

3-Night Isle of Wight Festive Self-Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: Self-Guided Walking

Destinations: Isle of Wight & England

Trip code: FWPXA-3

1, 2 & 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Spend the festive season on the Isle of Wight. There's something magical about walking in winter. Whether it's the frosty footsteps, the clear crisp air, or the breathtaking views, it's a wonderful time to go walking. We pull out all the stops on our festive holidays, with fabulous food, lots of seasonal entertainment and activities. Our historic Country House, set on the cliffs above Freshwater Bay with sea views, is geared to the needs of walkers and outdoor enthusiasts. Enjoy hearty local food, detailed walk notes, and an inspirational location from which to explore this stunning area. So wrap up warm, lace up your boots and go for an invigorating walk.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Wonderful meals – full selection at breakfast, your choice of picnic lunch, an excellent evening meal, afternoon tea and cakes every day, and plenty of festive sweets and nuts
- Make use of detailed walks notes from our Discovery Point or do your own thing
- HF Holidays' leader on hand to offer advice and guidance
- A celebration dinner with all the trimmings on Christmas Day and New Years Eve

- A packed programme of evening activities offering something festive for everyone, including some old HF favourites

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Stay in the comfort of our country house
- Plenty of opportunity to walk off the festive excesses
- An excellent variety of walks in spectacular winter scenery
- Visit cosy country pubs with roaring log fires to round off your walks
- Relax, soak up the party atmosphere, enjoy wonderful festive fare and leave all the organising to us

TRIP SUITABILITY

This trip is graded Activity Level 1, 2 and 3.

Get to know the area using our **Discovery Point** at Freshwater Bay -the starting point for your outdoor adventure. You'll find:

- Our recommended walking and cycling routes - detailed route notes for you to borrow
- Comprehensive library of local maps and guidebooks
- Ideas and contacts for more active options such as watersports and mountain biking
- A daily weather forecast

When you're not walking, there's plenty to do locally. Why not explore the island by bike, visit Queen Victoria's Osborne House, or just spend the day at the beach. See the 'Local Area' tab for further ideas.

Detailed walking notes: all our walking notes contain detailed directions, route maps, and information about the places of interest on the route.

ACCOMMODATION

Freshwater Bay House

Holidaying on the picturesque Isle of Wight doesn't get any better than at Freshwater Bay House. Stood atop the island's classic white cliffs and dominating the bay that it is named after, Freshwater Bay House has a gorgeous location. As well as 43 bedrooms, many decked out in blue and white printed wallpaper featuring foam-tipped waves breaking softly across the walls that act as a promise of the coastal scenery to come, there are three lounges and a friendly bar. Extensive gardens give on to the coast path, with a staircase that drops to the beach one way, while a path leads away across Tennyson Down towards the Needles in the other direction. If you're experiencing some of the island's plentiful sunshine (it averages around 2,000 hours a year), head to Alum Bay for coloured sands or Compton Bay for dinosaur footprints. Explore Carisbrooke Castle, stroll through Ventnor Botanic Gardens and keep an eye out for red squirrels in Borthwood Copse and America Wood.

Matchless Country House Accommodation

Accommodation Info

Need To Know

Important Covid-19 Steps We Have Taken For Guest Safety: Please Read

Following the relaxation in government guidance on 19 July, we are continuing to take extra steps to keep our guests leaders, and staff safe in our HF country houses. We ask all our guests to respect the measures put in place.

The English, Scottish and Welsh governments are not in sync, so measures in our country houses will vary between the nations. With the relaxation of social distancing in England, from 19 July we will be allowing larger groups to dine and relax in the bar together. However, we will still give guests space e.g. we will seat 6 people at a table where pre-pandemic we may have seated 8. We will ensure our public rooms are well ventilated by opening doors and windows wherever possible. If you have any concerns about distancing, please speak to the House Manager. The government recommendation for England is to wear face coverings in crowded areas. You must wear a face covering by law in public areas in hotels in Scotland. This is mandatory in public spaces; however, face coverings will not be required whilst eating and drinking in the restaurant and bar areas or whilst you are outside our houses. In Wales face coverings will remain a legal requirement indoors, with the exception of hospitality premises.

As a temporary measure, we will not be servicing rooms during a stay. Extra tea, coffee, milk, and toiletries will be made available on request for all guests. It is recommended that guests bring their own toiletries for the duration of their stay. We will though be increasing the frequency of cleaning in our public areas providing particular attention to frequently touched items including door handles and handrails.

Menus for the week will be available in your room on arrival. A self-service breakfast will be served from 7.45am – 9am. Picnic lunches will now be pre-ordered the night before from an order form in the room. Evening meals will be table service. A dinner order form will be available in each room for completion. Dinner is served at either 7.15pm or 7.30pm. Please check at the house for details. The bar will be open. We will be offering a table service but guests can also come to the bar to order (depending on local restrictions).

Join our team after dinner on Wednesday evenings for the HF Big Pub Quiz. There will be one other evening of entertainment at the start of the week, which will vary depending on the country house that you are staying at. Our Walk Leaders will also be on hand in the bar or lounge for individual or small group walks talks briefings, which allow guests to talk through the following day's walk options and ask any questions. All of our swimming pools are open, except for Glen Coe, which will not re-open this year. Swimming Pools will be operated in line with maximum capacities.

For more information and to see all the steps taken, [visit our page on how house stays will be adapted](#).

Rooms

Tea & coffee-making facilities, TV, Hairdryer, Toiletries, Wi-Fi

Stay in one of the main building's bright, beautifully presented rooms, many that come with sea views. They're mostly spacious and chic, styled to acknowledge the house's nautical connections but with a modern twist of dove greys, clean whites and contemporary furniture. With 43 bedrooms, Freshwater Bay House has plenty of space and there's a range of Classic, Premium and Superior Rooms to choose from: Rooms 19 and 20 on the first floor come with spectacular sea views out over the English Channel; Rooms 18 and 22 are sumptuous corner rooms with expansive views over both the bay and Tennyson Downs. If it's a room with a view you're after, ask for Room 24, a superb, spacious corner space with five large windows all overlooking the gardens and bay, with its own private sitting room to relax in. Request Room 39 on the second floor and you'll get an

attractive corner room complete with a bath to soak in after a day of coastal walking.

All 'Classic' rooms are en-suite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Premium' and 'Superior' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress and larger television – upgrade your stay for just an extra £15-25 per person per night. You can choose a specific room for an extra £30 per room, subject to availability. Upgrade supplements still apply.

Facilities

Free Wi-Fi, boot room and drying room, extensive garden, outdoor swimming pool, multi-purpose activity room, lounges, library and board games to borrow

After a day walking on the coast, come back to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Relax by sitting in the extensive gardens or challenge a fellow guest to a game of croquet. If you're visiting with children, turn them loose in the outdoor playground area or watch them splash in the large heated alfresco pool (open in summer season) – there's seating with sea views for you to enjoy a drink in too on a hot English summer's day. For something less strenuous, snag a comfy chair in one of the three cosy lounges to read a book, play a board game or just hideaway; there's a grand piano in one if you're feeling musical. Head to the bar before dinner to perch on a tall stool with a perfect gin and tonic made with the Isle of Wight's very own Mermaid Gin and a chance to catch up with your companions.

Food & Drink

As at all our country houses, holidays are full board, from afternoon tea served as a welcome treat through that evening's meal to a hearty breakfast on the day of departure. Food at Freshwater Bay House is varied with a strong emphasis on the use of seasonal British produce. Our experienced chefs create each dish using only the freshest ingredients and, when in season, use home grown herbs and vegetables taken from our own gardens to give a true taste of the local area.

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](#)

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Freshwater Bay House, Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight PO40 9RB
Tel: [01983 753854](tel:01983753854)

By Taxi:

It is possible to get a taxi to Freshwater Bay House. The 5-mile journey from Yarmouth ferry port takes approximately 15 minutes. You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended taxi company, Alpha Cars. As a guide price, it cost £20 per 4-seat taxi in 2019. 8-seat taxis are also available at a higher rate. Please pre-book your taxi at least 7 days in advance by contacting:

Alpha Cars*
Tel: +44 (0) 1983 280280
Email: rogerc@alphaiow.co.uk

The return taxi journey can be arranged on your behalf by the Freshwater Bay House Manager.

*Alpha Cars is not owned or managed by HF Holidays

By Train:

The nearest train station is Lymington Pier on the mainland. This is immediately adjacent to the ferry terminal. For train times and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 48 49 50.

By Ferry:

The Wightlink Lymington to Yarmouth ferry is the most convenient for Freshwater Bay - see www.wightlink.co.uk

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 - see www.redfunnel.co.uk

HF MEMBER DISCOUNT

HF Holidays Members' receive **15% off their car travel and 20% off foot travel with Wightlink Ferry** for full details and to book book your crossing visit www.wightlink.co.uk/HFHolidays

By Car:

From Yarmouth turn right out of the ferry terminal onto the A3054 and over the bridge across the River Yar. After 1 mile turn left down Pixley Hill, signposted to Freshwater Bay. Turn left at Freshwater Garage and continue along Afton road. At the Lifeboat station turn right and follow the road round passing the Albion Hotel on the left. The entrance to Freshwater Bay House is the next driveway on your left.

From East Cowes: Follow signs for Newport following A3021 and then A3054. Continue through Newport and Carisbrooke. Turn left onto the B3401 through Calbourne. At the T junction with Afton Road (A3055) turn left and then right by the Lifeboat station and follow the road round passing the Albion Hotel on the left. The entrance to Freshwater Bay House is the next driveway on your left.

Alternatively leave your car on the mainland and travel to the Isle of Wight as a foot passenger. There is a pay and display car park at Lymington Pier - price approximately £8.50 per day.

Travelling From Overseas

If you're travelling from Europe the most convenient airport is at Southampton. From Southampton Airport Parkway station (adjacent to the airport terminal) there are regular trains to Lymington Pier - journey time 40 minutes). See www.nationalrail.co.uk for details.

For most guests, travelling to either London Heathrow or London Gatwick airport is the best option. See www.nationalrail.co.uk for onward connections by train to Lymington Pier.

LOCAL AREA

Just off the coast of Southern England, the Isle of Wight is a delightful haven away from the bustle of the mainland, easily reached by ferry or even the world's only commercial hovercraft service (foot passengers only). Broadly diamond shaped, the island is 25 miles long and 15 miles wide. This makes it ideally sized for a week's walking and exploration.

Freshwater Bay

Freshwater Bay is a small semi-circular cove at the foot of the garden of Freshwater Bay House. There is a pebble beach here and sandy beaches approximately 3 miles away at Totland Bay or Colwell Bay. Shops and banks are located in Freshwater village, about 30 minutes' walk away. The house is located at the foot of Tennyson Down, a popular walking route which leads to The Needles and Alum Bay.

Yarmouth

The small harbour town of Yarmouth is located three miles north of Freshwater Bay; either a 10-minute drive or a pleasant 1-hour walk away, following the path of the River Yar. It can also be reached using the 'Needles Breezer' open-top bus. Yarmouth has a selection of small shops and pubs, and there's always a bustle of activity around the harbour. [Yarmouth's Tudor castle](#) is also worth a visit.

Osborne House

Queen Victoria's island residence, managed by English Heritage, is located near East Cowes at the north of the island. Enjoy the lavish interiors and take time to explore the extensive grounds which slope down to the Solent. [Osborne House](#) is about 40 minutes drive from Freshwater Bay. During the main season (May to Sept) we offer an excursion to Osborne on most Wednesdays.

Carisbrooke Castle

A fine medieval castle situated near Newport in the heart of the island. The castle's most famous 'resident' was King Charles I, who was imprisoned here after the English Civil War. Walk around the impressive walls and visit the castle's famous well where donkeys are used to raise the water using a large treadmill. [Carisbrooke Castle](#) is around 20 minutes' drive from Freshwater Bay and can also be reached direct using the number 12 bus. Alternatively, it is possible to walk here right from the door of Freshwater Bay House by following the Tennyson Trail (approx. 9.5 miles).

Alum Bay

[Alum Bay](#) is world-famous for its multi-coloured sand cliffs where 21 different shades of sand have been naturally created from various minerals. There is a chairlift down the cliff to the beach which gives amazing views of the sands and across the Solent. On the cliff top there are various other visitor attractions including a glass-blowing workshop and obligatory sand shop where visitors can fill glass ornaments with their choice of sand. Alum Bay can be reached on foot directly from Freshwater Bay house or on a 15-minute ride by public bus.

Isle Of Wight Steam Railway

Step back in time and ride this vintage steam railway from Wootton to Smallbrook Junction. The railway has a particularly historic collection of locomotives and rolling stock, including many wooden 4-wheeled carriages dating from the the 19th Century. The main station is at Havenstreet where you'll also find a museum and the line's workshops. [The Isle of Wight Steam Railway](#) is about 45 minutes' drive away from Freshwater Bay. It can also be reached by local bus, via Newport.

Blackgang Chine

The [Blackgang Chine fantasy theme park](#) is a big hit with children of all ages. Attractions include Cowboy village, 'Fantasyland', maze and the giant snakes and ladders. Adults may also enjoy the maritime exhibition and working sawmill. Blackgang is 20 minutes' drive from Freshwater Bay and in summer can be reached using the 'Island Coaster' bus.

Ventnor Botanical Gardens

The island's rich climate enables Mediterranean and sub-tropical plants to prosper. Enjoy magnificent floral displays and relaxing gardens based on geographical parts of the world at [Ventnor's Botanical Gardens](#) and keep an eye out for the garden's resident wall lizards. Ventnor is 30 minutes' drive from Freshwater Bay and in Summer can be reached using the 'Island Coaster' bus.

Bembridge Windmill

This [Grade I listed windmill](#) is the only surviving windmill on the Isle of Wight, now managed by the National Trust. It was built around 1700 and closed in 1913. It has four floors to explore and most of its original machinery is still in situ. The windmill was famously painted by JMW Turner in 1795. There are some lovely countryside walks near the windmill which sits on the Bembridge and Yar River Trail in the east of the island about a 45-minute drive away from Freshwater Bay House.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Essential Information

Essential Equipment

- Rucksack with a waterproof liner,
- Thermos flask for hot drink,
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre)
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed)

Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents
- Insect repellent,
- Sun hat,
- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Camera

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 5.30pm, Saturday: 9am – 1pm, Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £30 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: National

Westminster Bank, Account Name: HF Holidays Limited, Account Number: 48904805, Sort Code: 60-00-01, IBAN: GB90NWBK60000148904805

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

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.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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