

BUCKLER'S HARD

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

With so much spectacular scenery and history at Buckler's Hard, it can be hard to know where to begin. Our suggested itinerary will guide you through the main attractions...

ARRIVAL

Feeling peckish after the journey? Start your day with a hot drink and cheeky slice of cake at the **Captain's Cabin Tea Rooms**. If the sun is shining, grab a seat on the terrace; you may be visited by one of the friendly robins!

As you leave the tea rooms, take a moment to breathe in the peaceful atmosphere. Directly ahead, you'll see the **apple orchard**. Beginning with beautiful blooms in spring, the fruit slowly ripens and is picked each autumn to make Beaulieu Apple Juice.

Top tip: visitor toilets are located just behind the tea rooms. Make a pit stop now to avoid walking back up the high street later.

MARITIME MUSEUM

Beside the apple orchard you'll find the **Maritime Museum & Buckler's Hard Story**. Originally the village inn, the museum is now the portal for your journey through time. Step inside to discover the village's shipbuilding history, smuggling secrets, wartime stories and more. Don't forget to pre-book your tickets in advance for the best price.

P.S. like that other famous time-travelling device, the museum is much bigger on the inside than it looks on the outside!

Highlights include:

- **Puckle Gun** - one of the more unusual artefacts in the museum, this prototype machine gun held both round and square bullets.
- **HMS Beaulieu** - keep a look out for a ship called *Beaulieu* while you're in the museum.
- **Model of Buckler's Hard village** - get a bird's eye view of Buckler's Hard as it was on 3 June 1803. Look at the height of the wood stacks against the windows of the cottages, and compare the height of the ships under construction to the terrace roofline. Think back to this when you visit the high street later!
- **The New Inn** - this reconstruction of the village pub is in its original location and shows an evening in the 1790s. Unsubstantiated stories suggest the inn was once a centre for smuggling!

- **The Labourer's Cottage** – see the cramped conditions that a labourer's family would have lived in.
- **SS Persia treasures** – discover the tragic story of SS Persia, sunk by a German U-boat in WWI, and see some of the treasures that were salvaged from the wreck, including rubies, amethysts and moonstones.
- **Nelson's baby clothes** – three of the ships that were built at Buckler's Hard took part in the Battle of Trafalgar, including Nelson's favourite Agamemnon. View artefacts from the great man himself, including his baby clothes.

Junior shipmates: Pick up a quiz trail to join shipyard cats, Buckle and Bailey, on their tour of Buckler's Hard. Plus, get hands-on training for life in Nelson's Navy: learn to tie a bowline and have a go at caulking a seam.

VILLAGE HIGH STREET

Armed with your new shipbuilding knowledge, turn right out of the museum and follow the gravel pathway to the high street to see where it all took place.

This wide street would once have provided storage space for the stacks of timber used in shipbuilding, and if you visit at low tide you can still see the remains of some of the wooden launchways where *Euryalus* and *Swiftsure* were built.

Think back to the model of the village you saw in the Maritime Museum; compare that industrious scene with today's peaceful view down to the Beaulieu River.

Remember that Buckler's Hard is still a **living village** - most of the houses you see are still occupied and some are available to rent. If you're accompanied by a four-legged friend, please keep them on a lead throughout the village.

Take a seat on a bench to admire the view before making your way onwards.

Junior shipmates: the wide-open space of the village is the perfect place to let off some steam!

SHIPWRIGHT'S COTTAGE

Part way down on the left hand side of the high street, you'll find the red door of the **Shipwright's Cottage**. Step inside to see how shipwright Thomas Burlace and his family would have lived in the 18th century.

As you explore the cottage, think back to the cramped Labourer's Cottage you saw in the Maritime Museum. Shipwrights were skilled craftsmen, so earned an above-average salary. Although the cottage is still cosy, the shipwright actually lived in relative luxury, with more spacious accommodation and luxury items. Can you spot any?

ST MARY'S CHAPEL

Turn left out of the Shipwright's Cottage and head towards the bell that marks the door to **St Mary's Chapel**.

Still regularly used for services of worship, this unassuming building was once a residence and then became the village school, before being converted into a 40-seat chapel.

Tucked away beside the altar, peer through the viewing window to see a **hidden cellar**, believed to have been used by 18th century smugglers.

Top tip: If you're fascinated by the smuggling cache, you can find out more about smuggling on the Beaulieu River in a special display in the Maritime Museum.

RIVER CRUISE (SEASONAL)

If you're visiting between Easter and September, continue down the high street to Buckler's Hard pier to hop aboard a 30 minute **river cruise** (extra charge applies).

As you admire the scenery and tranquillity, remember that the Beaulieu River has not always been so quiet! From the sounds of 18th century shipbuilding to the construction of Mulberry Harbour segments during World War II, the river has seen plenty of activity. Listen to the informative commentary to hear more of its fascinating history.

Junior shipmates: can you spot any of the local river wildlife? You might even be lucky enough to spot some of the resident seals!

DUKE'S BATH HOUSE

Often overlooked by visitors, turn right after disembarking the river cruise (or left at the bottom of the high street if you've come from St Mary's Chapel), and follow the path for approx. 50 metres until you reach the **Duke's Bath House**.

Now a holiday cottage (and not accessible to the public), George, Duke of Montagu built this charming thatched cottage in 1760 for the use of his son, who suffered from arthritis. Read the information panel to discover the property's secret healing powers.

SHIPWRIGHT WORKSHOP

Wander back past the launchways on the banks of the river and make your way to the **Shipwright Workshop**.

Constructed using timber from the Beaulieu Estate, this replica 18th century workshop blends perfectly into its historical surroundings but was actually hand-raised in 2014. The construction was the work of months of hard work by craftsmen and students, and even small touches weren't overlooked. The building is glazed with special 18th century replica glass, tiled with reclaimed tiles, and hidden away under the studs in the wall plate there are coins for prosperity and luck.

The workshop is used by a variety of craftsmen during the year, so is not open to visitors (but feel free to peek in the windows!)

DEPARTURE

Before you depart, pop into the Master Builder's House Hotel for a meal or refreshments to keep you going on your onward journey. Their garden tables offer fantastic views of the Beaulieu River.

Then amble back up the high street and take one more lingering look back at the Beaulieu River before heading onto your next New Forest adventure.

Enjoy your journey back through the beautiful New Forest – remember that we share our roads with free-roaming horses, cows and donkeys, so please drive with care.

EXTEND YOUR DAY

If you have extra time, extend your visit to Buckler's Hard with a New Forest walk to see the oak trees that might once have been used for ship construction in their native habitat.

RIVERSIDE WALK TO BEAULIEU

This 2¼ mile route starts from Buckler's Hard and winds through woodland, grassland and salt marsh before ending at the village of Beaulieu, home to the Beaulieu visitor attraction with its world-renowned National Motor Museum as well as a variety of charming shops. The route takes approx. 1 hour each way.

Talk to one of our team for more details or download the route from the Beaulieu River website at beaulieuriver.co.uk.

For a full list of New Forest walks visit thenewforest.co.uk.

This itinerary is for guidance only. Exhibits are occasionally removed from display for maintenance, so if you'd like to see something particular please check with us before your visit.

Due to the historic nature of our buildings, some areas of the attraction are unsuitable for wheelchair users. Please see our accessibility page on our website for more details.
