

VisitGuernsey launches five new historical routes ahead of the 80th anniversary of D-Day

In addition to the new routes, guests can explore newly opened bunkers, take an adrenaline-racing historical RIB tour and encounter a whole host of ways to discover the Islands' fascinating past.



Imagery available [here](#).

April 2024: 2024, which marks the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings in 1944, is set to be particularly significant for the Islands, which were occupied by Nazi forces between 1940 and 1945. Alongside new historical routes on the VisitGuernsey app, a number of bunkers that were previously inaccessible to the public are set to be uncovered for the first time, with other historical newcomers to include an adrenaline-pumping Towers and Bunkers RIB tour. From cycling around the islands' World War II sites to exploring a German underground hospital, visitors looking for a historical adventure in 2024 to commemorate this significant anniversary should look no further than the Islands of Guernsey.

New historical routes with the VisitGuernsey app

On Monday 22nd April, five new routes will join the [VisitGuernsey app](#) as part of its new History & Heritage section. The three walking itineraries (Coastal Memories, Liberation, and Invasion), cycling itinerary (Occupation) and driving itinerary (Fortifications) will take travellers to some of the most historically significant sites on the islands. Directions will be clearly available on the VisitGuernsey app, and all routes will have information boards set up en-route with QR codes linking to further details so that users can be truly immersed in the site that they are visiting. Those using the app will have access to video content of local residents who lived through the occupation, bringing sites to life with real-life stories of human courage and experience. Also accessible on the app will be 'now and then' images, which will showcase the dramatic contrast between World War II and the present day.

Newly accessible World War II bunkers

Travellers looking to dig deeper into the Islands' history can do so this year with a visit to one of the hundreds of World War II bunkers which make Guernsey and its island group the most fortified place in the world. In 2024, many bunkers that were previously inaccessible to the public will be available to explore at special open days and events. This year, local volunteer organisation [Festung](#), which works to restore and safeguard the Islands' bunkers, is applying to renovate the German site at Fort Hommet, making this World War II relic more accessible to visitors and bringing Guernsey's World War history to life. Visitors on Saturday 8 June can attend Festung's European Bunker Day to witness Fort Hommet being reopened to the public, whereas guests on Saturday 5 October can take part in a family-friendly Fort Hommet Headland Open Day event, more details of which will be released soon. Other events include the Batterie Mirus Open Day on Saturday 20 July and Flak Battery Dolman Open Day on Saturday 17 August. All events are free of charge, and there is no need to book.

History-focused tours

Those keen to explore the Islands' history on a guided tour can do so both on foot and by sea. Accredited guide Amanda Johns, founder of [Tours of Guernsey](#), takes guests on captivating historical journeys, with itineraries including shorter bunker visits as well as four-hour 'Occupation Explorer' and 'Highlights of Guernsey' tours. Amanda provides visitors with deep insight into the sites visited and with plenty of opportunity to ask questions and stop to explore the extraordinary coastal views. Those preferring to explore by boat can embark on Island RIB Voyages' new [Towers and Bunkers](#) expedition, which takes sailors down Guernsey's coastline, offering exceptional views of the island's formidable sea-facing defences.

Museums and historical landmarks

Guests can travel back in time at the [German Occupation Museum](#), which includes an authentic recreation of a street during the occupation period. Alternatively, travellers can immerse themselves in the past at [La Vallette Underground Military Museum](#): set in underground tunnels dating back to the German occupation, there are a wide variety of exhibits and artefacts on the Islands' role in both the First and the Second World Wars. At the [German Underground Hospital](#), visitors can explore a haunting network of tunnels used as both an ammunition store and hospital in the 1940s, whereas at [Castle Cornet](#), guests can explore a different side to Guernsey's past, discovering the 800-year-old castle and its role in French and British conflict since the 1200s. Highlights include encountering historical re-enactments and hearing the Noonday Gun, which fires daily amidst music.

Liberation Day celebrations

79 years since the occupation ended, Islanders come together each 9 May to celebrate their liberation in 1945. Visitors to the Islands during this public holiday – [Liberation Day](#) – can enjoy parades, wreath laying, music, a cavalcade and fireworks. Charmingly, island residents aged 80 or over who lived through the occupation period can sign up to receive a [hamper](#) of Guernsey goodies to highlight the sacrifices made by the war generation for the Islands' freedom.

How to get there

With flight times from the UK as little as 40 minutes and ferry sailings from three hours, visitors can opt to take the ferry over the Channel from Poole or Portsmouth or fly directly from the UK with Aurigny airlines. [Aurigny](#) operate year-round direct flights to Guernsey from London, East Midlands, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Exeter, Southampton and Dublin. New flight routes to Guernsey from London Stansted, London City and Liverpool launched in March and April 2024, with new routes from Edinburgh and Cornwall Newquay to launch in May and July respectively. Return flights start at £109.98 per person. www.aurigny.com

[Condor Ferries](#) operate fast and traditional ferries from Poole and Portsmouth to Guernsey year-round. Ferries depart from Guernsey's St Peter Port to Sark, Alderney, and Herm at multiple times throughout the day during the summer. Return pedestrian fares start at £90 per person. www.condorferries.co.uk

For more information on the Islands of Guernsey, visit [here](#).

For more information on exploring the history of the Islands of Guernsey, visit [here](#).

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