

### Anstey's Cove...

is arguably the top-spot for hard-core, sport climbing in the Southwest. Diminutive it might be, but Anstey's punches way beyond its weight given the concentration of hard routes on its short, but often alarmingly overhanging walls. Routes start around F7a and soon rocket upwards through the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade topping out currently at F8c. And all this is thanks, in no small way, to local Ken Palmer who has almost single-handedly developed the crag into the show-piece that it is today. Anyone climbing in this grade range and in the area shouldn't hesitate to spend some time at Anstey's; it wouldn't necessarily be an easy time but it will be rewarding. At the very least, you'll get a great work-out! Finally, the backdrop is very pleasant; very Mediterranean, especially if one or more gin palaces (a.k.a. yachts and/or motor launches) are moored in the Cove.



**Featured Route:** Empire of the Sun (F7b) is one of the main routes at Anstey's offering steep, powerful climbing on a slightly overhanging wall. Get through the crux low down and then just keep ploughing on before the lactic gets you! How the Mighty Fall (F7+), around on the 'front face', is something of a sloping rocky horror show.

**Tips:** Empire is well equipped with good crimps and jugs and hence is best taken at a pace. How the Mighty Fall however, climbs

any one of the great beaches in the area, there's a plethora of tourist attractions including a model village and some show-piece caves nearby to check-out. Thirty minutes 'inland' and you have the Dartmoor Tors and some of the prettiest villages around to visit as well. Equestrians amongst you will be looking to squeeze a hack or two in as well out on the Moors. Dartmouth itself, 30 odd kms south, has a strong navel interest and a great working stream railway.

very differently and its best to take you time and find the best of the sloping holds.

**Clips:** As standard sport rack is sufficient.

**'Must Do's':** Might and Main (F6c+), on the arête right of Empire, and Cider Soak (F8a), around on the main face, are but two of the other 'must do' routes.

**Alternatives:** The Lynch (F7b+) and Just Avenged (F7c+) are two other very, very good routes in the late 7s. Devonshire Cream (E5 6a) is the perfect antidote to the bolt clipping – it's pair of bolt runners being the only gear you get!

**Rest Days:** Not a problem in this area, the so-called English Riviera, as there's plenty to do. Quite apart for a day on

Essential Beta

**How to get there:** From Torquay or Babbacombe head for the DIY store. Park here – with discretion. Back down the hill from the car park is an alley way – popular with dog walkers - which soon leads onto the open ground overlooking Anstey's Cove. A footpath, fenced off since a rockfall in the Cove some years ago, drops down into the gully past the Empire Wall.

**When to Visit:** The Empire Wall faces west so gets late afternoon/evening sun. The main (Cider Soak) wall faces south and gets sun during the day – except in summer when the sun is too high! Visit according to taste/needs. Seepage prevents year-round activities on some routes. It can also have an impact in summer – after heavy rain.

**Where to Stay/Shop:** Shops, B&B's and hotels are plentiful, though campsites slightly less so.

**Which Guide:** Anstey's Cove is covered in both Mark Glaister and Pete Oxley's Rockfax Dorset guide and in Nick White's South Devon and Dartmoor guide (published Cordee).



**Photos:** Main: Audrey Seguy nearing the end of Empire of the Sun (F7b). Secondary: Audrey again topping out on How the Mighty Fall (F7a+).