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Jersey's Top 10

Spectacular cliff paths, stunning coastal scenery, beautiful gardens, historic forts and castles, and museums chronicling the island's rich heritage – here at a glance are the high spots of Jersey



▲ **Jersey War Tunnels.** The dark, dank tunnels and evocative displays are a harrowing reminder of Jersey under the Germans. See page 32



▲ **North Coast Footpath.** Flower-clad cliff paths extend all along the northern coast, offering bracing walks and stunning views. See page 80

► **Maritime Museum.** Explore the island's links with the sea and its former role as a seafaring state. See page 16



▲ **Elizabeth Castle.** Take the Castle Ferry to see this Tudor fort, which defended the island for over 300 years. See page 25





▲ **Mont Orgueil Castle.** Climb the ramparts of this medieval fortress for splendid views of the east coast and Normandy, across the water. See page 88



▲ **Samarès Manor.** This fine manor is a horticultural haven with acres of landscaped gardens, a plant nursery and spectacular herb garden. See page 98



▲ **Jersey Museum and Art Gallery.** Steep yourself in Jersey's history at this award-winning museum. See page 24

▼ **Surfing.** Ride the big Atlantic swell which pounds the 4-mile (6km) sandy bay of St Ouen's – or just sit and watch the surfing pros. See page 49



▼ **La Hougue Bie.** A huge mound conceals one of the largest and best-preserved Neolithic passage graves in Europe. See page 85



▼ **Durrell Wildlife Park.** No ordinary zoo, Durrell has been saving species on the brink for more than 50 years. See page 100



Catching some rays
on St Brelade's beach.

Overview

Queen of the Channel

A tiny island in the shadow of France, Jersey packs in big beaches, stunning seascapes and a host of historic and family attractions

When the novelist Victor Hugo was exiled from France he chose to live on the island closest to home – just 14 miles (22km) across the Channel, where his native language was spoken. “Fragments of Eu-

rope dropped by France and picked up by England”, was how he described the Channel Islands. As self-governing islands and strongholds of ancient, semi-feudal laws, the Channel Islands are neither truly British, nor are they French. English is now the accepted language, the currency is pounds and pence, yet many street names are still in French, the food has a Gallic slant and the islands have a distinctly foreign flavour. Tourists are drawn by this combination of French flavour and British lifestyle – not to mention the location, which is sufficiently far south to guarantee more daily hours of sun than anywhere else in Britain.

For a small island Jersey offers a wide range of attractions and activities, from ancient castles and wartime relics to





sea sports and cycle tours, spas and adventure parks. But for most visitors it's the coastline that has the greatest allure. Jersey has 50 miles (80km) of shoreline and 20 miles (32km) of fine sandy beaches, swept clean by huge tides. The island tilts southwards, and seascapes range from the towering cliffs of the north to the Atlantic rollers of the west and the spacious sands of the south. The island has one of the largest tidal movements in the world, and the coastal landscape undergoes dramatic changes between high and low water.

LOCATION AND CLIMATE

The most southerly of the British Isles, Jersey lies in the Gulf of St Malo, 100 miles (160km) from mainland Britain, but only 14 miles (22km) from the coast of Normandy. On most days you can see France from the north and east coasts. Largest of the Channel Islands, Jersey is 9 miles (14km) east to west, 5 miles (8km) north to south. In summer the island has a daily average of eight hours of sunshine and an av-

The Jersey cow pops up everywhere on the island.



erage maximum temperature of 68°F (20°C). As in the UK, there is always the risk of bad weather, but clouds are often quickly dispersed by the strong south-westerly winds.

BRITISH LINKS

The Channel Islands once formed part of the Duchy of Normandy but have had links with the British Isles ever since the Battle of Hastings, when they became part of the Anglo-Norman realm. The links were reinforced in 1204 when King John lost Normandy to France but the Channel Islands chose to remain loyal to the English crown. In return for their allegiance King John granted the islands customs and privileges, tantamount to self-government, which have since been confirmed by every English monarch. France then became the enemy, and for the next 650 years Jersey was repeatedly threatened by French invasions. The last invaders were the Nazi Germans, who occupied the Channel Islands in World War II.

LANGUAGE

Until the 1960s French was still the official language of Jersey. Prayers are still said in French before States and court sittings, and the parliament votes *pour* or *contre*. Not so long ago

Jersey Royals are one of the most prized crops of spring.



Toads and Donkeys

Deep-rooted rivalries exist between Jersey and Guernsey. To Guernsey natives Jersey is "the other island" and the inhabitants are *crapauds* (toads), while Jersey people refer to the residents of their supposedly stubborn little sister as *ânes* (donkeys).

The *crapaud*, which is found on Jersey but not Guernsey, has been fast disappearing from ponds and waterways. The Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, renowned for recovering endangered species from more exotic climes, is currently helping to save the island mascot.

a Jersey resident would have spoken English, standard French and Jèrriais, a derivation of ancient Jersey-Norman. This *patois* enjoyed a revival during the German Occupation as a useful means of covert communication, and today it can very occasionally be heard by elderly Jersiais (the people who speak it). Less than 3 percent of the population speak it fluently, but renewed interest in the language has led to the introduction of classes in some schools.

The English language was first introduced to Jersey in the 18th century, and is now spoken by all the islanders. Street names on the island still carry their French names, often very different from the English names they were later given, eg La Rue de Derrière (King Street) or La Rue des Trois Pigeons (Hill Street).

ECONOMY

The all-dominant financial services industry accounts for around 42 percent of the total economic activity on Jersey, employing 21 percent of the workforce. This took over from agriculture and tourism as the mainstay



Anne Port, a pleasant cove on the northeast of the island, is an ideal location for rockpooling with children.

of the economy in the latter part of the 20th century. Tourism is down to a mere 4 percent of GDP, having seen a steady decline over the last 20 years with competition from cheaper holiday destinations with hotter climates.

Since Napoleonic times Jersey has attracted high-earning immigrants seeking to benefit from the island’s desirable way of life and advantageous tax laws. Today’s high earners are actively encouraged through the High Value Residency initiative, whereby applications are assessed for suitability on social and economic grounds, including paying a minimum tax of tax of £125,000 per annum.

ENVIRONMENT

To date Jersey has 34 Sites of Special Interest (SSIs), protected for ecological and geological interest, plus a huge intertidal zone designated as a Ramsar site (a wetland of international importance) on the southeast coast. The island’s 16 beaches are washed by some of the cleanest waters in Europe.

Green lanes, reducing the speed limit on some country lanes to 15mph

(24kmh), have encouraged cyclists and pedestrians, and clearly marked cycle routes now cover 96 miles (155km) of coast and countryside. On the negative side, Jersey still has one of the highest car ownership and user rates in the world.

Although the island is still largely unspoilt its capital, St Helier has seen unsightly development swallowing up the coastline. The construction of a huge new incinerator east of St Helier, built in 2012 to cope with waste and generate electricity, has raised concerns over potential damage to marine life in Jersey’s protected Ramsar site.

Guide to Coloured Boxes

Eating	This guide is dotted with coloured boxes providing additional practical and cultural information to make the most of your visit. Here is a guide to the coding system.
Fact	
Green	
Kids	
Shopping	
View	