

GQ Taste

The RESTAURANT ▶ The BAR ▶ The HOTEL ▶ The CLUB ▶ The PUB ▶ The NEIGHBOURHOOD ▶ The DRINK ▶ The BOOK ▶ The BOTTLE

Rise of the fallen: Far from its storm-torn state, St Mawes has been resurrected as Cornwall's new hot spot. Head to the Hidden Hut for a beach feast (far right) or enjoy a sea view from the Dreamcatchers house (bottom right)



St Mawes the merrier



Back in February of this year, Cornish newspaper the *West Briton* described the storm damage suffered by St Mawes as "carnage". With the fire brigade cordoning off the area, homes wrecked and hotels ruined, residents were left wondering if the little harbour would ever be the same again.

Well, *GQ Taste* is pleased to report that not only has St Mawes recovered, it is currently *the* place to visit in Cornwall. With world-class accommodation, beautiful hotels, a Michelin-starred restaurant and a couple of unmissable traditional pubs, the issue for St Mawes is no longer: "Can things get any worse?" The question now is: "Does it get any better than this?" PH



A sea view from the Dreamcatchers St Mawes retreat (above); the entrance to Idle Rocks (below)



Hotel Tresanton's cosy ber-snug (top) and its terrace restaurant (above)



St Mawes' go-to breakfast spot, Café Chancellors (above); the exterior of the Victory Inn (below)



THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

St Mawes & Roseland

Train
London Paddington
to Truro, from
£39.95 (one way)

Time
From four hours
18 minutes
firstgreatwestern.co.uk

Taxi
From Truro to
St Mawes, from £40

There are a few painfully unavoidable truths to be observed when it comes to picking out Cornwall's must-visit destinations. Padstow is too obvious. St Ives is overdeveloped. Rock is too *Tatler-on-Sea*. And Newquay is a Club 18-30 Gulag for Asbos. Thank Saint Piran then for the gift that is **the coastal town of St Mawes** and its rural extension the Roseland Peninsula.

For the ultimate in luxury, style, sophistication and indulgence, book yourself a long weekend (or longer) in one of Amanda Selby's **(1) St Mawes Retreats** (0800 088 6622, stmawesretreats.co.uk). With four spectacular holiday homes in the town, all with superb views of the harbour and Falmouth bay, once you've unpacked you won't want to leave. Take advantage of Amanda's concierge service (she can source a private chef, massage therapists, picnic hampers, restaurant bookings, child care etc), and you won't have to.

If Amanda can't accommodate you, St Mawes has plenty of options for the discerning traveller. As well as the **(2) Idle Rocks hotel** (*Harbourside*, 01326 270270, idlerocks.com), there is Olga Polizzi's **(3) Hotel Tresanton** (27 Lower Castle Road, 01326 270055, tresanton.com) that remains the place to stay for romantic relaxation. Built from a collection of small cottages, the rooms creep up the steep sloping banks of the town making it a unique and charming location. Make sure you book dinner on the terrace and leave everything to the brilliantly attentive staff.

To savour the St Mawes atmosphere, grab a morning croissant and cappuccino from **(4) Café Chancellors** (1 The Quay, 01326 270998, cafechancellors.co.uk), a pint of Betty Stogs in the cosy **(5) Victory Inn** (Victory Steps, 01326 270 324, victory-inn.co.uk), or sit outside the **(6) Rising Sun** (The Square, 01326 270233, risingsun-stmawes.co.uk) and enjoy the harbour. And definitely visit the

(7) Watch House (1 The Square, 01326 270038, watchhouse-stmawes.co.uk). Owner and chef Will Gould is balancing London style with local sensitivity, serving big flavours (try the mussel pot cooked with cream and cider) or seaside staples (fish and chips – what else?).

Beyond St Mawes and just up the headland is Roseland, home to the **(8) Driftwood restaurant** (Rosevine, 01872 580644, driftwoodhotel.co.uk). Chris Eden is the first Cornishman to receive a Michelin star for his seasonally focused and inventive cooking. There's much to recommend, but *GQ* Taste still wakes up drooling over the crisp lamb belly.

Further up the coast at Carne Beach is the old-school **(9) Nare Hotel** and its Quarterdeck restaurant (Vernan-in-Roseland, 01872 501111, narehotel.co.uk). With views over Gernans Bay, it is a perfect spot for lunch or dinner. Whenever you go, order the grilled Portloe lobster.

Finally, there is the **(10) Hidden Hut** (Porthcurnick Beach, hiddenhut.co.uk). Set in an old, rustic cabin on the cliff, go there for coffee and home-made cake or, better yet, book tickets for one of their feast nights. Take your own alcohol, squeeze onto one of the huge picnic tables, and enjoy owners Jemma and Simon's steaming pots of Goan seafood curry, jambalaya or bouillabaisse as the sun sets. Like St Mawes itself, it really is magical. PH



The Watch House exterior (above) and its chef and owner Will Gould (left)



The Driftwood restaurant's fillet of red ruby beef (above); the Nare hotel entrance (below)



The Hidden Hut





A sea view from the Dreamcatchers St Mawes retreat (above); the entrance to Idle Rocks (below)



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