

[00:00:35.840] - Intro

Intro Welcome to the UK Travel Planning Podcast. Your host is the founder of The UK Travel Planning website, Tracy Collins. In this podcast, Tracy shares destination guides, travel tips, and itinerary ideas, as well as interviews with a variety of guests who share their knowledge and experience of UK travel to help you plan your perfect UK vacation. Join us as we explore the UK from cosmopolitan cities, to quaint villages, from historic castles to beautiful islands and from the picturesque countryside to seaside towns.

[00:00:37.340] - Tracy

Hi, and welcome to episode 48 of the UK Travel Planning Podcast. This week, I thought I would talk to you a little bit about visiting the UK in summer, a bit about the advantages and disadvantages of visiting the UK in summer, what things you can expect to do and see, a little bit about what to pack, I guess. And based on our own experiences, obviously, of living in the UK for years and enjoying the beautiful summer weather. I will say that with a little caveat because it is the UK weather. So one thing about the UK is that the weather is predictably unpredictable. So last year, I can say that in 2022, the weather was absolutely beautiful. We had absolutely gorgeous summer, not a lot of rain, which I guess brings its own problems, but it was beautiful. And I even remember that we were at Highclere on the hottest day of the year when it went up to 42 degrees, which was absolutely astounding for the UK. Anyway, you're either going to be listening to this podcast because you are visiting the UK this summer or you are considering planning a visit to the UK in summer coming up, so I guess 2024 onwards.

[00:01:45.810] - Tracy

I want to talk to you about the advantages of visiting the UK in summer. One thing is what I've already mentioned is you get beautiful weather. Usually, it's warm. One thing you are guaranteed to get are the long, beautiful light nights and days because the hours of daylight seem to go on forever. It's amazing. It's something I miss when I live abroad is the fact that we get such long days and it can go to 9.30 - 10 o'clock before it gets dark. Obviously, the further north you go, the lighter it is. I remember being in Orkney last year and I don't think it actually got dark. It was amazing. So you get a much longer time to actually get out and about and enjoy seeing things because it's lighter, so you can fit more into your itinerary. I know we recently talked about our Cornwall Drive in itinerary that we did last July, and obviously we had long days, so we could fit lots and lots of things in. So that's an advantage. Advantage is that it should be warm. Am I going to lie, it should be warm? It should be lovely and beautiful sunshine and warmth at least.

[00:02:55.010] - Tracy

Do bear in mind, though, the further north you go, the cooler it can get. But generally in the summer, hopefully it's going to be fairly warm. Again, put that into context from wherever you live in the world, because I live in Queensland, I live in Queensland. So for us, warm is 30 something. Warm in the UK is 20 something. So saying that it did go up to 42 last year, so it was particularly exceptional. So advantages are, as I say, warmer weather, you've got the long days, lots of things are open, opening hours are longer. You get the chance to go to some of those fantastic events, outdoor events that are held. You can go and sit in a beer garden and a country pub. You can enjoy things like concerts that are on plays, festivals, some beautiful gardens are at the peak. So there's lots to do, lots of advantages to visiting in the summer. I guess disadvantages are the fact that it's a popular time of year to visit. It's a popular time of year for people from overseas, and it's a popular time of year for British people as well to actually travel around the UK.

[00:04:09.460] - Tracy

So it's peak time. Things are more expensive. So do keep that in mind. And obviously, the places are busier. So expect that they're going to be crowds. That's just really how it's going to be. And also, whether you're driving or taking the train or have it getting around, it will be busier. So you need to think about booking things and just be aware that there are going to be more people around. Also in the UK, the schools break up. So in England and Wales, the schools break up third week in July, generally, go back the first week in September. Schools in Scotland, they finish it in mid-June and then they go back in mid-August. So that's worth bearing in mind. So there's lots to do when you visit the UK in the summer. For example, there's so many places that are wonderful to visit. We spent time last

summer in Cornwall, which was fantastic. We were in Derbyshire Peak district. I remember going to Bakewell and we saw Morris dancers. It was lovely, beautiful, warm weather. Cotswolds were always a firm favourite of mine. Beautiful gardens to go and visit. There are gardens throughout the UK that you can go and enjoy the wonderful flowers.

[00:05:26.150] - Tracy

My favourite in the Cotswolds are Hidcock Gardens, the Hudson Gardens and Kiftsgate, which were to me absolutely stunning. I can't wait to visit again this year. So obviously, if you enjoy walking, I'm not a hiker, I have to say I do admit that. But again, it's a perfect time of year to go and do some walking. There are also lots of events on in the summer that may be of interest. For example, the Trooping of the Colour. This year, 2023, that's held on the 17th of May. That's the official birthday of the British sovereign. So obviously it will be our King. King Charles III will be out parading on that day in London. Definitely, if you want to see a bit of pomp and pageantry, that's where to go and enjoy that event. Obviously, other things that are worth thinking about if you're going to visit and over the summer, Stonehenge Summer Solstice is very popular. At sunrise and the 21st of June every year, you'll find lots of crowds gathered at Stonehenge to celebrate the Solstice, Summer Solstice. And that is the longest day of the year. So on that day, the sun rises directly behind the heel stone of Stonehenge, and the entrance to the stone circle demonstrates how Stonehenge was designed to align with the summer and winter solstices. So again, very popular time to go. So it is incredibly busy.

[00:06:53.000] - Tracy

If you're interested in literature, it's a Jane Austin Regency Week, it's held in June. If you're interested in outdoors spectacular, military themed outdoor show, the Edinburgh Military Tattoo is held in August, which is incredibly popular. Again, if you're interested in going to see that in August, you need to get tickets online. Lots of sports events are held in the summer. So you've got Wimbledon. You don't have to go to Wimbledon to watch the tennis, though. I watched Wimbledon last year sitting in a deck chair at Covent Garden, drinking Pims and enjoying the warm weather. And again, in Cambridge, because quite often you'll find that you have screens, outdoor screens set up and people sitting and enjoying the sunshine and having a drink and the tennis. Great time as well, I say, to go and sit and have a drink in a pub garden and just enjoy the weather and the sport. Royal Ascot is held in June, which is held over four days. That's as famous for its fashion as it is for horse racing, though. Yeah, and cricket. If you're a cricket fan, you'll probably see lots of cricket being played. Well, you will see lots of cricket being played in parks, village green. People will be out playing cricket. I remember going to Blenheim Palace one year and watching everybody playing their cricket. It was fantastic. Sitting just for the drink and we're taking a picnic and just enjoying watching everybody playing their cricket. Obviously, it's also the time where you'll see international matches take place in Old Trafford, Edgbaston, Headingley in Leeds, Trent Bridge and Nottingham, as well as obviously the famous Home of cricket and Lord's Cricket Ground in London. So if you enjoy cricket, you'll definitely be able to see some cricket if that's up your street. Also, you'll find some unusual things taking place in the summer. Things like well dressing festivals, you'll find those in Derbyshire between the months of May and September. It's a tradition of decorating wells and natural springs, you'll find across towns and villages throughout Derbyshire. You'll find scenes are created using only natural materials such as flowers, petals, seeds, and each well dress and takes group of volunteers around one week to complete. So you'll be able to see that and you can find those. I'll put a link actually to the Peak district website where you can find dates of where you'll be able to see the different world dressing events if that interests you.

[00:09:27.900] - Tracy

Obviously in Scotland, in July and August, you've got the Highland Games. That's a massive sporting and cultural event held in town all over Scotland between May and September. Most of the festivals take place in July and August. You can see things like tossing a caber, the sheaf toss, and hammer throw. Those are all day events with food, drink, craft stalls, Scottish dancing, piping displays, craft and food competitions. So they're incredibly popular. So again, I'll put some links to some Highland Games that you may be interested in going to. Edinburgh Fringe is very popular. It's held in Edinburgh in August, where you'll find music drama and comedy. Festival attracts lots of big names and new artists from all over the world. You enjoy those three weeks in August. Thousands of people to send on Edinburgh. It's as popular as Hogmanay. It's a very popular month of August if you go to Edinburgh

with the Tattoo and the festival on. So worth remembering that if you're thinking about going to Edinburgh. Hopefully, if you're going this August, you've already booked everything. But if you're planning 2024, you need to really think ahead and get yourself sorted with that.

[00:10:41.830] - Tracy

So let's think about some frequently asked questions about visiting the UK in the summer. So obviously, when we talk about summer, I'm talking about June, July and August. So if you have to choose one of those months, if you have the freedom to choose, I would recommend June because that's before the school's break up for the summer. So it's going to be slightly less busy. What is the weather like? So as I said, predictably unpredictable, the English weather. Average daily temperature in June is around 18 degrees Celsius or 64 degrees Fahrenheit. There is an average rainfall of around about 77 millimetres. Whereas July, temperature goes up to about 20 degrees Celsius, 67 Fahrenheit. Average rainfall, 82 millimetres. August, average temperature of about 19 degrees Celsius or 67 degrees Fahrenheit, with an average a little bit more rain due around 94 millimetres. But again, to say that can vary. Daylight hours, because this is one of my main reasons that I love visiting the UK in summer. 17 hours of daylight per day in June and July. You get just under slightly 16 in August. 17 hours to go out and about and explore. It just makes it. It's fantastic. Perfect. You can just do so much into your itinerary. If you've listened to our podcast about our road trip around Cornwall last year, we were able to do so much because we did that in July. So again, we did that before the schools broke up in England. I will just say that. But it just gave us so much time.

[00:12:23.250] - Tracy

So if you're going to pack to come over in the summer, what sorts of things that you should bring? Well, I brought T shirts, light tops, crop trousers, sandals. I actually even brought shorts last year. Not thinking I was going to wear them, but I did. I wore them down in Cornwall, where it was lovely. Do remember, though, it is worth bringing just a lightweight jumper, a raincoat, and maybe a pair of trainers just in case it does get cooler. And obviously, you've got to consider that the further north you go, the cooler it can be. So it's worth considering that. But I think that gives you an overall view of summer in the UK. We spent, say, July and August in the UK last year, June, July and most of August anyway, and the weather was amazing.

[00:13:08.750] - Tracy

So if you're planning to come over in the summer, all I can say is absolutely enjoy it. Enjoy the beautiful gardens, enjoy the light nights and hopefully enjoy the warm weather. I will put links to everything I've talked about in the show notes and we have got a whole blog post all about visiting the UK in the summer, which goes into more detail than I have got into in this podcast. And you can find the information and links to all of the places that I talked about in the show notes for this episode, which are [uktravelplanning.com/episode-48](http://uktravelplanning.com/episode-48). Anyway, all that leaves me to say for this week is as usual, I'm going to sign off with those words, Happy UK Travel Planning.