

# SOUTH COAST STARS

Make the most of Britain by holidaying at home. Visit a superb farmers' market in Bridport, eat line-caught mackerel in St Ives and enjoy fine-dining for just £15 in Brighton

Photographs CLAIRE LLOYD DAVIES

## Bridport

Bridport is a lively market town that acts as a hub for locally produced foods from the west Dorset countryside. There's access to the sea at nearby West Bay, with a harbour and miles of sandy beach. Come here to walk the Jurassic Coast, enjoy great local fish, and visit a once-a-month farmers' market so rich in produce it will make you feel like you're in France. The Bridport Food Festival 2009 ([bridportfoodfestival.org.uk](http://bridportfoodfestival.org.uk)) takes place 26-27 June.

### EAT

At **Café Bean** you can enjoy Fairtrade cappuccinos and lattes. Paninis and sandwiches (£3.95-£4.95) are made with locally sourced ingredients, such as Rawles' old-English pork sausages. ([cafe-bean.co.uk](http://cafe-bean.co.uk)) Pick up freshly baked pastries and breads from **Leakers Bakery** – don't miss their Jurassic slice (£1.50) with dates, apricots and chocolate. (29 East Street, 01308 423296)

**The Electric Palace**, a cinema since 1926, also hosts comedy and music events. Go to the foyer Brasserie for coffee or well-prepared pre-cinema meal such as steak and chips for under a tenner. ([electricpalace.org.uk](http://electricpalace.org.uk))

The best fish and chips are at **Longs**. Get stuck into cod and chips (£6.80 eat-in, £5.50 takeaway) or bouillabaisse (£12.50). There's also a decent wine list. ([longsbridport.co.uk](http://longsbridport.co.uk))

Head to the rustic chic of **The Bull Hotel**, formerly a 17th-century coaching inn, and tuck into seared local sea bass (£17.50). Moules-

frites (£10) on Wednesday evenings is popular. ([thebullhotel.co.uk](http://thebullhotel.co.uk))

**The Riverside** is on its own island, accessed by a footbridge, in the harbour of West Bay. Outstanding local fish dishes include Lyme Bay Dover sole grilled on the bone with sea salt (£18.75). ([thefishrestaurant-westbay.co.uk](http://thefishrestaurant-westbay.co.uk))

### DRINK

Bridport boasts one of the highest number of pubs per population in the country. Visit **George Hotel**, an untarted-up, town-centre boozier, popular for its well-kept Palmers beers (try the Tally Ho), wines, and bar food. Ploughman's (£5.95), oxtail and kidney pudding (£6.95). (4 South Street, 01308 423187)

**Palmers** has been around for more than 200 years, and beer lovers can take tour of the brewery, weekdays at 11am, from Easter to September. ([palmersbrewery.com](http://palmersbrewery.com))

### MUST DO

Walk along one of the most beautiful stretches of the **Jurassic Coast** ([jurassiccoast.com](http://jurassiccoast.com)), from West Bay to Burton Bradstock. Reward your exertions with a stop at the **Hive**



## eat away south coast

**Beach Café** for a late breakfast of smoked salmon and scrambled eggs (£6.25) and a glass of buck's fizz, a seafood feast, or takeaway fish and chips in a box (£11.50).

([hivebeachcafe.co.uk](http://hivebeachcafe.co.uk))

### SHOP

Stock up from Bridport's brilliant **farmers' market**, second Saturday of every month, at the Arts Centre on South Street. Expect about 30 stalls including meat from Wild Meadow Farm and local cheeses such as Blue Vinney. (01297 678318)

**Washingpool Farm Shop** is a one-stop source for own-grown farm produce and local goodies such as Bridport Gourmet Pies, Denhay ham, and fish from the Bridfish Smokery – it also has a restaurant. ([washingpool.co.uk](http://washingpool.co.uk))

### SLEEP

**The Bull Hotel** is a stylish, town-centre boutique hotel with a good restaurant (see above). Doubles from £85. ([thebullhotel.co.uk](http://thebullhotel.co.uk))

**The Gables b&b** is in a peaceful Edwardian house with outstanding breakfast. Doubles from £75. ([thegablesbridport.co.uk](http://thegablesbridport.co.uk))

**Highlands End Holiday Park** on the cliffs overlooking Lyme Bay has two-bed caravans from £387 per week; two-bed bungalows from £401 per week and tent pitches from £18.60 per night. ([evdlh.co.uk](http://evdlh.co.uk))

### DRIVE

Take a short drive to Lyme Regis, to visit chef Mark Hix's fantastic **Oyster & Fish House** where dishes are prepared simply and stylishly: Lyme Bay fish soup (£6.75), grilled lemon sole with Béarnaise sauce (£19.50), Fisherman's stew for two (£42.50). ([hixoysterandfishhouse.co.uk](http://hixoysterandfishhouse.co.uk))

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's **River Cottage** has moved to Axminster, 20 minutes away. Visit its Local Produce Store or eat in the Canteen – try whole roasted Lyme Bay mackerel with a warm potato and Cornish asparagus salad, £8.50. (01297 631715; [rivercottage.net](http://rivercottage.net))

**Top, from left: Leakers Bakery; boats in Bridport; Washingpool Farm Shop**  
**Bottom, from left: Hive Beach Café; Highlands End Holiday Park; The Bull Hotel**