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Kent's Colourful Coastal Gem That Feels Like the Riviera

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Tucked along the coast between Folkestone and Hythe, the charming village of Sandgate is one of Kent's most delightful hidden treasures. With its rainbow-coloured houses, clear sea views, and peaceful seaside vibe, it's no surprise some call it Kent's very own Riviera. There's even a sign that says just that.

This picturesque village offers much more than just a pretty face. The shingle beach has been awarded 'excellent' bathing water status for eight years running, and it's held a Seaside Award for the past 12. It's the kind of place where you can take a slow, refreshing walk along the promenade, feel the sea breeze, and lose yourself in the simple joy of coastal life. On a clear day, you might even spot the French coast in the distance.

One of the first things visitors notice is the burst of colour in Sandgate's homes. From soft lavenders and aqua blues to sun-faded terracottas and bold greens, every street corner feels like a canvas. This colourful charm adds to the laid-back atmosphere, and it's no wonder people feel inspired to paint their own homes after a visit.

Despite being a quiet spot, Sandgate is full of life. The High Street is lined with cafés, pubs, and restaurants offering everything from fresh seafood to hearty breakfasts. The Boat House Café, for example, has become a local favourite, thanks to its welcoming owners and delicious Greek salad. A short walk away is The Famous Ship Inn, a community-run pub with beautiful sea views from its terrace and a log fire for those colder months.

For those interested in history, Sandgate has plenty to offer. The historic Sandgate Castle, built under the reign of King Henry VIII, still stands as a reminder of the area's strategic coastal past. The village is also home to the Shorncliffe Redoubt, a Napoleonic-era fort, and is linked to famous names like H.G. Wells and actress Hattie Jacques, who was born here.

While it may look like a sleepy village, Sandgate is surprisingly sought-after. Last year, it was named one of the ten most expensive seaside areas in the United Kingdom by real estate platform Rightmove, with average house prices hovering around £435,995 today.

Whether you're strolling along the beach, admiring the quirky houses, or simply soaking in the peaceful seaside vibe, Sandgate is a place that gently captures your heart. It may not be the most talked-about destination in Kent, but that's part of what makes it so special. For those seeking beauty, charm, and a slower pace of life, Sandgate is a hidden gem worth discovering.

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