

ENGLISH RIVIERA

MEDIA BRIEFING FACT SHEET

AGATHA CHRISTIE

Torquay's World-Famous Resident

Dame Agatha Christie, the world's most famous mystery and crime writer, was born in Torquay in 1890 and lived for many years in the area. Many of the English Riviera's landmarks can be recognised in her novels and the destination is hugely popular with Agatha Christie fans from around the world.

New Agatha Christie Literary Trail through the English Riviera and South Devon

Agatha Christie's novels are strongly influenced by the county of Devon. The newly-launched '*Agatha Christie Literary Trail through the English Riviera and South Devon*' allows amateur sleuths to follow in the footsteps of the Queen of Crime and discover the inspirations behind some of her best-loved works. With a front cover boasting an iconic Poirot image, the new trail leaflet includes an authentic and detailed map pin-pointing the settings/connections to 20 novels; from *Murder on the Links*, to *The Body in the Library*, *Dead Man's Folly* and *The ABC Murders*, the literary connections are all here. The leaflet is also available in German.

Torquay's Agatha Christie Mile

Fans can drift back into the halcyon days of the English Riviera during a walk along the Agatha Christie Mile on Torquay seafront, which takes visitors to some of the additional places that have strong connections to author. The Mile – also featured in the Literary Trail leaflet - runs between the Imperial Hotel and the Grand Hotel, and includes: Princess Pier, where she enjoyed roller-skating, Beacon Cove where she was a regular swimmer and the Victorian Pavilion where she loved to dance. Torquay Museum also features on the Mile – the site of the UK's only dedicated Agatha Christie Gallery.

Agatha Christie Film

Also recently launched is an inspiring two-minute film, which features archive footage of Agatha Christie speaking and showcases the inspiring local scenery that she knew and loved. Now available on You Tube, it can be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFuuMrEiIN0.

Agatha Christie's Greenway

In 1938, Christie purchased her stunning holiday home of Greenway on the banks of the River Dart, describing it as “the loveliest place in the world”. Now owned by the National Trust, Greenway offers an extraordinary glimpse into the private life of the author and her family in a setting that evokes the spirit of the 1950s. Note: parking is very limited at Greenway and must be pre-booked either over the phone or on their website www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greenway. The best way to arrive is by boat along the river, or by vintage bus:

Transport around Agatha Christie's Riviera

In keeping with the era, there are three exciting options for discovering Agatha Christie's Riviera. Firstly, there's the 1947 vintage bus, a bouncy but characterful classic green charabanc that drives along the Agatha Christie Mile through the South Devon lanes to Greenway. Then there's the Greenway Ferry, running coastal trips from Torquay, Paignton and Brixham and up the River Dart (with a service from Dartmouth), to Greenway. Both of these are run by Greenway Ferry and Pleasure Cruises www.greenwayferry.co.uk.

Then there's the atmospheric Dartmouth Steam Railway, running along the stunning coastline and through glorious countryside between Paignton and Kingswear on the banks of the Dart. The railway features in a number of novels, including *The ABC Murders*. From Kingswear, it's a short ferry trip across the river to Dartmouth, where a ferry can be picked up for Greenway.

www.dartmouthrailriver.co.uk.

Agatha Christie's Potent Plants Garden

Torre Abbey on Torquay seafront is the location for a unique Agatha Christie experience – the Potent Plants Garden. Head Gardener Ali Marshall read each and every Agatha Christie novel, digging deep into the murky world of poisons, antidotes and remedies, and set about planting some of the species from which these substances might be created. The result is a variety of plants that may kill or cure – depending on one's motives...

Do not touch – is the warning for all visitors; but while this might sound extremely dangerous, gardeners have been very careful in their choice of plants, substituting less potent garden cultivars where possible. Species include *Prunus*, monkshood, foxgloves and poppies.

The annual Agatha Christie Festival

The world-famous annual Agatha Christie Festival will once again take place on the English Riviera, from **11th-18th September 2011**. There will be steam train trips, murder mysteries, talks, walks, theatre and much more. For a complete programme, visit www.englishriviera.co.uk/agathachristie/festival.

English Riviera Tourism Company Welcomes Journalists

We host a number of familiarisation visits throughout the year and tailor each itinerary to suit your perfect story. We are always happy to welcome journalists to the English Riviera, if you are interested in visiting please contact:

Lydia Stone

e-mail: lydia.stone@englishriviera.co.uk

Telephone: 01803 408346

Launched in October 2010 the ERTC is a new private sector led public/private tourism partnership leading on the official promotion of the English Riviera as a leading UK resort and overseeing the effective delivery of the 2010-2015 Turning the Tide for Tourism in Torbay Strategy. To download a copy of the strategy please visit:

www.englishriviera.co.uk/ertc Please note that the ERTC is a company controlled by the council of the borough of Torbay.