

Why Folkestone is Kent's most underestimated seaside town

From Whitstable to Margate, Kent's seaside towns are back in fashion - but it's Folkestone that's the artistic rough diamond you really need to visit

BY ELLA ALEXANDER / MAY 24, 2019



COURTESY



It's not breaking news that Kentish seaside towns are back in fashion. There's Whitstable with its candy coloured beach huts and genteel clientele; Broadstairs and its sweeping sandy beaches seemingly borrowed from across the channel; Margate, now an embarrassingly gentrified hipster parody; and Dungeness, its barren seascapes popular with artists and students back from university. Then you have Folkestone, the scrappy underdog with its growing art scene and seafront pubs where locals stare with fleeting suspicion as you walk inside.

It's not a particularly photogenic place upon first sight. Anyone who arrives at Folkestone Central expecting sandy beaches and colourful architecture will be



The Harbour Arm in Folkestone

POPPY HOLLIS

ADVERTISEMENT - CONTINUE READING BELOW

Once you've walked up and down the arm, explore the Old High Street or the 'Creative Quarter' as it's now called, which offers a mix of colourful independent shops, cafes and bars, from record and vintage shops to galleries selling unusual neon artworks. My favourite is [Rennies Seaside Modern](#), a beautifully-curated store which sells furniture, vintage seaside posters, ceramics and textiles by 20th Century British artists. Its owners, Paul and Karen Rennie, have such in-depth knowledge and a contagious enthusiasm for every single item in their shop. You won't want to leave this tiny cabin of unique curiosities.

