



RICHARDSON'S  
BOATING HOLIDAYS

— IN THE BROADS NATIONAL PARK —

# THE GUIDE TO NORFOLK BROADS BOATING

*for twenty-something shipmates*



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# INTRODUCTION

**Why go boating? And why the Broads? That's what you're thinking, right? Out of all the places in the world, why take a bunch of your mates to East Anglia and jump onto a cruiser? Well, here are the top four reasons.**

## **1. Boating rocks**

Holidays with friends can get a bit same-y: shared villas; campsites; beach caravans. They can all blur into each other.

But boating is different. You're

mobile. It's an adventure. And you get to spend every day frying up bacon butties, drinking beers, playing card games, lounging out on deck and basically hanging with your mates. What's not to like?

## **2. There are shops and beaches**

Boating on the Broads isn't all rope, reeds and riverbeds. There's loads of shopping, bars and fun to be had.

In Norwich you can hit the malls and bars; in Great Yarmouth you can go retro and immerse yourself in theme parks, amusement arcades and tons

more seaside nostalgia. If the sun is out, you can stay at the seaside, splash on the lotion and chill out on the beach with some cold beverages.

## **3. There are pubs, lots of pubs**

Cooking and drinking onboard is great, but one of the best things about the Broads are the pubs. The Broads are full of traditional food pubs, doing classics like fish and chips and roast dinners.

To wash it down, there are ales from local breweries to be consumed. Broads pub beer gardens are also the

perfect place to spend a long, lazy afternoon with your friends kicking back and watching the world go by. Remember to drink responsibly, and never try to drive the boat when you're drunk.

## **4. The Broads are cool**

The Broads aren't just for old people. They're awesome! You get to cruise around with your crew, exploring marshes and waterways that have remained pretty much the same since olden times. Every day will bring the discovery of new landscapes, river folk, weird wildlife and historical type stuff.





# THINGS TO DO

**So there's loads of cool stuff to do on a Broads boating holiday. But what, exactly? Glad you asked. Here are some of the types of things you can get up to.**

## **Parks and Attractions**

At the end of the River Bure lies the Norfolk town of Great Yarmouth, one of East Anglia's top seaside destinations. Yarmouth is home to The Pleasure Beach, a classic fun park with loads of rides.

You'll find the compulsory log flumes and go-karting areas, but

there's also plenty of adrenaline-pulsing, stomach-churning experiences, like the Disko, Evolution and the terrifyingly-named Sky-Drop.

A 15-minute bus or taxi ride from Oulton Broad is the Suffolk town of Lowestoft, home to Pleasurewood Hills Theme Park.

At Pleasurewood you'll find dizzying rides such as the plummeting Jolly Roger, rollercoasting Wipeout and furiously spinning Fireball. If that all sounds like a lunch-losing misstep, there's the Laser Labyrinth and a sea lion show.

## **Pubs and Restaurants**


There's nothing better than a friendly pub for hungry and thirsty boaters, and plenty come recommended by Broads regulars.

The Bridge Restaurant in Wroxham does a cracking fry-up breakfast, The Malters in Ranworth does a blinding battered cod and chips, and The Fur & Feather in Woodbastwick has seriously sumptuous seafood.

The pub restaurants on the Broads excel at traditional British pub classics, and you can find highly rated carveries at The Ferry Inn in Horning,







The King's Arms in Ludham and the Wherry Hotel at Oulton Broad.

This is just skimming the surface, though. Honourable mentions must go to perennial favourites The Berney Arms in Berney Arms, The Lion Inn at Thurne and The Acle Bridge Inn.

### **Entertainment and Shopping**

Shopping? On the Broads? You won't find too many pop-up high-fashion outlets in Stokesby or Potter Heigham, but the Broads extends up the River Yare all the way to Norwich.

Yep, you can moor up and spend a

day soaking up some of the city. The obvious place to start is Norwich's Riverside Entertainment, a boulevard packed with chain restaurants, bars and an IMAX multiplex cinema.

If shopping is more your bag, you'll find a couple of great malls - Chapelfield and Castle Mall - plus a ton of interesting boutique shops waiting to be explored in the popular Norwich Lanes and Royal Arcade.

And make sure you don't miss the Norwich Market right in the centre of the city, where a certain local Partridge can sometimes be seen.





# PLANNING THE TRIP

Okay, so now you know how awesome a boating holiday with your mates could be. Next, you need to organise the trip. Here's how. That's right, it's time for one of you to step up - and create a Facebook Event...

## 1. Be the leader

Organisation by committee doesn't work. To make a holiday with friends happen, someone has to take command.

It's usually the most enthusiastic person. You're the one reading this, so that's you. Don't wait for a vote. Assume control. Democracy is for land-lubbers!

## 2. Get everyone excited

Create some boating buzz among your mates by sharing this guide.

Once you have sufficient interest, create the Facebook Event. Invite all likely ship mates and establish your role as the trip-planning captain.

Remember how much time you're likely to be spend with these people in enclosed spaces, so only invite friends you really like.

## 3. Work out a budget

Your friends aren't fools. They know holidays cost money. Do some pre-planning and present a rough guide of the total cost of the trip divided by the likely number of ship mates. Avoiding

peak season, sharing transport and planning pre-holiday shopping will bring the cost down!

## 4. Choose your vessel

Will it be the Pink Champagne or Eastern Gem? Shortlist some suitable boats and share the options. Do a Facebook poll to find out what boat people prefer.

You should also find out how long (and how much) your friends are willing to spend onboard a boat.

## 5. Give everyone jobs

One man (or women) cannot be expected to bring all the supplies. Divvy up the pre-trip shopping

responsibilities, assigning different mini teams to buy the booze, the food, and communal stuff, like the grazing snacks. But you don't need to worry about stocking up on toilet roll - it's all provided.

## 6. Head to the boatyard!

You're now ready, sort of. Post all the key details and logistics on the Event page, and continue nailing your role as trip leader.

Remember, none of the boating awesome-ness will happen without a proactive hero to rally the troops. Be that guy. Or gal.



# WHAT ARE THE BROADS?

**Want to sound smart when you pitch boating to your friends? Too lazy to visit Wikipedia? Here's a quick Q&A guide...**

**So what are the Broads? A bunch of rivers, right?**

Sort of. They're a stunningly beautiful and totally amazing network of waterways. The 40 broads encompass a (navigable) maze of rivers, lakes and marshes.

**What are the main rivers?**

The Bure, the Yare, the Ant, the Thurne, the Chet and the Waveney.

**How big are the Broads?**

Pretty big. In total, they cover a 188-square mile area, which means there's plenty of ground (or water) to cover for would-be boaters.

**And they're in Norfolk?**

They basically fill a geographical triangle between Cromer, Norwich and Lowestoft. It's 125-miles of lock-free boating fun.

**Lowestoft sounds suspiciously like Suffolk**

You're good. Yes, there are Norfolk and Suffolk Broads!

**Sounds cool. I love natural places**

Actually, the Broads aren't natural. They were formed by 12th Century peat diggings. When these diggings were abandoned, water levels rose and a new landscape was formed.

**The Broads aren't natural? Does that mean there's no wildlife?**

No! The fens, rivers, marshes and reeds are home to some kick-ass British nature, including kingfishers, dragonflies, otters, marsh harriers, swallowtail butterflies, grass snakes and grey heron. Oh, and fish. Lots of fish.

**Can I actually fish the fish?**

Sure, as long as you've got a licence. Remember the fishing season is closed between 15th March and 15th June.

**Aren't there lots of windmills, too?**

Yep, there are tons of old-world style windmills. And historical homes. And castles! Basically, if your friends want to break up the boating and pubbing with some heritage fun, there's a lot to see!

*For more information on the wildlife and history of the Broads, visit: <http://www.richardsonsboatingholidays.co.uk/area-guide/>*



# DOS AND DON'TS

## THINGS TO DO

- ✓ DO try and wear your buoyancy jacket on deck. It might not look cool, but it could save your life.
- ✓ DO say hello to other boating parties - the Broads are a friendly place.
- ✓ DO remember there's already toilet roll provided - no need to come armed with an epic 72-pack of the stuff.
- ✓ DO make sure everybody knows where the emergency stuff is, like lifebelts and fire extinguishers/blankets.
- ✓ DO share the music playlist duties - nobody wants to listen to your Miley Cyrus mix all week.
- ✓ DO make sure everyone does their fair share of cooking and washing up.
- ✓ DO stick to cruising during the day - you don't have lights (or insurance) for night cruising.
- ✓ DO pretend to be pirates. The Broads is a great stand-in for the Caribbean.
- ✓ DO print off this guide as the definitive document to solve all onboard arguments!
- ✓ DO use nautical puns. Whenever you can.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- ✗ DON'T drink-drive the boat. It is not okay.
- ✗ DON'T bring your high heels. Wear flat-soled, non-slip rubber shoes.
- ✗ DON'T get involved in any boat-towing unless a pro is organising it.
- ✗ DON'T smash the speed limit. The Broads are for chilling; powerboating is a different holiday.
- ✗ DON'T take on extra passengers - the boats are designed for the number of people advertised.
- ✗ DON'T be inconsiderate when it comes to noise. Have fun, but remember the Broads are for everyone.
- ✗ DON'T come with a suitcase jam-packed full of bed linen - it's all provided.
- ✗ DON'T jump off a moving boat - you're not actually in a Pirates of the Caribbean movie.
- ✗ DON'T try and stop the boat with your hands or feet. You're not Superman, either.
- ✗ DON'T stand up in a dinghy. What do *you* think will happen?





# EATING AND DRINKING

The reality of boating is you're going need to eat onboard a lot of the time. But that's okay, because communal boat cooking and drinking is part of the experience. Here are some suggestions...

The full-on **English Breakfast** fry-up is as British and traditional as it gets. The full works can be a challenge for a larger group, but by working as a team and properly utilising the oven, grill and microwave you can make it happen. Try and localise things by buying Norfolk bacon and eggs.

The moored-up boat **BBQ** is a quintessential experience. Sizzling up

some burgers and bangers with a cold beer in your hand is a wonderful thing, so make sure you buy plenty of those easy-to-light disposable barbecues.

Cheap and filling carb-based meals like **Pizza and pasta** are an easy win. There's not really a lot that can go wrong with pasta, and you can make sauces as simple (e.g. a can of chopped tomatoes) or as complex as you like. Serve with baguettes for a deeper post-meal carb coma.

Any one-pot meal is ideal when you're boating, and a meaty (or veggie) **chilli** is a tasty classic. As with curries and stews, you could even make some up in advance of the trip and heat them up onboard. Be cautious

about making spicy food too powerful, though - remember you're sharing a small bathroom...

Pub lunches are a glorious way to spend an afternoon when you're boating. But if you need to lunch onboard, simple **sandwiches** are the humble man's feast. Stock up on loaves, meats, cheeses and a little salad pre-trip to allow for this.

When you've exhausted all other supplies at the end of the holiday, how about **beans on toast**? A few cans of Heinz and some bread will still provide sufficient nutrition to power you all back to the boatyard.

While not appropriate as a meal in themselves, **snackage** should form the

basis of any respectable boating trip. So load up on posh crisps, biscuits, chocolate, muffins and cakes during your pre-trip shop.

With **soft drinks**, bring plenty of vitamins in the form of juice, and of course fizzy pop works well both on its own and as a mixer for stronger stuff.

Remember to drink responsibly, and never try to drive the boat when you're drunk. Ever.



# BOATING GAMES

Boating games are the cornerstone of any successful evening on a Broads cruiser. Whether you're drinking, gambling or taking a Chance on the Monopoly broad, gathering around a booth table is a brilliant way to spend a night. Remember not to go on too loud or too late if you're moored up next to some family boats!



## 21

This is a great game for sharp wits. Essentially, you're counting to 21 in a circle. But adding extra numbers can skip or change the direction, and once you get to 21 you can change a number for a rule, e.g. instead of 13 everyone has to say "unlucky". Poor performance results in a forfeit of your choosing. Just remember if alcohol is involved, drink responsibly!



## Poker

If drinking games aren't your speed, you can still have some messy fun by shuffling up some cards and dividing up some gambling chips. Poker is the card game of kings, and most versions are super easy to learn. No-Limit Texas Hold'Em is by far the world's most popular poker pastime, so make sure everyone has 'two in the hole' and get ready to do some brave bluffing.



## Board games

The point of most games onboard a Broads boat is simply to provide a focus for relaxing, drinking and chatting. So board games are a perfect addition to your pre-trip packing list. The choice is almost endless, although traditional favourites such as Monopoly or Cluedo are still as great as they've ever been. If you're tired of going around in circles, try a Scrabble session.



## Truth or Dare

This is a great ice-breaker if your motley crew is assembled from different friendship groups. Essentially, you're forced to 'fess up to some personal secrets - or accept a daring challenge. The key to a fun game is not going too big too early; don't come up with incredibly epic dares straight away. And remember to keep all dares safe and in keeping with the Broads!



# BOATING BINGO!

As you've probably guessed by now, a lot of things can happen on a Broads adventure with your mates. Use this boating bingo card during your trip to keep track of the most likely happenings. For added competitive fun, print out a copy for everyone!

You run out of toilet roll	Someone does a Jack Sparrow impression	Bacon is burnt beyond eating	A full-on mutiny is suggested	Motion sickness strikes	Someone gets Facebook withdrawal	Catch an amazing sunset	You feel like an authority on Broads pubs
Someone logs 12 hours of boat driving	A nautical pun is used	The sunset looks like an Instagram	Everyone gets bored of nautical puns	An argument breaks out over Monopoly	You run out of booze	Anyone correctly identifies any animal	You spot three windmills
Someone references Moby Dick	Someone quotes Pirates of the Caribbean	Someone bans Jack Sparrow impressions	A trip to a nature reserve is voted down	You are bunk-ridden with carb overload	Jaffa Cakes are used as makeshift poker chips	Poker chips are used as makeshift Jaffa Cakes	You finally develop sealegs
A seagull is mistaken for an eagle	Someone confuses port and starboard	You run out of water	Everyone forgets what day it is	Kettle Chips are the only remaining food source	You learn an awkward fact in Truth or Dare	Everyone agrees to go boating again	Someone spots Pirate Richie



# BROADS MAP





# KICK-ASS ROUTES

## 1. The Urban Urchin

Route: Norwich - Great Yarmouth  
Rivers: Yare and Chet

Starting out in **Norwich**, explore the shops, restaurants, history and bars. Pootle down the River Yare and stop at **Loddon**, a town built in the 1400s. Visit nearby **Langley Staithe**, which has quaint shops, and stretch your legs by doing some walking. You could even take a detour to **Wroxham** by taking a train or taxi.

Continue on downriver to **Reedham**, drink local ales at the Reedham Ferry Inn before feasting on some hearty fish and chips from the local chippy. Satisfy your appetite for history by checking out the Roman fort **Burgh Castle**, and enjoy the views looking out over **Breydon Water**. Hop back onboard and continue to the pretty Berney Arms windmill.

On the boat spend approximately 20 minutes wildlife spotting before giving up and teaching everyone the rules of poker. Then suggest that you start gambling. Save money on food and drink by enjoying some moored-up barbeques by the side of the boat.

Finish up in **Great Yarmouth**, visiting some of the beaches, amusements and theme parks. Reignite your childhood passion for crazy golf, and suggest everyone checks out the Sea Life Centre. Before returning to the boatyard enjoy the views, play some drinking games. Respond to any rainy days by cosying up inside with a classic movie box set, if you've got a DVD player onboard. Star Wars or Back to the Future are recommended.







'The Guide to Broads Boating for Twentysomething Ship Mates' was brought to you by Richardson's Boating Holidays. We hope you enjoyed reading our ebook!

Want to create your own Broads experience? Book your boating holiday by visiting [www.richardsonsboatingholidays.co.uk](http://www.richardsonsboatingholidays.co.uk) or calling **01692 668 981**.

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You can also join our friendly and helpful online community by following us on social media.

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