

A passport-free paradise

Jersey is the sunniest spot in the British Isles – and you don't have to worry about HMPO backlogs to get there.
By **Emily Cope**

A backlog at HM Passport Office has meant many travellers are being forced to cancel summer holidays abroad, which means it might be the perfect time to book a trip to the Channel Island of Jersey.

Though closer to France than Britain – just 14 miles from the Normandy coast – the island is part of the Common Travel Area and there is no requirement to carry a passport if you are arriving from the UK – only a form of photographic identification, such as a driving licence.

With beautiful beaches, outstanding restaurants, historic castles and miles of coastal hiking trails – as well as being the sunniest spot in the British Isles – you'll soon see why it's nicknamed "the jewel of the Channel Islands". These are 10 highlights you shouldn't miss on a visit.

Hit the surf

Due to strong swells that travel thousands of miles across the Atlantic Ocean, St Ouen's Bay is the place to surf. It has three miles of sand banks that are perfect for beginners and experienced surfers, as well as a number of cafés and restaurants to retire to afterwards. New to surfing? Sign up to Jersey Surf School for a lesson, from £30pp, jerseysurfschool.co.uk. **Local's tip:** For a relaxing beach holiday, the picturesque, sandy St Brelade's Bay on the south-west coast is lapped by clear waters.

Stay at Durrell Wildlife Park

Set up by naturalist and writer Gerald Durrell in 1959, Jersey Zoo has continued to preserve many rare and endangered species. The zoo is home to orangutans, ring-tailed lemurs and Andean bears,



Cruise passengers will spot birds, Atlantic grey seals and dolphins

but the luxury glamping yurts are also something to behold. With a wood burner, hob, electricity and al fresco dining furniture included in the pod, guests can enjoy waking up to the sounds of some of the planet's rarest animals. **Three-night stay from £510, durrell.org/wildlife/visit/hospitality**



Cycling the four-mile Railway Walk BUSINESS.JERSEY.COM/MEDIA

Follow the Railway Walk

This peaceful car-free route travels from the picturesque harbour of St Aubin west to La Corbière. Ideal for walking and cycling, it has some great refreshment pit stops along the way. After the four-mile course, look out for the lighthouse as well as panoramic views across St Ouen's Bay. You can hire children's, mountain and electric bikes from Jersey Bike Hire, jerseybikehire.co.uk.

Local's tip: Stop halfway for tapas or sourdough pizza – or a cocktail – at Off the Rails café, offtherailsjersey.com

Discover the German Underground hospital

During the Second World War, the Channel Islands were the only part of Britain to be occupied by German forces. The five-year occupation came to an end on 9 May 1945 – a date that is still celebrated by islanders with an annual bank holiday – but the scars of this trauma remain, with concrete bunkers and watchtowers littering the Jersey coastline.

The most well-preserved site is the War Tunnels (*inset*). In the quaint parish of St Lawrence, the

underground tunnels span more than a kilometre and bring to life the experiences of locals living under German command.

Artefacts include prams made to conceal bread, photos, ration cards and the many ingenious methods islanders used to organise secret gatherings outside curfew hours. jerseywartunnels.com

Local's tip: Book a guided bunker tour for tales of Jersey's occupation, £35, jerseybunkertours.com

Explore Gorey Castle

Overlooking the fishing village of Gorey, Mont Orgueil Castle was built to guard the island's east coast and has stood for more than 800 years. Climb up to the battlements to take in views of the French coast, before enjoying fresh Jersey oysters at Sumas in Gorey village, jerseyheritage.org, sumasrestaurant.com

Hike the north coast

The island is a dream for hikers. The north coast is home to the

The turquoise water in the secluded Beauport Bay on Jersey's south-west coast
ALAN LAGADO/GETTY

most scenic routes, where paths are bordered by heather and bracken, beaches conceal caves and waterfalls, and wildlife includes puffins, peregrine falcons and Manx Loaghtan sheep.

The stretch from Rozel to Greve de Lecq is around 12 miles long and will take you most of the day, jersey.com/inspire-me/itineraries/north-coast-jersey-walks

Local's tip: Jersey Walk Adventures offers a host of tours from bioluminescence beach walks to sea foraging and oyster excursions, jerseywalkadventures.co.uk

The Battle of Flowers

What began in 1902 as a one-off celebration to mark the coronation of Edward VII has since grown to become one of the largest floral carnivals in Europe.

The battle involves dozens of flowered floats, dancers and entertainers parading through the streets to music on 11 and 12 August. **From £19, battleofflowers.com**

Cruise to the Écréhous

Jump on a RIB boat and zoom off to the Écréhous – a small group of islands six miles offshore. On a cruise around the reef, passengers will spot birds, Atlantic grey seals and, if lucky, bottlenose dolphins. There's also the chance to take a picnic to eat on the islands, as well as a spot of swimming before heading back. **From £36.99, jerseyseafaris.com/lecrehous**

Wine tasting at Le Mare vineyards

As Jersey's only wine estate, Le Mare, in the parish of St Mary, comprises historic buildings, beautiful gardens and extensive vineyards and orchards. Take a tour to view the winery in action as well as the chocolate kitchen, where you can see how traditional Jersey black butter (a blend of harvested apples, cider, sugar, spices, liquorice and lemons) is made. Guests are invited to taste estate-made products, from wines to apple brandy cream liquor. **From £14.99, lamarevineestate.com**



Local ales at the Cock & Bottle

A local favourite, The Cock & Bottle is in the heart of St Helier in the royal square. Bringing together Jersey's Franco-British identity, its menu uses local produce and incorporates classic French dishes, such as croque monsieur and coq au vin, alongside pub favourites, while the drinks list contains many island-brewed tipples, including the award-winning Liberation ale and Longboard lager, liberationgroup.com/cock-and-bottle