

# I ♥ Wight



## Romantic Breaks and Spring Escapes on the Isle of Wight 2017

### 10 PAGE TOOLKIT produced by Visit Isle of Wight LTD

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**Banner: Romantic Spring Breaks on the Isle of Wight**

**Included in this toolkit:**

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6. February half-term events and special offers.

## Romantic Spring Breaks on the Isle of Wight

Throughout history, the Isle of Wight has been the perfect backdrop for the romantically inclined, from the Pre-Raphaelite artists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who were drawn to the romantic poetry of Alfred Lord Tennyson at his Island hideaway in the stunning West Wight, to the passionate love affair of a Queen and her prince played out at their palace by the sea – Osborne at East Cowes.

Still popular with today's generation looking for a romantic getaway – most recently Benedict Cumberbatch who married here on Valentine's Day 2015 - the Island is the perfect place to spoil your loved one with a wonderful break away.

There are lots of heavenly hotels, cosy cottages and coastal retreats, which are ideal for couples looking to get away from it all this February and March. Choose from historic houses, stylish hotels, boutique bed & breakfasts, dreamy cottages and other intimate hideaways. And whether you're celebrating a special occasion, or are indulging in some time away together, the Island offers that little something extra to make your stay one to remember.

Visit atmospheric castles, interesting museums and galleries and let the Island's legendary and literary lovers inspire you. Follow the antiques trail – the Island is a great antiquating destination, with auction rooms and shops selling something for everyone from bargain hunters to lover of fine art.

After the winter solstice, the days get longer – especially on the Island where Spring comes early because of our southerly position and our unique maritime climate – allowing you more time to discover hidden coves and walk the Island's glorious beaches. Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin have wide expanses of sand where you can watch the tide come rolling in.

The Island's beautiful and diverse scenery make it a walker's paradise and there are plenty of footpaths that will lead you through ancient woodlands, open farmland, leafy green lanes, visiting historic towns and charming villages along the way. Visit Isle of Wight produces a range of free walking and cycling trails as well as inspirational one and two-day itineraries to get you started - and don't forget to look out for the banks of wild daffodils, crocuses and snowdrops which all arrive earlier than on the mainland <http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/inspiration/isle-of-wight-trails>

A bike ride can create the perfect backdrop for romance and adventure and the Island's 500 miles of cycle paths will take you on a journey through dramatic and contrasting landscapes. Look out for the Bronze Age Longstone at Mottistone, pay a visit to the medieval castle at Carisbrooke and incorporate a bit of off-road cycling in the majestic woodland of Parkhurst Forest.

These days, the introduction of the Red Squirrel Electric Bikes means you can cover much more ground and have more time exploring the hidden corners of the Isle of Wight than you would on a conventional bicycle. Find your own secluded place for a picnic, or take afternoon tea in one of the Island's tea rooms or elegant hotels.

If the two of you are all about action and adventure, there are exhilarating activities to enjoy from rib rides and zorbing to paragliding and stand-up paddle boarding – and treat yourselves to a soothing body massage afterwards. Ventnor has a long tradition of being a Spa town and these days, there are spa retreats and treatments on offer in towns and villages across the island, including stunning seafront treatment rooms, providing the perfect antidote for couples stressed out by city life.

When you're done with sightseeing, visit a traditional inn with a roaring log fire, serving local ales and top-notch pub grub. Many Island pubs host regular live music events provided by the very best local talent and which are well worth seeing. Sing the blues, jazz things up or just have fun as you settle back on comfortable sofas and let the sounds of aspiring artists wash over you.

If fine dining is the order of the day, then spend a candlelit evening at a Michelin restaurant that celebrates Island produce on its menu and afterwards enjoy a stroll hand in hand on a beautiful beach or wander through an illuminated town buzzing with night life.

This February, visitors can also enjoy the stunning spectacle of Oriental light, sound and entertainment at Robin Hill's Electric Woods event. Watch the dragon procession and amazing late evening falconry show and enjoy quiet moments as you explore the woods with their beautifully lit trees and displays.

It's said that couples that play together stay together and on the Island, there are lots of fun and exciting activities that are designed for just you two...

## Events and activities across the Island January to Easter 2017:

### Fresh start Walking Weekend, 7th & 8th January

January is a time of new beginnings and if you're hoping to get fit and healthy after the excesses of Christmas, the Isle of Wight's Fresh Start Walking Weekend provides the perfect fit. With its natural landscape and rich variety of coastline, the Isle of Wight has long been recognised as a walker's paradise. So, this January, let the Island's scenery motivate you to kick-start a healthy habit as you take part in a range of interesting winter walks with like-minded people who want to get fit in the Island's beautiful outdoor gym - and have fun in the process. The full programme of walks will be available here [www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/walkingfestival](http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/walkingfestival)

See the end of this TOOLKIT document for more information about SPIRIT OF THE ORIENT, sensational Electric Woods experience at Robin Hill in late January and February. Ideal for couples and families, this really is a must see attraction on the Island this Spring.

<http://www.electricwoods.co.uk/events/spirit-of-the-orient>

Victoria: Queen Beyond the Screen guided tour (2<sup>nd</sup> January to 12<sup>th</sup> February):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/victoria-queen-beyond-the-screen-guided-tour-p1359221>

Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra Concert at Medina Theatre (21<sup>st</sup> January):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/isle-of-wight-symphony-orchestra-concert-p1337811>

Best of Buble Tribute at The Spinnaker (28<sup>th</sup> January):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/best-of-buble-tribute-p1363991>

Island Photography Workshop at The Royal Hotel (4<sup>th</sup> February):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/island-photography-workshop-at-the-royal-hotel-p1365331>

Family Coppicing in Borthwood Copse (5<sup>th</sup> February):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/family-coppicing-in-borthwood-copse-p1363451>

Live Music at The Pearl Café (8<sup>th</sup> Jan, 26<sup>th</sup> Feb, 26<sup>th</sup> March):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/live-music-p1359301>

Salt and Pepper, Ahoy at Blackgang (10<sup>th</sup> February):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/salt-and-pepper-ahoy-p1358831>

Birdwatching at Newtown (22<sup>nd</sup> January & 25<sup>th</sup> March):

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/birdwatching-walk-at-newtown-p1358641>

Elkie Brooks – Live in Concert at Shanklin Theatre (Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm)

[https://www.shanklintheatre.com/events/elkie\\_brooks\\_live\\_in\\_concert\\_1/details.aspx](https://www.shanklintheatre.com/events/elkie_brooks_live_in_concert_1/details.aspx)

Barbara Dickson at the Medina Theatre, Newport (Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm)

<http://www.medinatheatre.co.uk/article/barbara-dickson>

Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra (18<sup>th</sup> March)

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/isle-of-wight-symphony-orchestra-p1337841>

**Stargazing Weekends at the Island Planetarium** -24<sup>th</sup> February and 24<sup>th</sup> March

Whether you are an absolute beginner or a serious amateur astronomer, the Island Planetarium promises an enjoyable and worthwhile weekend amongst the stars

<http://www.islandastronomy.co.uk/stargazingweekends.html>

**The Royal Ballet presents The Sleeping Beauty** (Live Cinema Season at Cineworld in Newport). Live performance: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm, Encore Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm.

<https://www.cineworld.co.uk/cinemas/isle-of-wight>

**Painting a Bluebell Wood** (Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March, 10am to 4pm)

On this one-day workshop held at The George Hotel in Yarmouth, you will learn how to capture the wonderful sights of Bluebells in Spring in watercolour. Becky will guide you step by step through this day to complete a painting. This will include looking at trees, how to draw and paint them, colour mixing and the techniques needed to capture the bluebells. Please bring your usual watercolour equipment; further details on request.

<https://www.thegeorge.co.uk/events/art/>

## Leading Attractions and Activities Open January onwards

Adventure Activities Isle of Wight	YARMOUTH	PO41 0YJ	<a href="http://isleofwight.adventureactivitiesuk.com">http://isleofwight.adventureactivitiesuk.com</a>
Allnatt Outdoors East Dene	BONCHURCH	PO38 1RQ	<a href="http://www.allnatt.co.uk">http://www.allnatt.co.uk</a>
Amazon World Zoo Park	NEWCHURCH	PO36 0LX	<a href="http://www.amazonworld.co.uk">http://www.amazonworld.co.uk</a>
Carisbrooke Castle	Newport	PO30 1XY	<a href="http://www.english-heritage.org.uk">http://www.english-heritage.org.uk</a>
Cowes Maritime Museum	WEST COWES	PO31 7SG	<a href="https://www.iwight.com">https://www.iwight.com</a>
Dimbola Museum and Galleries	FRESHWATER BAY	PO40 9QE	<a href="http://www.dimbola.co.uk">http://www.dimbola.co.uk</a>
Dinosaur Isle	SANDOWN	PO36 8QA	<a href="http://www.dinosaurisle.com">http://www.dinosaurisle.com</a>
Haven Falconry Bird of Prey Centre	HAVENSTREET	PO33 4DS	<a href="http://www.haven-falconry.co.uk">http://www.haven-falconry.co.uk</a>
Isle of Wight Pearl	BRIGHSTONE	PO30 4DD	<a href="http://www.iowpearl.co.uk">http://www.iowpearl.co.uk</a>
Isle of Wight Zoo	SANDOWN	PO36 8QB	<a href="http://www.isleofwightzoo.com">http://www.isleofwightzoo.com</a>
JR Zone	NEWPORT	PO30 5FA	<a href="http://www.jrzone.co.uk">http://www.jrzone.co.uk</a>
Museum of Island History	NEWPORT	PO30 1TY	<a href="http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk">http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk</a>
Osprey Venturer Charters	WEST COWES	PO31 7BH	
Quarr Abbey	RYDE	PO33 4ES	<a href="http://www.quarrabbey.co.uk">http://www.quarrabbey.co.uk</a>

Quay Arts	NEWPORT	PO30 5BD	<a href="http://www.quayarts.org">http://www.quayarts.org</a>
Ryde Superbowl	RYDE	PO33 2EL	<a href="http://www.rydesuperbowl.com">http://www.rydesuperbowl.com</a>
Sally's Riding School	BEMBRIDGE	PO35 5TP	<a href="http://www.sallysridingschool.com/">http://www.sallysridingschool.com/</a>
Shanklin & Sandown Golf Club	LAKE	PO36 9PR	<a href="http://www.ssgolfclub.com">http://www.ssgolfclub.com</a>
Shanklin Theatre	SHANKLIN	PO37 6AJ	<a href="http://www.shanklintheatre.com">http://www.shanklintheatre.com</a>
South Boats IOW Charters	WEST COWES	PO31 7PG	<a href="http://www.sbiowcharters.com">http://www.sbiowcharters.com</a>
The Garlic Farm	NEWCHURCH	PO36 0NR	<a href="http://www.thegarlicfarm.co.uk/">http://www.thegarlicfarm.co.uk/</a>
The Needles Landmark Attraction	ALUM BAY	PO39 0JD	<a href="http://www.theneedles.co.uk/">http://www.theneedles.co.uk/</a>
UKSA	WEST COWES	PO31 7PQ	<a href="http://uksa.org/leisure-courses/">http://uksa.org/leisure-courses/</a>
Ventnor Botanic Garden	ST LAWRENCE	PO38 1UL	<a href="http://www.botanic.co.uk/">http://www.botanic.co.uk/</a>
Waltzing Waters (IOW) Ltd	RYDE	PO33 1QS	<a href="http://www.waltzingwaters.co.uk">http://www.waltzingwaters.co.uk</a>
Wight Karting	RYDE	PO33 1QS	<a href="https://www.wightkarting.co.uk/">https://www.wightkarting.co.uk/</a>

## Additional Attractions and Activities opening in March

Bembridge Windmill	Bembridge	PO35 5SQ	<a href="http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/isleofwight">http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/isleofwight</a>
Blackgang Chine	CHALE	PO38 2HN	<a href="http://www.blackgangchine.com">http://www.blackgangchine.com</a>
Chessell Pottery Barns	YARMOUTH	PO41 0UE	<a href="http://www.chessellpotterybarns.co.uk">http://www.chessellpotterybarns.co.uk</a>
Dinosaur Expeditions, Conservation & Palaeoart Centre	Newport	PO30 4PG	<a href="http://www.dinosaurexpeditions.co.uk">http://www.dinosaurexpeditions.co.uk</a>
Godshill Model Village	GODSHILL	PO38 3HH	<a href="http://www.modelvillagegodshill.co.uk">http://www.modelvillagegodshill.co.uk</a>
Goodleaf Tree Climbing	RYDE	PO33 1ND	<a href="http://www.goodleaf.co.uk">http://www.goodleaf.co.uk</a>
Island Planetarium	YARMOUTH	PO41 0RR	<a href="http://www.islandastronomy.co.uk">http://www.islandastronomy.co.uk</a>
Isle of Wight Bus & Coach Museum	RYDE	PO33 2BE	<a href="http://www.iwbusmuseum.org.uk">http://www.iwbusmuseum.org.uk</a>
Isle of Wight Steam Railway	HAVENSTREET	PO33 4DS	<a href="http://www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk">http://www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk</a>
Lilliput Antique Doll & Toy Museum	BRADING	PO36 0DJ	<a href="http://www.lilliputmuseum.co.uk">http://www.lilliputmuseum.co.uk</a>
Monkey Haven	NEWPORT	PO30 2NB	<a href="http://www.monkeyhaven.org">http://www.monkeyhaven.org</a>
Needles Pleasure Cruises	TOTLAND BAY	PO39 0JD	<a href="http://www.needlespleasurecruises.co.uk">http://www.needlespleasurecruises.co.uk</a>
Robin Hill Country Park	NEWPORT	PO30 2NU	<a href="http://www.robin-hill.com">http://www.robin-hill.com</a>
Shanklin Chine	SHANKLIN	PO37 6BW	<a href="http://www.shanklinchine.co.uk">http://www.shanklinchine.co.uk</a>
The Needles New Battery	TOTLAND BAY	PO39 0JH	<a href="http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk">http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk</a>
The Needles Old Battery	TOTLAND BAY	PO39 0JH	<a href="http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk">http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk</a>

## Valentine's breaks:

Spend time with your favourite person and help make this Valentine's a stay to remember. Lots of Island hotels, restaurants and pubs propose special Valentine's offers from tantalising dinner menus through to romantic overnight breaks with champagne, chocolates, flowers and other tempting treats...

Check the website ([www.visitisleofwight](http://www.visitisleofwight)) often as we are always updating the listings but here's one to get you in the mood:

### **Romantic Valentine's Treat at the Royal Hotel, Ventnor**

A romantic 4-course dinner and live music experience, including a stay over in a classic room and a delicious Full English breakfast the next morning (£190 based on 2 people sharing). Offer available for 14 February 2017. Call 01983 852186 to make your preferred booking

<http://royalhoteliow.co.uk/events.aspx>

### **Searching for a romantic gift this Christmas?**

Romantic gift givers are invited to share some Isle of Wight love this Christmas with an exclusive limited edition gift package only available from Visit Isle of Wight.

Featuring a unique collaboration with Liz Earle, the Gift of Pure Island Happiness gives the purchaser a beautiful gift for under the tree on Christmas Day as well as a voucher for a romantic short break on the Isle of Wight in 2017.

Prices range from £245 to £425 and the luxurious accommodation on offer includes stays at The Caledon Guest House in Cowes, The Leconfield on Bonchurch Downs, The Royal Hotel, Ventnor and The Liz Earle House at The Westbay Club and Spa in Yarmouth.

Ordering is simple via the Visit Isle of Wight website. Helpful Visit Isle of Wight Travel Ambassadors will then handle the booking process and send the gift out via Royal Mail in good time for Christmas.

All that's needed is for the purchaser to put the gift under the tree and enjoy the moment...and the thought of the romantic Isle of Wight spring break to come.

For more information and to purchase The Gift of Pure Island Happiness head to

<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/inspiration/the-gift-of-pure-island-happiness>

### **NEWS: Veteran Visitors Return for Wallaby Welcome**

For many couples, the Island holds a special place in their hearts and they can't wait to return to rekindle the magic. Such was the case with Therese Willmore (84), and her husband Dennis (79) who met and married on the Island over 50 years ago and have been returning with their family ever since. This October, the couple made the journey from their native Kent especially to see the animals at Tapnell Farm - in particular their favourite 'mob' of wallabies, who now reside at the farm's newly opened Farm Park attraction in Yarmouth. Not only were Dennis and Therese given a tour of the new Wallaby Walkabout area, they were treated to a personal "meet and greet" session with the wallabies, where the couple got to pet and feed them.

After their visit, Therese wrote to Tapnell Farm Park to report they had enjoyed a "fantastic day", and would be returning on their next visit to the Island in March. Animal magnetism some might say!

Like many Isle of Wight attractions, Tapnell Farm is open all year round and there are lots of indoor and outdoor close-up animal experiences and farmyard friends for you to come and meet. Tapnell is currently running a Winter 2 for 1 entry offer for Concessions on weekdays. This offer is valid Monday to Friday, from 14/11/16 to 16/12/16. Concessions tickets are available for adults aged 60 and over, and students with a valid form of student ID [www.tapnellfarmpark.com](http://www.tapnellfarmpark.com)

## **10 Romantic places to stay:**

1. The Clock House is part of the original stables of Steephill Castle, and has been lovingly restored to provide a cosy hideaway for romantic breaks. This pretty and characterful cottage is adjacent to Ventnor Park Gardens, and a pleasant walk through these take you to Ventnor esplanade, with its variety of restaurants and eateries  
<http://www.islandcottageholidays.com/isleofwight/cottages/clockhouse/>
2. Voted the top UK 'Romantic Retreat' by Country Living magazine last year, Sturdy, the harbour houseboat in Bembridge, offers a wonderful blend of luxurious accommodation with the romance and calm of a magnificent 72' Thames Lighter conversion [www.theharbourhouseboat.co.uk](http://www.theharbourhouseboat.co.uk)
3. Whatever you desire for your bespoke fairytale wedding, the Enchanted Manor offers a unique venue for your wedding day. The Cinderella ceremony package for up to 50 guests starts at £350 and increases to £3950 for The Sleeping Beauty special wedding and accommodation package. Facilities include a fully-decorated wedding room or ornate garden pagoda for the ceremony, a Cinderella carriage, a garden spa and a fairytale grill hut in the manor's woods. <http://www.enchantedmanor.co.uk/>
4. Old Nursery Thatch in Ventnor offers an idyllic retreat for discovering the very best of the Island. Located in peaceful, rolling countryside surrounded by open fields and just moments from the stunning south coast, it is packed full of character at every turn, with oak panelling, original stone floors, beams and several log burners  
<http://vipcottages.com/details/?id=395080>
5. Mimosa Lodge B&B in Cowes is a lovely, detached Regency House close to the centre with easy access to the coastal walk to Gurnard and beyond. Their ensuite double rooms have king-size beds and breakfast is served in the elegant dining room with French windows opening onto a patio overlooking the garden. In the winter a log burning stove provides a cosy atmosphere <http://www.mimosa-lodge.co.uk/>
6. St Catherine's Lighthouse holiday cottages are perfectly positioned just outside the hamlet of Niton, approximately 10 minutes' drive from the popular coastal resort of Ventnor - the southernmost point of the Isle of Wight. The lighthouse grounds are enclosed with a wall and each cottage has a private enclosed courtyard and parking area. There is an excellent real ale pub just a 10-minute walk away. <https://www.trinityhouse.co.uk/lighthouse-cottage-rental/st-catherines-holiday-cottages>
7. With stunning views across the sea from the bedroom and lounge and a big sofa to laze on with the papers or a good book, the Crow's Nest is the ultimate couples' chill out. In fact, if you want a stress-free break, then you can have a seafood supper or lunch delivered to your door from our restaurant, freshly caught and brought back to the cove on the owner's fishing boat. The only thing you'll have to do is lay the table and open the wine!  
<http://www.steePhill-cove.co.uk/the-crows-nest>
8. Less than three minutes' walk away from the beach at Freshwater and the coastal path, Pen-Y-Bryn in Freshwater is tucked away in a quiet location making it a perfect holiday escape. All rooms offer luxury thermostatic showers with softened water and king size beds,

including a brand new four poster room. <http://www.pen-y-bryn.co.uk/>

9. At the Lakeside Park Hotel & Spa, loved-up couples can spend some quality time in the hydro experience which includes a 10 x 5 m heated indoor hydro-pool with integrated shoulder massage jets, spa pool, sauna, steam room and the ultimate in hydrotherapy – a fragranced ‘Experience’ shower to stimulate, awaken and revitalise the senses  
<http://www.lakesideparkhotel.com/>
10. Exclusively for adults, the Melville Hall Hotel & Spa in Sandown is the place to unwind, relax and feel perfectly pampered. Their ‘Weekend Reviver Spa break’ includes 2 nights’ accommodation, a 2-course dinner each evening, 3 x 30-minute spa treatments and unlimited use of the hotel’s leisure facilities <http://www.melvillehall.co.uk/>

### Romantic places to visit:

1. The gardens at Rosetta Cottage was the spot where Winston Churchill's parents became engaged after meeting on a yacht moored off Cowes just two days earlier. Lord Randolph Churchill and Jenny Jerome (daughter of the New York Times proprietor) met during Cowes Week in 1873, married in April 1874 and their son, Winston, was born in late November 1874. Owned by the National Trust, Rosetta Cottage is in a prime seafront location in Cowes <http://www.nationaltrustholidays.org.uk/holiday-cottage/rosetta-cottage-cowes-isle-of-wight/>
2. Inspiration for one of the biggest love stories ever – Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at Osborne House – visitors can spend a romantic day out exploring the sumptuous surroundings of the royal apartments, and enjoy the calming tranquillity this special house and its grounds and private beach have to offer. These days, you can even follow in the footsteps of this royal romance by holding your own wedding at Osborne – the perfect backdrop to say “I do” [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)
3. Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote some of his most romantic poetry while living on the Isle of Wight and lives on not only in his work but also in the Tennyson Trail – a 15-mile walk from Carisbrooke Castle to The Needles. The last few miles of the footpath at Freshwater Bay are perfect for a lover’s stroll and will most certainly impress with its romantic and dreamy scenery.
4. George Frederick Watts had a home on the Island, just outside Freshwater where he lived and worked for a number of years with his pupil the Pre-Raphaelite painter, Val Prinsep, whose family Watts had been close friends with in London. There is a beautiful stained-glass window in St Mary’s Church, Freshwater, depicting Sir Galahad based on a painting by Watts of his then wife, the actress Ellen Terry.
5. Ventnor Botanic Gardens are a magical place to visit with pathways to rare and exotic plants and a secret tunnel to the sea. You can even take part in one of their regular yoga sessions or a beautiful reiki treatment while Signal Point cottage offers a wonderfully, unique escape in the beautiful and tranquil surroundings of the gardens. <http://www.botanic.co.uk/>
6. Quarr Abbey, is a working Benedictine monastery set in beautiful and peaceful surroundings and can be found just outside of Ryde. The woodland walk and wildlife hide is a trail that meanders through woodland and gives visitors the chance to catch a glimpse of the native

Red Squirrel. There are guided tours and a visitor centre which tells the fascinating story of Quarr as well as a charming café and a farm shop.

7. Head on up Headon Warren – a breathtaking walk with splendid views of the Needles, the magnificent white rocks that jut out of the sea at Alum Bay. Alternatively, walk from the Needles Landmark Attraction to the Needles Old Battery and New Battery, a Victorian coastal defence and secret rocket testing site perched high above the Needles Rocks.
8. Settle back in beautifully restored Victorian and Edwardian carriage at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway and enjoy a unique view of some of the Island's unspoilt countryside. Hop off at one of the stations and take beautiful photographs of historical steam trains whose nostalgic romance transports you to a bygone era. <http://www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk/>
9. It's thought that the Romans were growing vines on the Island some 2000 years ago and at Adgestone Vineyard you can still sample the flavoursome wines which are grown, produced and bottled on this Island estate. Take a romantic stroll through the vines, enjoy a delicious wine-tasting session and leave with a bottle of two as a perfect reminder of your trip. At nearby Brading Roman Villa you can see some of the best-preserved mosaics in Northern Europe.
10. As England's largest Island with over 60 miles of coastline, you are never far from the sea on the Isle of Wight and with so many beautiful beaches and bays, secluded moonlit strolls are guaranteed. There's a huge variety from large sandy beaches like Shanklin beach, famous for its great sands and good facilities to the many delightful coves like Freshwater Bay, Totland Bay and Colwell Bay, which has great views towards Lymington and Hurst Castle. Gurnard Beach is a quaint traditional, pebble and shingle beach, just a stone's throw south east of the town of Cowes on the north-east coast of the Isle of Wight, with great views across the Solent, and some of the best sunsets you are likely to find.

## 10 handpicked pubs for romantics

1. The Crab and Lobster offers superb sea views over Bembridge Ledge due to its cliff-top location. This pub/restaurant offers five, high quality rooms and is located next to the 65-miles coastal footpath [www.crabandlobsterinn.co.uk](http://www.crabandlobsterinn.co.uk)
2. The Dairyman's Daughter sits at the heart of Arreton Barns and offers great local live music, fabulous real ales and a delicious menu of traditional home cooked dishes. The barns showcase local craftsmen and the nearby Church of St George dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century.
3. The Fishbourne Inn is ideal for those who have an early or late start to their journey. Located close to the ferry terminal yet in a quiet location, the inn has 5 boutique style rooms and a quality dining experience in a pub environment [www.fishbourne.co.uk](http://www.fishbourne.co.uk)
4. The Woodvale in Gurnard is situated close to the beach with superb views and a coastal walk to Cowes on the doorstep. There are 5 boutique-style furnished rooms, good pub grub and occasional entertainment nights. It is also a renowned area for watching the sun set [www.hotelcowes.co.uk](http://www.hotelcowes.co.uk)
5. The Bugle Inn, Yarmouth. This charming 16<sup>th</sup> century inn with its flagstone flooring, inglenook beams, quaint snugs and roaring open fire can be found in the centre of Yarmouth, very close to the picturesque harbour. The inn has 7 letting rooms, an extensive menu and an interesting atmosphere [www.thebugleinn.co.uk](http://www.thebugleinn.co.uk)

6. [The Old Fort Bar & Café](#) is situated on the seafront in the delightful village of Seaview. Enjoy a pint of Isle of Wight brewed Goddard's beer before taking a stroll along the seawall passed Puckpool park hidden amongst which you will find the ruins of a Victorian fortification battery which once guarded the Solent - and the imposing gothic-style Appley Tower. Continue along the Esplanade to Ryde with its international cuisine restaurants, pubs and cafes. With its many boutiques, antique shops and [Liz Earle's](#) flagship store, Union Street is the ideal place for a shopping trip or a spot of pampering.
7. [The Sun Inn](#) at Hulverstone is set in beautiful countryside with fantastic sea views near Brook Chine on the South-West coast of the Island. Perfect for a cosy meal by a roaring fire, the inn has live music on Saturday nights with highly talented local musicians. The inn was also favoured by the actor Benedict Cumberbatch for some post wedding drinks following his marriage to his sweetheart Sophie Hunter on Valentine's Day 2015.
8. The [Spyglass Inn](#) on Ventnor seafront regularly has good local bands in the bar and the same family also have the [Bargeman's Rest](#) in Newport where there is live music five nights a week.
9. [The Crown in Ryde](#) is a traditional English pub in the heart of Ryde making it an ideal place to stop off for a beer or a snack during a shopping trip. Ryde is the biggest town on the Island and is fast becoming known for its specialist boutiques from fashion and jewellery to health and home products. Ryde is known as the gateway to the Island and The Crown is just a few minutes from Ryde seafront with its transport links to Portsmouth and a bus station with connections right across the whole Island.
10. [The Taverners](#) can be found in the quintessential English village of Godshill making it popular with locals and tourists alike. It is a picture perfect village with charming thatched-roofed cottages, a medieval church and plenty of gift shops. There's a lovely circular walk from Godshill which takes in Appuldurcombe House, once home to the passionate Lady Seymour Worsley who, aged 17, married Sir Richard Worsley the 7<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Appuldurcombe House on the Isle of Wight, on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1775  
<http://www.redfunnel.co.uk/library/pdfs/island-guide/walking-maps/walking-factsheets/appuldurcombe-house.pdf>

## February half-terms events and offers:

Victorian Fun and Games at Osborne (20 to 24 February 2017) <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/whats-on/victorian-fun-and-games-Osb-20-02-2017/>

Sandman Snowman at Small Hope Beach, Shanklin (Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> February)  
<http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/whats-on/sandman-snowman-p1320351>

### Special offers from Hovertravel

#### £25 Family day return

February half-term (Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February – must be booked by midnight 15<sup>th</sup> February).

Routes: from Southsea to Ryde and Ryde to Southsea; day return only; minimum 1 child and 2 adults/maximum 2 adults and 3 children; please quote Customer promo code: FEBFAM25

#### £5 Day return

February half-term (Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February – must be booked by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February)

Routes: from Southsea to Ryde and Ryde to Southsea; day return only; maximum of 5 per transaction; please quote Customer promo code: FEBHTFIVER

Additional T's & C's apply, please visit website for more details:

<http://www.hovertravel.co.uk/special-offers/index.php>

### **More Information about SPRIT OF THE ORIENT – The Electric Woods**

Visitors to Robin Hill's award-winning electric woods event, *Spirit of the Orient*, can experience the stunning spectacle of Oriental themed light, sound and entertainment set in the park's ancient woodland, as it captures the spirit of the Chinese New Year, one of the world's most popular celebrations.

Following the success of previous years, the 'electric woods' *Spirit of the Orient* event is being extended to include the weekend of Chinese New Year, **27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January**, then every weekend up to and including February half term, **3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February**.

From **6pm – 10pm** each evening, the beautiful oriental theme truly takes effect as a dazzling array of coloured lanterns, flags and features - like the stunning '**Golden Oriole**' bridge with its cascading golden water and the **marble temple** - bring the ancient woodland to life.

New for 2017, visitors can enjoy a spectacular **sound and light show** set within the woodland glades which tells the story of the '*legend of the Rooster*' and how it came to be finally selected as one of the animals of the Chinese zodiac. The story telling theme continues, with a larger than life, **mystical dragon** who will recount traditional Chinese stories, before inviting children to take part in a fun and interactive **dragon procession** with a 12m long dragon that will meander through the woodland and across the canopy skywalk amidst plumes of flames!

The Chinese themed entertainment continues with authentic performances of a **traditional lion dance**, featuring illuminated lions in a show full of fun choreography and light and sound effects. And if that's not enough ... there's **glow poi** performers wandering through the woodlands, and the most amazing **falconry show** in the woodland amphitheatre too!

During **half term week ONLY** (18<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February), an elegant and colourful **Chinese fan dance** will be performed by a dance troupe of 20 artists in the woodland amphitheatre.

To complete the evening, visitors can enjoy the delights of an authentic **oriental menu** served in the woodland ponds, and toast marshmallows on the open brazier - there will be something to suit all tastes.

Tickets for the 'electric woods' *Spirit of the Orient* cost £12.50 per person or £46 for a saver ticket (4 x people). Children under 4 years are free. Tickets are available to purchase in advance from the website : [www.electricwoods.co.uk](http://www.electricwoods.co.uk)

