry Head Nature Reserve

MORNING



Start your day trip in Brixham, with an easy 0.6-mile (1km) saunter along the Breakwater – from where you can soak up panoramic views of the bay. (Be aware that the harbour edge doesn't have a handrail or barrier). As you head towards the iconic lighthouse, on one side is the historic Torbay Lifeboat Station, while, on the other side, lies the Blue-Flag Breakwater Beach with its plaque commemorating the American service men that left from the slipway for the D-Day landings.

AFTERNOON

From the harbour, follow the coast path for one mile (1.6km), past the art deco Shoalstone Sea Water Pool (perfect for a dip on a summer's day), to the café at Berry Head. After lunch in this clifftop, Napoleonic-era fortress, keep your eyes peeled for sea life and seabirds (especially rare migrant birds in autumn) on an easy 1.6-mile (2.6km) loop around the important Berry Head Nature Reserve. Back in Brixham, find out more about the area's fascinating history as you mooch around the Brixham Heritage Museum. [If you want to shorten the footwork on the return journey, skip from Shoalstone Beach to Brixham on the No.17 bus.]



Photographs: English Riviera Image Gallery and Lee Brewer

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Dartmouth: the Dart Valley Trail and Agatha Christie's estate

MORNING

Kick off your day in Dartmouth and get under the skin of this maritime town on a quick romp around the 1.2 mile (2km) Dartmouth Town Trail. Pack a picnic of finger-licking treats from the bakeries and delis. Then, after coffee in a waterfront café, it's time to cross the river on the Higher Dart Ferry and follow the stunning Dart Valley Trail along the river to Agatha Christie's estate at Greenway (four miles / 6.5km).



AFTERNOON



As the trail winds up into magical woodland overlooking the estuary, you're spoilt for choice of breathtaking picnic spots. Scan the treetops for buzzards, cock your ears for the call of jays and woodpeckers, and see if you can spot a rare roe deer. Once you've explored the historic gem of the National Trust Greenway Estate (that's been the home of Elizabethan explorer, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, and crime novelist, Agatha Christie), float back to Dartmouth by ferry before a slap-up fish feast on the Seafood Coast.



Photographers from top: English Riviera Image Gallery,
Ray & Dot Culmer and National Trust

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Local Knowledge

Accommodation: A popular, award-winning holiday destination, the English Riviera is home to a huge range of accommodation for all tastes and budgets. Torquay, Paignton and Brixham are all ideal bases for the week, offering boutique hotels, charming B&Bs and well-equipped campsites.

Food & drink: Called England's Seafood Coast for good reason, the English Riviera is the prime destination to sample the UK's finest seafood and visit the world-famous Brixham fish market (where the nation's best chefs source their seafood). As well as fresh fish, you'll also find an abundance of local farm produce – and don't forget to try a traditional Devon cream tea.

Transport: The English Riviera is the perfect destination for a car-free holiday – with a reliable and extensive network of buses, trains and ferries servicing all the major towns, villages and attractions. There are also open-topped bus tours, heritage steam train and riverboat tours, and a land train that operates around Torquay. For easy bus and train journey planning and timetable information visit www.travelinesw.com

For more information visit

www.englishriviera.co.uk

Membership

You are sure to fall in love with the South West Coast Path when you walk it, you may even be hooked while planning your adventure. If you'd like to support the South West Coast Path Association and protect and promote this beautiful trail, we have an Overseas Membership for just £29 that gives you masses more information about the Path including the Complete Guide to the South West Coast Path in your language. Please join us! **Find more information at southwestcoastpath.org.uk**



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