

THE PERFECT WEEKEND IN...

MILFORD HAVEN

The route: Neyland Marina, Llangwm, Black Tar, Lawrenny, Dale, Watwick Bay & Milford Haven

Milford Haven is one of the deepest natural harbours in the world, located within the only Coastal National Park in the UK. Here there are activities to suit many an outdoor soul, from sailing and angling to diving and powerboating, with plenty of anchorages, launch slipways and two excellent fully serviced marinas. And for the less active – or those after a more tranquil pace of life – waterside restaurants, sheltered bays and peaceful places to drop the hook are certainly not in short supply.

SATURDAY MORNING

For me, a perfect weekend always starts with an early morning bacon roll and freshly brewed coffee at Brunel Café, Neyland Marina (+44 (0)1646 601 667). Berths at the lower basin in Neyland Marina have 24-hour access to the Haven – there is no lock or sill, so after a tasty brekkie you can happily slip away and join the incoming tide which will take you up river towards the Cleddau Bridge (look out for otters sunning themselves on the banks as you leave the marina).

Once past the bridge, the waterway is flanked by trees right down to the water's edge and it's a popular spot with waterskiers. Taking advantage of the tidal flow, head to the upper reaches of the



Haven passing Burton, Benton Castle, Lawrenny and Llangwm. It's worth a trip to this part of the Haven just to admire the breathtaking scenery of tranquil villages, calm waters and historic buildings. At Black Tar, turn and head back to Lawrenny for lunch at the award-winning Quayside Café or the popular Lawrenny Arms pub and restaurant. A personal favourite is the locally caught crab baguette served at the Quayside Café, the ideal waterside lunch.

Be cautious though as the visitor pontoon here dries at low water, although visitor moorings are available. Manoeuvring in the vicinity of the moorings can be a little challenging for a larger vessel but it is also possible to anchor or moor at the entrance to Lawrenny.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Depending on your craft you may want to fill up at Lawrenny as this is the only marina that offers petrol on the Haven. Once your tank is full, take the ebb tide to Dale, passing Neyland, Milford and some of the biggest tankers in the world which berth at the oil refineries and terminals. A distance of 100m must be maintained from the tankers and a good lookout is essential. At Dale you can use the outer pontoon which is accessible at all tides, but you will

PROFILE

THE AUTHOR

Ian Addison
Ian has been boating in the Bristol Channel for over 35 years. He has owned a variety of boats and currently has a Bénéteau Antares 680 with a Suzuki 115hp outboard engine.



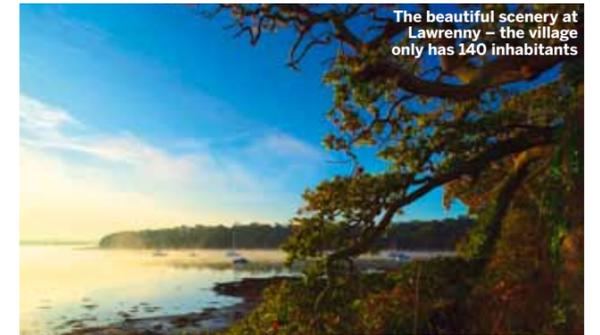
The town of Milford Haven has a rich heritage and hosts a major trading port



1 SATURDAY MORNING



Neyland Marina, which benefits from 24-hour access to the Haven



The beautiful scenery at Lawrenny – the village only has 140 inhabitants

Popular with surfers, West Dale beach is an area of rugged natural beauty with dramatic views over the islands of Skomer and Skokholm



Lawrenny fuel station

2 SATURDAY AFTERNOON



Dale is a popular place in summer and an excellent lunch spot



Small dinghies in Dale



The sandy bay and island views at West Dale beach

3 SATURDAY EVENING

West-facing Dale has stunning sunsets

FAVOURITE MARINAS

Neyland Yacht Haven (Tel: +44 (0)1646 601 601) is easily accessed at all states of the tide. There are two chandleries within walking distance: Brunel Chandlery (Tel: +44 (0)1646 601 667) & Dale Sailing (Tel: +44 (0)1646 603 110). Milford Marina (Tel: +44 (0)1646 696 313) is accessed through a lock and also has a local chandlery adjacent, Windjammer Marine (+44 (0)1646 699 070).

HANDY FUEL BERTHS

Dale Sailing provide a diesel berth at the entrance to Neyland Yacht Haven (Tel: +44 (0)1646 603 110). Milford Marina provide diesel from their berth within the marina (Tel: +44 (0)1646 696 313). Both diesel and petrol are available from Lawrenny Yacht Station (Tel: +44 (0)1646 651 212).

FAVOURITE EATERIES

The Bar Restaurant at Neyland (+44 (0)1646 602 550) is highly recommended. Martha's Vineyard (Tel: +44 (0)1646 697 083) at Milford is also a popular choice, again located adjacent to the marina. The Griffin Inn at Dale (+44 (0)1646 636 227) has fabulous views over the bay. The Jolly Sailor at Burton (+44 (0)1646 600 378) has gardens leading down to the estuary. And Neyland Yacht Club (+44 (0)1646 600 267) has excellent views over the Cleddau.

NAVIGATION NOTES

The Irish ferry runs from Pembroke on a daily basis, arriving approx 1200 and departing around 1500. If you are within the shipping channel, it's also wise to monitor VHF channel 12 to chart the movements of large vessels. Tides in the Haven can be quite strong at times and a local chart and tide table are advisable, especially as certain places can dry at particular low tides. Both marina entrances are buoyed and it's best to observe this buoyage at all times.

The Griffin Inn is perched on Dale's seafront

**4 SUNDAY MORNING**

Thorn Island's fort was built in 1854

Taking it slow in Watwick Bay



Milford Marina



need a dinghy to go ashore. There is also an inner walk-ashore pontoon which is tidal and can get very busy in the summer period. Dale is one of our favourite locations and very popular in the summer as an overnight anchorage – but best avoided in a strong easterly wind. A short walk from Dale leads to West Dale beach, an area of rugged natural beauty popular with local surfers. It also worth a visit for the dramatic views over the islands of Skomer – renowned for its puffins – and Skokholm.

SATURDAY EVENING

After a day on the water, Dale Yacht Club has excellent facilities and is a good place to stop off and have a drink or some food. Alternatively, the Griffin Inn – dating back to the 16th Century – occupies a prime spot overlooking the beach and pontoon. If you have longer than a weekend the Pembrokeshire Puffin shuttle bus stops at Dale and takes the coastal route to St David's. Before returning to the boat for the night, a walk along the beach is a must and dogs are also permitted on part of the beach for the whole season.

SUNDAY MORNING

An early departure from Dale makes the most of the weekend and brings you to the beautiful bay of Watwick with its white sandy beach and crystal-clear water. Shoals of small fish can often be seen darting along the sea bed and you can spend hours snorkelling and swimming here. It can get very busy in the summer, so it's always best to get here early in the day before the crowds arrive, though this is not a good anchorage in a strong south-easterly.

Heading for Thorn Island in the afternoon, you pass the Angle lifeboat station and Angle Bay, where it's often possible to see seals. Angle Bay dries at low water but is worth a visit at high water – en route keep a good lookout for lobster pot buoys.

Head back up the Haven, passing the refineries, to Milford Marina where there is a landing pontoon accessible at all states of tide (without needing to use the locking system to get into the marina itself). Milford Marina is surrounded by waterside cafés, restaurants and a good selection of shops – something for all members of the family to enjoy. One tip though: it's worth using plenty of fenders on the landing pontoon due to the passing wash from other vessels.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

After a visit to Milford Marina you should head back towards the Cleddau Bridge for Sunday lunch at either Neyland Yacht Club, famous for its Sunday roast carvery, or the Jolly Sailor pub where the grounds are lovely and go down to the water's edge. Both restaurants have stunning views over the Cleddau and have walk-ashore pontoons (care must be taken as these can dry at low water springs). From here, it is just a short hop back to Neyland Marina to end a perfect weekend. **MBY**

Next Month: The Swale in Kent.

DO YOU HAVE A PERFECT WEEKEND? If you'd like to show fellow *MBY* readers how to spend the perfect weekend in your home waters, drop an email to hugo_andrae@ipcmedia.com. We pay for successful submissions!



Skomer is famed for its puffins

5 SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Heading up river with Cleddau Bridge in the background