

TOWN&COUNTRY



COUNTRY

TRAVEL

TIME & TIDE

The changing face of Agatha Christie's atmospheric island escape

The world's bestselling mystery novel, Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None*, might never have been written had it not been for the author's long sojourn at Beach House, a secluded writer's retreat on a tidal island in South Devon whose haunting atmosphere inspired the tale. Today, visitors can book a stay in Christie's coastal bolthole, part of the beautiful Burgh Island Hotel. Built in 1929, this art deco landmark, known by its then owner Archie Nettlefold as the 'Great White Palace', has recently been restored to its former glory. Take tea in the Palm Court lounge, with its kaleidoscopic stained-glass ceiling dome; don your finest evening gown for a black-tie dinner in the Grand Ballroom; and then retire to one of the 25 individually designed rooms, many of which are named after illustrious former guests including Noel Coward, Nancy Cunard and Josephine Baker. **RM**
Burgh Island Hotel, from £295, including dinner, bed and breakfast (www.burghisland.com).



DESIGN

WATER WORLD

An oceanic odyssey in art

The Salcombe-based artist Lissy Marsh finds inspiration for her intricate prints, greeting cards and homeware while freediving beneath the swell of the Atlantic Ocean. Her aquatic creations, which she sells through her Etsy shop, feature all manner of marine life, from lobsters, seals and starfish to blue sharks and manta rays. **BROOKE THIES**
(www.elseamart.etsy.com)



EXHIBITIONS

OPEN HOUSE

Explore a storied County Down palace

For the first time in its long history, Northern Ireland's newly renovated Hillsborough Castle – the Royal and government residence that has played host to guests including Benjamin Franklin, Margaret Thatcher and Bill Clinton – is opening its doors daily to the public. Roam the beautifully landscaped grounds, before venturing into the Georgian house's opulent state-rooms to admire the silk-lined walls, open fireplaces and cascading chandeliers. **YASMIN OMAR**
Hillsborough Castle (www.hrp.org.uk) is open daily; tickets start from £8.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH SHINNER. © HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES, EMMA LEWIS. © SIMON BUDGEON

TEXTILES

STITCHES IN TIME

Flora Soames' beautifully woven heritage

The interior designer Flora Soames, who divides her time between Dorset and London, has created her first range of fabrics and wallpapers, many of which are bursting with blooms. The designs are reminiscent of antique textiles: a delicate Arts and Crafts cloth was the starting point for 'Chartwell Weave'; a gold-threaded Syrian fabric sparked the idea for 'Oulton Stripe'; and a scrap of early-20th-century linen led to 'Enid's Garland', which is named after Soames' beloved dachshund. The former furniture dealer has the painterly patterns woven in traditional British mills and printed by hand, in bold colourways. Partly inspired by the furnishings her grandmother loved, the designs are imbued with a deep sense of nostalgia. 'But they are not polite, or precious,' says Soames. 'The collection is a cacophony of colour.' **GCHARLOTTE BROOK** *(www.florasoes.com)*



ABOVE: ENID WITH SOAMES' ANTIQUE-FABRIC COLLECTION



ACTIVITIES

IN GOOD HANDS

Expert-led workshops



BEST FOR... RUSTIC RELAXATION
Take part in a well-being festival in Dorset's Sculpture by the Lakes. 19 to 21 September *(www.wellbeingbythelakes.co.uk)*.



BEST FOR... FLOWER ENTHUSIASTS
Master the art of creating exquisite floral sculptures in Wiltshire's Belcombe Court. 4 to 5 October *(www.jamjarflowers.co.uk)*.



BEST FOR... TEA-LOVERS
Learn about Britain's favourite brew at Cornwall's Tregothnan tea estate. 11 September or 6 November *(www.tregothnan.co.uk)*.

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