

The Coast is QUEER



YOU'RE WELCOME:
Julian (left) and
Andy in front of
The 25

With local travel restrictions about to be lifted, we can all go on holidgay again – and you can't beat a Great British break. Heading to the seaside, we meet the folks who make it queer, from hoteliers and pub landlords, to Pride organisers and drag queens, as they give us the lowdown on where to vacay this summer

has Rockfish in Torquay harbour, which is always a good bet. If you want special, it has to be Torquay's Michelin-star restaurant, The Elephant. We always go for the tasting menu with matched wines.

Is there a gay beach?

Petitor Beach is a little-known nudist beach where single men are encouraged to the left and women, couples and families to the right. It's mainly locals, and quite a hike down and back. Beware of cliff falls!

Any day trips we shouldn't miss?

You can catch a ferry in the harbour for a tour of the bay and may see dolphins while out on the water, or catch a steam train from Paignton to Dartmouth for stunning sea views en route.

Do you know any local LGBTQ+ factoids?

Oscar Wilde took a house in Babbacombe, next to Torquay, and spent six years writing, being joined there by his lover Lord Alfred 'Bosie' Douglas.

Do you have a local queer icon?

Winnaretta Singer, born in 1865, was heir to the famous Singer Sewing Machine dynasty who built Oldway Mansion, a grand house modelled on the Palace of Versailles in Paignton, a small seaside town next to Torquay. She had a marriage of convenience and maintained relationships with women throughout her life. She used part of her fortune to support artists including Monet and Proust, scientists and soldiers during the First World War, and was a leader in creating public housing and restored buildings for abused women and their children.

Where should we head for a good night out?

Start your evening at gay-owned Stumble Bar, then head down to Soho Bar to dance the night away with cocktails and a good mix of gay, straight, young, old, locals and tourists. There is the annual Rainbow Ball each November for charity, and a Pride event in nearby Totnes. 🏳️

the25.uk

Julian and Andy Banner-Price TORQUAY

Andy and Julian Banner-Price's B&B, The 25, has been named Best B&B in the World in the TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice awards in 2019 and 2020, so who better to give us their top tips for a trip to Torquay?

What are the top attractions in Torquay?

Torre Abbey has 800 years of history – a combination of an abbey, stately home, museum and art gallery with gardens and heated glass houses. The Princess Theatre hosts everything from plays by Agatha Christie – who was born in Torquay – to touring West End shows. It's just one of four local thriving theatres. And the English Riviera Wheel, where you can see Torquay from above.

A local hidden gem?

Beacon Cove – a beautiful, hidden, secluded beach used mainly by locals, that most tourists don't know exists. It's just behind Torquay harbour.

What high-profile guests can you tell us about?

At our last country house in North Wales we hosted many people, from Alan Carr to HRH Duke of Cambridge. Joanna Lumley is definitely the biggest star we've had here in Torquay, so far.

Where should we go for dinner?

For fish and chips, celebrity chef Mitch Tonks