

Swansea Bay

YEAR OF THE SEA MAGAZINE

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COUNTRYFILE'S

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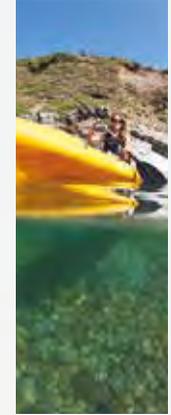
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Why

Sean Fletcher

loves

Swansea Bay



SEAN FLETCHER IS A BROADCASTER AND JOURNALIST, A REPORTER ON BBC COUNTRYFILE, A PRESENTER ON ITV'S GOOD MORNING BRITAIN AND A SELF-CONFESSED GOWER ADDICT!

‘We love Swansea, Mumbles and Gower, returning as often as we can...’

... for a ‘get away-from-it-all’ that’s ‘not-too-far-away’ family break. We’re there in a couple of hours - with the rest of the time to have fun and unwind. So, why do we keep coming back - 20 years after our first visit together? After all, as a Countryfile presenter, I’m fortunate enough to have visited beautiful land and seascapes the length and breadth of Britain.

Our initial draw was and is Gower. Beautiful things really do come in small packages and although only 19 miles long, this princess of peninsulas has craggy clifftops, golden sands, rolling hillsides and,

of course, the most captivating of coastlines!

We’re an active bunch and there’s a lot to do here, from surfing, stand-up paddleboarding, or kayaking around the coast, to walking some (or all!) of the 39 miles of the Gower Coast Path - which is our favourite thing to do.

But in addition to the great outdoors of Gower, when even our nature-loving kids feel the need for water parks or exploring a museum; Swansea and Mumbles are just around the corner. My wife and I are both keen runners and the view from along the Promenade between

Swansea and Mumbles (not to mention the lungfuls of fresh air) certainly beat pounding the streets of London!

We've always been struck by how friendly the Swansea people are, you get a cheery 'hello, how are you?' as you run past - it's all part of the welcoming feel of Swansea Bay - which is one of the reasons we keep returning.

We've also fallen in love with Mumbles (we're not the first!) and can't wait to try the new restaurants on the Prom - it's good to see an area sensitively developed to the benefit of the destination as a whole. Our kids used to love exploring the medieval Castle - but now they're older, a large pizza and a whopper of an ice-cream sundae have greater appeal!

But we don't like being inside for too long and there are so many opportunities to indulge in our preferred pastime - walking. The Gower Coast Path, the Gower Way



2018 is the Year of the Sea and across Wales we will be celebrating our seaside and coastal culture. Nowhere more so than Swansea Bay! The Sea is in our past, present and future and our captivating coastline is our pride and joy. We wanted to push the boat out, so we hope you enjoy our special Year of the Sea magazine.
#SeaSwanseaBay

(for the more adventurous) and a host of maintained country footpaths that criss-cross the Peninsula. But if you just want a gentle stroll to help walk off that ice-cream sundae, we can recommend the coast path from Bracelet Bay to Langland with its lovely views.

2018 is a good time to #SeaSwanseaBay, it is the Year of the Sea after all - and there's no better place to enjoy all things coastal!

Beach Safari

Commenting on TripAdvisor's choice of 'best beaches', The Independent remarked, perhaps tongue-in-cheek, that the list was 'packed full of glamorous destinations: South Africa, the Seychelles, Turks and Caicos, Hawaii, Mexico and err... **Gower, Wales**'. Why the surprise?



#BlueFlag30



Two in the Top Ten!



Rhossili Bay has been voted the third best beach in the UK and Three Cliffs Bay is number eight! Based on TripAdvisor customer reviews from around the globe! Gower Power!



A trip along the coastline confirms what many beach aficionados already know: that this part of the world compares with the very best. Start at the heart of things at **Swansea Bay**. The city's 'long and splendid curving shore' (Dylan Thomas's words) is bookended by Swansea Marina (which flies the Blue Flag) at one end and Mumbles at the other. You can walk or cycle the entire length of the prom (five miles if you're counting). But it's worth stopping off en route at 360 Beach and Watersports, which lays on all kinds of beachy activities (everything from volleyball to kite surfing).

Mumbles is Swansea's swanky little neighbour, nicknamed the 'Monaco of Wales' because of the Catherine Zeta-Jones connection. It's awash with cafés, bistros and boutiques



as well as deck chairs, buckets and spades and the neat little Pier Beach. The pier itself, which is being returned to its former glory, is popular for fishing and promenading.

Bracelet Bay, just around the rocky headland, is a Blue Flag/Seaside Award beach.

Langland Bay is the first of the Gower Peninsula's sheltered, south-facing beaches. Its golden sands, perfectly framed between two headlands, could well be one of those charming belle-époque Breton beaches (it even has a delightful row of period beach huts).





It's a Blue Flag/Seaside Award beach popular with families and surfers.

A short hop across the headland from Langland, **Caswell Bay** offers more of the same (including the Blue Flag/Seaside Award) but with a slightly wilder feel. Pristine Gower views come as standard on this sand

and shingle surfing beach. Take a tip from the locals and enjoy it out of season - it's in a sunny, sheltered spot.

Swap sand between your toes for walking boots and explore Bishop's Wood Nature Reserve, running inland from the beach.



Next comes **Three Cliffs Bay**. It gives local girl Katherine Jenkins 'the feeling of being hugged'. It's certainly easy to get warm and emotional about this dreamy spot, where sands are punctuated by a curious trio of triangular crags.



Above is a wilderness of grassy, shifting dunes that almost envelop the remains of Pennard Castle.

It's no surprise that **Oxwich** is a Gower favourite. Easy access plus three miles of sand backed by extensive and exceptional dunes - an important National Nature Reserve - guarantee popularity. As a bonus, there's picturesque Oxwich Castle and a beautiful walk through oak and ash woods to the headland of Oxwich Point.

A few miles further west there's **Port Eynon**. As you stroll through its whitewashed cottages to the beach it's easy to imagine its salty past as a haunt of smugglers and oyster fishermen. It's popular with the watersports crowd as well as for all the usual beachy attractions. Quality is assured: it's a Blue Flag/Seaside Award beach.

Rhossili is Gower's drama queen, where the peninsula ends on a high - a vast, west-facing beach unfolding

beneath a steep, windy headland. Rhossili's trophy cabinet brims with 'best beach' awards. As local hotelier Adrian Short remarks: 'It's become a figurehead location for Wales ... there's a certain mystique about it'. And if that's not enough, the headland ends at Worm's Head, a spectacular promontory accessible at low tide.

Our journey ends at **Llangennith**, Rhossili's western neighbour and probably Wales's top surfing spot. It's a laid-back place dotted with VW campervans, a sure sign that the surf here is something special. It's also very family-friendly and backed by extensive dunes.



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Hug the COAST

It's a bucket-list must-do during our Year of the Sea. We're talking walking - a short stretch or the entire glorious 39 miles of the Gower Coast Path. You'll be tripping over accolades.

For its size, Gower must be the most praised and protected part of Britain, with over 30 wildlife and nature reserves, almost 40 conservation areas and a wealth of best-beach 'Oscars'. What's more, 26 miles of the coast is in the safe hands of the National Trust. We can't cover the entire 39 miles here, but for starters you won't do better than these two very different walks.

Smugglers and Shipwrecks, Seascapes and Sea-serpents

Start at the National Trust's Visitor Centre perched on **Rhossili's headland**, an exhilarating, good-to-be-alive spot. Seabirds and hang-gliders share the skies. You'll be blown away by what's at ground level.

Hike down to the endless beach to see the skeletal remains of the *Helvetia*, shipwrecked in 1887. Then, if the tides are in your favour, take the sensational detour to **Worm's Head**, the narrow promontory that spears into the waves like a massive sea-monster. ('Wurm' is Norse for Dragon!)

Keep your eyes open for dolphins and porpoises

Round the headland and you're soon above sandy **Mewslade Bay**, tucked in snugly beneath the cliffs and a popular surfing spot.





Untamed Gower comes next, with grandstand views from the clifftop path as it tiptoes above the peninsula's most rugged, rock-bound stretch of coastline. You're walking in ancient footsteps, for beneath there's **Paviland Cave**. It's Gower's hidden superstar, one of Europe's earliest known burial sites where the famous prehistoric 'Red Lady' (actually a male skeleton) was found. Don't be tempted to visit, though - this one's best viewed from the sea.

In comparison, quirky **Culver Hole** on the approach to Port Eynon is a relative youngster. Originally thought to have been a medieval dovecote, it was later used by smugglers to store contraband. Nearby are the headland ruins of The Salthouse, a smugglers' HQ reputedly destroyed by a great storm in 1703.



Journey's end is pretty, pristine **Port Eynon**, a characterful sea-village nowadays far removed from its former reputation as a swashbuckling smugglers' haunt. You've walked around eight miles from Rhossili, so you deserve a bit of R&R in the suitably seafaring ambience of The Ship Inn (try its award-winning Gower Brewery ales).



Leave only footprints

Play Safe! See page 52

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

GOWER'S ALTER EGO RESIDES ON THE NORTH COAST. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH IS REMARKABLE. SOUTH-FACING HEADLANDS AND SANDY COVES GIVE WAY TO MOODY, LOW-LYING MARSHLANDS, SANDBANKS AND SALTINGS, AS YOU'LL SEE FROM THIS WALK (AROUND SIX MILES ONE WAY).



Head west from 13th-century Llanrhidian Church alongside huge, haunting marshlands riddled with water channels, a prolific habitat for wintering birds. Sheep and ponies like it too - the former are reared for succulent saltmarsh lamb.

You'll pass beside Weobley Castle, a boxy 13th-century fortified manor house that commands spectacular views across Llanrhidian Marsh and

the Loughor Estuary to the distant Brecon Beacons.

Continue westwards, skirting the village of Llanmadoc, for Gower at its most tranquil: the dune-backed beach of Whiteford Sands that unfolds northwards to Whiteford Point at the mouth of the Loughor. It's almost a desert island.



For more walking routes,
including downloadable guides:
visitswanseabay.com/walking

Our Ultimate Packing Checklist



Swimwear

Blue flag beaches mean lovely clean water. Grab your swimmers and come on in!



Suncream

We want you to enjoy our award winning beaches, so don't forget the suncream.



Camera

Amazing coastal views guaranteed - take them home and relive the memories!



Flip flops

Is any beach day complete without them?



Umbrella

Handy for the rain (and the sun and wind!). You could get them all in one day here in Swansea Bay!



Phone

Make your friends jealous! Check in and share your pics. #SeaSwanseaBay



Raincoat

Come prepared and don't let the weather stand in your way!



Sunhat

Make sure the only thing that makes you hot under the collar are our stunning views!



Sunglasses

Don't squint! Our beautiful coastline needs to be seen in all its glory.



Wellies

It might rain - even in August. Be prepared to make a splash, through puddles and mud.



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ADVENTURES

That won't cost the earth

Some things are worth looking after. Three sustainable tourism specialists give us the lowdown on serving up big coastal experiences with tiny environmental impacts in Swansea Bay and Gower.





Ground Level

“We want to share Gower with as many people as possible, while also preserving what makes the place so special. It’s an approach to tourism that brings benefits for both visitors and the local community.”



From beginnings teaching sustainable construction skills to vulnerable people, social enterprise company Down to Earth has expanded into providing eco-friendly outdoor experiences for everyone. For founder Mark McKenna, it’s all about getting back to nature.



A classic day with us could involve tree climbing, stick carving, fire lighting, maybe building an earth oven or a stone wall. It’s a very holistic way of being outdoors. We run our tourism business from two centres on Gower we built ourselves, incorporating all the best renewable technology.

We believe that sustainable tourism is about everything we do having a positive impact on the environment. All our buildings have green roofs so they increase biodiversity, our paths are made from cockleshells from north Gower, a waste product that we reuse, our energy is renewable and we only build with natural Welsh materials.



Back to Nature

For Andrew Price, owner and head instructor of Dryad Bushcraft, Gower is the ideal environment for teaching survival skills with a sustainable twist.

We specialise in bushcraft and wilderness survival skills, which include nature awareness, plant identification and foraging. We also train people in the safe use of tools such as knives, axes and saws, as well as shelter building, camp craft and fire lighting.

We generally avoid the rough and tough military approach, preferring instead to adopt a more holistic, back-to-nature style which can appeal to everyone regardless of age or ability.

“We’re not about pillaging everything we can find, but learning about the coastal environment and taking only what we need, just as our ancestors would have done.”



Gower is perfect for what we do. We have the use of an ancient woodland where we teach traditional woodland management techniques like charcoal making and coppicing. From there it’s only a 20-minute walk to the sea where we run courses geared towards coastal foraging and wild food - seaweeds like laver and sea lettuce, and bivalves like mussels and cockles.



In the Wild

We mostly run from Oxwich round to Worm's Head. There's a lot of wildlife to see along the way, from nesting seabirds on the cliffs to seals, dolphins and porpoises in the water. Even though our main focus is tourism, we're naturally conservation-minded. 'We work with Sea Watch, a foundation that monitors marine mammal sightings in Wales. We have a tablet that tracks our location so when we spot a dolphin or porpoise we can log what we've seen, in what numbers and so on. It's a fairly new way of recording sightings and it allows us to provide a huge amount of detail.

Gower Coast Adventures run nature-spotting boat trips around the peninsula's shores. Director David Tonge explains how coastal tourism and marine conservation go hand-in-hand.

“A lot of our staff are marine biology students who run projects alongside working for us. It's an arrangement that works really well for everybody. They get lots of opportunity to observe marine wildlife and we get people who really care about the sea.”



Go Green

Like our eco-heroes you can also do your bit for the environment. As a first step, leave the car at home. Whether you travel by bus, train, bike or on foot, there are plenty of ways to explore the area. For information and inspiration, visit swanseabaywithoutacar.co.uk





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Swansea Bay

Mumbles & Gower



-  Blue Flag and Seaside Award
-  Marina Blue Flag Award

0 4km

0 2 miles



- 360 Beach & Watersports
- Knab Rock

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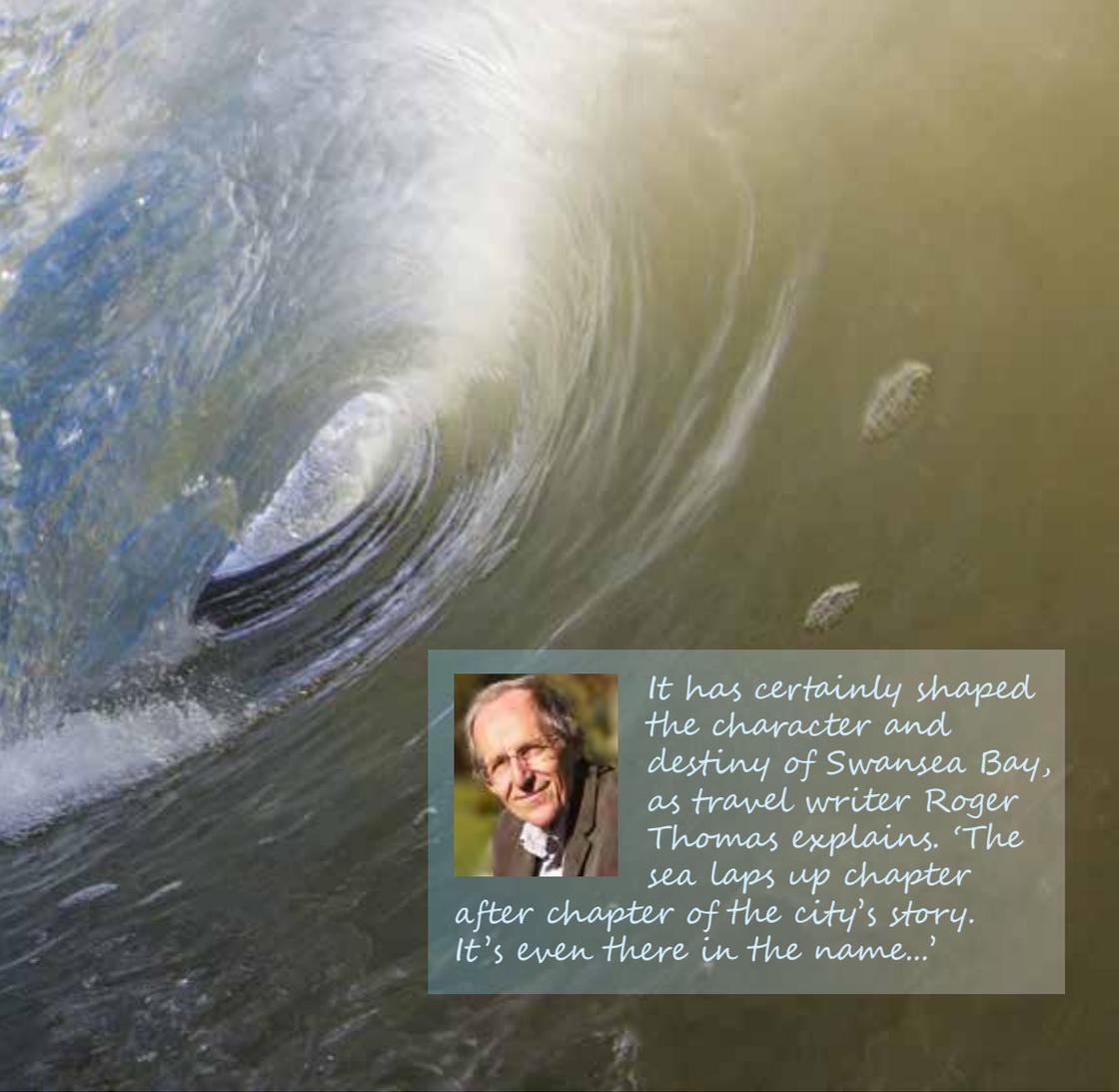


THE POWER OF WATER

My first exposure to Swansea came via the words of Dylan Thomas, who conjured up a picture of a rumbustious sea town on the edge of a 'long and splendid curving shore'. Swansea docks were proper docks in Dylan's days. When I first visited they had been transformed into a new marina,

overlooked by a statue of the poet looking slightly bemused by all the changes.

Swansea truly came of age during the Industrial Revolution, when its docks thronged with ships carrying cargo across the globe. The local speciality was copper, smelted and exported in such huge quantities that Swansea became known as 'Copperopolis'.



It has certainly shaped the character and destiny of Swansea Bay, as travel writer Roger Thomas explains. 'The sea laps up chapter after chapter of the city's story. It's even there in the name...'

Those links with the sea have been renewed and refreshed with the creation of the Maritime Quarter and SA1 waterfront development. For the best introduction to it all I'd recommend starting at Swansea Museum. It's Wales's oldest, full of quirky relics you'd expect such a place to contain, amongst which is a fascinating section on Swansea's

enduring relationship with the sea. What's more, it's a well-placed starting point for a walk around the historic waterfront, taking in the museum's floating exhibits - a lightship, tugboat and pilot cutter - moored in the marina.

Close to the oldest is Wales's newest museum. The National Waterfront Museum, flanked by bars and



restaurants, is located in a listed dockside warehouse linked to an ultra-modern building of slate and glass.

This innovative space blends past and future with high-tech, hands-on exhibits. It's sure to be a leading player during Wales's Year of the Sea.

As museum head, Steph Mastoris, explains: 'The crucial role of the sea features in most of the displays. Throughout 2018 the museum will mount a number of temporary exhibitions looking at different aspects of Wales's maritime heritage and life. Themes will include the truth behind the legends of Welsh pirates, the lost ports of Wales and the work of our coastguard service.'

I can't help going back to Dylan Thomas (no relation) for more insights. 'This sea-town was my world,' he said.

I know what he meant, for Swansea is a multi-layered place, a complete package, if you like, where traditional

and cosmopolitan Wales rub shoulders comfortably.

Its shopping centre, for example, is almost within touching distance of the beach. And it's here I always go when visiting, specifically to peruse warm-hearted Swansea Market. A literal taste of the sea is served up at this legendary fresh food emporium, where Penclawdd cockles, laverbread and catch-of-the-day fish are the stars of the show.

A walk along the five-mile prom of 'Wales's Waterfront City' is also compulsory. As bays go, it's a classic, with sweeping sands that disappear like clockwork daily, thanks to a massive tidal range of over 10 metres, one of the highest in the world. And, of course, its next-door neighbour just happens to be the Gower Peninsula, one of Britain's loveliest stretches of coastline.

Rivers and lakes also play their part in Wales's Year of the Sea. You can take a 'source to sea' cruise up the River Tawe on the Copper Jack from the

marina, passing historic landmarks on the way. Fresh water is hard at work at Gower Heritage Centre's spinning water wheel. Originally built to power a 12th-century corn mill, it's now the heart of an attraction bringing the peninsula's rich rural history back to life. If, like me, you like seeking out hidden haunts then you should also visit Penllergare Valley Woods on the outskirts of Swansea. Water power is also much in evidence here, in a picturesque Victorian landscape of cascades, gardens, lakes and woodland.

Penllergare neatly sums up Swansea Bay's relationship with the power of water, a force that has brought great beauty to its coastline and waterways as well as a dynamic sense of purpose.





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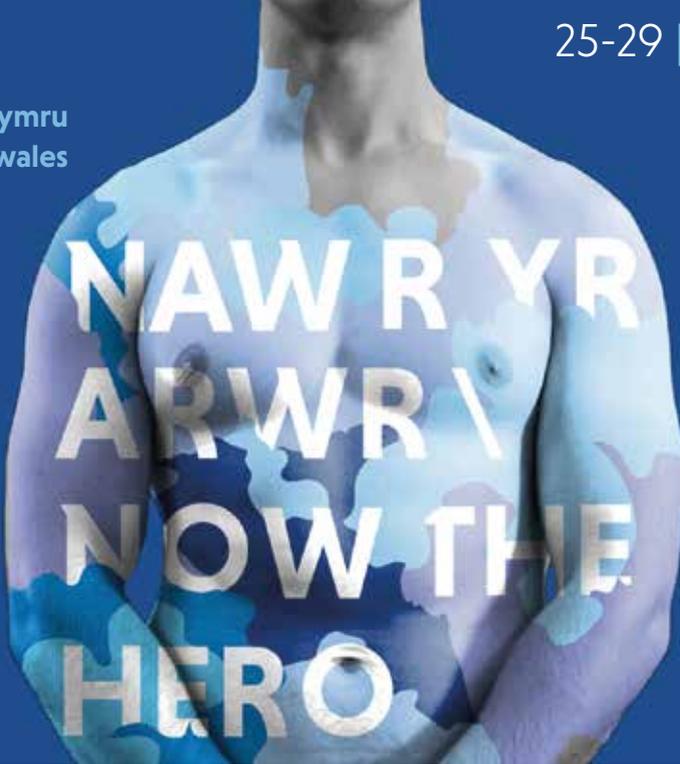
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Marc Rees' Nawr Yr Awr \ Now The Hero is an immersive theatrical experience that will take the audience on an extraordinary journey through three interweaving narratives of war; from Celtic history, the First World War, and today's conflicts. This bold production brings the stories of war imaginatively to life, but counterpoints the tragic telling with hope.

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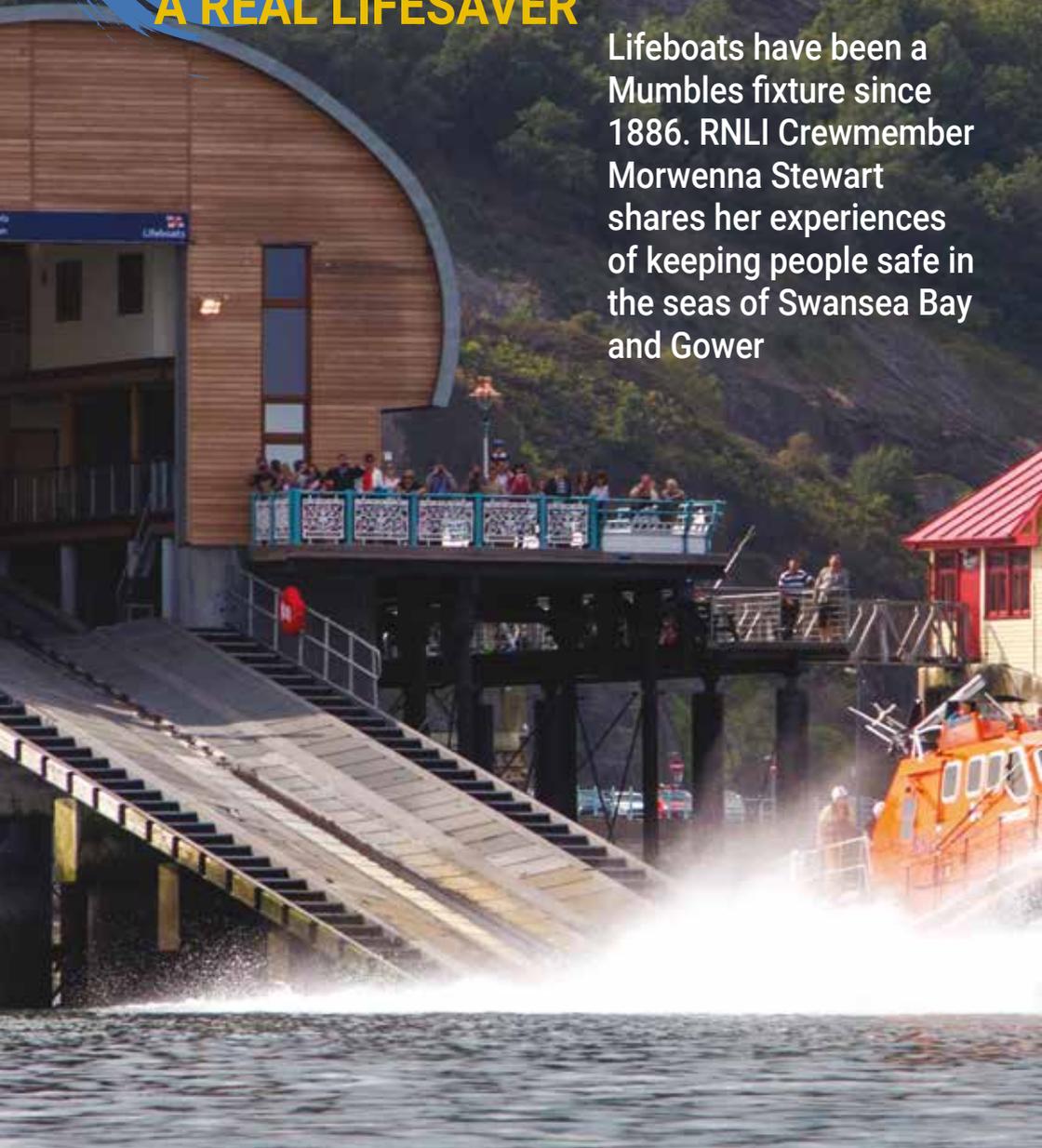


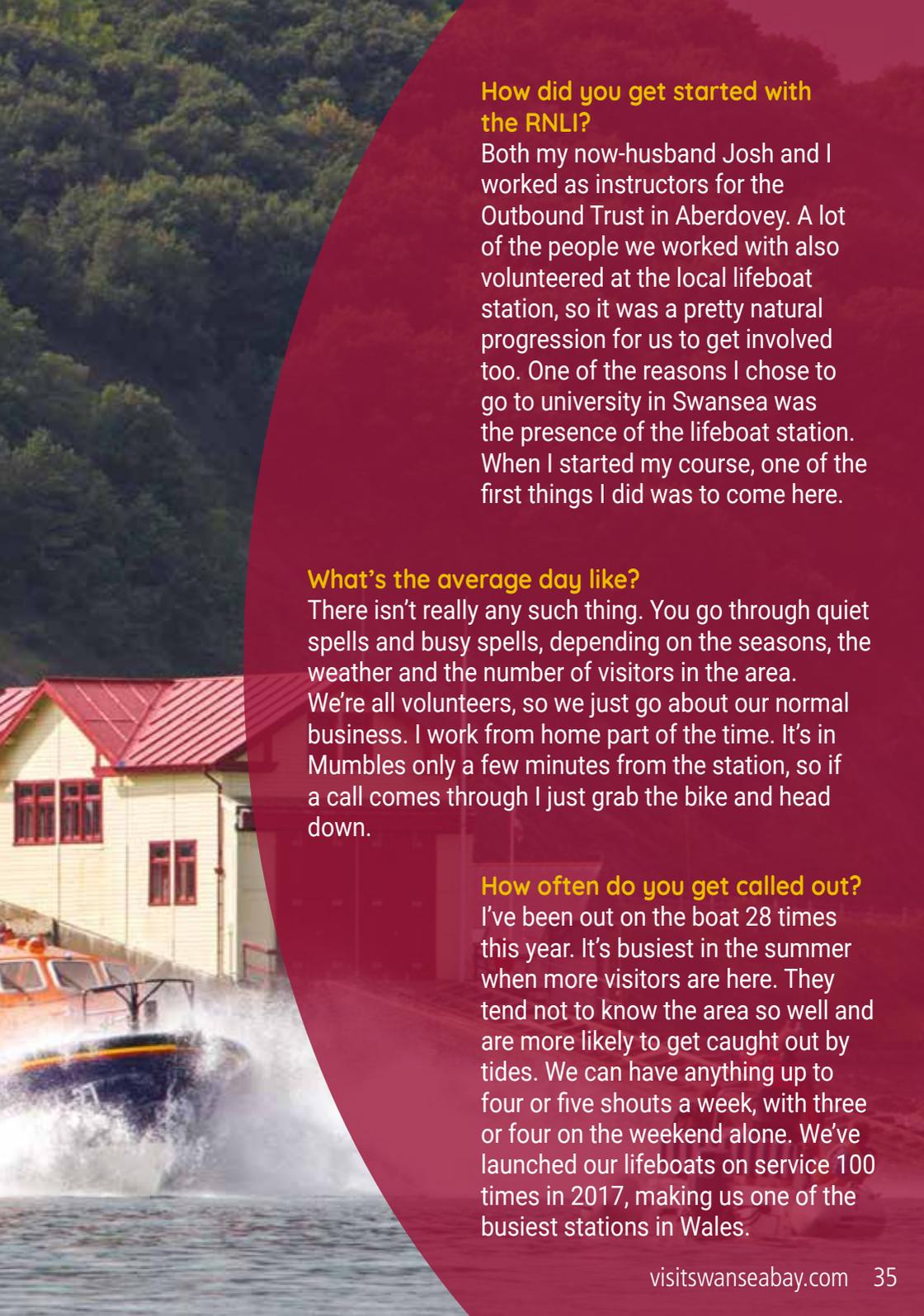
The RNLI logo is a blue circle with a white brushstroke effect around it, containing the letters 'RNLI' in white. It is positioned in the top left corner of the page.

RNLI

A REAL LIFESAVER

Lifeboats have been a Mumbles fixture since 1886. RNLI Crewmember Morwenna Stewart shares her experiences of keeping people safe in the seas of Swansea Bay and Gower





How did you get started with the RNLI?

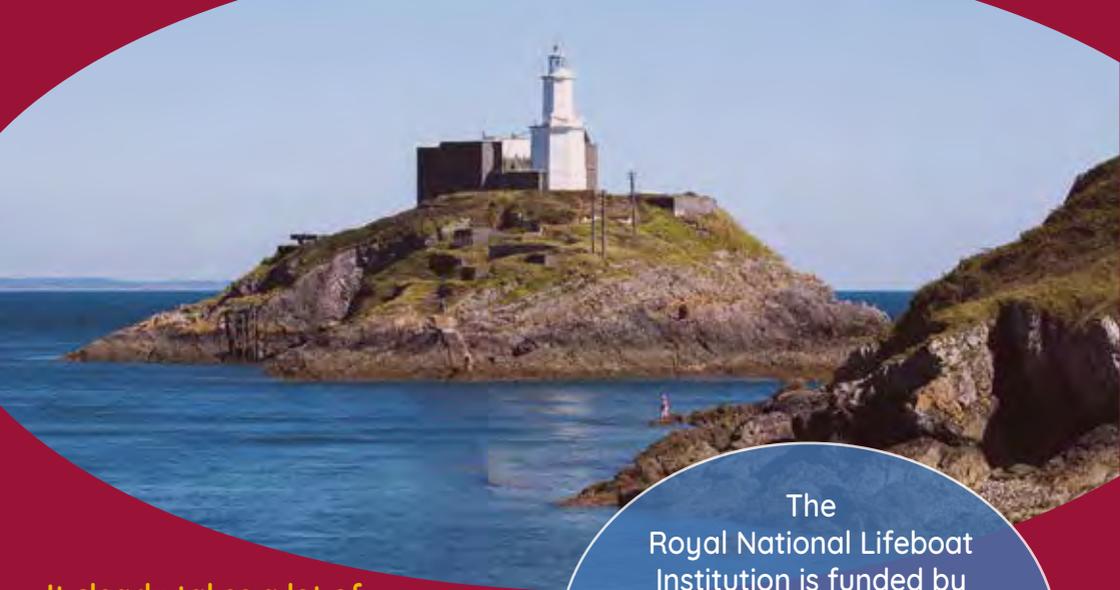
Both my now-husband Josh and I worked as instructors for the Outbound Trust in Aberdovey. A lot of the people we worked with also volunteered at the local lifeboat station, so it was a pretty natural progression for us to get involved too. One of the reasons I chose to go to university in Swansea was the presence of the lifeboat station. When I started my course, one of the first things I did was to come here.

What's the average day like?

There isn't really any such thing. You go through quiet spells and busy spells, depending on the seasons, the weather and the number of visitors in the area. We're all volunteers, so we just go about our normal business. I work from home part of the time. It's in Mumbles only a few minutes from the station, so if a call comes through I just grab the bike and head down.

How often do you get called out?

I've been out on the boat 28 times this year. It's busiest in the summer when more visitors are here. They tend not to know the area so well and are more likely to get caught out by tides. We can have anything up to four or five shouts a week, with three or four on the weekend alone. We've launched our lifeboats on service 100 times in 2017, making us one of the busiest stations in Wales.



It clearly takes a lot of commitment. What keeps you doing it?

Being out on the boat is always exciting and it feels good to give something back to the community. I also really enjoy the training where we get to work with the different boats and equipment. Josh actually proposed to me on a training exercise. I got winched up into a helicopter and he was waiting in the back ready to pop the question.

What are your top safety tips for visitors?

Get a tide table. They aren't hard to get hold of either in physical form or online. Find out what the tide times are and how they affect the area you're planning to visit. If you are going out on the water, make sure your boat has been checked out and is in proper working order and, most importantly, wear a life jacket.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is funded by donations and staffed almost entirely by volunteers. To find out more and get involved, visit rnli.org.uk

Finally, where are your favourite places to go when you're not out on the lifeboat?

Gower has it all. There are stunning beaches, amazing countryside, cliffs, rocks and an incredibly interesting coastline. It's hard to pick a favourite. If I'm out walking the dog, I like to go to Southgate, but if I'm doing some kite surfing, Rhossili is pretty hard to beat. I like mountains too, but the best thing about living by the coast is that it's exciting whatever the weather. In fact, if it's raining and blowing a gale it can be even more fun. The sea is so unpredictable, it's impossible to get bored of it.



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OPENING TIMES

LUNCH

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AFTERNOON TEA

all week from 12:00–4:00pm

EVENING MENU & LIGHT BITES

from 6:00pm Wed–Sat

*Don't forget... you can still come for
coffee and cake until 9pm Wed–Sat!*

*With The Cliff / Y Clogwyn being within
sound reach of the sea, why not celebrate
the year of the sea with us...*

*Join us for five fish Fridays... the first Friday of
every month May – September. Let Colin and
the team cook up a fish feast fresh from the sea.
As always, using local and seasonal goodies to
tickle your taste buds. Call The Cliff to make a
reservation 01792 399030.*

TO BOOK Call: 01792 399030

Email: reservations@the-cliff.co.uk

Events



WALES
AIRSHOW
SIOE AWYR
CYMRU

SPRING & SUMMER 2018

12th April	Man Engine, various locations in Swansea
27th - 29th Apr	German Bierfest Swansea 2018, Museum Park
1st - 31st May	Clyne in Bloom, Clyne Gardens
5th - 6th May	Cheese and Cider Festival, Gower Heritage Centre
26th - 27th May	BBC Music's The Biggest Weekend, Singleton Park
27th -28th May	Gower Good Food Festival, Gower Heritage Centre

2nd - 10th June

Gower Walking Festival

14th - 17th Jun	Swansea International Jazz Festival
23rd June	The Killers, Liberty Stadium
24th June	JCP Swansea Half Marathon

30th June - 1st July

Wales Airshow, Swansea Bay

2nd - 14th Jul	Gower Festival
7th July	Little Mix, Liberty Stadium
19th July	Outdoor Theatre at Oystermouth Castle: A Midsummer Night's Dream

25th - 29th July

Beach Sculpture Festival, various beaches in Swansea Bay

28th July	Dungeons and Dragons Day, Oystermouth Castle
28th Jul - 5th Aug	Pirate Week, Gower Heritage Centre
1st - 31st Aug	Botanics in Bloom, Singleton Park
5th August	Mumbles Raft Race



SWANSEA
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL



5th August

Gower Show

8th August

The Living Seas Wales Roadshow,
National Waterfront Museum

10th - 24th Aug

Swansea Festival of Stitch, various locations

18th - 25th Aug

Gower Cycling Festival

23rd - 25th Aug

CAMRA Beer Festival

AUTUMN & WINTER 2018 / 19

12th - 13th Sept

Luna Cinema, Oystermouth Castle

15th September

Roald Dahl Day, National
Waterfront Museum

16th September

Admiral Swansea Bay 10k

22nd Sept - 6th Oct

Swansea International Festival

25th- 29th Sept

**Now the Hero, a theatrical experience
from Swansea Bay to the Brangwyn**

29th September

Mumbles Triathlon

16th December

Handel's Messiah,
Brangwyn

23rd December

Christmas by Candlelight, Brangwyn

End of November -
January

Christmas in Swansea and
Waterfront Winterland



All details correct at time of going to press

Top 10

WAYS TO #SEASWANSEABAY



2

Seafood and Eat it

Fresh cockles and laverbread (it's seaweed - trust us - it's good with bacon) from Swansea Market, ice-cream from Mumbles (impeccable Welsh Italian heritage) and mighty fine-dining with epic seaside views across Swansea Bay.



4

From the Sea

Get a different perspective, take a boat trip and enjoy the coastline from a different angle. Sea birds, sea seals, sea porpoises, sea caves, sea secret coves. A fresh (in more ways than one!) way to sea our coastline!

Get Wet

1



The Year of the Sea is definitely the time to immerse yourself - literally - in something new. What'SUP? It's Stand Up Paddleboarding, really popular and easy to try. Surfing is not just for Beach Boys - and if you're looking for beach cred, coasteering gives you boasting rights.

3

Explore a Legend

We have King Arthur's Stone, an ancient dovecote set into a cliff, a Giant's Grave and a headland that thinks it's a dragon - when it's stormy you can hear it roar!



5

A Cultural Exchange

With two city centre theatres, there's always a drama somewhere! Discover so called 'bad boy' poet Dylan Thomas at the unique 'Love the Words' exhibition at the Dylan Thomas Centre then head to the Uplands and go back in time to experience his family home as he knew it.



Go Wild

6



Go all 'Five go to Gower' and really get to grips with the outdoors. Enjoy a camping holiday with a beach outside your tent flap and glorious Gower all around. (Glamping is also available for those who prefer their outdoors tamed.)

Let your Feet do the Talking

7



With walks to suit the stroller through to the stomper; on country lanes, beguiling beaches, clifftop paths and wooded ways. Half hour stroll or walking for the week? It's all here, it's good for you and it's free!

8

Experience Exciting Events

Are you a 'Swiftly' or a 'Sheerio'? We have one of the UK's biggest music events in May, or how about fighter jets thundering across the skies over Swansea Bay, or be a part of a massive indoor and outdoor performance event celebrating heroes past and present in September.

Baywatch

9



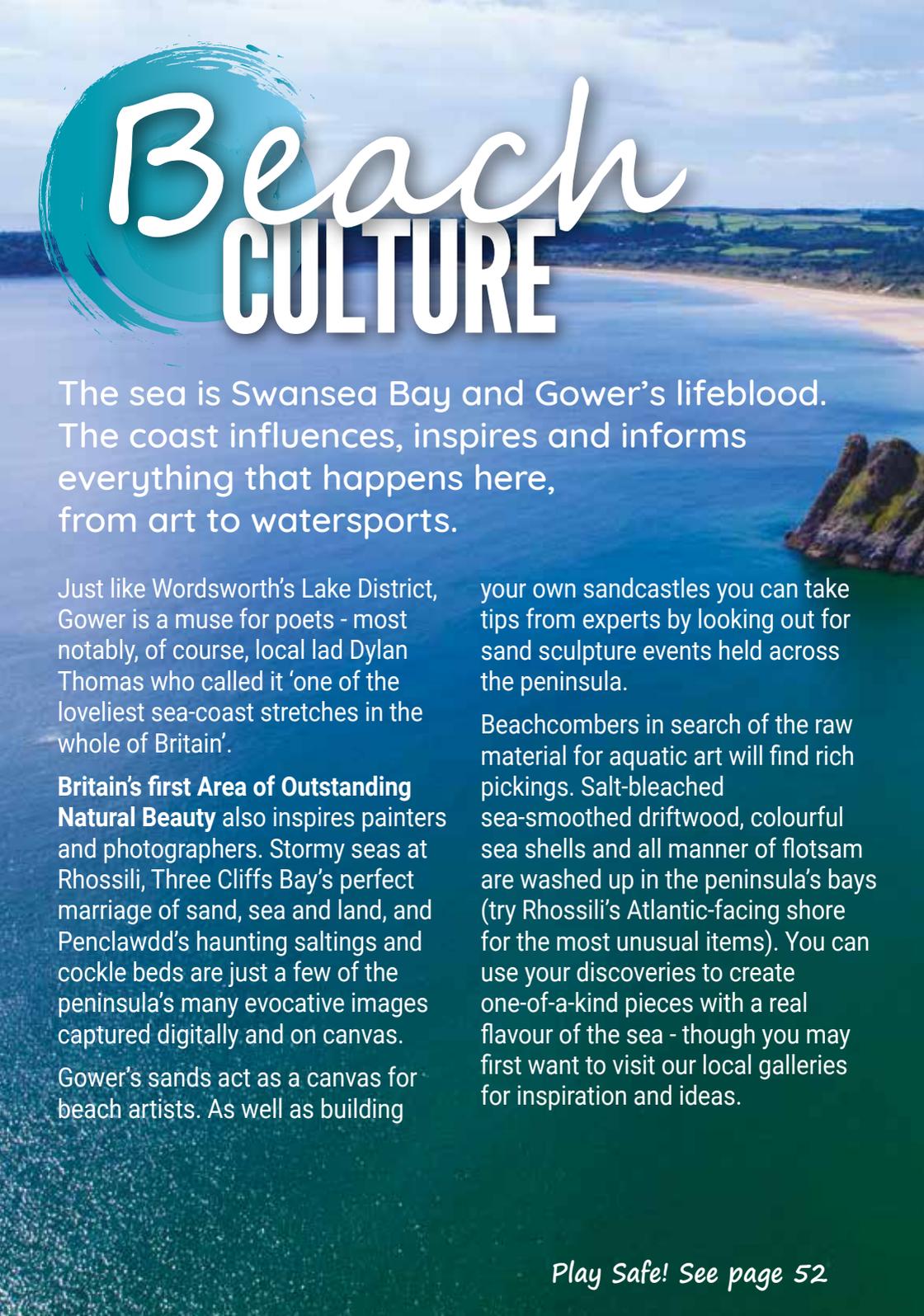
Chris and Michaela would be right at home here, with 10 Nature Reserves, 22 Wildlife Trust Reserves and an RSPB Reserve too! Not to mention the variety of different habitats - from marsh, to sand dunes to heathland. If we appreciate our natural heritage now - it will still be here for all our futures.

From our Point of View

10



Whether it's from a craggy clifftop, the battlements of a medieval castle or from the top of the tallest restaurant in Wales - the views have one thing in common - they're all breathtakingly beautiful! #SeaSwanseaBay



Beach CULTURE

The sea is Swansea Bay and Gower's lifeblood. The coast influences, inspires and informs everything that happens here, from art to watersports.

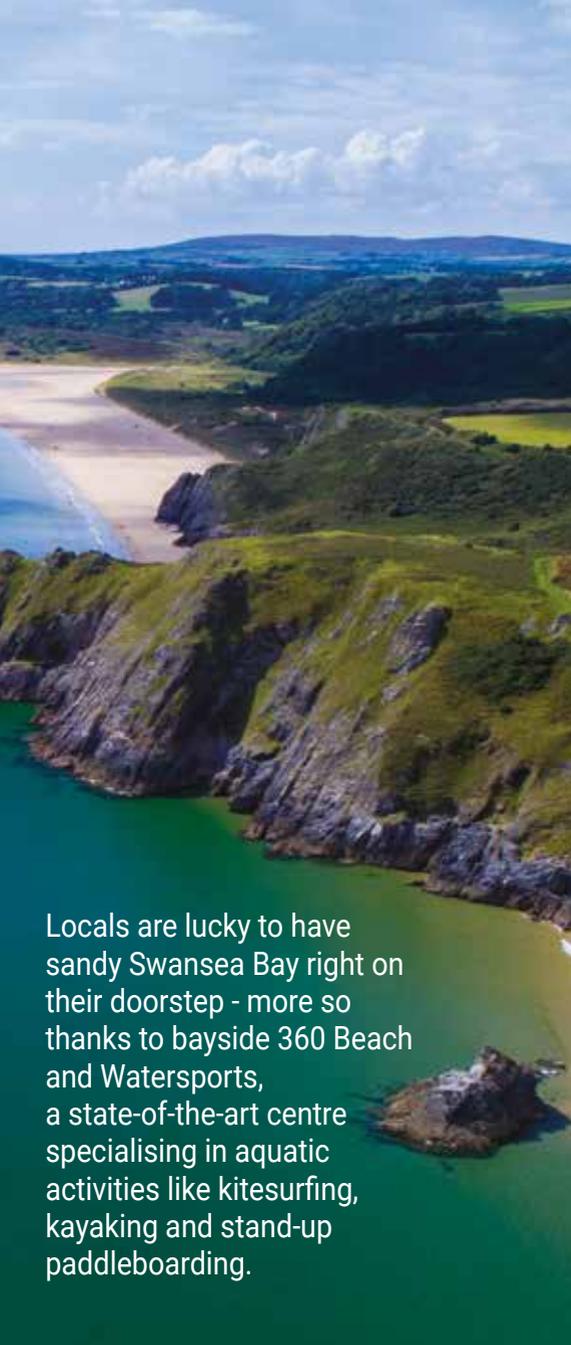
Just like Wordsworth's Lake District, Gower is a muse for poets - most notably, of course, local lad Dylan Thomas who called it 'one of the loveliest sea-coast stretches in the whole of Britain'.

Britain's first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty also inspires painters and photographers. Stormy seas at Rhossili, Three Cliffs Bay's perfect marriage of sand, sea and land, and Penclawdd's haunting saltings and cockle beds are just a few of the peninsula's many evocative images captured digitally and on canvas.

Gower's sands act as a canvas for beach artists. As well as building

your own sandcastles you can take tips from experts by looking out for sand sculpture events held across the peninsula.

Beachcombers in search of the raw material for aquatic art will find rich pickings. Salt-bleached sea-smoothed driftwood, colourful sea shells and all manner of flotsam are washed up in the peninsula's bays (try Rhossili's Atlantic-facing shore for the most unusual items). You can use your discoveries to create one-of-a-kind pieces with a real flavour of the sea - though you may first want to visit our local galleries for inspiration and ideas.



Locals are lucky to have sandy Swansea Bay right on their doorstep - more so thanks to bayside 360 Beach and Watersports, a state-of-the-art centre specialising in aquatic activities like kitesurfing, kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding.



WE'VE BEEN INSPIRED BY THE YEAR OF THE SEA...

...follow our Sea Sculpture Trail along the Gower Coast Path (see page 49)

The shortlist

For more on beach culture events, galleries and activities go to visitswanseabay.com/beachculture



Surfers worth their salt know that Swansea Bay and Gower has been at the centre of UK surf culture since the sport took off here in the 1960s. Llangennith-based surf legend and former European and British champion Peter 'PJ' Jones has been here from the beginning and got his start on the shores of Gower.

'I remember paddling out to the reef off Langland,' he says of his first time on the board. 'I stood up and that moment changed my life. I feel like surfing discovered me.'

PJ still rides the waves every day and runs the local surf shop. It has become something of a surfers' mecca, offering insider info on the best spots and daily wave reports. Surfing runs in the family. PJ's son James now heads the Welsh Surfing Federation surf school down on Llangennith beach, catering for absolute beginners and improvers.

You don't have to get wet to soak up the local beach vibe. Some of the best seaside experiences happen on dry land, especially when picnics and barbecues are involved (why does food always taste better when eaten outdoors?). As you'd expect, there are picnic spots all over, but if you want to tick off a superstar then make a bee line for Three Cliffs Bay, recently voted the UK's favourite.





The coast also acts as a backdrop for festivals and events like the high-octane Wales Airshow (30 June - 1 July). It's a huge spectacular, attracting 250,000 spectators to the broad sweep of Swansea Bay, which becomes an aerial amphitheatre for precision aerobatic displays from the likes of the Red Arrows and flypasts from historic and vintage planes.

For something a little quieter, the Gower Festival transforms the peninsula's historic churches into intimate classical music venues for two weeks each July.





holiday essentials

for your beach bag
or rucksack...



This little guide is packed full of information on Swansea Bay's best ideas for a great day out, from our amazing attractions and awesome activities to finding foodie heaven at our restaurants and cafés. From culture to coastering - this little book is where to look!

This little beauty does exactly what it says on the cover! It's an indispensable roll-call of our bevy of bays and beaches; together with all the important information including access, lifeguards and whether they're dog friendly.



This guide opens out to reveal a detailed map of the Coast Path and a number of other Gower walking routes, together with some handy hints to make the most of your walk.



All three guides are available across Swansea Bay and from VIPs, see page 51.

DIANC

I'R ARFORDIR

Gydag un o draethau harddaf Cymru ar ein carreg drws, nid oes un man gwell i ddathlu Blwyddyn y Môr nag yng Ngwesty Oxwich Bay. P'un a ydych chi'n chwilio am encilfa arfordirol gyda golygfeydd syfrdanol, lleoliad mis mêl byr rhamantus, neu rywle i ddathlu achlysuron arbennig gyda theulu a ffrindiau, rydym ni'n gwneud popeth o fewn ein gallu i wneud eich ymweliad yn un i'w gofio.

ESCAPE

TO THE COAST

With one of Wales' most beautiful beaches right on our doorstep, there really is no place better to celebrate the Year of the Sea than at the Oxwich Bay Hotel. Whether you're looking for a coastal retreat with breath-taking views, a romantic mini-moon location or a place to celebrate special occasions with family and friends, we go above and beyond to make your visit one to remember.

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The Oxwich Bay
hotel · restaurant · weddings · occasions

Win

A WEEKEND BREAK and #SeaSwanseaBay for yourself!

Have you been inspired to visit? Or, already here on holiday, and decided to come back and try something new?

Well, here's your chance!

Answer 3 simple questions on visitswanseabay.com/WIN for a chance to win **£500** towards a holiday in Swansea Bay. You can then decide where to stay and what to do while you're here from a wide selection on visitswanseabay.com.

The questions are:

1. Which two of our beautiful beaches are in the TripAdvisor Top Ten of UK beaches?
 - a. Caswell and Langland Bays
 - b. Port Eynon and Swansea Bays
 - c. Rhossili and Three Cliffs Bays
2. Which BBC Countryfile presenter regularly holidays in Swansea Bay?
 - a. John Craven
 - b. Sean Fletcher
 - c. Ellie Harrison
3. Which anniversary is the Blue Flag Award for beaches celebrating this year?
 - a. 30 years
 - b. 10 years
 - c. 25 years



Pssst! Here's a clue - if you've read this magazine - you'll have an advantage! We take your data protection very seriously, for a full list of our Terms & Conditions go to visitswanseabay.com/terms.



INSPIRED BY THE
2018 THEME YEAR OF THE SEA
YSBRYDOLWYD GAN THEMA 2018
SEF BLWYDDYN Y MŌR

**Sculpture on the Coast - a special trail along
the Gower coast path**
Cerflun ar y prosiect arfordir - llwybr
cerfluniau arbennig ar hyd llwybr arfordir Gwyr



Limeslade Bay
Bae Limeslade



Three Cliffs Bay
Bae'r Iri Chlogwyn



Horton



Rhosili Bay
Bae Rhosili



Caswell Bay
Bae Caswell

**Beach Sculpture
Festival July 2018**
Gŵyl Cerfluniau
Traeth Gorffennaf 2018



Beaches / Traethau
25/07/18 - Caswell
26/07/18 - Oxwich
27/07/18 - Port Eynon
28/07/18 - Bracelet
29/07/18 - Blackpill
(by Lido/ger y Lido)

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Created by
Wynny Williams

Would you like to Sea more?

.....

If you've been inspired by our Swansea Bay magazine and need to find out the why, how and where – right here, right now – visitswanseabay.com has all the info or pop in to see one of our VIPs (that's Visitor Information Points) and pick up a copy of our go to Guides.

.....

VisitSwanseaBay.com

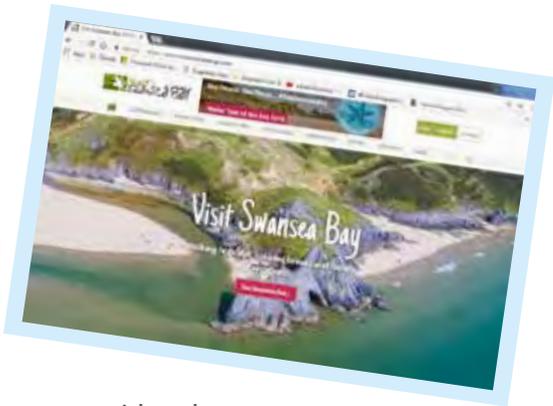
It's all here.

First of all, **where to stay.**

Somewhere to lay your head after the excitement of the day - from camping in the countryside and cosy cottages, to city centre by the sea hotels - there's plenty to choose from.

Fuel up! Keep your strength up for all your seaside adventures at one of our **cafés and restaurants.** From local seafood to an indulgent ice-cream dessert.

The main event - choose from a cultural day out on dry land to splashing good fun either on, in or near the sea! Our list of **things to do** is nearly as long as the Gower Coast Path (well almost!).



Mini-Itineraries

Too much information? No worries, we've got a plan - several in fact! We've done all the hard work for you and have already developed a number of **off-the-shelf mini-itineraries**. Already researched and ready to go. Put together two or three and you've got a ready made short break without the hours of online research.

It's as easy as 1-2-3!

1. Go to **visitswanseabay.com/mini-itineraries**
2. Choose a day out (or two or three) to suit you
3. Contact the businesses to book your activities, meals and accommodation and look forward to your short break

You'll be booked in record time!



Visitor Information Points



But once you're out there in the field (or the sea, or the city) - you just might need a bit of local know-how, and our friendly and knowledgeable Visitor Information Points (or VIPs for short) will be able to help.

For a list of VIPs go to **visitswanseabay.com/VIPS** or look for the orange **i**



Play Safe!

Whatever you do and wherever you do it, please ensure that the conditions are safe and that you have the right equipment. If new to the activity or inexperienced, use an accredited operator (where appropriate, all operators featured in this magazine have achieved the relevant activity accreditation).

If participating in an activity in the sea or near the shoreline, then keep an eye on the state of the tide, as it can turn very quickly here causing a tidal surge or rip tide; especially at Three Cliffs Bay, Burry Holms and the Worm's Head causeway (the Rhossili Coastwatch Centre can help you plan your walk safely). If surfing at Llangennith watch out for shipwrecks below the waterline.

It is recommended that you keep children in line of sight at all times and swim at a lifeguarded beach. If you do see someone in difficulty, do not attempt to enter the water yourself, telephone 999 and ask for the coastguard.

And finally, don't forget your suncream.

Now go and have fun!

Swansea Council cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information in this magazine and accepts no responsibility for any error or misrepresentation, liability for loss, disappointment, negligence or other damage caused by the reliance on the information contained in this magazine unless caused by the negligent act or omission of the Council.

Please check and confirm all details before booking or travelling.

This publication is available in alternative formats, contact tourism.team@swansea.gov.uk



Swansea Bay *enjoy* Bae *joie* Abertawe

THIS SUMMER'S BIGGEST STAGE - LLWYFAN MWYAF YR HAF HWN

FEATURING / YN CYNNWYS

LITTLE MIX

07 / 07 / 18

BBC MUSIC'S BIGGEST WEEKEND Y PENWYTHNOS MWYAF BBC MUSIC

26 - 27 / 05 / 18

THE KILLERS

23 / 06 / 18

NOW THE HERO NAWR YR ARWR

25 - 29 / 09 / 18

SWANSEA BAY 10K BAE ABERTAW

16 / 09 / 18

WALES AIRSHOW SIOE AWYR CYMRU

30 / 06 / 18 - 01 / 07 / 18





Published by

