Summer Guide

Our Staycation Summer Guide to the best DONATE™ spots around the UK to visit this summer, socially distanced of course!
The pandemic means that many of us will be spending our summer holidays in the UK, but the good news is that as lockdown begins to lift, UK national treasures are starting to open up for business. From museums to mountains, this Staycation Summer Guide from digital fundraising platform, DONATE™, compiles the best UK spots to visit this summer, socially distanced of course!

The scenic Ben Lawers mountain sits at 1,214m and is the 10th highest Munro. The central highlands venue is family friendly, packed with local wildlife and the best collection of rare mountain plants in the country. This beautiful spot is perfect for picnics and dog walks - although all dogs must be kept under proper control due to livestock on the hill.

Another must visit location North of the border is the breathtaking St Abb’s Head Nature Reserve on the borders. The cliff-top oasis has rugged coastal scenery aplenty and is locally known as ‘seabird city’ due to its vast numbers of seaboard colonies. The independent Old Smiddy Coffee Shop is next to the reserve and is expected to open as soon as safe to do so. Please check their website for latest details.

The Hermitage in Perthshire houses giant Douglas firs and leads visitors to the thunderous Black Linn falls where the River Braan crashes down the steep waterfall. Overlooking the waterfall is the picturesque Ossian’s Hall which was built in 1757 and compliments the local landscape perfectly. This venue lacks toilet facilities.

Speaking about the reopening of venues, National Trust Scotland chairman Sir Mark Jones said “We have been hard at work preparing to open up dozens more of our beautiful places. We’ve redesigned the visitor routes at some places and, of course, we are closely following all the advice on safety and hygiene measures, so that everyone can enjoy their trip to the Trust.

As we all adapt to the ‘new normal’ there have been some changes on the ground at properties, and we are really looking forward to welcoming our visitors back and we hope that this helps us all emerge back into the light, after being confined for so long.”

This guide has been produced in partnership with the following organisations:

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£3 a day.

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Another iconic must-visit is **Abbotsford**, the home of Sir Walter Scott. One of the most famous houses in the world, the house and stunning gardens are just an hour away from Edinburgh. At present, the house remains closed, however it will be open at the first opportunity. The creative and beautiful gardens though are open for exploration. The cafe, shop and gardens with picnic tables on the meadow. Well-behaved dogs are always welcome, with leads required in the walled garden.

All three venues are cared for by the **National Trust for Scotland** which protects some of Scotland’s most significant places and spaces, such as Crathes Castle in Aberdeenshire, Inverewe Garden in Wester Ross, Mar Lodge Estate in Braemar and Culzean Castle in Ayrshire. The charity celebrates Scotland’s heritage and relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

It is also appealing for donations as part of its Save Our Scotland campaign, which will see donations support vital conservation work and make up for lost donations due to the crisis.

**Snowdon** is the highest mountain in Wales at 3,560ft. The venue is extremely popular with visitors as it offers various walking paths and an exhilarating walk.

The summit cafe is closed for the rest of the year so picnics are recommended. Parking at the national park is in designated areas across the 6 car parks.

**Anglesey** in North Wales is the perfect beach escape with 125 miles of stunning coastline to enjoy. The North Wales hotspot has a number of blue flag beaches and coastal paths with many local businesses now open for food, drink and souvenirs. Beautiful beaches include Red Wharf Bay and Church Bay, where rockpools are in abundance.

For those further south, **Pembrokeshire** has the sea on three sides and is known for its iconic and wild landscape. With over 50 beaches, 186 miles of coastal walks and plenty of towns and villages for you to explore, there is something for everyone. Like Anglesey, restaurants, shops and cafes are re-opening for the summer.

Family favourites include the beautiful Coppet Hall beach and Goodwick Sands. There are disabled toilets and a cafe on-site at both locations.
Packed full of surprises whether that be the busy capital city, the countryside or down on the coast. Slightly outside of the capital, sit some great little spots.

The historic and iconic Wimbledon Windmill sits in the iconic South London town right on the common. The distinctive landmark was built in 1817 to serve the community before being converted to a museum in 1976, where it now attracts visitors from across the country. The large on-site cafe is also due to re-open in July with social distancing rules in place.

Vauxhall City Farm is a piece of the countryside in the heart of London. The friendly farm is the perfect day out for all the family, with animals and gardens to keep everyone entertained. Opening in early August, this venue is reliant on donations to keep it going and able to offer its programmes to the local and wider communities. The cafe is due to re-open shortly. Please note that this venue isn’t dog friendly, except for Guide Dogs.

Jeskynts Community Woodland in Kent is home to 360 acres of newly planted woodlands, meadows and orchards. Packed with walking trails, a dog activity trail and a Fairy and Elf Village, there is something for everyone. A great place to sit back and relax with the family, the woodland offers cafe facilities.

Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest is a wonderful world of trees. An award winning visitor attraction, home to a world-leading collection of conifers - the ideal spot for dog walks. The also has miles of cycle, running and walking trails and the cafe is open for takeaways.

For those in the Surrey and Hampshire areas, Alice Holt Forest is the place to head to explore beautiful woodland settings. The ideal location for family bike rides, with the cafe also open for takeaway so you can enjoy a relaxing lunch in the great outdoors.

The Etches Collection Museum of Jurassic Marine Life, sits in Kimmeridge on Dorset’s spectacular Jurassic Coast and houses a unique collection of significant marine fossils dating back 150 million years. The museum itself overlooks the sea, so you can gaze in wonder as prehistoric creatures swim overhead in the virtual Jurassic Aquarium, join in with the exciting themed activities and use augmented reality to see what the Jurassic seas were really like!

Rachael Harris at the Etches Collection said “The team at The Etches Collection can’t wait to open our doors again and welcome visitors to our spectacular fossil museum on the Jurassic Coast”.

“We will have new fossil exhibits, interactive apps and a spectacular art exhibition throughout the summer by our artist in residence Caz Scott.”

A small range of refreshments available from the on-site shop and plenty of gorgeous countryside and beaches for picnics. Dogs can be happily tied outside where they’ll have fresh water until you’re done exploring.

All tickets are also annual passes and cost as follows: Adult £8, Child (5-16) £4, Child (0-5) are FREE. Families tickets with 2 adults & 2 children for £20 or 1 adult & 3 children for £16.
Another lovely spot in the South West is Beechenhurst, set in the Forest of Dean, one of Britain’s oldest and largest woodlands. Enjoy the sculpture trail and endless trails that take you deep into the forest. The cafe is open for takeaways. For an incredible 3,500 acres of woodland just 15 minutes from Exeter lies Haldon Forest Park. Whether you’re after a quiet family stroll or an exhilarating mountain biking experience, there’s something for everyone. When there, don’t forget to check out the range of walking and cycling trails as well as the orienteering courses! The cafe is open for takeaway.

The National Arboretum in Westonbirt, Gloucestershire is a truly magical tree garden where you can explore trees from all over the world. Home to 2,500 different species and five national tree collections, idyllic for nature lovers of all ages. You can even head up to the canopy and walk over the Tree Top Walkway! The cafe is open for takeaways, however this spot isn’t one for dogs.

The only true mountain forest in England, Whinlatter, is home to stunning views, fantastic walks, exhilarating mountain biking and rare wildlife. Set in the iconic Lake District, a World Heritage Site, with unrivalled views across Bassenthwaite Lake, Derwentwater and Keswick.

Grizedale Forest is also in the heart of the Lake District, is packed with endless forest trails and unique sculptures by leading names in contemporary art are dotted throughout the forest. The cafe offering takeaway only.

From iconic cities to the Lake District. From Liverpool which is the second largest port in Britain, to Blackpool illuminations, there’s something for everyone.
Boasting some of the most iconic views in the country, particularly along the North Sea coastline. The region also plays host to the historic Hadrian’s Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a must-visit for all the family, especially for those studying our Roman history.

An area packed with history and magnificent views. From historic cathedral cities such as York and Ripon to the moors and coastline towns of Scarborough and Whitby, Yorkshire provides fresh air and vistas for those wanting to get away from day to day life.

Kielder Water and Forest Park in Northumberland is England’s largest forest. The unique Lakeside Way is a 26 mile path around the lake that leads to the beautiful Kielder Castle. It’s the perfect spot for bikers as it has one of England’s largest mountain bike trail networks. The spot is also home to Northumberland’s only breeding Osprey population. A great family location.

North of Birmingham, Cannock Chase Forest has a range of woodland walks to suit all ages and abilities, and for those wanting to explore the forest on two wheels, here you will find some of the best family and mountain biking opportunities in the Midlands. You can hire a bike from the cycle centre and lunch at the café.

Sherwood Forest, made famous by Robin Hood and his band of merry men, is filled with activity routes, wild running and mountain bike trails, which makes for a fantastic trip for all the family.

North of Corby sits Fineshade Wood, a picturesque woodland perfect for exploring. Take a walk through the woodland, or head over to the family cycling trail or even explore on horseback. Parking charges also apply to horseboxes.

Packed full of woodland adventures, from historic forests to rugged hills. Industry has played a big role in the landscape, with its cities being the birthplace of bicycles and the home of the ceramics and lace industries.

Nestled on the southern slopes of the beautiful North York Moors National Park, Dolby Forest has something for everyone. Glacial valleys to the south create a unique ‘rigg and dale’ landscape, while the north of the forest sits on an upland plateau. The landscape offers a variety of different trails - whether you are looking for an easy access stroll, a challenging bike ride or an active run all amongst breath-taking scenery.
This year, *The CBA Festival of Archaeology* is offering hundreds of opportunities to get involved in archaeology across the UK in two parts. This month, the digital festival looked at various online sessions and workshops with varying topics, from Life in Roman Leicester to Stonehenge 3019 - Climate Past and Future. Many of the virtual sessions are available on YouTube and will keep the whole family engaged and learning. In the second half of the festival, later in the year, there will be site visits and tours in person. To find out more about the digital festival, visit the [festival website](#) to find the perfect event for your family.

**High Lodge** in Thetford is known for its beautiful trails which wind through rich woodland. With amazing mountain bike trails, the venue also hosts a new Heritage Trail which is a perfect family stroll. The café is open for takeaways.

Known for its open countryside views and agricultural significance. It also offers visitors some lovely coastal spots as well as woodland walks.

For those who are unable to travel this Summer then there are many great opportunities to explore from the comfort of your own home.

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£12.50 a day

Picnic

PARKING

9am - 7pm

Friendly

9am - 7pm

Picnic

Friendly