

 | **SYKES** HOLIDAY COTTAGES

The Sykes Staycation Index 2025

An inside look at the UK staycation scene,
brought to you by Sykes Holiday Cottages



Welcome to the annual Sykes Staycation Index

This year’s report explores the UK staycation landscape – from top destinations and traveller profiles to the trends influencing holiday decisions in 2025.

Contents

Welcome	
What’s happening in the UK staycation sector?	3
Staycations at a glance	
A snapshot of the UK’s staycation landscape	4
Where are Brits holidaying?	
The most popular UK destinations for 2025	5
Where will Brits be holidaying next?	
UK locations growing in popularity	6
Who’s booking UK breaks?	
A look at the travellers behind the trends - from Gen Z to Boomers	7
What’s driving domestic travel?	
The key motivations influencing why Brits are choosing to stay local	8
2025 travel trends	
The emerging habits, preferences and shifts defining the year ahead	9
Pop culture and travel	
How TV, film and social media are inspiring UK breaks	12



Welcome

What's happening in the UK staycation sector?

We're expecting another strong year for UK holidays, with nearly two-thirds of Brits planning a staycation in 2025 and over a third enjoying a holiday here as their main break. This continued demand is a clear sign that the appeal of holidaying closer to home is here to stay.

With travellers taking more frequent breaks and spending more – an average of £1,292 on their main UK getaway – the staycation sector continues to provide a valuable boost to local economies and communities right across the country.

Now in its seventh year, the Sykes Staycation Index shines a light on the evolving habits and motivations shaping domestic travel – from an apparent Gen Z UK travel boom to a rise in solo staycations and a focus on food while away. Brits are seeking more meaningful escapes and fresh adventures, all without needing a passport.

James Shaw, Chief Commercial Officer Group
& Managing Director Agency Division



Staycations at a glance

Before we go into the detail, here's a quick snapshot of standout insights from our internal booking data and research of 2,000 UK holidaymakers.



63% of Brits will take a UK break this year — and 34% are planning to make it their main holiday in 2025

Gen Z UK travel boom – younger generation (18-28) are most likely to holiday in the UK in 2025 (71%) and choose it as their main holiday (45%)

Summer stays are on the rise, with Sykes seeing a 9% year-on-year increase in bookings



Between March and May 2025, ChatGPT accounted for 7% of all referral traffic to the Sykes website



Solo staycationing on the rise – solo break bookings grew by 28% in 2024

Holidaymakers travel for 3 hours 26 minutes, on average, to their destination

The average person will take 3 UK breaks this year, staying for an average of 6 days



Holiday spending is on the rise, with Brits expecting to spend £1,292 on their main UK break in 2025 – up from £1,070 in 2024

Domestic tourism is forecast to contribute approximately £24 billion to the UK economy this summer¹



Shift to later planning – Average lead times between booking and travel have decreased by 8% YoY (105 days in 2025 vs. 114 in 2024)

But destinations like Cornwall and Cumbria are being booked early, with an average 6-month lead time (180 days)

24% of all breaks are booked within a month of departure



Where are Brits holidaying?

From established favourites to emerging gems, here's where UK holidaymakers are choosing to stay.

Top 10 most popular regions based on 2025 bookings:

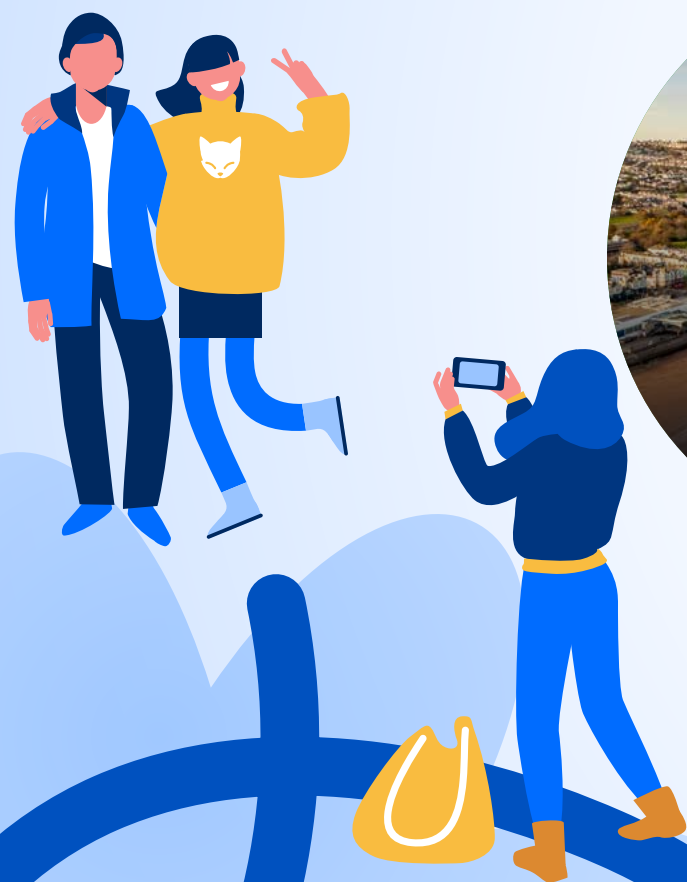
- 1 Cumbria
- 2 Cornwall
- 3 North Yorkshire
- 4 Devon
- 5 Gwynedd
- 6 Northumberland
- 7 Dorset
- 8 Anglesey
- 9 Derbyshire
- 10 Conwy

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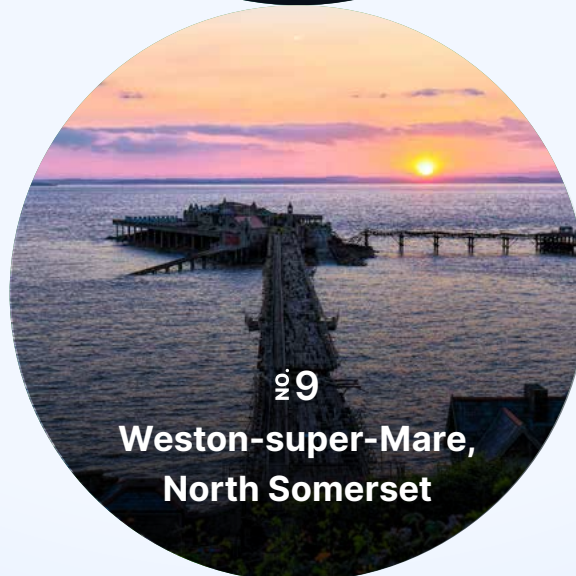
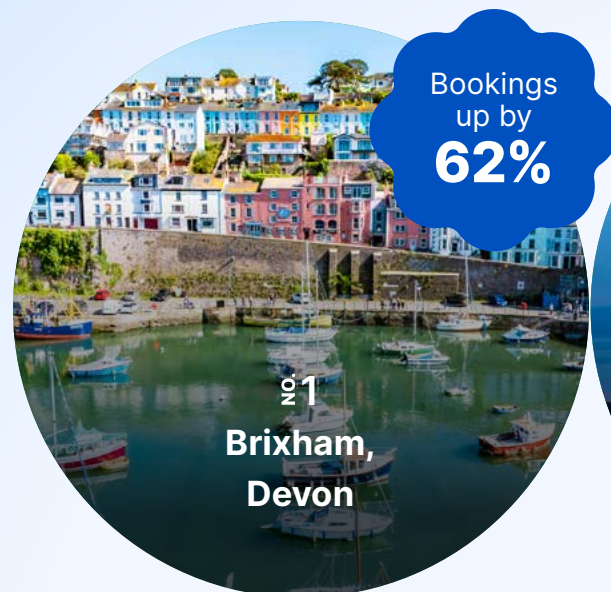


Destinations to watch

Discover the staycation hotspots capturing Brits' attention – from coastal escapes to countryside gems, these are the places growing in popularity.



Top 10 'trending' locations in 2025, based on year-on-year bookings growth



Steady uptick in short breaks
– Gwynedd in Wales is topping the list, with short break bookings up by 20%, followed by Devon (+18%) and Anglesey (+13%)

Who's booking UK breaks?

Meet the people behind the bookings – exploring how different generations, from Gen Z to Boomers, are holidaying in the UK.

Gen Z (18-28)



Most likely to holiday here in 2025:

71% are planning to holiday at home in 2025, with 45% choosing it as their main break - and setting an average budget of £1,195 in total.

Top 3 locations:

St Ives, Brighton, Robin Hood's Bay.

Solo staycationing:

Twice as likely to staycation on their own than the average Brit (60% vs. 29% of the general population).

Break of choice:

Lakes and mountains (35%), city breaks (34%), luxury hotel/spa getaways (32%).

Millennials (29-44)



Big spenders:

67% of Millennials are planning a UK holiday this year, with 37% choosing it as their main break - investing an average of £1,526 for the entire trip, more than any other generation.

Top 3 locations:

St Ives, Ambleside, Robin Hood's Bay.

Preferred companions:

Partners (73%), children under 18 (56%), friends (28%).

Generation X (45-60)



UK breakers:

32% plan to spend their main break in the UK, setting aside £1,133 on average per household.

Top 3 locations:

St Ives, Ambleside, Grasmere.

Travelling with:

Partners (69%), children under 18 (31%), extended family (19%).

Boomers (61-79)



Holidaying at home:

27% are keeping it UK-based for their main trip this year, spending around £1,217 on average per household.

Top 3 locations:

St Ives, Robin Hood's Bay, Ambleside.

Travel companions:

Partners (68%), adult children (22%), friends (14%).

Go-to holidays:

City breaks (51%), cottage-style stays (42%), lakes and mountains (41%).

Silent generation (80+)



Budget-savvy:

37% planning UK trips in 2025, budgeting £768 on average each trip (vs. £1,070 for all travellers).

Top 3 locations:

Alnwick, Grasmere, Bourton-on-the-Water.

Holidaying with:

Partners (63%), adult children (35%), friends (15%).



What's driving domestic travel?

We've explored why Brits are choosing UK holidays, the various factors influencing different groups, and the most popular activities they're excited to experience.

The top 3 reasons for choosing a staycation over a foreign trip:

- Holidays closer to home are easier **38%**
- It's less stressful **35%**
- It's cheaper **35%**

How does this compare across generations?

Gen Z and Millennials are the most price-conscious, with 42% and 39% respectively prioritising affordability

But **Millennials are still willing to invest in experiences**, spending the most on their UK breaks (£1,526 vs. £1,292)

Boomers most value the ability to take more frequent trips (28%)

Top 5 break types:






- City break **49%** (up from 37% in 2024)
- Lakes and mountains **41%**
- Beachfront holiday home **40%**
- Cottage-style holiday home **40%**
- Countryside B&B **32%**



Top 3 activities Brits most want to do on a staycation:

- £1 Go on countryside walks
- £2 Go on coastal walks
- £3 Explore local attractions

Most searched-for property features:

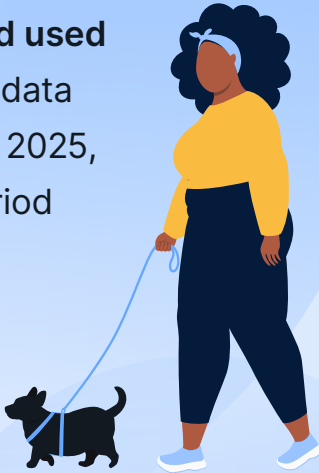
-  Pet-friendly
-  Hot tubs
-  Sea view
-  Swimming pool
-  Proximity to a beach



AI's influence on holiday 'shopping'

Between March and May 2025, ChatGPT accounted for 7% of all referral traffic to the Sykes website.

There has been a **421% increase** in the number of users who both visited the Sykes website and used ChatGPT, based on search data from December 2024 to May 2025, compared to the same period the previous year.



People and their pets

28% of all bookings made for 2025 include pet guests.



Glamping on the up

bookings to yurts, lodges and shepherd's huts increased by 16% in 2024 and are already up by 8% this year.



2025 travel trends

Uncover the key trends set to define travel in 2025, with a desire for foodie experiences, ‘micro tripping’ and ‘culturalcations’ shaping travel choices this year and beyond.

The rise of ‘tastecations’

We’re a nation of food-lovers but our palates are increasingly driving our travel decisions, with a third of Brits saying they’ve holidayed in a particular location to either try a local delicacy or visit a certain restaurant.

Here, we reveal the top 10 foodie towns Brits are most eager to visit in 2025. This is based on an analysis of the number of restaurants (ONS), TripAdvisor data on the quality and concentration of eateries (Tripadvisor), plus consumer research².

3 key motivations for visiting these destinations:

1 To try a local delicacy – 33%

2 To visit a specific restaurant – 32%

3 To sample or purchase local ingredients – 29%

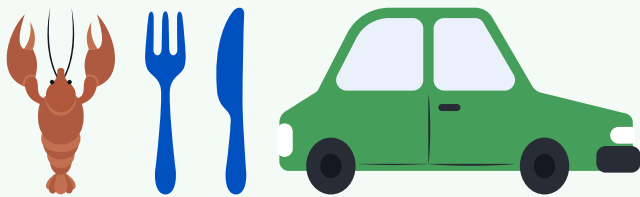
1 in 5 travellers say the food they eat heavily influences how much they enjoy their holiday

1 in 10 have rebooked a holiday location purely to go back to a favourite restaurant

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Top 10 foodie towns Brits most want to visit

- 1 St Ives, Cornwall
- 2 Padstow, Cornwall
- 3 Falmouth, Cornwall
- 4 Brixham, Devon
- 5 Blackpool, Lancashire
- 6 Bournemouth, Dorset
- 7 Great Yarmouth, Norfolk
- 8 Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear
- 9 Lyme Regis, Dorset
- 10 Weymouth, Dorset



Supporting pubs and independent eateries

Traditional British pubs are the top staycation dining option (58%), followed by independent local restaurants (52%) and fish and chip shops (51%)

Venturing far for good food

People are willing to travel 70 miles to visit a specific restaurant or to try a particular cuisine... with 1 in 10 Brits prepared to trek more than 150 miles



According to our research, 1 in 10 Brits are more likely to book a food-focused experience in the UK than five years ago. So, we've taken a closer look at the properties on our books which offer bespoke foodie experiences – from on-site sausage making classes to wine and gin tastings.

**The Tractor Shed,
Weston-under-
Redcastle, Shropshire
(Ref. 929789)**

This stunning barn conversion is situated in the grounds of Maynard's Farm, one of Rick Stein's Food Heroes.

Guests can request fresh produce from Maynard's Farm Shop ahead of their stay. This can be found on-site and stocks a variety of delicious products, including free range chicken, pork, beef and lamb, organic eggs, local cheeses, fresh fruit and vegetables and even alternative meats for the more adventurous – such as ostrich, venison and wagu beef.

Foodies looking to try their hand at a new skill can also book onto the farm's butchery and sausage making courses.

**Tuffon Hall Farmhouse,
Sible Hedingham, Essex
(Ref. 1067084)**

This stylish farmhouse sits in the heart of Tuffon Hall Vineyard, an award-winning estate producing exceptional English wines and artisan gins.

Guests can make the most of this unique setting with on-site wine and gin tastings held in a beautifully converted barn. Learn how to taste like a pro, discover expert food pairing tips, and sample a curated selection of Tuffon Hall's award-winning still and sparkling wines, alongside their handcrafted gins.

With vineyard views, immersive tasting sessions, and the chance to discover the craftsmanship behind every bottle, Tuffon Hall Farmhouse offers a perfect blend of luxury, learning, and local flavour.



The Tractor Shed



Tuffon Hall Farmhouse



2025 travel trends continued

Micro-tripping: The rise of short breaks



Almost half (48%) of all 2025 bookings to date have been short breaks (6 days or less) – up from 41% in 2023

24% of Brits much prefer multiple short trips over fewer longer holidays

Top 5 reasons why Brits prefer more frequent, shorter breaks:

- £1 To experience more locations
- £2 Easier to fit into busy schedules
- £3 Enjoying more regular escapism
- £4 Less need for extensive planning
- £5 More cost-effective

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Solo staycationing: An increase in travelling alone



Solo break bookings increased by 28% in 2024

1 in 3 (29%) say they are more likely to take a solo break now than five years ago – rising to 60% of Gen Z travellers

Top 3 locations for solo staycations in 2025:

- £1 Whitby
- £2 Keswick
- £3 Ambleside



Culturalcation: Exploring the UK through its history and heritage

More than a quarter (26%) have booked a UK trip specifically to visit a historic site or cultural attraction.

1 in 4 Brits say, when it comes to culture, they most look forward to exploring historical sites (25%), while nearly 1 in 5 are most excited about visiting museums or galleries (19%).

Top 10 cultural or historic sites Brits most want to visit in 2025:

- £1 Edinburgh Castle
- £2 The Jurassic Coast (Dorset & East Devon)
- £3 Giant's Causeway (Northern Ireland)
- £4 The Roman Baths (Bath)
- £5 The Tower of London
- £6 Portmeirion Village (Wales)
- £7 Cheddar Gorge (Somerset)
- £8 Hadrian's Wall (Northern England)
- £9 British Museum (London)
- £10 Stonehenge (Wiltshire)



Pop culture and travel

Discover how TV shows, movies and social media are driving UK travel trends and encouraging people to explore locations across the country 'seen on screen'.

15% of Brits are inspired by locations spotted on TV shows and films when it comes to choosing a staycation destination.



Top 10 TV and films that are influencing holidaymakers' choices to travel:



£1
Bridgerton
(Bath)



£2
Beyond Paradise
(Cornwall)



£3
Bridget Jones: Mad About The Boy
(Lake District)



£4
The Traitors
(Scottish Highlands)



£5
One Day
(Edinburgh)



£6
Saltburn
(Oxfordshire)



£7
Wicked
(Norfolk)



£8
Vera
(North East England)



£9
Fool Me Once
(Greater Manchester)



£10
Rivals
(Gloucestershire & Somerset)

1 in 10 say they're heavily influenced by social media channels, such as TikTok and Instagram, when picking a holiday location

Top 5 staycation activities most inspired by social media:

- £1 Restaurants choices
- £2 Walking routes
- £3 National Parks
- £4 Historical sites
- £5 Museum trips

About Sykes Holiday Cottages

Sykes Holiday Cottages is a B Corp certified, holiday cottage rental agency with more than 30 years' experience in the industry.

Owned by parent company Forge Holiday Group, who manage over 30,000 accommodation units, Sykes now has more than 22,500 properties available across the UK and Ireland, taking over three million people on holiday each year.

While the business has grown significantly over the years, Sykes' commitment to offering quality accommodation to travellers – and being the best choice for holiday homeowners – remains unchanged. Sykes has been awarded 'Best Large UK Holiday Cottage Booking Company' at the British Travel Awards for 11 consecutive years.

Headquartered in Chester and with regional offices around the country, its team work with customers and owners to deliver the best British breaks available.

Explanation of methodology

Sykes' bookings data for 22,500 properties in 2025 was used to provide a snapshot of the staycation market, while comparisons with equivalent YTD and full-year figures from 2019 to 2024 were used to identify market trends. Supporting consumer research of 2,000 UK adults was carried out by OnePoll in April 2025.

¹ Contribution to UK economy methodology – £23.98 billion. Calculated based on the number of Brits who plan to stay in the UK for their main UK break in 2025 (34%) (taking into account UK adult population – 54.6 million) multiplied by planned spend on their main summer break (£1,292).

² Top foodie towns methodology – Ranking based on ONS data on the number of licensed restaurants, unlicensed restaurants and cafes, and mobile food service activities (as of April 2023). As well as Tripadvisor data on the number of 5* restaurants and the amount of restaurants per square mile, plus consumer research of 2,000 UK adults.

Contact us

For further information on the report findings, methodology or press enquiries please contact sykescottages@citypress.co.uk

To book a holiday, visit www.sykescottages.co.uk or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. .

To find out more about becoming a holiday let owner, please visit www.sykescottages.co.uk/letyourcottage



