

# For Discerning Gay Travelers

# **Brighton, 2 Days**

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# **Guide Description**



AUTHOR NOTE: I've organized a trip for you in Brighton on Gay Pride weekend, simply the best time to come to Brighton! Book early to avoid disappoint. The Hilton Metropole is arguably THE HOTEL to stay at. If you fancy something more hedonistic, there are also several hotels in the area that double as saunas and/ or clubs like LEGENDS and THE AMSTERDAM. Have a stroll around the Lanes to round out your partying at Preston Park, the Brighton Pride Parade Hub. In Terms of clubs, I thoroughly recommend The Queens Arms and Charles Bar on the Brighton waterfront. Expect them to be packed on Pride Saturday. Mix it up with the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery and add some gourmet food and stir. Quite a cocktail!



# Day 1 - Brighton

DAY NOTE: The Gay Pride Festival and Parade is arguably the biggest event of the year. Brighton Pride is the best pride celebration in Southern England dwarfing the London celebration. Brighton is the Gay capital of the UK and synonymous with fun and frolics. Whether you are single, taken or somewhere in between you'll have a blast at Brighton Pride. Be sure to book many months in advance to make sure you can get a hotel room. The Metropole is likely to be booked ages before the parade. Make sure to visit the North Laines and the South Laines if you spend some time shopping. Havana is a gorgeous fancy restaurant which won't be as packed as those in Kemptown, the centre of the action.



## **Hilton Brighton Metropole**

Seafront hotel where many business conventions are held. Excellent for business travelers and those willing to pay a little bit extra for luxury.



### **North Laine**

The North Laine is Brighton's main shopping drag and full of one-of-a-kind boutiques with attitude.



#### Lanes (The)

Walk the old winding streets in Brighton's Lanes and have a look at the jewelry shops and designer boutiques.



## Havana

Romantic Cuban food in swanky surrounding that will impress your date.

# Day 2 - Brighton

DAY NOTE: Stop at the Queens Arms on Sunday Afternoon for the weekly cabaret. It is a real treat which lures some of the top acts on the circuit like The Boy George Experience. If you fancy something more cultural try the Brighton Museum & Art Gallery on the North Laine. Top it off with a healthy meal to Terre a Terre to combat last nights excesses. Happy Pride!



#### The Queens Arms

A small lively LGBT club that has free drag shows at the weekends and unlimited drinks nights.



## **Brighton Museum & Art Gallery**

Historical and contemporary art collection next door to the Pavilion.



Terre a Terre

Fantastic meatless dishes

# Day 1 - Brighton

**QUICK NOTE** 

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#### contact:

tel: +44 1273 77 5432 fax: +44 1273 20 7764 http://clkuk.tradedoubler.com /click

#### location:

Kings Road East Sussex Brighton E. Sussex BN1 2FU



# **Hilton Brighton Metropole**

DESCRIPTION: Originally built in 1889, with a handful of its rooms housed in a postwar addition, the Brighton Metropole is the largest hotel in Brighton and one of the city's top three or four hotels (though not as grand as the Grand or Thistle Brighton). This hotel, with a central seafront location, often hosts big conferences. The refurbished rooms are comfortable and generous in size with roomy sitting areas. The spacious bathrooms include faux marble vanities and tub/shower combos. Each room has a PlayStation game console. © Frommer's



Hotels.com

#### contact:

tel: +44 906 711 2255

## location:

Church Street Brighton BN1



# North Laine

## **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Don't forget to get some "Brighton Rock" or fudge whilst on the Laines. Brighton Rock can be found in most sweet shops. Some of the smaller shops sell homemade fudge.

DESCRIPTION: The North Laine is generally thought of as the focal point of Brighton. This what they call "The Main Drag". The North Laine is mostly comprised of boutique shops and small cafes. Sometimes walking on the North Laine, you'll spot a stray musician or a bubble blower, adding to the overall effect. One of the main clubs Komedia in Brighton is also notably on the North Laine. © NileGuide



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#### contact:

tel: +44 (0)1273 29 2589 (Tourist Information)

#### location:

East Street Brighton

## hours:

24hrs



# Lanes (The)

## **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Make sure to visit the vintage teddy bear store near the fountain. The only place you'll find a stuffed black swan and 50's dolls. If you like inanimate friends, you'll love this shop.

DESCRIPTION: The Lanes house some of the best shops and restaurants in the city. A lot of the more upscale brands can be



Photo coutesy of Frank Jepsen



www.nileguide.com

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found here, like MAC cosmetics and Karen Millen. Dukes Lane is particularly visually attractive and you'll love having a cuppa tea by the fountain. Honestly, for many the highlight of the city. © NileGuide

### contact:

tel: +44 1273 77 3388 fax: +44 1273 74 8923 http://www.havana.uk.com/

### location:

32 Duke Street Brighton East Sussex BN1 1AG

#### hours:

Daily 9a-11p



## Havana

DESCRIPTION: Stunningly stylish, Havana attracts a well dressed crowd of diners. Incredibly clean, cream decor with dark wood and beautifully set tables, this restaurant is not for those who want fast food. The front serves as a cafe bar during the day and a cocktail lounge at night. Breakfasts have recently been added to the menu and there are several lovingly prepared lunches on offer. An enticing cafe style menu is a little less pricey. Dinner is a bit more expensive, but worth it for great, contemporary cuisine in stunning surroundings. © wcities.com



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# Day 2 - Brighton

**QUICK NOTE** 

DAY NOTE: Stop at the Queens Arms on Sunday Afternoon for the weekly cabaret. It is a real treat which lures some of the top acts on the circuit like The Boy George Experience. If you fancy something more cultural try the Brighton Museum & Art Gallery on the North Laine. Top it off with a healthy meal to Terre a Terre to combat last nights excesses. Happy Pride!

#### contact:

tel: +44 1273 69 6873

#### location:

7 George Street Brighton BN2 1RH



# The Queens Arms

DESCRIPTION: A small friendly pub, the Queens Arms has been well frequented for a number of years. Bright yellow and blue decor as well as a custom made carpet complete with the name of the pub gives an attractive look. There's plenty of entertainment here; cabaret on Mondays plus freebies to "Mantrap" at Revenge and karaoke most other nights. © wcities.com

#### contact:

tel: +44 1273 29 0900 http://www.brighton.virtualmu seum.info/

#### location:

4-5 Pavilion BuildingsBrighton East Sussex BN11EE

#### hours:

Tues 10am-7pm; Wed-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 2-5pm



# **Brighton Museum & Art Gallery**

#### **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Stop in the museum café for a cup of tea or a sandwich. Don't forget to see the puppets in the Performance Gallery. Brings out the kid in everyone.

DESCRIPTION: The Brighton Museum and Art Gallery is part of the Pavilion. It showcases 9 different types of art including costumes and local paintings. If you are traveling with a disabled person, you will not have a problem visiting this gallery.

© NileGuide



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### contact:

tel: +44 (0)1273 72 9051 fax: +44 (0)1273 32 7561 http://www.terreaterre.co.uk

#### location:

71 East Street Brighton East Sussex BN1 1HQ

#### hours:

Tu-F noon-10:30p, Sa noon-11p, Su noon-10p



# Terre a Terre

DESCRIPTION: This vegetarian restaurant has achieved national acclaim for its fine cuisine. Unlike many vegetarian restaurants, Terre a Terre presents dishes that are made with a light, sophisticated touch. The decor is chic and modern, but takes on an altogether more romantic tone with candles and dimmed lighting in the evening. The food is simply superb—it is beautifully presented, the Twice Baked Camembert Soufflé is divine. This is a deservedly popular restaurant. Be sure to book in advance. © wcities.com



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# My List

#### contact:

tel: +44 1273 29 2594 http://www.visitbrighton.com/i nterests\_\_themes/brightons\_v illages/35.asp

#### location:

St Georges Road Brighton BN2



# Kemptown

### **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Don't forget to go to Sunday Afternoon cabaret at the Queens Arms. Some of the best drag performers gig there and drink prices are low. Don't be afraid to be heckled!

DESCRIPTION: Kemptown is a grittier area of the city but it's so alternative and gay friendly, you'll love it. Kemptown is quite a hip place and there are many great restaurants to choose from. Make sure to head toward Upper St. James Street past all the antiques shops to where it looks like it ends, and you'll find Kemptown Village, a hidden hotspot. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of dan taylor

#### contact:

tel: +44 1273 64 7101 / +44 1273 64 7100 (Box Office) http://www.komedia.co.uk/ind ex.php

#### location:

44-47 Gardner Street Brighton East Sussex BN1 1UN

## hours:

Daily Noon-7p

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## Komedia

#### **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Remember to book really early in advance.

DESCRIPTION: Komedia is a popular haunt that presents comedy, theatre, workshops and live music. The Krater Comedy Club takes place every Saturday and Sunday evening and presents a line-up of established and new comedians. There are two shows on Saturday, the later one is always a bit more raucous, but either is always a great night out. More informal performances are presented on Sunday. Ticket prices and show times vary; call for details. There is a fine restaurant, "Curve," on the ground floor for a pre-show meal. © wcities.com

## contact:

tel: +44 1273 68 1546 fax: +44 1273 62 2663 http://www.newsteinehotel.co m/

#### location:

12a New Steine Brighton EN BN2 1PB



# **New Steine Hotel**

DESCRIPTION: The owners of this hotel hope to make your stay an enjoyable one by providing a friendly and helpful service. Not only do they speak French and Spanish but they offer a laundry service and can make reservations for their guests at local theatres and attractions. There is a lounge in which to relax and play board games. The hotel is situated in a pleasant garden square in the Kemp Town district of Brighton. This area has an ambience all of its own. There are lots of bars, cafes and restaurants as well as several interesting shops. The seafront is only minutes away. © wcities.com



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#### contact:

tel: +44 (0)1273 29 0000 (Tourist Information)

#### location:

Kings Road Arches Brighton BN1 1NB



# The Doughnut

### **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Take some photos of the doughnut. Sit your kid in it. Or your lover. Make a joke "Ahh...look at Tom, he's such a doughnut". Laugh to yourself about your familiarity with British Slang. Rinse. Repeat.

DESCRIPTION: The Doughnut is right near the pinnacle of all Brighton attractions, the Pier. The Pier is the centre of everything. You have the arcades and the candy floss, the rides and the terrible foods that are terribly naughty to eat. The statue itself is a marmite sort of deal, either you like it or you don't. It's kind of a weird looking thing. © NileGuide



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#### contact:

tel: +44 1273 67 0743 fax: +44 1273 41 7739 http://www.infinityfoods.co.uk/ the-cafe.html

#### location:

50 Gardner Street Brighton East Sussex BN1 1UN

#### hours:

M-Sa 9:30a-5p

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# **Infinity Foods Cafe**

## **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

This place is packed in the afternoons. Come after the lunch rush to get a seat.

DESCRIPTION: Infinity Foods Co-operative also own this cafe, in the North Laine area. Everything is freshly produced and fair traded with many organic items. On two levels, this is the place to stop for a healthy snack or lunch. Frequented by a wide range of customers, you won't find greasy fry-ups here. Drinks include herbal teas, coffees, juices and soya milk is available on request. Chunky salads are great value, soups and other snacks look tasty and as fresh. Organic cakes are delicious - try the tofu cheesecake, you won't be disappointed and it's filling too. © wcities.com

# contact:

tel: +44 1273 77 7575 fax: +44 1273 23 0663 http://www.tindrum.co.uk

#### location:

43 James's Street Brighton East Sussex BN1 1RG

#### hours:

M-W 10a-11p, Th-Sa 10a-1a, Su 10a-10:30p



# Tin Drum

DESCRIPTION: The Tin Drum can be found at the Seven Dials, a 10 minute walk from Churchill Square. No-one would believe that in a previous incarnation this lively cafe bar was once a late night supermarket. The spacious interior now has large windows at the front, ambient lighting and brightly painted back walls. Wooden furniture, books on shelves and local art work add a homely touch. The Tin Drum is also child friendly and high chairs & crayons can be provided. The food menu has a Polish slant and is extremely inviting. Starters include delights such as goats cheese and red onion tartlets. Mains are equally good. Try potato rosti with sauerkraut and apple topped with poached egg and gruyere. © wcities.com



# **Brighton Snapshot**

## **Local Info**

If the sun shines anywhere in the, it will shine on the coast. So whilst finding sun in Britain can seem like winning the National Lottery, you will most likely find the sun shining inBrighton. However, the fantastic thing is that Brighton is a city, not just a seaside resort so the enjoyability of your holiday does not depend on Mother Nature's whims. If the sun plays games with you, you can always head over to theNorth Laines to do a spot of shopping. Brighton has more of an upper-end vibe than most seaside resorts in the UK.

Central Brighton, The North Laines and The Lanes

Brighton is a cheerful place, where basically anything goes. Movements would that would be marginalised elsewhere in the country, like the punk, goth or gay scenes co-exist alongside day trippers and yummy mummies. No head-butting with mohawk spikes, this is a peaceful place. Brighton is 1 hour by train from London, so it is a popular weekend destination or holiday extension.

Most visitors check out the Pavillion, which might be the most striking building you have ever seen and is even better inside. The rooms are furnished in historical decadence with Oriental touches. Upstairs you can also order a proper English cream tea and sit on the balcony overlooking the Pavilion gardens.

TheNorth Laines andThe Lanes give Brighton its village-y feel. You can literally spend hours weaving in and out of the small streets shopping in the boutiques or having an inexpensive bite at eat mouthwatering but not pocket breakingPiccolo.

There are a lot of restaurants near The North Laines and The Lanes and they are often good value for money and are not at all touristy. If you are wondering the difference between the North Laines and The Lanes, it involves the North Laines being shop-lined and funky and The Lanes(also called The South Lanes) looking more like the old fishing village streets that they are.

The Lanes are more up-market and have stores like MAC cosmetics, the classy England at Home furnishings and house the jewelery district. One of the best things

about Brighton is that the whole city hasn't gone corporate like many other places and the landscape is still dominated by individually owned businesses. If you are particularly into vintage clothing, try Snoopers Paradise. If you go insane for fudge, try Roly's. If you fancy corporate high street fashion, go to American Apparel near Churchill Square, between Brunswick and Churchill Square. If you like to accumulate material possessions or want to pick up some punk fashions, you'll find something suitable in Brighton.

#### Kemptown And Preston Park

There is lot to do inCentral Brighton and the many smaller areas part of the city, likeKemptown, which is the gay district. Kemptown has the best gay bars and clubs like theAmsterdam, theQueen's Arms and Club Revenge. Pick up a copy of Gscene magazine, which is the gay magazine for Brighton and Hove at Prowler Shop on St. James Street. If you happen to be the UK during the first week of August, look at forBrighton Pride atPreston Park, which is a massive park with a Japanese rock garden across the street. The park also bordersPreston Manor.

### Brunswick And Hove

Brunswick and Hove are two areas that are quieter than Central Brighton but still have a lot going on. Check out St Ann's Wells Park in Hove with its lovely flower garden and have a picnic. This park has a playground and tennis courts as well.

Hove is a good place to stop for several reasons. The relative quietness can be a breath of fresh, salty air. This rings particularly true if you are trying to sunbathe on the beach or clear your mind. Central Brighton's buzz in the summer months is obviously infectious but if you require something more subtle, you'll find respite in Hove.

# Brighton Seafront And Marina

Saving the best for last, theseafront is really the biggest and best attraction. The seafront stretches for miles and miles and houses the World Famous Brighton Pier, which is a pier filled to the brim with rides and junk food. Further from the seafront is Brighton Marina, the largest marina in the UK where you will find many restaurants and the occasional farmers market. The

scenic Mermaid Walk in the marina is a great place to stop and have a bite to eat and overlook the boats.

© NileGuide

# **Restaurants Insights**

Brighton is a traditional food mecca and an"alt" food haven. Aside from the nobrainer but seriously good fish and chips, you can find basically any cuisine in Brighton.

There are really great upper end-eateries like Havana, which serves Cuban food in a romantic atmosphere and the famous Food For Friends, which is THE vegetarian Brighton restaurant. These places are great for a special night out but most of the restaurants in the city are far less expensive. One underrated place that is great for lunch is The Cherry Tree, a cafe in Kemptown. The salad plates and soups here are great value and the owner is likely to come over and speak to you personally. Bill's Produce Store is fantastic whether you stop there for a quick snack or for a proper meal. The bread is freshly baked and this place is practically a local institution. Not enough can be said about the fantastic Lick, which serves soft-serve frozen yogurt and ice cream. Try the dark chocolate chips for a perfect finish. Lick was voted" Best frozen yogurt in Europe" in a recent contest and it is really, really good yogurt. If you have a family, you will be really hard to find anyone unhappy at the Harvester, despite different dietary requirements. The salad bar is amazing and you just can't go wrong for a simple dinner.

© NileGuide

# **Nightlife Insights**

If you're looking for hip, cosmopolitan and relaxed, look no further. This place is big on entertainment and is a renowned weekend getaway.

#### Clubs

Outside London, Brighton has one of the most vibrant clubbing cultures in Britain, easily rivaling Leeds and Manchester. For a big night out its definitely worth visiting some pre-club bars around The Lanes, near the seafront- The Fishbowl, Ali-Cats,



# **Brighton Snapshot continued**

The Prodigal, The Western Front- and then depending on your tastes, a visit to Kings Road Arches down by the beach or West Street which spreads down from the Clock Tower in the centre of town. The West Street vibe is more young and populist, while Kings Road Arches attracts the more discerning clubber. West Street has Event II which puts on major gigs in town as well as huge club nights and traveling road shows. At Kings Road Arches look to The Zap, probably Brighton's best known club which plays host weekly to the big names in DJ club culture. Just along from the Zap is The Beach, another draw for the big name record spinners, whilst down at the other end of the beach strip, the Honeyclub puts on equally well-attended, pumping nights of club anthems. Other choices include Phonic: Hoop at The Enigma, Casablanca or the Jazz Rooms.

#### Music

The live music scene isn't half bad either. With regular showcases each month entitled Brighton Rocks! at the Concorde 2 there's an explosion in indie-based sound. while venues such as The Freebutt and Sussex Arts Club cater for the hip-hop crew, punk rockers from abroad, electronic wizardry, folk and more mainstream pop. The Event II puts on the bigger gigs along with the Brighton Centre. For a touch of classical, there's the Brighton Dome, St Bart's Church, the Old Market Theatre, St Peter's Church, Sallis Benney Theatre, the Pavilion Theatre and Glyndebourne(near Lewes). Look out for the best in classical orchestras around the time of the Brighton Festival in May.

#### Art

Brighton is brimming with artistic talent, it's a creative town and one of the leading lights in multi-media digital arts. The Lighthouse company based in the Brighton Media Centre organizes many digital arts exhibitions which are put on usually at the Fabrica Gallery, renowned for its trail-blazing shows.

Other galleries leading the way include the George Street Gallery, Gallery 73, Gardner Arts Centre, University of Brighton Art Gallery and Phoenix Arts Centre. Hove Museum and Brighton Museum& Art Gallery house more established works but also play host to notable national touring exhibitions.

#### Cinema

Brighton is blessed with all manner of cinematic delights including the oldest independent cinema in the country,
The Duke Of York. Come here for low budget, independent films as well as themed festivals and art flicks. It has a beautiful art deco interior. For all Hollywood blockbusters, there's the Odeon multiplex along the seafront and the UGC multiplex at Brighton Marina boasting more than ten screens. There's also mainstream showings at the Gardner Arts Centre and the Sallis Benney Theatre shows occasional films as does Ali Cats bar.

## Comedy

Brighton is awash with stand-up comedians. The main place to see them is Komedia. Here you can see The Krater Club, a brilliantly conceived comedy showcase. Gardner Arts Centre also puts on big-name acts to rival the Komedia.

#### Theater

Theater is well catered for in Brighton from the big west end shows to the more experimental cutting edge theater. The Theatre Royal is the place to see the bigger performances, Oscar Wilde, Shakespeare, even Ben Elton. Komedia, the Sallis Benney, the Pavilion Theatre, the Corn Exchange and the Gardner Arts Centre also put on nationally acclaimed performances as well as those shows just breaking through. There's a wealth of smaller and more locally based drama to be found at the New Venture Theatre, Marlborough Theatre, Little Theatre, Ray Tindle Centre or the Sussex Arts Club- if you wanted you could probably take in a different performance every night of the week.

Dance

Dance is a Brighton specialty. The Gardner Arts Centre, The Komedia and the Sallis Benney Theatre have regular dance shows. These are often experimental in nature and feature world renowned companies.

#### Museums

Brighton has a number of museums from the mainstream Brighton Museum in the center of town to the more specialist Booth Museum of Natural History, the Fishing Museum and the British Engineerium. There's also the old Museum of Penny Slot Machines along the seafront. All of these museums offer free admission.

Whatever your age or interest, come rain or shine, day or night, there is always something new to do in Brighton.

Photo by: JP Oakar ©

## **Fun Facts**

Brighton State/Province: England Country: United Kingdom

Brighton by the Numbers: Elevation: 30 feet Population: 121,000 Average January temp: 5 degrees C(41 degrees F) Average July temp: 15 degrees C(64 degrees F)

Quick Facts: Time zone: GMT Electricity: 240 volts AC, 50Hz; square three-pin plugs are standard Country dialing code: 44

Did you know? Brighton is one of the most famous seaside resorts in Great Britain. Beginning in 1783, the Prince of Wales(later King George IV) patronized the city, transforming it from a fishing town into a fashionable resort. He also commissioned the Royal Pavilion in the city. In the 18th century, Dr Richard Russell published his thesis on sea bathing, which declared Brighton's salt water as a health benefit, prompting both the sick and the rich to visit the city.

Orientation: A city in Southeast England, Brighton is located on the English Channel, south of London.

