# Bruton’s rise as Somerset’s new artistic and celebrity hotspot reshapes rural life



Nestled in the verdant hills of Somerset, the small town of Bruton has emerged as an unexpected hub of contemporary art, culture, and celebrity allure. Once a sleepy locale, it now finds itself frequently compared to vibrant urban centres, having been dubbed "the new Notting Hill" by publications like British Vogue. This shift has transformed Bruton into a destination that draws not just tourists but also notable figures from the realms of film, fashion, and theatre.

The catalyst for this transformation can be traced back a decade when the esteemed art gallery Hauser & Wirth opted to open a branch in Bruton. This decision has since reshaped the town’s cultural landscape, making art a central feature of daily life. With the gallery’s commitment to international contemporary art, it has attracted a growing number of smaller galleries, turning the town into a thriving art community. Producer Polly Weston, visiting Bruton for the first time, was struck by this unexpected proliferation of artistic spaces and questioned how this new cultural ecosystem operates.

Bruton’s appeal does not stop at its artistic endeavours; the town has witnessed an influx of affluent residents, including high-profile celebrities such as filmmaker Sam Taylor-Johnson and theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh. Property prices have skyrocketed by nearly a third in the last five years as a result of its burgeoning popularity, prompting a staggering 72% increase in home searches in 2020 alone. These developments have led some to argue that the influx of wealth has fundamentally altered the character of the town. While many celebrate the economic stimulus this brings, others express concern about the potential erosion of Bruton’s traditional ethos.

Beyond the artistic and economic changes, Bruton has also become a fashionable retreat for those seeking refuge from metropolitan life. Renowned fashion designers like Stella McCartney and Alice Temperley have established their homes here, contributing to a lifestyle that blends rustic charm with high-fashion sensibilities. The picturesque setting, coupled with destinations like the five-star Newt hotel and the Roth Bar & Grill—known for its art exhibitions—further enhances Bruton’s status as a vibrant rural hub.

Yet, the growing fame of Bruton raises deeper questions about gentrification and sustainability. The town's residents, who once knew each other in a close-knit community, are now adjusting to an influx of new faces and rising living costs. As Bruton straddles the line between preserving its historical roots and embracing modernity, the challenge lies in how it accommodates change while maintaining its unique character.

In conclusion, Bruton, Somerset, stands as a captivating case study of transformation, where art, celebrity, and rural life intertwine. This small town’s evolution reflects broader societal trends, posing questions about cultural identity, economic disparity, and the worth of preserving local tradition in an ever-changing world. As Bruton continues to evolve, it will be fascinating to observe how its residents and newcomers negotiate this dynamic landscape.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/audio/play/live/bbc_radio_fourfm), [[2]](https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/1918182/beautiful-uk-town-named-new-notting-hill)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/audio/play/live/bbc_radio_fourfm), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/jul/10/this-isnt-really-somerset-how-the-rich-took-over-bruton-george-osborne), [[5]](https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/somerset-sleepy-village-thats-notting-9321766)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/12/23/bruton-new-notting-hill-searched-for-destination-among-prospective/), [[6]](https://www.mansionglobal.com/articles/five-postcard-perfect-regions-just-as-charmingly-british-as-the-cotswolds-e13f13d9), [[7]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/property/11496477/The-Somerset-town-that-celebrities-just-cant-keep-away-from.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/12/23/bruton-new-notting-hill-searched-for-destination-among-prospective/), [[5]](https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/somerset-sleepy-village-thats-notting-9321766)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/audio/play/live/bbc_radio_fourfm), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/jul/10/this-isnt-really-somerset-how-the-rich-took-over-bruton-george-osborne)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/audio/play/live/bbc_radio_fourfm> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/1918182/beautiful-uk-town-named-new-notting-hill> - Bruton, a picturesque town in Somerset, has become a rural hotspot for celebrities, with British Vogue branding it 'the new Notting Hill'. Notable residents include director Sam Taylor-Johnson and her husband, actor Aaron Taylor-Johnson, as well as theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, who resides in a converted 13th-century Augustine priory. Fashion designers Stella McCartney, Phoebe Philo, and Alice Temperley have also made Bruton their home, adding a touch of high fashion to the town's rustic charm.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/12/23/bruton-new-notting-hill-searched-for-destination-among-prospective/> - Bruton, Somerset, has been dubbed the 'new Notting Hill' by British Vogue, attracting celebrities like theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, fashion designers Alice Temperley and Phoebe Philo, filmmaker Sam Taylor-Johnson, and photographer Don McCullin. The town's property market has surged, with searches for homes increasing by 72% in 2020, making it the most searched-for destination among prospective buyers.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/jul/10/this-isnt-really-somerset-how-the-rich-took-over-bruton-george-osborne> - Bruton, Somerset, has experienced an influx of wealthy individuals, including former Chancellor George Osborne, who purchased a £1.6 million Georgian home. Other notable residents are theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, fashion designers Stella McCartney, Alice Temperley, and Phoebe Philo, filmmaker Sam Taylor-Johnson, and photographer Don McCullin. The town's property market has seen significant price increases due to this trend.
5. <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/somerset-sleepy-village-thats-notting-9321766> - Bruton, a small town in Somerset, has been dubbed 'the new Notting Hill' by British Vogue, attracting celebrities such as director Sam Taylor-Johnson and her actor husband Aaron Taylor-Johnson, theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, and fashion designers Stella McCartney, Phoebe Philo, and Alice Temperley. The town's property market has seen a surge, with house prices increasing by a third over five years.
6. <https://www.mansionglobal.com/articles/five-postcard-perfect-regions-just-as-charmingly-british-as-the-cotswolds-e13f13d9> - Bruton, Somerset, is emerging as a refined medieval town known for contemporary art and good food. It features an outpost of the Hauser & Wirth art gallery and the five-star Newt hotel within a Georgian limestone mansion. The town is about 25 miles south of Bath and offers properties ranging from £1.2 million to £5 million.
7. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/property/11496477/The-Somerset-town-that-celebrities-just-cant-keep-away-from.html> - Bruton, Somerset, has become a hub for celebrities and creatives, with residents like theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh and filmmaker Sam Taylor-Johnson. The town offers a vibrant arts scene, including the Roth Bar & Grill, which hosts events and showcases art on loan from Hauser & Wirth. The town's unique blend of rural charm and cultural vibrancy has attracted a diverse community.