# 7 Night Discover More of the Isle of Wight



| Trip style: | Destination: | Walking Grade | Carbon Footprint: |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Isle of Wight | 1 | 160kg CO2 |

## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Our 7-night Isle of Wight Discover More Tour lines up a selection of the island's highlights. Journey along the southwest coast for views of the postcard-worthy Needles and admire exotic plants from around the world at Ventnor Botanic Gardens. You'll visit charming English villages and spend time at ancient Carisbrooke Castle and Osborne House – Queen Victoria's favourite summer residence. And to top it all, there's a ride aboard the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.

## WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Riding the Isle of Wight Steam Railway
- Visiting Osborne House, the favourite holiday haunt of Queen Victoria
- Discovering the history of Carisbrooke Castle
- Exploring Ventnor Botanic Gardens
- Admiring the famous Needles
- Staying in our seafront country house on Freshwater Bay
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people in 2026 and 16 people in 2027)

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Entrance to Shanklin Chine, Ventnor Botanic Gardens, trip on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, Brading Roman Villa, Bembridge Lifeboat station, Godshill Model Village
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided sightseeing with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks and sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently
- Get 15% off car travel and 20% off foot travel via www.wightlink.co.uk/HFHolidays

## ITINERARY - ITINERARY

### Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

### Day 2 **Along the South West Coast**

We begin with a visit to Alum Bay. Admire its coloured sands and iconic views of the Needles before enjoying a scenic drive along the island's Military Road. Running parallel with the island's southern coast from Freshwater to Chale, it offers unbeatable views of the spectacular coastal scenery. Making a turn inland, the road takes us to Shanklin where we'll explore the old village and you may choose to walk down through Shanklin Chine (entrance included) - the stunning tree lined gorge that leads to the esplanade below. We end the day at Ventnor with a chance to visit its sub-tropical Botanic Gardens (entrance included) which are split out into zones of the world, so you can travel between New Zealand, the Mediterranean, and Japan in a few paces!

### Day 3 **Ryde & Carisbrooke Castle**

We'll discover the seaside town of Ryde today, with its elegant Victorian and Georgian architecture. Stroll along the seafront enjoying the sandy beaches or perhaps wander around town taking in the eclectic mix of shops. We spend the afternoon visiting Carisbrooke Castle, located in the centre of the island. Learn about its history and relax in the stunning Edwardian-style Princess Beatrice Garden. There's time to climb the ramparts and meet the donkeys in the pumphouse who help pump water up from the well.

*Entrance to Carisbrooke Castle has not been included as many of you are English Heritage members and will be able to access the castle free if you show your membership card.*

### Day 4 **Free Day - Isle of Wight**

Discover more about Freshwater Bay House and the local area for ideas on how to make the most of your free day.

### Day 5 North East Wight

Spend time learning about the fascinating history of modern Quarr Abbey before heading to Ryde for the opportunity to travel on both the Island Line and the Isle of Wight Steam Railway (railway tickets included). We then take the scenic route to Bembridge to visit its lifeboat station before rounding off the afternoon with the option of visiting the fascinating Brading Roman Villa (entrance included).

### Day 6 Isle of Wight Villages & Gardens

Be charmed by the pretty village of Brighstone before exploring the peaceful gardens at Mottistone which surround an Elizabethan manor. Located in a sheltered valley, these enchanting gardens enjoy their own micro-climate, meaning the flowering season of familiar favourites is extended and plants usually associated with the Mediterranean region thrive. In the afternoon, it's time to head for the popular village of Godshill with its delightful medieval church, charming, thatched cottages, and a winding main street lined with traditional tearooms and craft shops, as well as the nostalgic Model Village (entrance fee included).

*Entrance to Mottistone Manor has not been included as many of you are National Trust members and will be able to access the site free if you show your membership card.*

### Day 7 Cowes & Osborne House

Today's focus is on the island's royal connections. We first head to Cowes, home to the oldest and biggest sailing regatta in the world and the Royal Yacht Squadron based at the Cowes Castle. There'll be time to stroll along the Parade to Egypt Point, where Queen Victoria herself enjoyed panoramic views of the Solent. Or you may wish to explore the historic town with its independent shops and maritime connections. The afternoon is spent at the island's premier visitor attraction – Osborne House – Queen Victoria's family home. Enjoy its opulent interiors, such as the Indian-style Durbar Room, and extensive grounds including walled gardens and its own private beach.

*Entrance to Osbourne House has not been included as many of you are English Heritage members and will be able to access the site free if you show your membership card.*

### Day 8 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

## DAILY WALK OPTIONS




**Gentle walking grade 1**

Short, easy walks on level paths with no stiles. Ideal for relaxed walking and active sightseeing. Typically, 2-3 miles (3-5km) or less, with little if any ascent.

## ACCOMMODATION

### Freshwater Bay House

Chalky white cliffs and eyebrow-arching sea views set the tone for the delights that follow at this county house on the Isle of Wight - Queen Victoria's favourite island that's just a ferry hop from the South Coast. The location is as gorgeous as it gets; to the south of the village of Freshwater, within pebble-throwing distance of its namesake bay, and just a skip from Tennyson Down. You'll also be within easy reach of the area's showstoppers, including the

imposing Stag and Mermaid rocks, the multi-coloured sands of Alum Bay, the remarkable Ventnor Botanic Gardens, and the 125-million-year-old dinosaur footprints at Compton Bay. And then, of course, there's the Needles Old Battery for the ubiquitous photo opportunity and the best views of The Needles.

## About

· 43 well-appointed guest rooms · Exclusive occupancy: 61 guests minimum · Check in from 4:00pm · For members check in from 2:00pm · Full-board (including cream tea on arrival) · Free Wi-Fi · Free on-site parking · Boot room and drying room · 2 travel cots & 4 high chairs · Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and information for self-guided walks · Books and games to borrow · Licensed bar · Three lounges · Garden · Electric vehicle charging point - Please note, you will need to bring your own cables to use this EV charging point

## Then & now

Little is known about the history of Freshwater Bay House, yet records show it was a purpose-built hotel owned by Charles Plumley in 1824. Prior to this, it was known as The George Inn and visited by London-born artist George Morland in 1799. He earned a living on the island by painting inn signs and undertaking local portrait commissions, although it's thought he sought refuge here to dodge his creditors. By the 1850s, the hotel was known as Plumley's Post House before later changing its name to the Freshwater Bay Hotel and Posting Establishment (it was around this time that playwright George Bernard Shaw visited with his new wife). It was then bought by William T Lambert who renamed it Lambert's Hotel – and this name stuck until the beginning of the 20th century. Over the years, the rather famous roll call of guests included Lewis Carroll, Anthony Trollope, and Lord Tennyson. It has been part of our HF Holidays line-up since 1956.

Nowadays, Freshwater Bay House has 43 well-appointed guest rooms in three categories (Classic, Premium, and Superior), three cosy lounges (one has a grand piano), a licensed bar, and a light-filled restaurant for a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. There's a handy boot and drying room, books and games to borrow during your stay, and a Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and easy-to-follow information for self-guided walks. Equally fabulous is the putting green, and lovely gardens with paths leading down to the beach in one direction and Tennyson Down in the other. For sunny days, there's an outdoor heated pool (open from May to September*) with a seating area and far-reaching sea views.

## Check-In & Check-Out

You are welcome to check in from 4pm at the earliest. HF Members can check in earlier, from 2pm. On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team. Check out 10am.

## FOOD & DRINK

### Dining

Seasonal dining, tailored for you

Our team of skilled chefs design our dinner menus to showcase the best of each season, from warming winter comfort food to vibrant summer dishes, including vegetarian, vegan and high-protein options. We also source fruit and vegetables within a 40-mile radius of each house, open every break with a Chef's Special menu inspired by dishes and flavours of the local area, and are able to adapt dishes to suit special dietary requirements.

Welcome Cream Tea

What better way to start your stay than with a cream tea, served fresh on arrival to make you feel instantly at home. A quintessentially English tradition, our scones are baked in-house and served with preserves and clotted cream, providing the perfect opportunity to meet fellow walkers.

A hearty breakfast to start the day

Start the day with a freshly-prepared cooked breakfast and a wide choice from our continental buffet, including hot drinks, juices and fresh fruit. Our team offer a quick and friendly service, leaving you fuelled and ready for your day's adventures.

Our famous picnic lunch

Our personalised picnic lunches are perfect for a day out walking, ready to enjoy when hunger strikes. Choose from a large selection of fresh sandwiches and salads, freshly baked cakes and snacks, including the ever-popular Freddos chocolate bar! Everything is designed to fit neatly into your rucksack, and all of the packaging we provide is recyclable or compostable.

3-course evening meals

Our à la carte evening menus feature a wide choice of starters, mains, and desserts, made with seasonal ingredients and, wherever possible, herbs and vegetables from our own gardens. Shared around sociable tables, dinners are relaxed occasions, with drinks available to order at the table or from the bar, and a traditional Sunday roast to round off the week.

## ROOMS

Your room at Freshwater Bay

Designed with your comfort in mind, Freshwater Bay House has 43 well-appointed guest rooms available in three categories: Classic, Premium, and Superior.

**Classic Rooms** are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

**Premium Rooms** are more spacious en-suite guest rooms*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

**Superior Rooms** are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surroundings*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

**We love:** Rooms 19 and 20 on the first floor for their lovely sea views. Rooms 18 and 22 are both corner rooms overlooking the bay and Tennyson Downs. The more spacious Room 24 has five large windows overlooking the gardens and bay as well as a private sitting room. Room 39 on the second floor is a corner room with a bathtub.

The **Choose Your Room** service is available at our UK country houses, allowing you the option of choosing and confirming a specific room for an extra charge of £30 per room. This is subject to availability. Upgrade supplements apply.

**Check in & check out**
You are welcome to check in from **4:00pm at the earliest**. **For members check in is available from 2:00pm (2026).** On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team.

On the day of departure, we kindly ask all guests to check out by **10:00am**. You'll be asked to settle your bill prior to leaving. You may, of course, make a charitable donation to our HF Holidays Pathways Fund if you wish. Please note that we only accept card payments.

**Room supplements**

| Superior | Premium single | Premium double/twin | Choose your room |
|---|---|---|---|
| £25 pppn | £20 pppn | £20 pppn | £30 per room |

*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

*Please note, pool opening hours are: 07:00am – 09:00am and 16:00pm – 18:30pm

## ACCESSIBILITY

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865 or view the accessibility information online for Freshwater Bay House

## ABOUT YOUR STAY

**A warm welcome**
We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

**Evening entertainment**

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided waking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

**Helping you enjoy the Great Outdoors - A natural focus on walks**

**Walks talks and Discovery Points**
Our founder, country pastor turned social innovator, Thomas Arthur Leonard, was passionate about encouraging people to explore the countryside. His legacy continues in HF's continued focus on walking. Many guests choose to travel with us on guided or self-guided walking holidays, and as such, evenings at our houses are often busy with walk leaders hosting various briefings and talks. On guided walking holiday arrival days, there are walking information briefings before dinner, and for the duration of any guided walking holiday there will be a Walks Talk before (or on occasion after dinner), to go through the following day's walk options. Self-guided walking guests, and those on special interest holidays (where there is free time to explore independently), are of course welcome to also join in these Walks Talks - please talk to the team locally if you have any queries. Our Discovery Points are filled with handy maps and route notes, designed to ensure everyone, not just those booked on a guided walking holiday, can enjoy the beautiful countryside settings that our HF houses enjoy.

**The walking day**
Prior to setting off on guided walks, our HF Holidays Leaders run through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure walkers have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

# TRAVEL DETAILS

## Address

Freshwater Bay House
Freshwater Bay
Isle of Wight PO40 9RB

**Tel:** +44 (0)1983 753854

## By taxi

From Yarmouth ferry port it's a five-mile taxi journey that takes approximately 15 minutes. We recommend booking your taxi at least seven days in advance as availability may be limited.

For pricing, please contact the taxi company directly.

Taxi companies in the area include:

**Bay Taxi**
Tel: +44 (0)7475 662350

**Rayner's Taxis**
Tel: +44 (0)1983 752784

**I Cabs**
Tel: +44 (0)7553 567567

A return journey can be arranged on your behalf by the HF Holidays House Manager at Freshwater Bay.

*HF Holidays does not own or manage any of the above taxi companies.

## By Bus

From Yarmouth there are public buses - please check timetables https://www.islandbuses.info/

## By train

The nearest station is Lymington Pier on the mainland which is adjacent to the ferry terminal.

Check National Rail for train times and routes.

## By ferry

You have two ferry options. The Wightlink Lymington to Yarmouth ferry is the most convenient for Freshwater Bay. Should you wish to take the bus from Yarmouth, rather than taxi, the Needles Breezer bus stop is a 2min walk from the ferry terminal, and buses run hourly to Freshwater Bay, a 5min walk to Freshwater Bay House. Alternatively, the Red Funnel Southampton to East Cowes ferry is often the cheapest option if you want to take your car to the Isle of Wight.

**HF Holidays member discount**
If you're a member, you can **get 15% off car travel and 20% off foot travel** with Wightlink Ferry. For full details visit www.wightlink.co.uk/HFHolidays.

## By car

**From Yarmouth**
Turn right out of the ferry terminal onto the A3054 and cross the bridge. After one mile, turn left down Pixley Hill, signposted Freshwater Bay. Turn left at Freshwater Garage and continue along Afton Road. At the lifeboat station turn right and follow the road round. Freshwater Bay House is on your left.

**From East Cowes**
Follow signs for Newport, taking the A3021 and then A3054. Continue through Newport and Carisbrooke. Turn left onto the B3401 through Calbourne. At the junction with Afton Road (A3055), turn left and then right by the lifeboat station, and follow the road round to Freshwater Bay House.

Or you can leave your car on the mainland (there's a pay and display car park at Lymington Pier) and travel on the ferry as a foot passenger.

## By air

The nearest airport is Southampton Airport.

From Southampton Airport Parkway station (adjacent to the airport terminal) there are regular trains to Lymington Pier, taking about 40 minutes. From here, you'll need to catch the ferry over to the Isle of Wight.

Otherwise, the best options are London Heathrow or London Gatwick airports for connecting trains to Lymington Pier.

Check National Rail for the best routes and train times.

## LOCAL AREA

Places to visit in the Isle of Wight

Whether you're enjoying a guided or self-guided walking holiday, there's always the opportunity to linger for longer. Here's our pick of the very best things to see and do within easy travelling distance of Freshwater Bay House.

### Freshwater Bay

Just a skip away from Freshwater Bay House, this semi-circular namesake bay surrounded by gleaming white cliffs is a magical spot for rock pooling, watersports, swimming, boating, walking, and more. While mostly pebbles, there are some sandy parts on its eastern side.

### The Needles

Named for their pointy shape, this iconic trio of brilliant white chalk rocks are located on the island's western tip. They lead out to what is easily Britain's most photographed lighthouse – a red-and-white-striped tower built in 1859 on the outermost of the chalk rocks.

### Yarmouth

An hour's walk away, this historic seaside town is set at the mouth of the River Yar. The highlight is the 16th century Yarmouth Castle – one of Henry VIII's most sophisticated coastal fortresses built to guard the western entrance to the Solent.

### Osborne House

Just a 40-minute drive away, this former royal retreat was purchased by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1845 and used to escape court life. Now managed by English Heritage, it charms with glorious gardens and rooms filled with original furniture and works of art.

### Carisbrooke Castle

What was once an artillery fortress, king's prison, and royal summer residence is located near Newport in the heart of the island. Not-to-be-missed attractions at this medieval stunner include King Charles I's bowling green and the lovely Princess Beatrice Garden.

### Alum Bay

Cherished for its multi-coloured sands and stunning views across the Solent, Alum Bay delights with crystal-clear waters that are perfect for swimming and paddling. Don't leave without buying a souvenir filled with this world-famous sand that comes in 21 shades.

### Isle of Wight Steam Railway

Following a five-mile countryside route Smallbrook Junction to Wootton, this lovingly restored vintage steam train is an award-winning attraction. Hop off at the rural stations and learn about 150 years of railways history at the Train Story Discovery Centre.

## Blackgang Chine

Perfect for those with children in tow, this family-run fantasy theme park dating back to 1843 is the oldest in the UK. Highlights include life-sized pirate ships, fairy castles, an underwater kingdom, and a cowboy town where kids can choose to be chose to be an outlaw or sheriff.

## Ventnor Botanic Gardens

A 30-minute drive away, this botanical wonderland is home to around 6000 species of rare and exotic plants and trees in 22 acres. The warm climate attracts some amazing wildlife, including wall lizards, slow worms, and even Iberian ants.

## Bembridge Windmill

Built in the early 1700s and closed in 1913, the last surviving windmill on the island was famously featured in a 1795 watercolour by JMW Turner. This much-loved local landmark was donated to the National Trust in 1961 still has most of its original machinery intact.

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

### Packing list

Weather conditions in the UK can vary throughout the day. Use the following list as a guide when preparing for your holiday.

**Essentials**

- Sturdy footwear with good grip for spending much of the day on your feet
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Sun hat
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner
- Water bottle with a capacity of at least 1 litre
- Sunscreen
- UV-protective sunglasses
- Mobile phone

**Recommended**

- First-aid kit, including plasters
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bags
- Wallet or purse
- Walking poles
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Waterproof rucksack liner
- Membership cards for English Heritage, the National Trust or similar heritage organisations in Scotland and Wales, if you are a member. These may be useful when visiting attractions during your itinerary or on your free day.

## TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip

you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

**Document produced:** 10 November 2026