



6 BRIGHSTONE, CHALE & NITON ITINERARIES

Isle of
Wight


It's easy to explore the Isle of Wight using sustainable transport. Here are a few ideas for fun local days out – no car required!

BETTER BY BUS



1 Everything's better by bus. It's more fun than a car, the kids don't fight and you get brilliant views. From Brighstone you can jump on the Southern Vectis route 12 bus and you'll be in Freshwater in 20 minutes... so long as you don't get stuck behind a tractor, which happens rather a lot around here! In Freshwater, go for a bracing walk up Tennyson Down, right up to the monument at the top. You'll be rewarded by views over the iconic Needles.

Head back the way you came, then get the route 7 bus to Yarmouth to check out the posh boutiques and restaurants. Or snap up a 24hr hop-on, hop-off bus ticket and explore the spectacular South on an **Island Coaster**. Stop offs include Isle of Wight Pearl where you can splurge on jewellery and a cream tea, and then go on to subtropical Ventnor with its Botanic Garden, and Shanklin old village.


 **The Island Coaster bus will take you all the way to the golden sands of Ryde where you can pop into the Bus and Coach Museum (it's free!).**

DINO HUNT



2 You're never far from dinosaurs here. The Isle of Wight is known as **Dinosaur Island**, as it's the fossil capital of Europe. Rare species and whole skeletons have been found along the coast, sometimes by holidaymakers just messing about on the beach. To explore dinosaur country, start at Brighstone and walk along the public footpaths and bridleways to Grange Chine. From here you can stroll along the coastal path towards Chale. The beaches all along this stretch of coast are famous for their fossils.


Alternatively, from Niton, you can head down to Reeth Bay and along to **St Catherine's Lighthouse**, which was built in 1838. After a stroll, relax with a drink or two at the **Buddle Inn** in Niton – it's an old smugglers' haunt.

 **Kids will love the *Isle of Wight Official Dinosaur Safari Guide*, available from the Tourist Information Centre at the Guildhall.**

BEACH OUT



3 People often ask 'which is the best beach on the Isle of Wight?' Is it Appley, where the golden sand goes on forever? Or Steephill Cove, where you might see supermodels sipping champagne. Or Ventnor, where the sand changes from red to gold to black, depending on the tides? The debate rages on. But one name always crops up. It's a firm favourite that regularly tops those 'Best beach in the World' type polls. Yes, we're talking about **Compton Bay**, which is just off the iconic Military Road. The sandy beaches along this stretch of coast are perfect for watersports, and you'll often see hang gliders soaring above you. But that's not all. You can also see some extraordinary dinosaur footcasts at the foot of the cliffs and dinosaur footprints left millions of years ago in the mud near Hanover Point.

 **Go on an organised tour to look for fossils – they're safe and fun. See visitisleofwight.co.uk**



SUSTAINABLE BRIGHSTONE, CHALE & NITON

A Nearest bus station: Southern Vectis
Brighstone – Three Bishops
Chale Green – opposite the Post Office
Niton – Rectory Road
Telephone 01983 827 000
islandbuses.info

B Cycle hire: Wight Cycle Hire
(delivery available)
Yarmouth Station, Station Road,
Yarmouth PO41 0QT
Telephone 01983 761800
wightcyclehire.co.uk




ALL ABOARD



4 Back in the old days, there used to be several railways crossing the Island. This included an ‘invalid express’ that rushed sickly visitors from Ryde to Ventnor, where the air was thought to be therapeutic. Now, all that’s left is the Island Line between Shanklin and Ryde; and the **Isle of Wight Steam Railway**. Both railways will give you an exhilarating trip back in time.

First, get the bus to Shanklin train station. Then take the train to the end of the line. It’s a bone shaker of a ride, going through unspoiled countryside and right out over the pier in Ryde. If the carriages look familiar, that’s because they used to run on the London Underground. On your return, jump out at Smallbrook Junction, where you can connect with the wonderful **Isle of Wight Steam Railway** and take a nostalgic journey on one of their beautifully restored vintage locomotives.


 An **Island Liner** ticket gives you a day’s unlimited travel on the **Isle of Wight Steam Railway** and **Island Line** (available from stations or on the train).

FURRY FUN



5 We love dogs on the Isle of Wight and they’re very welcome at many local pubs including **The Three Bishops** in Brighstone and **The Buddle Inn** in Niton. Tourist hotspots including **Blackgang Chine** and **The Needles Landmark Attraction** are also happy to accept well-behaved dogs on leads in open areas of their parks. Best of all, dogs are allowed to roam around the beaches on the West Wight, without other people tutting. Some of the beaches here are so secluded that you probably won’t see anyone else anyway! Just watch out for the restrictions at Freshwater Bay between 1 May and 30 September.

If you don’t have a pet, but love animals, then get your furry fix at **Grange Farm**, near Brighstone, and **Tapnell Farm**, on your way into Freshwater.


 Follow in the hoof-prints of **Warrior the War Horse** on the **Warrior Trail** – pick up a leaflet from any **Tourist Information Point**

BICYCLE ISLAND



6 There are bike rides... and Isle of Wight bike rides. We’ve got the spectacular scenery to turn a little cycle into the memorable ride of your life. The Island is known as **Bicycle Island** because there are fantastic trails for all abilities, many of them off-road. You can tour around the entire Island, stopping off at gourmet locations along the way, with the **Round the Island Taste Trail**. Or tackle the **Chalk Ridge Extreme** (spoiler: it’s a tough one!).

From Brighstone, you can take a circular route to Chale and back. You’ll cross the Downs, cycle through Shorwell and pass alongside **Mottistone Manor** (where actor Benedict Cumberbatch held his wedding reception).

 Reward yourselves with a hearty meal at **The Sun Inn** in **Hulverstone**, where there’s a safe place to leave your bikes. Or enjoy a cream tea in the garden at **Chessel Pottery Barns**.