

A taste of Brighton

Some thoughts on familiarisation visits to a city



With so many venues, hotels, attractions and things to see and do for conference and incentive organisers, just what do you (or do not) include on a city familiarisation visit?

With a large and diverse portfolio of conference venues there is always the temptation to overload an itinerary with site inspections. Whilst we provide an opportunity for guests to view some of the cities venues, all of which are selected to meet the individual needs of our guest's potential business for the city, we do not want these to take the lion share of the time we have with them. The finer details of the clients business can be discussed further down the line and once they have decided whether Brighton could provide a suitable destination.

Whilst there are of course elements of the itinerary we do organise, providing free time for guests to 'discover their own Brighton' is a key feature in all of our itineraries. Given the compactness and walkability of Brighton, we actively encourage our guests to explore the city on their own. By walking the backstreets, exploring the unique retail sectors, taking in the sea front and enjoying the eclectic mix of architecture in the differing 'areas' of the city, we find it allows guests to gain a greater understanding of just 'who we are' as well as the engage with the friendly local residents and businesses. We were recently voted the '[Happiest City in the UK](#)', it would be a shame for our guests not to experience that first-hand.

With MeetGB fast approaching, VisitBrighton are really looking forward to welcoming a number of overseas guests to the city in advance of the two-day event in London. The itinerary we have put together is truly unique and we are confident it will give an authentic experience of Brighton. It's an itinerary that allows guests to get a real taste of Brighton and see it through the eyes of both an organiser as well as a delegate.

Darren Johnson at VisitBrighton says: "First and foremost, for us at VisitBrighton, it's about giving our guests a chance to discover the energy and distinctive personality of our city. Brighton is known the world over for its vibrant and free-spirited atmosphere so we want to ensure that whoever visits our city, they have a chance to experience that.

How do we measure the success of a familiarisation visit? Returning to the city with business would be the obvious answer but we would consider a fam-trip a success if they left with a positive experience of Brighton and became champions and ambassadors for the city. That kind outcome is priceless.