



Margate Press Pack

www.visitthanet.co.uk

How to reach Margate?

Margate is a seaside town situated on the Isle of Thanet, the most easterly point in Kent the 'Garden of England'. In the past, Thanet was separated from the mainland by the river Wantsum but it is now no longer an island.

Margate is easily accessible by car, coach and train. The country's only high speed train service, HS1, brings travellers from London St Pancras, to Margate in just 90 minutes.

There are regular train and bus services, including the Thanet Loop, to the neighbouring resorts of Broadstairs (3.4 miles/5.5 km) and Ramsgate (5.3 miles/8.5 km). The City of Canterbury is 17 miles (27.4 km) away and the Port of Dover, with its cross-Channel services to mainland Europe, just 22.6 miles (36.4 km) distant.





Margate Main Sands



Turner Contemporary

Escape to Margate

- World-class art and cultural exhibitions at Turner Contemporary gallery
- Dreamland Margate, the UK's original pleasure park, re-imagined for the 21st century and celebrating the age of the Great British seaside amusement experience
- Classic seaside heritage - magnificent sands, water sports, rock pools, cockles and whelks, fish 'n chips and candyfloss
- Time and space to relax and enjoy the resort's famous sunsets, clifftop walks and contemporary culture
- Margate Old Town - independent galleries, vintage and retro hotspots, and quirky shops along cobbled streets

Margate is a classic seaside destination with deep roots in the original development of visits to the coast for the health benefits of exhilarating sea air and salt water bathing.

As the passion and fashion for seaside fun and frivolity became more accessible with boat trips from London and the arrival of the railways, Margate became synonymous with family holiday fun, weekend escapes (including romantic liaisons) and daytrips.

As more people came to visit and many wanted to set up home on the coast, new quality estates were built in adjoining Cliftonville. Initially these were detached and semi-detached houses with

gardens, followed by the newly fashionable bungalows, set along wide open avenues leading down to the seafront.

Cliftonville accommodated the new residents and provided numerous guest houses and smaller private hotels for visitors to Margate. Larger hotels took pride of place high on the chalk cliffs overlooking the sea.

Visitors today soak up the sun, sands and sea with all the enthusiasm of previous generations of the bucket 'n spade brigade as well as a wealth of retro and vintage seaside pleasures presented in 21st century style.

Along with the resort's more than 50,300 residents, visitors find themselves at the heart of the cultural and creative arts revolution sweeping along the coast of Kent – The Garden of England.



Margate Main Sands - children's rides



Westbrook Bay



Beaches and bays

Paddling, rock pools and sandcastles alongside swimming and watersports, Margate's many beautiful bays are perfect for all ages and abilities.

Margate Main Sands – a spacious family favourite with lovely golden sand, children's rides, surfing and all beach facilities. Plenty of ice creams, lollies, candyfloss, cockles and whelks, and fish 'n chips are available nearby.

Walpole Bay – much-loved by swimmers, this long bay is perfect for exploring rock pools and crabbing. The bay is named in honour of the former British Prime Minister Robert Walpole.

Westbrook Bay – a beach popular with family and excellent for water skiing.

Discover more of Thanet's award-winning beaches at www.visitthanet.co.uk/beaches-bays

Galleries

TURNER CONTEMPORARY (www.turnercontemporary.org) – the internationally-acclaimed art gallery overlooking the sea and Margate Sands has attracted 1.5 million visits since opening in 2011. The gallery's programme of exciting forthcoming world-class exhibitions and creative activities promises that success is set to continue for many years to come.

Since the opening of Turner Contemporary in Margate, a wealth of independent art galleries and studios have opened in the historic Old Town featuring the works of international, national and local artists in a range of media.

Discover more art destinations in Thanet, including galleries and studios at www.visitthanet.co.uk/things-to-do/galleries

Attractions

The Shell Grotto

(www.shellgrotto.co.uk) – tucked away just a short walk from the coast, this memorable attraction and its myriad of shell patterns still intrigues visitors as the mysteries of its meanings and origins have never been conclusively resolved.

Walpole Bay Hotel, Living Museum and Napery

(www.walpolebayhotel.co.uk) – popular with celebrity guests, this unusual hotel offers a unique experience whether for an overnight stay or enjoying afternoon tea or an evening meal. The Napery is a gallery of textile art on table linen.

Margate Museum

(www.margatemuseum.wordpress.com) – a real gem set in a former police station and magistrate's court. Exhibitions and standing exhibits reflecting Margate's history and its wartime experiences.

The Tudor House

(www.visitthanet.co.uk/attractions) - one of Margate's oldest buildings dating from the first half of the 16th century

Hornby Visitor Centre

(www.hornby.com/uk-en/hornby-visitor-centre) – a journey through the history of Britain's best-loved toys.

Quex Park, The Powell Cotton Museum, The Secret Garden Centre, Jungle Jim's , Quex Barn

and more in nearby Birchington (www.quexpark.co.uk) – year-round entertainment and fun for all the family. The Powell-Cotton Museum has been named as the most inspiring museum and heritage attraction in the UK (The Guardian Culture Professionals Network). Large outdoor and indoor play areas for younger visitors are set alongside Quex Barn for enjoying and buying top quality local produce. Restored Victorian Gardens and garden centre.



Shell Grotto



Powell-Cotton Museum



Hornby Visitor Centre

Entertainment

The Theatre Royal

(www.theatreroyalmargate.com) – a regional theatre with a great reputation offering a lively programme of professional and community entertainments.

The Winter Gardens

(www.margatewintergardens.com) – set on the clifftops, the famous large venue stages a wide range of events, concerts and entertainments throughout the year.

The Tom Thumb Theatre

(www.tomthumbtheatre.co.uk) – one of the smallest theatres in the world created in a former coach house. Look out for comedy nights, burlesque, off-beat cinema, live music and more.

Tom Thumb Theatre



Outdoor adventures

Take the opportunity to swim, surf or waterski at the resort's main bays. Stride out for exhilarating walks on the cliffs along the foreshore or take to two wheels on the Viking Coastal Trail. The Viking Coastal Trail (32 miles/51.4km) with its mini routes for walkers and cyclists exploring Smugglers Haunts and Beaches & Bays. Alternatively create your own path along the Trail walking or cycling from Margate and Birchington to Reculver Towers or heading off from Margate to the popular resorts of Broadstairs and Ramsgate.

The Active Coast itinerary planner gives more detail on outdoor fun and adventure www.visitthanet.co.uk/activecoast. Download the Viking Coastal Trail map on www.vikingcoastaltrail.co.uk

Westbrook



Uncover the hidden depths of Margate past and present along the **Margate Heritage Trail** or step out along a restored ancient footpath between Turner's Margate and Dickens' Broadstairs (4 miles/6.4km).

www.visitthanet.co.uk/attractions/turner-and-dickens-walk

Great Days Out Whatever the Weather – find out a wealth of ways to discover and explore different aspects of Margate and its neighbouring towns and villages at

www.visitthanet.co.uk/itinerary-planner

Viking Coastal Trail at Minnis Bay





'Mrs Booth' Shell Lady



T.S. Eliot shelter

Artistic impressions

JMW Turner's time living with his landlady and companion Mrs Sophia Booth in Margate made a lasting impression on his work as he rose to the challenges of capturing the qualities of light. Turner Contemporary now stands where he used to live. Turner (1775 – 1851) wrote: "*The loveliest skies in Europe are over the Isle of Thanet.*"

Tracey Emin, one of the famous Britartists, grew up in Thanet and has announced to Margate in green neon: *I Never Stopped Loving You.*

TS Eliot (1888 – 1965) wrote large sections of *The Waste Land* while convalescing in Margate.

David Watkin (1925 – 2008) the award-winning cinematographer was born in Margate. He worked with such directors as Ken Russell and Franco Zeffirelli. His work can be seen in such classics as *Out of Africa* and *Chariots of Fire*.

Famous entertainers with Blue Plaques to be discovered in Margate include **Eric Morecambe**, **Hattie Jacques** and **John Le Mesurier**.

Download a copy of the Margate Heritage Trail on www.visitthanet.co.uk



Annual events

FEBRUARY

GEEK (Games Expo East Kent) a festival of play and games with hundreds of video games on original consoles, workshops, talks, tournaments and presentations.

MARCH & OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

Margate Beach Cross is a real spectator occasion as Margate Main Sands are transformed into a thrilling course for motocross bikes and quads.

MAY

Margate Meltdown is a major motorcycle ride from the Ace Café, London, to Margate for a celebration of motorcycles and memorabilia, music and entertainments.

AUGUST

Margate Soul Weekend and Carnival – visitors from across the world enjoy the best of soul music and the resort's traditional seaside carnival filled with colourful floats.

Volleyball England Beach Finals - see the top beach volleyball champions battle it out on Margate Main Sands.

What a Vintage Carry On – a popular vintage festival with markets, bus tours, music and more.

Food and drink, where to stay

ON THE MENU

Look out for the opportunity to enjoy a great Kent Breakfast – fare to suit all tastes for a morning boost with more than 60 per cent of the food and drink served produced in Kent. www.producedinkent.co.uk/kent-breakfast

Margate is home to a wide range of eateries and fine dining opportunities, featuring different cuisines, alongside award-winning fish 'n chips. Restaurants serving local produce, including seafood, in original and unexpected dishes, such as multi award-winning The Ambrette (www.theambrette.co.uk) in the Old Town, are always popular and booking is advised.

Check out a wide range of local produce at Cliftonville's Farmers Market, a regular winner in the Produced in Kent Awards, or in local shops such as Kent Crisps, goodies from Margate Smokehouse or a pint or two from one of the

many micro-pubs opening across the Isle of Thanet. For a real taste of the traditional seaside sample some of Mannings' Cockles and Whelks on Margate harbour arm.

Visitors this summer will be among the first to enjoy top quality local produce bought within sight of Turner Contemporary and Margate Main Sands at the Old Kent Market (www.oldkentmarket.com)

Find out more at www.visitthanet.co.uk

WHERE TO STAY?

Visitors are spoiled for choice for places to stay in Margate and its environs from new and restored state-of-the-art boutique hotels alongside the Old Town to embracing views over the sea and sands; contemporary guest houses and B&Bs as well as self-catering cottages and houses or camping. Discover the full range of accredited accommodation at www.visitthanet.co.uk/accommodation





Roots, revival and regeneration

Once a small coastal village, Margate's development as a health and pleasure destination and then into one of the most popular seaside holiday spots in the country led to rapid expansion along the seafront and inland.

Growth was fuelled by the need for accommodation not only for visitors but all the people working in the tourism industry as well as people keen to acquire permanent and retirement homes for all-year enjoyment of the coast and its many differing and stunning landscapes.

Thanks to public and private investment, including the arrival of the internationally-acclaimed gallery at Turner Contemporary overlooking Margate Main Sands, the resort is once again a leading must-see UK destination meeting the needs of weekenders, day trippers and classic family holiday fun enthusiasts.

Luxury and themed boutique hotels, stylish B&Bs and guest houses and a range of restaurants have opened to welcome the new generation of visitors.

The golden sands of Margate and the rock pools of Walpole Bay promise hours of entertainment in the fresh air while the energetic can test their skills in a wide range of watersports, coastal walking routes and cycle paths.

From this summer (2015), the traditional thrills and spills of the Golden Age of the Great British Seaside amusement experience can be enjoyed once again with the opening of the first phase of the redevelopment of Dreamland with stylishly restored and recreated classic rides and amusements www.dreamland.co.uk

Meanwhile, Old Kent Market, featuring stalls laden with local food and drink within a few paces of Turner Contemporary, is set to open soon and enhance every picnic being assembled to be enjoyed on the beach or on the cliff tops. Brewing is returning to Margate too with the opening of its first micro-brewery this year www.margatebrewery.com

A visit to the regular changing exhibitions at Turner Contemporary can be followed by gentle strolls through the cobbled streets of Margate Old Town now all an artistic buzz with galleries and workshops, vintage and retro shops, and a wide range of contemporary eateries and cafés for relaxing and people watching.

Visitors can regularly sit back and marvel at the dramatic sunsets over the sands that so inspired JMW Turner when he lived and painted in the town before selecting from an excellent choice of fine dining venues and exploring the numerous entertainments on offer at the town's theatres and venues.



Dreamland





Botany Bay



Viking Bay



So close

BROADSTAIRS

Broadstairs succeeds in more than satisfying the needs of today's generations of short break, weekend visitors and daytrippers who flock to its beaches. Yet the coastal honeypot retains all the charms and features of a traditional seaside destination.

Morelli's, the quintessential 1950s ice cream parlour, still stands at the top of the chalk cliffs overlooking the flowers planted along the promenade and the gently sloping sands and rock pools of Viking Bay.

Charles Dickens, one of the town's most famous former visitors and residents, would easily recognise the narrow streets and flint walls in the older parts of the town and the streets winding down to the small fishing harbour.

Throughout the summer demand is high for the town's many guesthouses and B&Bs, self-catering houses and apartments.

As a resort, and a long-standing favourite destination for people of all ages and interests, Broadstairs has more than held its own and is thriving in the 21st century.

- Seven sand-filled, family-friendly Blue Flag and Seaside Award beaches and bays
- Stunning chalk cliffs including caves and much-photographed stacks at Botany Bay
- Closest surfing beaches to London and best in the south east
- Timeless seaside charm

- Traditional fishing harbour, cobbled squares and narrow streets
- Vibrant nightlife economy and exciting eateries
- Classic ice cream parlours and coffee shops
- Clifftop gardens and bandstand
- Clifftop and foreshore strolls, cycling and golf
- Blues Bash (February), Spring Fair (Easter), Dickens Festival (June), Folk Week and Water Gala (August), Broadstairs Food Festival (October).

A Broadstairs press pack is available, see back cover.



Westcliff Arcade



Royal Harbour



Ramsgate Tunnels

RAMSGATE

Ramsgate, a favourite seaside destination of Princess Victoria, is an architectural jewel in the coastal crown of the Isle of Thanet on the north-eastern edge of Kent – the Garden of England.

The town's long maritime history as a port, with the country's only Royal Harbour, and its thriving modern marina have contributed to the development of a relaxing Mediterranean-style waterfront filled with a wealth of bustling bistros and restaurants.

The resort's fine weather, superb sands, sea air and stunning views from the chalk cliffs alongside elegant side streets, independent shops, galleries and seaside entertainments add even more flavour to Ramsgate's popular café culture.

- UK's only Royal Harbour
- Golden sands, famous family-friendly beach and bay, boat trips and clifftop walks
- Modern marina filled with luxury yachts
- Augustus Pugin's house The Grange and St. Augustine's Church
- Elegant Georgian, Regency and Victorian architecture – hundreds of listed buildings
- Ramsgate Tunnels - deep shelter tunnels built to protect civilians during WWII
- Thriving continental café culture along the south-facing waterfront

- Fine eateries serving local produce including seafoods
- Retro and contemporary boutique hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and self-catering
- Events include Great Bucket and Spade Run (June), Ramsgate Week, an alternative to Cowes (July), Ramsgate Festival (August) and Heritage Open Days (September).

A Ramsgate press pack is available, see back cover.



Quex House



Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum



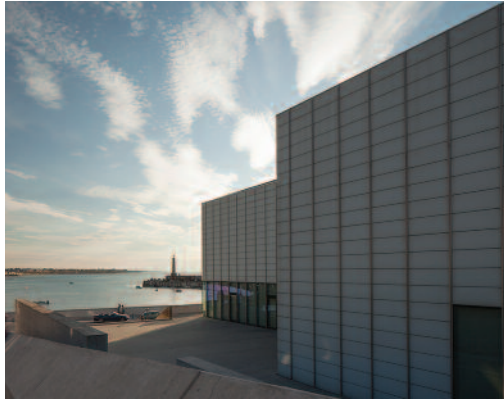
Minnis Bay

THANET VILLAGES

Just a short distance from the coast visitors discover a treasure chest of delights in Thanet's traditional villages.

Popular visitor gems include:

- Quex Park Estate and the Powell-Cotton Museum, plus their annual events diary, including I Love Vintage (April), Museum at Night (May), Gears of Change and Fought for Freedom (September), Quexmas (November)
- The Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum at Manston
- RAF Manston History Museum
- Minster Show – (www.minstershow.org.uk) celebrating its 129th anniversary in July 2015. Minster and neighbouring villages work together to present action-packed, entertainment celebrating the success of flower and vegetable growers, cooks, jam and preserve makers and more.
- Minster Abbey at Minster – possibly the oldest inhabited house in the country near where St Augustine led the first Christian mass in Britain
- Monkton Nature Reserve and Observatory – trails, UK's first artificial bat cave, fossils and visitor centre
- Birchington and Westgate – coastal villages with Blue Flag beaches at Minnis Bay, West Bay and St. Mildred's Bay



Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate – why visit?

Londoners have been **escaping** to the Isle of Thanet for more than 200 years ... for the **laidback** seaside vibe ... breathtaking sandy beaches ... **fresh** sea air ... and **romantic** Turner skies ...

Here at the very **edge** of the **Garden of England**, three **Georgian and Victorian** resorts, each with its own distinctive character – Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate – **cluster** around the **bays** at the far end of the **peninsula**.

There's a **retro** feel to these harbour towns, with their remarkable 18th and 19th century **architecture**, their **classic seaside heritage** and kitsch, their eclectic attractions and live arts and music venues. And there is a variety of **independent** places to shop, eat, drink and stay.

Miles of low **chalk cliffs** edge the peninsula, sheltering a string of **secluded, unspoilt sandy bays**. Chalk **rockpools**, chalk stacks and **rare**

chalk reefs teem with **wildlife**. These are the closest **surfing beaches** to the capital city: a popular choice with southeast boarders.

Artists, writers and musicians have long been inspired by this almost-island ... and continue to be drawn here. **Turner** said Thanet had "the loveliest skies in all Europe" ... for **Dickens**, Broadstairs was "the freshest, freest place" ... and Tracey **Emin** declares in green neon on Margate seafront: "I never stopped loving you".

The Isle's a **historic landing place** steeped in symbolism for the story of Britain ... the **first Saxons, Hengist and Horsa**, arrived and settled here ... and **St Augustine** first stepped onto these shores on his way to nearby **Canterbury**.

For this is the **furthest** south east you can go in Britain ... almost touching mainland **Europe** ... yet these days only 75 minutes from central London ...

And now with the **Turner Contemporary** gallery, the return of the iconic pleasure park **Dreamland**, reimagined for the 21st century, and **high-speed trains** from the capital ... a **new generation** is discovering this **original seaside escape**.

For further media information including packs on Thanet, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, press trips and access to up-to-date images, please contact Julie Edwards, Senior Tourism Officer at Visit Thanet, tel: 01843 577671 or email: julie.edwards@thanet.gov.uk

For further information about all Thanet visitor destinations and attractions go to www.visitthanet.co.uk

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VISIT THANET
Margate • Broadstairs • Ramsgate

