



Local Information

Here's some information that you may find useful;

BASIC STUFF

Drop in GP and A&E Hospital St Marys
Parkhurst Rd
Newport
01983 524081

Nearest shop – Aldi Airfield Way, Cowes PO31 8BF

A SPOT OF LIGHT REFRESHMENT?

PUBS

Locals that do food are;

The Woodvale Esplanade, Cowes PO31 8LE – Traditional pub serving food whilst overlooking the Solent

The Lifeboat Britannia Way East, Cowes PO32 6UB – River Views and great food, book early!

The Blacksmiths Arms, Calbourne Rd, Newport – they serve pretty good food all day, even on a Sunday (lovely Sunday lunch and local fish/lobster). Worth booking at busy times like Sunday lunchtime - 01983 529263

The Dairymans Daughter, Arreton Barns, Main Rd Arreton. Good pub grub, nice atmosphere, music. Family friendly pub that also does decent cream teas.

The Bargemans Rest, by the quay arts centre, Newport. Jazz bands galore and usual pub grub served in outrageously large portions.

The Folly Inn, right by the Medina Marina. Really good food for a pub and nice setting.

The Sun Inn, Main road, PO30 4EH 01983 741124- Views and a nice garden ...might even spot Benedict Cumberbatch.

The Met, Espanade Ventnor. 01983 855441 – Wine, tapas and a leather sofa with a sea view.

The Taverners, Pub & Eating House, High Street, Godshill, Isle of Wight, PO38 3HZ, Awesome food – book early!

The Pointer Inn High Street, Newchurch, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 0NN – Good food, plenty of outside space (for the kids there is a swing through the gate) and a nature reserve walk if you fancy.

The Wight Mouse – Military Road, Chale, 01983 730431- Family pub with a play area for children and a coastal view for adults.

The Buddle Inn St Catherine's Road Niton – Picturesque setting and a nice round walk to St Catherine's Lighthouse to work up an appetite. Live music on a Sunday lunch time - 01983 730243

The Spyglass Inn, Esplanade, Ventnor – again food (superior pub grub) all day with a great view over Ventnor bay. Not all that local to the site but well worth a mention. Live music every night – from raucous Irish bands to tinkly pianos – pot luck. If your luck *isn't* in you might get the bloody Morris Dancers.

PLACES TO EAT

(just a short list – **some places are seasonal!!)

Lunch or tea and cake;

Coast Shooters Hill, Cowes, PO31 7BG 01983 298574 - Stylish stop off in the heart of Cowes, perfect for breakfast, dinner and everything in between.

Peach 89 St James Street, Newport PO30 1LB – The Islands only vegan café and zero waste store.

The Garlic Farm Mersley Farm, Mersley Lane, Newchurch, PO36 0NR - a brill cafe with proper coffee and yummy cakes etc. Sunday morning jazz and Sunday papers. Take a walk around the after if you fancy.

Django's Staplers Road Newport PO30 2LU – Jazz café and 100% plant based tapas restaurant. Fab customer service, beautiful setting and regular music events.

Cantina Café restaurant, bakery and kitchen in the heart of Ventnor, freshly baked bread and cocktails are the speciality here.

Salix Café Small Hope beach, Shanklin – Fully licenced café, enjoy a rose whilst the littles play on the beach, plenty of kids options too.

Smugglers Haven Tea Room**. Leeson Rd, Bonchurch, Ventnor, PO38 1QD Tel: 01983 852992 - Home made milkshakes and plenty of space for kids to play...stay away from the edge!! Egg and Chips or a cream tea. Lovely, lovely people and great view. If you are feeling fit/guilty after your lunch there is a great walk down through the landslip to Luccombe Bay. Prehistoric looking trees and some good folly houses to nose at.

The Quay Arts Centre, Sea street, Newport Harbour, Newport. Has an excellent cafe and the centre is well worth a visit. Always good free exhibitions on and a great shop selling Island crafts (good ones!) they also run lots of workshops and a FREE Saturday cinema morning in the theatre.

The Boathouse * - Steephill Cove, Ventnor PO38 1UG 01983 852747 in 2 minds whether to put this in as they are always booked up. Still, they DO call you back if they have a cancellation so worth a try. A lovely experience – freshly caught crab and lobster straight out of the sea with crusty bread and very cold wine – bliss. Right on the sea. Families can get a downstairs table so that kids can wander while you quaff.

Not open in the evening.

* our favourite 😊

The Beach Shack Steephill Cove PO38 1UG - amazing views and kids can play in the rock pools whilst you enjoy a glass of something.

Harbour Kitchen High Street, Cowes, PO31 7AX 01983 297559 – great coffee and friendly staff

The Piano Gate Lane, Freshwater Bay, PO40 9PY – Views of the downs and close to the beach, nice atmosphere and menu.

Freshwater Coffee House School Green Road, PO40 9 AJ – Friendly cafe with home made food, worth a visit

Ventnor Haven Fishery – On the pier Ventnor seafront – Family run freshly caught fish and chips shop. Also sell fresh fish to cook yourself.

Dinner;

North House Sun Hill, Cowes PO31 7HY ·01983 209453 Super stylish interiors, nice for a grown up treat.

The Royal Hotel, Ventnor . Oooh it's lovely. We have only just discovered the Old World Charm and great service here. Oh, lovely food as well!! When we went the restaurant was full (well, 2 sets) of grans and granddaughters out for a treat. (££!)

Valentinos 93 Carisbrooke High St, Carisbrooke, PO30 1NT Tel: 01983 522458 Carisbrooke high street – The nicest authentic Italian food, Great value in an old school setting, park opposite the Co Op.

SHOPPING

Great shops in Newport;

Hurst – Holyrood St- great Ironmongers and general 'stuff' , they have everything!

Visual Impact, Holyrood Street, Newport – Fab service and the Islands only stockist of designer brands, Levi's, Barbour, Ted Baker.

Farmers market every Friday morning in the market square Newport. Gets better every week.

Numerous VG charity shops

Great shops in Cowes;

Live Like This in Cowes High Street – great shop – lots of lovely stuff – homewares and accessories

Buff – ditto above but more for boys (same owners as Live Like This)

That Shop – High St Cowes ... all kinds of nonsense!

Rosalies High street Cowes, Charming French inspired fayre.

Healthy Indulgence High Street Cowes – independent health food shop stocks a wide range of organic, vegan, allergen-free chilled and frozen foods – including home-cooked meals, cakes and cookies -Hair, body and home cleaning products also available.

Wine Therapy High Street Cowes – Independent boutique wine shop in the heart of Cowes, in store sampling!

Great shops Freshwater and Yarmouth:

Whistle & Hound School Green Road, Freshwater – Local artisan wares along side eco home wares and beauty products.

Blue by the Sea Yarmouth PO41 0PB – Gifts, clothing and a resident doggy.

THINGS TO DO

Lots more in the Wight Life guide but here's a list of our faves.

Again – some are seasonal**

Good leaf tree Climbing Ryde PO33 1ND – Reliving the tree climbing of your youth in a safe and fun environment.

I Surf 07968 609169- Mobile surf school -Activities range from surf lessons to SUP yoga at various beaches around the Island.

National museum of Poo Yaverland Road, Sandown, PO36 8QB -Intrigued by your composting toilet? Head here for education and entertainment.

Quinta Da Llama Oak Farm, Bartons Corner, Shalfleet, PO30 4ND- yes, treks, with Llamas! 01983 221122

West Wight Alpacas and Llamas Main Road, Wellow, PO41 0SZ 01983 760900 – Not just alpacas and llamas (you can book to walk with them) this farm has plenty of animals to delight visitors. Great bistro café too.

Blackgang Chine** Blackgang – if you are of a certain age you may remember John Noakes reporting on the dinosaurs being craned in??? Featured in the great 'Bollocks to Alton Towers' guide book. (free return within 7 days but don't tell the kids this). *Look out for 'the mission' just around the corner from here at 'Blythe Shute'.*

Robin Hill ** Downend Rd, Arreton – great toboggan ride (even if you do have to pay extra for it), can spend a day here easily without too much pain. (Bestival site). Also the free return thingy.

Amazon World Watery Lane, Arreton – surprisingly good, animals look reasonably chirpy – great place to go if it's raining! (once made the news when a baby penguin got stolen)

Ventnor Botanic Gardens Undercliff Drive, Ventnor, PO38 1UL 01983 855397 Subtropical plants, plenty of gardens to explore, and a tunnel tour. There is also a visitor centre, with regular art exhibitions and café.

Brading Roman Villa Morton Old Rd, Brading. yes the Roman stuff is interesting but fans of modern architecture will love the new building!

Godshill model village High Street, Godshill, PO38 3HH – Step back in time in miniature form, a fun couple of hours - kids will love it. (Taverners pub opposite...recommended)

Dimbola Lodge, Freshwater. Home of Victorian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron and the new Jimmy Hendrix statue. Excellent exhibition.

Chessel Pottery Brook Road (nr Calbourne)PO41 0UE

Tel: 01983 531248. Paint your own or buy some of the Pottery's own lovely designs. Lovely café with garden too.

Quarr Abbey Ryde PO33 4ES – A Catholic Benedictine Monastery –take in the grounds, feed the pigs and visit the farm shop and café selling home grown produce including their own bees wax candles. Take the footpath in either direction to find your way to the seashore.

[Loads more – just have a look through the guides](#)

Best avoided we think;

The Needles Fairground etc – head for the old battery and rocket launching place instead as it's much nicer.

Oasis shop near St Helens selling knick knacks from Bali – why?

BEACHES

Surf Dudes – head for Compton Bay, Military Rd, Near Freshwater

Family fun – Ventnor and Shanklin (head left off the main drag for quieter spots). have great Sandy beaches for those buckets and spades and Dad burials. Totland and Colwell beaches are also child friendly.

Crabbing – head for Gurnard beach and look for the little bridge over the stream heading out to sea. Dangling a pork chop on a string will produce legions of crabs. Cheating I know but hey. Idea courtesy of some local Gurnard ‘nippers’. Crabs very sniffy at our dried bread and sweetcorn efforts.

Or head to Seaview, crabbing here is great for little and big kids, the rocks make it fun to explore, with plenty of crabs and fish to be found.

Best for Enid Blyton fans – Steephill Cove, Ventnor. Follow signs for the Botanical Gardens and look out for a small make-shift car park with signs pointing to ‘the cove’. The Wheeler family sell their fresh caught crabs and lobsters and supply a great beach side cafe. Our favourite island place, it’s very special. Try a cliff edge walk along from here to Ventnor for a cold beer at the Spyglass pub. Bliss.

Best For Explorers - Freshwater Bay, rock pooling, head round to the left at low tide to explore the caves.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Isle of Wight Distillery Pondwell Hill, Ryde PO33 1PX 01983 613653 -Home of the infamous Mermaid Gin, pop in to the Mermaid Bar for a taste of this distinctive locally made gin, take the distillery tour to learn the process.

Dores Hill Farm Emporium Briddlesford Road Wootton Bridge, Wootton PO33 4RX - an eclectic mix of Antiques, Vintage and Retro. Biggest Emporium on the Isle of Wight with over 30 dealers stocking everything from collectables, antiques, curios, jewellery, linens, postcards.

The Cow Shed Froglands Lane, Newport PO30 3DU – Furniture, antiques and quirky interiors.

Bayliss & Booth Lushington Hill, Wootton, Isle of Wight PO33 4RD – Beautiful interiors and gift shop, fab customer service.

Golf Course – Newport – 01983 525076 (Frazer said I should put that in zzzz..)

Swimming Pool – Medina Leisure Centre, Fairlee Rd, Newport, 01983 523 767

Walks and cycling – loads!

Follow the Red Squirrel Trail around Parkhurst Forest - follow this link to download the map.

<https://redsquirreltrail.org.uk/other-routes/parkhurst-forest/>