

VISIT ISLES OF SCILLY 2019 PRESS PACK  
FEATURE STORY IDEAS AND TOPLINE INFORMATION

ISLES  
OF  
*Scilly*

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# ESCAPE TO THE ISLES OF SCILLY



Just 28 miles off the coast of Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly is a cluster of jewel-like islands, tucked away in the vast Atlantic Ocean. Close enough to mainland UK, yet a world apart in so many ways, these wild little isles are fringed with white sand beaches, covered in flowers and gorse, and surrounded by the glittering sea.

The ebb and flow of daily life is a little slower, more relaxed, and perfectly in tune with the seasonal nature of the isles. This is a place for escape and adventure, to swim with seals, to gaze at the stars and to take a breath of fresh, pure air. Marvel at the storms sweeping through in the winter months; bask in the sun-drenched days of summer.

*“On Scilly, hedgerows are bursting with song, there are no cars on most of the islands and limited access keeps a lid on visitor numbers... For families, it feels like a chapter from a Famous Five tale.”*

**Mark Rowe**

National Geographic Traveller

## SOME SCILLY FACTS

Among the 140 or so uninhabited islands and islets, there are five inhabited islands; **St. Mary’s, Tresco, St. Martin’s, Bryher and St. Agnes**. Each has its own distinctive character despite their close proximity.

You can island hop between all the islands in a matter of minutes.

2,200 people live on this tiny archipelago. 1,800 are based on the largest, St. Mary’s; with about 110 each on Tresco and St. Martin’s, and between 80 and 90 on Bryher and St. Agnes.

The beaches are not only some of the most beautiful in the UK, but also the finest in the world.

The entire archipelago is designated as an **AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**.

Scilly enjoys one of the mildest climates in the UK.

There’s a whole host of events each year, all distinctly Scillonian, all offering visitors a taste of real island life.

Scilly welcomes around 125,000 visitors a year – a combination of holidaymakers, day trippers from Cornwall and passengers from visiting cruise ships.



# BEGIN YOUR SCILLY STORY

Journey across to the islands and experience a hidden haven that will live long in your mind; a timeless, easy-going place where you can write your own unique story. Here are just a few ideas for you:

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## ISLAND ESCAPE

Immerse yourself in a slower pace of life on the Isles of Scilly with island hopping adventures between the five inhabited islands, all about a 20-minute boat ride away. Enjoy strolling across shell scattered beaches or discovering hidden trails through the moorland and woods.

## WILD LITTLE ISLES

Enjoy windswept coastal walks, potter along pristine white beaches and lose yourself for the day along trails and footpaths with plenty of foodie stops along the way. Wander back through history as you explore castles and ruins, or keep an eye out on a sea safari for puffins, seabirds, dolphins and porpoises.

*“The dramatic coastal scenery and sense of isolation on the Isles of Scilly make them a unique place to explore on foot.”*

**Annabelle Thorpe**  
The Times

## A SPOTLIGHT ON...

### Hell Bay Hotel and Crab shack

An award-winning hotel on the beautiful island of Bryher with an exclusive dinner option – freshly caught Bryher crab, mussels and scallops prepared and cooked to order in an intimate setting.

### St. Martin’s Observatory

New for 2019. Visit the stunning isle of St. Martin’s, a Designated Dark Skies Discovery Zone, and gaze at the stars at the new, purpose-built community observatory. A first on the Isles of Scilly and the most south-westerly observatory in the UK.

### Island Gin Distillery

New for 2019. Scilly Spirit crafts gorgeous gin from a range of botanicals. The twist? You choose your own unique blend in a workshop setting and take a bottle home.

### Creative Scilly Festival

New for 2019. Bringing the islands’ creative and cultural talent together for 13 days of island whimsy and intrigue. From 10th – 22nd May.

### Tanglewood Feasts

Exclusive Scillonian feast nights in a quirky setting. Sup on gourmet delights in small groups in the old post office, steeped in island history.



## STARLIGHT AND STORMS

Marvel at the milky way, experience a meteor shower or come for a wild night in the early season. With a new observatory on St. Martin's and endless stretches of darkness to welcome the stars, there's nowhere better to sit back and star gaze or storm watch.

## A PLACE FOR MINDFULNESS

From wild yoga to meditation, the islands are a place for calm and peace. Read, write, sketch or simply sit back and enjoy the seclusion. Scilly is safe and welcoming, the ideal place to recharge and renew you.

*"The islands enjoy their own relaxed pace of life and you'll appreciate more by doing less. Simply soak up the unique scenery and enjoy a sense of remote relaxation."*

**Wendy Johnson**  
Woman's Own

## FIND YOUR ADVENTURE

With an island playground to explore, start with a coastal boulder yomp, scramble along the shoreline, then take a dip in the sheltered coves – or out into the vast Atlantic - for a spot of wild sea swimming. Kayak to your own uninhabited island for the day and swim with friendly seals.

## A TASTE OF SCILLY

Across the isles are many artisan producers and foodie hot spots allowing you to enjoy eating like a local. From dining on freshly caught lobster to workshops to craft your own gin with your choice of botanicals, Scilly serves up a range of gourmet delights, all washed down with the sound of the waves.



## A SPOTLIGHT ON... CONTINUED

### Island Fish, Bryher

From sea to plate, watch Mark Pender, Shellfish Fisherman of the Year, cast out with his lines and nets, landing the freshest island seafood for you to enjoy.

### Island Cinema

Bring a picnic blanket and relax in pop-up settings to experience outdoor cinema shows with the isles as the backdrop.

### Vineyards

Tour the vineyards and taste the local wines produced on St. Mary's and St. Martin's in the sunshine. Holyvale Wines offers exclusive lobster lunches amongst the vines; St. Martin's Vineyard offer special taster tours.

### Longstone Lodge

The only hostel on the isles, featuring cool accommodation in family rooms through to singles, and a fully-equipped kitchen in a spectacular island setting.



#myScilly

## #MYSCILLY

Nowhere is more local than the Isles of Scilly, with family ties that go back generations. The isles are full of interesting characters, many with a story to tell and a little bit of sea water washing around their hearts. Take a visit to the museum on St. Mary's, a treasure trove filled with island history of shipwrecks, seabirds and history through the ages. There's even a complete 1877 gig that stretches up through the museum's two floors.

View #myScilly stories online at:  
[visitislesofscilly.com](https://www.visitislesofscilly.com)

### ROMANCING THE ROCK

Feel the sand between your toes and the sun on your face as you say 'I do'. Castaway on your own adventure, renew your vows, tie the knot or simply bask in the glow of a celebration for two.

*"Beautifully romantic, a place where time stands still and moments shared will last forever."*

**Jessica Way**

Exclusively British magazine

### SIMPLE PLEASURES

A family holiday without the fuss, fall into the Scilly way of life and potter along the beach with buckets and spades, explore the winding country lanes by bike, or hop on a wildlife safari boat trip. A chance to bring together every generation.

### CREATIVE ISLANDS

With so much natural inspiration, it's no wonder that the isles are filled with creatives. From artists to creators, potters to crafters, there are a host of workshops and galleries to explore. For an authentic island night out, try an evening of folk music and sea shanties, all performed by locals whilst you try a glass of island-brewed beer.



# SCILLY BUCKET LIST 2019



Eleven unmissable events and activities on the islands for the year ahead.

## WALK SCILLY

This 10-day festival from 3rd to 12th April features 40 walks and boat trips across nine islands; the five inhabited islands and four of the uninhabited ones – Samson, St. Helen’s, Tean and Nornour. All are led by the very best of expert guides and local islanders to really bring the treasures and hidden gems of Scilly to life. Energetic island hikes, sunrise strolls, wildlife discovery tours, food foraging forays, beachcombing, star gazing and top to toe rambles.

You can also catch the autumn Walk Scilly Long Weekend from 10th – 14th October for some bracing sea air and the very best of the spring programme, packed into one exciting long weekend.

*“Over a jam-packed programme of guided walks, Walk Scilly celebrates the very best that the Isles of Scilly have to offer – dark skies, delicious food, rich heritage and wonderful wildlife – all hosted by local experts.”*

**Emily Cunningham**  
Bald Hiker



## 30TH WORLD PILOT GIG CHAMPIONSHIPS

2019 promises to be the best year yet! A festival atmosphere mixed with a weekend of gig racing in the Atlantic Ocean - what’s not to love? This year it takes place on 4th-6th May with over 150 gigs and their crews descending on Scilly for an energy-fuelled weekend.

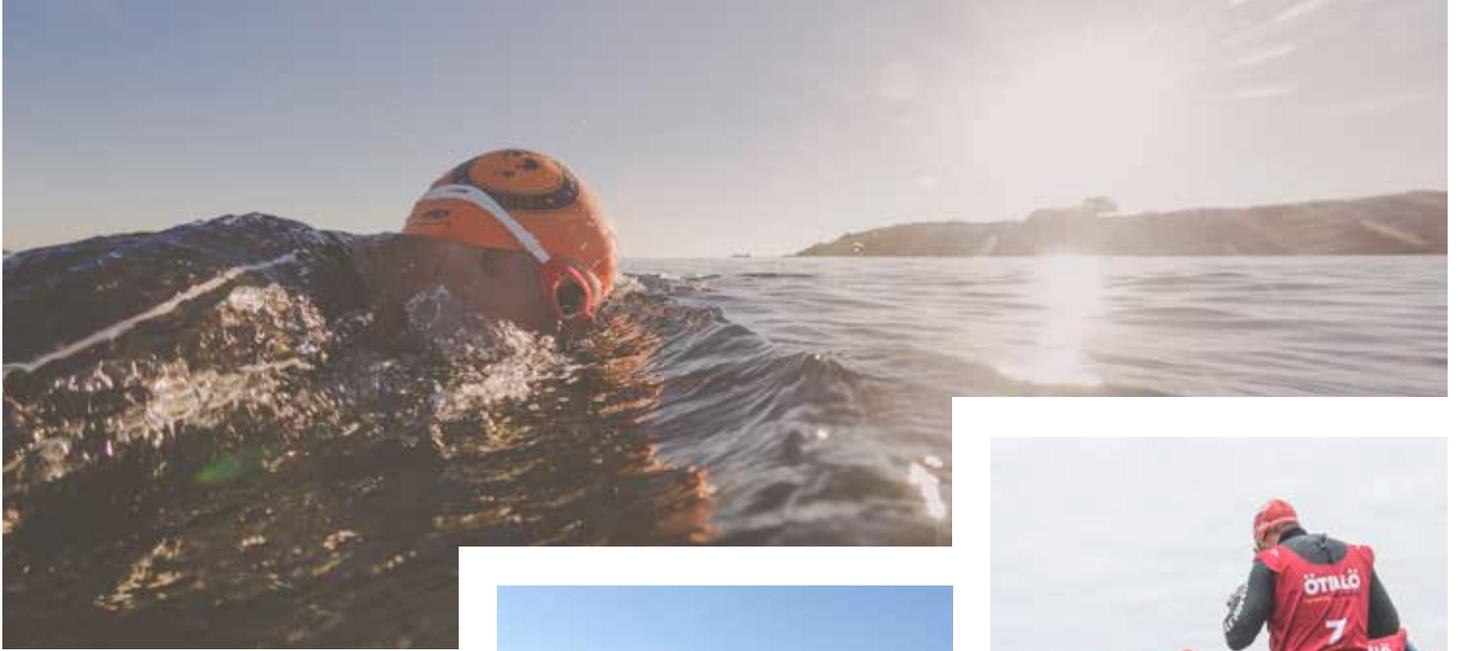
## CREATIVE SCILLY

Thirteen days of island whimsy and intrigue from 10th – 22nd May, with pop-up theatre in immersive settings, workshops with local artists and an open studio trail to explore. Have a go at stained glass painting, lino printing or simply sit back and enjoy an evening with a famous author...this festival is full of island-wide delights and surprises for all the senses.



## TRESCO ABBEY GARDEN

Tresco Abbey Garden is a botanical paradise planted among the ruins of a Benedictine priory. Its incredible 20,000 plant species have been collected from as far and wide as New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and South America. Red squirrels were introduced to the garden in 2013, and it’s also home to the Valhalla Museum – a collection of figureheads gathered from shipwrecks around the islands.



### SCILLY SWIM CHALLENGE

Have a go at traversing the islands in a single day in six swims and six walks at the Scilly Swim Challenge on 25th May. It's a brilliant way to experience the amazing open water swimming that Scilly has to offer, with an overwhelming sense of achievement at the end. The Scilly Swim Challenge returns in autumn, when participants can choose to swim and walk the islands over one or two days between 7th – 10th September.

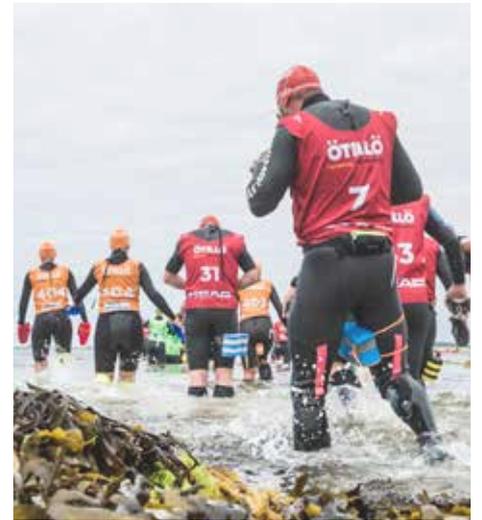
### TAKE TO THE WATER... SNORKELLING WITH SEALS AND MORE

Scilly Seal Snorkelling gives you a magical opportunity to meet some Atlantic grey seals up close and personal in the clear-blue waters off St. Martin's. These charismatic creatures often let their curiosity get the better of them, which means you might just turn around to find one gently nibbling your flipper. If you prefer life at the surface, explore the myriad coves and islets by kayak or stand-up paddleboard, or get blown away on a windsurfing or sailing excursion.



### WILDLIFE WALKS AND BOAT TRIPS

The guided walks and boat trips organised by the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust offer a window onto Scilly's stunning natural environment. There are weekly wildlife safaris in summer, taking in seals and seabirds, and regular strolls on the beach delve into the intriguing world of rock pools.



### ÖTILLÖ SWIMRUN WORLD SERIES UK QUALIFIER

In June, Scilly will once again host one of world sport's most daunting challenges: the UK leg of the Ötillö Swimrun World Series, which will see 150 teams of two tackling a course of nearly 40km, alternating between running and open-water swimming. The event takes place on 8th-9th June, with the winners qualifying for a place in the Swimrun World Championship in Sweden in September.

*“The atmosphere pre- and post-race is one of familiarity and hugs for those who reach the finish and those who don't... In the pre-race briefing, organisers talk not of conquering but immersing yourself – quite literally – in nature.”*

**Tom Levitt**  
The Guardian



## THE TASTE OF SCILLY MARQUE

Scilly has an extraordinary array of award-winning producers and foodie entrepreneurs. If you're out and about on Scilly, look out for the Taste of Scilly marque. This recognises that the produce you're buying or eating has either been grown or reared, caught or created on the islands.

*“Seafood platters are stacked with shellfish just-hoiked out of the Atlantic, followed by bittersweet mouthfuls of apple-cider sorbet.”*

**Rachel Walker**  
Metro

### LOW-TIDE EVENTS

Walking between the islands of Tresco and Bryher on an extreme spring tide is something every Scillyphile should experience. On 20th April and 1st September, you can catch a pop-up mini festival in the channel halfway across, with Tresco salt beef baps and Island Fish paella, gin and prosecco bars, live music, stalls and games.

### CHRISTMAS STREET MARKET

Join the whole community on the islands for the annual Christmas street market. A festive evening of music, foodie stalls, competitions and festive lighting, a joyous night in the run up to Christmas held on the Friday before the big day each year.

### TASTE OF SCILLY

Taste of Scilly, the festival that has foodies flocking to the Isles of Scilly, is back with a month-long celebration of the very best in food and drink from across the islands. Running throughout September, the programme is packed with events sharing the unique low-food miles, slow-food culture of the archipelago. Savour pop-up beach barbecues, lobster feasts, foodie masterclasses, farm tours, evening supper boats and Taste of Scilly cider and ale festivals as well as the unique island hopping foodie safari suppers, back by popular demand this year.

For more details and a full listing of events, go to:

[visitislesofscilly.com](https://www.visitislesofscilly.com)





## TRAVELLING TO SCILLY

Getting to Scilly by small plane or passenger ferry is all part of the adventure.

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You can fly to St. Mary's with Isles of Scilly Travel from Land's End, Newquay and Exeter airports six days a week, Monday to Saturday, and enjoy breathtaking aerial views of the Cornish coastline and the archipelago. Skybus departs year-round from Land's End and Newquay and from March to November from Exeter. You are in the air just 20 minutes from Land's End, 30 minutes from Newquay and one hour from Exeter. National and European connections are available from Newquay and Exeter airports.

Or you can opt to travel by boat and head to Penzance harbour to board the Scillonian passenger ferry, which sails to Scilly up to seven days a week from March to November, with a journey time of two hours and 45 minutes. Sailing around the Cornish coast offers wonderful views from the deck, and it's also a great way to spot sea life, with the ferry regularly escorted by pods of dolphins.

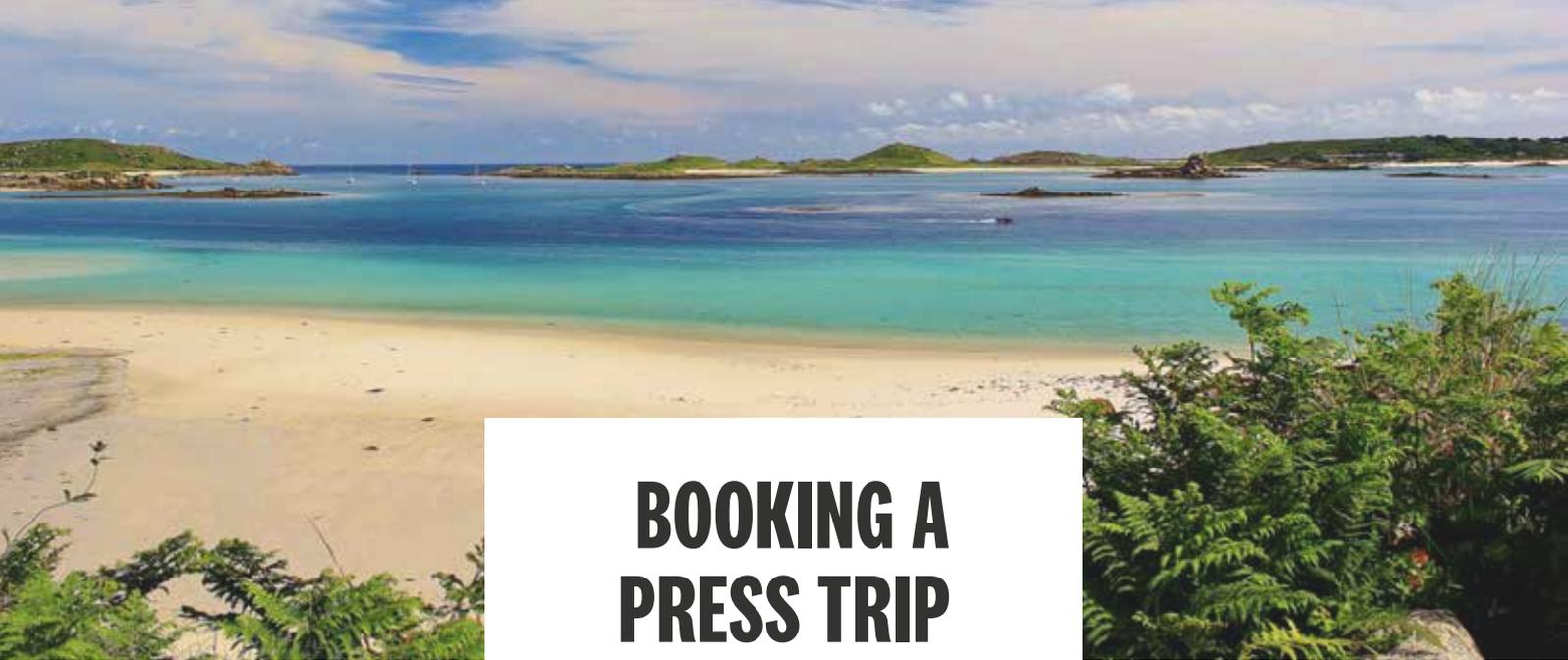
For more travel information, visit:

[islesofscilly-travel.co.uk](https://www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk)

*“You can take local bulbs home with you to recreate the peace of the islands in your balcony box. A reminder of a place where – wherever you are standing – you can always see the sea.”*

**Mariam Ahmed**  
Stylist magazine





# BOOKING A PRESS TRIP

The Islands' Partnership (Visit Isles of Scilly) hosts a limited number of press trips to the islands each year.

Skybus flights from Land's End, Newquay or Exeter airports or tickets on the Scillonian passenger ferry from Penzance harbour, are provided by Isles of Scilly Travel. Travel is complimentary for the journalist and a guest. Decisions on travel discounts for any further guests are based on the angle of the feature. Accommodation on the islands is tailored to the focus of the piece.

If needed, we'll aim to negotiate press train tickets from London Paddington with GWR, though these are not guaranteed. In addition, we'll pull together a suggested itinerary for your stay.

Complimentary travel, accommodation and activities are dependent on mentions in the piece and credits in the fact box. The URL for the visitor information website, [visitislesofscilly.com](http://visitislesofscilly.com), must also be included in the fact box.

The Visit Isles of Scilly website provides the definitive guide to the islands:

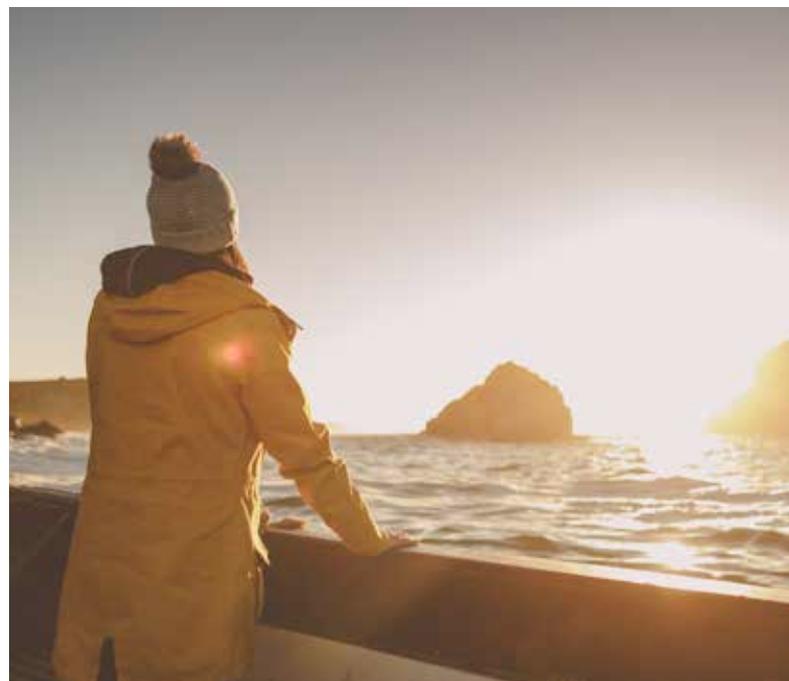
[visitislesofscilly.com](http://visitislesofscilly.com)

A selection of images can be found on the Visit Isles of Scilly Flickr account:

[flickr.com/photos/visitislesofscilly/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/visitislesofscilly/albums)

Credit the images with either the name of the photographer or Visit Isles of Scilly.

Travel to and from Scilly is weather-dependent. Flights can sometimes be affected by low-lying cloud or strong winds. Sailings can also be cancelled due to bad weather conditions. If bad weather is forecast, it may be advisable to reschedule your press trip.



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Journalists are asked to post on social media during the trip, with links to Visit Isles of Scilly.



**YOU CAN VIEW THE 2019 ISLES OF SCILLY GUIDE [HERE](#)**