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<h1>Festival of the Sea</h1>

The sea is the essential element that creates our Isle of Wight existence. Surrounded by its beauty, serenity and majesty, the Island can’t help but be synonymous with the blue stuff. We travel across it, we watch its moods to gauge sailing conditions, we feast on its rich harvest, we paddle in the shallows and we celebrate the fact that it infiltrates almost every aspect of Island life. And we share our love of all things maritime through the annual Isle of Wight Festival of the Sea.

The 2017 Isle of Wight Festival of the Sea (23rd June to 9th July) continues and celebrates the Island’s connection with the water that laps our shores. While simply exploring our 67 miles of coastline, punctuated with rugged rockpool filled beaches, golden sand covered coves and tranquil sailing ports, is enough to show off the beauty of the sea surrounding the Island, we like to rejoice in in our maritime existence as we set sail into the summer.

Celebrate with us as we welcome a pirate invasion (yes really me hearties!), sail round the Isle of Wight or just tuck into seafood galore at one of our many restaurants selling locally sourced produce.

<h2>It’s a pirate’s life for us! </h2>

Party like a pirate at Shipwreck Isle 2017 on the 2nd July. This annual event at Appley Beach in Ryde invites thrilling pirate fun including lots of stunts, demonstrations, and the very likely chance of seeing Captain Jack Sparrow himself. Or zip over to the other side of our Island and sharpen up your sword skills with smugglers and pirate based fun at Blackgang Chine on 24-25 June and 1-2 July.

<h2>High on the ocean waves</h2>

Whether you’re a sailor, a keen watcher or a bit of both, we have lots on offer. The Round the Island Race is on 1 July, and attracts around 1,500 boats and 12,000 sailors. That’s a whole lot of yachts to follow as they race around the Island, starting and finishing in Cowes.

A bit later on, from 6 to 13 July you can catch the Panerai British Classic Week. Also starting in Cowes (it’s world famous for a reason!), it’s the only UK regatta as part of the Classic Yachts Challenge series and comes complete with a rich social calendar.

<h2>Celebrate in carnival style</h2>

Celebrate Queen Victoria’s love of the Isle of Wight and our connections with India at the annual Mardi Gras parade held in the seaside town of Ryde on the 1st July. This annual event sees the streets full of local people in extravagant hand-made carnival costumes – it’s a sight to behold! The Mardi Gras forms part of Ryde Arts Festival 30th June to 9th July which sees artistic and cultural events held throughout the town.
Catch up with our maritime heritage at The Classic Boat Museum, The Sir Max Aitken Museum, Cowes Maritime Museum and The Shipwreck Centre.

<h2>Walk your way to moonlit sea views</h2>

For the very active there’s Challenge the Wight on 24 June. This marathon-length walk/jog/run across the Isle of Wight happens at night, giving a spectacularly unique view of the sea from the starting point at the Needles Landmark Attraction to the end at the long sandy beach at Yaverland, Sandown. And it raises cash for a local charity helping disadvantaged young people to boot. Don’t worry if you can’t handle 26 miles, there are shorter routes on offer as well.

<h2>Listen to the sounds of the sea</h2>

A change of pace comes with the dulcet tones of the Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra as they perform ‘Carnival at Sea’ at Medina Theatre on 1 July. Catch the sounds of the sea with a programme packed with music that celebrates everything connecting the island with the waves.

Add in fresh crab sandwiches, a visit to Ventnor, hunting for dinosaurs on the West side of the island, a good old fashioned paddle in our beautiful blue waters, and much, much more you’ll find yourself as enchanted as we are with our Island paradise.

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