

Press release: 8th September 2009

Autumn and winter events in South East England

Those visiting South East England this autumn and winter will be spoiled for choice with a huge range of events and activities on offer. Highlights include food and drink festivals in Brighton and Chichester, as well as Christmas specials at Blenheim Palace and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

For more information on any of the attractions listed below and for recommendation for places to stay, please see:

www.visitsoutheastengland.com.

SEPTEMBER 2009

Brighton & Hove Food and Drink Festival, East Sussex

1st-30th September 2009

The Brighton & Hove Food and Drink Festival is a celebration of the best food and drink available across Sussex. New for 2009 is an 'Open House Dining' event for foodies in the style of 'Come Dine with Me', following the great Brighton Festival Open House Art trail tradition. The Fiery Food Festival and National Chilli Awards will take place from 19th-20th September and a 'Great People's Picnic' by the sea will run alongside the World Food Market on Hove Lawns over the last weekend in September.

www.brightonfoodfestival.co.uk

Chichester Local Food Fare 2009, West Sussex

11th-13th September 2009

The second Chichester Local Food Fare is expected to attract over 150,000 people to celebrate the best of local food. There will be over 50 trading pitches featuring selections of baked goods, meats, cheeses and spices. Chichester-based cook and food writer Rosemary Moon will also be giving cooking demonstrations and tips on how to cook on a budget.

www.visitchichester.org

Wisley Flower Show, RHS Garden Wisley, Surrey

11th-13th September 2009

The Wisley Flower Show is one of the largest and most popular events in the gardening calendar. This year, the show will contain a village-style collection of stalls and displays, with over 30 nurseries displaying top quality plants and creative and colourful arrangements. Visitors to the show will be encouraged to take part in a 'People's Choice' vote for their favourite floral arrangement and will also be given helpful tips on how to get started or progress with flower arranging.

www.rhs.org.uk/wisley.

Heritage Open Days at National Trust Properties in the South East

12th September 2009

Heritage Open Day celebrates England's fantastic architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or which normally charge for admission. In South East England, properties such as Bodiam Castle in East Sussex; Basildon Park in Berkshire; Royal Armouries Fort Nelson near Portsmouth and Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire will be offering free entry.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Amazing Machines at LEGOLAND® Windsor, Berkshire

12th-13th September 2009

From Monster Trucks to Roary the Racing Car, Amazing Machines of all shapes and sizes make a rumbling return to LEGOLAND Windsor for another exciting weekend of stunts and displays for all the family to enjoy. Be thrilled by the awe-inspiring freestyle tricks of the Xtreme Trials Team or get hands-on with a fun and unusual Segway Experience.

www.legoland.co.uk

White Air Extreme Sports Festival, Brighton Beach, East Sussex

18th-20th September 2009

White Air is one of Europe's biggest extreme sports festivals. The ultimate extreme sports village will have the biggest ever free sports ramps for skaters, boarders and bikers and all the urban sports. There'll be more than 20 "have a go" sports for everyone to try and displays by the Red Arrows and music featuring The Doves, White Lies and The Cribs are also on offer throughout the weekend.

www.whiteair.co.uk

www.visitbrighton.com

Goodwood Revival, Chichester, West Sussex

18th-20th September 2009

The Goodwood Revival is the world's most popular historic motor race meeting and the only event of its kind to be staged to replicate the fifties and sixties. As well as recreating the golden era of motor sport, the Revival offers exceptional wheel-to-wheel racing around a classic circuit. Expect racing, air displays and period theatre at this three-day event.

www.goodwood.co.uk

www.visitchichester.org

Windsor Festival, River Thames, Berkshire

19th September – 4th October 2009

Now in its 40th year, the Windsor Festival promises to be bigger and better than ever before. Events take place in a variety of venues including within Windsor Castle itself, as well as other notable venues in the town such as the Royal Chapel and Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park, Windsor's Guildhall and Eton College. The programme includes concerts by international and local performers, literary talks, heritage walks and music nights. This year's line-up includes talks by Sir Michael Parkinson, Joss Ackland and Stanley Johnson.

www.windsorfestival.com
www.visitthames.co.uk

Wine Festival at Isle of Wight Steam Railway

26th–27th September 2009

Returning for its second year, the Isle of Wight Steam Railway's Wine Festival is an opportunity to sample a range of wines from around the world, including Australia, New Zealand and even the Isle of Wight itself. Later, there's the chance to take a trip through the island's countryside on a restored 19th-century locomotive. Wightlink travel to the Isle of Wight for as little as £25 return.

www.wightlink.co.uk

OCTOBER 2009

Free children's ferry travel to the Isle of Wight

1st October – 31st December 2009

Wightlink is offering some great family ferry deals to the Isle of Wight. Visitors to southeastoffers.com can download as many vouchers as they like, allowing free ferry travel for kids under the age of 15. Two full fare paying adult foot passengers can take up to five children with them at no extra cost. The same offer is available for two full paying adults travelling by car.

www.wightlink.co.uk

www.souteastoffers.com

Vine and Dine at Denbies Wine Estate, Surrey

Monday-Friday and selected Saturdays throughout October 2009

Take a snapshot into the day of a working vineyard and winery at Denbies Wine Estate in Surrey. Starting at 9am, participants will be welcomed with a hearty breakfast and a chance to view a fascinating film on the background of the vineyard in the 360-degree cinema. Later, the vineyard team will teach the techniques used to pick grapes before guests will get the opportunity to help press and sample the grapes in the winery. A wine tasting session in the cellars and a ploughman's lunch will finish off the experience.

www.denbiesvineyard.co.uk

Portsmouth Film Festival, Hampshire

3rd-11th October 2009

A celebration of film in Portsmouth, the film festival is a nine-day event packed with features, shorts, local premiers, projections and world cinema from local, national and international filmmakers. Highlights include a drive-in movie on Southsea Common on Europe's longest screen. Many of the events are free, but tickets are on a first come, first served basis.

www.portsmouthfilmfestival.org.uk

Autumn countryside show at Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Chichester, West Sussex

10th-11th October 2009

This celebration of autumn and British rural heritage incorporates traditional skills, countryside crafts and trade stands. Enjoy heavy horses ploughing, vintage tractors, steam threshing, falconry, dog shows and many other demonstrations and displays of traditional rural crafts and skills. Visit the show with First Great Western, which offers travel to Chichester from as little as £5 each way.

www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk

Isle of Wight Walking Festival

23rd-26th October 2009

The UK's largest walking festival takes place on the Isle of Wight – home to over 500 miles of well-maintained and signposted footpaths around 30 miles of Heritage Coastline, where more than half of the Island is recognised as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The walking festival suggests over 50 different walks around the island, for a range of ages and abilities. Themed events include speed dating walks, ghost walks, food walks and children's walks. Travel with Red Funnel from the UK for just £32 for a day return.

www.redfunnel.co.uk

Kids go free at Four Pillars Hotels, Oxfordshire

24th October 2009 – 1st November 2009

Families looking to get away this October half-term can pick up a great deal from Four Pillars Hotels in Oxford, which is offering dinner and bed & breakfast rates from as little as £40 per person, per night. What's more, kids can stay and eat for free. Four Pillars Hotels in Oxford are wonderfully located nearby to all the main attractions of this scenic city. Oxford Spires Four Pillars for example is located just half a mile from the centre of Oxford, while Oxford Thames Four Pillars is set in 20 acres of parkland just twenty minutes from the city. Finally the Abingdon Four Pillars hotel is located just 6 miles South of Oxford, in the heart of the Thames Valley.

www.four-pillars.co.uk

Half-term at the City Museum, Portsmouth, Hampshire

24th October – 1st November 2009

For a free day out with the children, why not pop into Portsmouth's City Museum to learn more about the city and its history? Themed talks and displays will be on offer throughout the half-term, from robots to outer space. There will also be a fascinating insight into the works of Charles Darwin.

www.visitportsmouth.co.uk

Hallowe'en fun at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

24th October – 1st November 2009

There are ghostly goings-on at Blenheim Palace this Halloween half-term with a ghost trail taking place in the Pleasure Gardens, as well as face-painting and pumpkin carving. Spooky family tours of the Palace's State Rooms will entertain (or petrify!) the whole family and you can meet the ghosts of the Palace's intriguing past in 'Blenheim Palace: The Untold Story'. Find all 15 ghosts throughout the Palace, fill in the ghost trail activity sheet and you will be entered into a prize draw to win a free family ticket to the Palace.

www.blenheimpalace.com

Firework spectacular at Beaulieu, Hampshire

Saturday 31st October 2009

Beaulieu's annual Fireworks Spectacular, one of the largest in South East England, is an explosive and dynamic fireworks display that will be set to a spine-chilling theme - scary music from movies such as *Psycho*, *Halloween* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*. Admission to the fireworks is from 3pm and entry includes complimentary admission to the National Motor Museum, as well as its latest exhibition, 'Jaguar Jamboree', plus the James Bond Experience. Live music will also be provided throughout the day. Everyone is invited to get in the spirit of the night, with prizes for the best fancy dress.

www.beaulieu.co.uk

Firework Family Day at Ascot Racecourse, Berkshire

Saturday 31st October 2009

Ascot Racecourse presents its fourth Family Day during this year's half-term break with the opportunity to experience the first meeting of the new 2009/2010 jumps season, followed by a spectacular fireworks display and fun fair. Children will love trying out the carousel, dodgems, waltzers and ghost train before settling down to watch the 6pm fireworks display. A Halloween themed BBQ, as well as magician, balloon sculpture and juggler will also be on hand to make sure the children are kept entertained.

www.ascot.co.uk

NOVEMBER 2009

Victorian Festival of Christmas, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, Hampshire

27th-29th November 2009

Visitors to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard will be magically transported into a Dickensian-style by-gone era of snowy white streets with a festive fairground and seasonal carols this Christmas. Hearty food is on the menu including roasted chestnuts and mulled wine. Parlour games, bawdy Music Hall, a nativity farm and a traditional 'green' Santa are also on hand to keep the whole family entertained. Visitors will be met by a host of colourful characters including the Town Crier, suffragettes, chimney sweeps and cheeky scamps.

www.christmasfestival.co.uk

Christmas Nostalgia – Toys, Treats and Treasures at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

Every Sunday from 14th November – 13th December 2009

Enjoy heart-warming memories of Christmas for the festive season at Blenheim Palace with 'Christmas Nostalgia – Toys, Treats and Treasures' this Winter. The magnificent Palace will be decorated with elegant displays bringing to life childhood memories of Christmas including impressive Christmas trees and treasured yuletide gifts of antique toys, teddy bears, and train sets. Carol singers, organists and brass bands will bring the music of Christmas to life on every Sunday until 13th December 2009.

www.blenheimpalace.com

Get your skates on at Hampton Court Palace, River Thames, Surrey

28th November 2009 – 10th January 2010

Now in its seventh year, The Hampton Court Palace Ice Rink returns as the quintessential festive skating experience on the banks of the River Thames. The real-ice rink is set against the backdrop of Henry VIII's historic Tudor palace and offers lessons, ice guides and group skating packages.

www.visitthames.co.uk

DECEMBER 2009

Christmas shopping at Bicester Designer Shopping Village, Oxfordshire

Throughout December 2009

Just under an hour from London, Bicester Designer Shopping Village is a great place to get cut-price designer and luxury items this Christmas. The village boasts up to 60 per cent reductions in over 120 boutique shops, together with a wide selection of restaurants and cafés. Travel to Bicester Village from London with Chiltern Railways starts from as little as £5 each way.

www.chilternrailways.co.uk

'Henry VIII: Man and Monarch' at the Mary Rose Museum, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, Hampshire

12th December 2009 – 17th January 2010

Celebrating the 500th anniversary of the accession of Henry VIII, the Mary Rose Museum at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard welcomes the touring exhibition of England's best-known King. The exhibition examines the personal, political, intellectual and religious transformations of the King Henry VIII throughout his reign.

www.historicdockyard.co.uk

Burning the Clocks – Winter Solstice parade, Brighton, East Sussex

21st December 2009

This spectacular annual event attracts thousands of participants and spectators alike as the people of Brighton and Hove gather together to make paper and willow lanterns to carry through their city and burn on the beach as a token for the end of the year.

www.burningtheclocks.co.uk
www.visitbrighton.com

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For more information on visiting South East England, including places to stay from B&Bs to luxury hotels, please see: www.visitsoutheastengland.com.

For family events in South East England please visit:
www.funfamilydaysout.com.

For special offers and deals on hotels, attractions and transport in South East England, please go to: www.southeastoffers.com.

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