

6 top reasons to visit Sussex in 2026

1. Celebrations

Three major anniversaries are making 2026 a year of celebration in Sussex!

Winnie the Pooh is 100 – Visit the home of the [100 Acre Wood](#) and the inspiration for the famous AA Milne characters, with dedicated anniversary trails, pop up exhibitions and the obligatory game of pooh sticks.

The Year of the Normans – See the 1000-year-old historical landmarks of the 1066 [Battle of Hastings](#) and [Pevensey](#) in Sussex, where on 28th September 1066, William the Conqueror arrived on British soil.

America 250 – Uncover the history that links the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence to Sussex. Discover a copy of the Declaration of Independence, on public display for the first time in [Chichester](#) and visit [Bull House in Lewes](#), the home of Thomas Paine, a key influence in writing of the American constitution

2. Calmcations

With a slower pace of life defined by its calming combination of countryside and coast, Sussex is a place where nature and tranquillity take centre stage.

Wellness - [Crafted at Powdermills](#), near Battle – this newly opened hotel sits around a seven-acre lake with 78 acres of private ancient woodlands. There's a focus on wellness perfect for a calm escape. Or try the new British Vinotherapy treatments at the luxurious [South Lodge Spa](#).

Stargazing - [Birling Gap](#) is a designated Dark Skies Discovery Site, where stargazing in the quiet winter months is the perfect way to escape from it all, or join a guided walk with [Pied a Terre](#) adventures.

Go off grid – [Woodfire camping](#) host regular supper clubs under the stars or [Knepp Wildland](#) campsite comes complete with wild-swimming lake. For luxury cabin getaways, stay at the newly opened [Nestled](#) lodges in stunning rural locations.

Connect with nature – discover a [Sussex Dolphin project](#) boat tour, walk with [Alpacas](#), hug a Highland Cow at [Cattlestone Farm retreat](#) or howl at the [Watermill Wolves](#) experience.

3. Sussex in bloom

10 blooming good reasons to visit Sussex, with award winning gardens, galleries and floral displays all year round.

Spring

[Arundel Castle tulips](#) – (April-May) - The festival is regarded as one of the top tulip displays in Europe and is set against the breath-taking backdrop of the Castle. In East Sussex, [Pashley Manor's](#) spectacular Tulip Festival sees this garden carpeted with over 40, 000 tulips,

[Chichester Cathedral Flower Festival](#) - from 3 – 6 June, more than 50,000 blooms will transform the Cathedral in a spectacular four-day celebration for its 30th anniversary.

Summer

[Wakehurst](#) – Henry Moore and more (5 June-27 September) - sculpture meets the beauty of the natural world with four of Henry Moore's iconic sculptures, alongside bold new commissions.

[Borde Hill](#) (June) - celebrating 30 years of Jay Robin's Rose Garden, a spectacular 'garden room' created by RHS Gold Medal-winning designer Robin Williams, with bookable experiences.

[Great Dixter](#) (open March-November) - A vibrant, daring, and immersive garden with a 15th century house. At [Sussex Prairies Wild](#) (August) there are very exciting developments underway as the 32-acre site will be rewilded with a focus on wildflowers and pollinators.

Autumn

[Leonardslee Lakes and Gardens](#) (open all year) – from Spring Azaleas to fiery Autumn colour, a Dolls' House exhibition, to a sell-out winter light trail. Or join a Sparkling Wine Tasting Masterclass like no other in [Leonardslee House](#).

Galleries and Gardens

[Charleston in Firle](#) – Designed as a living painting and filled with sculpture at the modernist home and studio of the painters Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. In Summer, join gardeners and growers, artists and activists, designers and thinkers for the Festival of the Garden.

[Goodwood Art Foundation](#) – A new destination for contemporary art in the UK featuring the work of internationally acclaimed artists set amid a 70-acre landscape of woodland glades and wildflower meadows, by landscape designer Dan Pearson.

4. Culture

Sussex is alive with culture in 2026. From world-class performances and inspiring art trails to historic houses and vibrant festivals. Whether you're drawn to theatre, music, or contemporary creativity, Sussex promises a year of discovery.

[The BFG at Chichester Festival Theatre](#) (16 March-12 April)- book now for the world premiere presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Roald Dahl Story Company. This magical new adaptation by **Tom Wells** will open the Festival 2026 season.

[Glyndebourne](#) (21 May – 30 August) – a flagship summer programme of world class opera in Sussex. Enjoy a performance in the indoor auditorium, and picnic in the gardens during the 90-minute interval.

[Sussex Craft Week](#) (20-28 June 2026) – now in its second year, over 100 makers across 40 venues in Sussex host a series of events and workshops celebrating local craftsmanship.

Explore the [Coastal Culture trail](#) – linked by an 18-mile section of Coastal path from Hastings to Bexhill, this corner of East Sussex is a hotspot for art and culture; Towner Eastbourne, De La Warr Pavilion and Hastings Contemporary.

Bluebell Railway (open all year) – Catch a steam train from Horsted Keynes station, famous as Downton station in Downton Abbey. Experiences include Golden Arrow dining, Sunset observation rides and the popular SteamLights Christmas celebration.

5. Coast

Sussex's coastline offers fresh experiences in 2026. Whether you're seeking adventure on the water, a scenic walk, or simply a spot to unwind by the sea, you'll find it in Sussex. The area stretching from **Worthing** to Newhaven and **Seaford** to the South Downs National Park, is designated as a UNESCO **Living Coast** Biosphere, covering 700Km² of rare and unique landscapes.

Littlehampton & Bognor Regis – neighbouring Victorian seaside towns are undergoing a modern glow up. Get active at Littlehampton's brand-new seafront activity area complete with splash park, take a seat at the UK's longest bench or watch Kitesurfing Championships at The Beach Watersports centre. In Bognor Regis, a new **Nordic sauna** has launched on the promenade, next to **Butlin's** resort which is celebrating its 90th birthday.

Newhaven – this coastal town is becoming a destination for culture. Discover local art exhibitions at **BN9 Studios** or the Look Again mural festival. Explore hidden tunnels at **Newhaven Fort**, reopened after a £7.5m restoration in 2025. DFDS operate daily crossings to Dieppe, where keen cyclists can connect to the Avenue Verte from Paris to London.

KIICP England Coast Path – Opened fully at the end of 2025, walk 140 miles of Sussex coastline along the England's Coast Path. Linking Chichester Harbour in the West to Rye Harbour in the East, there is plenty to explore in 2026!

6. World-famous Food & Drink

Sussex is a food and wine lover's dream. From award-winning vineyards to innovative dining and artisan producers, the region celebrates flavour at every turn.

Sussex Winelands is a region that is home quarter of the UK's vineyards, including two of the Forbes World's 50 best wineries – **Wiston Estate** and **Sugrue South Downs**, the latter opened their doors for wine tours in 2025. Explore the new **Rother Wine triangle** with organic wineries at its heart or for something different, take a dip in the wild swimming lake at the Secret Vineyard on the **Wealden wine trail**.

Sussex has two celebrated **Michelin Star** restaurants; **Gravetye Manor** (One star), a luxury hotel in the stunning Mid Sussex countryside and **Restaurant Interlude** (One star) set within the beautiful Leonardslee Lakes and Gardens, both showcasing local produce and seasonal flavours.

Experience **famous Sussex produce** – try a *bee-keeping* experience with **South Downs Honey**, taste local beef and cider at **Trenchmore farm** or have a go cheese-making at **High weald Dairy**. For rock-star credentials, sip craft beers at the taproom at **Lakedown Brewery**, set on Actor and Rock Legend, Roger Daltrey's East Sussex family farm and fishery.

Resources

How to get to Sussex

Sussex is well connected to London by rail and road in just over 1 Hour or fly into Sussex from London Gatwick Airport. DFDS operate daily ferry crossings to Newhaven from Dieppe for connections to Europe.

For more inspiration and to plan a trip visit **[experiencesussex.com](https://www.experiencesussex.com)**

Access and download images from the Media Library [here](#).