

The following English Riviera locations are just a few of the many that boast connections with Agatha Christie, inspired her writing and appear in the pages of her best selling crime novels.

KENTS CAVERN, TORQUAY (01803 215136)

Agatha Christie's father was a fellow of the Natural History Society and helped finance the excavations. Kents Cavern appears as Hemsley Cavern in 'The Man in the Brown Suit', published in 1924, several years before her own interest in archaeology was stimulated by a trip to the Middle East.

ANSTEYS COVE, TORQUAY

Agatha often took moonlight picnics with her friends on the tiny shingle beach at Ansteys Cove. It was here that she had a romantic encounter with a gentleman called Amyas Boston whose name was later used for one of the characters in 'Five Little Pigs'.

MEADFOOT BEACH, TORQUAY

Agatha was an enthusiastic swimmer and during the warm summer months would visit this beach nearly every day. Mixed bathing was not permitted during Agatha's day and males were not allowed within 50 yards of ladies bathing machines!

TOWN HALL & DISPENSARY, TORQUAY

During WW1, the then Town Hall was used as a Red Cross Hospital and when Agatha joined the Voluntary Aid Detachment she worked here as a nurse. In 1915 she transferred to the Dispensary where she acquired her knowledge of poisons that later proved such an integral part of her writing.

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S RIVIERA

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, TORRE (01803 328865)

Agatha was baptised at All Saints Church and regularly attended Sunday services. Her father made a financial donation to the church and ensured that Agatha was entered in the records as a founder member. Visitors welcome, guided tours available.

COCKINGTON COURT, TORQUAY (01803 606035)

In the 1900's, Cockington Court was home to the Mallocks, friends of the Miller family. Amateur theatricals were often organised and Agatha was encouraged to take part in the open-air dramatics on the lawns in front of the house. Cockington Court & Country Park is open all year round.

OLDWAY MANSION, PAIGNTON (01803 207930)

Originally built in 1874, Oldway Mansion was reconstructed in 1904 for Isaac Singer of sewing machine fame. Agatha came to this magnificent Mansion to attend social dances that were held in the lavish ballroom. Oldway Mansion is open to the public.

PAIGNTON AND DARTMOUTH STEAM RAILWAY (01803 555872)

The steam train runs 7 miles from Paignton to Kingswear following the coast and River Dart, and was often a journey undertaken by Agatha. Hercule Poirot also undertook this journey in 'The ABC Murders' and again in 'Dead Mans Folly'. The Steam Railway runs from Easter to October.

ELBERRY COVE

A peaceful cove surrounded by beautiful rolling South Devon hills yet here Sir Carmichael Clark met with his untimely death. Poirot is called in to investigate in 'The ABC Murders'.

CHURSTON FERRERS

Nestled between Paignton and Brixham, Agatha frequently visited this quaint village, often attending her parish church, St Mary the Virgin Church, which she later helped by financing repairs to the stained glass window from book royalties. After church, Agatha would often take lunch at Churston Court with Lord and Lady Churston. The Churston's sold the Manor in 1951 and it is now known as Ye Olde Churston Inn. Churston Station appears as Nassecombe Station in 'Dead Mans Folly' and as itself in 'The ABC Murders'.

GREENWAY GARDENS (01803 842382)

Greenway Gardens is a beautiful woodland garden set on the banks of the River Dart. The Gardens are part of the Greenway Estate which includes Greenway House, previously Agatha's home, now the residence of her daughter, Mrs Rosalind Hicks. The Gardens are open from March to October. Please call for further details regarding opening times and access.

DETAILS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, SITES EN ROUTE AND VISITOR MAPS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE ENGLISH RIVIERA TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES.

HOW TO GET HERE

BY CAR - From the end of the M5 at Exeter take the A38/A380 to the English Riviera.

BY TRAIN - Virgin CrossCountry and Great Western trains call at Torquay and Paignton.

BY COACH - National Express services call at Torquay and Paignton.

BY AIR - Nearby Exeter and Plymouth have airports with train or bus connections to the English Riviera.

WHERE TO STAY

The English Riviera has a wide choice of accommodation including top of the range hotels, great value guest houses, self catering apartments and caravan and camping parks. Details are available in the English Riviera Holiday Guide.

To obtain a copy of the Guide call on 0870 241 1535.

THE RIVIERA COLLECTION SHOP

The Riviera Collection Shop, situated adjacent to Torquay's Tourist Information Centre, stocks a wide variety of Agatha Christie merchandise including a full range of her novels and plays, many videos, audio tapes, puzzles and murder mystery themed games, together with details of Agatha Christie Tour Guides and Murder Mystery themed breaks.

For more information call, email or drop in;
Torquay Tourist Information Centre
Vaughan Parade, Torquay, TQ2 5JG
Tel: 0906 680 1268 (Calls charged at 25p per minute.)
email: tourist.board@torbay.gov.uk

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www.agathachristie.com

Published by the English Riviera Tourist Board



AGATHA CHRISTIE'S RIVIERA

Welcome to the English Riviera, the home of the world's greatest crime fiction writer, Dame Agatha Christie.



WE INVITE YOU TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF AGATHA CHRISTIE AND DISCOVER THE ENGLISH RIVIERA THAT SHE KNEW AND LOVED SO DEARLY

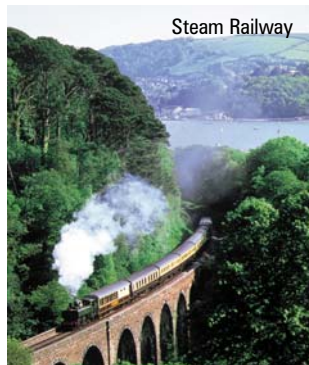
Elberry Cove



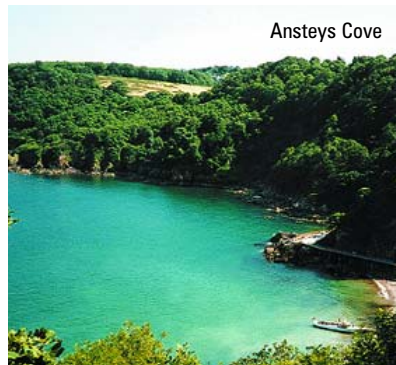
Oldway Mansion



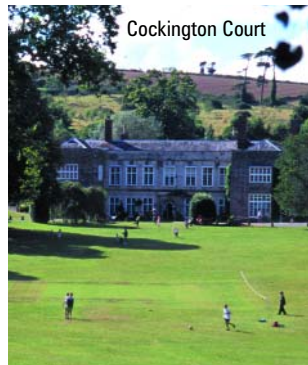
Steam Railway



Ansteys Cove



Cockington Court



Agatha Christie

Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller was born in Barton Road, Torquay on 15 September 1890 and spent much of her life in the area. Educated at home, her first published piece was a poem about electric trams in an Ealing newspaper when she was just 11 years old.

It was whilst her husband, Lt. Archie Christie of the Royal Field Artillery, was serving his country in France during the First World War, that Agatha began working as a nurse for the Red Cross Hospital located in Torquay Town Hall. She was later transferred to a dispensary where she acquired her knowledge of poisons - central to the plot of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), her first published novel.

Agatha Christie Mile

The Agatha Christie Mile takes you to some of the places that were inspirational in the life and works of the great writer. Each of the locations are marked with a unique

Agatha Christie plaque. Start from the Grand Hotel and make your way along the mile to the Imperial Hotel, or alternatively, start from the Imperial Hotel and finish at the

Grand! Whichever direction you choose, take your time and try to imagine the scene in those halcyon days of the early 20th Century.....



1. THE GRAND HOTEL

It was the Grand Hotel where Agatha and Archie spent their honeymoon after their wedding on Christmas Eve, 1914. Two days later, Agatha travelled up to London with her new husband and waved him goodbye as he set off to the war in France. It was to be 6 months before they would see each other again and nearly four years before their married life really began. The Grand Hotel is well worth stopping at for morning coffee or afternoon tea. Non-residents are most welcome.

...AND TORQUAY STATION

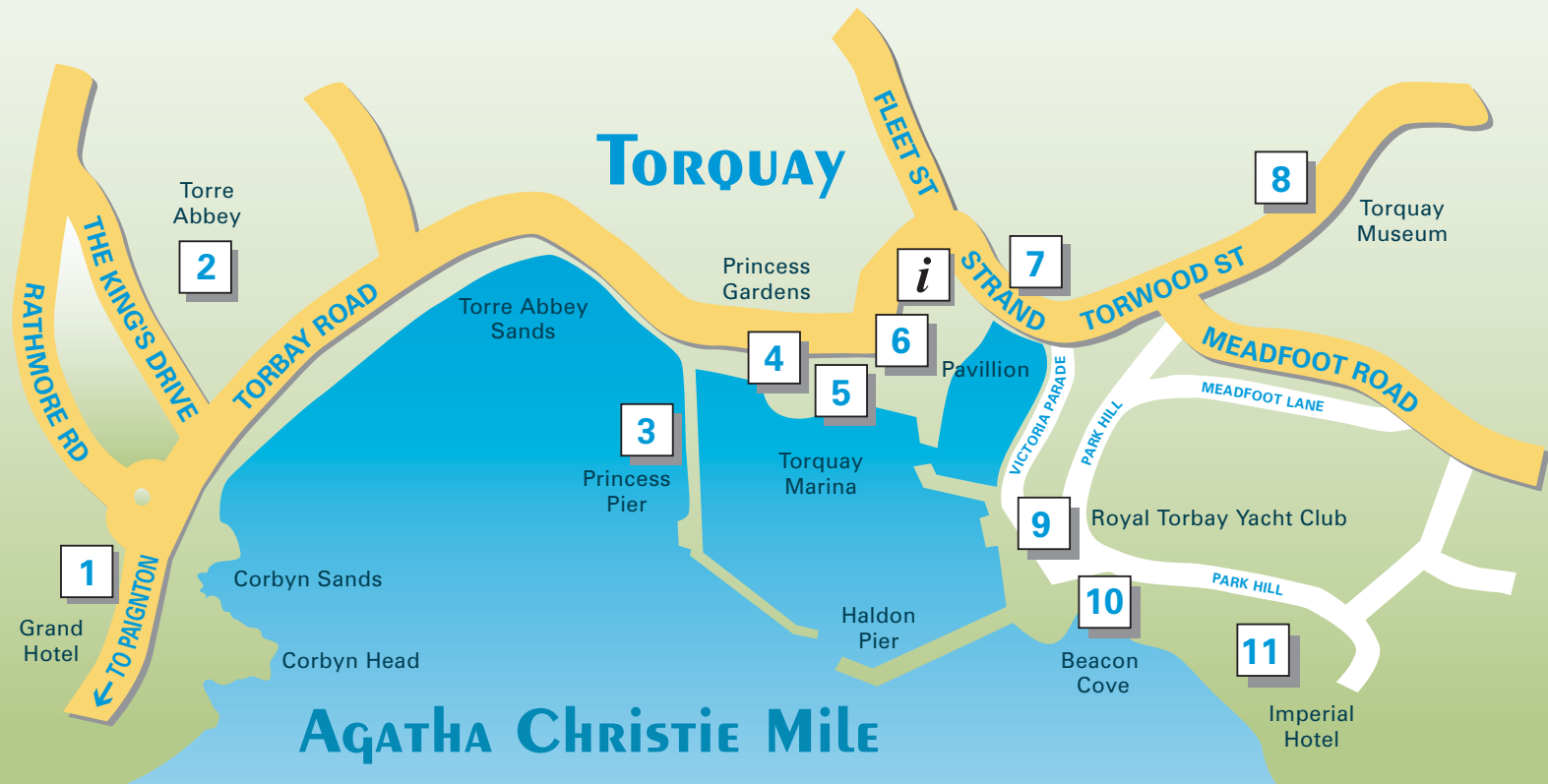
In 1990 as part of the town's Agatha Christie Centenary Celebrations, the Orient Express brought Hercule Poirot (David Suchet) to the station to meet Miss Marple (Joan Hickson) for the first time. In her books Agatha Christie never allowed the two to meet so it was a very special occasion. Poirot and Marple came face to face on the platform, Miss Marple held out her hand and Poirot, in his unique style, raised it to his lips and kissed it. The watching crowd applauded!

2. TORRE ABBEY

Torre Abbey is Torquay's oldest building dating back to 1196, and is home to The Agatha Christie Memorial Room, which features Agatha's favourite armchair, her 1937 Remington Portable Typewriter and her plotting notebook containing the handwritten manuscript of the best seller 'A Caribbean Mystery'.

3. PRINCESS PIER

Roller-skating on Princess Pier was one of young Agatha's favourite pastimes. In Torquay Museum, Agatha is pictured skating in an ankle length skirt and large feathered hat, as was the fashion then. Skating on the pier cost 2d and was a noisy and bumpy affair but enjoyable outdoor fun.



4. PRINCESS GARDENS

Opened in 1894, the gardens were built to a classic Victorian design which includes ornate fountains, rich flower beds, ornamental shelters and palm trees imported from New Zealand.

Agatha was doubtless a frequent visitor to Princess Gardens and they featured in 'The ABC Murders'.

5. THE PAVILION

This elegant building was opened in 1912 as a grand concert hall. Agatha had a great love of music and attended many concerts here. In fact, in early 1913 Agatha enjoyed a Wagnerian concert here with Archie Christie, who she later married.

6. AGATHA CHRISTIE BRONZE BUST

The only one on view in the world. The Bust was unveiled on 15 September 1990 by Agatha's daughter, Mrs Rosalind Hicks, to commemorate the centenary of her mother's birth and is the work of Dutch sculptor, Carol Van Den Boom-Cairns.

7. THE STRAND

The Strand has always been a busy area of Torquay. In Agatha's day it was a popular meeting place and a stopping point for stagecoaches. Young Agatha would have shopped with her mother here at exclusive stores such as William & Cox (now Hoopers).

8. TORQUAY MUSEUM

Devon's oldest museum is home to the Agatha Christie Centenary Exhibition, the only one of its kind in the world. It was created in 1990 with the help of the Christie family, who have loaned exhibits and photos of Agatha previously never seen. The Museum is open Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 1.30pm to 5pm (summer only).

9. ROYAL TORBAY YACHT CLUB

In her autobiography, Agatha talks fondly of the Yacht Club of which her father, Frederick Miller, was a prominent member. He would visit the Yacht Club daily to play cards, read newspapers and chat to friends, a routine that would only change during the cricket season, when he would devote his time to Torquay Cricket Club of which he was president.

10. BEACON COVE

At the turn of the century, Beacon Cove was known as the Ladies' Bathing Cove, although the men of the Royal Torbay Yacht Club were frequently seen at the club window, hoping for a glimpse of the female bathers! In Agatha Christie's teenage years, the Cove was the scene of a near tragedy. While swimming she got into difficulties. Fortunately, she was spotted by a boatman who hauled her to safety.



11. THE IMPERIAL HOTEL

In the opening chapter of 'Peril at End House', the Imperial Hotel, renamed the Majestic, is described by Hastings as ... "in its own grounds on a headland overlooking the sea. The gardens of the hotel lay below us freely interspersed with palm trees. The sea was of a deep and lovely blue."

The terrace of the hotel is also the setting for the final chapter of 'Sleeping Murder' when Miss Marple unravels the mystery for Gwenda and Giles.

Agatha herself attended many social occasions here and the hotel still reflects the elegance and grandeur of that period. Experience elegance and elegance by taking morning coffee or afternoon tea in the Palm Court Room which boasts panoramic views of the Bay.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGATHA CHRISTIE MILE AND OTHER TRAILS CAN BE FOUND IN DAVID GERRARD'S BOOK, 'EXPLORING AGATHA CHRISTIE COUNTRY' AVAILABLE FROM THE RIVIERA COLLECTION SHOP PRICED £3.50.

