

THE SUNDAY TIMES

travel

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magazine

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18 LUXURY
HOLIDAYS INSIDE!

Brazil

Sugar sands, street rhythms, saints & sinners — you'll love life in Bahia

Paris

The nine hotels you need to know

Secret summer

ISLANDS

Grilled fish, chilled rosé — and no tourists. 24 sleepy Med specks the crowds can't find

Asturias

The raw beauty of *real* Spain, where the road runs out

Connoisseur's Cornwall

- The cosiest boltholes
- The dreamiest beaches
- The creamiest teas

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Total Guide

Cornwall

Fish 'n' chips, secret swimming coves, cool campsites — we've got it all in our connoisseur's edit

Page 56 Strap on your hiking boots — coastal walks await

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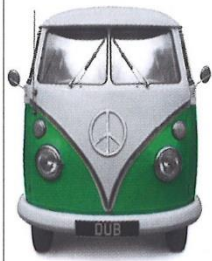
Page 66 The best places to stay, from Falmouth to Fowey

PRETTY
TOWNS YOU
MUST SEE

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Travel high: Polruan, south across the estuary from the picture-postcard town of Fowey

Bay view: the sunny balcony of the Penthouse at Coast, Porth



FAQ:

Where can I hire a cool campervan?

If your heart is set on a vintage VW campervan, you'll find one through the Cornwall Camper Company (thecornwallcampercompany.co.uk) or Cornish Campers (cornishcampers.co.uk) — both provide a free pick-up service from Newquay airport. Three nights start at £300 and kitchen-equipped vans sleep two, though bear in mind they're rather compact so it might be squeezey if you're on the bigger side. In which case, you may be better off with something larger or more modern: Kernow Kampers (kernow-kampers.com) has everything from petite Minidubs (from £60 a night) to a seven-berth motorhome (from £130 a night). ■

Get it right...

Self-catering holidays

A lot can go wrong on a self-catering holiday (cut to: family of six squeezed under a single shower and arguing about who gets the four minutes of hot water, while Mum heats baked beans in a 20w '80s microwave, while the rain leaks relentlessly through the mildewed window frames, out of which can be seen only an office block).

And the first step to avoiding this kind of rentmare? Location, location, vacation. Decide where you want to be — close to the sea, far from main roads, handy for town, whatever — and use 'satellite view' on **Google Maps** (rather than the rental company's own claims) to make sure any property fits the bill. In terms of narrowing down which part of the Duchy you want, **Visit Cornwall** (visit

cornwall.com/accommodation) has a useful filtering tool, but its listings of individual properties don't even scratch the surface of what's out there. Instead, see its 'Self Catering Agency' section: using one of these companies not only guarantees you a certain level of quality, but also saves you time wading through the 7.7 million (seriously!) results Google throws up if you search it for 'self-catering Cornwall'.

Perfect Stays (perfectstays.co.uk) is a good company at the higher price range, **Latitude 50** (latitude50.co.uk) has delectable, sleekly modern properties in North Cornwall, **Cornish Traditional Cottages** (corncott.com) does what the name suggests very well, but **Beach Retreats** (beachretreats.co.uk) tops the list for its combination of gorgeous properties and excellent service.

It's got standout apartments around **Mousehole**, **Padstow** and

Whitsand Bay/the Rame Peninsula — all good choices for self-catering, since there's the odd shop nearby, but nothing to disturb the peace too much. But it's perhaps **Porth** that ticks boxes best. Here, you're less than five minutes' drive from the bright lights/Sainsbury's of Newquay, but less than five minutes' walk from dashingly gorgeous Porth Beach.

The **Penthouse at Coast**, for instance, has a back garden that opens directly onto the sands, a wraparound terrace above them, bright airy sitting room overlooking them, and sleeps eight, across four bedrooms with views of them, from £1,255 for seven nights (book via Beach Retreats). As with any rental, do ask questions before booking, and don't let good looks tempt you if the place hasn't got what you need, be that mobile-phone reception, nearby public transport — or three showers with plenty of hot water...