

Reasons to visit Hampshire in 2020



An epic 60-mile 'Swiss Roll' for cyclists in Hampshire

Think cycling in Hampshire and your thoughts probably turn to picturesque trails ambling through the New Forest. But for serious, and less serious, road cyclists, there's so much more.

While there is plenty of great family and leisure cycling to discover, Hampshire is also a perfect spot for a variety of more challenging routes for road cyclists. And a series of new routes just launched by Visit Hampshire offer a handy guide to off-the-beaten track cycling through some of Hampshire's finest scenery, using quiet rural country lanes with very little traffic.

From the steep-sided sunken lanes and short and sharp hills of 'Little Switzerland', to river-straddling rides through the Test Valley, the routes offer rides of between 60 and 20 miles - along with suggested cycle-friendly cafes, pubs and attractions.

As well as highlighting tried and tested refueling spots for a bite to eat, great coffee or local ale, the three new routes start and finish at a cycle-friendly hotel, on the edge of the heritage city of Winchester. Nestling just outside the city, and on the doorstep of the South Downs National Park, the Holiday Inn Winchester has just undergone a £2.5m refurbishment, including the creation of a new five-star luxury spa that's perfect for a post-ride deep-tissue massage.

As well as outside secure bike storage, cyclists can take their bikes to their room - if the bike is stored in a bike bag or box - while the hotel also stocks inner tubes, a track-pump and energy bars. It also offers a 'cyclist breakfast pack' for cyclists wishing to head out before the restaurant opens. Included with the cyclist break pack is porridge, pastry, bottle of water, muesli bar and fruit for £6.



[America's Cup World Series returns to Hampshire](#)

The Emirates America's Cup World Series (ACWS) is returning to Portsmouth in June 2020. As Official Presenting Partner of the ACWS Portsmouth, Emirates has helped secure the event during which world-class America's Cup sailors will return to the Solent for a thrilling preliminary regatta from 4th to 7th June 2020 as part of the competition to win the oldest sporting trophy in the world.

[The Flying Scotsman at The Watercress Line](#)

The Watercress Line will welcome the famous record-breaking Flying Scotsman locomotive for the first time ever in 2020. Enjoy a trip through the Hampshire countryside and feel the thrill as the Flying Scotsman conquers the 1 in 60 'over the Alps' climb to the summit at Medstead and Four Marks.



Tornado Springs opens at Paultons Park – Number 1 voted family theme park in the UK

In spring 2020 visit the charming desert resort town of Tornado Springs and discover how the friendly locals have harnessed the power of the elements. This new exciting attraction will bring several new thrilling rides, Storm Chaser roller coaster, Cyclonator gyro swing spinning pendulum ride, Al's Auto Academy Driving School, Jesse's Route 83 Diner and Rio Grande Train ride.

Charles Dickens 150th Anniversary of his death

Universally recognised as one of the truly great Victorian writers, Charles Dickens created stories which have helped to reveal a vivid picture for us all, of life in early Victorian England. In the 150th anniversary of his death, on June 9, 1870 - Hampshire will once again be a focal point of a major literary landmark. In 2020, Charles Dickens Birthplace Museum, on Old Commercial Road in Portsmouth, which will be helping to commemorate Dickens' links with the county. All eyes were on the house eight years ago, during the events to mark the 200th anniversary of the author's birth. And literary pilgrims from across the globe are likely to return once again to commemorate the life and times of Charles Dickens.



Gilbert White 300 at Gilbert White's House

Gilbert White is best known as one of the first naturalist and for his major discoveries in the world of natural history. Today he is described as the original David Attenborough and 2020 will mark the 300th anniversary of his birth. To celebrate this important anniversary Gilbert White's House, in the village of Selborne, will be hosting a special exhibition looking at the global impact of Gilbert White's work and display international editions of The Natural History of Selborne.



Cricket's Juxtaposition; New & Old

Hampshire will be reminding everyone that the county is known as the cradle of cricket. The new cricket competition The Hundred will be held across the country this summer, and - in addition to the county will be home to the Southern Brave hosting several of the matches at the iconic Hampshire Bowl - Hambledon Cricket Club, founded in Hampshire in 1750, will be one of the places taking centre stage. Known as 'the cradle of cricket', Hambledon Cricket Club was once the most powerful and foremost cricket club in England, and was instrumental in helping to develop many of the rules of the game, prior to the focus switching to Lord's. The Club interchanged its name between Hampshire and Hambledon, with The Bat and Ball pub becoming its clubhouse - not to mention, a current-day monument commemorating the club. Thomas Lord, founder of the MCC at St John's Wood, is buried in West Meon Church graveyard in Hampshire, where the village pub is named after him. And Hampshire's William Nicholson - one of the MCC's star players - supposedly gave the club its colours. Known as "bacon and egg" the famous red and yellow came from his family's Nicholson Gin and they were also used in Privett village church, which he funded.

Luxury Tree Houses Opening this Summer

Four luxury tree houses will be springing up in summer 2020, each with their own individual designs and interiors. The tree houses are situated in the picturesque Test Valley in West Hampshire, guests will be spoilt with views of the Black Chalk Vineyard, an award winning English Sparkling Wine producer. Stay in luxury and take a tour and tasting.



MicroGap in Hampshire

MicroGap in Hampshire this year, with so many experiences to choose from like making your own gin, head out on a photography safari or paddle to the pub in a kayak in the New Forest.

New event and play area at Beaulieu

A brand-new event for 2020, **Simply Electric** will bring together electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles, From BMW i8s to the Nissan Leaf. Take a walk around the display of vehicles and connect with fellow enthusiasts.

Little Beaulieu is a new enchanting play area is coming to Beaulieu in Spring 2020. Let your little ones run free and let off steam whilst exploring Little Beaulieu's wooden palace, a slide through the grand fireplace, secret staircases, an epic climbing wall, a wooden car, balance stepping-stones and a zip wire. Little Beaulieu play area is inspired by the real history of the Beaulieu site and its architectural features.

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