

7 Night Isle of Wight Discovery Tour

Destinations: Isle of Wight, United Kingdom & England

Trip code: FWHCR-7



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

A 7-night Isle of Wight Discovery 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'S INCLUDED

- Ride on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway
- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- 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 sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

Please note - Entrance fees are not included. See Essential Info tab for details.

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- 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

TRIP SUITABILITY

Trip suitability

Our Discovery holidays give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of the local area through **active sightseeing**.

On each Discovery day, you will be walking throughout the course of the day as you explore the venues and locations we visit. You'll also be hopping on and off the coach throughout - you should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Most of this walking will be at attractions but some may be across country tracks or footpaths so be sure to **bring sturdy shoes**. There will also be stairs to climb in the majority of the venues you visit, though other more accessible options may be available. At some venues, there may also be uneven surfaces, such as cobbles or rocky paths.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea on arrival.

Day 2: Along The South West Coast

We begin with a visit to Alum Bay, with 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, 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 which are split out into zones of the world, so you can travel from New Zealand to the Mediterranean to Japan in a few paces!

Day 3: Ryde & Carisbrooke Castle

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.

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. 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 or Sandown and Dinosaur Isle. Please note, due to coach access restrictions, if you wish to visit the Villa, there is a 500m uphill walk to the Villa, and 500m walk back downhill to our coach. Alternatively, our coach can take you to explore Sandown with the option of visiting Dinosaur Isle.

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.

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 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.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

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.

Country House Accommodation

Rooms

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, and comfortable mattresses.

Superior Rooms are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surrounds. 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, and comfortable mattresses.

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**. 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 |

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, the HF Holidays Big Pub Quiz held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays Leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays Leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's walking delights (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you 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.

Food & Drink

Led by experienced chefs, we serve a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. We always aim to source the best produce available and use home-grown herbs and vegetables from our own gardens whenever possible. Additionally, we have a licensed bar with beers, soft drinks, and a superb selection of spirits. Full-board comes as standard and includes a cream tea on arrival and a hearty breakfast on departure day.

HF Holidays understands the importance of managing allergens effectively to ensure food is safe for guests with food allergies. Whilst we are always able to confidently inform guests which allergens are present in our ingredients and dishes, we are unable to guarantee absolute freedom from the 14 main allergens in our kitchens. Vegetarian and vegan menu choices are available. If you have allergies, food intolerances, or any special dietary requirements, please inform our reservation team at the time of booking.

Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on [020 3974 8865](tel:02039748865) or view the accessibility information online for [Freshwater Bay House](#)

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Freshwater Bay House
Freshwater Bay
Isle of Wight PO40 9RB

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1983 753854](tel:+44(0)1983753854)

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](tel:+44(0)7475662350)

Email: info@baytaxi.co.uk (Please provide your phone number when emailing)

Rayner's Taxis

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1983 752784](tel:+44(0)1983752784)

I Cabs

Tel: [+44 \(0\)7553 567567](tel:+44(0)7553567567)

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 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. 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

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 chosen 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.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Essential Information

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute

and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Suitable, sturdy footwear with a good grip. You'll be on your feet for much of the day
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Sunhat
- Rucksack
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- Sunscreen
- Mobile phone
- UV sunglasses

Recommended

- First aid kit, including plasters
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace)
- Wallet/purse

Optional extras

- Walking poles,
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Waterproof rucksack liner

Admission Information

Please note

Admission fees are payable locally and aren't included in your holiday price, apart from what is stated in the what's included section. This gives you greater choice, freedom, and flexibility to only pay the entrance fees for the attractions that interest you most. Should you choose to visit all the highlighted attractions during your holiday please see the table below for the approximate totals. If you have National Trust (NT), English Heritage (EH) or Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) membership, please be sure to bring your membership identification with you.

| Approx. cost of entrance fees | 3 night holiday | 4 night holiday | 7 night holiday |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| RHS, NT & EH members | £8.50 | £18 | £26.50 |
| NT & EH members | £8.50 | £18 | £26.50 |
| NT members | £21 | £38 | £59 |
| EH members | £8.50 | £26 | £34.50 |
| RHS members | £21 | £46 | £67 |

No memberships

£21

£46

£67

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: 15-06-2024

