



Welcome to Watchet

Come and watch the boats, walk the beaches, explore the rockpools, take a steam railway trip, linger round the galleries, listen to the fiddle players, drink cider, sample the cafes, see the carnival, dance at the music festival, take a fishing trip, explore the museums, find gifts in the local shops and a lot more!

Watchet heralds from a time when Vikings raided and King Canute had coins cast from his royal mint. Kings, queens, murderous knights, pirates, saints and even a famous singing sailor have their stories to tell here. The wild beauty of its coastline is untouched and ancient ammonite fossils lie on the shore, waiting to be found along long, empty, windswept, rock pool beaches.

The maritime history in Watchet pervades every part of the town, from the steam railway brought here by Brunel, to the current Marina. Many an afternoon can easily be whiled away watching activity on the boats and in the dry dock. Or searching for sea glass and ammonites on the beaches. Time has no meaning here, so whether you choose to explore every one of the nine pubs, or prefer a classic cream tea or fish and chips straight from the paper on the quayside, whether you are exploring the rock pools, strolling along the ancient mineral line taking a steam train to a nearby town, or visiting the mosaic or well at St Decumans mentioned in the poem, written here by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in the Rime of the Ancient Mariner still hold true: 'the fair breeze blew, the white foam flew and the furrow followed free.'



By Road

From the East: Leave the M5 at Junction 23 (Bridgwater) and follow the signs for Minehead (A39). After about 16 miles turn right following the signs to Watchet.

From the West: Leave the M5 at Junction 25 (Taunton) and follow the signs to the A358 towards Minehead. At Williton turn right and then left following the signs to Watchet (about 18 miles from the motorway).

From Exeter: Follow the A396.

By Rail

National Rail connection to either Bridgwater or Taunton then by bus. Local steam and diesel trains to Watchet from Bishops Lydeard and Minehead on The West Somerset Railway - www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk.

By Bus

From Bridgwater: Service No. 14 - www.firstgroup.com.

From Taunton: Service No. 28 - www.firstgroup.com
Service No. 18 - www.webberbus.com.

By Sea

Tidal access twice a day. Mooring berths available by enquiry to Watchet Harbour Marina - www.watchetharbour.co.uk.

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www.visit-watchet.co.uk
www.watchettowncouncil.org



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WELCOME TO WATCHET



COME AND VISIT US

Harbour and Marina

Come and visit our ancient harbour, with a new Marina built at the millennium. Look at the wonderful, eclectic selection of boats and walk out along the quay to the lighthouse. You can also book fishing trips out of Watchet.

West Somerset Railway

Travel on Britain's longest heritage steam railway to the picturesque station of Watchet. At the station there is a lot to see including a second-hand bookshop, a pagoda with a pictorial display and the Jubilee Geological Wall.

Market House Museum

With a wonderful collection of artefacts and documents this delightful little museum is a must. There is so much to find out about the stories and history of Watchet. Open daily from Easter to 31st October 10.30-16.30. Admission FREE.

Boat Museum

An evocative and intriguing display of local flatners and related items. The museum is literally packed to the rafters with displays and information, including boats where the children can play. Open daily from Easter to 30th September 14.00-16.00. Admission FREE.

Contains Art

Art gallery and studios in converted shipping containers on the quayside. A wide range of exhibitions and installations from local artists and those from further afield. See the artists in their studios and talk to them about their work. Usually open Wednesday to Sunday Easter to October 11:00-16:00. Admission FREE.



Heritage trail

Take a trip back through the history of this ancient harbour town, exploring Watchet's fascinating past as you take a walk around the town. You can pick up a copy of the map from the Market House Museum, the Tourist Information Centre or download it at www.visit-watchet.co.uk.



Two beaches

Watchet is lucky enough to have not one but two beaches. To the east of the harbour you'll find Helwell Bay, rich in fossils - ammonites, bi-valves and 'Devil's Toe Nails'. West Street beach has a wonderful old boating lake, extraordinary rock formations with quartz and alabaster running through, as well as plenty of rock pools to explore and if you're very lucky, you might even spot our resident Peregrine Falcons.

Antiques and vintage shops

Watchet is teeming with interesting independent shops to browse around, full of antiques, vintage, craft and gifts. Perfect for that quirky birthday present, or to find something to remember your visit by.

Cafes, pubs and restaurants

Eat and drink to your heart's content in one of Watchet's many cafes, pubs and restaurants. Some of the pubs have a garden to laze away a summer's afternoon, or sit around a glowing fire in the frosty winter months, often to the sound of fiddle players or sea shanties being sung. For a full listing of pubs and cafes go to: www.visit-watchet.co.uk.

Places to stay

Watchet has lots of lovely places to make your time here last, from self catering fisherman's cottages to cosy traditional B&Bs and Michelin Guide boutique B&Bs. Find out more at: www.visit-watchet.co.uk.

Wonderful walks

There are plenty of walks around Watchet, from hardy day long rambles along the Coleridge Way or the West Somerset Coastal Path, to 1-2 hour circular saunters in the surrounding countryside, or the heritage trail around town. For details on walks visit the Tourist Information Centre or download at www.visit-watchet.co.uk.

Did you know?

- The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, written by Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was inspired by Watchet.
- Yankee Jack sang sea shanties on a Yankee ship in the American Civil war and brought the songs home to Watchet. His songs were collected by Cecil Sharp who was the founding father of the folklore revival in the 20th Century.
- 1649 was the year Charles I walked to the scaffold in a waistcoat of Watchet blue. Queen Catherine, or Queen Catur as she is known in Watchet, came to Watchet to buy the same cloth for her husband Charles II years later.
- In the 17th Century, brave Watchet Sailor George Eskott tricked and captured a notorious and bloodthirsty pirate gang, led by the wicked Thomas Salkeld, in their stronghold on Lundy Island. Apparently George fought the pirates with only a shovel, but managed to break Thomas Salkeld's arm and win!
- Ammonite fossils that can be found on both of Watchet's beaches are 200 million years old, from a time when shallow tropical seas covered much of the South West.

Have you?

- ✓ Found an ammonite fossil?
- ✓ Heard a sea shanty?
- ✓ Seen the lighthouse?
- ✓ Walked the mineral line?
- ✓ Found 'pirate treasure' (sea glass) on West Beach?
- ✓ Sampled local cider?
- ✓ Taken a steam train ride?
- ✓ Visited Market House Museum?
- ✓ Sat on Yankee Jack's knee?
- ✓ Taken a fishing trip?
- ✓ Talked to the artists at Contains Art?
- ✓ Been to the Boat Museum?
- ✓ Visited the shops on Swain Street?
- ✓ Eaten an ice cream on the Esplanade?
- ✓ Looked around the galleries?
- ✓ Watched the sunset with Fish & Chips on the West Quay?
- ✓ Played in the Memorial Ground play park?
- ✓ Played skittles in a pub skittle alley?
- ✓ Found presents for your friends and family in the local shops?
- ✓ Walked the heritage trail?
- ✓ Chosen your favourite boat in Watchet Marina?
- ✓ Visited St. Decuman's Holy Well?
- ✓ Found the Ancient Mariner?