

7 Night Bridge & Walking Holiday in the Isle of Wight

Trip style:

Destination: 📍 Isle of Wight

Trip code: FRW07-BRW05

Grades: 1, 2 & 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Perfect for regular bridge club players, this holiday sees you exercise both mind and body with a combination of bridge and walking. Stay in the comfort of our characterful country houses and you'll have a choice of two guided walks a day (one short and one longer) followed by a bridge competition each evening. EBU Members can also earn Master Points on this holiday.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Guided walking with experienced HF Holidays Leaders
- Playing bridge in a relaxed and friendly environment
- Meeting like-minded people
- Being surrounded by the stunning landscape of Isle of Wight
- Evening bridge competitions
- Staying in the comfort of our country house

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All bridge-related materials
- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Choice of two different-grade daily walks
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently
- Get 15% off car travel and 20% off foot travel via www.wightlink.co.uk/HFHolidays

TRIP SUITABILITY

This holiday is suitable for regular players of Duplicate Bridge at club level.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

Day 2-3: Bridge & Walking

Enjoy a daily choice of two walks each day, with a free day on all 7-night holidays. You can choose either an easier route of around 4-6 miles or a harder route of around 6-8 miles to explore the local area. Your optional walks will take you out to explore the countryside surrounding your HF country house, and sometimes further afield. The walking options are outlined below. We'll return to the house in time to relax before your evening Bridge competition starts at 5pm. Walks information: Day 2 - Option 1: Yar Valley to Golden Hill Distance: 4.5 miles (7.5km) Ascent: 350 feet (120m) In summary: This walk leaves from the house with the opportunity to take in Afton Park and Nature Reserve, before reaching the Golden Hill Country Park and its fort with extensive history. This walk also takes in both sides of the River Yar and a chance to walk part of the Freshwater Way. There may even be the possibility to visit Freshwater parish church on this walk with the grave of Lady Tennyson. Highlight: Golden Hill country park has extensive views are the surrounding area. Day 2 - Option 2 - Wooded Trails & Grassy Downs Distance: 7¼ miles (13km) Ascent: 750 feet (280m) In summary: Starting from Calbourne, the prettiest village on the island, we follow the footpath passing Winkle Street, and then ascending on to Westover Down before crossing countryside following the Tennyson Trail back to Freshwater Bay. Highlight: Visiting the postcard village of Calbourne and enjoying breathtaking views of land and sea while walking along the Downs. Day 3 - Option 1: Alum Bay and the Downs Distance: 4 miles (6.5km) Ascent: 800 feet (260m) In summary: Explore Alum Bay and the Needles Old Battery and New Battery before a glorious walk atop the chalk cliffs of Tennyson Down, offering magnificent views over the western half of the island Highlights: Alum Bay with its coloured sands. The sand was once used for sand painting pictures, a popular craft in Victorian times. Day 3 - Option 2 - Alum Bay and the Downs Distance: 4¼ miles (6.5km) Ascent: 820 feet (250m) In summary: Explore Alum Bay and the Needles Old Battery and New Battery before a glorious walk atop the chalk cliffs of Tennyson Down, offering magnificent views over the western half of the island Highlights: Alum Bay with its coloured sands. The sand was once used for sand painting pictures, a popular craft in Victorian times.

Day 4: Free Day - Isle of Wight

Discover more about Freshwater Bay House and the local area for ideas on how to make the most of your free day.

Day 5-7: Bridge & Walking

Enjoy a daily choice of two walks each day, with a free day on all 7-night holidays. You can choose either an easier route of around 4-6 miles or a harder route of around 6-8 miles to explore the local area. Your optional walks will take you out to explore the countryside surrounding your HF country house, and sometimes further afield. The walking options are outlined below. We'll return to the house in time to relax before your evening Bridge competition starts at 5pm. Walks information: Day 5 - Option 1: The Long Stone & Brightstone Distance: 3.5 miles (5.5km) Ascent: 300 feet (100m) In summary: Walk to the Long Stone, a neolithic long barrow and ancient meeting point, then on over the hills to Brightstone village. Highlights: Legend has it that St Catherine and the Devil had a contest to see who should control the Isle of Wight. The Long Stone's tall iron sandstone pillar was supposedly thrown by St Catherine. Day 5 - Option 2: Brightstone to Freshwater via the Longstone Distance: 6 miles (10km) Ascent: 700 feet

(215m) In summary: Stretch your legs with a super walk through woodland and along the downs, passing the megalithic monument of The Longstone, before reaching Freshwater Bay. Highlight: Superb views from the Downs across the Solent

Day 6 - Option 1: Yarmouth Distance: 3.5 miles (5.5km) Ascent: 150 feet (60m) In summary: Walk beside the tidal River Yar to the historic town of Yarmouth. Take time to explore the cobbled streets and quaint shops and cafes, before catching the Breezer bus back to Freshwater Bay. Highlights: Opened in 1876, Yarmouth Pier is the UK's longest wooden pier and stretches 186 metres into the Solent.

Day 6 - Option 2: Yar Valley Distance: 7 miles (11km) Ascent: 350 feet (120m) In summary: Walk beside the tidal River Yar to the historic town of Yarmouth with its bustling harbour and Tudor castle. We'll return on the opposite side of the river back to Freshwater Bay. Highlight: The salt marsh, reedbeds and mud flats of the Yar Estuary are a great place to see wildfowl and waders.

Day 7 - Option 1: By Down and Coast to Compton Bay Distance: 3.5 miles (5.5km) Ascent: 590 feet (180m) In summary: A gentle walk over Afton down golf course followed by the Coastal Path above the sandstone cliffs with views towards the English Channel and the white chalk cliffs of Freshwater in the distance. Highlight: Views of the clay and sandstone cliffs of Compton Bay and on a clear day, even France across the English Channel.

Day 7 - Option 2: Downs and lanes via Brighstone to Carisbrooke Castle Distance: 9 miles (14km) Ascent: 1100 feet (340m) In summary: Starting the walk from the coast, we ascend through Brighstone and Shorwell before crossing more countryside until we arrive at Carisbrooke Castle. Highlight: Enjoy views of the coast, and the south of the Isle of Wight before exploring the historic roots of the Carisbrooke Castle.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Freshwater Bay House

Chalky white cliffs and eyebrow-arching sea views set the tone for the delights that follow at this county house on the Isle of Wight - Queen Victoria's favourite island that's just a ferry hop from the South Coast. The location is as gorgeous as it gets; to the south of the village of Freshwater, within pebble-throwing distance of its namesake bay, and just a skip from Tennyson Down. You'll also be within easy reach of the area's showstoppers, including the imposing Stag and Mermaid rocks, the multi-coloured sands of Alum Bay, the remarkable Ventnor Botanic Gardens, and the 125-million-year-old dinosaur footprints at Compton Bay. And then, of course, there's the Needles Old Battery for the ubiquitous photo opportunity and the best views of The Needles.

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays walk leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on guided walking holiday arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's guided walks (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

Walking safety - SHARED WITH ALL

Walks may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests. Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and may need to alter or curtail the walk if the conditions dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest where clothing, equipment or behaviour is unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you. If you have a particular health condition or disability please put this on your guest registration form. This information will be confidential to your leaders and the house manager, but leaders do need to take account of any issues when planning walks. Please carry a copy of these trip notes with you, or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

Packing list - Bridge & Walking

Bridge All your Bridge stationery and equipment will be supplied. You may, however, like to bring a notebook and pen to make your own notes. EBU Members - don't forget to bring your EBU membership number to earn Master Points on this holiday. **Walking** To enjoy your walking comfortably and safely, it is essential that your footwear, clothing and equipment are suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered. Britain is famous for its changeable weather, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities. Bring a rucksack, a thermos flask for a hot drink, a water bottle (at least 1 litre) and spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar, a small torch (in spring, autumn and winter) and first aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed). Many guests find walking poles useful, particularly for descents. Insect repellent, sun hat, sunglasses and protection cream and a camera are all optional extras you may choose to bring.
