



48 HOURS IN BRISTOL . . .

The fun doesn't stop at swanky shops... Bristol is packed with great places to eat, sleep and party, says local lass Sharon Davies



◀ EAT AT...

For gorgeous food, fab service and a relaxed atmosphere, book a table at the **River Station Cafe and Restaurant**. Overlooking the harbour, this former police station has been tastefully converted into a Conran-esque dining experience. The Grove, BS1. 0117-914 4434.

▶ GAWP AT...

Not only the West Country's capital of cool, Bristol is also home to Europe's biggest and most colourful balloon festival. It's well worth a look. You've missed this year's but next year's **International Balloon Fiesta** will be held on 9-12 August.



▼ PEOPLE WATCH AT...

Café culture has hit the city big style with a number of cool venues springing up in Park St, most notably the **Boston Tea Party** (0117-929 8601). Boasting a blissed-out feel unmatched by any of its rivals, ensure you've got plenty of time to sit, sip and soak up the brilliant atmosphere.

HANG OUT AT...

For an evening of mellow jazz, don't miss the friendly café bar **Tantric Jazz**. Tucked away behind St Nicholas market, live musicians and DJs entertain revellers with the sounds of Latin jazz, Afro funk, soul and blues. 39-41 St Nicholas St, BS1. 0117-940 2304.



◀ STAY AT...

Get your head down at the heavenly **Hotel du Vin**. Built within the walls of a 17th-century warehouse, each room, complete with minimalist furnishings and custom-made beds, is sponsored by famous wine and champagne houses and decorated with wine-related memorabilia. Narrow Lewins Mead, BS1. 0117-925 5577.



▶ BREATHE FRESH AIR AT...



Surrounded by some of the country's most beautiful landscapes, Bristol is tops for the great outdoors. Wander

down past the Clifton Suspension Bridge in the stunning Avon Gorge and you'll see funky, daredevil rock climbers, serious cyclists down by the riverside and miles of rolling hills just begging you to try and climb to the top for some seriously jaw-dropping views over the West Country.



▲▶ PROPERTY SPECULATE AT...

Once a busy port, Bristol has plenty of warehouses dating from the 19th century, many of which have now been converted into cool modern apartments. As a result, estate agents windows are well worth a peek; even if you've no intention of buying. (Tip: **CJ Hole** estate agents on 0117 923 8238 makes for some great window shopping). There are beautiful Regency crescents and brightly coloured terraces built on steep undulating hills, while the newly regenerated dockside is home to chic newly-built lofts and vast, converted warehouses. San Francisco in miniature, some might say.



Photos: Sharon Davies

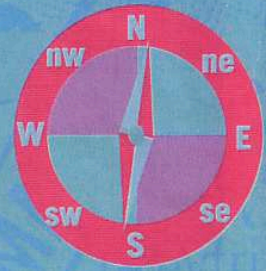
BRISTOL

From salvage yards to swanky stores, Bristol is rammed with great interiors shops. Here's five of the very best



ADHIKA A fabrics emporium well-stocked with beautiful and exotic textiles. Helpful, friendly staff too. 42-48 Stokes Croft, BS1. 0117-924 5116.

AU TEMPS PERDU After a few reclaimed treasures? Good, cos Bristol is heaving with architectural salvage yards, and this is one of the best. Midland Rd, St Phillips. 0117-929 9143.



BRISTOL GUILD A great source of stylish furnishings and interiors. Finding your way around the labyrinth of corridors and landings is a bit of a test, but the stuff you can pick up here makes it well worth it. There's also a fab selection of gifts and homeware, and a great food shop. 68-70 Park St, BS1. 0117-926 5548.

LIFE ENHANCING TILE COMPANY

For unique designs with a contemporary edge, take a look in this temple of to-die-for tiles. Unit 3B, Central Trading Estate, Bath Rd, BS4. 0117-977 4600.



IOTA Bristol's answer to chic interiors is Iota. This tiny shop's selection of ultra-modern accessories and furniture will have you reaching for your credit card. 63-65 The Covered Market, St Nicholas St, BS1. 0117-929 9099.

