

Press release: 29th September 2009

Celebrate Halloween and fireworks night in South East England

Visit South East England this October to enjoy Halloween themed events and firework spectacles from across the region, including family days out throughout the October half term, spooky night-time ghost tours and themed firework displays. Oxford Pillars Hotel in Oxfordshire is even letting kids go free this half-term.

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

www.visitsoutheastengland.com

Halloween 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. Travel to Blenheim Palace with First Great Western and receive two for the price of one on entry.

www.blenheimpalace.com

www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk

Indiana Jones Fireworks Show, LEGOLAND® Windsor

24th, 25th, 30th and 31st October 2009 (Fireworks are also on the 1st and 7th November 2009)

Billed as LEGOLAND's most spectacular event of the year, this half-term's fireworks show takes place over four days and takes on an Indiana Jones theme. Whilst at LEGOLAND, families can enjoy over 50 interactive rides, shows and attractions as well as a new 'Kingdom of the Pharaohs' land to explore.

www.LEGOLAND.co.uk

Autumn extravaganza at Cowdray, Chichester

25th October 2009

Set in the stunning landscaped gardens of Cowdray Park, Cowdray plays host to an autumn extravaganza this October. Children's activities such as pumpkin carving and apple bobbing will take place alongside an impressive food festival celebrating everything culinary. Music, cooking demonstrations and entertainment will be taking place throughout the day, with a fireworks display to finish off the extravaganza.

www.cowdray.org.uk

Wizard Week on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway

25th-30th October 2009

Children are invited to dress up as witches, wizards and other spooky characters to marvel at magic shows during a steam train ride through the countryside. There will also be the chance to explore the enchanting woodland before meeting the bats from the Isle of Wight bat hospital. Prizes are awarded each day for the best costumes as well as for arts and crafts competitions. Red Funnel is offering discounted tickets to the event, including Steam train rides and return ferry trips to the Island.

www.redfunnel.co.uk

Halloween hocus pocus at the Isle of Wight Zoo

26th-31st October 2009

Visit the Isle of Wight Zoo during October half term for some Halloween fun. Throughout the week there will be Halloween themed craft activities for all children and the animals will also be receiving their own Halloween inspired presents every day. Travel to the Isle of Wight with either Wightlink or Red Funnel.

www.isleofwightzoo.com

www.wighlink.co.uk

www.redfunnel.co.uk

Halloween Monster Madness at Painshill Park, Surrey

26th-31st October 2009

Visit Painshill Park in Surrey this half-term for a spooky family Halloween. The 'Monster Madness' adventure is suitable for children aged between two and 11 and includes pumpkin carving and a spooky monster hunt through the park. There is also a crystal grotto in which a storyteller will tell ghostly tales. A family-led trail is also available for those who want to follow the clues and find their own monsters! Fancy dress is optional, booking is essential.

www.visitsurrey.com

Halloween week at Basildon Park, River Thames

26th-31st October 2009

Take a day trip to historic Basildon Park in Berkshire this half-term and take part in a whole week filled with Halloween themed activities and events. Enjoy a variety of spooky trails through the grounds, ghostly storytelling and creative arts and crafts, where children can create their own scary Jack O'Lantern.

www.visitthames.co.uk

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

The Return of Dr Terror at Royal Armouries Fort Nelson, Portsmouth

27th-30th October 2009

Join mad Victorian scientist Dr Terror as he takes visitors on a spine tingling journey into the tunnels and depths of Fort Nelson. The spooky visit includes ghoulish sound effects, spectral sightings and appearances from a number of monsters along the way. There will also be Halloween craft workshops and a spooky storyteller, as well as the normal explosive daily gun firings at noon and 3pm.

www.royalarmouries.org.uk

Halloween fun on board HMS Victory, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard
29th October 2009

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard presents a special Halloween drop-in session on board the HMS Victory where children and adults alike can learn about the more gruesome aspects of the historic ship's history. The day will also include an interactive and creative workshop with the opportunity to make something spooky to take home.

www.historicdockyard.co.uk

Fright night at the Dinosaur museum, Isle of Wight

30th October 2009-09-24

The UK's first purpose-built dinosaur museum, 'Dinosaur Isle', is hosting a fright night when the museum will be transformed for a spooky evening of ghost stories and tours. A Wightlink Days Out ticket, combining return car ferry crossings and entry to Dinosaur Isle costs £43 for a family of four.

www.dinosaurisle.com

www.wightlink.co.uk

Halloween activities at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire

30th-31st October 2009

Visit the coach house at Waddesdon Manor for two days of Halloween activities. Get a spooky face painting before listening to scary ghost stories with Bill Spectre, as he reveals the darker side of Waddesdon Manor. Later, take in the family show, complete with arts and crafts activities and scary films. Special Halloween food will also be served in the Stables restaurant. Get two for the price of one on entry to Waddesdon Manor when you travel with Chiltern Railways this October.

www.chilternrailways.co.uk

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Fireworks spectacular at Beaulieu, Hampshire

31st October 2009

Beaulieu's annual Fright Night Fireworks, one of the largest in South East England, is an explosive and dynamic fireworks display that will this year 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 and 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, Berkshire

31st October 2009

Ascot Racecourse presents its fourth Family Day this year during the 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

funfair. 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

Ghost Investigation at Fort Widley, Portsmouth

31st October 2009

Take part in a Halloween investigation of this remarkable hill fort with tunnels that burrow deep within the chalk hills of Portsdown. Throughout the night enjoy a briefing on ghost hunting techniques and a demonstration of the latest ghost hunting equipment before taking part in paranormal experiments and team vigils.

www.darkencounters.co.uk

www.visitportsmouth.co.uk

After dark ghost tours of Preston Manor, Brighton

31st October, 6th and 26th November 2009

Dating back over 200 years, Preston Manor is steeped in history and is commonly known as Brighton's most haunted house. This Halloween, hear about the Victorian ghost sightings, the 1896 séance and spooky experiences up to the present day before exploring the manor for yourself.

www.prestonmanor.virtualmuseum.info

www.visitbrighton.com

Family ghost tours at Hampton Court Palace, Surrey

31st October 2009 – March 2010

Discover the spooky past of Hampton Court Palace on this ghost tour that is suitable for all the family. Hear tales of past Kings and Queens including Henry VIII and 'Bloody' Queen Mary I as you tour the darkened Palace, exploring hidden corridors and ancient artefacts. Kids can also fill out a free ghost investigators booklet along the way.

www.hrp.org.uk/hamptoncourtpalace

www.visitthames.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 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

-Ends-

For more information about visiting South East England with your family, please visit: www.funfamilydaysout.com

Fore more information about visiting South East England as a couple, please visit: www.timeforus.co.uk

For media information and images, please contact Susie Tempest or Sarah Habicht at The Saltmarsh Partnership on 020 7928 1600 or email susie@saltmarshpr.co.uk / sarah@saltmarshpr.co.uk.