**Things not to miss on a day out in the Tamar Valley**

The Tamar Valley is one of the hidden gems of the west country.

Designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the river Tamar forms the boundary between Devon and Cornwall.

The area has been an important centre for mining and market gardening in the past and remnants of these industries can be seen throughout the area.

Due to the geography of the area by far the easiest way to visit is by train on the scenic Tamar Valley Line.

The line starts from Plymouth; buy yourself an off-peak day return to Gunnislake, the end of the line, so you get to see all the scenery. On this ticket, you can stop off and then carry on your journey later.

Once out of the urban areas of Plymouth, the views quickly change from rooftops and roads to rivers and rolling fields.

Bere Ferrers is the first station you will come to and is well worth a visit, especially if you fancy a gentle stroll and hearty pub lunch in the cosy Olde Plough Inn [http://www.theoldeploughinn.co.uk/](about:blank)

The journey continues to Bere Alston and here you’ll notice the train changes direction as the line the train takes now is the old route that used to run up to Callington.

Leaving Bere Alston the line slowly heads downhill as it prepares to cross the impressive Calstock Viaduct.

The views from the top are stunning and if you are sitting on the left hand side of the train you will see in the distance the National Trust estate of Cotehele.

Stay on the train at Calstock and head up to Gunnislake, the end of the line where you will see many remnants of the area’s mining past as well as the odd deer or buzzard if you are lucky.

As mentioned before, stay on the train at Gunnislake which then heads back down the hill to Calstock and get out here.

Calstock has the most options for a varied day out.

The village itself has lots of events throughout the year as well as two great pubs, a lovely café selling locally sourced homemade food and an artisan ice cream parlour.

If you have a young family there is a fantastic play area in the centre of the village next to the river where you could bring a picnic and enjoy some relaxing family time. Just watch out for the ducks as they are partial to the odd sandwich too!

For adults or those with older children the best way to entertain yourselves for a day is to walk to Cotehele from Calstock.

The walk is approximately 2.5 miles and mainly flat on quiet lanes. There is one steep section as you walk up into the woods but the views at the top over the river, viaduct and valley below are well worth it.

There are a couple of options for your day out once you get to the viewpoint in the woods.

If you want to visit the beautiful Tudor house of Cotehele, its gardens and mill then turn right.

Like all National Trust properties, there is a charge to enter the house and gardens, but they are well worth a visit.

If you do not want to visit the house, then take the left hand fork of the path which will take you down to Cotehele Quay.

On the Quay you’ll find a lovely little tea room, take away ice-cream and pasty shop if you haven’t brought lunch with you.

The Quay is also the home of Shamrock, an old Tamar Sailing Barge that is currently undergoing restoration. [https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele/features/conserving-shamrock](about:blank)

If you ‘ve still got plenty of energy and want a longer walk, you can walk through the woods and loop up to the main house and still retrace your steps back to Calstock where you catch the train back to Plymouth.