

Where sea meets SOUL

Escape to Jersey, where the shoreline provides both serenity and solitude and conviviality and connections

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It's early morning and the sun is creating golden threads along the clouds as I brace myself to plunge into the cold water. The granite is cool and grainy beneath my bare feet and the sea laps at the stone below. Across the water I can make out the coast of France; just over 25km from where I'm standing on the edge of St Catherine's breakwater on Jersey's east coast. I think about what it might be like to swim across and imagine myself emerging from the sea on

to a French beach and ordering a coffee and a croissant. And then I take the plunge.

There's nothing more invigorating than an early morning swim. And in Jersey, the southernmost of Britain's Channel Islands, you could swim on a different beach every morning of your holiday and still not have swum in them all.

I don't like inching into cold water, which is one of the reasons I have chosen St Catherine's Bay so I can jump straight in, off the Victorian breakwater. The other reason is that

I can get out and go straight into the sauna to warm up. Yes, that's right, just a few feet up the beach on St Catherine's slip is a bijou wood-fired sauna on a trailer. I've booked the 8am communal session (these sessions are every hour, on the hour, from 8am to 5pm) so I can get to chat with the locals who make this blast of hot and cold therapy a regular part of their health regime, relishing the physical connection with the natural environment before they head off for a day in the office.

Although I grew up in Jersey and

have been coming back to the island for holidays every year since I left to go to university at 18, there are always some new tips to be learned from talking to locals, which is how I found out about this sauna in the first place.

During my 50-minute sweat session (interspersed with quick runs back to the sea to cool down) I'm told I have to sample a bottle of Stinky Bay IPA, made by two surfy hop-heads who limit their waste by sending their used grain to local dairy farmers to feed the famed Jersey cows; not buy new buckets and spades for my >

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GET TO KNOW... SUSTAINABLE JERSEY

Jersey is a natural playground that's open year-round for visitors to admire, not overwhelm. A nature-lover's island that's deeply connected to its environment, visitors to the island will find a wealth of low-carbon, planet-friendly initiatives to help you tread lightly.

FOOD & DRINK

Jersey is rightly proud of its local and seasonal produce – look for the Genuine Jersey Mark as a guarantee of local provenance. Faulkner Fisheries sells local seafood, Ganache is a B-Corp making 100% traceable chocolate and SCOOP is the sustainable cooperative that runs a farm shop and production kitchen. Meanwhile, the Channel Island Liquor Company uses zero plastic and donates a percentage of its profits to beach cleaning, and Stinky Bay Brewery ensures nothing goes to waste by upcycling its hops as fertiliser.

THINGS TO DO

Whether you choose to walk, cycle, kayak or go foraging, there are plenty of activities that have a low carbon footprint. And arrive by sustainable travel to Jersey Kayak Adventures and Jersey Walk Adventures and you'll get exclusive discounts.

WHERE TO STAY

The Seymour Hotel Group, the largest and oldest group in Jersey, has been recognised with a Green Award for its commitment to eco-friendly travel, Jersey's only five-star hotel, Longueville Manor, has a 'New Leaf' sustainability programme that includes its 'Garbage Guzzler' refuse solution, and the four-star Atlantic Hotel is one of only 12 in the UK to have Earth Check's Silver Status.

GETTING THERE

For the slow travel option take the ferry from Poole or Portsmouth, or fly from one of 20 UK and European airports.

All this and more is helping Jersey be carbon neutral by 2030.



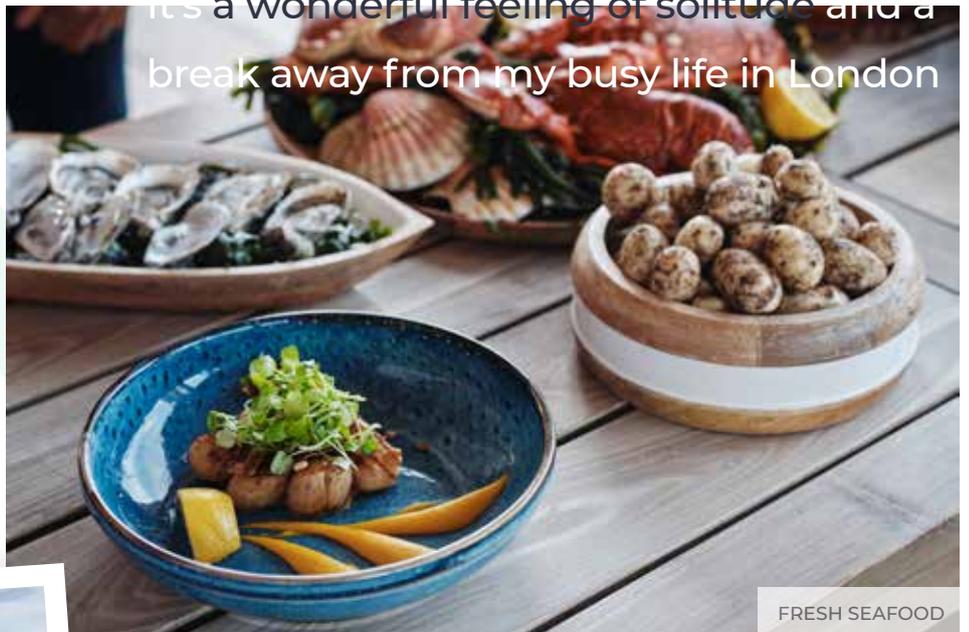
ST. OUEN'S BAY

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It's a wonderful feeling of solitude and a break away from my busy life in London

kids and instead borrow beach toys from one of the Borrow a Bucket Boxes across the island to limit plastic consumption; and visit the Hedgeveg website for an interactive map of local food producers selling from stalls and farm shops. From the enthusiastic recommendations I can tell how glad these people are to call Jersey home, how important it is to them that we all protect it, and how proud they are about steps the island is taking to become carbon neutral by 2030.

I have just enough time to shower and change before I head back down the slip for my safety briefing for the Jersey Seafari RIB trip I've



FRESH SEAFOOD

of solitude and a break away from my busy life in London. I sit on a rock and watch oystercatchers and terns battle with the gulls for the remains of a piece of bread and then lie on the sand in the sun listening to the gentle lap of the water.

But the joy of visiting Jersey sustainably is you don't have to choose

between being remote and being in a cosmopolitan hub – you can have them both. Once I'm back, I head into the capital St Helier for lunch, keen to be around people again. I walk through the beautiful Victorian market with its wrought ironwork and glazed roof, admiring the stalls heaving with colourful local produce and inhaling the scent of freshly picked freesias. I stop for a bowl of Jersey crab linguine, fresh from the sea, at the Pavilion on La Route de la Libération. This place uses plenty of Jersey-grown produce and works

closely with local charity Caring Cooks to encourage children and young people to grow, cook and eat healthy food, and it's buzzing with a stylish crowd – it feels a world away from the beach on the Écréhous I was sitting on just a few hours ago. I watch closely as each new person enters in the hope it might be one of my sauna buddies, because Jersey feels like the kind of place you can just bump into people and spark up spontaneous friendships. It's a feeling that's good for the soul. ♥



OYSTER BEDS IN THE ROYAL BAY OF GROUVILLE

booked to the tiny cluster of islands between Jersey and France called the Écréhous for some wildlife spotting. Seafari offsets every litre of fuel used towards the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust's 'Rewild Carbon project', which protects natural habitats. On the 15-minute journey out, we slow right down as we come to a pod of dolphins, who gracefully circle the boat, before spotting seals basking in the sun.

The sandy islets are deserted apart from a cluster of small fishing cottages and I feel like I'm on my own private island. It's a wonderful feeling



MARKET, ST HELIER