



View gallery

The Anchor Inn

Seatown, Dorset, England

View on a map

8/10

Telegraph expert rating

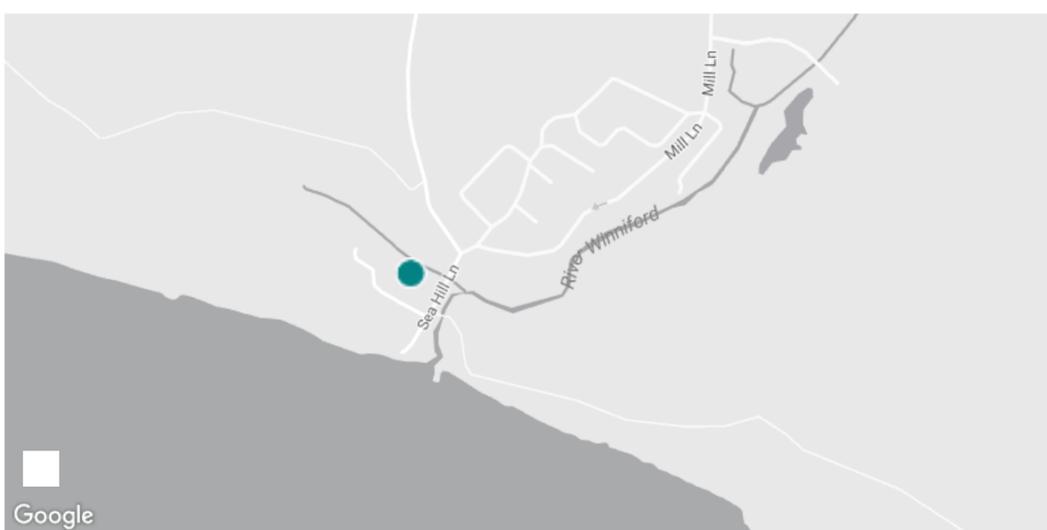
"The Anchor Inn, sat beyond snaking lanes and tucked between scarped cliffs on the edge of a little known Dorset village, is a destination gastropub serving elevated British classics. It is also a boutique hideaway that cocoons guests amid the sound of rolling waves."

By Benjamin Parker, TRAVEL WRITER

Location

9/10

The highlight of tiny Seatown is the beach, with a steeped ochre shore bordered by green fields. Visitors often skip it in favour of neighbours along the Jurassic Coast – trendy market town Bridport to the east, and fossil-cum-fish favourite Lyme Regis to the west – but this hamlet is a worthwhile stop for those in the know. Countryside walks from here are abundant; trek 30-40 minutes up to Golden Cap, the highest point on the south coast.



Google

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Style & character

7/10

With white stone walls, a grey roof peaked by chimneys and a thatched cottage next door, the Anchor fits the bill as a shore-perched West Country bolthole. After 200 years at this site, the pub has some rugged edges (much like the cliffs on either side), but head-to-toe redesigns have bestowed a contemporary edge. The weather-beaten anchor, which gives the inn its name, still sits shipwrecked by the car park. Inside, the bar is a scrubbed-up smuggler's haunt with low ceilings, smart wooden textures and knick-knacks on the walls. An optimistic approach to British summer weather sees plenty of seating dotted outside, including a curved stone lookout with rustic wooden stools facing out to Lyme Bay.



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Service & facilities

8/10

The chirpy staff are pleasant, even when rushed by the swell of summer crowds. Easy-going landlord Paul Wiscombe is a born-and-bred local, and can help you decide how to spend days out in Dorset. Aside from lunch and dinner offerings, and a bar in which to linger, the beach is as close to additional on-site facilities as you'll get – but staff are happy to point you to nearby attractions.

- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Beach
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Wi-Fi

Rooms

8/10

The three rooms – named after Dorset landmarks – are all large, with plush king beds and sea views. Traditional furnishings (chesterfield-style sofas, wooden writing desks) are complemented by modern touches, like metal trunks turned into a glass-topped table and cupboards made from salvaged floorboards. In line with the property's name, there's more than a little nautical adornment – lampshades of thick rope, life rings on the wall, maritime art – but nothing is over the top. Rooms are coloured in pastel and natural hues. Brightly tiled bathrooms feature console sinks and roll-top baths.

Food & drink

8/10

If the weather is decent, expect a fight to secure a lunchtime spot, either tucked inside or al fresco. Menus from head chef Jean-Paul De Ronne – who previously worked under Masterchef winner Mat Follas – reveal commitment to local, seasonal fare from land and sea, such as the fresh crab salad using crustacea caught only metres away. Ales are all from Palmers, brewed four miles away, while an extensive cocktail list from former Hix bartender David Smith features a number of Dorset's own spirits (Black Cow Vodka and Conker Gin).

Value for money

7/10

Double rooms from £120 in low season; rising to £150 in high. Breakfast included. Free Wi-Fi.

Access for guests with disabilities?

Sloped access to the ground floor, where there is a disabled toilet, but none to the rooms.

Family-friendly?

Yes. Run by a family with small children who understand the needs of travelling families. The restaurant has a good menu for younger guests, with colouring sheets to keep them entertained. Travel cots and fold-out beds can be put in the rooms.

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