

globetrotter

TOBIAS VERNON SHARES HIS SWEET SOMERSET ESCAPES

founder of gallery space and design studio 8 Holland Street (8hollandstreet.com), Tobias Vernon is no stranger to the West Country. Often in London, Tobias also has a cottage tucked away in the historic village of Mells – a ‘little haven’, as he describes – and in June 2019 set up a second gallery location in the centre of Bath. We caught up with Tobias on all his favourite spots in Somerset...

First things first, where should we sleep over? For the most indulgent weekend, Babington House (sohohouse.com) is the obvious choice. But for something a little more low-key, stay in the Rooms at Caro (carosomerset.com). They sit above the design shop in Bruton and have a contemporary feel with subtle design nods to the local area.

Where to go for a drink or two? I can't recommend anything more than the pub in my village, The Talbot Inn (talbotinn.com). It has a wonderful cobbled courtyard and they're always eager to serve a Negroni at the bar – otherwise a pint of the local ale never fails to disappoint. If you're in Bath, don't leave without picking something up from Beckford Bottle Shop (beckfordbottleshop.com) – they're a fountain of knowledge when it comes to wine.

The buzzy table to book? I'm fixated on Castle Farm (castlefarmmidford.co.uk), which is right on the edge of Bath. The chef, Pravin Nayar, is of mixed Asian and Scandinavian heritage, which is reflected in the incredible menus. Friday curry



night is to die for. Whatever you order, you have to have their roti bread – it's more delicious than you could ever imagine.

Best street to explore? It has to be Margaret's Buildings in Bath, which is where our gallery can be found. A pedestrianised street between the Royal Crescent and the Circus, it is full of independent cafes and retailers including boutique clothing shop Uber, Gallery Nine, fashion illustration gallery Gray M.C.A., the treasure trove Bath Old Books and The Green Bird Cafe, my regular haunt.

The Bath label to know? Florence Saumarez of Inq Studio (inq.ink). She makes amazing handmade marbled papers, wallpapers and lampshades in her studio, which is an old mews house in the middle of the city. Book onto a workshop there with her if you can.

The iconic building to snap for the 'gram? Be sure to stop by the Assembly Rooms, while roaming the streets. Bath and the surrounding areas are well known for their classical heritage and are fortunately full of 18th and 19th century architectural wonders.

Your perfect day trip? Visiting Iford Manor and the idyllic Italianate gardens. Bordering Somerset and Wiltshire, it is a great place to just walk around taking everything in, and there is the most picture-perfect vista from the bridge. You can then continue walking and follow the river to The Inn At Freshford (theinnatfreshford.com) for a delicious dinner.