



# Lonely Planet names East Anglia a top destination choice for 2025

East Anglia is a top destination to visit in 2025, according to Lonely Planet's prestigious 'Best in Travel' list. No wonder, spanning Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Cambridgeshire, this part of England boasts unspoiled coastlines, lush rolling countryside and numerous characterful towns and villages.

East of England

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*Visitors can navigate the scenic waterways of the Broads National Park, wander along Suffolk's heritage coastline, and marvel at Cambridge's iconic university. The sandy North Norfolk coast is home to an abundance of Blue Flag beaches, while cities and towns including Norwich, Ely and Bury St Edmunds have featured in film productions such as The Crown, The Personal History of David Copperfield, Full Metal Jacket and Maestro. With its rich history and vibrant culture, East Anglia promises unique experiences that reflect the dynamic spirit of Britain...*

## Head outdoors in Norfolk

Norfolk is a region celebrated for its sweeping beaches, charming windmills, and the winding waterways of the [Norfolk Broads](#). Visitors can [hire a boat](#) and set sail through these picturesque waterways, one of the best ways to take in the scenic views. The historic city of [Norwich](#), with its

blend of medieval architecture and modern culture, offers a wealth of opportunities for exploration, including the iconic [Norwich Castle](#). This 11th-century fortress, now a museum, features extensive collections ranging from archaeology to fine art and regularly hosts exhibitions about the region's past.

For a taste of local life, head to [Jarrold's](#), a family-run department store established in 1770. This Norwich institution is known for its wide range of designer brands and products, including Norfolk-made delicacies available in its extensive food hall. What's more, Jarrold's also boasts a cosy café, a choice of three stylish restaurants, two wine bars and a seafood bar. Another essential stop in Norfolk's capital is [Norwich Market](#), one of the UK's largest and oldest open-air markets, where visitors can browse a variety of stalls selling everything from fresh produce to street food.

In May, the [Norfolk and Norwich Festival](#) is a major highlight in the cultural calendar, featuring 17 days filled with international music, arts, theatre and literature across various venues and public spaces in Norwich and the surrounding countryside. Or hop in a buggy for wildlife encounters with a difference, as part of unique tours and luxury safari stays at [Watatunga Wildlife Reserve](#). Whether visitors are seeking outdoor adventures, eager to sample local flavours, or looking to explore the heritage of market towns, Norfolk is brimming with diverse experiences.

## Uncover the past in Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire, renowned for the prestigious University of Cambridge, blends historic charm with picturesque landscapes. In [Cambridge](#), visitors can explore the centuries-old colleges, with highlights including the stunning architecture of King's College Chapel and the tranquil River Cam, where they can glide along in a [traditional punt](#).

For a deep dive into the city's history, visitors can join a lively [guided tour](#) covering iconic sites and insights into the university's storied past, from tales of famous students including Isaac Newton, to stories of student pranks. Visitors can choose from themed tours such as the 'Cambridge Ghost Tour' or follow in the footsteps of famous novelists and poets. Alternatively, the [Cambridge University Botanic Garden](#), a 40-acre oasis featuring themed gardens, offers a scenic spot for relaxation.

Beyond the city itself, picturesque villages and lush farmland await, as well as the medieval cathedral city of [Ely](#). Having featured in Netflix's hit show *The Crown* and Bradley Cooper's biographical romantic drama *Maestro*, it is a prime spot for leisurely walks and riverside picnics. But the Cambridgeshire countryside offers more than just rolling hills. Gin enthusiasts can discover a world of flavours during a [gin masterclass](#) at the award-winning Cambridge Distillery. Ranging from gin tastings to cocktail-making lessons, the experiences allow visitors to get a taste for the spirit, featuring everything from Japanese gin blended with yuzu and sansho pepper, to the rich earthiness of Italian truffle gin.

For fans of military history, [IWM Duxford](#) (Imperial War Museums) showcases military aviation with a comprehensive collection of aircraft and regular live flying displays throughout the year. The former RAF airfield was also home to the US Army Air Force 78th Fighter Group during the Second World War, as depicted in the Apple TV+ series *Masters of the Air*.

## Be inspired by the landscapes of Essex

Essex is rich in maritime history and scenic beauty. The coastline boasts sandy beaches in Frinton-on-Sea and Jaywick, and bustling harbours in Harwich and Walton-on-the-Naze. Inland, an array of charming villages set within an idyllic region known as 'Constable Country' – spanning Essex and Suffolk – invite visitors to discover the landscapes that inspired the famous painter,

John Constable.

For a luxurious getaway, consider [Piglets Boutique Bed and Breakfast](#), an award-winning retreat nestled in the countryside near Saffron Walden, offering locally sourced meals and a natural swimming pond. Alternatively, relive history through outdoor theatre performances and medieval reenactments at [Hedingham Castle](#), a well-preserved Norman fortress that hosts guided tours and various events throughout the year. Visitors can also explore the grand interiors and expansive grounds of [Audley End House and Gardens](#), a magnificent 17th-century mansion.

For gardening aficionados, [RHS Garden Hyde Hall](#) features 360 acres of themed gardens with seasonal displays. [Beth Chatto's Gardens](#), renowned for its diverse ecosystems, also provide insights into sustainable gardening practices. Wine lovers can join a guided tour at [Saffron Grange Vineyard](#), where they learn about local grape-growing techniques and enjoy tastings of English sparkling wines paired with regional cheeses.

## **Delve into Suffolk's rich heritage**

From charming market town [Bury St Edmunds](#) to [Ipswich](#) and the historic [wool towns](#) of the Dedham Vale, Suffolk is famed for its rich heritage. Visitors can spend an afternoon on the sandy beaches at Aldeburgh, renowned for its vibrant [music festival](#), or try exceptional seafood served up by local Michelin-star restaurants like [The Suffolk](#). Further inland, foodies can indulge at [The Unruly Pig](#), an award-winning gastropub in Woodbridge offering a seasonal menu that highlights local produce. Its cosy atmosphere and blend of British and Italian-inspired dishes help make it a top foodie destination.

For one-of-a-kind entertainment, from world-class drama to music, [Thornington Theatre](#) provides an atmospheric outdoor setting nestled within the Suffolk woodland. Or spy some of Britain's rarest birdlife at [Minsmere](#), a coastal reserve packed with trails and wetlands.