

FOR WOMEN WHO WANT MORE FROM THEIR WORLD

STYLIST

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It's complicated.

Escape Routes

LIVE BY THE SEA



INDULGE IN MIAMI-STYLE BEACH LIFE NEAR ST IVES

The beach huts of all beach huts have arrived on the west Cornish coast. *Stylist's* Susan Riley wants to change into a dryrobe and move in forever

Contentment is hard to find in building form but I have found it: Three Mile Beach. Otherwise known as beach-hut heaven and a place to keep making happy, satisfied sighs all day long.

Three Mile Beach is a hamlet of 15 colour-pop dwellings tucked behind the entrance to Gwithian Beach on the West Cornwall coast – and as holiday houses go, they are stand out in every single way. This starts with their appearance because each house is painted brightly in contrasting hues and named after a corresponding pop song. Ours, an intense plum, is Purple Rain. Strawberry Fields with its deep pink and the calming cream of Champagne Supernova are just down the way.

Three Mile only opened in June but it's

already put Gwithian on the map; a beach that has long been a favourite with the local surfing and kitesurfing communities. It's a place where people in hoodies pull up at sunset, light up a barbecue and share drinks. Where kids and dogs roam free over the sand dunes and long grasses. It's wild and gloriously untamed. And it's right on Three Mile Beach's doorstep.

Just a five-minute walk from the beach itself (OK, call it 10 when you're lugging a paddleboard and supplies in your 'beach barrow'), the beach house has super-slick interiors. Miami-style whitewashed clapperboard walls, Moroccan-inspired textured throws, big bright social entertaining spaces... Outside, a wooden deck wraps around the



ESCAPE ROUTES

house; sunken cedar hot tub at one end, barrel sauna at the other, with long dining tables and giant Fatboy hammocks peppered in between. It's a going-away-with-a-group nirvana that would suit any season.

The beauty of this place is also that you can pack as light as you like because the owners – a couple who live locally, one of whom started Audley Travel – have thought of everything. A welcome hamper of local produce; a beach bag with buckets and kite; every board game imaginable. And there's a ridiculously comprehensive guide to the area – sent pre-arrival – that lists what to do nearby, from beach yoga and surfing lessons on Gwithian to visiting Truro's farmers' market.

And if you don't have something, you can hire it. Wetsuits, bodyboards, paddleboards, acoustic guitars, char-broil smokers... They even offer a pizza oven and dough kit delivery service.

Until high tide hits, Gwithian beach is wide and striking. We hired eBikes (globalboarders.com) for a morning scoot across the sand – highly recommended for lots of windswept laughter – and pootled along the coastline for



STYLIST'S SUSAN (LEFT) AND LISA ENJOY THE BEACH LIFE IN WEST CORNWALL

a few walks. Turn right over the dunes to Godfrey Point and its lighthouse, stopping at the pint-sized Jam Pot cafe for toasties. Turn left for the local town of Hayle if fish and chips is more your bag.

At just four miles away, a St Ives visit is a no brainer. Save parking angst and get the train from St Erth via Carbis Bay to stroll around the shops and galleries. Book ahead for the teeny tiny Barbara Hepworth museum in peak season and guard your Cornish pasty with your life because the seagulls are aggressive.

For self-catering supplies, Trevaskis Farm Shop is a short drive away. Rest assured, however, that good food is all around you. The Hungry Horsebox mobile cafe sits beachside for a hot lunch on the sand, and Three Mile Beach has its own tapas truck and drinks tuk-tuk with everything from halloumi chips and



THE CHIC DECOR IS MIAMI MEETS MOROCCO

pomegranate molasses to crispy spiced squid and peach salsa and grilled Cornish sardines.

If you want even more of a foodie treat, order in a private chef (£75 each for the Feast menu). We had former rugby pro Rupert Cooper – owner of cookery school Philleigh Way – rock up and serve dish (fresh Thai fishcakes and kimchi) after delicious dish (miso aubergine) as well as possibly the best dessert on Earth (caramelised plums, whipped cream and yoghurt with meringue) as we chatted under the stars. Next day's leftovers did not disappoint either and I can report it was hard to get out of the Fatboys.

The other things you will not be starved of at Three Mile Beach are rest, replenishment and a chance to reconnect with nature. So go if you can and throw another log on the woodburner for me.



Three-bedroom beach houses start from £2,400 per week in low season; threemilebeach.co.uk

Beach huts reimagined: the best of the rest



THIS 100-YEAR-OLD HUT IN PEMBROKESHIRE IS NOW A COSY BOLTHOLE

THE CABLE HUT, PEMBROKESHIRE

Looking to go off the beaten track? Nestled between the remote beaches of Abermawr and Aberbach on the Pembrokeshire coast you'll find The Cable Hut, a self-catering cottage just a stone's throw from the sea. Originally built to house the first telephone cables laid across the Atlantic, the 100-year-old hut has now been turned into a rustic bolthole with an open-plan living area, courtyard garden and summer house. Curl up in the snug, soak up the sea views from your very own hot tub or head down to the secret beaches below where you're sure to catch a glimpse of the neighbourhood dolphins, seals and puffins.

From £1,195 per week; uniquehomestays.com

BAREFOOT BEACH HOUSE, SUSSEX

If drifting off to the sound of waves lapping the shore sounds like your idea of heaven, head to Barefoot, a stylish holiday house that sleeps eight and leads straight onto the golden dunes of the famous Camber Sands. With a private wooden deck and panoramic views of the beach, the sandy plains will feel like your very own; and when you're sleepy from beachcombing and exploring the historic town of Rye nearby, you can unwind by toasting marshmallows over the fire pit, watching the sunset and getting comfy before the roaring wood burner inside.

From £450 per night; barefootcamber.co.uk



WHEN THEY PROMISE SEA VIEWS AT THIS CAMBER SANDS BEACH HUT, THEY MEAN IT