

HMS Victory, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Visit Hampshire

VISIT HAMPSHIRE
CITY · COAST · COUNTRY

The county of Hampshire is where some of England's finest countryside meets the sea. Both Southampton and Portsmouth ports are located within this historic county and whole world of unique and memorable attractions encompassing history and heritage dating back 1000 years awaits. There's so much for cruise passengers to discover – all within an hour of each port.

Southampton is the embarkation cruise capital of Europe and for good reason – the city welcomes over 1 million cruise passengers a year. Portsmouth Port has developed a reputation for handling small to medium sized luxury vessels, and has become a favourite destination for explorer cruises.

Most passengers will arrive at Southampton and Portsmouth unaware of the wealth of fascinating heritage or special experiences that are available to them within a relatively small radius. There's a vast array of stunning and memorable experiences to help you create innovative and unique excursions for the most discerning cruise passenger. History and heritage are found within minutes of each port and you'll be spoilt for choice within 40 miles or one hour's driving distance with places such as Stonehenge, historic Winchester, Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey) and the ancient New Forest all within easy reach.

Here in the South, some of the most important seafaring and battle stories are brought to life for visitors from all over the world. From the 1545 sinking and raising of Henry VIII's flagship *Mary Rose*, the pioneering journey to America of the Pilgrim Fathers aboard The Mayflower in 1620, departure of the *Titanic* in 1912, to planning of the World War II D-Day Landings in 1944, there's plenty of opportunity to put together historical excursions which span centuries.

Hampshire's a great place for pre- and post-cruise excursions to make the most of a visit and a guided tour is the most interesting and enjoyable way to explore a destination as it brings to life the place, the people and its history. There is an excellent choice of knowledgeable guides in the towns and cities of Hampshire and at many attractions. Venues, recognising the value of overseas visitors, look to meet their needs by offering printed information or audio in several languages.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Top 5 facts about Hampshire

1. Hampshire is the perfect blend of city, coast and country, blessed with natural beauty of two National Parks, thriving culture, with history and heritage at its heart.
2. Two cruise ports (Southampton and Portsmouth) 20 miles apart and both only 1hr 30mins from London and its major airports.
3. We've been at the heart of defending the nation over the centuries. The county is the traditional home of the Royal Navy and British Army and hosts dozens of castles, historic ships, museums and other outstanding military heritage attractions.
4. Hampshire is a leading foodie destination with famous vineyards, distilleries, breweries and farms producing some of the nation's finest products.
5. This is where Jane Austen was born, wrote her famous novels and is buried. Charles Dickens, Arthur Conan-Doyle and Richard Adams, author of Watership Down, all lived and drew inspiration from the county. (more…)

Experience Visit Hampshire

SeaCity Museum

This innovative, state-of-the-art museum focuses on Southampton and its connection with the sea. There are 3 fascinating permanent exhibitions – Southampton's Titanic Story, Gateway to the World and Southampton Stories. The Titanic Story includes a 1:25 scale interactive model of the ill-fated cruise liner. The Gateway to the World exhibition cover 200,000 years of history from the earliest settlers in Southampton to the people living in the city today.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/seacity-museum-p762811

Highclere Castle

This castle isn't just famous for being the setting for the highly acclaimed drama 'Downton Abbey' but is also steeped in history with connections to both World Wars. During WWI Almina, the 5th Countess of Carnarvon, transformed the Castle into a hospital, and patients began to arrive from Flanders in

September 1914. During WWII, the Castle briefly became a home for children evacuated from north London. The Egypt Exhibition is also not to be missed. 100 years ago, the Castle was the home of the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, who famously discovered the Tomb of the Egyptian Boy Pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in 1922 with his archaeological colleague, Howard Carter.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/highclere-castle-and-gardens-p50993

Jane Austen's House Museum

This is the only house where Jane Austen lived and wrote that is open to the public. It is the most treasured Austen site in the world. Explore the house and learn about Jane's life through displays of her precious belongings including her jewellery, letters and the table where she wrote her much-loved novels. It was in this country cottage that Jane's genius flourished and where she wrote, revised and had published all her novels, including the timeless Pride and Prejudice.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/jane-austens-house-p51053

Winchester Cathedral

One of the finest and largest medieval Cathedrals in Europe, Winchester Cathedral has a history dating back 1000 years. Its magnificent architecture, priceless treasures and great works of art make for a very interesting visit. Winchester was England's ancient capital and is a city steeped in history. Find the resting place of kings, queens and bishops as well as the gravestone of much-loved author Jane Austen. The Winchester Bible, a 12th century national treasure should not be missed. There are a wide range of special interest guided tours available including a 30 minute Highlights Tour. Enjoy an exhilarating and unique Tower Tour with an experienced guide with magnificent views across Winchester and the county.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/explore/cities/winchester

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Visit Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and step on-board the stunning historic ships Nelson's HMS Victory and Queen Victoria's HMS Warrior 1860 – the first iron-hulled armoured battleship, and discover the Royal Navy past, present and future. View the only 16th century warship on display anywhere in the world and brought to life with cutting edge technology and thousands of artefacts. Discover the events of 19 July 1545 – the day Henry VIII's flagship, the Mary Rose was lost. She was raised from the sea bed in 1982 and now stands at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/explore/cities/portsmouth

Mottisfont

A romantic house and art gallery set in beautiful riverside gardens which include a walled rose garden. The House features an 800 year old vaulted cellarium, the extraordinary drawing room created by Rex Whistler and a superb collection of 20th century art. This superb National Trust garden has over 500 varieties of roses and some varieties are so rare that it's possible the only examples left in the world are found here. Discover ancient oak woodland, working hazel and chestnut coppices, wetland meadows and mixed plantations. Arrange a guided tour of the House and gardens or a specialist walk perhaps looking at Mottisfont's impressive collection of trees.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/mottisfont-abbey-garden-house-and-estate-p1440961

Bombay Sapphire Distillery

Uncover the secrets of this famous gin and enjoy tours of the distillery, which is housed within a 300 year old mill that was used to supply bank note paper to the Bank of England. Take a tour and learn about the history of Laverstoke Mill in the Heritage Room. Discover the botanicals used in the Mediterranean Glasshouses & Botanical Dry Room. Go behind the scenes in the Dakin Still House. Enjoy a complimentary drink in the Mill Bar.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/bombay-sapphire-distillery-p1466521

Beaulieu

The Estate offers three stunning attractions in one location. Take an hour-long tour with a guide in costume around Palace House Beaulieu. This is a 13th-century house which was originally part of Beaulieu Abbey – the ruins of which can still be seen. The home of the Montagu family since 1538, it is now a fine example of a Victorian country home, adorned with family treasures, portraits, and memorabilia. Surrounding this magnificent house, the gardens are diverse with a Victorian Flower Garden, Victorian Kitchen Garden, fine examples of topiary and sculptures and much more. Beaulieu is also the home of the National Motor Museum – the world-famous collection of over 250 cars, cycles and motoring memorabilia.
Link:
https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/beaulieu-home-of-the-national-motor-museum-p1383341

Exbury Gardens

Over 20 miles of riverside walks and woodland pathways showcasing the world-famous Rothschild collection of rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias. Here you can smell the heady aromas and see the stunning colours of these glorious flowers as they burst into bloom in spring. At other times of the year you can explore this garden's many attractions, including its steam railway, tree-lined walks, adventure playground and spectacular views of the Beaulieu River.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/exbury-gardens-and-steam-railway-p49463

Tudor House Museum

One of Southampton's most important historic buildings, revealing over 800 years of history in the heart of the old town. Located in the area of the city where the Pilgrims would have lived whilst preparing the Mayflower and the Speedwell for their voyage. Highlights of the Tudor House include a World War II bunker, King John's Palace and a Norman House attached to the city wall defences.
Link: https://www.visit-hampshire.co.uk/things-to-do/southampton-tudor-house-and-garden-p1521541

Contacts & further info

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