



Isles of Scilly

The unique character and beauty of this archipelago is undeniable. Each of the five islands, St Mary's, Tresco, St Martin's, St Agnes, and Bryher, has a distinct character, shaped by geology, nature and the communities that live there. Our island hopping holiday explores each of these islands from our base on St Mary's. The islands are designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Stunning silvery white beaches, pristine translucent seas, rugged coastline bounded by golden gorse and heather heathland, and tiny pocket-sized bulb fields filled with scented narcissi - this charming landscape is warmed by the breezes of the Gulf Stream.

Travel

The easiest way to reach the Isles of Scilly is by air flying from Lands End, Newquay and Exeter. Sailings are also available from Penzance on the Scillonian III. **To reach the hotel from the Quay:** At the end of the quay, turn left in front of the Mermaid Inn. Follow this road (Hugh Street) passing the Post Office on your right and the Co-op on your left. At the end, where the road divides, take the left fork and stay on the right hand side of the road, passing the Town Hall on your right. Continue on this road (Church Street) until you reach the Bell Rock Hotel on your right. If your luggage has been labelled with your name and accommodation it will be transported to the hotel for a small fee (£1.50 in 2018) which will be charged to your hotel extras bill. If not, you will need to wait for it to be unloaded and take it with you. **To reach the hotel from the Airport:** Drivers from the Skybus shuttle bus service meet all flights and will take you and your luggage to your accommodation. They

will also arrange to collect you for your return journey. The return bus fare is payable locally (approx £8.00).

Once you have made your travel arrangements, please contact us on 020 8732 1250 or e mail trails@hfolidays.co.uk with your travel plans and expected time of arrival. This will help your group leader determine the most appropriate time for the introductory meeting on the first evening.

Accommodation

You will be staying at the **Bell Rock Hotel** on St Mary's, the largest of the islands stretching to two-and-a-half miles by one-and-three-quarters. Mid-way between the two beaches of Porthcressa and Town Beach, it is situated on a quiet street, minutes from the shops, and a short stroll from the harbour. The hotel has a small heated indoor swimming pool and good WiFi. Rooms have a hairdryer, tea and coffee making facilities and a boot tray.

The holiday is Half Board with the opportunity to eat in pubs and cafes at lunchtime, experiencing the local produce, rather than buying a packed lunch.

Dietary requirements

Our partner hotels can cater for most dietary requirements, but it is important you advise us of any allergies and dietary restrictions you have at the time of booking.

The Bell Rock Hotel

Church Street
Hugh Town St Mary's Isles of Scilly
TR21 0JT
Tel: 01720 422575



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Website: www.bellrockhotel.co.uk

In the hopefully rare event of any cause for complaints regarding accommodation then you must notify your leader at the time; he or she can then attempt to rectify the problem.

Trail Grading



This Guided Walking/Hiking Trail is graded 2 with walks/hikes on good paths, though often quite a distance each day. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness required to join this holiday.

Planned Itinerary

The daily itinerary has to be very flexible as our itinerary, like life on Scilly, is determined by weather and tide. We have provided you an outline of the selection of walks on each of the islands which could be included in the itinerary. There are lots of things to see on each island, so some of the walks are not as lengthy as others. The holiday runs at a relaxing pace so that you get a real flavour of island life.

St Agnes and Gugh

Surrounded by rocks and reefs, St Agnes is the most south-westerly community in the UK, where the whitewashed lighthouse and traditional stone cottages tumble down to tiny bulb fields, and pocket sized farms. Our circular walk will take us past the old lifeboat station, Troytown Maze, a labyrinth laid out in beach pebbles, and the granite outcrop of the Nag's Head. From the coastal path we will have impressive views of the treacherous Western Rocks and the famous

Bishop Rock lighthouse. A visit to Gugh (pronounced like the name Hugh, but with a G) is determined by the tide. This small island is home to a bounty of archaeological sites. 5 miles (8km).

St Martin's

Though the third largest of the islands, St Martin's is a narrow island only 2 miles long. Easily recognisable from its fine shimmering white sandy beaches, the shores of St Martin's have the longest stretches of sand in Scilly. Following the coastal path takes us past kelp pits, through scented gorse heathlands, to stone and rope labyrinths. We follow the sandy shore of Little Bay and Great Bay, before turning inland to the flower fields and glasshouses of Higher Town. We also head over the golden gorse heathland of Chapel Down to St Martin's Head with its chapel, Daymark and ruined Signal Station. 6½ miles (10.5km).

St Mary's circular

Our walk circumnavigates the Islands' hub of St Mary's, starting out from our base in Hugh Town. We explore the coastline, passing by the archaeological sites of Bant's Carn and Innisidgen, the granite tors of Porth Hellick and Peninnis Head, and the one and only set of traffic lights on the islands, at the airport! Before returning to Hugh Town, the coastal path brings us to Old Town— a favourite haunt and now the resting place of the former Prime Minister Harold Wilson. 10 miles (16km).

Bryher

Bryher is wild, windswept and unkempt, and has a very individual feel to it. Fewer than 100



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people live here. There is only one road, and the locals quote the definition of a traffic jam as being “when two tractors meet”! The island has a magnificent variety of scenery, from the wild and rugged Hell Bay in the north, to the peaceful bays and secluded beaches of the south. Our walk will take us across heather moorland, past prehistoric cairns and boulder walls and along sandy coastal paths to see these different sides of Bryher. 5 miles (8km).

Tresco

This is the second largest of the islands. Tresco and its garden are world-renowned and attract many visitors each year. We will see white sand beaches and a panorama of islands from the coastal path and explore the north of the island with its wild heathland, rocky coastlines and 16th and 17th century castles. There will be the chance to visit the Abbey Garden (admission £15.00 or £13.50 for concessions in 2017; payable locally) and to explore this collection of sub-tropical plants, and also to see the Valhalla museum – housing figureheads salvaged from shipwrecks from around the islands' shores. 6 miles (9.6km).



Your Trail Leader

Katharine Sawyer has been leading our Isles of Scilly holidays since 2011. She first visited the islands in 1993 and, having become captivated by them, moved there in 1999. She has a degree in Archaeology and Anthropology and, since living in Scilly, has obtained a PhD for her research on the Bronze Age burial chambers of the islands. She has worked as a guide since 2000 but, in common with many residents of small islands, has a range of other jobs which include archaeological monitoring and recording, adult education teaching and human resources consultancy.

Please ensure you complete and hand in your registration form on arrival and let the leader know about any medical problems you may have. This may be useful in the event of a problem on the walk and will be treated confidentially by the leader.

What to wear

To enjoy walking /hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions.



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Safety is our priority and Britain is famous for its changeable weather, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities. Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents. Walking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in) and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters. Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares). Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended. Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers are essential and a warm hat and gloves are useful additions. Gaiters are an optional but useful extra. Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.

What to bring

Rucksack with a waterproof liner, thermos flask for hot drink (optional as you can eat in cafes and pubs at lunchtime to experience the local produce), water bottle (at least 1 litre) and spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar. Small torch and first aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed). Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents. Sun hat, sunglasses and protection cream, camera and binoculars are all optional extras you may choose to bring.

Ticks

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information prior to your holiday.

On the walk

We try to create a relaxed atmosphere on the walk but please listen to safety instructions from your leader. Keep members of the group in view especially when weather or visibility is poor. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. Our leaders consider the safety of the group as a whole and are likely to be more cautious over potential risks such as bad weather.

In the event of a problem

If you become separated from the party please stay where you are. Your leader will retrace their steps to find you. All our leaders carry a mobile phone, spare maps and a compass. In the unlikely event your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack. Call the emergency services (call 999 in the UK, or 112 overseas). Please then try to call the hotel where you are staying to let them know there is a problem.

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance and any other personal insurance relevant to you and the holiday. It is particularly important with the possibility of flight changes and cancellations due to the challenging weather conditions that can occur on the islands and might impact your onward travel arrangements.

Maps and guides

Your leader will carry all the necessary maps and guides for this holiday. For your own enjoyment you may consider buying the 1:25,000 Map Explorer 101: Isles of Scilly



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While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the information in this guide may change after it has been printed. For the most up-to-date information please see our website or use the contacts below.

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