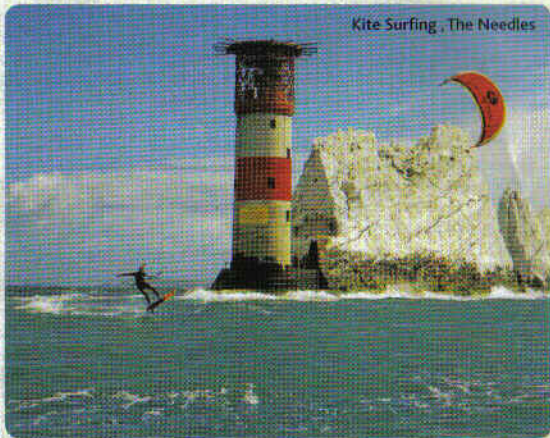


## THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Osbourne House



Kite Surfing, The Needles

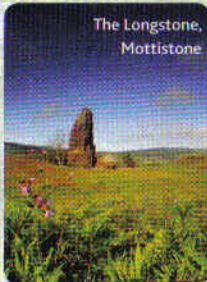


Sandown Bay



Priory Bay Hotel

The Longstone,  
Mottistone



The Isle of Wight may only be a short hop across the Solent from the Hampshire coast but the moment you step off the ferry (it's the only way to get there), it feels as if the mainland is a million miles away.

For a relatively small island (only 43 km long), the Isle of Wight packs quite a lot in. Whether you choose to spend your visit walking the spectacular landscape of hills, white cliffs and sandy bays or exploring picturesque villages with thatched cottages and beautifully preserved churches, there are some absolute must-sees that should be on everyone's agenda.

The most iconic attraction on the Isle of Wight has to be The Needles. Get a good view of these eroded chalk cliffs from Alum Bay, before taking the chairlift down to the beach. Alternatively, walk there from Freshwater Bay, with a cliff-top stop at the monument to the poet Lord Tennyson.

As well as Freshwater Bay, the Isle of Wight has plenty of other sandy beaches and the main resorts are Ryde, Shanklin, Sandown and Ventnor. For those looking for their own private beach, spend a few nights at the stunning Priory Bay Hotel, a 70 acre country estate nestled atop a small valley overlooking the sea. Stroll through a carpet of primroses and daffodils, through the woods and down to the magnificent beach before dining on seasonal spring dishes with ingredients fresh from the kitchen gardens ([www.priorybay.com](http://www.priorybay.com)). The island also has royal connections – visit Queen Victoria's home, Osborne House, given to the nation by King Edward VII, and the imposing Carisbrooke Castle where King Charles I was imprisoned. Maritime heritage can be discovered at a number of museums, with displays of pirate gold and silver, and countless artefacts recovered from shipwrecks. Children will have a great time, especially at Blackgang Chine with its amusements and rides, the Dinosaur Isle Museum at Sandown and the Isle of Wight Zoo.

After all that sightseeing, hungry visitors can discover the range of local food and drink available, from wines and ciders to garlic, asparagus, tomatoes on the vine, bacon and dairy produce.

Ferries to the Isle of Wight travel from Portsmouth to Fishbourne, and Yarmouth to Lymington ([www.wightlink.co.uk](http://www.wightlink.co.uk)), Southsea to Ryde ([www.hovertravel.co.uk](http://www.hovertravel.co.uk)) and Southampton to East Cowes ([www.redfunnel.co.uk](http://www.redfunnel.co.uk)).

[www.islandbreaks.co.uk](http://www.islandbreaks.co.uk)