



Raisin scones topped with jam and whipped cream Getty

Caroline Boucher

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From restored stations to seaside shacks, Britain's best places to break for teatime

1 Baines, Uppingham, Rutland

A proper, old-fashioned tearoom with lovely home-made cakes (try the classic Battenburg). It has been run by the Baines family since 1867. Kate, 27, is now in charge of the tearoom and her parents do the baking next door.

Closed on Sundays. 01572 823317

2 Crediton Station Tea Rooms, Crediton, Devon

There's something charmingly Enid Blyton about the restoration of these old stations. The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, the cakes home-made and the pace unhurried.

01363 777766

3 Coastal Café, Gorran Haven, Cornwall

This tiny painted shack is staffed by volunteers and all money raised is ploughed back into

the running and equipping of this fledgeling enterprise, perched above the harbour and beach of the tiny village. The cakes are very hard to choose between — there was a sublime Bakewell tart, carrot cake and chocolate cake on the day we visited. Only open on Saturdays this winter.

gorranhaven.org.uk

4 Peacocks Tearoom, Ely, Cambridgeshire

Chocolate-box pretty and overlooking the river, this award-winning tearoom serves a seriously good tea. Besides the delicious home-made cakes and cream teas they have a huge choice of leaf teas — 72 of them. And served in pretty bone china, too.

peacockstearoom.co.uk, 01353 661100

5 Hotel Missoni, Edinburgh

Sleek, modern and chic, tea here in the dazzlingly patterned surroundings is taken on Missoni black and white china. The emphasis is on Italian food, so there are yummy Italian cakes as well as the traditional British scones and cream. Tea is supplied by Eteaket. For an extra £5.20 you can have it with a glass of Prosecco.

hotelmissoni.com, 0131-220 6666

6 Cliff Top Café, Overstrand, Norfolk

You deserve tea after a bracing walk along this coastline in winter, and there will be up to ten different home-made cakes waiting for you at this hamlet just outside Cromer. From November they open only Wednesday to Sunday and close at 4pm.

01263 579319

7 Rosy Lee's Tearoom, Loddon, Norfolk

Beloved by Norfolk Broads boatmen who flock here for home-made food served on mismatched china by the cheery lady owner. Everything is home-cooked and she'll even do you a kipper and poached egg for tea, if you feel like it, although hot food stops at 4.30pm.

01508 520204

8 Claridge's, London

At £38 for tea (£49 with a glass of Champagne) this is a very special tea that doesn't disappoint. The room is airy, light and luxurious, with a mix of chairs and sofas. The tea is substantial and delicious, the china chic and there's a pianist and often a violinist, too. The nicest smart tea venue in London, but booking is essential.

claridges.co.uk, 020-7107 8872

9 Linthwaite House Hotel, Windermere, Cumbria

There's nothing like the sight of a cakestand to raise your spirits. Tea (£16.85) at this former Edwardian country house — now a 31-bedroom hotel — is generous and relaxed. There are log fires and the views are spectacular. Enjoy well-filled sandwiches, scones and cakes, and 14 acres of garden in which to walk it off.

linthwaite.com, 015394 88600

10 Rushton Hall, Rushton, Northants

A stunning Grade I listed building set in 25 acres and now a hotel and spa, this is the perfect place for tea on a cold winter's day, when the huge stone fireplaces are put to good use. Tea is served from 3pm to 5pm; £16 for sandwiches, scones and cream, cakes, a pot of

tea and a good slice of history.
rushtonhall.com, 01536 713001

11 Orchard Tea Garden, Grantchester

And is there honey still for tea? Possibly, but there are certainly scones at £2.25 each (60p extra for cream, ditto for jam). This is where Rupert Brooke lived from 1909-14 and partied with the likes of Virginia Woolf and Augustus John. In the summer you can sit in the orchard in deckchairs, but the action retreats to the tea pavilion at this time of year. You can walk here from Cambridge along the meadows.

orchard-grantchester.com, 01223 551125

12 Sandhurst Tea Rooms, Sandhurst, Kent

“A proper tearoom, a very rare and lovesome thing,” says a local fan of this weatherboarded Kentish venue. Wonderful cakes cooked on site and a pretty garden for the summer. Open Thursday to Sunday.

01580 850745

13 The Little Tea House, Ilkley, West Yorkshire

The famous tearoom in this area is Bettys, but this pretty little business with delicious food and lovely staff is giving them a run for their money. Their cakes include lemon drizzle, coffee and walnut, carrot and Victoria sponge. Yum!

01943 817387

14 The Lime House Café, Welbeck, Notts

Situated in the former gasworks on the Welbeck estate, this bright and cheerful café has a good selection of cakes and scones. Next door is the Harley Gallery and craft shop, so plenty to look at and buy. Closes at 4.30pm

harleygallery.co.uk

15 Thaymar Tea Room, Retford, Notts

It's probably best to arrive hungry to do justice to the tea menu. There's a choice of chocolate, carrot or coffee cake, Bakewell tart and warm brownie — all with cream, ice cream or custard. They also do a sensational knickerbocker glory.

www.thaymaricecream.co.uk, 01623 862632

16 Joules Eating House, Market Harborough, Leicestershire

In the mood for mooching round antique shops or getting some furniture stripped? Well, you can have your cake and eat it here, then buy the table you're sitting at if you feel so inclined. There's a huge range of antiques from old doors to garden urns.

joulesyard.co.uk, 01858 463250

17 The Tea Cosy, Kempton, Brighton, East Sussex

Dazzlingly kitsch, from the Union Jacks to the royal crockery, this room is crammed with stuff to match teas named after the royals, including a Beatrice and Eugenie tea. Hilarious. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

theteacosy.co.uk

18 Attic Tea Bar, Bristol

They take their tea very seriously here — it's all Chinese loose leaf, sourced by the owners who got the tea bug when backpacking in China. Bright, modern premises with seating for

26.

attictea.com, 0117-909 0357

19 Deliciously Gorgeous, Eastbourne

Opened in the summer, this bright pink and black café with a stunning chandelier makes a hot chocolate described as “heaven in a cup”. Their speciality is chocolate, but there’s plenty more – wonderful cupcakes and bread made on the premises. Open seven days a week.

01323 749794

20 Tiny Tim’s Tea Room, Canterbury

A good way to finish a tour of this beautiful cathedral city would be here, where they take tea very seriously. There are more than 30 varieties and even a tea sommelier. Cakes and scones are baked on the premises daily (they do a gluten-free one and a gluten-free orange cake). Or there’s a high tea of poached egg or crumpets if you fancy something hot. Closed on Mondays.

tinytimstearoom.com, 01227 450793

21 The Polly Tea Rooms, Marlborough

Yummy teas are served all day long, seven days a week. There’s a huge array of home-made cakes, with specials such as Jamaican ginger cake, a wheat-free sticky toffee cake and treacle tart.

thepolly.com, 01672 512146

22 The Mock Turtle, Brighton, East Sussex

Cosy and welcoming, with old-fashioned china, a few tables outside if you’re feeling brave and doughnuts to rave about – enormous ones. There’s plenty else besides; generous cream teas and the proper loose-leaf tea in teapots. Closed Mondays and shuts at 6pm.

01273 327380

23 Llangoed Hall, Llyswen, Powys

A beautiful country house hotel that dates back to 1632, set in 17 acres. Afternoon tea is a gracious and luxurious affair served daily in the comfy lounge from 3.30pm to 5.30pm and is £14.50 per person.

llangoedhall.co.uk, 01874 754525

24 Georgian Tearoom, Topsham, Devon

“I love baking cakes,” says the owner of this handsome building on the outskirts of Exeter, famed for the generosity of its cream teas. She also makes chocolate cake, Victoria sponge, fruit cakes and Viennese whirls. Closed today. Tea finishes in winter at 4.15pm.

broadwayhouse.com, 01392 873465

25 Willow Tea Rooms, Glasgow

A Charles Rennie Mackintosh masterpiece. That it survived unscathed is a testament to its extraordinary design, which dates back to 1904. Not only did he design the interior and the furniture, he even dictated what the waitresses should wear. Tea is served daily – you can have a set tea, choose from a long list of sandwiches, teacakes and cakes or opt for the all-day breakfast.

willowtearooms.co.uk, 0141-332 0521

26 Shelly's Tea Rooms, Chilham, Kent

Situated in one of the prettiest villages in the country, food is served here daily, right through the winter. They make their own soups, scones and flapjacks on the premises and have a sister branch at St Margaret's Bay, near Dover.

shellystearooms.com, 01227 730303

27 The Coffee Rush Café, Shaldon, Devon

Open every day except for Christmas Day, this welcoming café in a pretty Devon village offers Aga-baked cakes, gluten-free cakes, pastries and, of course, cream teas. An ideal place to go to sit and watch the world go by.

thecoffeerush.co.uk, 01626 873922

28 Vintage Emporium Café, London

There are few things nicer than shopping and eating, and this is what you get here: downstairs is awash with beautiful vintage clothes and on the ground floor food is served from 10am to 10pm. Teas are old-fashioned and cakes range from coffee and walnut to Victoria sponge and brownies. There are also events, including drawing classes and poetry readings.

vintageemporiumcafe.com, 020-7739 0799

29 Bridge Tea Rooms, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire

A huge range of food and teas are served here in an old blacksmith's cottage that dates back to 1675. Waitresses wear long dresses and mob caps, and the ladderback chairs will remind you of your granny.

thebridgeatbradford.co.uk, 01225 865537

30 Earl Grey Tea House, Alnwick, Northumberland

OK, so you have to pay a £6 entry fee to visit the Howick Hall gardens if you want to have tea here, but this is a piece of history and where Earl Grey tea came from. Howick Hall has been the family seat of the Greys since 1319 and the second Earl had the tea specially blended by a Chinese mandarin who added bergamot to offset the lime-tasting Howick water. Probably the obvious choice of drink here, but there's plenty to eat and big family pictures to look at. Open February until mid-November.

howickhallgardens.org, 01665 572232

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