

No frills and fabulous

Our choice of the best bargain bolt-holes mean that summer holidays won't break the bank

BEST FOR STYLE BY THE SEA

EASTBOURNE EAST SUSSEX

YOUR BARGAIN BASE The Big Sleep is part-owned by John Malkovich and he's managed to bring a bit of Hollywood glamour to the good old British seaside – for a bargain price too! This place is high on style but low on services (there's no restaurant), with prices from just £65 per night for

a double or twin room with continental breakfast (01323 722 676; www.thebig-sleep-hotel.com).



Stroll Eastbourne's classic pebble beach

You can have takeaways in the lounge



WHAT TO SEE AND DO Eastbourne's fantastic new Towner contemporary art museum (www.townereastbourne.org.uk) is a must-see. Sit on the terrace with coffee and cake after you've taken in a bit of culture. Or set off for iconic Beachy Head, the UK's highest sea cliff, in the beautiful South Downs National Park (www.south-downs.gov.uk), with its miles of spectacular walks.

BEST FOR BUSY WEEKENDERS

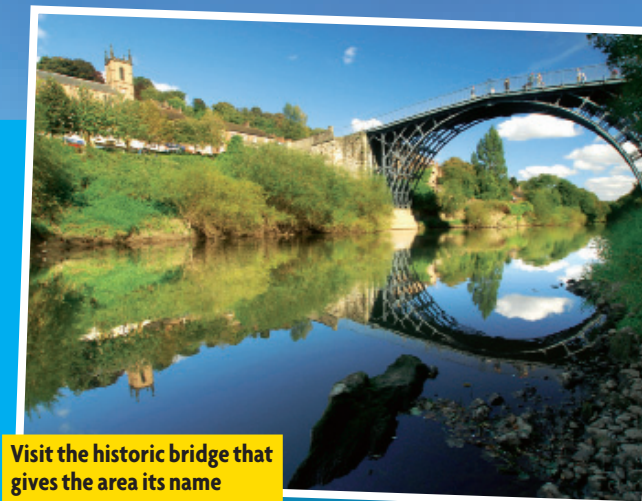
IRONBRIDGE SHROPSHIRE

YOUR BARGAIN BASE Grays Hotel in Telford is the perfect base for a busy weekend in the beautiful Ironbridge area of Shropshire. The hotel may not grab your attention with looks alone, but you're getting a lot for your money here if you'd like more than just a place to rest your weary head. With prices from only £65 B&B per double room, the family can use the hotel's pool and sauna, outdoor tennis court, gym and snooker table, leaving you to have a beauty treatment or a quick Zumba class!

(01952 425 000; www.south-watereventgroup.com/grays-hotel-telford).

WHAT TO SEE AND DO

A World Heritage Site and the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, the countryside surrounding Ironbridge is just spectacular. Like a packed itinerary? There are 10 fascinating museums in one beautiful valley, so if you fancy stepping back into the past, take your pick. From the Museum of the Gorge to the Coalport China Museum, there's something for everyone, but Blists Hill Victorian Town is our favourite – a



Visit the historic bridge that gives the area its name

working 19th-century community where you can chat to the locals, buy from the shops and try out crafts. You'll feel like you've been in a time machine. Visit www.ironbridge.org.uk for tickets and prices.

BEST FOR VINTAGE VACATION

SWANAGE DORSET

YOUR BARGAIN BASE Yes, the Townsend Centre is a hostel, but trust us, with a stunning coastal location, this no-frills but comfortable and clean accommodation is a real bargain, with en-suite family rooms for four costing just £71 per night, including bedding and breakfast (www.townsendhostel.org.uk). And what a coastal location. You'll love it!

WHAT TO SEE AND DO Explore the area's glorious beaches and islands (www.visit-swanage.com) or if you leave your walking boots behind, take a trip on a

Take the steam train from Corfe Castle



steam train (01929 425 800; www.swanage-railway.co.uk for routes). Fancy an adventure? Pack lashings of ginger beer in that picnic basket and head out on the Famous Five Adventure Trail 2012, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Enid Blyton's books. Download the clues from www.f5trail.co.uk and solve them as you travel around – there will also be a party in the grounds of Corfe Castle on 11 August with topping fun for all ages!

BEST FOR BARGAIN HUNTERS

NEWCASTLE

YOUR BARGAIN BASE Jurys Inn hotels are in 25 locations countrywide with great value accommodation. A favourite of ours is the Newcastle/Gateshead one, overlooking the Tyne. Over the summer, Jurys Inn is offering up to 20 per cent off best available B&B rates, depending on when you travel between 20 July and 9 September, so you could bag a room here for a rock-bottom £51.75, including a fab full English breakfast (www.jurysinn.com).

WHAT TO SEE AND DO It is possible to enjoy a city break

on a shoestring. The hotel is next to The Sage music centre, where there's always something good to tune into (www.thesagegateshead.org for free workshop listings). Or visit the Segedunum Roman Fort, Baths and Museum (adults, £4.95, under 16s free, www.twmuseums.org.uk/segedunum). To round a weekend off, head across the Gateshead Millennium Bridge for the Sunday Quayside Market. Browse the gorgeous ceramics, artwork

and jewellery, before stopping off at The Broad Chare (www.the-broadchare.co.uk) for an old-fashioned pub lunch.



Soak in some culture at The Sage

GO FOR GOLD

From 27 July, there's only one place to be! If you weren't lucky enough to get Olympics tickets, or have only just got swept up in the buzz and suddenly decided you would like to go to the event, Thomas Cook still has a few packages that include accommodation and guarantee



entry, with prices starting from as little as £119pp and rising to a whopping £4,999pp!

