

WIN OUR FOOD TEAM COOKING IN YOUR OWN HOME

JULY 2011 £3.

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FIVE-A-DAY IN ONE MEAL

A week's recipes
put to the family test

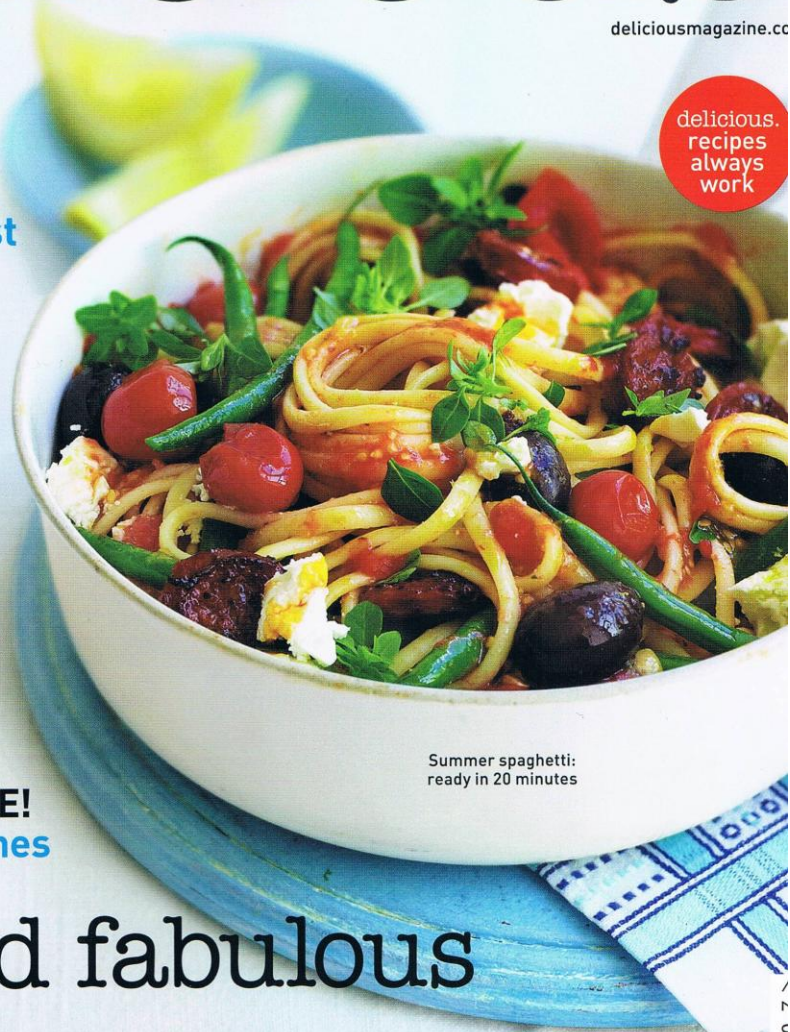
THE RIVER COTTAGE BARBECUE

60-MINUTE MENU
3 courses for
just £5 a head

RELAXED SUMMER ENTERTAINING

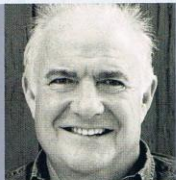
- Best-ever mix & match menus
- Lusciously good cherry puds

EASY ON THE CHEESE!
Healthier veggie dishes



Summer spaghetti:
ready in 20 minutes

Fast and fabulous



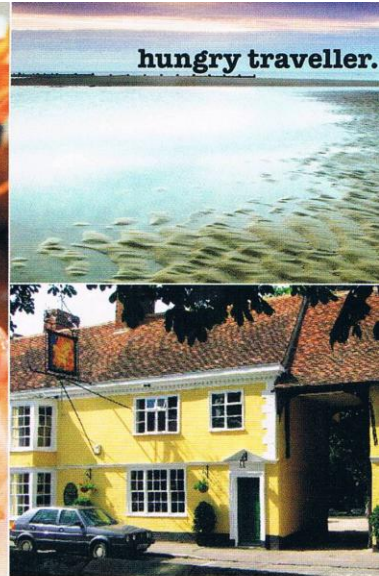
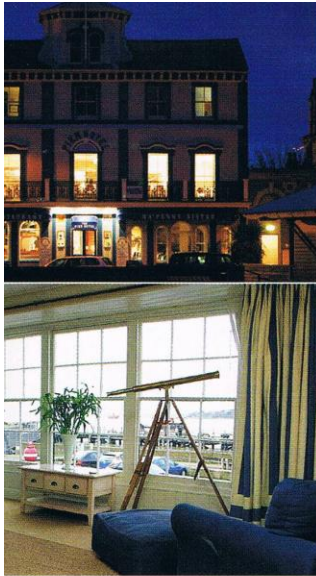
RICK STEIN'S SIMPLE SPANISH COOKING
JAY RAYNER "I LIKE ROSÉ – SO THERE!"
FERN BRITTON WHAT DOES SHE EAT?

10 GREAT COTTAGES BY THE SEA • GROW YOUR OWN VEGETABLES

hungry traveller.

Coast to COAST

Summer's here, which can mean only one thing – it's time to head for the beach. Clare Hargreaves reveals the top seaside breaks the length of the UK, including where to go and what to eat. And if you're staying awhile, we've rounded up the 10 best waterside cottages »



by Staithes. Find wild herbs and
al fish, then cook them up in your
istal cottage in the evening.

HERE TO STAY

● **Estbek House** East Row,
idsend; estbekhouse.co.uk.
oubles cost £165-£190 per
ht B&B.
● **Storm Cottage** See p115.
● **Low Peak** See p115.

ndring Peninsula, SEX

SKIES AND ZLING SEAFOOD

ginally known for its witch trials
he 1640s, the Georgian port
m of Mistley, on the Stour
uary, has become known as the
ce where California meets Essex,
nks to American-born Sherri
gleton, who transformed **The
stley Thorn** into a hip gastropub
t's raved about by locals and
tors alike. With its smart rooms
me with views over the estuary),
vell as a buzzy bar and sizzling
food, the pub alone is reason
ugh to explore this tranquil
l little-known peninsula.
ut there's plenty more. For
diterranean-style pub grub
d five bedrooms), head inland to
e **Sun Inn** in pretty Dedham. For
sy food and estuary views, try the
rbourside restaurant at The Pier
tel on Harwich Harbour to the
t. South of here you'll find vast,

lyrically named sandy beaches such
as Walton-on-the-Naze and Frinton.

Complete your gastronomic
journey with a stop in Mersea Island,
famed for its oysters. Be sure to visit
The Company Shed (129 Coast
Road, West Mersea; 01206 382700),
a shack housing an excellent
fishmonger and restaurant (BYO
bread and booze); **The Art Gallery**
(2 Coast Road, West Mersea; 01206
385820; islandartcafe.co.uk), an art
gallery with a top café and deli; and

- **Peake's House** Dutch Quarter,
Colchester; 01628 825925;
landmarktrust.org.uk. This is an
ancient half-timbered self-contained
cottage for four people in Colchester.
A week's self-catering costs from £461
(low season) to £905 (high season).
- **Park Hall Country House**
St Osyth, Essex; 01255 820922;
parkhall.info. There are three
characterful self-contained cottages
on a 400-acre estate, sleeping
two, four or six. B&B is also available

“With its secret coves, wooded river
valleys and huge sandy beaches, South
Devon has something for everyone”

Mersea Island Vineyard (Rewsalls
Lane, East Mersea; 01206 385900;
merseawine.com), yielding some very
acceptable white and sparkling wines.

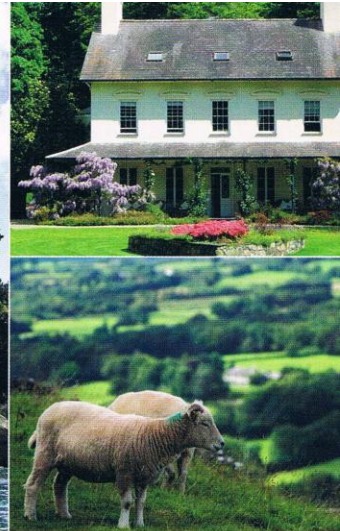
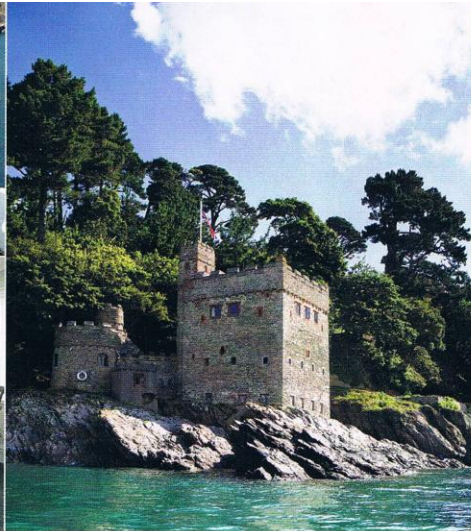
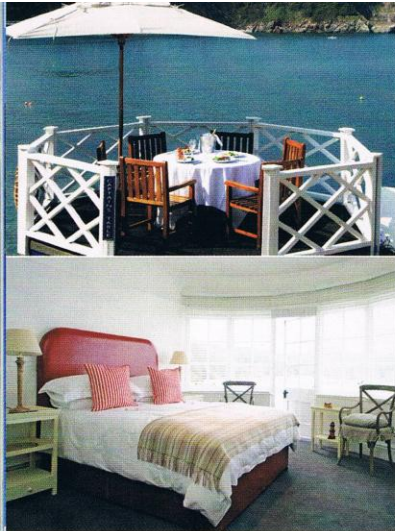
WHERE TO STAY

- **The Mistley Thorn** High Street;
01206 392821; mistleythorn.co.uk.
Doubles cost £90-£180 B&B.
- **The Pier Hotel** The Quay,
Harwich; 01255 241212; the-pier-hotel.co.uk. Doubles cost £112-£210
B&B. Stylish, 14-bedroom boutique
hotel on the quayside of old Harwich.
- **The Sun Inn** High Street;
01206 323351; thesuninndedham.com. Doubles cost £105-£160
B&B per night.

in the main house for £50-£90 per
night per person. Cottages cost
from £450 (sleeps two; low
season) to £970 (sleeps six;
high season) per week.

South Devon FAMOUS FIVE COUNTRY

With its secret coves, wooded river
valleys and huge sandy beaches,
South Devon has something for
everyone. For foodies, though,
there's no better place to start
than **The Cary Arms**, a classy
but casual boutique hotel at
Babbacombe, just up from Torquay.
Its eight chic rooms gaze straight
out to sea, and the convivial bar >>



FROM LEFT Dine with the ultimate sea view and stay in one of the pretty rooms at **The Cary Arms, South Devon**; **Kingswear Castle** in Dartmouth; at **Plas Bodegroes** in North Wales, there's fine local lamb on the menu; enjoy innovative cuisine at **The Hambrough, Isle of Wight**

delivers hearty gastropub fare. In the summer you can dine near the water's edge at the circular Captain's Table. There are also three stylish self-catering cottages.

Other self-catering offerings are equally tempting. If beachside pottering is your thing, head to picturesque Dittisham, up the estuary from Dartmouth, and stay at the beautifully restored Grade II listed cottage **The Old Brewhouse**, just a stone's throw away from the excellent **Anchorstone Café** (Manor Street, Dittisham; 01803 770606). For something really special, book yourself in at **Kingswear Castle** in Dartmouth. You can listen to the waves crashing as you snuggle inside this 15th-century stronghold, right on the water's edge.

First-rate eateries abound. On Torquay's seafront, **The Elephant** (elephantrestaurant.co.uk) offers a choice between brasserie nosh downstairs and Michelin-starred food upstairs. In the pretty village of Shaldon, chef Tim Bouget delivers organic fare at **Ode** (21 Fore Street, Shaldon; 01626 873 977; odetruefood.co.uk). In Dartmouth, feast on fish at **The Seahorse** (5 South Embankment, Dartmouth; 01893 835147; seahorsrestaurant.co.uk), or grab fish and chips at **Rockfish** (8 South Embankment, Dartmouth; 01803 832800; rockfishdevon.co.uk), both owned by chef and fish supremo Mitch Tonks. For

something more earthy, book yourself in for an outstanding field-fresh lunch and a tour of the organic farm at the **Riverford Field Kitchen** (Wash Barn, Buckfastleigh; 01803 762074; riverford.co.uk/restaurant).

If you're self-catering, buy fish in Dartmouth, then stock up on fruit and veg, meat and freshly baked bread at **Occombe Farm Shop** and **The Occombe Café** (Preston Down Road, Paignton; 01803 520022; occombe.org.uk). Buy wine and cheese at the **Sharpham Estate** (Totnes; 01803 732203; sharpham.com) with its fabulous café (01803 732178; thevineyardcafe.co.uk) and views over the vineyard and the Dart.

WHERE TO STAY

- **The Cary Arms** Doubles cost £155-£260 B&B. For self-catering cottages, see box opposite.
- **The Old Brewhouse** See box.
- **Kingswear Castle** See box.

Lleyn Peninsula, North Wales

SHEEP, SURF AND SANDS

It's often dubbed Wales' Land's End but, thankfully, it doesn't have Cornwall's crowds. For an appropriate starter for a food tour of the Lleyn peninsula, head to **Y Gegin Fawr** (The Big Kitchen; Aberdaron, Pwllheli, Gwynedd; 01758 760359). Once a communal kitchen that fed 13th-century pilgrims, it still feeds visitors today and serves up locally

caught crab and lobster, as well as home-made cakes and scones.

Before a stroll along Lleyn's cliff-top coastal path, stock up on tasty local provisions at **Y Bwtri** (10 Y Maes, Pwllheli; 01758 613113; bwtri.com) or at **Glasfryn Farm Shop** (Glasfryn Parc, Y Ffôr, Pwllheli; 01766 810044; siop-glasfryn.com).

For fine dining with rooms, you're spoiled for choice. In posh Abersoch, with its glorious sandy beaches, go Italian at the glitzy **Venetia** boutique hotel. For relaxed country house comfort, head to **Porth Tocyn**, where the food and views are legendary.

But the star is **Plas Bodegroes**, a gorgeous Georgian house tucked in woods just inland from Pwllheli. Enjoy local lobster, crab and Lleyn lamb prepared by Chris Chown, one of Wales' best chefs, before relaxing in one of its 10 beautiful rooms.

Couples will adore **Tri-A-Hanner**, a cosy self-catering cottage on the north side of the peninsula in the hamlet of Porthdinilean, famous for its pub, **Ty Coch Inn** (01758 720498; tycoch.co.uk).

WHERE TO STAY

- **Venetia** Lon Sarn Bach, Abersoch; 01758 713354; venetiawales.com. Doubles cost £80-£148 B&B.
- **Porth Tocyn** Bwlch Tocyn, Abersoch; 07789 994942; porthtocynhotel.co.uk. Doubles cost £99-£176 B&B. For self-catering cottages, see p115.