

WELCOME

BY SARA, FROM ROME

US EUROPEANS KNOW CULTURE. We're famous for it. Whether it's art, music or theatre, we have passionate people creating things for all to enjoy on every street corner. From the Louvre of Paris to the Berghain nightclub of Berlin we have iconic venues to enjoy dotted all over.

For this humble Italian though, there is only one place I go to enjoy the best of culture in the summer months. The UK.

Of course, I would never talk down the duomo's of Italy, the food of Portugal, the dancers of Spain. But when it comes to a good time on holiday, I would take the joy of beautiful, rainbow-painted beach huts, or the camaraderie of a village Morris dancing show, over the stuffiness of the opera and other high-end cultural experiences.

Although, if that's your thing, the UK has more than enough of those for you to enjoy too!

Because Britain is the land of tea and Tolkien...the Beatles and Bridgerton... galleries and gardens...

Its cultural scene is filled with confidence and contradictions. And so has something for everyone. With this guide, I will show you! ■

REGIONAL HIDDEN GEMS



THE REGIONS IS WHERE THE British really shine. No, really.

London has an air of romance that I as an Italian love. There is style, there is fashion, and many finer things to enjoy.

Britain's great Northern cities too have plenty of things that are worth leaving home for. From sites where the Beatles wrote genre-breaking music, to world-class museums preserving anything you can imagine.

But these places are only one part of the cultural life that is on offer for the intrepid holidayer to explore.

When I first holidayed in this

dear land many years ago – from my conversations with the locals you'd be forgiven for thinking that this is all the art and culture that you had on offer. That I could see everything the UK had to offer simply by popping across to a few iconic spaces.

This was before I realised that the very best of UK art and culture isn't on show in photographs of the country's great skylines, or what I had seen from the countless sitcoms and TV shows I had seen set there.

At first of course I was a little put out by this revelation. It came about after I wandered into a quaint little

gallery on the coast and saw art that made me weep. I thought that you had been keeping it from us Europeans! A little secret for only you true blue Brits to enjoy.

Over time, and over many wonderful discussions with the people who reside on these shores, I came to realise that your British propensity for self-deprecating humour, that you had hidden these wonderful things even from yourselves.

There are so many wonderful and unexpected attractions hidden across the UK. I can't wait to share with you my favourites. *Belissimo!*

BATH AND THE SOUTH-WEST

Bath is a city that has been home to the crème de la crème of Art and Culture for centuries. Hailing from Italy – perhaps it was even some of my very own ancestors who helped build some of its high points – like the Roman Baths.

Culture didn't leave the city with the exodus of the Romans though, and the city has been home to many stunning forward-thinking people and movements ever since.

One of my favourites being Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein – an independent museum that teaches the history of Mary Shelley writing her famed creation in Bath in a fun way. It's spooktacular good fun!

Check out the fun at:

House of Frankenstein, Bath

houseoffrankenstein.com

If romance is more your thing, then there is always the Jane Austen Centre, a museum dedicated to telling the story of Bath's most famous storyteller.

Check out the fun at:

The Jane Austen Centre, Bath

janeausten.co.uk

It seems like the city has inspired creatives ever since, as it's not just been home to literary heroes. The streaming-smash *Bridgerton* was filmed in several locations in Bath, too. Try your luck finding a love match on a guided walking tour around Bath's stunning Georgian landmarks, including the Holbourne Museum and the Royal Crescent.

Check out the fun at:

The Bridgerton Experience Walking Tour, Bath

bathwalkingtours.co.uk





BRIGHTON

Brighton is a place filled with thrills and spills, but the best aren't the ones with the brightest lights and longest queues.

There are some quieter cultural experiences to be had away from the bustle of the pier. Like the Brighton Toy and Model Museum, which brings together a collection of iconic UK toys which have shaped culture here in the UK, across Europe and the world.

Check out the fun at:
Brighton Toy and Model Museum
brightontoymuseum.co.uk

There are even more blink and you'll miss it examples of brilliant culture in Brighton – like this incredible miniature gallery which is found in a re-imagined phone box in Powis Square. It's called the 'Dog and Bone' gallery, and it features a revolving collection of artworks – so there will be something different each and every time you visit.

Check out the fun at:
Streets Across the City, Brighton
 Instagram: [dogandbonegallery](https://www.instagram.com/dogandbonegallery)



CORNWALL

Cornwall isn't all ice cream and beaches. There's a whole host of other outdoor activities to check out. Like one of the only Tate galleries outside of London. Did I mention it's open air?

As an Italian I adore the sunshine, so feel there's nothing better than soaking up some rays as I soak up some culture.

Check out the fun at:
Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden, Cornwall
tate.org.uk/visit/tate-st-ives/barbara-hepworth-museum-and-sculpture-garden

There's more than one place to enjoy sun and culture in Cornwall. And even though people have gotten so used to hearing about the futuristic advancements of the area's Eden Project, if you take the time to see it in person you will feel the magic of a truly special place.

Check out the fun at:
The Eden Project, Cornwall
edenproject.com



EDINBURGH

Edinburgh is truly a magical place. And we mean that in more ways than one. The city is steeped in sights that are a must see for any fan of J.K Rowling's famous wizard.

The best way of experiencing all of this is to take a Potter Tour. There's a brilliant company which bears the same name offering a selection of both public and private tours which are both well worth taking the time to check out.

Join in the fun at:
The Royal McGregor, Edinburgh
pottertrail.com

There's also the hauntingly beautiful graveyard which inspired so many of the characters in the book – worth checking out if you don't have time for the full potter tour.

See the sights at:
Greyfriars Kirkyard, Edinburgh
greyfriarskirk.com/visit/kirkyard



LIVERPOOL

The people of Liverpool are a hardy lot. But don't let that fool you. They are just as equally sensitive – and are home to some truly brilliant Morris Dancers.

That's right, Morris Dancers. You may have seen pictures – but trust me it is sublime in person. And as I'm into fashion like many of my Italian countrymen, I have to say that I love their looks. It's bold, unique and it's not found anywhere else in the world.

Check out the fun at:
A selection of dates throughout the year, in Merseyside, Liverpool
www.merseymorrismen.com

It's always been a place filled with music. The Beatles don't need any introduction do they? And while Brits might not realise it, there is something special about popping into the club that gave birth to their legacy. Check out the Cavern Club, home of a rock and roll revolution.

Check out the fun at:
Cavern Club, Liverpool
www.cavernclub.com

LONDON

Every street in this city seems to uncover another hidden gem of art and culture. So, my advice would be to get on those walking boots and get exploring.

One place that you simply must check out though is Little Venice. A stunning community of houseboats that seemingly has more in common with the city from my home country than it does with those in the UK!

Check out the fun at:

Warwick Avenue London

Underground Station, London

[wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Venice](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Venice)

After walking through the quiet glamour of Little Venice, a little shopping will likely be in order.

Where better in the world than Camden Lock Market? It's collection of quirky oddities and hyper specialised stores has to be seen to be believed. And even if you don't purchase – it's the ultimate window-shopping experience.

Join in the fun at:

Camden Lock Market, London

[camdenmarket.com](https://www.camdenmarket.com)

There is also a whole load of art to be enjoyed simply by walking

through the city – the architecture has countless sculptures to see, bridges that would be at home in any art gallery, and quirky-skyscrapers that look like outsized versions of the latest Tate Collection.

One piece of public art that is not to be missed is The Painted Hall. It's a fresco within the UNESCO listed Old Royal Naval College that rivals any of those from the great Leonardo Da Vinci.

Join in the fun at:

The Royal Naval College,

Greenwich, London

[ornc.org](https://www.ornc.org)



MANCHESTER

Manchester is so much more than football, even if it is home to many world-renowned places important to the sport.

That's why I'm not going to recommend anything related to the beautiful game in this guide. Plus, I know I don't need to tell you Brits anything about football.

Instead, I'll share some things to do which were like stepping into another world right in the heart of Manchester. Like 'The Chinese Garden'.

A beautifully tranquil green space modelled on classic Chinese

gardens that can be found in the heart of the city.

Check out the fun at:

RHS Garden, Bridgewater

[rhs.org.uk/gardens/bridgewater/articles/visiting-the-garden](https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/bridgewater/articles/visiting-the-garden)

For the best indoor art and culture, check out John Ryland's Library.

When you step inside, you would be forgiven for thinking that you had stepped into the court of King Arthur or a great cathedral, with its grand Neo-gothic stone work.

Check out the fun at:

John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester, Manchester

[library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands](https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands)

While you're walking to and from the various delights the city has to offer, keep your eyes peeled for 'Anacoats Peepholes'. They're micro art installations found all across the city that will give you a little window into the city's industrial past

Check out the fun at:

Anacoats Area, Manchester

[ancoatspeeps.com](https://www.ancoatspeeps.com)



NEWCASTLE

The British national story is tied to India in so many ways – and has led to the creation of some unmissable cultural curiosities. You Brits tend to think that the curries created on these shores are ‘just a curry’ – but to us traveling Europeans they are a both a window into history, and a taste of what the future of this nation holds. You really should celebrate them a bit more.

The best place to do exactly that is by taking the passage to India. A unique ‘Raj Style’ train service that escorts you to The Valley in Corbridge, a stunning restaurant serving modern British Indian food.

Check out the fun at

Passage to India, Newcastle

valleyrestaurants.co.uk/passagetoindia.php

The UK is known for royalty, and although some of you Brits can roll your eyes at the enthusiasm, you must recognise that for those that don't encounter it daily it really is a fabulously fun spectacle.

I mean, in which other country can I enjoy a pint in a pub once frequented by King Charles I... and which is now supposed to be haunted?

Check out the fun at

Old George Inn, Newcastle

craft-pubs.co.uk/oldgeorgeinnnewcastle



There are also sights that I know British locals wouldn't have seen. Because they're right there in front of them every single day.

One of the best is Grey's Monument in Newcastle. It's stunning on the outside, crafted by the man behind Nelson's column in Trafalgar square, and marks the top end of one of the North East's prettiest streets, Grainger Street, but very few know that you can climb inside.

It's by appointment only, but is well worth making time to climb the 164 steps to see unrivalled views of the historical city.

It also celebrates the famous Earl Grey, who gave his name to the eponymous tea.

Check out the fun at:

Grey's Monument Tours, Newcastle

newcastlethead.com/events/greys-monument-tours



YORKSHIRE

Yorkshire is a place of such stunning beauty that I've noticed Brits tend to take it for granted. A walk in the open air, I hear them say. What's so special about that?!

Well, Janet's Foss and Gordale Scar, Malham answers that question. And is sure to delight even the most sceptical. This place is home to a unique aspect of UK culture – tales of fairies and woodland magic. It's actually named after Janet, who was said to be Queen of the Fairies. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows was filmed in the area too. So, one trip gives you a double hit of culture.

Check out the fun at

Malham Cove, Malham, Yorkshire

daleswalks.co.uk/walks/janets_foss_from_malham



This part of the UK is also home to some original open air art galleries, including Yorkshire Sculpture Park, displaying the very best of modern and contemporary sculptures. Or for something quirkier, you could try a walk around one of the most famous landmarks in North Yorkshire, the Kilburn White Horse, a giant chalk figure on a hillside dating back to 1857.

Check out the fun at:

White Horse Walk, Yorkshire

northyorkmoors.org.uk/visiting/enjoy-outdoors/walking/our-walks/walking-routes/white-horse-walk

There are also some cultural delights that aren't quite on show in Yorkshire – and which truly embody the meaning of 'hidden gem'. The best of these is the Forbidden Corner, hidden away in the Yorkshire Dales.

It's a labyrinth collection of tunnels which stretch far underground, follies tucked away in foliage above ground, and even a pyramid of translucent glass. It is very weird. Very British. And very, very good.

The locals seem to be immune to its charm as it's so nearby – but is an incredible experience if you take the time to really see its sights.

Check out the fun at:

The Forbidden Corner, Tugill Park, Yorkshire

theforbidencorner.co.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND - THE REAL GAME OF THRONES TOUR

WITH GAME OF THRONES HAVING ended, this summer is the perfect time to visit the sites where it was filmed, and reminiscing about your favourite scenes. Here are some of my favourites:

COUNTY ANTRIM AND COUNTY DERRY/LONDONDERRY



1. Cushendun Caves, County Antrim

The scene in which the magical Melisandre gave birth to a shadow baby was filmed here. It's less spooky without her there though, so is well worth a visit.

Explore at: guide-ireland.com/tourist-attractions/cushendun-caves



2. Ballintoy Harbour, County Antrim

The picturesque harbour has been used as a location for the Iron Islands and exterior Greyjoy Kingdom of Pyke shots. It is featured in the scene in which Theon Greyjoy arrives back in the Iron Islands and meets his sister Yara.

Explore at: discovernorthernireland.com

COUNTY DOWN



3. Castle Ward, Down Patrick

This gorgeous Georgian farmyard was the backdrop for many of the scenes that took place in Winterfell. Including the battle with Baelor, key scenes at Robb Stark's camp, and Brienne's confrontation with Stark men.

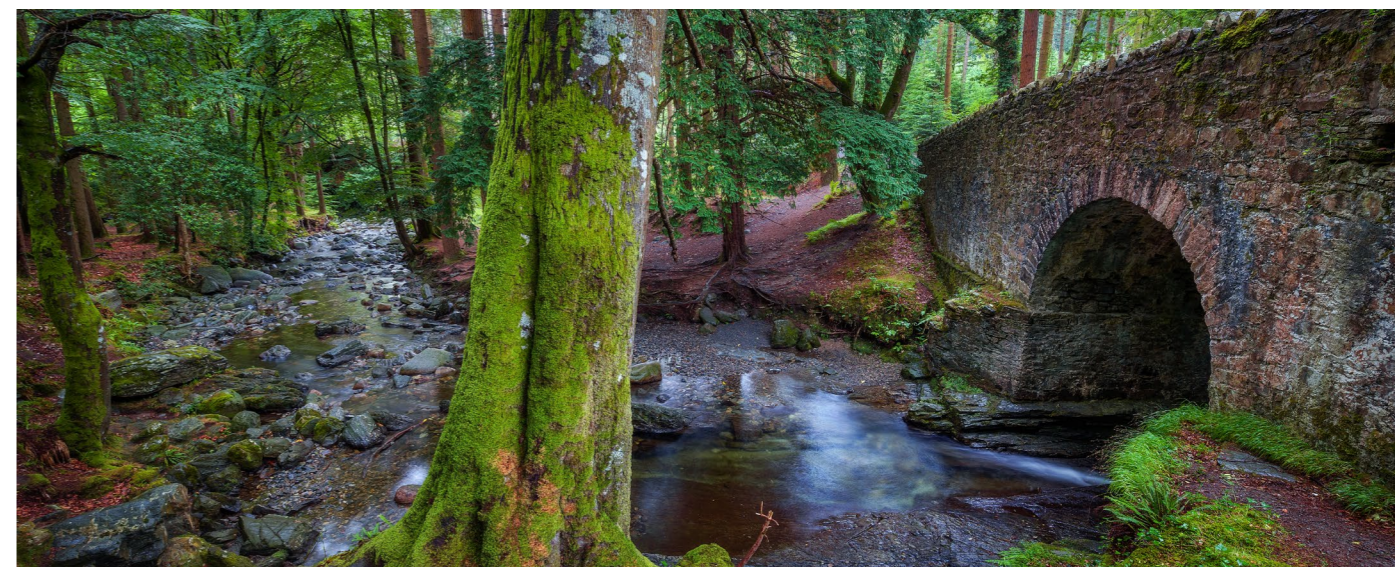
Explore at: nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-ward



4. Inch Abbey, Down Patrick

The nail-biting moments where Robb Stark was waiting to cross the Trident were shot at this medieval building – alongside a variety of other moments that took place in the 'Riverlands'

Explore at: nationalchurchestrust.org



5. Tollymore Forest Park, County Down

Tollymore has been a big part of Game of Thrones since day one. Literally! This beautiful space featured in the very first episode when Ned Stark finds direwolf puppies that became important to the series overall.

Explore at: discovernorthernireland.com

THE BRIDGERTON TOUR

WITH SERIES TWO OF THE NETFLIX smash hit series Bridgerton having finished and series three just recently announced, many fans will be eager to see some of the locations where the series was filmed. Here are some of the most iconic. They're all top holiday spots that guarantee you'll also capture some enviable snaps for the gram.



1. Holburne Museum of Art, Bath

Takes on the role of Lady Danbury's now famous residence as well as several ballrooms scenes from the series

Where to stay: [Premier Inn Bath](#)



2. No.1 Bath Royal Crescent & Assembly Rooms

The Georgian Crescent features as the front of the Featherington's residence as well as countless other period dramas including Vanity Fair (2004) and The Duchess (2008). The Assembly Rooms appear in the drama for ballroom scenes.

Where to stay: [Premier Inn Bath](#)



3. Syon House, London

Prior to Bridgerton, this impressive house has appeared in countless films and television programmes including Gosford Park, Vanity Fair as well as the upcoming Belgravia. It features as the interiors in the Duke of Hastings' residence

Where to stay: [Premier Inn London Kew](#)



4. Badminton House, Gloucestershire

A stone's throw away from Prince Charles' Highgrove makes Badminton House a perfect location to take on the role of the interiors for a number of scenes including the Duke of Hastings, Lady Danbury and the Duke and Duchess' residences

Where to stay: [Premier Inn Bristol East \(Emersons Green\)](#)



5. Hatfield House, Herts

The location for Shakespeare in Love, The Favourite, Enola Holmes and the Featherington's Residence

Where to stay: [Premier Inn Hatfield](#)



6. Hampton Court Palace, London

Location for The Favourite, and also the fitting filming location Queen Charlotte's residence in Bridgerton

Where to stay: [Premier Inn Kingston upon Thames](#)



7. Ranger's House, London

Is the Wysteria covered home of the Bridgerton family and is actually an art museum in Greenwich

Where to stay: [Premier Inn London Lewisham](#)



8. Wilton House, Wiltshire

The location for scenes from the earlier series of the Crown and the latest adaptation of Emma (2020) as well as the location for the Duke of Hastings residence

Where to stay: [Premier Inn Salisbury South Milford](#)



9. Castle Howard, Yorkshire

The location for Brideshead Revisited (2008, 1981) and the location for the Duke and Duchesses fictional home Clevedon House

Where to stay: [Premier Inn York North West](#)



10. North Mymms Park, Herts

Was used to film several of the interior scenes in the Duke and Duchesses residence and is open to the public.

Where to stay: [Premier Inn South Mimms](#)

SARA'S RECOMMENDATIONS



THE CLASSIC AND ICONIC BRITISH attractions are still well worth checking out. The Brits paint a picture of them being sometimes 'naff' compared to their European counterparts. But I have travelled all across Europe, and a trip on the London eye rivals the views seen from the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

There is real beauty and fun to be experienced – and I've gathered a list of the best.

UNMISSABLE UK CLASSICS

1. **Stonehenge**
Wiltshire
2. **Big Ben**
London
3. **Windsor Castle**
Berkshire
4. **The West Highland Line**,
Scotland (Best Sight-Seeing by Rail)
5. **Dan yr Ogof National Showcaves of Wales**
Brecon Beacons

EASY DAYS OUT

Hey there day-tripper! Here's my list of the top ten things to do for free in the UK, and which make for the perfect day trip – as well as stops along a longer holiday.

1. **Tate Modern London.**
Nearest Premier Inn: London Southwark
2. **Science Museum, London**
Nearest Premier Inn: Kensington Earl's Court
3. **Peak District National Park**
Nearest Premier Inn: Matlock
4. **Natural History Museum, London.**
Nearest Premier Inn: Kensington Earl's Court
5. **Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham**
Nearest Premier Inn: Birmingham City Centre
6. **Royal Albert Dock, Liverpool**
Nearest Premier Inn: City Centre (Albert Dock)
7. **National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh.**
Nearest Premier Inn: Edinburgh City Centre
8. **Valley Gardens, Harrogate**
Nearest Premier Inn: Harrogate
9. **The Falkirk Wheel, Falkirk**
Nearest Premier Inn: Falkirk Central
10. **National Museum Cardiff, Cardiff.**
Nearest Premier Inn: Cardiff City Centre

OUR TOP PICKS

UNMISSABLE UK CLASSICS

1. **STONEHENGE**
Wiltshire
2. **BIG BEN**
London
3. **WINDSOR CASTLE**
Berkshire
4. **THE WEST HIGHLAND LINE**
Devon
5. **DAN YR OGOF NATIONAL SHOWCAVES OF WALES**
Brecon Beacons

EASY DAYS OUT

1. **TATE MODERN**
London
2. **SCIENCE MUSEUM**
London
3. **PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK**
Derbyshire
4. **NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM**
London
5. **BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY**
Birmingham
6. **ROYAL ALBERT DOCK**
Liverpool
7. **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND**
Edinburgh
8. **VALLEY GARDENS**
Harrogate
9. **THE FALKIRK WHEEL**
Falkirk
10. **NATIONAL MUSEUM CARDIFF**
Cardiff



ARRIVEDERCI!



AS I PROMISED, WE HAVE discovered so much of the UK is bellissimo.

There are cultural pursuits to enjoy whether you are in the mood for something fun, funny, or serious.

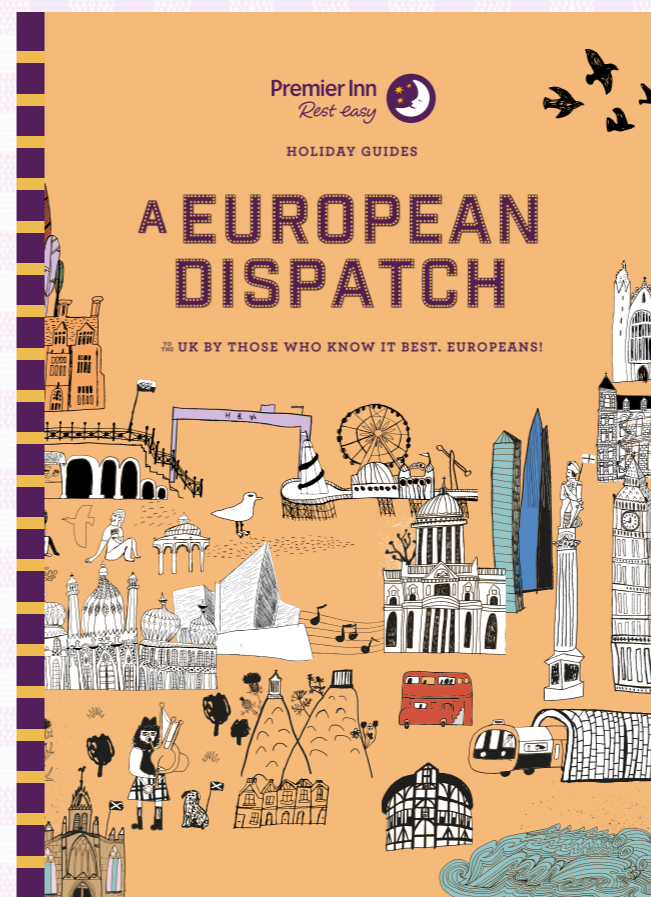
For adults and kids. Or even adults who are kids at heart.

For me, a summer in the UK gives me everything I could want. Beautiful things, and beautiful experiences.

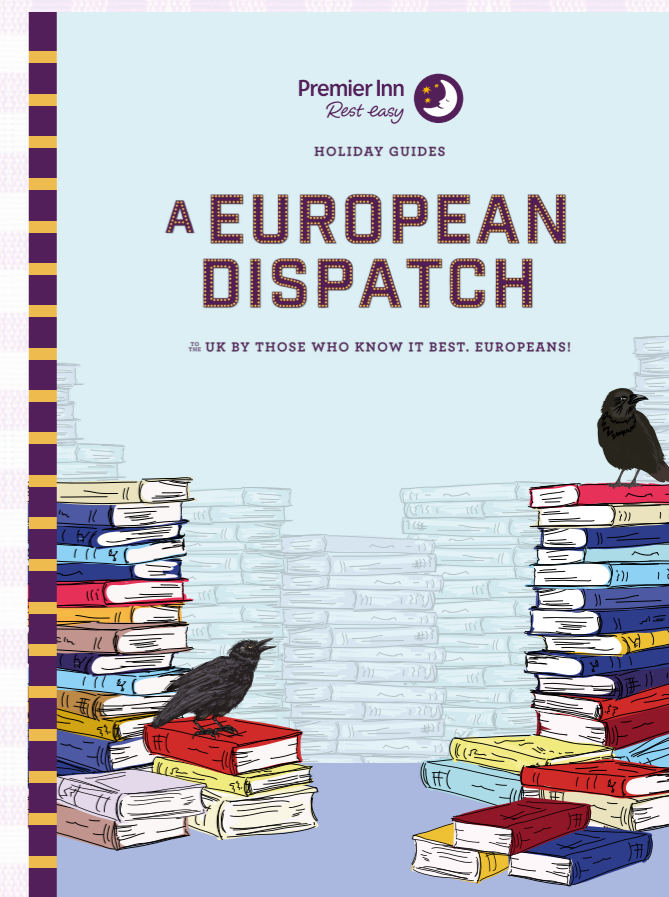
Simply put...there is wonder to discover in every corner, if you only have the courage to look.

Us Italians are not afraid of adventure – and so seek these things out.

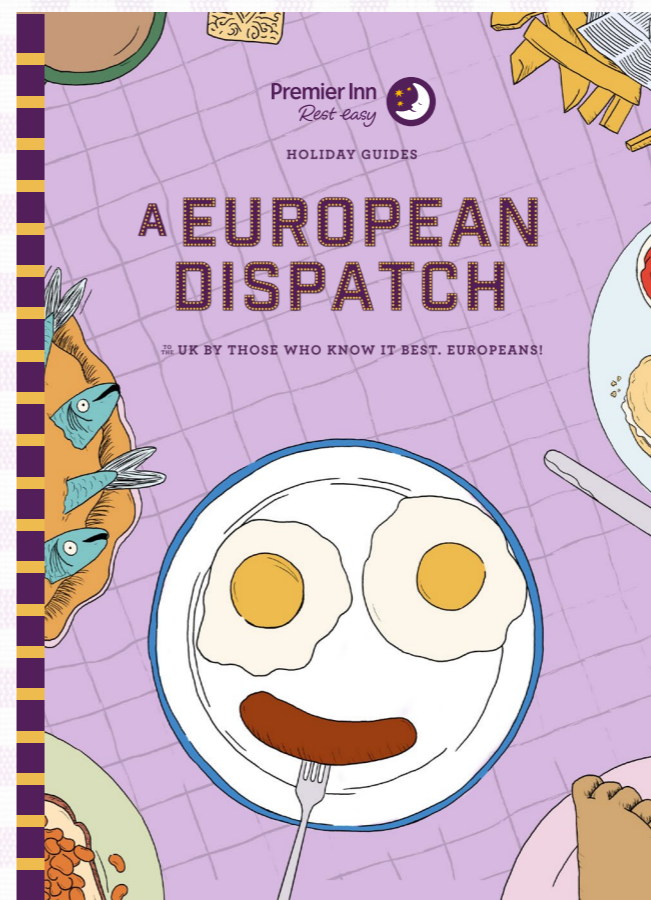
I hope dear reader, that after seeing what is on offer out there in the UK, that this summer you will choose to do the same. ■



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ON UK HISTORY



ON UK FOOD

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