

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

# Rye, East Sussex

**Train:**  
London St Pancras to Rye, from £36.70 return ([thetrainline.com](http://thetrainline.com))

**Time:**  
Around one hour and 15 minutes

**Drive:**  
London to Rye, one hour and 48 minutes, via the M20

Once one of the major centres of trade in England and a member of the **Cinque Ports** federation, this hilltop town perched above Romney March is famous for **smugglers**, authors such as Henry James and artists such as Paul Nash. Other famous locals have included Tom Baker and **Sir Paul McCartney**. Today, it is being reinvented as a cool weekend destination for food and fresh air – and arguably the best beach in Britain.



Situated in a handsome refurbished former coaching inn on the

High Street **(1) The George In Rye** (98 High Street. 01797 222114, [thegeorgeinrye.com](http://thegeorgeinrye.com)) is the first destination for stressed City types, plus a host of loyal regulars. The rooms are great and locals congregate in the bar for lunch while The George Grill is for more formal occasions. One downside is that there is no hotel parking and setting down on the busy street can be difficult.

The old team behind The Engineer in London's Primrose Hill are the brains behind **(2) The Ship Inn** (The Strand. 01797 222233, [theshipinrye.co.uk](http://theshipinrye.co.uk)). The result is your perfect gastro pub. All Fifties Festival of Britain-inspired graphics, it is a little bit rough around the edges but all the more charming for it. The bedrooms upstairs are bright, cheerful and booked way in advance.

For a more old-school approach, head for **(3) The Landgate** (5-6 Landgate. 01797 222829, [landgatebistro.co.uk](http://landgatebistro.co.uk)). Just beyond the town's only remaining gate – as built on the instructions of Edward III – for a long time it was the only decent eatery for miles around. The lighting is terrible but the food is very good – save space for a pudding.

Modern Indian is not what you expect in a picture postcard

town like this, but **(4)**

**The Ambrette At Rye** (24 High Street. 01797 222043, [theambrette.co.uk](http://theambrette.co.uk)) serves locally sourced food excellently cooked.

For Italian, **(5) Tuscan Kitchen Rye** (8 Lion Street. 01797 223269, [tuscankitchery.co.uk](http://tuscankitchery.co.uk)) has won local hearts and a recent change in owners doesn't seem to have dimmed its popularity. One medieval street over, **(6) The Union Steakhouse** (8 East Street. 01797 229289, [theloughrye.co.uk](http://theloughrye.co.uk)) is the place for great meat and good atmosphere. The town, however, is most famous for its fish – particularly local scallops – and **(7) Webbe's At The Fish Café** (17 Tower Street. 01797 222226, [webbesrestaurants.co.uk](http://webbesrestaurants.co.uk)) is reliably good.

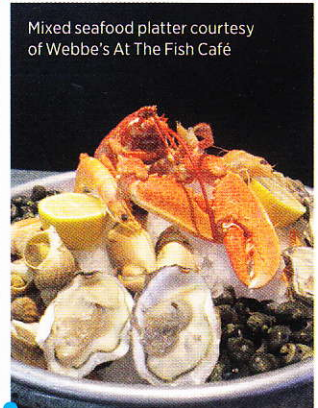
**(8) The Globe Inn Marsh** (10 Military Road. 01797 225220, [globeinnmarshrye.com](http://globeinnmarshrye.com)) was recently named one of the best pubs in the country, and the praise is well deserved. The décor is, well, quirky (it looks as if, having been unable to pick a style, it has decided to go with every style) but it is comfortable, the service friendly and the food surprisingly good – as well as generous.

If you are heading for Camber Sands a few miles away, try **(9) The Gallivant** (New Lydd Road, Camber. 01797 225057, [thegallivant.co.uk](http://thegallivant.co.uk)), a refurbished motel opposite the beach car park, for a pre-paddle lunch.

Robert Johnston



Tuscan Kitchen Rye's tortino al cioccolato dessert (left)



Mixed seafood platter courtesy of Webbe's At The Fish Café



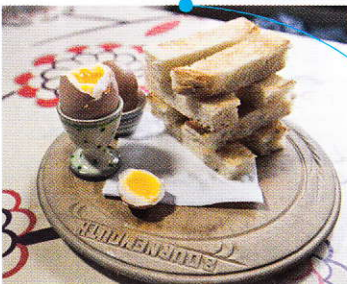
The Globe Inn Marsh, named one of the best pubs in the country by the Telegraph



The dining room of The Gallivant, Rye's refurbished motel by the sea



The luxury double room at The George In Rye (above); The Ship Inn's egg and soldiers breakfast (below)



The Landgate restaurant (left) and its focaccia bread (below)



The Ambrette at Rye's (inset) cinnamon poached pear dessert with chillies, thyme and honey ice cream

