



Alum Bay. Credit: Visit Isle of Wight

## Cowes

The world's most famous yachting destination and a unique port-of-call



Boutique destination and gem of the UK South Coast, Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, is ideally located and an economical stopover for the Northern European luxury cruise market.

The coastal town of Cowes, an up-and-coming cruise port-of-call and the Isle of Wight beyond offer the perfect destination for cruise operators looking to cater to current demand for experiential and personalised travel, whilst still delivering a beneficial income stream for cruise lines.

The sheltered anchorages for small to medium-sized cruise ships provide ample swinging room with a short tender run to Trinity Landing in Cowes for disembarkation.

Cruise passengers come ashore at Trinity Landing on The Parade, next to Henry VIII's Cowes Castle, home to the prestigious Royal Yacht Squadron and in the heart of Cowes. Individual and eclectic shops, art galleries, restaurants and cafés, and local artisan food and drinks producers line Cowes town's charming streets.

Cowes and the Isle of Wight deliver exceptional visitor appeal with cruise guests able to visit world-famous tourist attractions and enjoy an up-market selection of bespoke, memorable experiences.

Cowes Harbour Commission is facilitating the ongoing development by shoreside tour operators of an enhanced range of authentic and exclusive excursions for discerning travellers. Destination experiences at Cowes, Isle of Wight include, for example: a royalty, yacht racing and rigging walking tour of Cowes, an exhilarating RIB ride to The Needles, an exploration by bicycle of Victorian history in Cowes and East Cowes, a lecture tour or English afternoon tea at Royal Osborne House, a guided visit to Ventnor Botanic Gardens, Carisbrooke Castle, Farringford House – Lord Tennyson's idyll, golf at Freshwater, an expert tour at Mottistone Gardens, a chauffeur-driven panoramic tour in vintage cars, and other tailor-made trips on the Island that's known as "England in miniature".

## Top Five Facts about Cowes, Isle of Wight

1. Cowes is renowned as the world's most famous sailing destination.
2. Cowes hosts an unequalled number of yacht racing events every season including Cowes Week, the highlight of the British yacht racing calendar, and the Round the Island Race, one of the world's largest participatory events.
3. Elegant Cowes town is relaxed and friendly with... delightful boutique shopping, winding streets, fashionable clothing, photographers' stores, art galleries, jewellers, delicatessens, locally produced gifts and artisan crafts, plus cafés, traditional pubs, and restaurants.
4. The Isle of Wight has so much on one picturesque island: stunning coastline, inspiring countryside, historic houses and ancient monuments, beautiful beaches, coastal towns and pretty villages.
5. Dinosaurs, invasions by the Romans and French and infamous Royal visitors are all part of the Isle of Wight's rich history!

## Experience Cowes

### Osborne House

Queen Victoria's royal palace by the sea is one of the Isle of Wight's most treasured gems. Visitors will get a unique glimpse into the lives of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their nine children. Marvel at the opulence of the rooms in the House adorned with artefacts from the Royal Collection, including the beautiful Durbar Room, filled with Indian décor gifted to Victoria as Empress of India. View the Queen's private apartments and enjoy the royal family's once-private beach; see the charming Swiss Cottage - built for the royal children, and wander through the terraced gardens and beautifully landscaped grounds.

Image credit: English Heritage

**Link:** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/osborne>

### A Taste of Royal Cowes

Enjoy the delights and history of Cowes, the coastal town that is synonymous with yacht racing. From the 1800s the Isle of Wight has hosted Cowes Week, the oldest sailing regatta in the world, attended by Royalty and Olympic champions. Enjoy exclusive access to a private Yacht Club and fully appreciate the

rich sailing heritage of Cowes. Stroll along The Parade and through the town to the remarkable Sir Max Aitken Museum, filled with unique nautical memorabilia. Alternatively, your guide may take you to the Cowes Classic Boat Museum, which boasts over 50 yachts, motor and lifeboats. Image credit: Island Sailing Club

**Link:** <http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/cowes>

### The Needles By RIB

Meet your RIB and the friendly crew at the Trinity Landing tender pontoons for a scenic tour along the picturesque coastline. Your skipper shares his/her outstanding local knowledge with a commentary on the landmarks and areas of natural beauty along the route. Watch out for Gurnard Bay, beautiful Newton Creek, picturesque Yarmouth Harbour, Colwell Bay, and Alum Bay where the vertical sandstone layers make a kaleidoscope of colours in the cliffs. Your destination is The Needles. This iconic landmark is a distinctive cluster of three stacks of chalk rising vertically almost 100 feet out of the sea. The impressive Needles Lighthouse stands boldly on the outermost chalk stack. Stunning photo opportunities! Image credit: Visit Isle of Wight

**Link:** <https://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/explore/coast-and-country/isle-of-wight-landmarks>

### Carisbrooke Castle

The quintessential romantic castle, Carisbrooke has been an Elizabethan artillery fortress, a king's prison and a royal summer residence. Of Saxon origin, the castle was built as one of the fortified camps intended to defend England against the Vikings. The Normans, in turn, came and established their own stronghold. For more than 800 years, the living heart of the castle was enclosed within the Norman curtain walls. Today, the high castle walls provide an excellent viewpoint over the Isle of Wight, and a home to a herd of donkeys that for generations have helped raised water from a deep well using a well-house wheel. Explore the castle and its Edwardian-style garden, and place yourself at the very heart of the Isle of Wight's history in Carisbrooke's Princess Beatrice Garden. Image credit: Visit Isle of Wight

**Link:** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/carisbrooke>

### Ventnor Botanic Garden & Tea at The Royal

Garden lovers come to Ventnor Botanic Garden, Britain's hottest garden, to better understand the English flora and horticulture. Benefiting from the micro-climate of the Undercliff, the Garden sits in a prime position to grow subtropical and exotic plants on 22 acres of land overlooking the sea. This immersion landscape showcases 30,000 rare plants and trees, displayed as they would be seen in their native environments. Afternoon tea is a sacrosanct tradition at The Royal Hotel, ever since Queen Victoria enjoyed taking afternoon refreshment at the hotel when visiting Ventnor. Relax in style in this handsome, four-storey building that overlooks Ventnor's Esplanade and the English Channel. Image credit: Visit Isle of Wight

**Link:** <https://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/explore/towns/ventnor>

### Cowes By Bicycle

Set off on a leisurely guided bike ride through Cowes town. You will go on the Chain Ferry, an unusual floating bridge, and make your way over the River Medina to East Cowes. Admire the views back towards Cowes from the seafront, and spot landmarks such as the world famous Royal Yacht Squadron. St Mildred's Church in Whippingham village, rich in royal history and heritage, offers wonderful architecture and excellent views. The Church was designed by Prince Albert and frequented by Queen Victoria. Continue to Newport via picturesque country lanes and cycle paths, admiring the stunning rural views of the Medina Valley before returning to the quaint streets of Cowes. Image credit: Wight Cycle Hire

**Link:** <http://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/cowes>

### Panoramic Island Drive

Travel by classic vintage vehicle and experience a step back in time through the scenic highspots. Throughout your journey your local driver will share an insights into island life and history as you stop at points of interest, many of them well-kept secrets off the tourist map. Godshill is the quintessential English Village, and boasts some of the oldest architecture on the Isle of Wight. With its delightful medieval church, fabulous Model Village, charming thatched-roofed cottages and a winding main-street lined with traditional tearooms, Godshill is as picturesque as it is popular. Alternatively, you may pass through quaint villages and rolling hillsides as you head to Calbourne Watermill, an ancient site and operating mill since 1066. Image credit: Visit Isle of Wight

**Link:** <https://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/explore/villages/godshill>

### Farringford House

The historic home of Alfred Lord Tennyson, the most famous poet of the Victorian era. One of the fashionable Victorians who took up residency on the Isle of Wight, Tennyson was Poet Laureate to Queen Victoria. The important historic estate has been meticulously restored, bringing the dramatic Gothic house back to the late 19th-century style that reflected Tennyson's tastes, interests and lifestyle. The grounds have also been returned to their authentic Tennyson-era condition, including an enchanting walled garden with a planting scheme based on contemporary descriptions and artistic depictions by the poet's friends. Image credit: Farringford

**Link:** <http://www.farringford.co.uk/>

### Island Gastronomy with Robert Thompson

Robert Thompson is the UK's youngest Michelin-starred chef. Robert's award-winning restaurant, thompson's, in the Island's capital of Newport serves contemporary British cuisine in an open kitchen concept. Drawing on Robert's fresh and experienced approach, you will see how different dishes are put together using local produce. Suitable for everyone from beginners to budding master chefs, these relaxed demonstrations will guide you through different techniques that Robert uses. Demonstrations start with a coffee and catch up in the bar where Robert will talk you through what he is cooking. After the demo you'll enjoy refreshments and a three course set lunch. Image credit: David Griffen

**Link:** <https://www.robertthompson.co.uk/robert-thompson/>

### Explore the Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight offers spectacular countryside, stunning coastline, sandy beaches and a compelling mix of attractions including Roman ruins, Dinosaur museums, castles, a royal seaside palace and a steam railway. Lovers of the great outdoors can enjoy hundreds of walking routes, peaceful cycle paths and adrenalin-boosting adventures. From watching yachts sailing to enjoying afternoon teas in chocolate box villages, the Island is England in a nutshell. Measuring 23 miles by 13 miles, the Island is littered with picturesque villages, and bustling small towns with local boutique stores and familiar high street brands. Potter through the villages and discover the picture-postcard side of the Island. Look out for some of the famous historic monuments such as St Catherine's Oratory, Tennyson's Monument, and the Mottistone Longstone, all set on stunning rolling hills. Image credit: Visit Isle of Wight

**Link:** <https://www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/explore>