

# Escape to the sea

*Whether you're seeking peace and quiet, or an adventure to write home about, a secluded stretch of sand may be the perfect place to find it. From the furthest fringes of mainland Scotland to the secret shores of an Australian isle, here are some of our favourite hidden beaches to discover, both here in the UK and abroad. By Charlotte Tottenham.*

## CLOSE TO HOME

### **Bamburgh Castle Beach,** Northumberland

This long sandy beach and its dunes are overlooked by the magnificent medieval glory of Bamburgh Castle. Perfect for a bucket and spade afternoon in summer or for a blustery winter walk, the best views are to be had from the northerly headland, which is also home to a lighthouse. When conditions are right, take a boat out to the National Trust archipelago of the Farne Islands for the day, famous for their thriving puffin population.  
[visitnorthumberland.com](http://visitnorthumberland.com)

### **Benacre Beach,** Covehithe, Suffolk

The striking red cliffs that border this beach are the product of rapid erosion – the fastest in Britain, in fact, and a good reason to go sooner rather than later. The short walk down to the shingle beach passes the remains of a 17th-century church that holds a newer thatched one inside. Along the coast is a lagoon that is home to some of Britain's most endangered birds and is

popular with photographers for the dead trees that jut out of the sands at haunting angles.  
[visitsuffolk.com](http://visitsuffolk.com)

### **Kenneggy Sands,** Rosudgeon, Cornwall

Like something out of *The Famous Five*, Kenneggy Sands can only be reached at low tide by climbing across the rocks or by descending a chain ladder. The nearby Prussia Cove cottages, which are managed by the local estate, complete the Blyton-worthy illusion – with WiFi and TV replaced by the simple pleasures of incredible sea views, board games and a piano. The beach makes a great stop-off on the South West Coast Path on the way to St Michael's Mount and Penzance.  
[visitcornwall.com](http://visitcornwall.com)

### **Sandwood Bay,** Sutherland, Scotland

The four-mile hike over rugged moorland from the small hamlet of Blairmore is worth it for the sight of this spectacular wild beach, often voted the most unspoilt in Britain. Backed by dunes and a freshwater loch, and flanked by cliffs and unusual landforms, it is a good

reason to go to the furthest reaches of west Scotland. When the tide goes out far enough, it reveals the Spitfire engine belonging to an RAF sergeant who made a successful emergency crash-landing here during World War II.

[visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com)

## FURTHER AFIELD

### **Notre Dame beach,** Îles de Porquerolles, France

This little-known island in the archipelago of the Îles d'Hyères off the Côte d'Azur is reached by boat and has avoided development after it was bought by the French government in the 1970s and given protected national park status. Go in July for the island's annual jazz festival or off-season in spring or autumn to have the island almost completely to yourself. The family-friendly beach of Notre Dame on the northeast of the island is great for a swim in the crystal-clear lagoon or a snooze in a shady spot beneath the eucalyptus trees.

[hyeres-tourism.co.uk/en-hyeres/porquerolles](http://hyeres-tourism.co.uk/en-hyeres/porquerolles)



**Stiniva beach,** Vis, Croatia

This tucked-away cove is either reached by a steep, narrow path or by renting a canoe from the nearby bay of Rukavac. The petite white pebble cove is framed by towering limestone cliffs, a small opening leads out to sea and a nearby classic Croatian tavern serves local cuisine. There is much to explore on the rest of the island too – the small port town has art galleries and fish restaurants, and the island’s vineyards produce world-class wine.

[visinfo.org](http://visinfo.org)

**Naracu Nieddu beach,**  
Aglientu, Sardinia

The walk to this secret beach weaves through gorse forests and along wooden walkways, until you emerge onto a stretch of shimmering white sand. Even in peak season expect just a scattering of people, making this a dreamy location to read, sunbathe and paddle. The warm Mediterranean waters and gentle sloping sand make it a great choice for families, too.

[sardegnaturismo.it/en](http://sardegnaturismo.it/en) ➔

The dramatic,  
sweeping Benacre  
Beach in Suffolk

## FAR-FLUNG SANDS

### Wineglass Bay, Tasmania

Tasmania is known for its expansive, unspoilt wilderness – the mountains are rugged, the views are awe-inspiring and the beaches are stunning. One particularly sublime beach is the perfectly curved Wineglass Bay, reached by hiking through Freycinet National Park on the east coast. Go snorkelling or diving, kayak around the bay, admire the pink granite mountains that rise up out of the sea, take a dip in the warm turquoise waters or simply laze on the vast pristine stretch of white sand.

[wineglassbay.com](http://wineglassbay.com)



The stunning Wineglass Bay, Tasmania

### Radhanagar beach, Havelock, Andaman Islands, India

The azure waters of the Blue Lagoon and the golden sands that surround it at the end of Radhanagar beach on the island of Havelock are the true definition of a remote tropical

island paradise. Tucked away beyond the rocks at the end of the island's longest beach, it is shielded by jungle, and usually deserted but for the odd hammock strung up in the shady spots between the trees. As part of the Indian territory of the Andaman Islands,

this archipelago in the Bay of Bengal can only be reached from India, making the beaches here exceptionally secluded.

[andamans.gov.in](http://andamans.gov.in)

### Shela beach, Lamu, Kenya

Sitting on the immaculate white sand of Shela beach in Lamu – sandwiched between rolling dunes and endless blue ocean with hardly a soul in sight – is the sort of place that will make even the most reluctant and restless beach-goer unwind. If doing nothing is too much of a struggle, take a traditional single-mast wooden *dhow* fishing boat for a gentle meander through the nearby mangroves, finishing with a spectacular sunset sail, or simply wander down the two-mile stretch of empty beach. The sprinkling of boutique guesthouses in Shela Village, topped by the Peponi Hotel, make this an increasingly popular destination, and a dreamy spot to take in the blissfully laid-back atmosphere.

[lamutourism.org](http://lamutourism.org)



One of France's finest: Notre Dame beach