

# EveningStandard.

tuans, talon-tipped fingers.

Fortunately, everything is quiet on this balmy autumn day, both geologically and mythologically, bar the honks of Canada geese and paradise shelducks on the adjacent lake. But the

Christchurch along a disused railway line. From 1886 it carried passengers, wool, livestock and timber from the eponymous settlement to the growing city; closed in 1962, the route was reopened in 2006 as a cycle trail and is

the line closed, it's now been restored as a micro-museum, complete with stationmaster's desk, rusty barrows and blackboard listing freight schedules. Alongside the vintage wagon outside we mount our steeds and pedal

## A taste of London down by the sea

### WEEKEND AWAY

BRIGHTON

SUSANNAH BUTTER

**B**RIGHTON goes beyond the seaside basics of fish and chips and a chilly paddle. London's food scene has migrated here, with a branch of MEATLiquor, a Polpo for Italian small plates done with a Soho twist, and sourdough pizza hotspot Franco Manco coming soon.

It's also set to have a new landmark. The 1360 "vertical cable car" and observation tower is due to open this summer. It has been controversial – decide for yourself whether it is an incongruous juggernaut or a fun way to see the city or catch a glimpse of France.

Before then, the Brighton Festival runs until May 29, and the Brighton Fringe until June 5, with hundreds of cabaret, comedy, theatre, dance, debates, music, art and free events taking place ([brightonfestival.org](http://brightonfestival.org); [brightonfringe.org](http://brightonfringe.org)).

#### Bed down: a room with a view

To make the most of being by the sea, stay at Hotel Una ([01273 820464](http://01273-820464), [hotel-una.co.uk](http://hotel-una.co.uk)) on Regency Square. It is at the centre of things but off the main seafront so not too noisy. Rooms are named after rivers and lots of the furniture is from local makers. They all have coffee machines and White Company toiletries, while the Quila suite has its own film projector and a deep bath.

The hotel bar, Fifty Five, serves a

potent barrel-aged negroni, perfect for warming you up after a walk. Staff are keen to share tips for enjoying the city although it's easy to stay in, looking at the sea and the owners' collection of mounted animal heads.

#### Fed and watered: inventive eggs, crafty cocktails and London outposts

Start the day with an egglette at Café Coho on Ship Street ([01273 747777](http://01273-747777), [cafecoho.co.uk](http://cafecoho.co.uk)) – that's an amuse bouche of an egg on a canapé-sized slice of bread with tomato (it whets your appetite before breakfast). This independent café is so popular it has another branch near the station but this outpost near The Lanes is more relaxed and has an outdoor seating area. Coffee is a rich, caramelly blend called Revelation from Union. Eggs are prepared inventively – try them poached with peashoots, avocado and thyme-roasted tomato on sourdough or with harissa. On our visit specials included fried duck egg with wild mushrooms and gruyère. They also do great stacks of pancakes.

If you don't fancy fish and chips, head to MEATLiquor ([01273 917710](http://01273-917710), [meatliquor.com/brighton](http://meatliquor.com/brighton)) for proper sustenance in the form of a burger, deep-fried pickles and hippie fries – potatoes filched up with grilled onions and a mustardy sauce – in the company of the neon flamingo light. Save room for an



Brighton rocks: above, Brighton Pier. Top right, Resident Records. Right, The Lanes. Inset, The Set restaurant



ice cream in The Lanes at Gelato Gusto. Everything is made onsite and flavours include prosecco sorbetto or lychee.

After a day of sea air, The Set restaurant ([01273 855572](http://01273-855572), [thesetrestaurant.com](http://thesetrestaurant.com)), with its tiki beach bar, is the perfect place to recuperate. A new, film-inspired cocktail menu features an Obe One Negroni and Ribena Death Star that changes colour. I had Getting Figgy with it – dry saffron vodka with fig, almond and foamy egg white.

Bar snacks include posh chicken nuggets with red-cabbage ketchup, oxtail croquettes and deep-fried mash. There's a ping-pong bar downstairs and it's in The Artist Residence Hotel if you want to carry on the evening.

For dinner, there are three set menus, ranging from £29 to £35, prepared by New York chefs. That means desserts such as cereal milk with spelt granola and milk ice cream like at Brooklyn's

Momofuku. Mains are more British: pork with black pudding, mustard turnips and apple ketchup.

One of Brighton's newest imports is Polpo ([01273 697361](http://01273-697361), [polpo.co.uk](http://polpo.co.uk)), the Italian small-plates restaurant Russell Norman founded in Soho. This branch, with low lighting and candles, is a romantic escape from the noise of the pier. Start with little bites such as marinated baby octopus and chilli garlic prawns and move onto lamb osso buco with saffron risotto, and plenty of Barbera wine. Pep yourself up afterwards with a tiramisù and a negroni.

#### In the bag: record-collecting and an antiques arcade

Music fans head to independent music shop Resident Records ([01273 606312](http://01273-606312), [resident-music.com](http://resident-music.com)), which puts on frequent in-store gigs. There are also plenty of vintage shops – Snooper's Paradise ([01273 602558](http://01273-602558), [snoopersattic.co.uk](http://snoopersattic.co.uk)) is an arcade piled high with clothes and curiosities where you might

just find a Prada skirt buried underneath an old tea set – but Brighton also does good modern design. Check out Unlimited ([01273 204 423](http://01273-204-423), [unlimitedshop.co.uk](http://unlimitedshop.co.uk)), a shop and gallery that works with artists to produce wonderful prints and cards.

#### Cultural agenda: intimate live music and comedy central

The Brian Jonestown Massacre and Candi Staton are both due at Concorde 2 soon ([01273 673311](http://01273-673311), [concorde2.co.uk](http://concorde2.co.uk)). Or head to Komedija ([0845 292 8480](http://0845-292-8480), [komedia.co.uk](http://komedia.co.uk)) for gigs and stand-up. The Theatre Royal ([0844 877 7650](http://0844-877-7650), [theatroyalbrighton.com](http://theatroyalbrighton.com)) hosts ballet and theatre; Ruby Wax is also playing there in June.

#### Details: Brighton

Trains from St Pancras, London Bridge and Victoria take about an hour, from £17.20 one way. For buses in town see [brighton-hove.gov.uk/journeyplanner](http://brighton-hove.gov.uk/journeyplanner) visitbrighton.com

