

Cowes Week

It's not all at sea!



ASK A CARAVANNER ...
the best campsites



Listed Site
The Camping and Caravanning Club
Kite Hill Farm Caravan & Camping Park
A quiet Caravan and Camping Club site, family-run and set in 12 acres of meadows and woodland. Clare and John from New Langdon, Portsmouth, came to Kite Hill in their 2008 Airstream.

Although it's close to the mainland it could be in a foreign country. It's so relaxing

We like this site as its near the Wightlink ferry and away from Cowes traffic, yet we can still nip to see anything in Cowes – it's only three miles to East Cowes

Kite Hill, Wootton Bridge, Ryde,
Tel: 01983 882543
www.kitehillfarm.co.uk
Great pub nearby: The Sloop Inn Ryde
01983 882 544. Speciality £3.99 carvery.
Right on Wootton Creek



Thorness Bay Caravan Park
Four miles from West Cowes, Thorness Bay is a large site, with sea views. It's great for children. Jeannette and Derek Banks from Walsall Birmingham came to Thorness Bay in an Elddis twin-axled Crusader.

We've not been to the IOW for 14 years but remembered how nice it was. The sites suit us terrifically with the space and the resorts amenities.

Thorness, Cowes, PO31 8NJ
Tel: 01983 523 109 reception
www.park-resorts.com
Great pub nearby: The Sportsman's Rest, Newport 01983 522 044
www.sportsmansrest.co.uk

MORE CAMPSITES ON
www.outandaboutlive.co.uk

offers blue skies, white cumulus clouds and a southwesterly warm breeze blowing up the Solent.

As a spectator, knowing the wind direction will help you select the best viewing spot. If the wind is from the east, watch from Cowes Parade and if it is westerly, position yourself on the grass or the sand at the Green.

Once the races have started, you won't be able to see much of the action, so it's time to enjoy the shoreside attractions.

Cowes is a uniquely attractive holiday town, with its twisty little streets full of bars, restaurants and tourist shops. Select some nautical-influenced fashions or look round the shop

6-13 August



Formula 1 type event to wow the crowds on the beach or in the (free) grandstand as they race close to the shore.

As an alternative, you can watch from deck chairs at beach level along the shoreline towards Gurnard (one mile away), or from high vantage points through binoculars, or on Dad's shoulders for the children.

Courses are chosen each day, taking into account the weather forecast, tidal streams, and speed of each class of boat.

Typical Cowes weather during the first week in August

to follow from the spectator's point of view, at least the starts and finishes – the most exciting and spectacular parts – can be easily and comprehensively viewed from the Cowes shoreline.

Suggested places to watch the daily races are around the Royal Yacht Squadron on the Promenade for the morning starts, 10.30-12.30, and in afternoon from a 'picnic position' on the Green on the Esplanade. There you can see the yachts return with colourful spinnakers hoisted, racing for the finishing line. In the afternoons, the Extreme 40 catamarans compete in an exhilarating series of sprint races close to the shore, offering a

It's the largest sailing regatta in the world – and nowadays Cowes Week is also a non-stop shoreside festival with loads to see and do for all the family, in Britain's most unusual seaside resort.

Cowes was, in the past, all about royal patronage, with yachts owned by the super-rich. These days the yacht racing is a lot more democratic and accessible, with dinghy classes and modest-sized 30-40-foot yachts taking part. Over 8000 competitors on 1000 boats take part in up to 40 races each day.

And although the sport of yacht racing remains notoriously one of the hardest

Come and share the festival feeling on the Isle of Wight. Watch the racing and soak up the island atmosphere





COWES WEEK TIPS...

Buy an official programme for contacts and tips and races for the week

WARNING
Zealous wardens are out to catch the unwary holiday maker

Where to watch
Catch the start of the sailing regattas, usually at around 10:30am. Watch from between the castle

of the RYS (Royal Yacht Squadron) and the cannons. You might want to wear protective earplugs!

The shore at the Green in front of the Esplanade, is great in the afternoons at about 4.30 to see returning yachts with colourful spinnakers hoisted.

Get on a spectator boat, running from Trinity Landing. Book from June onwards, online (Google 'Cowes Week spectator boats') or on arrival in Cowes.

For info on Jenny Lee cruises, go to www.solentcruises.co.uk

Sail yourself

Get afloat with ...

Come Racing
Tel: 01983 201587
comeracing@pelican-racing.co.uk

Try Sailing
UKSA, Arctic Road, West Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7PQ
Tel 01983 294 941
www.uksa.org



Info
Wightlink produces a range of themed booklets and online guides – free from Wightlink by calling 0871 376 1000 or to view/download from the website (www.wightlink.co.uk/themedbreaks).

Secret Wight: www.wightlink.co.uk/secretwight
Wight History Trail: www.wightlink.co.uk/historytrail
Wight Taste Trail: www.wightlink.co.uk/wighttastetrail

Floating Bridge
East Cowes To West Cowes
0500- 0200 continuous service.
Pedestrians free, cars (2010) £1.80 each way

Parking
Southern Vectis are offering a Park & Ride service available from Somerton just outside Cowes.

Free parking along Gurnard's Princes Esplanade to Egypt Esplanade, Cowes

West Cowes – Northward House (off Ward Avenue) the grass parks are used for parking £5 for the day

SEE THE OLYMPIC YACHTING IN DORSET NEXT YEAR...
More on www.outandaboutlive.co.uk

You can watch it all from the comfort of your caravan in the hill-top Waverly Caravan and Holiday Park, East Cowes which overlooks the Medina Estuary. Mix yourself a jug of Pimms and tune into Cowes Radio, 87.7 FM

(also broadcast from speakers on the Promenade), which brings the event alive with a constant narrative and witty banter about what's going on on the water.

If you feel like having a go yourself, try Pelican Racing's Come Racing deal with Laser boats for just £10 a session, or UKSA's Try Sailing, for £5 per session. Or if you just want to get out to take a closer look as a spectator

on the water try the Jenny Lee cruises.

So, if you want to sample a traditional British institution with lots of modern buzz – then hop on over to the Isle of Wight ('South Island', as the locals call it – North Island being the British mainland) at the beginning of August for a taste of Cowes Week.

GETTING THERE ...

Red Funnel Services
Car ferry Southampton - East Cowes and Red Jet fast passenger catamaran to Cowes
Web www.redfunnel.co.uk

Wightlink
Tel 0871 376 1000 Web www.wightlink.co.uk
Gary travelled by car ferry from Portsmouth to Fishbourne (30 minutes).
A return ticket for a car and caravan and up to 4 passengers £79.90.
Passenger ferry, Portsmouth Harbour (BR Station) to Ryde



Listen to Cowes Radio 87.7 FM

owned by Beken, a premier yachting photographer. Cowes is Britain's top yachting centre, and doesn't let you forget it. There's a preponderance of nautical motifs and boaty bar names. It helps if you enjoy being surrounded by sails and spars and the whole infectious, boaty atmosphere.

But Cowes is also full of 'normal' entertainment as well – as much as is found in much larger resorts, and with Cowes being so compact it's all conveniently close together. There's free entertainment in the arenas and marquees – head for the Parade for live music from midday – and street performers and children's entertainers add to the vibrant atmosphere. It's no

wonder Cowes Week attracts more than 100,000 visitors.

For more quiet entertainment, visit the Cowes Maritime Museum on Beckford Road, or hop over on the floating bridge to the Classic Boat Gallery in East Cowes and – a little further afield – to Osborne House, once Queen Victoria's grand holiday home. She loved Cowes Week. Or take a bus tour round the island to admire its spectacular coastline, not forgetting the famous Needles.

In the evenings the town is transformed into a carnival, with live music, and parties for everyone.

There are continuous nightly waterside events, in three easy-to-walk-to locations, with music, tribute bands and big screens to catch up on the daily events, plus discos and clubs.

