



HOXTON MINI PRESS

# An Opinionated Guide to Bristol



**Text by Florence Filose**

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**160pp**

**Book 22 in the Opinionated  
Guide series**

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*Where to eat, drink, shop, swim, surf, cycle and even set sail in this green, creative city.*

Bristol is one of the most vibrant and artistic cities in Britain. Nestled between rolling green hills beneath skies scattered with colourful hot air balloons, this countercultural epicentre is the birthplace of Banksy, Massive Attack and some of the best cider you'll ever down. From independent shops promoting local artisans to seriously good seasonal eats and the only artificial surf lake in Europe, discover what makes Bristol so great with this pithy and highly opinionated guide.

This book is part of a growing series of opinionated pocket guides for people who don't want more information, they want the right information. Illustrated with brilliant photography and short, punchy reviews by expert writers.

## **Key selling points:**

**Florence Filose** is a writer and editor born and raised in the West Country. She lives and works in Bristol, where she splits her time between sampling local ciders and pushing her bike up hills.

**Hoxton Mini Press** is a small indie publisher based in east London. They are dedicated to making collectable photography books that are accessible, affordable and playful, and believe that as the world goes more online, beautiful books should be cherished.



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STAY

59  
ARTIST  
RESIDENCE BRISTOL

*Boutique bolthole in the centre of the city*

This art-focused hotel has breathed new life into a Georgian townhouse and adjacent former boot factory. Its 23 rooms, which range from small-but-stylish quarters to lavish suites, have been individually designed around the building's original features – so you'll find ornate cornices framed by eclectic splashes of colour. The atmosphere is laidback and welcoming, with a downstairs 'library' (housing more art than books) for guests to hang out in, as well as a bar and restaurant that's often abuzz with Bristolians thanks to its plates of high-end comfort food and a Sunday roast menu that features four different kinds of Bloody Mary.

28 Portland Square, BS2 8SA  
artistresidence.co.uk



SHOPS

29  
BAM STORE + SPACE

*Colourful wares and workshops*

In 2019, Easton local Fran Harkness was looking for a way to support and showcase her neighbourhood's creative community, so she opened BAM: a non-profit shop and event space dedicated to doing just that. Now, locals and out-of-towners alike can tap into BAM's buzz by joining one of its eclectic workshops, which range from darning lessons to collage club social nights. No time to stop and stitch? You can still take the Easton energy home with you in the form of a leopard-print bumbag or some fresh new stationery – or choose from the gallery wall of neon-hued prints and risographs, many of which are specially commissioned from Bristol artists.

104-108 Belle Vue Road, BS5 6BX  
bambristol.co.uk



For further information about this book or to see a review copy, please contact:  
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CULTURE

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ROYAL WEST OF  
ENGLAND ACADEMY

*Landmark gallery that's inspiring inside and out*

Bristol's original art gallery, the RWA is as lovely to look at as the works within it. The listed building was purpose-built in 1857, largely thanks to the patronage of pioneering English painter Ellen Sharples. What's on show changes throughout the year, with annual highlights including the Open Exhibition, when a multitude of mediums jostle for space across the galleries, and the Secret Postcard Auction, where bidding on anonymous miniature masterpieces starts from just £40. Its recent renovation added a family activity room (where the dressing-up wall features a unicorn cape and a Yayoi Kusama costume) and a cafe piled high with savoury bakes from local lunch maestros, Spicers+Cole.

Queens Road, BS8 1PX  
rwa.org.uk



FOOD

15  
LITTLEFRENCH

*Unashamedly indulgent French fare*

Among Bristol's abundance of small-plate, plant-focused restaurants, littlefrench feels defiantly, deliciously different. Drizzled in butter, dripping with melted cheese and accompanied by towering piles of salty frites and punchy aioli, the plates here forego lightness in favour of deep, decadent flavour – all served in a cosy bistro setting lit by hanging lanterns. From starters of twice-baked soufflé Suisse or milk-fed lamb sweetbreads to sharing plates of whole roast guinea fowl or wood-grilled côte de bœuf, everything is rich, juicy and generously portioned. Stick a napkin in your collar and get stuck in.

2 North View, Westbury Park, BS6 7QB  
littlefrench.co.uk



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CULTURE

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### SPIKE ISLAND

*Contemporary art in a much-loved locale*

This creative community hub is named after the historic strip of industrial dockland it sits upon between the River Avon and Bristol Floating Harbour. Alongside fostering a coterie of local artists in its studios, the gallery brings contemporary art from around the globe to an exhibition space that feels truly welcoming – thoughtful children's activity sheets encourage younger visitors to creatively engage with each artist's medium and message. It's free to visit (with donations encouraged) and the attached cafe, Emmeline, is a cut above the usual gallery pitstops with colourful salads, smoothies and self-proclaimed 'mega cheese toasties'.

133 Cumberland Road, BS1 6UX  
[spikeisland.org.uk](http://spikeisland.org.uk)



FOOD

17

### WILSONS

*Seasonal restaurant with its own smallholding*

The walls at Wilsons are bare other than two chalkboards: one showing that day's set menu opposite another with the wine list. It makes sense, because both menus are in themselves works of art. Created in dialogue with the seasons, the six courses served daily are built around what's growing in Wilsons' market garden (which is just 20 minutes away) as well as fastidiously sourced meat and seafood, paired with low-intervention wines from small-scale makers. Visit on a weekday (Wednesday to Friday) to enjoy the deliciously good value of a shortened lunch menu.

24 Chandos Road, BS6 6PR  
[wilsonsbristol.co.uk](http://wilsonsbristol.co.uk)



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FOOD

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NUTMEG

*A celebration of regional Indian cooking*

Set between Georgian terraces, this vibrant Indian restaurant is a welcome stop-off after an afternoon spent exploring the picturesque hilltop walkways of Clifton Village. Inside, multicoloured murals span the walls, embroidered umbrellas twirl above your head and the mouth-watering smell of spices fills the air. The menu takes inspiration from all over India, offering Punjabi chana masala alongside Bihari tarka daal and Goan vindaloo, accompanied by plump naan and fragrant saffron rice. Finish with a traditional sweet gulab jamun (syrup-steeped, deep-fried dough balls), or crack into the aromatic fusion of a chai-spiced crème brûlée.

10 The Mall, BS8 4DR  
Other location: City Centre  
[nutmegbristol.com](http://nutmegbristol.com)



CULTURE

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CLIFTON  
SUSPENSION BRIDGE

*Brunel's Bristol icon*

Only a few cities in the world can boast of a bridge so famous, it's worth seeing even if you don't end up crossing it. San Francisco has the Golden Gate, Florence has the Ponte Vecchio – and Bristol has the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and first opened in 1864, it spans the imposing crags of the Avon Gorge connecting Clifton to the beauty of Leigh Woods, and has become a symbol of Bristol's creative spirit. It's free to cross for cyclists and pedestrians and, with excellent coffee from Chapter & Holmes available on both sides, it's well worth the wander – as long as you don't have vertigo.

Visitor Centre: Bridge Road, BS8 3PA  
[cliftonbridge.org.uk](http://cliftonbridge.org.uk)



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