Escape | Weekend Away



Exeter

Close to coast and country, the cathedral city has many national treasures and cultural offerings

xeter is a firm favourite with holidaymakers, sited as it is on the edge of Dartmoor and close to numerous beaches across East Devon, home also to a stretch of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

It's not just about natural wonders, of course. The city received a £230m boost which regenerated the central Princesshay area in recent years, and as a result Exeter has a retail experience to rival that of other major cities. During excavation works, the city's Roman heritage came to light with around 1.5 tonnes of tile fragments unearthed. Many Roman items can be seen at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

Summer crowds flock to the quayside to relax, shop, hire a canoe, or pause for refreshment at a tea room or pub. The cathedral green offers further opportunities to relax, where lunch al fresco is a tradition. Better still, the annual Exeter Festival of South West Food & Drink takes place 24-26 April 2015 in the courtyard of Exeter Castle and Northernhay Gardens, an opportunity to indulge in the best of local produce.

For sports fans, Sandy Park stadium will play host to three matches of the Rugby World Cup in autumn 2015. As Exeter prepares for the spotlight, there's no better time to visit.

Getting there: By car, from the north, take the M5; from the far south west take the A30 via Bodmin or A38 from Plymouth. By train, South West Trains operate services from London Waterloo to Exeter Central; First Great Western runs from London Paddington to Exeter St Davids. Cross Country trains service the North via Exeter. More information: www.visitdevon.co.uk

ALBION MILLS PANORAMA Bill Douglas Cinema Museum

Among the museum's 75,000 artefacts are panoramic images dating to the 1700s, illustrating views of London from Albion Mills, a controversial building of the time. The mill, by Blackfriars Bridge, has been called the city's first great wonder of the industrial age, built in the 1780s to process enormous amounts of corn for the growing population. When it was razed to the ground in 1791, foul play was suspected, most likely caused by individuals who fought against the rise of industrialisation. *www.bdcmuseum.org.uk*



ROMAN COINS Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery

A large Roman coin hoard discovered in East Devon in 2013 has recently been confirmed as 'treasure' by the Coroner for Devon, and work now begins at RAMM to raise sufficient funds to buy the collection and retain it for display in the county. The hoard, chanced upon by metal detectorists on a corner of land owned by Clinton Devon Estates, has been dated to between AD330-348. It comprises 22,000 coins and three iron ingots. *www.rammuseum.org.uk*

ASTRONOMICAL CLOCK Exeter Cathedral Positioned inside the city's Gothic

cathedral this unusual 13thcentury timepiece represents the solar system, with a clever - still functional - design that features the date and hour. A small bell chimes the guarters, the hour marked by the louder strikes of the Peter Bell in the tower above. A constant reminder to worshippers is the clock's Latin motto Pereunt et Imputantur: 'The hours pass and are reckoned on (our) account'.

www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk

FIGURE FOR LANDSCAPE BY DAME BARBARA HEPWORTH

Streatham Campus, University of Exeter

The Yorkshire-born sculptor's work stands on the Queen's Building lawn. Modelled in 1960 in bronze, it is one of seven casts - only two of which are in Britain. The form evokes mother and child, and set within a natural landscape appears to 'grow' alongside the trees and shrubs.

The piece came to the university through the great friendship of Hepworth with the university's Canon W Moelwyn Merchant, Professor of English from 1961-74. www.exeter.ac.uk/visit/ campuses/streatham

Clyst St Mary

М5

Topsham

VIVIEN LEIGH NIGHTGOWN Topsham Museum

This silk nightdress was worn by Vivien Leigh in Gone with the Wind. It came to Topsham through Leigh's only daughter, Suzanne, who often visited her aunt Dorothy Holman, (sister of Vivien's first husband, Leigh) for her holidays in the town. Suzanne donated the nightgown when she learned of her aunt's plans to bequeath her home as a museum for the community. It was discovered in a chest of drawers during the property's conversion. www.devon museums.net/ topsham

University of Exeter

Exeter

Hospital





