

SPRIT OF EASTBOURNE

Iain McGowan

As late as 1813, Eastbourne was simply noted as a small fashionable watering place adjacent to the East Sussex South Downs, consisting mainly of the village of Eastbourne itself over a mile inland and the hamlet of Seahouses overlooking the beach. Southbourne and Meades formed two further isolated communities. In 1851 following the example of Brighton along the coast, the principal landowner the Earl of Burlington – later to become the 7th Duke of Devonshire – started development of the entire area on an ambitious scale. Initially in a conservative Regency manner near the sea, this was shortly followed by distinctly recognisable grand Victorian and Italianate fashions. By the turn of the century red brick and tile hanging from the Weald and decorative gabled frontages had become the more desirable style.

With its wide avenues, elegant villas, pretentious terraces and the often dazzling white opulent hotels or colourful guest houses lining the seafront, the resort has for many years been affectionately known as the 'Empress of the Watering Places'. The 7 km tiered and flower-lined promenade, backed by landscaped slopes and gardens at its western extremity adjoining the Downs, extends as far as Langney Point close to the Pevensy Levels. It is this juxtaposition of town planning, local facilities, the aspect of the sea and surrounding countryside and an exceptionally sunny climate that has made Eastbourne such a notable resort, considered by many to be one of the finest in Britain. All of this is justly celebrated in renowned photographer Iain McGowan's masterly evocation in more than 60 images of the true spirit of Eastbourne.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Iain McGowan is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and a professional photographer specialising in landscape and environmental photography.

Over the years he has had photographs reproduced in numerous books published by Halsgrove and also in magazines, postcards, brochures, tourism literature and exhibitions. He now spends a considerable amount of his time conducting Landscape Photographic Workshops around the UK. He has lived in Sussex since the age of five.

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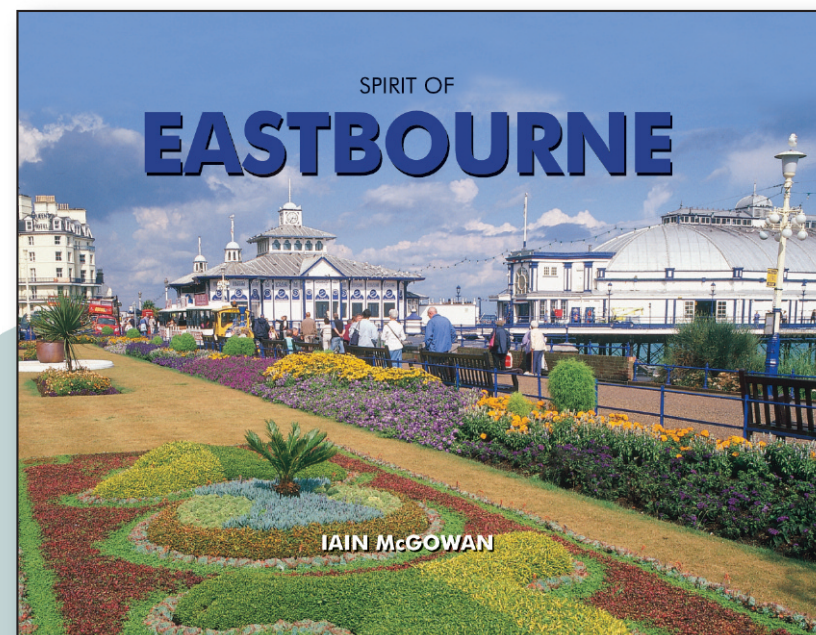
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The view west along a busy lower promenade towards Holywell with its seafront chalets and the rising chalk cliffs beyond.



Eastbourne's central seafront area looking back from the pier.



Coast and countryside – Beachy Head.



Seaside architecture.



The famous seafront 'carpet gardens' with the pier beyond.



Early Eastbourne. A few of the remaining buildings of the hamlet of Seahouses overlooking the beach and now incorporated into the later sea front. (opposite) The view from the pier looking east towards Peversey. Seahouses is on the left facing Marine Parade.



Example of a double-page spread.