

UK TOURISM: MAD THINGS TO DO IN ENGLAND



Britain is full of crazy events, which have seemingly been designed to simply make the newspapers and make people say, "I was there". Events include lie telling; garlic eating, toe wrestling and snail racing.

The English are renowned for keeping to traditions and keeping their distance from the habits of others. Examples, which leap to mind, are the British measuring system, driving on the other side of the road and the British Pound.

The competitions the English think up are bizarre to say the least. Admittedly, there are odd festivals and folk events all over Europe - images of Spain, donkeys, bulls, tomatoes and giant tankards of Munich beer are prominent. **Yet the English seem to have a skill in thinking up the most original competitions, all steeped in history and tradition.**

Gawthorpe in West Yorkshire often reminisces over the mining era by holding a **coal carrying competition**. The event goes back to 1963 and the rules have never changed. Men carry 50 kg of the black stuff up a hill and women 20 kg until either the coal or the contestant drops.

A less painful but equally odd competition takes place annually to find the biggest liar in the world. Contestants are given the floor to prove that they are capable of making their stories convincing for at least 10 minutes. A recent winner told everybody that the Lake District was formed by the activities of moles and eels.

Moving on to food, garlic, asparagus and nettle eating festivals head the menu. They are perhaps not everybody's cup of tea, yet they provide the best gastronomic entertainment in England throughout the year. For those without Eurosport or Sky Sports, there is always live snail racing in Norfolk on the 17th July. The winner receives a traditional tankard stuffed with lettuce, yet it is not recommended to spend too much time watching replays.

Crazy Events Calendar

World Coal Carrying Championships, April 5, Gawthorpe, West Yorkshire

Worcestershire Asparagus Festival, April 23 - May 31, Evesham

Annual Nettle-Eating Contest, June 12-13, Dorset

World Toe Wrestling Championship, August, Derbyshire

World Snail Racing Championships, July 17, Norfolk

Doggett's Coat and Badge Race, July, London

Isle of Wight Garlic Festival, August 14 and 15

Biggest Liar in the World Competition, November, Cumbria

Flaming Barrels, December 31, Northumberland

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