

## WONDERFUL BEACHES

The Northumberland Coastline is exhilarating and includes mile upon mile of unspoilt, sandy beaches, punctuated by ancient castles and fortifications.

There are numerous beaches and coves to explore and some of our favourites include from north to south:

### Bamburgh

Majestic Bamburgh Castle, once a Norman stronghold towers over the wide expanse of pristine, sandy beach, backed by sand dunes. Bamburgh Castle beach is a perfect place to go for long, wind-swept walks at any time of year. The water temperatures don't really get particularly warm even in the height of summer, but in the milder months of the year children enjoy playing in the waves and the sand is good for building sandcastles and playing beach games.

What really makes Bamburgh beach stand out though is the breathtaking castle dominating the skyline behind the beach. A castle is known to have stood here since the 6th century; the oldest part of the present structure was built in the 12th century. Bamburgh castle is well worth a visit and children will enjoy the extensive collection of arms and armour.

A walk along the beach in a northerly direction brings the visitor to Stags Rocks, so named because of the white stag painted on the rocks. There are some interesting rock pools in this area of the beach and a small lighthouse - the most northerly of its kind in mainland England.

The beach at Bamburgh gets good waves for surfing and is regarded as one of the most consistent spots on the coast. Surf hire and lessons are also available.

### Embleton Bay

Embleton Bay is a long stretch of golden sand overlooked by the dramatic ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle. Running behind the beach is the Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club and a little way beyond this the medieval village of Embleton. There is wildlife in abundance here with flora in the dunes including species such as bloody cranesbill, eye bright, bedstraw, potentilla, spring squill, wild thyme, and wild vetch. Some of the bay's nearby cliffs are a breeding site for seabirds such as by fulmars, kittiwake, eider ducks, and shags.

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At the far northern end of the beach is the village of Low Newton, which is considered a separate beach. Reached down a small country lane, the village feels blissfully isolated from the rest of the world. It boasts a church, a couple of small shops, a pub that has been open since the 18th century and a few holiday cottages.

### Ross Back Sands

Sitting on this quiet beach Lindisfarne Castle on Holy Island appears tantalizingly close, but don't be tempted to walk across the flats at low tide as the tides are treacherous and fast moving. A relatively remote beach reached only on foot, the second half of the walk passing through a nature reserve.

### Budle Bay at Waren Mill

Waren Mill was once an important port given its charter in the C13th by King Henry III, though the once busy harbour has long since disappeared, sited up beneath the estuary sands. Budle Bay is a bird sanctuary and at low tide a vast expanse of mud flats is the home to countless thousands of sea and land birds. This coastal area is a haven for birdwatchers and naturalists in all seasons – especially during the winter months. The five mile walk around the bay is also interesting and offers excellent scenery.

### Seahouses

Seahouses North Beach is a wide-open expanse of beach backed by low, grassy dunes and features a number of rocky outcrops. This can be a good destination for anyone who enjoys tranquillity and big open skies. The water quality here is good and the beach is used by birdwatchers and sea anglers as well as walkers. On clear days, the Farne Islands can be seen in the distance.

### Beadnell

The harbour is ancient and the only west facing port on the east coast of England. Beadnell Bay is a wide, sandy beach in a horseshoe shaped bay just south of the village of Beadnell. The glorious golden sand, curves around the bay forming a natural harbour. To the rear of the beach are grassy sand dunes and fields beyond. The beach itself is a popular spot for swimming and also for many different types of watersports such as surfing, sailing, windsurfing, and kitesurfing.

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## [Newton and Newton Pool](#)

Easily accessible by car this is a lovely and popular beach. The hamlet of Newton is almost entirely National Trust owned and includes a square right next to the sand where The Ship Inn is located and a great place for lunchtime sandwiches. Canoeing and wind surfing are also done from the beach. Newton Pool, a freshwater National Trust owned nature reserve with observation hide, is located among the sand dunes just south of Newton.

## [Sugar Sands](#)

Two adjoining sheltered coves are often overlooked by the majority of visitors to the area. As you drive into Longhoughton past St Peter & Paul's Church on the left, turn right following a narrow lane and park on the sand dunes.

## [Alnmouth](#)

Alnmouth beach sits in a wide sandy bay at the mouth of the River Aln (hence the name!). On the north bank of the river, behind the beach is the pretty little village of Alnmouth, a clutch of elegant, red-roofed houses that almost spills down to the sand. These days the village is all about the beach, and what a beach. You will be equally happy if you came to build sandcastles or gallop along the shoreline on horseback. Curving off into the distance on both sides of the river estuary there is always room at Alnmouth. Swimming at Alnmouth is not generally recommended and it is particularly dangerous towards the estuary mouth on a dropping tide. In fact there are signs warning against even paddling near the river mouth let alone attempting to cross.

Whilst the beach in front of the village is seldom busy, the beach to the south of the estuary is often empty. Backed by vast expanses of dunes there is a wealth of birds and wildlife to be seen here.

## [Warkworth Beach](#)

A small roach leads off the coastal route before entering Warkworth village and takes you down to spectacular golden sands. It runs northwards to Buston Links and the estuary at Alnmouth Bay. Warkworth itself is a pretty village unspoilt by modern development and the main street dominated by the massive medieval keep. A stroll down the street reveals interesting shops, cafes, restaurants and pubs.