Brits’ lockdown longings revealed with our taste buds set to guide our travel plans

**New VisitEngland research shows sensory summertime experiences on the cards for staycationing Brits**

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With just days to go until al-fresco dining and the first phase of staycations are allowed across the country, new VisitEngland research shows that it’s foodie experiences that are top of the agenda for sensory-starved Brits.

In a research poll of 2476 nationally representative adults commissioned by VisitEngland, more than half (51%) of respondents cited eating out at a restaurant as the travel experience they had missed most of all during lockdown, followed by more than a third (37%) who had missed visits to pubs and bars and coffee shops and cafes.

The research showed that our taste buds are also driving our travel plans with foodie experiences taking the top three spots for activities Brits are hoping to enjoy this summer. Almost half, 46%, of respondents were most looking forward to eating out at a restaurant, market or street food truck, jointly placed with the chance to have a drink in a pub garden, with 44% looking forward to visiting coffee shops and cafes.

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said ‘From fine-dining restaurants and gastropubs to beach-side shacks and city street-food, England’s food and drink offering is as varied as it is exciting and an integral part of exploring a destination. From our coast and countryside to our city streets, England offers a huge diversity of sensory experiences and we encourage Brits to responsibly explore both their old favourites and discover our hidden gems this summer.”

Tantalising our tastebuds also scored highly when thinking about the sensory experiences Brits are looking forward to as freedom to travel begins to open up. Fish and chips (51%); ice-cream (51%) and a cold drink in a pub (47%) were the top three tastes Brits were excited about experiencing this summer.

Food and drink dominated the other sensory highlights, with the smell of a BBQ (46%), the noise of an ice-cream van jingle (35%); the sound of chatter in a pub (44%) and the feeling of a cold drink in hand (45%), all scoring in the top three responses when asked about the sensory travel experiences Brits were most excited about.

The allure of the coast scored strongly with the top smell cited as sea air (56%) and the top sound as waves crashing on the beach (54%), with nearly half of respondents (49%) citing beach views, sandcastles and windbreaks and the sparkling sea (45%) when asked about the sights that they were most looking forward to seeing.

The lockdown appreciation of nature looks set to continue as we venture further afield, with both the smell and sight of flowers in bloom and bumblebees buzzing, alongside the simple act of sitting on the grass, amongst the top three responses when asked about the experiences related to smell, sight and touch Brits were most looking forward to.

More than half, 55%, of those surveyed, were planning on taking a day trip, short break or longer holiday in England within six months of being allowed to travel again, rising to 63% amongst those living in large cities.

Below, VisitEngland has rounded up its top tips for sensory travel across this country this summer, from visits to our lavender fields and rose filled gardens to top fish and chip spots beyond the honeypots.

And, as tourism begins to reopen up, the national tourist agency is calling on Brits to **Escape the Everyday responsibly**, whether that’s looking for the **We’re Good to Go** mark - with more than 44,000 tourism businesses registered to the scheme and supporting visitors to book a break with confidence - to pre-booking attraction and hospitality visits and following the Countryside Code as we explore this summer. For more information and the latest guidance go to [www.visitengland.com/escape-the-everyday-responsibly](http://www.visitengland.com/escape-the-everyday-responsibly)

**For further press information please contact the VisitEngland PR team:**

Consumer: Louise Ferrall / Claire Keenan / Patrycja Woda E: [vepr@visitengland.org](mailto:vepr@visitengland.org)

Corporate: Tracey Edginton [tracey.edginton@visitbritain.org](mailto:tracey.edginton@visitbritain.org)

Image selection available at [visitbritainimages](https://www.visitbritainimages.com/lightbox/?st=109cff8a178a4b86e26dfdcf4a57d9d93851cce1)

**Notes to Editors**

The research was commissioned by VisitEngland via Kantar between 18 and 25 March 2021 to 2476 British adults. For full survey results please contact [press@visitengland.org](mailto:press@visitengland.org)

**Ways to stoke your senses in England this summer**

**Taste sensations**

**Salivate over the smells of BBQs, taste of Fish and Chips, a cooling Ice-cream and the feel of a cold pint in hand**

* There’s no shortage of opportunity to enjoy **Fish and Chips** across the country but you can do worse that ticking off the winners of the [National Fish and Chip Shop of the Year](https://www.seafish.org/promoting-seafood/the-national-fish-chip-awards/2020-national-fish-chip-award-winners-and-finalists/) awards, in which Nottingham’s [The Cod’s Scallops](https://www.codsscallops.com/) took the 2020 top spot; or by heading to Norwich’s [Grosvenor Fish Bar](https://www.fshshop.com/), whose co-owner Duane Dibartolomeo is the recipient of a previous VisitEngland Tourism Superstar award. For fish and chips with a view why not try Southwold Pier’s [The Boardwalk](https://www.southwoldpier.co.uk/business/boardwalk-restaurant/)
* Let the professionals do the **barbequing**whilst you kick back on a freshly mown lawn at a food festival this summer. Some upcoming highlights include the touring [Pub in the Park](https://www.pubintheparkuk.com/) (June-September) and the [Blenheim Palace Food Festival](https://www.blenheimpalace.com/whats-on/events/food-festival/) (20-22 August)
* Whether it’s a traditional ‘99’ from one of England’s historic piers or an artisan creation from the likes of Fortnum and Mason’s **Ice cream** at [The Parlour](https://www.fortnumandmason.com/the-parlour-restaurant), it’s a quintessential summertime treat. For something different head to the [**Ice Cream Getaway**](http://www.visitderby.co.uk/whats-on/events/ice-cream-getaway) being held near Derby this summer (28 May – 22 August**.**) Bluebell Dairy will be hosting their first ever wild camping "Ice Cream Getaways" on certain dates this summer, featuring a “family only” weekend including ice cream sundae sessions
* Pubs and bars across the country have been adapting and innovating ready to welcome back visitors for that long awaited freshly poured pint. Gin lovers should try the rooftop terrace [**Zestival**](http://www.firmdalehotels.com/hotels/london/ham-yard-hotel/roof-terrace/zestival) launching 14 April at Ham Yard Hotel in London, or for those who want to squeeze in more than one pub to make up for lost time, try the new [**Cotswolds Trails and Villages tour**](https://www.gocotswolds.co.uk/product/brewery-pub-lunch-the-cotswolds-pub-tour/) which includes beer tasting at a brewery, a pub lunch and a visit to The Ebrington Arms, voted the best UK village pub

**For more ideas head to**[**www.visitengland.com/8-best-beers-london-and-beyond**](http://www.visitengland.com/8-best-beers-london-and-beyond)

**Coastal Escapes**

**The smell of sea air; the sight of beach views and sparkling sea and the sound of waves crashing**

* Enjoy  seven new site specific art installations along a new [**England’s Creative Coast**](https://www.englandscreativecoast.com/)trail launching this May to connect the coastline of Essex, Kent and East Sussex
* Feel the fresh sea breeze on your face as you walk a section of the [**England Coast Path**](https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/england-coast-path-route-description-landing-page/), a new National Trail which hopes to have all stretches approved and with establishment works underway by the end of 2021. Once complete it will be the longest coastal walking route in the world at 2,700 miles. New stretches for 2021 will include Cumbria’s Hidden Coast, a 40-mile trail that will link Millom to Whitehaven via the Duddon Estuary, Silecroft, and Ravenglass, and feature a new arts trail, Deep Time

Head to our most quintessential of seaside resorts where [**Blackpool Pleasure Beach**](http://www.visitblackpool.com/detail/blackpool-pleasure-beach-5886/) is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year and you’ll be sure to hear the sound of the ice-cream van jingle. Events will include Late Night Riding sessions where you can ride into the dark until 10pm

* Get up close and personal with the sea on a **RIB tour** from Teignmouth with [Devon Sea Safari](https://devonseasafari.com/); join a **foraging and kayaking trip** with [Fore Adventure](https://www.foreadventure.co.uk/kayaking-foraging-dorset) in Dorset; **learn to surf or SUP** at [Joss Bay](https://www.jossbay.co.uk/) in Kent or try your hand at [**coasteering**](https://keswickadventures.co.uk/outdoor-activities/coasteering/) in Keswick

**For more ways to experience England’s Coast head to**[**www.visitengland.com/8-unmissable-experiences-englands-coast**](http://www.visitengland.com/8-unmissable-experiences-englands-coast)

**The scent of summertime**

**Soak up the scents of flowers in bloom and the sight of bumblebees buzzing**

* England’s photogenic purple [**lavender fields**](https://www.visitengland.com/best-lavender-farms-fields-england) are a summertime favourite, especially between June and August when the plants are in full bloom. Plus, with bee-keeping, distillery tours and sculpture gardens amongst the many offerings at lavender farms across the country – from Yorkshire to Somerset - there’s plenty of ways to make the most of your visit
* Head to [**RHS Bridgewater**](http://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/bridgewater)**,** set to join the prestigious RHS portfolio on 11 May 2021 as the largest gardening project in Europe. The 156-acre garden will be the first to be added in 17 years, offering a tranquil escape in the grounds of the historic Worsley New Hall, near the bustling centre of Manchester
* [**Harewood House**](file:///C:\Users\lferrall\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\7LCQ0SHM\harewood.org)**in Yorkshire** will reopen with Up+Open, a programme of wellbeing, culture outdoors and open history as well as new areas of the gardens to discover. **Together We Are** will be a brand new three-mile circular walk, featuring six unique flag artworks by graphic artist Anthony Burrill, which aim to encourage moments of mindfulness
* Reconnect and rejoice with the very best of British nature on a [**Biodiversity Breakfast**](https://www.hawk-conservancy.org/events) at Hampshire’s Hawk Conservancy (8 May) exploring the wildflower meadow and learning more about British bird song
* Go on [**Blossom Watch**](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/blossom-watch) with the National Trust at sites across the country, or head to Herefordshire and join a new [**Blossom cycle trail**](https://www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/see-do/scenic-trails/cider-circuits) through the region’s orchards for a sensory sensation

**For more garden ideas visit**[**www.visitengland.com/16-secret-english-country-gardens-visit**](http://www.visitengland.com/16-secret-english-country-gardens-visit)