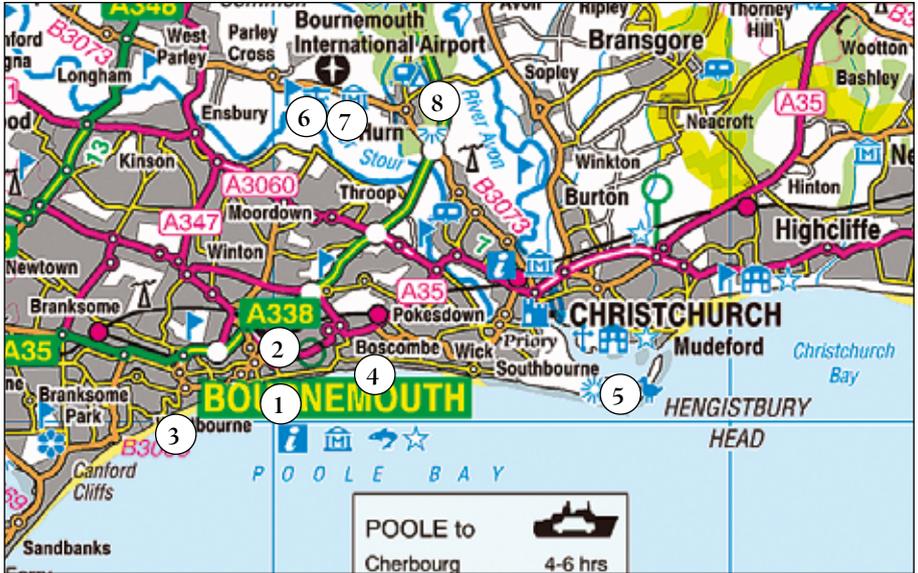


ITINERARY #16 - BOURNEMOUTH

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BOURNEMOUTH

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BOURNEMOUTH was uninhabited heathland until the early 1800s. The first house was built in 1812, but its development as a seaside resort proceeded slowly until the arrival of the railway in 1870. By 1900 the population exceeded 60,000 and it had become one of Britain's favourite holiday and retirement destinations.

Climate and Situation The combination of a year-round mild climate, southerly aspect sheltered from the north winds and a fabulous beach, are Bournemouth's secrets. The fact that it was developed from pristine heathland, regarded as useless in former times, combined with no industrial past, made it all the more attractive.

Beaches The beaches here extend from Studland in the west all the way to Calshot in the east. Despite all the development of the last 200 years, the Bourne Valley and adjacent foreshore remain highly attractive. There are fine gardens, imposing buildings, the old pier, traditional seaside entertainments and, of course, the beach itself.

Beach Huts were introduced here in 1908. They can be rented by the day, week or year. Bournemouth has over 250 for hire from Alum Chine to Southbourne. They cost from as little as £10 per day in winter to £3,650 for a whole year.

Shopping Many people come to Bournemouth primarily for its excellent retail opportunities. All manner of specialist shops, designer boutiques, jewellers, art galleries and antique shops jostle with many High Street brands to create an experience to please even the most dedicated shopaholic.

Culture & Nightlife The Bournemouth International Centre and the Pavilion Theatre host plays, musicals, pop and classical music concerts, opera and ballet all year round. There are bars, cocktail bars, old fashioned pubs, gourmet restaurants, clubs and takeaways to suit every taste. The town caters for hen weekends, culture lovers, aficionados of fine food and wine and everyone in between. It is also a very child-friendly place, with a huge range of things to do.

ORDNANCE SURVEY 1:50,000 & 1:25,000 MAPS

OS Landranger Map 195 Bournemouth & Purbeck
OS Explorer Map OL22 New Forest

BOURNEMOUTH

Bournemouth (page 292, popn. 2011, 183,491) stretches from Poole in the west to Christchurch in the east and inland to the River Frome. This large town is one of Britain's most popular seaside resorts, attracting over 4.5m visitors annually.

1. Bournemouth Beach (page 294) is one of the secrets of this success. From Sandbanks in the west to Mudeford in the east, there are uninterrupted sandy beaches for c.11mi (18km).

Bournemouth Air Festival (page 299) is held annually over a long weekend in late August. It has been voted to be "one of the world's top ten air shows." The Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Flight are the star attractions among a host of aircraft, vintage and modern. The Promenade hosts many attractions, performances and traders.

2. The Oceanarium (page 294) on Pier Approach has a huge variety of marine and fresh water species to view in a range of habitats.

Russell-Cotes Museum (page 297) overlooks the Pier. This Art Nouveau-style house contains an eclectic collection of Japanese, French, Middle Eastern and British works of art. Many depict the nude female form.

Bournemouth Pier (page 294) extends to 225m. This cast iron structure was completed in 1880 and remains as an iconic attraction. There are amusements and fine views over the beach and town.

The Pier to Pier Walk (page 294) is 2mi (3km) each way along the Promenade. There are many temptations along the way, including traditional fish and chips. Whether at the height of summer, or on a blustery winter's day, this walk is strongly recommended.

Bournemouth Balloon (page 296) is a tethered helium-filled balloon in the Lower Gardens. It ascends to 150m from where there are panoramic views all around.

The Gardens (page 295) are Bournemouth's second secret. They were first laid out in the 1840s as the Lower, Central and Upper Gardens along the length of the Bourne Valley. Others include those at Alum Chine and Boscombe.

The Arcade (page 297), at the heart of the pedestrian zone, dates from Victorian times. It hosts designer shops, jewellers and art shops. Bournemouth is famous for its retail therapy.

St Peter's Church (page 296) has a 62m steeple and a very elaborate interior. It is best known for the grave of Mary Woolstonecraft Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein* and widow of the poet Percy Shelley. **St Stephen's Church** (page 296) is most noteworthy for its Gothic revival style interior.

3. Chines (page 294) are all small ravines formed by streams flowing down the cliffs. They include Churley, Middle, Alum and Branksome Chines. They offer access to the beach from the clifftops. All are oases of tranquility away from the busy streets. **West Cliff** (page 294) is highest of the cliffs overlooking Bournemouth Beach.

4. Boscombe Pier (page 295) was first opened in 1889. The 180m long structure was reopened in 2008 after a major renovation.

Southbourne (page 299), to the east of Boscombe is less commercial and quieter than Bournemouth, but the beach is at least as nice.

Early Flying (page 298) The first British international aviation meeting took place east of Southbourne in 1910. Charles Rolls was tragically killed when his aircraft crashed.

5. Hengistbury Head (page 299, 308), at the east end of the beach, offers spectacular panoramic views over Poole Bay and Chistchurch Harbour.

6. Bournemouth Aviation Museum (page 273, 298) is sited across the road from the International Airport. It features several aircraft, aero engines and aviation artefacts. Visitors can sit in the cockpits of various jets and a helicopter.

7. Adventure Wonderland (page 260) next to the Aviation Museum, is an indoor and outdoor activity park packed full of fun things for children to do. The outdoor part is closed in winter. There are regular shows and visits from favourite characters.

8. Avon Valley Viewpoint (page 272) is off the A338 opposite the entrance to Avon Country Park and offers fine views over the valley.