

LLANDUDNO

CONWY | RHOS-ON-SEA | COLWYN BAY | CONWY VALLEY

#DISCOVERNORTHWALES

PEAK EXPERIENCES

Our peak season lasts all year. Go winter walking in Snowdonia or surfing in the spring. Spend summer on the beach or autumn in the woods. 365 days of discovery.

LLANDUDNO LIVE

It's vital and vibrant, classic and contemporary, with a lovely Victorian pier, pristine prom and ultra-modern art gallery.

GREEN AT HEART

The lush Conwy Valley, Betws-y-Coed, Snowdonia, Gwydyr Forest Park and the Hiraethog moorlands are all just a stone's throw from the coast.

YEAR OF DISCOVERY - VISIT
19
LLANDUDNO -

VISITLLANDUDNO.ORG.UK

DISCOVER EXPLORE EXPERIENCE

LITTLE ORME, LLANDUDNO

WHAT'S INSIDE

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---------------------------------------|----|--------------------------------|
| 02 | PEAK SEASONS:
WE'RE OPEN ALL YEAR | 20 | HISTORY AND HERITAGE | 34 | FESTIVALS AND EVENTS |
| 04 | SPRING AND SUMMER | 24 | BETWS-Y-COED | 38 | ACCOMMODATION
GUIDE |
| 06 | AUTUMN AND WINTER | 26 | COUNTRYSIDE AND
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES | 53 | ATTRACTIONS ADVERTS |
| 08 | LLANDUDNO | 30 | FOOD AND DRINK | 56 | TOURIST INFORMATION
CENTRES |
| 12 | ALONG THE COAST | 32 | WHAT'S NEW | 60 | MAPS AND TRAVEL
INFORMATION |
| 16 | THE NATIONAL
EISTEDDFOD, ART,
ENTERTAINMENT,
CULTURE AND CRAFTS | 33 | EVENING
ENTERTAINMENT | | |



2019 is Wales's 'Year of Discovery'. It's a theme that fits Llandudno and Conwy County like a glove. Uniquely, this area sums up all that's special about Wales in one neat package...its stunning coast and country, rich heritage and culture, immersive outdoor activities and indoor attractions, food, festivals and entertainment.

It's a collection of experiences you won't discover anywhere else. Start at the tip of Llandudno's retro pier and travel into the timeless hills and mountains of Snowdonia, and you'll come across everything from Punch and Judy to world-class contemporary art, one-of-a-kind outdoor experiences (inland surfing anyone?) to rousing, robust castles, exciting new attractions to existing favourites.

Neither will you go short on the good things in life. Stay at snazzy, stylish seafront hotels (we have the best choice in Wales) or characterful country boltholes. Eat at bistros and restaurants serving the finest locally-sourced produce. Dip into a vibrant night-time entertainment scene at theatres, pubs and clubs – and don't miss the Big One, Wales's National Eisteddfod, which comes to the handsome, historic market town of Llanrwst in 2019.

Take your time to discover it all. This part of Wales welcomes visitors throughout the year. Springtime strolls along Llandudno's immaculate promenade and Christmas shopping in Betws-y-Coed bookend a thriving all-season scene.

For the full picture delve into the pages of this publication. Enjoy the read.

Roger Thomas, editor and travel writer.

PEAK

SEASONS

A person wearing a bright yellow jacket and dark trousers is captured mid-jump, clearing a rocky stream. The landscape is rugged with brown, mossy rocks and sparse vegetation. In the background, a calm lake is nestled between steep, hazy mountains under a cloudy sky. The scene is bathed in soft, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. Decorative yellow geometric shapes, including a large 'X' on the left and three chevrons on the right, are overlaid on the image. A fine mist of yellow dots is scattered across the upper half of the page.

IT MAY BE COLD OUTSIDE BUT WRAPPED UP IN YOUR WINTER JACKET YOU'LL FEEL A GOOD-TO-BE-ALIVE WARMTH AND EXHILARATION UP IN SNOWDONIA'S MOUNTAINS.

This image is the perfect scene-setter for the one message we really want to get across in this guide: Llandudno and Conwy County are open for business 24/7/12, shorthand for all day, every day, every month of the year.

And one year equals 365 different experiences. From warm summers on the beach to winters tucked up in cosy country inns, springtime wildlife-watching to autumnal walks in the woods, you'll find plenty to see and do whatever the season.

There's another message too, summed up in three words: adventure, culture, landscape. They're the inspiration for Wales's 2019 Year of Discovery. On the next few pages we'll show you how, uniquely, you can experience all three along our coast and in our hills and mountains... at all times of the year.



HERE ARE FIVE OF THE BEST EXPERIENCES IN

SPRING AND SUMMER

1 BLOOMING BODNANT.

It's a must. Bodnant Garden's famous Laburnum Arch bursts into life from late May. This 180ft/55m tunnel of drooping yellow blossoms is the perfect introduction to a garden that's coming into colour everywhere after its winter slumbers.

2 THE WAY TO GO.

See our shores on two wheels by cycling parts (or all, if you're feeling energetic) of the waymarked 30-mile Conwy Cycle Route along the coast from Llanfairfechan to Kinnel Bay. You'll also be following part of the recently launched North Wales Way, the new national route from Chester to Holyhead.

3 WALK THE WALLS.

Blow the cobwebs away by walking Conwy's medieval walls. Along with brooding, dark-stoned Conwy Castle, this 3/4-mile circuit, the most intact in Europe, guards a maze of narrow streets and alleyways.

4 RURAL ROWEN.

Rowen is one of the prettiest villages in Wales. That's especially true in springtime, when the gardens of its traditional stone cottages are decked with flowers. Follow paths up into the Tal-y-Fan Mountain before returning to the village pub for a well-deserved pint.

5 GREAT TO BE ALIVE.

That's what you'll feel on top of the Great Orme, the headland that rears up like a sea monster above Llandudno. This wildlife haven is one of Britain's most important sites for rare plants. Springtime wildflowers peek through limestone grassland, seabirds gather on the cliffs and over 20 species of butterfly can be seen.



1 P IS FOR...

Pier. Take a stroll in the summer breeze along Llandudno's splendid pier, the longest in Wales.

Promenade. Then head to the prom. Like the pier, it goes on and on – all the way along an unblemished seafront that makes Llandudno the envy of other seaside resorts.

Punch and Judy. Stop off at Professor Codman's show, a Llandudno favourite for over 150 years.

2 CATCH A WAVE.

Not in the sea but at Adventure Parc Snowdonia in the Conwy Valley, the world's first inland surfing lagoon. Revolutionary technology guarantees the perfect wave every 90 seconds.

3 UP, UP AND AWAY.

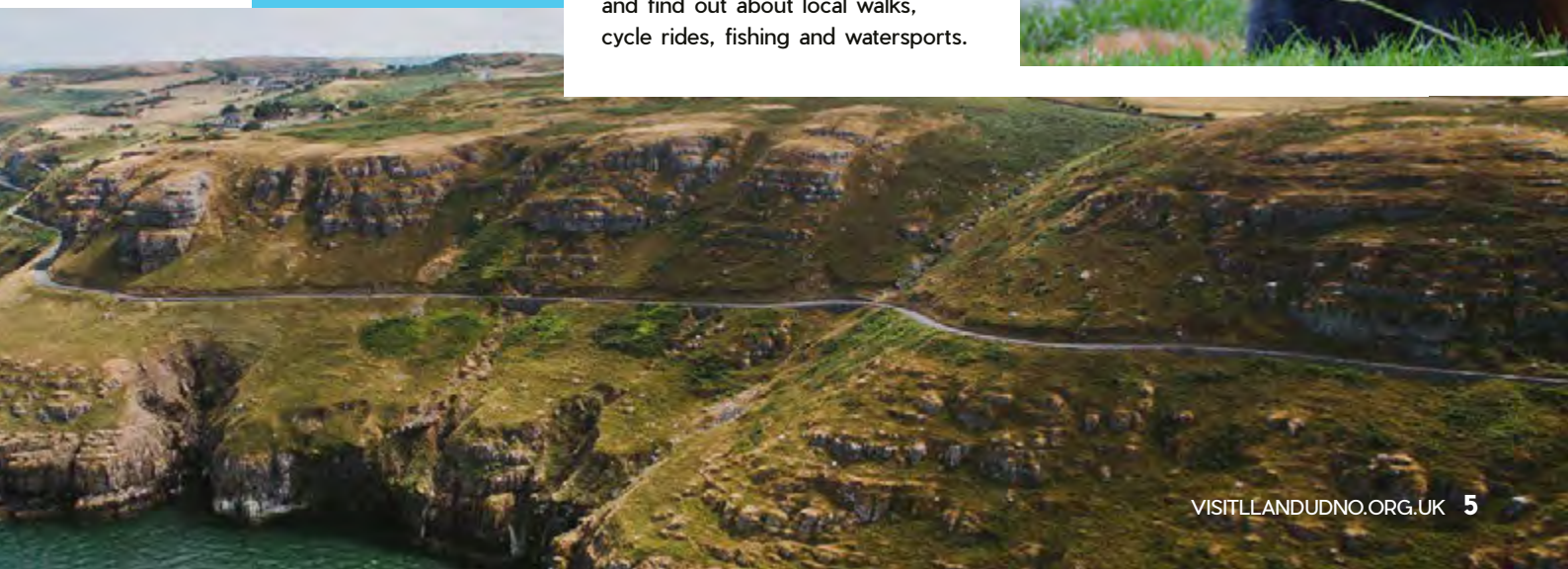
On a balmy summer's day there's no better place to be than Mynydd Hiraethog, the moorland that rolls away into the distance beneath big skies. Go first to the Llyn Brenig Visitor Centre to get your bearings and find out about local walks, cycle rides, fishing and watersports.

4 SUMMERTIME, AND THE LIVIN' IS EASY.

Sip a cocktail, chardonnay or craft beer on the terrace of the King's Head, Llandudno's oldest inn and don't miss Headstock, its summer music festival.

5 COOL COLWYN.

It's all change at Colwyn Bay. Walk Porth Eirias's remodelled promenade, have a meal at award-winning chef Bryn Williams's snazzy seafront bistro, enjoy aquatic action at Colwyn Bay Watersports. Then do the traditional thing and visit the Welsh Mountain Zoo, Colwyn Bay's caring conservation zoo.



AUTUMN COLOUR

HERE'S A QUICK TASTER FROM OUR
ACTIVITY-PACKED AUTUMN AND WINTER.

1 IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS...

We'll start with something woody after all, our woodlands are at their reddish, russety best at this time of year. Go to Coed y Gopa, an eye-catching mixed woodland of oak, elm, ash, pine and larch above Abergele. 'It makes for a knockout show of autumn colour,' says the Woodland Trust magazine.

2 WE'VE GOT TASTE.

Our food scene is buzzing and inventive, with menus covering everything from fine dining to the best fish and chips. You can't go wrong in Conwy, for example. Try multi award-winning Signatures in the Aberconwy Resort and Spa, or the big, bold flavours at Watson's Bistro. Or the recently opened Midland, where Spain meets North Wales in a choice of tapas with the accent on seafood and local produce.

3 UNDERCOVER.

Okay, we'll come clean. It sometimes rains in autumn. Don't fret. There's plenty to do inside and underground. Go Below near Betws-y-Coed is an action-packed subterranean journey through abandoned mines ('Pound for thrills, this might just be the best value day out in the UK,' reckons The Sunday Times). Not to be outdone, at Llandudno you can explore Great Orme Copper Mine, the world's oldest metal mine open to the public.

4 ART WORKS.

Follow the Helfa Gelf Art Trail every weekend in September, when studios and workshops throughout North Wales open their doors to visitors.



5 OPENING TIME.

Autumn 2019 sees the scheduled opening of the innovative Conwy Culture Centre, where the arts and heritage (we have plenty of both) come alive in interactive exhibits and displays.



WINTER WARMTH

1 CHRISTMAS SHOPPING.

Forget Amazon. There's a special magic about Christmas shopping - especially if you head our way. Llandudno's Christmas Fayre is famously festive, and for more great gift ideas go to Betws-y-Coed's speciality shops. At nearby Trefriw Woollen Mills you can browse products manufactured on site. And Llandudno has the biggest and best shopping in North Wales (Mostyn gallery's shop is outstanding for art and jewellery).

2 YOU'LL FALL FOR THIS ONE...

Swallow Falls usually reserves its best displays for winter. Natural Resources Wales reckons that the trail to the falls from Ty'n Llwyn four miles west of Betws-y-Coed is one of its 'Ten Best Winter Walks'. If one waterfall isn't enough head to the spectacular Conwy Falls the other side of Betws.

3 SNOWY SNOWDONIA.

Now's the time to see the white stuff on Snowdonia's peaks. Get to grips with these mountains under expert tuition on outdoor courses run by Plas y Brenin National Mountain Sports Centre at Capel Curig. They cover everything from climbing to canoeing, mountain biking to hiking. If you're planning your own outdoor adventures, take a look at adventuresmartwales.com... its advice on weather, gear and skills helps you stay safe.

4 THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT.

Pop, comedy, opera, drama, dance... they're all on the bill at Venue Cymru, North Wales's biggest entertainment and arts venue. The biggest? Oh yes it is! (during the winter season there's panto too).

5 IN THE DARK.

Our winter night skies are crisp and inky - ideal conditions for a spot of stargazing. Head for the hills away from light pollution. Llyn Geirionydd above the Conwy Valley is a good choice. It has a real sense of solitude, especially at night.



An aerial photograph of Llandudno, Wales, showing the long Llandudno Pier extending into the sea. The pier has a large promenade at its end. In the background, a rocky headland is visible, and the coastline is dotted with green fields and buildings. The sky is blue with some clouds.

EVERYONE LOVES LLLAND

HERE'S WHY, IN ONE IMAGE, EVERYONE LOVES LLANDUDNO. JUST TAKE A LOOK AT THE IMMACULATE PIER AND PROM. THEY HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH SINCE THEIR CREATION WELL OVER A CENTURY AGO (SOMETHING YOU CAN'T SAY ABOUT OTHER SEASIDE RESORTS).

Quite simply, Llandudno is a classic of its kind, cherished, unblemished and pristine. But it's not fuddy-duddy or old-fashioned. That's the key to its character. From its Victorian roots it has grown into a uniquely contemporary resort, the kind of place where you can build sandcastles or see modern art, admire period architecture and enjoy the latest entertainment, go shopping or wildlife-watching, ride a vintage tram or alpine cable car.

It's staying beside the sea as it should be.

UDNO

SEE OVERLEAF
FOR MORE



LLANDUDNO PIER, LLANDUDNO



LLANDUDNO

TRAVEL WRITER AND EDITOR ROGER THOMAS AND HIS WIFE LIZ TAKE A TWO-DAY BREAK. YOU CAN FOLLOW IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR. WHATEVER THE SEASON, LLANDUDNO IS FULL OF LIFE.

DAY 1

10am Let's start right at the top. By which I mean the summit of the Great Orme, the soaring 207m (679ft) headland that's an essential part of Llandudno's character.

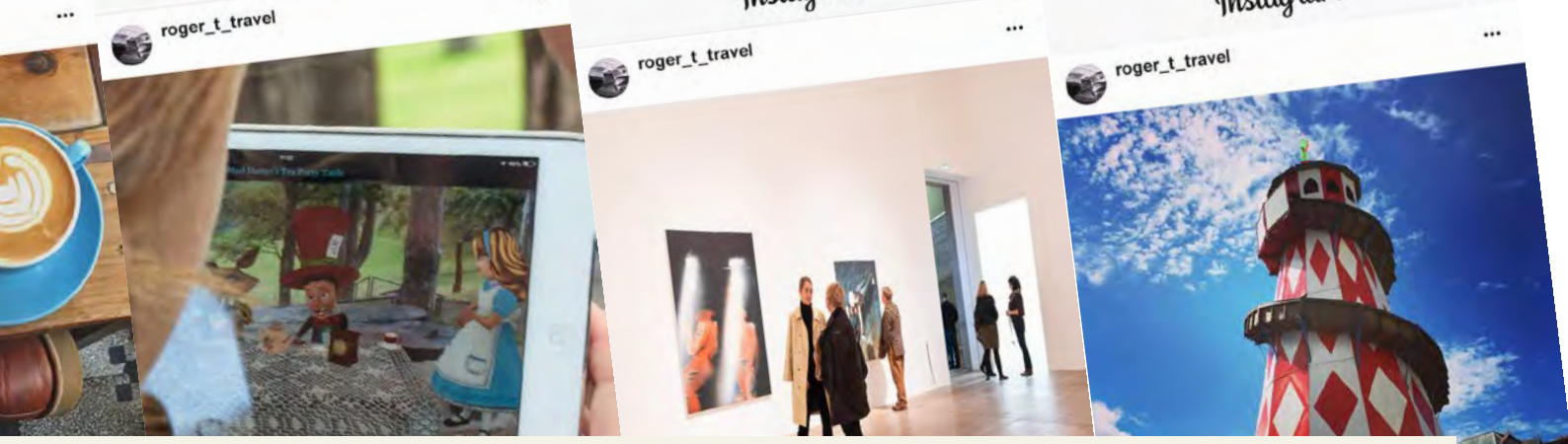
Until October, you can get there by tramway or cable car. In winter, it's a short, steep drive from the seafront. Our bird's-eye view takes in the sweep of the bay and the mountains of Snowdonia. The Orme itself is uniquely diverse, home to a country park, ancient copper mines and an amazing variety of wildlife, including a herd of Kashmiri goats and some of the rarest plants in the world.

11.30am Coffee time. There's a great choice of coffee shops - and much else - in Llandudno's busy canopied shopping streets just behind the prom.

2pm After lunch we do what everyone does - take a walk along the pier. Wales's longest pier carries us almost half a mile out to sea, and for every step of the way we soak up views of that picture-perfect, paintbox-coloured seafront - pure eye candy - that makes Llandudno such a special place.

3.30pm We find out more about Llandudno - from its ancient roots to its birth as a resort - at the town's museum (now closed for refurbishment, but scheduled to reopen in winter 2019 - see llandudnomuseum.co.uk). Then we call into the nearby Home Front Experience, an immersive little museum that takes you back to World War Two.

7pm Time to eat. We're spoilt for choice but plump for Dylan's Restaurant, located in an extraordinary seafront setting. The food is as good as the surroundings - do what we did and go for the whitebait and sea bass.



LLANDUDNO LIVE

DAY 2

10am We call into Llandudno Tourist Information Centre (in the Victoria Centre on Mostyn Street). As well as providing local knowledge on what to see and do, you'll also get great gift ideas from its well-stocked range of local craft products, food and drink.

Llandudno's 19th-century links with Alice Liddell (the real Alice in Wonderland) are fascinating. We trace her connections with the resort on the Alice Trail. Starting from the information centre and with the help of the map (there's also an app available from alicetowntrails.co.uk), we follow the White Rabbit's bronze footprints past landmark characters from her fantasy world, like the Mad Hatter and Queen of Hearts. It's the ideal way to really get to know this heritage-rich resort that hasn't changed that much since Alice's time.

NOON Sand and sandwich time. We grab a sandwich and head for the North Shore, a popular beach complete with boat trips, donkey rides and Punch and Judy. There's lots of summery sandcastle-building going on (though, to be honest, I prefer it in its bracing, reviving winter persona). Llandudno's second beach - the West Shore - is peaceful throughout the year, with sweeping mountain views an added bonus.

2.30pm We head for Mostyn, a personal favourite and one of Wales's leading galleries, where cutting-edge art (and a seriously good gift shop) are housed in an ornate red-bricked building.

4pm We're not quite shopped out, so pay a visit to Parc Llandudno, the modern retail park on the edge of town.

7pm Time for a slice of showbiz at Venue Cymru, North Wales's largest entertainment complex, which stages a huge variety of starry performances. It's a major venue with world-class productions - everything from top West End shows and Welsh National Opera to big-name stars from pop, comedy and drama.


MAKE A DATE

HERE ARE A FEW OF LLANDUDNO'S 2019 FESTIVALS AND EVENTS. FOR THE FULL PICTURE SEE PAGES 34/37.

16 FEBRUARY
CAMBRIAN RALLY
Llandudno and the Conwy Valley
cambrianrally.co.uk

4-6 MAY
LLANDUDNO VICTORIAN
EXTRAVAGANZA
victorian-extravaganza.com

13-15 SEPTEMBER
LLAWN07
Free multi-arts festival
llawn.org

An aerial photograph of a coastline. The top half of the image shows dark, turbulent ocean water with white foam from breaking waves. A thick band of white surf runs horizontally across the middle. Below the surf, the water is a deep teal color, meeting a wide, flat, golden-brown sandy beach at the bottom. The text 'COASTLINE' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the top, and 'ALONG' is written in the same style across the middle, partially overlapping the surf.

COASTLINE ALONG

NG

LLANDUDNO IS JUST PART OF OUR SEASIDE STORY. THERE ARE COMMUNITIES ALL ALONG OUR COASTLINE, EACH ONE PACKED WITH THINGS TO SEE AND DO. HERE'S A QUICK GUIDE TO WHAT YOU CAN FIND ON OUR SHORELINE, FROM EAST TO WEST.

KINMEL BAY AND TOWYN

WHAT'S THE STORY? Kinmel Bay's wide sandy beach is popular for thrilling coastal activities like kitesurfing, kayaking and windsurfing, while neighbouring Towyn is the place to be for buzzing beachfront amusements, arcades and entertainment.

DON'T MISS. Take a nature walk through the rolling landscape of Kinmel Dunes Nature Reserve, an unspoilt expanse where you can spot countless seabirds in the sky and grey seals swimming just off the coast. If you're in the mood for action, head to Tir Prince Leisure Park where you'll find American-style harness horse racing and high-speed rollercoasters, or try the go-karts and fairground rides at Knightley's Fun Park.

ABERGELE AND PENSARN

WHAT'S THE STORY? It's two for the price of one. Set slightly back from the coast and a great jumping-off point for country walks, the historic town of Abergele is full of tempting independent shops, while Pensarn's big sandy beach serves up seaside fun in buckets and spades.

DON'T MISS. Take a walk up to the 178m (583ft) Tower Hill. Local legend says it was once the site of an Elizabethan watchtower that guarded the coast against pirates, but today it's the perfect vantage point for stunning sea views. Alternatively, head for the beach. It's often quieter than some of its better-known coastal neighbours, so you'll have plenty of room to enjoy the sand and sea – and sun, if last year's summer is anything to go by. If you're a golfer, don't forget your clubs. There's also an excellent 18-hole golf course.



COLWYN BAY

WHAT'S THE STORY?

While Colwyn Bay has been attracting visitors since the Victorian era, it's not afraid to move with the times. In recent years, the seafront has been transformed with the arrival of the Porth Eirias development (home to Michelin award-winning chef Bryn Williams's bistro) and the construction of a whole new beach.

DON'T MISS. Enjoy some aquatic action at Colwyn Bay Watersports (also found at Porth Eirias), which offers courses in windsurfing, sailing, stand-up paddleboarding and power boating. Away from the water, you'll find animal magic at the Welsh Mountain Zoo, home to rare and endangered creatures like red pandas, snow leopards and Sumatran tigers.

RHOS-ON-SEA

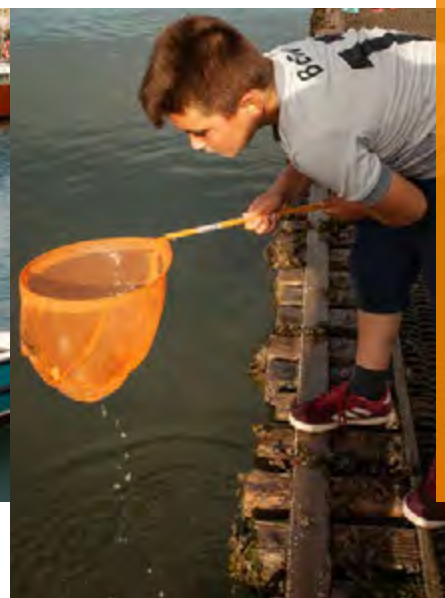
WHAT'S THE STORY? This little harbour town packs a huge amount of personality into a compact package. There's the traditional promenade (ideal for gentle seaside strolls), colourful boats bobbing in the harbour, children dipping for crabs at the water's edge, and a charming puppet theatre, the only one of its kind in Britain. It all adds up to a perfect, pocket-sized resort.

DON'T MISS. The clear waters round here are alive with fish of all shapes and sizes. Go in search of the big one with a sea-angling trip from the harbour. Or stay on dry land and explore Rhos-on-Sea's stellar shopping scene of independent boutiques selling antiques, vintage clothes and jewellery.

CONWY & DEGANWY

WHAT'S THE STORY? You've probably heard of Conwy's historic quayside, an authentic old waterfront (complete with famous 'Smallest House', an impossibly tiny fisherman's cottage) that huddles beneath the town's medieval castle and walls. But it's worth exploring the entire estuary, both sides of the shore. On Conwy's side there's Conwy Quays, a modern marina with splendid views across the water to another swish, stylish boat-filled marina on the opposite bank at Deganwy. They're both a continuation of this area's strong seafaring and maritime traditions.

DON'T MISS. See it all on a boat trip from Conwy's quayside. And sample succulent Conwy mussels.





PENMAENMAWR

WHAT'S THE STORY? A family favourite. Penmaenmawr's wide sandy beach and promenade boast a paddling pool, children's play area and skate park, perfect for keeping younger visitors entertained. There's also great walking, watersports and a busy sailing club.

DON'T MISS. For that classic seaside experience, hire one of Penmaenmawr's wooden beach huts. Conveniently located close to the café on the promenade, they're the ideal base for a day of fun on the sand.

LLANFAIRFECHAN

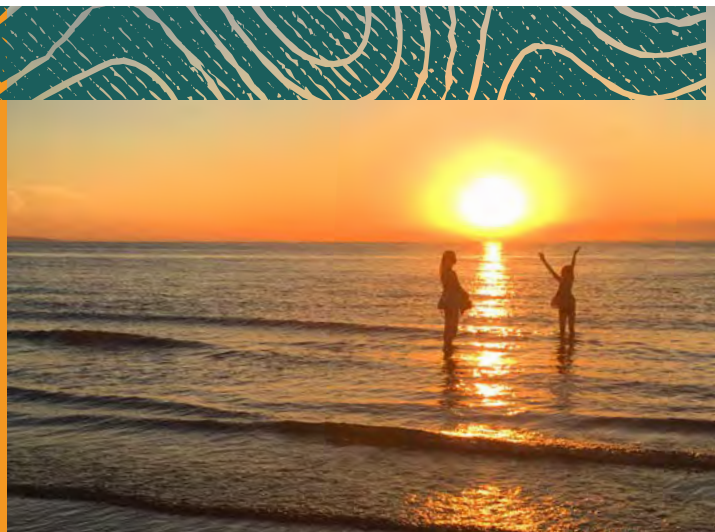
WHAT'S THE STORY? A pretty little village with a big sandy beach built for games, paddling and sandcastle building. It's also a good starting point for walks in the surrounding hills. Head to higher ground and you'll be rewarded by fantastic views over the Menai Strait towards Anglesey.

DON'T MISS. Make sure you bring your binoculars. Llanfairfechan is close to Traeth Lafan Nature Reserve, a rich coastal habitat home to seabirds like oystercatchers, great crested grebes and red-breasted mergansers.



AWARD WINNERS

Many of our beautiful beaches have received the prestigious Blue Flag and/or Seaside Award in recognition of their cleanliness and water quality. Kinmel Bay, Abergele (Pensarn), Colwyn Bay/Rhos-on-Sea, Llandudno North Shore, Llandudno West Shore, Penmaenmawr and Llanfairfechan have all picked up top beach prizes.





It's one of the world's greatest festivals and this year it's coming to Conwy County. In August 2019 the National Eisteddfod lands in Llanrwst for a uniquely Welsh, week-long celebration of music, art, culture and much more. The Eisteddfod is a beguiling blend of tradition and 21st Century fun, attracting around 150,000 visitors a year.



S Entertains

Central to the Eisteddfod are competitions in poetry, storytelling and song featuring 6,000 entrants from all over Wales. But that's just part of what's going on. You'll also find activities and events for all the family, plus Maes B (the Eisteddfod's very own rock and pop festival). Don't worry if you're not a Welsh speaker. Translation services are provided in the main competition pavilion and you can even join in with some on-site Welsh lessons.

It's the biggest party in North Wales and you're all invited.

**FOR MORE ON ART AND
CULTURE SEE OVERLEAF**





WHEN IT COMES TO
ART AND CULTURE,
THE NATIONAL
EISTEDDFOD AT
LLANRWST IS OUR
HEADLINER FOR 2019.
BUT THIS WEEK-
LONG CELEBRATION
IS ONLY ONE PLAYER
IN A RICH CULTURAL
SCENE WAITING TO
BE DISCOVERED ALL
YEAR ROUND.



CULTURE CLUB

Scheduled to open in autumn 2019, the new Conwy Culture Centre brings Conwy's heritage to 21st-century life. Housed in a striking modern building with views over the town walls and castle, it will be home to a library and the Conwy Archive, plus an arts and heritage hub featuring interactive exhibits and displays from the county's historic collections.

ON STAGE

Head to Llandudno's Venue Cymru for a packed programme of theatrical entertainment. Take your pick from traditional family pantomimes (a big hit at Christmas time), performances by Welsh National Opera, pop music, dance and hit plays direct from the West End. Colwyn Bay's Theatr Colwyn is Wales's oldest working theatre and cinema – and it's still going strong, now modernised to offer a 21st-century entertainment experience. Rhos-on-Sea is home to a very different kind of theatrical encounter. The Harlequin Theatre is the first and only permanent puppet theatre in Britain. If movies are more your thing, catch all the latest releases in the Cineworld multiplex at Llandudno Junction.

PLAYING TO THE GALLERY

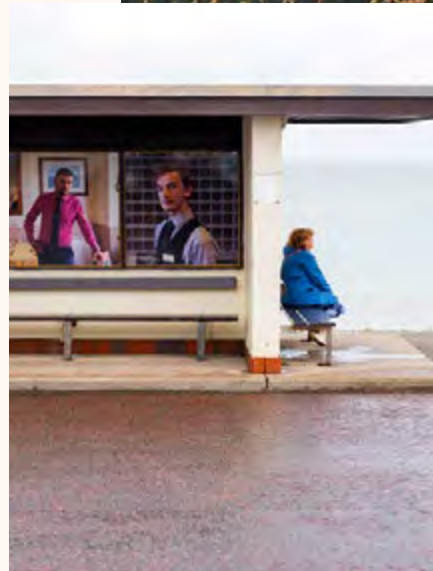
Mostyn in Llandudno isn't only one of the UK's best contemporary art galleries. It's also a fascinating architectural achievement, with a gold-spined Edwardian façade giving way to a series of strikingly modern interior spaces. Inside you'll find a shifting programme of exhibitions that showcase the best in contemporary art and craft from Wales and beyond. There's also a cool café and stylish shop selling jewellery, ceramics, prints and books.

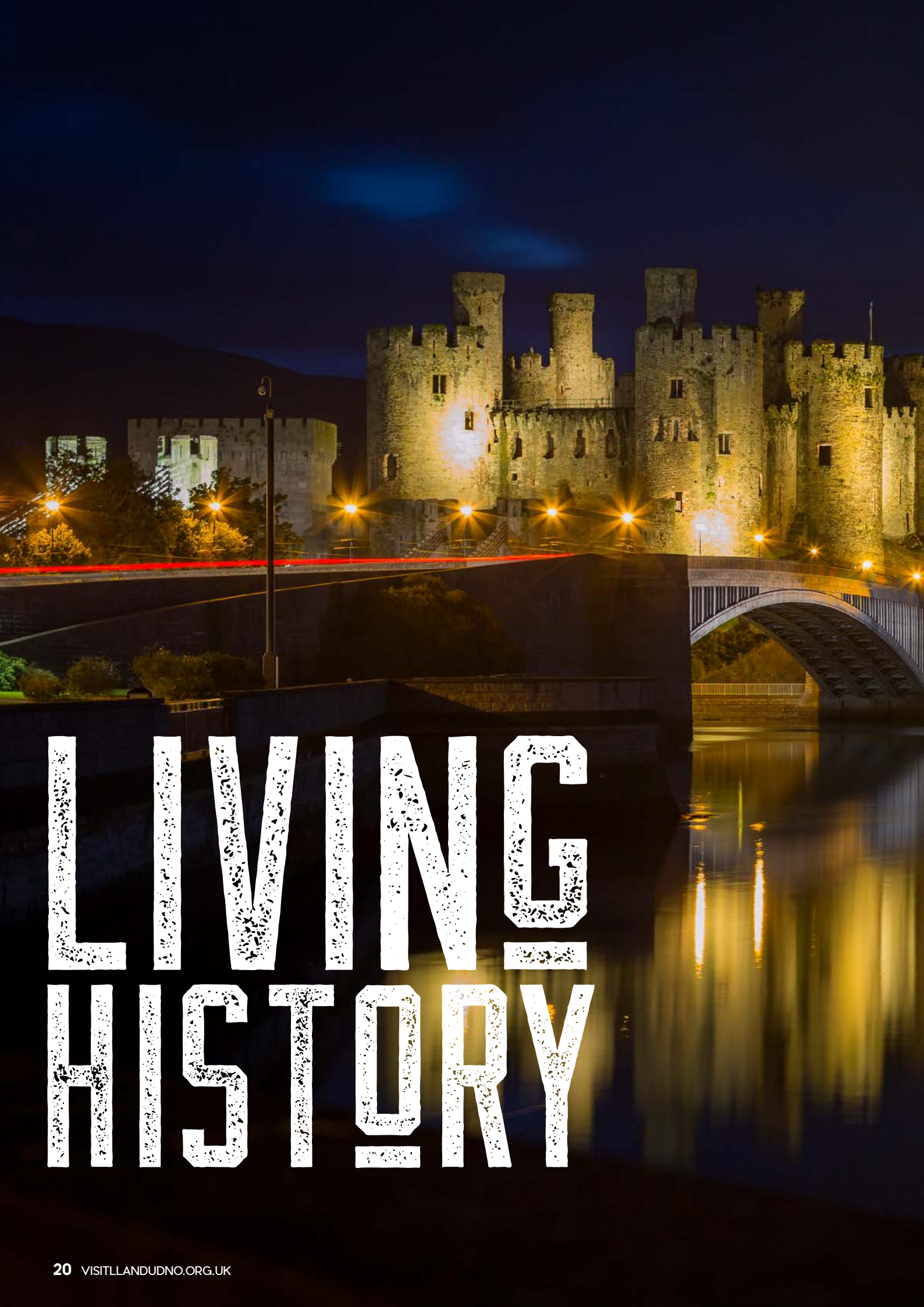
PICTURE PERFECT

The highly respected Royal Cambrian Academy of Art in Conwy focuses on artistic excellence in Wales, with a mix of historic and contemporary works. There's more amazing art at beautiful Ffin y Parc in Llanrwst, a grand country house that showcases some of the finest artists working in Wales alongside the best of contemporary 20th-century art. Displayed in immaculately designed rooms, all are available to buy. Don't worry if your budget won't stretch to taking a painting home with you. The cakes on sale in the café are masterpieces in their own right.

TRAIL FINDERS

For a wide-ranging look at our diverse art and craft scene take a trip on the Helfa Gelf Art Trail, Wales's largest open studios event. Every September hundreds of artists from all over North Wales welcome visitors to their studios, offering a fascinating insight into the creative process.





LIVING HISTORY