

BEACH



BUMS

Beach holidays are all well and good but let's face it, haven't you been there, done that? How about a bit of spice, a bit of something new... Throw caution, and your clothes, to the wind and let it all hang out. **Piers Townley** shows off his white bits on the best nudist beaches of Europe.

Great Britain & Eire



Oooo, just the thought of it makes you shiver. Huddled next to the ice-cream van while a good North Easterly wind chills your cockles may not be the first image a nudist would want. *But*, the cooler climes of the country haven't extinguished the fires of the naked horde, and there are plenty of beaches, resorts and centres to visit.

1. Trawalua Beach, Clifony, Co Sligo, Eire

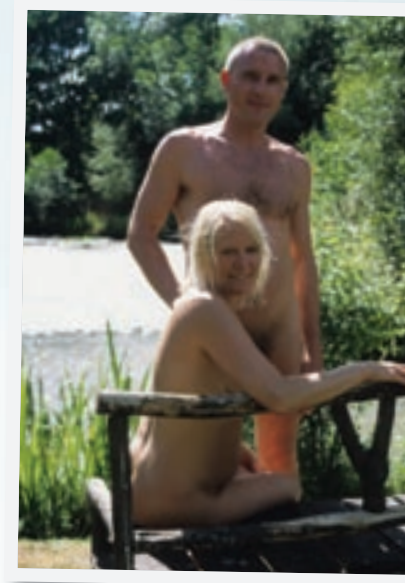
People must come here for the crack as the saying goes. Only brave bodies withstand a full Atlantic breeze, but the extensive dunes offer shelter and a secluded haven for those determined souls.
Extras: Locals who welcome all the sights this activity can offer. It's an unofficial and well-known location.
Nearest easyJet airport: Knock

2. Traeth Mawr Monknash, vale of Glamorgan, Wales

Being butt naked is the least of your concerns here. Dramatic 200ft plus cliffs tower over this impressive beach, which has been designated as an area of special scientific interest; the many naked bodies only add to the attraction.
Extras: Ridiculously strong currents make the dip to cool off (should you get too hot in the Welsh climate) a definite no no.
Nearest easyJet airport: Bristol

3. Druridge Bay Amble, Northumberland

Now we're entering the realms of the hardcore nudist. North Sea swells aside, the area has been used for unclothed activity for over 50 years and the waters, cold enough to shrivel the most hardened of "outdoor folk", are extremely clean.
Extras: Ramblers and dog walkers use the beach. But if Fido doesn't mind, neither should you.
Nearest easyJet airport: Newcastle



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Mainland Spain

After gaining its first official nude beach back in 1979, Spain's bare beach scene has blossomed. An unrivalled length of coastline and variety of secluded spots make whipping your clothes off an easy option. Plus, the love of the pastime here means that few people will stare at your wobbly bits.

1. Playa de Castilla Matalascañas, Huelva

A secluded and dreamy coastline with a friendly outlook to bathing in the buff. With over 20km of sandy shoreline you won't be cheek to cheek with your naked neighbour.

Extras: Colonies of Flamingos inhabit the area of the nearby Donana national park.

Nearest easyJet airport: Faro

2. Costa Natura Estepona

The first official nudist beach that started the Spanish revolution in clothes-free holidays. Popular with tourists and locals alike, wanting to let it all hang out on a well-equipped piece of coast framed by dunes and a picturesque pine forest.

Extras: A beach bar and naturist resort directly opposite has apartments and hotels with golf courses and spas.

Nearest easyJet airport: Malaga

3. Playa de Pals Pals, near Palafrugell

Head for the south end of the beach where you can let the breeze blow your bits in style. Popular and lively, the two official nudist coves have safe waters and rocky hideaways.

Extras: The nearby Camping Relax Nat has several swimming pools, bars and a choice of bungalows to stay in.

Nearest easyJet airport: Barcelona

4. Mar Bella near Poblenou

Normally, nudist beaches are located far from the madding crowd—but not here. It's only a trunk-throw away from the teeming Barceloneta city beach. Elderly men flying kites butt-naked should alert you to its nudist status pretty quickly.

Extras: Being so close to the city, there are plenty of bars, cafés and restaurants. (Put some clothes on first though!)

Nearest easyJet airport: Barcelona

Ibiza

Where to start? This notoriously "good-time" Island is synonymous with letting everything hang out, literally and mentally. Must be something in the water. Most beaches such as Aguas Blancas and Las Salinas, have a very relaxed birthday suit policy.

1. Playa de Es Cavallet Ibiza's southernmost tip

Music, bars, the cream of the euro-ravers and an attitude so laid back it's horizontal, the beautiful posers and the clubber casualties strip off on this official 1km of nudity.

Extras: There are plenty of sunbeds and umbrellas to prevent the crown jewels getting scorched, and groovy tunes provide a perfect backdrop. *Nearest easyJet airport: Ibiza*



Portugal

Portugal's advantage is that, until only a few decades ago, nudism hadn't caught on. This means there is a vast selection of coves and beaches that are never overcrowded.

1. Ursa Beach near Sintra

It's a bit of a trek down to this sandy beach, on a rocky cove. But, being one of Portugal's most idyllic, secluded and unspoilt beaches, it's worth every drop of sweat it takes to get there.

Extras: The Cabo da Roca, Europe's most easterly point, is a superb backdrop to beachlife *au naturel*.

Nearest easyJet airport: Faro



Italy

In many areas of Italy nude sunbathing, if not illegal, is certainly frowned upon. So choose your locations wisely and check with local naturist societies before the trunks come off. Although, the abundance of secluded coves, flat sands, dunes and rocky outcrops mean you do have plenty of options.

1. Capocotta Between Ostia and Tor Vaianica, Rome

A nudist treasure for the country. Reclaimed from its seedy beginnings and its use in the 1980s for many "adult" film backdrops, it's now fast-becoming a busy nudist colony.

Extras: Showers, changing huts and a lively sport scene on the beach.

Nearest easyJet airport: Rome

France

A huge coastline mirrors a huge appetite for birthday-suit beachwear. In France, you have three choices: the English channel, the Atlantic and its more breezy charms and the idyllic 100 mile coastline of the Mediterranean, which offers world-class nudist locations.

1. Cap d'Agde Between Béziers and Sète

A famous location, the Cap is an entire nudist village with a kilometre of pristine beach. You'd feel weird if you ventured here *with* clothes to wander around the hotels, restaurants and shops—there are plenty of baguettes in sight in this unique area.

Extras: Friends! And lots of them; up to 40,000 to be precise. That's how many holidaymakers come here in the peak months, so there's no room for shyness.

Nearest easyJet airports: Marseille & Barcelona

2. St Girons Plage—Arnaoutchot Between Bordeaux and Biarritz

The Atlantic coast offers a superb naturist resort and beach watched over by (naked) lifeguards! That's got your attention. Think *Baywatch* but without Hasselhoff and red lycra.

Extras: The health and beauty spa in the nearby resort is world-famous—among naked people that is.

Nearest easyJet airports: Bilbao & Toulouse

3. Les Grottes Plage Ile du Levant

There's nothing grotty about this idyllic island, set off the Mediterranean French coast. It was the original birthplace, so bare people say, of nudism in France.

Extras: Excellent snorkelling is on hand, but be sure to dab some sun cream on your bum if you have a go. Burn that bit and you won't be sitting down for the rest of the holiday.

Nearest easyJet airports: Marseille & Nice

Naked Nuances

THE DOS:

- Remain calm and relaxed as you enjoy your new-found freedom.
- Use sunscreen. You think sunburn on your arms is bad, but sunburn "down below" isn't worth thinking about.
- Watch out for the sand—it gets everywhere.

THE DON'TS:

- Point excitedly and yell "Wow, look at that!"
- Wander off to do some sightseeing without checking the nudist policy extends off the beach. You don't want to be the only naked holidaymaker at the bank.
- Forget where you left your clothes.

For more information visit:

www.nudeplaces.com

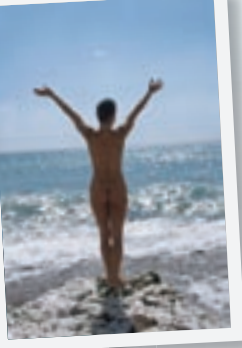
www.secretnaturistsociety.org

www.british-naturism.org.uk



Bare Beaches and *Bare Britain* are indispensable guides to seaside nudity for an informative lowdown on bare bottom breaks. Available now from Lifestyle Press, both priced at £12.95.

www.barebeaches.com



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