

## A long weekend in... Falmouth Bay

Awash with creative talent, Falmouth, Truro, Penryn and the Roseland peninsula make for a charming Cornish getaway

FEATURE EMILY BROOKS

**C**ornwall has long been a favourite summer escape, and Falmouth Bay has all the elements you'd associate with the south-west: a sub-tropical climate, rollicking seafaring history, and a palpable creative vibe from its many local artists. So bring a bucket and spade by all means – but leave time to explore the area's castles, gardens and great independent shops and galleries.

### Falmouth

Falmouth is one of those seaside towns that easily combines the twin roles of both port and resort. The town's busy harbour and boatyards demonstrate that nautical interests are still very much alive here, while a life of leisure can be had with its beaches, hotels and restaurants. On the headland, **Pendennis Castle** (Castle Close, 01326 316594; english-heritage.org.uk) is a good place to get your bearings. One of the fortresses built by Henry VIII to defend England, it saw action until after World War II, and has some stunning views across the bay.

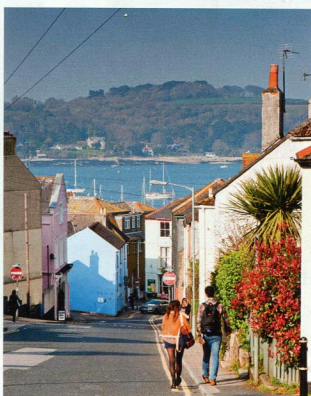
Partly because of the town's arts-based

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## H&A IDEAS



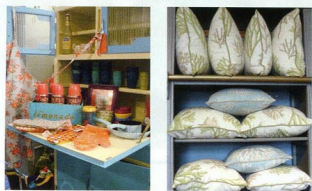
**Facing page Falmouth's thriving marina** This page, clockwise from top left **Pendennis Castle, which was built by Henry VIII; the Victorian Penmorvah Manor Hotel; looking down towards Falmouth's picturesque seafront; Camellia Interiors is the place to go for coastal-style furnishings; Kit Home is full of tempting kitchenalia**



### MECHANICAL WONDERS

Falmouth is world-renowned for its automata – mechanical tableaux that come to life when you turn a handle or press a button. Historically, these were not toys but were intended to astound and entertain the wealthy and show off the skills of their creator (usually a clockmaker). Even in the digital age, they can still delight.

Falmouth's connection to the tradition began in the late 1970s, when Peter passed on his skills to other local talent. Falmouth Art Gallery (The Moor, 01326 313863; falmouthartgallery.com) has amassed a charming collection of automata, including work by Markey and other locals such as Anthony Crosby and Paul Spooner (who was featured in the January 2009 issue of H&A).



university, and partly because of its inspiring natural beauty, Falmouth is a creative hotbed. A high density of artists and craftspeople live here, with lots of galleries to support them. **The Great Atlantic** (48 Arwenack Street, 01326 318452) is one of the largest in the area. You can pick up a print for £20 or splash out on a painting or piece of sculpture by an artist of international renown. Just along the road is **Willow & Stone** (42 Arwenack Street, 01326 311388), a nostalgic reminder of the way shopping used to be. It specialises in traditional ironmongery, from boot-scrapers to brass fingerplates, beautifully displayed on vintage shop fittings.

The steep High Street that leads north out of town is one of Falmouth's oldest roads, and is now home to a cluster of stylish independent shops. **Camellia Interiors** (38 High Street, 01326 311193) furnishes chic local properties in its signature coastal style – think shells, seaweed and nautical motifs in sea greens and blues. But the showroom's Fiona Osman says plenty of weekenders come in 'just to get ideas – people need that breathing space.' The shop also runs

masterclasses in sewing and decorating, aimed at holidaymakers. For something fun and youthful, head to **Kit Home** (18 High Street, 01326 218778). Like so many Falmouth residents, owner Paddy Butler came here as a student and never left. He now sells colourful kitchenware, blankets, flasks and reproduction 1950s kitchen cabinets.

The High Street is also Falmouth's antiques hub, with a good selection of shops to browse. **High Street Bazaar** (7 High Street) blends the tastes of brother and sister Dene Berryman and Jeremy Smith. 'He's good on traditional furniture, whereas I find things that might appeal to a more bohemian crowd,' says Dene. At the top of the hill, **Old Town Hall Antiques** (3 High Street, 01326 319437) offers two floors of English furniture at very reasonable prices, with many pieces restored on site.

Fans of mid-century design will love **Elephant & Monkey** (35 Killigrew Street, 01326 218881), just a couple of minutes' walk away. Its owner, 25-year-old Rowena Turner, has been buying furniture since she was 16 and has an infectious passion for British brands such as G Plan and