

time
for us

48 hours in...

...The New Forest

You can't mention the New Forest without conjuring up images of its famous New Forest ponies, stunning countryside and wildlife. As well as offering the very best of England with 300 square miles of idyllic woods and open moorland, the New Forest has charming towns and villages, and its little known hidden gem of 43 miles of wonderful coastline to explore. Choose from an action-packed family break to an indulgent romantic getaway, with activities and attractions to suit every taste.

Getting to the New Forest by car

The New Forest is only 90 minutes from London Waterloo and easily accessible by car. The New Forest lies to the west of Southampton Water in south-west Hampshire. If you are travelling from Southampton, London or the east, exit the M27 at Junction 1, signed Cadnam and head southwards into The New Forest. If you are travelling from the west, you can use the A31 from Dorset. From the north, take either the A338 from Salisbury to Ringwood in the west of the Forest, or the A36 to Totton in the east. The Forestry Commission car parks are all free to park in although there is the opportunity to donate towards parking.

Top 5 must see places

The forest

The New Forest is a walker's paradise, with mile upon mile of car-free woodland paths criss-crossing the National Park. From Bolderwood Deer Sanctuary to Rhinefield Ornamental Drive at Brockenhurst, take your pick of spectacular scenery and enjoy the freedom of free days out close to nature. www.thenewforest.co.uk

The coast

The New Forest coast has wide open spaces of golden, sandy beaches, the coastal town of Lymington which is ideal for crabbing with the family or a swim in an open-air pool and Lepe Country Park, with stunning views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight. www.thenewforest.co.uk

Paultons

Try the exciting new 'drop and twist' Magma ride at Paulton's Park, which was recently voted the UK's Top Theme Park by Which? The family theme park is also home of Peppa Pig World. www.paultonspark.co.uk

Beaulieu

Beaulieu's attractions include the world-famous National Motor Museum, Palace House – Lord Montagu's family home, Beaulieu Abbey, the high-level Monorail and the open-topped London Bus. www.beaulieu.co.uk

Exbury Gardens

Soak up the natural wonder of the world-famous Rothschild Collection of rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias, rare trees and shrubs and enjoy its year-round riot of colour. Exbury Gardens' attractions include a steam railway. www.exbury.co.uk

the Beautiful South

48 hours in The New Forest



Day one

The New Forest is so beautiful and unique that it was chosen by William the Conqueror as his 'new hunting forest' nearly 1,000 years ago. The ancient management system he put in place to protect its special woodlands and wilderness heath still keep it special today, for visitors to enjoy its relaxing quality and enchanting scenery.

Discover the New Forest on foot, by bike or on horseback to get close to nature. The Queen's Bower near Brockenhurst is a great starting point right in the depth of the woods yet just a few minutes from the village. A route leads from here to Poundhill Heath, where you can spot the famous New Forest ponies and deer.

Stop at the hamlet of Bank, about a mile from Lyndhurst, for lunch at the cosy Oak Inn, which serves local ales and meals made from the best New Forest produce. Then head into Lyndhurst, regarded by many as the capital of the forest, and learn about its history and heritage at the New Forest Centre. For those in search of excitement, try something new with Go Ape's high-wire adventure or archery – pick from a choice of outdoor activities at the New Forest Activity Centre in Beaulieu. Or take the children to Longdown Activity Farm for some hands-on fun.

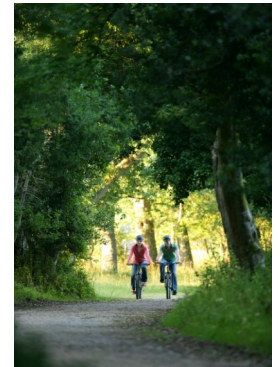
Or take the relaxing option with some pampering at one of the world's top selections of spa hotels and indulge in some of the finest foods with the Forest Marque stamp of approval.

Day two

There is so much to do along the New Forest's coast. Head for one of its top attractions such as picturesque Buckler's Hard, where Nelson built his fleet for Trafalgar on the banks of the Beaulieu River. Take a river cruise, enjoy the tranquil step back in time which remains unspoilt by today's busy world and visit the Maritime Museum which brings history to life.

A short trip along the coast will take you to Lymington, where you can walk the cobbled streets, enjoy the boutique shops or entertain the family with crabbing at the quay. Then treat yourself to a fish dinner or head along the coast to Milford-on-Sea where you can watch the sun set from the spectacular setting of The Marine restaurant.

If you want to leave the car behind, jump aboard the open-top hourly New Forest tour and use it as your guide to see the best of the New Forest from the highest possible vantage point. Choose from an inland or coastal route from June until September.



Where to stay

Careys Manor
A luxury country house hotel with spa.
www.careysmanor.com
01590 623551

The Mill at Gordleton
An original 400-year-old mill.
www.themillatgordleton.co.uk
01590 682219

Shorefield Holidays
Offers a range of lodges, touring and camping at parks in the forest and on the coast.
www.shorefield.co.uk
01590 648331

Upper Kingston Farm Cottages
One of the best examples of a holiday on a working farm.
www.upperkingstonfarmcottages.co.uk 01425 474466

Cottage Lodge
High-quality B&B, which also offers themed rooms such as eco suites.
www.cottagelodge.co.uk
01590 622296

Hollands Wood
A camping site set in 22 hectares of beautiful oak woodland.
www.campingintheforest.co.uk
0845 1308224

Where to eat

Hotel TerraVina
Luxury boutique hotel run by World Champion Sommelier.
www.hotelterravina.co.uk
02380 293784

The Pig
A traditional country kitchen with a modern twist.
www.thepighotel.co.uk
01590 622354

Stanwell House
Fine dining in a cosmopolitan and stylish boutique hotel in Lymington.
www.stanwellhousehotel.co.uk
0844 7046820

The Drift Inn
Local ales, good food, cosy fires and children's play areas.
www.driftinn.co.uk
023 8029 2342

The Buttery
Cosy coffee house and tea room in Brockenhurst.
www.thebuttery.org
01590 622958

The Marine
Spectacular Art Deco styled café-bar, bistro and restaurant.
www.themarinrestaurant.co.uk
01590 644369