

MY FAVOURITE DESTINATION



Offered a one-way ticket to anywhere, what's your destination of choice? Five more leaders in their fields point us towards their favourite places. Contact the editor if you have a destination to share.

EAST LOCH TARBERT, LOWER LOCH FYNE, SCOTLAND



Jane Blackburn,
Chief Executive,
Joined Up North
Cultural Consultancy



Nosing your boat into the narrow entrance of Tarbert, one of Scotland's most perfect natural harbours, is bliss. It's a suitably complicated track in, giving you a chance to show off your skills at the wheel and to practice ferry gliding onto the pontoon, one of the many ways of mooring a boat. I am usually quite good at this, but to say that mooring is an art rather than a science is an understatement.

The harbour is frequently crowded with fishing boats and small craft, but it is always peaceful and the ever-changing sky and sea scape make it the perfect backdrop for sitting in the cockpit and watching the world go by. Actually, very little goes by except noisy birds

and silent seals that catch your eye with a flash of a shiny black head or a splash as they dive from the rocks that they bask on. Better even than that though, is the sight of a submarine rising through the water as you sail through their officially charted exercise area. I spend the entire passage from Largs, the boat's home port, with my eyes glued to binoculars hoping for a glimpse. Tarbert Harbour Authority provides excellent showers and loos with loads of hot water and fresh flowers every day. Dinner at The Anchorage restaurant with their fantastic fish menu makes the trip even more worthwhile.



HUNGERFORD BRIDGE, LONDON



**Mike Dixon, Director,
The Natural History
Museum**



Whilst my professional interests relate explicitly to the natural world, I have a great personal affection for cityscapes. Many of the great cities of the world, ancient and modern, offer spectacular views of man's creative ingenuity juxtaposed with wonderful natural features. Manhattan from the Brooklyn shoreline, Lisbon from a boat on the Tagus, Barcelona from Montjuich Park, Venice from the Rialto and Sydney from North Harbour all provide visual feasts that please the eye as well as offering historical insight.

But the overall favourite is much closer to home. The view over the City of

London from the old Hungerford Bridge retains that position, despite its familiarity. Much improved by the two new bridges that now flank the railway bridge crossing the Thames into Charing Cross, the view is most spectacular on those autumn evenings when the setting sun provides strong directional lighting. On a cloudless such evening the notable buildings, from late 17th century Wren to early 21st century Foster, shine brightly and the eyes are drawn from dome to tower and stone to glass. As the legions of commuters hurry by it is a good place to pause and reflect. But, don't take my word for it, go and see for yourself!



SRI LANKA



**Mark Ellingham,
Founder of Rough Guide**



I have an awful lot of favourites – I feel a need to return often to parts of Greece, Morocco and Spain – and each July I spend a fortnight at the Druidstone Hotel in Pembrokeshire, which is as relaxing as it gets. But if we're talking favourite, as in "transport me tomorrow" then I think Sri Lanka has the edge.

My wife Natania's family come from Sri Lanka. Her parents were among one of the world's smallest and oddest geneological minorities: Sri Lankan Dutch Burgers, who are essentially the descendants (through the male line) of employees of the Dutch East India Company, who went out to Ceylon, as it was then, in the seventeenth century, and stayed. So that gives me a headstart – a sense of belonging. And all the more so these days

since our son, Miles, gets adopted by a bevy of first and second and twice and thrice removed cousins.

When we visit, as we try to do at least every other year, there are two places that we find ourselves drawn towards, as well as the family visits. The first is Galle and Unawattuna on the south coast, which is about as good as seaside gets. The other is the wonderful jungle hotel of Kandalama, near Sigiriya. Here you can swim in a pool surrounded by monkeys, rise at dawn and go off to spot fifty, sixty or maybe seventy tropical birds, or take a jeep off to the nearby waterholes to see the elephants come in at dusk.



KIRSTENBOSCH, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



Penny Baker,
Chief Executive,
Lincolnshire Tourism



lines depicting people or animals. In the nineteenth century Cecil Rhodes planted an avenue of Eucalyptus trees here. They stretch into an eerily atmospheric canopy and provide a refreshingly cool contrast to the heat outside. A smart new restaurant and café have opened in the last few years but I pine for the old rickety restaurant where I celebrated a wonderful birthday breakfast several years ago.

Kirstenbosch is a captivating haven for garden enthusiasts and casual visitors of all ages.

Every time I visit I feel like an intrepid explorer on the brink of a great adventure.



Kirstenbosch is a paradise: 36 acres of maintained gardens which sit at the foot of Table Mountain, 20 minutes from the centre of Cape Town. It is a terrific place to walk and explore - or just to sit and reflect. September is my favourite time. Everything bursts into flower. The range of plants is amazing. Proteas, agapanthus and the fynbos fill the eye with vivid colour. The refreshing cool of the early morning contrasts with the baking heat at midday when many heady fragrances saturate the still air. Dotted amongst the beds are tall, striking stone sculptures with smooth clean



ITCHENOR REACH, CHICHESTER HARBOUR, ENGLAND



Marjorie Althorpe-Guyton,
Director of Visual Arts,
Arts Council England



Eight feet wide, the same deep. A wooden table folds down for the bed; two burners and a shelf for the books, radio, CD and the Garmin GPS 120. A wide deep hatch opens to an eye-cleansing stretch of grey green water. Slicks of lime and red weed cling to the mooring buoys and a scattering of boats. Exeter (James and Ben), Candela (Kate and Lucy), Humbug, Stampede, Hawk, Grebe, Privateer and Zeste. At night, the water and the low oaks darken and the skies take over, and the birds. Curlews, oystercatchers and the white egret break cover and stalk their dinners in the pitted mud. Time for the Vodka moment on Sleuth. At six am the perfect

thirties X-boats slide by. Much later the flatulent powerboats come from up river making fumes and wash. The children call them stink boxes.

This is a simple place, unglamorous and dangerous, powerful currents rip through the Reach and claim lives. I came here first seven years ago. Last summer we left in Alexa to cross the Atlantic. She is still there waiting in Grenada, a luxury of seas and landscapes. Andy, the Itchenor ferryman, came with us. He's back. And I'm back now in the consuming fever of London, art and business. Itchenor is only sixty miles away. It could be a thousand.

