

British Culture 8 - Visit England (Part 1)

Bath



Bath is located in the south-west of England. It is famous for its Roman Baths. They are the best preserved baths in the world!

Bath is also known for its Georgian architecture. One of the most famous buildings in Bath is the Royal Crescent.

Jane Austen is a famous English author who lived in Bath. She wrote six novels: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Mansfield Park*, *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion*. They have all been adapted into films or TV series.

Stonehenge



Stonehenge is also located in the south-west of England. It is a prehistoric monument that is over 5,000 years old. We don't know who built Stonehenge. Some people believe Stonehenge is the work of mythological creatures like the Devil, Merlin, giants or even aliens from outer space! Some scholars think that Stonehenge had an astrological or time-keeping role. Indeed, on the summer solstice, the sun shines directly through the centre of the monument.

For archaeologist Mark Parker Pearson, Stonehenge was used as a cemetery. Over 1,000 houses have been excavated around Stonehenge. Mark Parker Pearson believes that these houses were not permanent houses. They were temporary houses for people who gathered to celebrate an important moment of the year at Stonehenge: the summer solstice which is the longest day of the year. These people used Stonehenge as a monument to the dead.

Brighton



Brighton is located in the south-east of England, on the English Channel. It is famous for the Royal Pavilion, a former royal residence. The construction of the Royal Pavilion began in 1787 and ended in 1822. The architecture of the Royal Pavilion is quite unique as it is of Indian inspiration. As for the interiors, they are mostly of Chinese inspiration. The Royal Pavilion was transformed into a hospital during WWI.

Brighton is often called 'London by the sea'. At the beginning, Brighton was a small fishing village. Then, with the construction of the Royal Pavilion, it became an important sea resort.

Another place Brighton is famous for is the Pier which represents the classic Victorian entertainment centre.

Canterbury

Canterbury is also located in the south-east of England, about 60 miles from London, just 15 miles from the white cliffs of Dover on the English Channel. It is a beautiful medieval town which Chaucer celebrated in his *Canterbury Tales*. Canterbury is also a cathedral town: it is the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Head of the Anglican Communion. St Augustine founded the first church in Canterbury in 597. The cathedral, which stands on top of Augustine's church, dates from the time of the Norman Conquest in the 11th century. It took 400 years to complete.



On the evening of December 29, 1170, Archbishop Thomas Becket was preparing to say vespers in the cathedral when four knights, loyal to King Henry II, entered and killed him. Becket had served as the King's Chancellor, and the king thought he would be able to control him after he was made Archbishop. But Becket felt his first loyalty was to the Church. Three years after the murder, the Pope ordered the King, under threat of excommunication, to go to Canterbury and do public penance at Becket's tomb. The shrine became a major pilgrimage site. In 1538, King Henry VIII ordered the shrine and Becket's remains to be destroyed as part of his break with the Roman Catholic Church. Today a single candle burns on the place where the shrine once stood.

Finally, Canterbury is also an important university town: one quarter of the population is composed of students. There are three universities in Canterbury.