

50 great British beach escapes

Article

The best sea views



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The Beach Hut in Widemouth Bay, Cornwall (3)

BEST BEACH HOUSES

The West Country

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1 Sky House, St Agnes, Cornwall

This stylish four-bedroom cedar-clad house set in 2.5 acres of woodland is only a five-minute walk from surf-friendly Trevaunance Cove on the north Cornish coast. A Scandinavian style open-plan living area with a woodburner and sleek kitchen has sliding doors leading to a decked terrace. Upstairs, off the master bedroom, is another terrace with a hot tub where you can enjoy sea views through the mature trees. There's also a king-size en suite, twin or double and single room. Eat pub grub at the Driftwood Spars or splash out on dinner at No 4 Peterville in St Agnes.

Details: A week for seven costs from £1,675 (01872 241241, cornishgems.com)

2 The Sand House, Portreath, Cornwall

Plenty of outdoor space makes the most of the sea views from this modern house perched high above sandy Portreath beach on the north Cornish coast. High ceilings maximise the lofty feel in the open-plan living area with its sleek kitchen, marble-topped table and white sofas. There are three double rooms, two en suite, and a single en suite. Store your surf boards and wet suits next to an exterior shower ideal for washing off the salt. There's also a swimming area for children in the inner harbour beach. Take the train from St Erth to St Ives or cycle along the 11-mile coast-to-coast former tramway from Portreath to Devoran.

Details: A week for seven costs from £1,389 (0345 268 0788, english-country-cottages.co.uk; reference TMZ)

3 The Beach Hut, Widemouth Bay, Cornwall

The actress Kate Winslet is just one of the celebs who have stayed at this quaint beach shack for two between Bude and Boscastle. You can understand why — and why it has very limited availability left over the summer — when you venture into its seaside chic interior of stripped floors and whitewashed walls. The perfect romantic retreat, it has its own secret surf spot and is on a 52-acre estate in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There's a barbecue, or you can book an in-house chef, or venture to nearby fish restaurants and pubs if you can bear to tear yourself away.

Details: A three-night weekend for two costs from £1,120 (01637

7 Tamarisk Beach House, Woolacombe, Devon

This elegant 1930s Arts and Crafts-style house overlooks the vast golden sands of Woolacombe Bay. Once frequented by Hollywood stars, it's very chic with its art deco furnishings and fireplace in the open-plan kitchen and living area. Eat alfresco on the sea-view balcony or in the tiered garden. The master bedroom has a smart en suite and a lovely window seat with stupendous views. There are two further doubles and a twin. Take a boat trip to Lundy Island, go rockpooling or surfing at Woolacombe, or explore Exmoor National Park.

Details: Three nights for eight cost from £695 (01637 881 183, uniquehomestays.com)

8 Carswell Farm, Holbeton, Devon

These seven characterful cottages are dotted across an organic farm leading down to secluded beaches and private coves in the scenic South Hams. You'll have to book a year in advance to secure the one-bedroom Beach Hut, which sits on an isolated cove. One of the nicest cottages is the Lodge, a timber-framed, eco-friendly, two-bedroom house with oak floors and bespoke furniture using oak from the estate. Lambside House is an elegant Georgian property sleeping up to 14. Most are ideal for families, with baby equipment, a communal play area and wi-fi for teenagers. Take the sea tractor to Burgh Island from Bigbury-on-Sea with its excellent Venus café, or head to Plymouth with its aquarium and historic barbican.

Details: A week for four costs from £695 (The Lodge) or a week for